

# *Great Glen Genealogical Research Centre*

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Saturday, October 4, 2008

Frank and Sandy,  
The SPAR Foodmarket,  
12 Castle Street,  
Dornoch IV25 3SN

Dear Frank and Sandy,

A week ago today, I popped into your store to advise you that the site was – between 1805 and 1822 – where a merchant store was run by John Macdonald, grandfather of Canada's first and third Prime Minister, Sir John Alexander Macdonald.

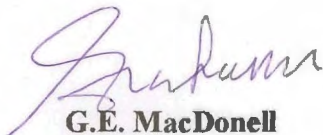
While Sir John was born in Glasgow in 1815, his father, Hugh, was born in Rogart in 1782 and moved around the turn of the nineteenth century with his parents, John and Jean, to Fourpenny, where John Sr. crofted before starting up his merchant shop on Castle Street, according to research carried out by the late Sheila Board.

Hugh and some of his brothers moved to Glasgow by 1810 where Hugh married Helen Shaw from Dalnavert, near Aviemore, and sired five children (three boys and two girls) before moving to Kingston, Upper Canada (now called Ontario).

Bentinck's book is the best local authority (see one of the pages enclosed) on the history of Dornoch, and, it seems, the shop was once the manse of the Rector of Canisbay, if one juxtaposes current mapping with early nineteenth century mapping. (See enclosed pages.)

I have a 90-minute presentation on Sir John Alexander Macdonald's family history which I present to history or genealogy societies at no cost. Should your local history or genealogy society wish to have me make a presentation in Dornoch, please have *them* contact me.

Yours truly,



G.E. MacDonell  
B.A. PG Cert. (Genealogical Studies)  
Principal Researcher

Encl.

# MACDONALD'S SHOP





# **DORNOCH IN DECLINE**

**Dornoch had been waning from a century of decline and destruction and was about to undergo redevelopment starting in 1810-15; consequently, there is only one 1822 view of where his store could have been as found in, *“Dornoch Cathedral and Parish”* by the Reverend Charles D. Bentinck, the Northern Counties Newspaper and Printing and Publishing Company Limited, published in 1926.**

# HISTORY REVEALED

The *Northern Times* reveals that, “At the time, Fourpenny was subdivided into three farms or holdings occupied respectively by Patrick Squair, the Rev. Dr. Bethune and **John Macdonald.**”

At the death of **John Macdonald** in 1822, the house and holding at Fourpenny were occupied by William Gunn, the grandfather of the very late Thomas Grant of Evelix, who assisted in providing historically accurate information for the original 1923 article in the *Northern Times*.

Acquiring the name, “*An Ceannaiche Domhnallach*” (Gaelic for “the merchant Macdonald”), John tutored his sons, excluding Hugh, in the trade.



# Sir John Alexander Macdonald



A look at the  
Highland Ancestry  
and Descendants  
of Canada's  
First and Third  
Prime Minister  
including  
his relationships  
with his wives,  
sons and family



# DORNOCH SCHEMATIC TODAY

- Car Park
- Public Convenience
- Information Centre
- Post Office



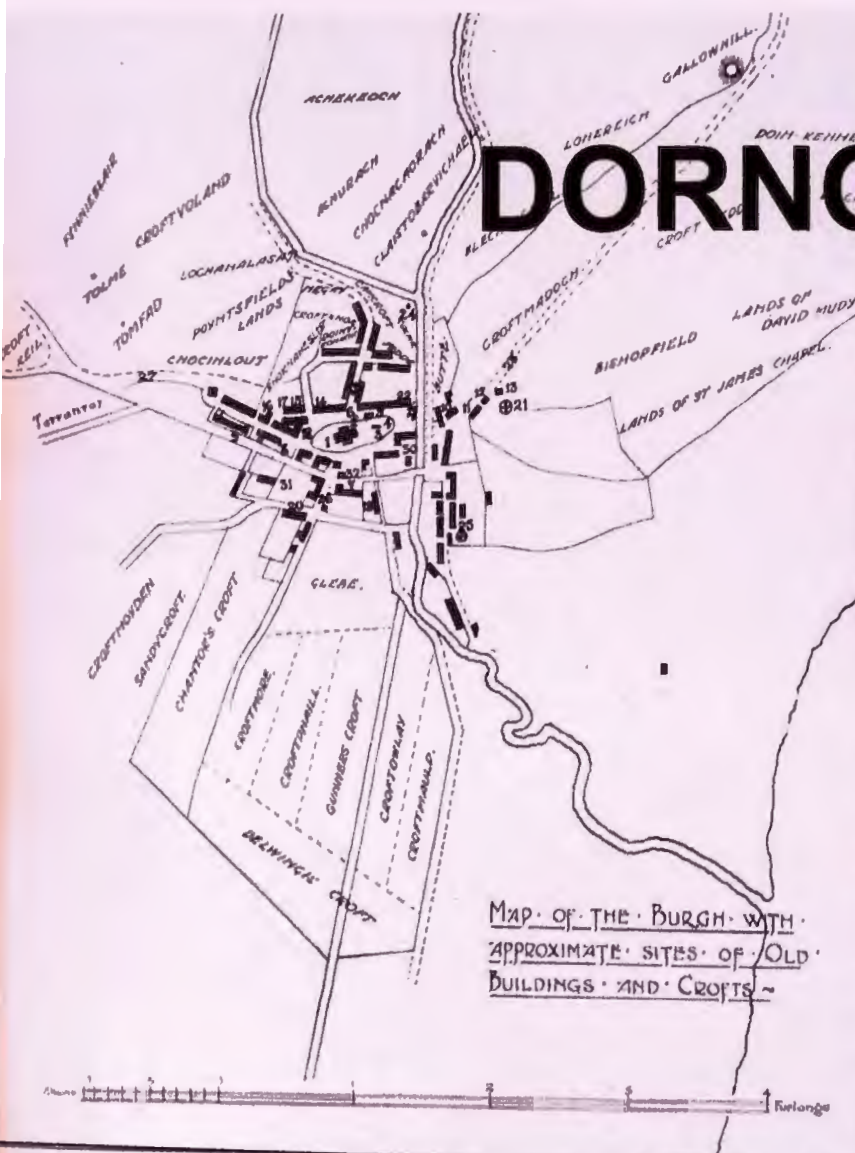
The Royal Burgh  
of Dornoch

The shop, according to Sheila Board's research, was sold to Robert Ross and was reputed to have been on the site of the present SPAR supermarket on Castle Street.

To Aberdeen & Glasgow  
To Cairn & Ayr  
To Larbert & Perth  
To Inverness  
To Aberdeen  
To Ayr  
To Perth



# DORNOCH THEN



MAP OF THE BURGH WITH APPROXIMATE SITES OF OLD BUILDINGS AND CROFTS ~



- |                                  |                                                                 |                                            |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1. Cathedral.                    | 13. Canon of Creich's Manse.                                    | 23. Monastery Well.                        |
| 2. Chapter House.                | 14. Archdeacon's Manse.                                         | 24. St Michael's Well.                     |
| 3. St. Barr's Church.            | 15. Schoolhouse.                                                | 25. Probable Site of Franciscan Monastery. |
| 4. Tornarauch.                   | 16. Bishop's Vicar's Manse.                                     | 26. Site of the Old Inn                    |
| 5. Council House.                | 17. Rector of Assynt's Manse.                                   | 27. The King's Gait.                       |
| 6. Mercat Cross.                 | 18. Bishops' Liching Place.                                     | 28. Old Road to Embo.                      |
| 7. Castle - Old Bishop's Palace. | 19. Sheriff McCulloch's House.                                  | 29. The Common Gait.                       |
| 8. Dean's Manse.                 | 20. Old Parish Manse.                                           | 30. Bishop's Mill and Kilm.                |
| 9. Rector of Canisbay's Manse.   | 21. Probable Site of Culdee Settlement and Red Friars Monastery | 31. Deansfield.                            |
| 10. Precator's Manse.            | 22. Vicar of Golspie's Manse.                                   | 32. Castle Court and Archway.              |
| 11. Treasurer's Manse.           |                                                                 |                                            |
| 12. Chancellor's Manse.          |                                                                 |                                            |

**No. 9, the Rector of Canisbay's Manse, could have been John Macdonald's store site between 1805 and 1822 (his death year).**

# TWO VIEWS OF DORNOCH

