

Beth Whatley Robertson

MENTIONED WITH HONOUR:

THE STORY OF FLORA MACDONALD

IT WAS IN EARLY OCTOBER OF THE YEAR 1774 that a battered little three-master the *Baliol*, sailing from the Western Isles of Scotland, arrived at Wilmington, North Carolina, with a shipload of Highland-Scottish immigrants.

Not that this was in itself anything out of the ordinary for the period, as the Scots had been migrating in great numbers to the American Colonies, and to North Carolina in particular, for the past twenty-five years and more. So much so, in fact, that there had grown up a considerable community of Highlanders in and around Cross Creek in the Valley of the Upper Cape Fear River north of Wilmington. And such names as Macdonald, MacNeil, MacLeod, Stuart, Campbell, MacKinnon, MacNichol, McGill, and MacDougall were prominent throughout Cumberland and adjoining counties.

But arriving on the *Baliol* from the far Hebridean Isle of Skye this autumn day was an immigrant of much more than ordinary interest and importance—some would say the most colourful and romantic personality ever to reach Colonial American shores. A crowd had gathered to greet her, famed and beloved Scotswoman that she was, and the welcoming shouts and banners went up: "Welcome Flora Macdonald, Preserver of Bonnie Prince Charlie!"

Flora, now in her early fifties and still a very handsome woman, her husband Allan, and the children and grandchildren who had accompanied them, were given a royal welcome to the new land. They were greeted and fêted not only in Wilmington but at the Royal Governor's Palace in New Bern as well, and finally—and best of all—at Cross Creek, the capital of the Highland settlement. There they were met and escorted into town to the skirl of the pipes playing the marching song of the Macdonalds and many another martial air known and loved in the Highlands. Excitement, one may be sure, ran high; and many a happy tear must have fallen that day as the new arrivals were greeted by loved relatives and old friends who had preceded them to America. And surely if there was any person in all that great North Carolina valley—"The Valley of the Highlanders"—who did not know the full, exciting

story of Flora Macdonald's rescue of the Bonnie Prince back in 1746, he would not have had far to look for a willing narrator, for it was a story that never grew old and one that all loved to tell.

The so-called "Rebellion of the 'Forty-Five" had marked the final effort of the Scottish people to return the line of Stuart kings to the throne of Scotland and England.

When James VII of Scotland and II of England was deposed in 1688 for his oppressive rule and stifling of religious freedom, the people turned with renewed hope to the Protestant William of Orange, husband of James' daughter Mary—and later with diminished enthusiasm to Anne, another daughter of James, who succeeded William and Mary. But conditions were scarcely improved; the people, still burdened with grievances, remained unhappy and discontented. Then came George I, the Hanoverian, to the throne; and this to the Scots was the final straw. George, called in derision "The Wee, Wee German Lairdie", never even bothered to learn the English language. Surely, many Scots felt, this was the time to restore the crown to a Stuart king.

Urged by renewed agitation on his behalf, James Francis, son of the deposed James II, came over from France in 1715 and made a half-hearted effort to win the throne. To the Jacobites, the Stuart followers, he was James VIII, but George's supporters called him the "Pretender." Later he was known in history as "The Old Pretender." This uprising, "The Rebellion of the 'Fifteen", ended in failure. And it was not until thirty years later, during the reign of George II, that the Jacobites rose again under the Old Pretender's son Prince Charles Edward Stuart, the "Bonnie Prince Charlie" of song and story.

Charles had been born and brought up in Rome. His mother was an Austrian princess, daughter of an unsuccessful claimant to the throne of Poland. Although he was a bright and precocious child, the young Prince's education was somewhat neglected by careless tutors as he grew older. He was, however, a great lover of music, had a good singing voice, and was said to be a talented performer on the bass viol. From his earliest youth, it seems, he cherished the ambition and the dream of going to Scotland some day to claim the throne, which he felt should have rightly belonged to his father and would one day be his own.

He was fond of outdoor sports and exercise, and often while out hunting or tramping would wear the Highland kilt, and walk barefoot over rough ground to harden and toughen his feet. Also, he insisted on eating rather

coarse and simple foods, in order to become accustomed to the diet of the Highlanders. As he grew into young manhood, stories of his great good looks and charming personality, and of his growing ambition to recover the throne of his forefathers, travelled all over Europe and particularly to Scotland itself. In the Highlands and elsewhere secret meetings were held, plans were made, and money was raised; and the hopes of the Stuart sympathizers once more ran high.

Finally in July, 1745, Charles landed on the west coast of Scotland, and soon his standard was raised at Glenfinnan. Everywhere, Highland hearts—and some Lowland ones as well—yielded to the Prince's charm. And in spite of serious setbacks, such as the failure of expected aid from France and the reluctance and even refusal of some of the clans to carry on without that aid, the campaign got off to a very successful start. The fiery cross went round, and most of the great clans rallied to the Prince's support. Edinburgh was entered without opposition except from the ancient fortress, the "Castle on the Rock", held by Hanoverian troops. The Battle of Prestonpans was fought and won. But as Charles and his army moved southward into England, the picture changed. The English failed to rally to his support as expected; and although Carlisle was captured, the Jacobites were forced to turn back at Derby, just 130 miles from London. In charge of the English troops assigned to drive back the Scots was Charles' own cousin the Duke of Cumberland, later known bitterly in Scotland as "Butcher Cumberland."

A few more successes followed for the Prince as he returned reluctantly northward. An English army under Hawley was halted and defeated at Falkirk; Inverness Castle was captured and held for two months. But on April 16, 1746, came the tragic and disastrous Battle of Culloden, fought on Culloden Moor five miles from Inverness. The Jacobites, in spite of many desperate acts of courage on the part of the various clans, were hopelessly outnumbered and almost cut to pieces. Nearly all the chiefs were killed, together with hundreds of their followers. Managing to elude the enemy, Charles and a few companions slipped away into the hills and went into hiding.

There followed five long months of wandering, of hardships and adventure and hair-breadth escapes, for the Prince. Some of the pitiful remnant of his army were captured and imprisoned in the Tower of London, some escaped to France and even to America, and some were beheaded. A reward of £30,000 (the equivalent of \$150,000) was offered for the return of the Young Pretender or for information leading to his capture. But while hundreds of destitute Highlanders, to whom that sum of money would have meant

untold riches, knew of Prince Charlie's movements and his various hiding places, not one would stoop to betray him. Even those who had not supported the uprising had no wish to see him a captive in the hands of the English, so tightly did both love and honour seal the lips of the loyal Highlanders.

After more than two months of hiding and sheltering in many a mountain corrie or cave or shepherd's hut throughout the Western Highlands and Isles, Charles and his faithful guide Donald MacLeod found themselves completely hemmed in at last on the little island of South Uist in the Outer Hebrides off the west coast of Scotland. Hanoverian soldiers were stationed all over the island, every pass and ferry was guarded, and men-of-war constantly patrolled its shores. Then it was, in his hour of most desperate need, that Flora Macdonald came to the rescue of her Prince.

Flora was born at Milton, South Uist, in 1722. Her father died when she was a child, and her mother later remarried—a distant kinsman, Hugh Macdonald—and went eventually to live at Armadale in Skye. Flora, however, continued to spend much of her time with her older brother Angus, who had succeeded to the ownership of their father's farm.

The islands of North and South Uist, and between them Benbecula, make up a chain separated only by narrow fords and known as the Long Island. They lie across the Little Minch about twenty miles westward from Skye. Not far from Milton was the home of the chief of Flora's clan, the great Clan Ranald; and Lady Clanranald, it seems, became so warmly interested in the young girl Flora that she practically adopted her, taking her to live for a time in her home and educating her with her own daughter.

When Lady Clanranald learned of the Prince's presence in Uist and of his dire peril, she was very eager to help him. Flora was not a Jacobite as was her benefactor, but her heart was touched and her deepest compassion aroused by the plight of the handsome young fugitive. It was Flora's stepfather Hugh, however, who originated the plan of escape, and not Flora as some writers have stated. Although heading a contingent of Macdonald militia searching for the Prince on the Long Island, this gentleman sent a secret message to the royal fugitive expressing his wish to help him and saying that he had a plan to get him safely to the home of Lady Margaret Macdonald in Skye. He would, he said, send his stepdaughter Flora to her mother in Armadale, and the Prince, dressed in feminine attire, should accompany her as her maid. Neil MacEachen, Flora's second cousin and a devoted follower

of the Prince, would be in charge of the party. The daring plan pleased Prince Charlie, and he expressed his wish to carry it through without delay.

Flora, when informed of the plan, was at first reluctant, not because of the danger to herself but for fear of bringing trouble upon her friends in Skye. But when the Prince himself came to Milton Farm—secretly by night with Neil and another follower—to plead for her assistance, she was so deeply touched by his “haggard, ragged and dejected appearance”, that she yielded in tears and agreed to the hazardous undertaking. Neither her loyalty to the reigning monarchy nor her deep religious convictions could hamper her compassion for “one who was haunted and ready to perish.”

With the help of Lady Clanranald, Flora soon made arrangements for a boat and trusted boatmen for the crossing to Skye. Then the two of them hurriedly set to work sewing and assembling the clothing for the Prince’s disguise, all with the greatest secrecy and care. Finally on Friday evening, June 27, the three ladies—Flora, Lady Clanranald, and the latter’s daughter Peggy—accompanied by Flora’s brother Angus, arrived at the hut on the east coast of Benbecula where the Prince was hiding, and found him with Neil and another friend preparing a meagre meal. Supplementing it with refreshments of their own, they sat down with some cheerfulness and even merriment to eat—only to be interrupted by the nearby landing of fresh government troops, forcing them to take a precipitate leave. In great fear and haste they rowed to the opposite side of the loch. And there, after all but Flora and Neil and the boatmen had departed, the harassed but momentarily amused Prince donned his disguise and was transformed into “Betty Burke”, the new Irish maid. The outfit consisted of a quilted petticoat, a dress of flowered linen sprigged with blue, a white apron, a cap, shoes and stockings, and an enveloping dark mantle with attached hood.

For the crossing from Benbecula to Skye, Captain Hugh Macdonald had issued a passport for Flora, her “manservant” Neil MacEachen, and the maid Betty Burke. His stepdaughter, he said, had been fortunate enough to find in Uist a very good spinning maid; and as her mother was in need of a spinner, Flora thought it well to take the maid with her. To further ensure the safety of their passage, Captain Macdonald gave Flora an open letter addressed to his wife in Armadale, saying that he was sending home her daughter Flora, with Betty Burke, an Irish spinning maid, both in the care of Neil MacEachen.

The little party waited for the cover of darkness to begin the dangerous crossing; and again during the day they were badly frightened by the passing

of several sloops of war quite near, so they had to put out their fire and run and hide in the heather. But luckily the ships, or "wherries", passed on southward without discovering their presence. Then as darkness fell, on that historic Saturday evening of June 28, 1746, they set out on their perilous journey across the Little Minch, an amazing and heart-tugging adventure that would ring in song and story down the years.

Speed, bonny boat, like a bird on the wing.
 "Onward", the sailors cry.
 Carry the lad that's born to be king
 Over the sea to Skye! . . .

Though the waves leap, soft shall you sleep;
 Ocean's a royal bed.
 Rocked in the deep, Flora will keep
 Watch by your weary head

So, in part, goes one of the hundreds of Jacobite songs that have been known and sung throughout the English-speaking world for more than two hundred years.

The ocean, however, was far from an easy or royal bed that stormy night. For eight hours the little party rowed or were helplessly tossed on a tumultuous sea, with fog obscuring all land and no compass to guide them. The intrepid Flora, exhausted after the anxieties and activities of the past twenty-four hours, at one time fell asleep. The Prince, however, was apparently in a gay and light-hearted mood. Frequently throughout the journey he sought to calm the party's fears for his safety and to lift their spirits by telling them stories and singing songs—some of the songs, to their secret amusement, being in rather less than perfect Gaelic.

As morning dawned they found themselves drifting just south and west of Waternish Point on the northwest coast of Skye. The wind, which had been in their favour, had now shifted to the northeast, and they were at its mercy. Neil MacEachen later wrote that the oarsmen were "about ready to breathe out their last", but at length made the Point of Waternish. Their intention had been to make a temporary landing at Ardmore on this coast; but, as Flora herself afterwards related, "they found the place possessed by a body of forces who had three boats or yawls near the shore, and one on board one of the boats fired at them to make them bring to, but they rowed as fast as they could, being all the chance they had to escape, because there were several ships of war within sight."

A little farther on, they did make a landing beside a waterfall under the cliffs, and here they had a meal and an hour's rest. Then, rowing slowly so as not to arouse suspicion, they continued northward and eastward around the Point. Crossing the mouth of Loch Snizort, the "bonny boat" landed according to plan near Monkstadt, the home of Sir Alexander and Lady Margaret Macdonald, good friends of Lady Clanranald and of Flora. Here Flora thought it best that she and Neil proceed to the house alone, and it was well that they did so, for an officer from a nearby encampment of militia engaged in the search for the Prince was at that very time a guest in the house. With great presence of mind, Flora allayed any suspicions he might have had, saying that she was on her way to visit her mother at Armadale and had just stopped to see her friend Lady Margaret. With an assumption of much lighter spirits than she must have felt, she chatted with the officer and her hostess, and even played the spinet and sang. At an opportune moment she revealed the Prince's whereabouts to Lady Margaret, whom she knew to be wholly sympathetic to the Jacobite cause, though Sir Alexander was not. And in great fear and trembling the two of them made further plans to convey the fugitive to safety.

Fortunately, Sir Alexander was away, but his factor, Macdonald of Kingsburgh, who lived farther south at Kingsburgh House, happened to be calling at Monkstadt at the time of Flora's arrival. His aid was enlisted; and while Flora and Lady Margaret dined with the militia officer, Kingsburgh slipped out with food for the royal fugitive, whom he found much calmer than any of his rescuers and idly tossing pebbles into the water as he waited on the beach below. The Prince, still of course in his Betty Burke disguise, had at first been left in the boat, but Kingsburgh had dispatched Neil MacEachen to remove him to a safer hiding place over a little hill by the shore. The boatmen had been warned to tell any who might be curious that the woman was Miss Macdonald's maid, and to berate her as a "lazy jade" who did not attend to her mistress.

In the early evening Kingsburgh and "Betty" set out for Portree, where it had been arranged for Donald Roy Macdonald (who had fought with the Prince at Culloden) to meet them at the inn. It was related that on this journey "Betty" had some difficulty in managing her petticoats, letting them trail at first in the water of one of the little streams they forded near the village of Uig, and at another time holding them too high, thus scandalizing some passers-by who may or may not have suspected the identity of the tall, awkward woman who travelled with Kingsburgh. Flora and Neil had overtaken the two near Uig, and Flora in some alarm suggested that they take a more remote

route across the hills and that they should call at Kingsburgh House before proceeding to Portree. This plan was followed, and the little party reached Kingsburgh's home in safety after darkness had fallen. Kingsburgh's wife and daughter, much excited over their royal visitor, welcomed the travellers and hurriedly prepared a late meal. But Flora, temporarily collapsing from exhaustion, was unable to eat. She was cared for by Mrs. Macdonald, and it was decided that the party should remain for an overnight rest. The royal visitor was assigned to an upstairs room above a secret stairway and had his first good sleep in a real bed in many a weary night.

Next morning Flora was fully recovered. Prince Charlie exchanged his Betty Burke costume for a Macdonald kilt and complete Highland outfit, including a wig and bonnet, belonging to his host; and the party, again divided, proceeded to Portree. Before leaving Kingsburgh House, however, the Prince allowed Flora to cut a lock of his "lang yellow hair" to keep in remembrance of him. It is related that Mrs. Macdonald, Kingsburgh's wife, had suggested to Flora that she ask for the lock as a memento of their adventure, but Flora demurred. And the Prince, hearing them speaking in Gaelic outside his door, asked them what the discussion was about. When told, he immediately invited them to enter, and laying his head in Flora's lap—for he was still in bed—he told her by all means to cut a generous tress. This she did, and she and Mrs. Macdonald (later her mother-in-law) divided the lock between them to cherish for the rest of their lives. Mrs. Macdonald also kept the sheets from the bed where the Prince had slept, instructing her family to use them as her "winding sheet" when she was buried.

At Portree Charles was met by his loyal friends Donald Roy Macdonald and Malcolm MacLeod, the latter of whom was to ferry him across to his next place of refuge, the nearby isle of Raasay. And it was at the little thatched inn at Portree, Isle of Skye, that the Prince took leave of Flora, bowing and kissing her hand with gallant courtesy, and expressing the hope, forlorn as he must have now felt it would be, that they would "meet in St. James's yet." She never saw him again, but she must have carried his gracious but saddened image with her to her grave.

There were weeks of further flight and continuing peril ahead for the Prince, but no adventure so hazardous or half so romantically interesting and appealing as the crossing to Skye and the brief sojourn there of Flora Macdonald and "Betty Burke". It must have been with a great sigh of thankfulness that Flora learned some three months later that the Prince had embarked on a French privateer and made a safe landing in Brittany. He spent the

last of a sadly embittered life wandering about Europe. His great regret, he had said to the loyal Highlanders, was that he had brought such sorrow and suffering upon them. Twice unhappily married, he had one daughter by his first wife Clementina Walkinshaw; and it was this daughter Charlotte who came to him in Italy and cared for him during his last illness. Toward the end of his life, it is said, he became more considerate, open, and gentle, more like the charming Prince of old than he had been for many a year. He died in Rome in 1788.

Soon after Prince Charles had escaped from Benbecula to Skye, it became generally known that Flora had been the chief factor in his rescue. She was arrested and held for a time as a state prisoner at Dunstaffnage Castle in Argyll before being transferred to Leith, the charge sheet referring to her as "a very pretty rebel 24 years of age." During a two-months detention on board the *Bridgewater* in Leith harbor, she was visited by crowds of admirers eager to see her and express their sympathy. And thousands came to cheer her and wish her well as she sailed away south toward further imprisonment. In London, Flora was detained in "honourable captivity" seven months longer. And there once again she was lionized. Many people visited her and became her admiring friends, money gifts were raised and presented to her, famous artists painted her portrait, and she was granted unusual privileges and freedom for one supposed to be a prisoner. Among her prominent visitors was Frederick, Prince of Wales, who came first in anger to ask her how she dared assist a rebel against his father's government. But when Flora answered him gently that she would have done the same for him had he been in like distress, he was completely mollified and won over. Finally in July, 1747, an indemnity act was passed, and Flora and her fellow prisoners in London were set free.

In 1750, Flora was married to Allan Macdonald the Younger of Kingsburgh, eldest son of the Alexander Macdonald of Kingsburgh who had sheltered the Prince that memorable night almost four and a half years earlier. He, the elder Kingsburgh, had been imprisoned in Edinburgh for twelve months for his part in the Prince's rescue, "having got", he afterwards commented with wry humour, "a whole year's safe lodging for affording that of one night."

Flora's and Allan's first home was at Flodigarry Farm, a beautiful spot overlooking Staffin Bay on the northeast coast of Skye; and it was there that five of their seven children were born. Later, on the death of Allan's mother, they went to live at Kingsburgh House. Apparently and from all accounts, theirs was a true love match and their marriage an unusually happy one. Con-

trary to some unfounded accounts, there had been no romantic attachment whatever between Flora and Prince Charlie—the episode of the lock of hair notwithstanding. This Flora revered as from the head of one who might have been her king, and who *was* the undoubted king of many Highland hearts. But Allan was her one and only love.

Though so many of the Highlanders had loved and aided their Prince, they were forced to admit later that the ill-fated bid for the throne had brought nothing but disaster to the Highlands. His followers were hunted and imprisoned as traitors. Many were killed. Their lands were confiscated, and their homes were burned to ashes. Where any Jacobite sympathizers were allowed to remain, they were burdened down with impossible rentals and oppressed by grasping new English or Lowland landlords who turned their farm lands into sheep runs for greater profits. Under heavy penalties they were prevented from carrying arms of any kind. And as a crowning blow they were forbidden to wear the time-honoured tartan costumes of their clans. For many Highlanders there was only one answer and one hope—emigration to the American Colonies. Some movement to America had taken place as early as the 1720s, but it was not until after the disaster at Culloden that the great mass migration of the Scots began.

Allan and Flora held on to their impoverished land and struggled as long as possible for a livelihood in Skye, but eventually they too succumbed to the call of America. It was in the summer of 1774 that they set sail on the *Baliol* to make a new home in the Cape Fear Valley of North Carolina.

Before leaving Skye, however, Flora and Allan entertained as guests at Kingsburgh House no less a pair than the great Dr. Samuel Johnson and his faithful biographer Boswell. The latter has given us in his journal a very graphic description of Allan and Flora. "Kingsburgh", writes Boswell, "was completely the figure of a gallant Highlander. He had his tartan plaid thrown about him, a large blue bonnet with a knot of black ribbon like a cockade . . . He had jet black hair tied behind, and was a large stately man, with a steady, sensitive countenance . . . She is a woman of middle stature, soft features, gentle manners, elegant presence." The visitors used the small upstairs room reached by a secret stairway which Prince Charlie had occupied. Johnson slept in the historic poster bed in which the Prince had slept. The eminent writer and moralist, it seems, was more than pleased with his entertainment and his hosts and particularly impressed with Flora. He wrote of her: "The name of Flora Macdonald will be mentioned in history, and if

courage and fidelity be virtues, mentioned with honour"—a great and graceful compliment from a great and conservative man.

Of Flora's and Allan's arrival in North Carolina and the enthusiastic welcome that they received, something has already been said. Their first plantation home, after a temporary stay with relatives, was Mount Pleasant—now known as Cameron Hill—situated about eighteen miles north of Cross Creek near the present town of Fayetteville. Later they moved to a larger farm in Anson (now Richmond) County, and this home they called Killiegray.

The Macdonalds' eldest daughter Anne and son-in-law Alex MacLeod, who had accompanied them to North Carolina, purchased a home farther north in adjoining Moore County. There have been conflicting accounts concerning some of the children, but it is certain that at least two of the Macdonalds' five sons, Alexander and James, did accompany them on the voyage to America. The youngest little girl, Frances or Fanny, and the fifth son John, were left with close friends in Scotland until the family should get settled. Charles, the eldest son, was an officer in the East India Company at the time of his parents' move, and later was with the British army in Nova Scotia. Ranald, the third son, who may have accompanied his parents to North Carolina or possibly came later, was a lieutenant in the Marines; it is known that he saw service in America and was wounded at the Battle of Bunker Hill.

As pioneer settlers in North Carolina, Allan and Flora learned the full meaning of hard physical labour as they had never known it in their native Highlands. In Skye, even in the latter years of near poverty, they had been the laird and lady of Kingsburgh House with serving maids and gillies to help in home and field. A few of these faithful retainers—five men and three women—had accompanied them to America as indentured servants; but in the struggle to clear the land and establish a paying farm, Flora freed even her maids from household duties that they might toil in the fields, while she herself struggled with every menial household task. As for tall, handsome Allan, his hands grew calloused with splitting wood, ploughing, and other such hard labour as he had never previously known. But they must have considered the rewards well worth it. The farm prospered, and for a time they knew joy and pride in their new home in a new land.

This happiness, however, was short-lived. For now the rumbling of

revolution was growing and spreading in the American Colonies; and soon Flora and Allan and their sons and son-in-law were to be caught up and almost destroyed in a conflict which was not of their making and which they never quite understood. Like many other Highland settlers, particularly the more recent arrivals such as themselves, the Macdonalds tried for a time to remain aloof and "take no sides". But when neutrality grew seemingly impossible for Allan, his own conscientious convictions, right or wrong, led him to but one choice—to uphold the government of the King. Not realizing the strength and scope of the opposition to George III and his ministry, Allan felt, and must have so convinced Flora, that the Colonists' revolt could never succeed, and that it would only bring such terrible sorrow and suffering upon the rebels as he had seen in Scotland after the disastrous rebellion of 1745. The Scots had come to America seeking peace. Also, many still felt irrevocably bound by the oath they had sworn before their departure, not to take up arms against the Crown. And apparently Allan—who had never espoused the Jacobite cause as had his father—sincerely believed that peace for the future could only be assured by siding with the King and the established government. One may surmise, as do some other thoughtful students of Flora's life and times, that her love for Allan and her great desire to remain in harmony with him led her to smother her distaste for the Hanoverian king and his rule and to side eventually with the Loyalists. Whatever her motives, and Allan's, one cannot doubt the agonies of indecision and conflicting loyalties through which they and many of their fellow Scots in America must have passed at this critical time.

Every student of North Carolina history knows what happened at the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge, February 27, 1776. When the Royal Governor called the Loyalists of that state to arms, Allan Macdonald, now a captain, raised a force of about 1500 Highlanders and their sons, including his own, to join with the regulars at Wilmington. But their objective was never reached. At Widow Moore's Creek Bridge, the Highlanders were surprised by Patriot forces under Colonels Caswell and Lillington and severely defeated. Allan was taken a prisoner, as was his son Alexander. His son-in-law Captain Alex MacLeod escaped and was able to join the British. Later his younger son James also joined the British forces. The prisoners were taken to the jail in Halifax, North Carolina, thence to Reading in Pennsylvania; and from there Allan was finally allowed to go to New York to arrange for his own exchange and eventually to proceed to Nova Scotia, where he served again as captain in the Royal Highland Emigrant Battalion.

Meanwhile, Flora was once more paying in cruel hardship and suffering for the stand she had taken with a losing side. Bereft of her husband and children, her home and property confiscated by the Patriots, she must surely at times have felt black despair as she pondered on the strange and ironic blows that life had dealt her. To this period probably belongs the fragment of a Gaelic love song, thought to have been written by Flora for her absent husband. Dr. Kenneth MacLeod has put it into English words, some of which run as follows:

Allan, would that thou wert with me!
 Sad each day, for thee I'm longing.
 Gone with thee all joy and gladness . . .
Fain would I with thee be wandering . . .
 Allan, would that thou wert with me.

Still, one gathers from all available records of Flora's life and personality an impression of amazing strength and forbearance even during her darkest days.

For a time she and Anne and Anne's small children found refuge at the plantation home of Kenneth Black on Little River. And finally, through the combined efforts of Anne's husband Captain MacLeod and of Allan himself, they were granted passports to sail from Wilmington to New York, thence to Nova Scotia to be with Allan, and eventually back home to Scotland. Flora had to sell her silver—the remaining precious pieces that she had somehow managed to preserve—to pay for their passage. But she must have considered this a small sacrifice indeed; for now at last after almost two long years she was to see her beloved Allan again.

One can only imagine the joy of that reunion—and later Flora's great disappointment that Allan could not return with her to Skye. She spent that winter of 1778-79 with him at Windsor, Nova Scotia, and then sailed sadly without him for Scotland and home. Today, interested visitors to Windsor may see a plaque attached to the blockhouse (all that remains of old Fort Edward) which reads:

FLORA MACDONALD

A name that will be mentioned in history, and if courage and fidelity be virtues, mentioned with honour.

—Samuel Johnson

The preserver of Bonnie Prince Charlie spent the winter of 1779 here with her husband Captain Allan Macdonald of the Royal Highland Emigrants, when returning to her old home in Skye after exile from her new home in North Caro-

lina. Her loyalty and devotion in the midst of troubled days have long been told in Scottish song and story.

As Flora was crossing the Atlantic on her homeward journey, the ship on which she sailed was attacked by a French privateer. All the other women passengers fled to their quarters for safety, but Flora refused to go below. Instead, she remained on deck encouraging the sailors and inspiring them with her own fearlessness and her confident assurances of success. Soon the enemy was beaten off. But in the confused scrimmage on deck, Flora was knocked down and suffered a broken arm. Thus, as her family was wont to say later, she had risked her life for the Houses of both Stuart and Hanover, and had received little in return from either except sorrow and pain.

There were stops in London and Edinburgh. Then, on her arrival in the Highlands—where one must presume that there was soon a happy reunion with her two younger children—Flora went to reside again with her brother Angus at Milton in South Uist. And now once more there was a period of long separation from Allan, almost five years, in fact, which must have tried the hearts of both. But finally, on the signing of the treaty at the close of the war, the Highland Battalion in Nova Scotia was disbanded, and in 1784 Allan at last came home. He and Flora remained for a time at Milton, but eventually went back to Skye to reside at the farm of Peinduin. Here, with Allan's retirement allotment of a captain's half-pay and the income from the farm, they were able to live comfortably and happily during their remaining years.

Flora's death came suddenly in 1790. She became ill while at Peinduin, just two miles from Kingsburgh House, and died the same evening. All over the Highlands her loss was mourned. It was said that her funeral was the largest ever seen in Skye. As one Scottish writer expressed it, "The undaunted warm heart, the gentle voice, the sweet charming smile, are stilled. But she left a memory, and example, which will blossom throughout the ages."

Flora was buried in the Kingsburgh family vault in the Churchyard of Kilmuir near the northern tip of Skye. A beautiful monument in the form of an Iona cross of Aberdeen granite marks the grave, and a memorial tablet bears the famous tribute from Dr. Johnson which has already been quoted: "The name of Flora Macdonald will be mentioned in history . . . and mentioned with honour."

Allan Macdonald survived his wife Flora by only two years. He died in 1792 and was buried beside her at Kilmuir.

The people of Skye still proudly claim Flora as their own. More than forty of her sixty-eight years were spent on that beautiful misty isle, and the greatest adventure of her life took place there. In Skye she met and married her true love, and spent with him her happiest years. There her children were born, and there she died and was buried.

If one visits the Isle of Skye today, he may stop as this writer did at the Royal Hotel in Portree and be shown the very room where Prince Charles sat and ate and said his farewells to Flora almost 220 years ago—the little thatched inn having long since been incorporated into the comfortable low rambling hostelry that now occupies the site. On a bus tour around the northern end of the island, famed for its fantastically wild and beautiful mountain scenery and seascapes, one of the stops is for tea at Flodigarry Hotel, formerly Flodigarry House where Allan and Flora spent the first years of their married life. Her grave is of course visited, the plain stone house of Monkstadt (now a ruin) is pointed out, and one may if he wishes be taken to see modern Kingsburgh House quite near the original site.

In Portree's Episcopal Church of St. Columba there is a beautiful stained-glass window dedicated "To the glory of God and the memory of Flora Macdonald." Its theme is Esther delivering her countrymen, and various scenes from the Bible story are depicted. An ornamental border of lights bears angel figures, the Macdonald arms, and the words from Esther 4, 16: "If I perish, I perish." Nor is Skye alone in honouring Flora. In Inverness one may see on Castle Hill overlooking the river Ness a striking monumental statue of the famous heroine. Flora, with a shawl over her shoulders and her dog beside her, stands with hand shading her eyes, looking out over the countryside as if watching for any danger to Prince Charlie. And as late as 1953 Flora was again memorialized, when in the presence of a large gathering of the Clan Donald led by a bagpipe band, a "Cairn of Remembrance" was unveiled at Milton in South Uist where she was born.

But we need not go to Scotland to find one of the best memorials to Flora Macdonald. At Red Springs, North Carolina, stands beautiful Flora Macdonald College, founded more than sixty years ago by the Southern Presbyterian Church. This fine liberal arts college and conservatory of music began as Red Springs Seminary, and was later known for a time as Southern Presbyterian College for Women. But in 1915, when a convention of the Scottish Societies of America was held in Fayetteville, the delegates petitioned the trustees of the college to adopt the present name. Since this was the part of North Carolina in which Flora had lived while in America, and which is still the home of

numerous descendants of those first Scottish settlers, it was felt that the idea was a good and happy one. The college would indeed be a living memorial to perpetuate the name of the gallant Scotswoman and her historic act of courage. The petition was granted, and the name became Flora Macdonald College. Though temporarily closed in 1961, to implement the union of several Presbyterian colleges in North Carolina and to increase attendance at recently completed St. Andrews College in Scotland County, it is hoped and believed that Flora Macdonald College will soon re-open through the efforts of the Scottish College Foundation.

The College has some interesting relics of Flora and, in the library, a fine copy of the Allan Ramsay painting of the famous heroine. Among the relics are a locket containing a strand of her hair and one from the head of the Prince, another locket containing a sprig of heather, and some pieces of Flora's silver. This lock of the Prince's hair is presumably a part of the one which Flora cut at Kingsburgh House on that memorable morning in 1746, to be divided between herself and Mrs. Macdonald. Today, one of those locks, still silky and golden, is displayed among other historic treasures in Dunvegan Castle in Skye, having been presented to the wife of the 21st Chief of the MacLeods by Flora's daughter Anne, Mrs. Alex MacLeod, after her mother's death. And it seems fitting that the other should be preserved in North Carolina, so near to Flora's one-time American home.

For years the students of Flora Macdonald College have kept alive the old traditional Highland dances. Each year at the Annual Highland Games, held on the second weekend in July at the foot of Grandfather Mountain in the Blue Ridge, the Clan Donald Society sponsors a Flora Macdonald award to the champion Highland dancer in the Carolinas. The donor of this award was until his recent death Reginald Henry Macdonald of Kingsburgh, great-great-grandson of Flora Macdonald, and XV Chieftain of Kingsburgh and Castle Camus. Born in Christchurch, New Zealand, he later came to America where he and his family resided in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. His son, Somerled Donald St. Maur Macdonald the younger of Kingsburgh, who succeeded his father as Chieftain, resides in Sewickley, Pennsylvania. Other descendants of Flora and Allan live in England, New Zealand, South Africa, and Arabia. There are also descendants of Flora's beloved brother Angus living today in Nova Scotia.

NOTE ON SOURCES

In addition to standard local and general histories, the author has made use of the following works relating especially to Flora Macdonald and her family:

The Truth About Flora Macdonald. By Allan R. Macdonald of Belfinlay and Waternish, edited with an introduction by the Rev. Dr. Donald MacKinnon, Portree, Skye. (Considered by descendants to be the most authentic personal history.)

Notes on the Kingsburgh Family. By Reginald Henry Macdonald (great-great-grandson of Flora Macdonald.)

History of the Macdonalds and the Lords of the Isles. By Alexander MacKenzie, F. S. A. (Scot.). (1881).

TERRORS

John Z. Bennett

The twilight of days he hopes will pass,
When the tendril-selves sprout horribly
In that unredeeming dark
Behind such eyes as cannot look again
Upon the healing light, the human hurt;

The shattered maw gaping in that mask,
Its brute obscenities unstilled,
Always warping toward the truth
Which is unbearable: "That thing
I overthrew—it pleased me not—
Only the fall, the shriek,
The fang it showed at last
Glinting at my rage."

But most, the murmured platitudes
Which pass for prayer,
The well-ingested viscera of grace, the smile
Which for one foolish, deadly moment
Has forgot.