

DUNDARAVE ESTATE, BUSHMILLS, COUNTY ANTRIM, NORTHERN IRELAND HAS BEEN SOLD

By Peter McNaughton

Sir Malcolm F. Macnaghten, chief of the clan, advised our chairman that the Macnaghten family estate in Northern Ireland was put up for sale early in 2014 because the cost of maintaining the estate continued to increase and the acreage no longer could produce sufficient income



through agriculture to cover the day to day expenses of its operation. It was a very difficult decision to make and the family weighed all options before coming to the final conclusion.



The property was listed for sale by Savills of London, England and included about 1100 acres of land and Dundarave mansion with a secondary farmhouse and eight cottages. For those that are not aware of the location of the estate, Bushmills Village is the home of the famous Bushmills Distillery. Bushmills Distillery, distillers of fine Irish whiskey is right next door to Dundarave Estate and is the oldest distillery in the world and in

continued production for over 400 years since 1608. Many of our members have probably heard of Bushmills whiskey as it is well known and highly regarded for its quality around the world. Bushmills Distillery and Dundarave Estate, I believe, share a property line on the south side of the estate.

A very popular tourist attraction that is nearby known as the Giant's Causeway and it attracts thousands of tourists each year. According to legend, the columns are the remains of a causeway built by a giant from Ireland all the way to the island of Staffa in Scotland. The Irish giant, known in Gaelic as Fionn mac



Cumhaill or in English as Finn MacCool, built the causeway, so the fable goes. You can look up the story on line as it is interesting and several authors have written books on the tale.



On a clear day you can view the coast of Scotland from the cliffs in the Bushmills area by hiking on the heritage walks from Portsewart through Portrush. There is the Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge to Ballycastle and scenic views of the Rathlin Island. There is also Dunluce Castle, where at least two generations of Macnaghtens were Secretaries to the Earls of Antrim in the 16th and 17th centuries. Plenty to see and do in the Bushmills area and much

of the land that was part of the Macnaghten lands a century or two back.

The Macnaghten family bought the Dundarave Estate in 1805 and the original home was called Bushmills House. Sir Edmund Macnaghten had the Bushmills House completely destroyed and built Dundarave on the land between 1846 and 1849 that was designed by the famous architect, Sir Charles Lanyon. The Bushmills House was located about four hundred yards away from the Dundarave site and the walled gardens from Bushmills House were saved and included in the grounds of Dundarave. The design was modelled after the famous Reform Club in London, England.

Dundarave has three entrances to the property with the main entrance or front drive guarded by a Gate Lodge. This drive meanders through old woodlands and opens to a gently undulating parkland arriving at the house surrounded by sweeping lawns. There are two other gate houses located from other sides of the property.



Dundarave mansion or house consists of 22,477 square feet and is a two story building with very high ceilings. Five reception rooms are located on the ground floor mostly off the Great Hall. The Hall rises to the full height of the building. The Great Hall features carved

timber pillars with painted marble design which are flanked by green marble arches. There is a central open fireplace with decorative mantelpiece sitting on Corinthian pillars.

The five rooms located off the Great Hall consist of the drawing room, dining room, morning room, and the billiard room and library are accessed from the entrance vestibule.

During a visit to Northern Ireland and Dundarave Estate with my son in late July of 2007, I was given the opportunity to experience the great views and sunlight that flooded the morning room. Lady Marianne served Sir Patrick, my son Michael and myself cake and tea in the morning room. She quizzed us as to what local sites we had visited and then insisted and whisked us off for a driving tour to see those we were not aware of before visiting Dundarave Estate. The sad fact is that almost exactly a month later, I received the word in a phone call from Lady Marianne that Sir Patrick had passed away in August of 2007.

There are 7 bedrooms off the galleried landing on the first floor, with three bedrooms having private dressing rooms. The main suite is called the Brown Room with an ensuite bathroom as well as the dressing room. The wing houses a further 7 bedrooms with two bathrooms. Dundarave in all houses 19 bedrooms.



It is recorded on the Internet in several accounts that the Macnaghten family lands at one time consisted of a total of 7,134 acres in Counties Antrim, Londonderry, and Armagh in Northern Ireland. The Macnaghten family were not only good stewards of the land but also good citizens of their community. The family built The Causeway Memorial School which opened in 1915 and was dedicated to the community. The school was

finally closed in 1962 after the number of enrolled pupils declined and new facilities had been built in the area. Since then the school has been used by the local Education Board to host school trips to allow children to experience a day living as if in the early part of the 20th century.

The facts were that the estate was built and meant to be supported by income from several thousand acres but, after the Northern Ireland Land Act of 1924 when most of the land was confiscated without compensation, the estate was not able to raise enough income through agriculture to support the House and property. Each generation since 1924 has found it increasingly difficult to maintain the Dundarave Estate.

THE END OF AN ERA

In early January of this year, Sir Malcolm advised me that Dundarave Estate had been sold to a private individual in Northern Ireland by the name of Dr. Peter Fitzgerald, owner of a business in Crumlin, County Antrim, in Northern Ireland called Randox Laboratories. Randox Laboratories is a leading international manufacturer of medical and clinical diagnostics equipment and products. It is said to export products and equipment to some 145 countries worldwide.

The Macnaghten family has had a presence in County Antrim since around 1580 and has owned the property containing Bushmills House and later Dundarave Estate since 1805. In 1818 the Lord Lyon Court bestowed the chieftainship on Edmund Alexander Macnaghten who resided at Bushmills House and he became the XIX chief of the clan and the first that resided outside of Scotland and in Northern Ireland. With the sale of the Dundarave Estate, the chief of the clan, Sir Malcolm F. Macnaghten the XXXI chief now resides in Hampshire, England.

In a BBC interview, Dr. Fitzgerald indicated that his plans are to use the Dundarave Estate as a corporate hospitality center based at Dundarave and plans to renovate and remodel the existing facilities to meet their needs. Randox Laboratories will pursue the necessary permits for the Runkerry parcel of land with the intent of building a world class golf course and hotel complex.

The article that follows was taken from the book “A History Of The Clan Macnachtan”, authored by member James Macnaughton and published by CMAW through Amazon. If you would like to gain more historical knowledge on your Clan, you can go to CMAW’s website www.clanmacnaughton.net and click on the Amazon link that is located closest to your location that is displayed beside the picture of the book on the home page of your CMAW website.

The following excerpt gives brief historic facts on each of the Macnaghten chiefs in Northern Ireland from the nineteenth chief, Edmund Alexander Macnaghten through present day and Sir Malcolm F. Macnaghten who is the thirty-first chief of the clan.

THE CLAN MACNAGHTEN CHIEFS FROM DUNDARAVE IN COUNTY ANTRIM, NORTHERN IRELAND

After the death of John (XVIII chief) in Edinburgh in 1773, the elderly Uncle Edmund, who lived until 1780 or 1781, dying at the age of 102, was asked if he would take up the chieftainship, but he refused. The Macnaughtons of Strathtay and Glenlyon were very keen for the Clan to have a new chief, and in 1818 Edmund’s son, Edmund Alexander Macnaghten, agreed to become the XIX chief. He had taken over Beardville, was a barrister, Member of Parliament for an English constituency, High Sheriff of Antrim in 1793 and Lord of the Treasury from 1818-30. The Lord Lyon confirmed the chieftainship on him in 1818.

As he died unmarried in 1832, his brother Francis Workman-Macnaghten (XX chief) (1763-1843) claimed the title as heir. He was a Judge in India, first of the Supreme Court of Madras (1809-15) and then of Calcutta (1815-25) He was knighted in 1809 and became the 1st Baronet in

1836. His second son, Sir William Hay Macnaghten, a Member of the Council for India, was appointed Envoy to Afghanistan and perished in the massacre of Kabul in 1841.

When Sir Francis died in 1843, he was succeeded by his son, Sir Edmund Charles Workman-Macnaghten (XXI chief) (1790-1876) 2nd Baronet, the eldest of his 17 children. He was Registrar of the Supreme Court of Calcutta and became so wealthy that he was able to retire at the age of 24 to Bushmills Manor. He demolished it and built the present Dunderave Manor. He died in 1876.

Just as the Macnaghtens in N. Ireland spell their name slightly differently from their fellow Scottish Clansmen, so the name of the old castle and family seat on Loch Fyne – Dunderave – has been given an Irish touch by putting an “A” instead of an “E” in the middle – DundArave. Previously the Irish family had lived at Beardville and then at Bushmills Manor in Co. Antrim, but, as mentioned, in 1846 the wealthy Sir Edmund Charles Workman-Macnaughton (XXI chief) engaged a famous English architect – Sir Charles Lanyon – to design the new Dunderave on the site of the demolished Bushmills Manor. Sir Charles had gained a prestigious reputation as the Architect of Belfast Castle, Castle Leslie, Lanyon Building at Queen’s University, the Palm House at Belfast Botanical Gardens, the Queen’s Bridge and the big infrastructure project of the Antrim Coast Road, which was ten years in construction and included the Glendun Viaduct.

In political life he was Mayor of Belfast in 1862, Conservative Member of Parliament for Belfast (1865-68) and High Sheriff of Antrim in 1876. In view of this exalted reputation, Sir Edmund Macnaghten allowed Sir Charles Lanyon free rein in designing his new family seat and the very impressive result (See Illustration on Page 27), was variously described as “by far the grandest 19th Century House in North Antrim” and a “very fine Italianate Palazzo” sitting regally in the middle of the 7,000 acre Bushmills Estate. It is situated on high ground, with grand views over lawns and a sweeping drive. Two walled gardens were created and shelter belts of trees planted. The interior of the mansion is as impressive as the exterior, with a magnificent, lofty central hall surrounded by a wide gallery at first floor level. The Ball Room, too, is very grand, with an elaborate plaster ceiling.

The 3rd Baronet, Sir Francis Edmund Workman-Macnaghten (XXII chief) (1828-1911), left no male heir as his two sons died during his lifetime. He was a real philanthropist, who founded the old Causeway School near Bushmills in the 1850s to give local children a chance to better themselves through education. It was supported by the Commissioners of National Education, who re-named it the Causeway National School. It is only 500 feet from the Giants’ Causeway, that legendary pathway of thousands of basalt columns said to have been used by the giants of the folk fables to cross from Ireland to Scotland and an amazing spectacle in its own right. Sir Francis was an Officer Hussar in the British Army and was present at the Battle of Balaclava in the Crimean War in 1854. He was part of Lord Raglan’s staff and saw, from the top of the ridge, his regiment being decimated in the attack on the Russian guns. (The Charge of the Light Brigade)

In 1911, he was succeeded at Dunderave by his brother Edward Macnaghten (XXIII chief) (1830-1913), the 4th Baronet. He discontinued the use of the Workman surname. He had a distinguished legal career, becoming as Baron Macnaghten of Runkerry in the county of Antrim,

a noted Lord of Appeal in Ordinary (1887). GCB (Grand Cross of the Bath) GCMG (Grand Cross of St. Michael and St. George). He was also a Privy Councillor and a Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin. He was Conservative Member of Parliament for County Antrim. In the early 1860s he built Runkerry House on the Estate. Much later, in 1951, and as yet another example of their philanthropy and compassion for others, the family donated this mansion to the Northern Ireland Government. It was used for many years as a Retirement Home, and then as a Rehabilitation Centre. Baron Macnaghten's judgments – marked by keen intellect and dry humour – were published after his death in 1913.

His son Edward Charles Macnaghten (XXIV chief) (1859-1914), 5th Baronet, succeeded, who survived his father by little more than a year, dying in 1914. The family built a large school in his memory, which opened in 1915 and was called "The Causeway Memorial School". It finally closed in 1962 after the numbers of enrolled pupils declined and better facilities were built in that area.

Sir Edward Charles' second son, Sir Edward Harry Macnaghten (XXV chief) (1896-1916), the 6th Baronet, was killed in action in 1916 on the first day of the Battle of the Somme. His batman, Robert Quigg, repeatedly went into no man's land to look for him, each time returning with a wounded comrade. He never found Sir Harry, but was awarded the Victoria Cross for his efforts.

The third son, Sir Arthur Douglas Macnaghten (XXVI chief) (1897-1916), the 7th Baronet, took over, but was also killed in action in 1916 during the same battle some months later.

His uncle, Sir Frances Alexander Macnaghten (XXVII chief) (1863-1951), 8th Baronet, then took over the chieftainship. He had established himself near Calgary in Canada prior to unexpectedly inheriting the Dundarave Estate, but then returned to Dundarave to manage the estate.

In 1951, after his death, he was succeeded by his brother, Sir Frederick Fergus Macnaghten (XXVIII chief) (1867-1955) 9th Baronet, who died in 1955. He was a lawyer in London.

His nephew, Anthony Macnaghten (XXIX chief) (1899-1972), 10th Baronet, then succeeded, the son of Sir Frederick's brother Sir Malcolm Martin Macnaghten, who was a Judge in London. Sir Anthony had been a Merchant banker in London before retiring in 1960 to manage the Dundarave estate.

In 1972 the eldest of his three sons, Sir Patrick Alexander Macnaghten (XXX Chief) (1927-2007), (11th Baronet) succeeded. He had trained as a Civil Engineer, worked in Zimbabwe and had been employed by a confectionery company (Cadburys) until he retired to manage the Dundarave Estate in 1982.

He died in August 2007 and his son Sir Malcolm Francis Macnaghten (XXXI Chief) (1956 - present) (12th Baronet) agreed in November of that year to take over the chieftainship. Sir Malcolm trained in Computer Science and is currently working for an IT services company. His specialty is IT Security and he manages the Dundarave Estate as well. He lives in Hampshire, England with his family!