

# *The Massacre at Dunaverty, 1647*

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In 1647 the garrison of Dunaverty Castle, at the southern end of the Kintyre peninsula in Argyll, was massacred after surrendering to an army of covenanters. The massacre has often been pointed to as an atrocity typical of the covenanters. Andrew McKerral wrote of it as being caused by 'the religious fanaticism of the Covenanters', the result of 'fanaticism pure and simple' (McKerral 1948: 65, 66). J. R. N. Macphail wrote in similar terms of 'one of the most disgraceful incidents in Scots history', attributable to the 'exotic theories' of the covenanters, not 'to any innate savagery of the Scottish nature' (Macphail 1916: 248, 254). Such explanations, vaguely blaming everything on covenanting fanaticism and ignoring the other circumstances in which the massacre took place, are hardly convincing. The discovery of new evidence about the massacre (a letter by a man who admits, with regret, having helped to incite it) provides an opportunity for a reassessment, for trying to set the massacre in its context in an effort to understand why it took place. Religious fanaticism was involved, but it was far from the only motive present: inter-clan feuds and the bitterness aroused by a great civil war also played parts.

Central to the massacre was the rivalry of the Campbells and the MacDonalds, which had existed for generations. In the early seventeenth century the Campbells under the earls of Argyll had finally triumphed over the southern branch of the MacDonalds, who were driven from Kintyre in 1607. Ten years later they also lost Islay, their last major possession in Scotland, and many fled to their close kinsmen in Ulster, the MacDonnells of Antrim (Mackenzie 1949: 208-10, 214, 219 n. 12; Donaldson 1965: 228-9). The MacDonalds did not reconcile themselves to this defeat. Among the most active of their leaders who sought to restore their fortunes was Col MacGillespeck (Mackenzie 1949: 230; Buchan 1947: 179; MacLeod and Dewar 1901: 143), usually known as Col Ciotach or Col Keitach (meaning Col the left handed, the ambidextrous, or the cunning) who was closely related to the MacDonalds of Dunyveg, the former chiefs of the southern MacDonalds. Sometime after 1615 Col had seized Colonsay. His position was legalised in the 1630s by a lease from the Campbells, but at the first opportunity they got rid of this MacDonald outpost. Taking advantage of the confusion of the First Bishops' War in 1639 Campbells from Islay invaded Colonsay, capturing Col and two of his sons (Stevenson 1973: 296).

The old conflict between Campbells and MacDonalds thus now became a minor part of the great struggle between King Charles I and the Covenanters, who by 1639 had seized control of Scotland. For the devious but able 8th Earl of Argyll emerged as the

leading figure among the covenanters, and this brought about a dramatic change in the political situation in the southern Highlands. The Campbell victory over the MacDonalds had been greatly aided by the support of the crown: now the Campbells were in rebellion against the crown. The MacDonalds were quick to take advantage of this situation. Randal MacDonnell, Earl of Antrim, as representative of the southern MacDonalds offered to help the king by invading Argyll's lands at his own expense. Antrim's offer was accepted. It may well be that it was news of this which provoked Argyll into seizing Colonsay to deprive his enemies of a base. If so, the precaution was unnecessary, for Antrim's grandiose invasion plans came to nothing (Stevenson 1973: 99–100, 141, 148, 151).

The situation was further complicated in 1641 by the Irish Catholic rebellion, for the Covenanters felt themselves (and their countrymen who had settled in Ulster) to be threatened by a Catholic régime in Ireland. They therefore sent a large army to Ulster in 1642; this in turn provoked the Irish confederates into giving support to plans for an invasion of Scotland. They agreed to assist the irrepressible Earl of Antrim in an invasion which was to coincide with a royalist rising in Scotland led by the Marquis of Montrose. The leader Antrim appointed for the invasion force was one of Col Keitach's sons, Alexander or Alasdair MacColla or MacDonald (often confused by contemporaries with his father, and therefore called 'Colkitto'—or even 'Colonel Kitto'). Alasdair was well equipped for the job: he had led abortive raids from Ireland to the Isles in 1640 and 1643, as well as having fought for the Irish confederates (Stevenson 1973: 270, 273, 280, 296). In July 1644 he landed in Morven with about 1,600 men—Irishmen, not MacDonalds, but nonetheless Gaels sympathetic to their cause (Buchan 1947: 162–3, 179–80; O'Danachair 1959–60: 61–7).

The exploits of Alasdair MacDonald and his men after they joined Montrose are well known. The Irish troops gave Montrose a trained nucleus for his army, and they contributed greatly to his 'year of victories' (1644–5) in which he defeated six Covenanting armies in turn. The fighting was marked by great bitterness and cruelty on both sides. The Covenanters developed a passionate hatred for Montrose and his men, especially the Irish who were denounced as Catholic invaders, in league with the forces of evil, seeking to overthrow true religion. They were held responsible for the massacres (much exaggerated by rumour) of protestants in Ireland in 1641, and were regarded by most Covenanters as savages, men without civilisation, speaking a foreign language. The Highland allies of the Irish, who included many MacDonalds, were seen as little better. Royalists shared such opinions: it was a royalist who denounced the Marquis of Argyll for using Highland troops 'out of his Africa. . . . The Libians of Africa were not so savage' (Rogers 1877: 45–6); another royalist who denounced the cruelty 'uncleannes and filthy lust' of the Irish troops, who 'killed men ordinarily with no more feeling of compassion, and with the same careless neglect that they kill a hare or capon for their supper' (Gordon 1844: 161 quoted in Buchan 1947: 294). An additional point of bitterness from the Covenanters' point of view was that before Montrose's

rising they had believed themselves to be on the verge of final victory which would enable them to dominate a peace settlement in all three kingdoms. They put much of the blame for the failure of this over-ambitious scheme on Montrose and his men: they had stabbed the Covenanters in the back, forcing them to withdraw troops from England and Ireland at a critical moment, thus depriving them of influence in those kingdoms. With so many causes of hatred it was only to be expected that when the Covenanters finally got the upper hand they would show little mercy to 'these wormes', the 'naked Scots Irishes', the 'worst men in the earth' (Baillie 1841-2:II. 234, 262, 304). At Philiphaugh in September 1645 they defeated Montrose and forced him to flee back to the Highlands. In this and their later successes all Irish and their womenfolk who were captured by the Covenanters were put to death: as Irish and papists they were barely human and needed no trial. Of captured Scottish rebels many were killed but others spared (Buchan 1947:292-4).

The conduct of Montrose's men was no better. Irish and Highlanders (many of them Catholics) had a hatred of the Covenanters as Presbyterians and as Lowlanders, men alien to them in language, race and culture who were trying to undermine their way of life and bring them under effective central government control. With the Campbells they at least had links of language and culture, but these were more than outweighed by the burning hatreds the Campbells had aroused as the most successful imperialist clan of the day. Moreover the type of warfare Montrose was waging often made brutality unavoidable, mercy a luxury that could not be afforded. His men were fighting a large-scale guerrilla campaign, and were constantly on the move. They could not occupy and hold the enemy areas they passed through, and therefore they systematically devastated them. They could not burden themselves with more than a few prisoners (men important enough to be useful as hostages and in exchanges of prisoners) so they took very few: after Montrose's victories fleeing Covenanters were cut down by the hundred. Most bitter of all was the killing when Montrose invaded Argyll. His Irish and Highland troops saw themselves as engaged primarily in a war of revenge against the Campbells: in the Argyll campaign many old scores were paid off with interest. One of Montrose's Irish officers boasted that 'we left neither house nor hold unburned, nor corn nor cattle, that belonged to the whole name of Campbell' (Carte 1739:I. 75). The historian of Clanranald claimed that in ravaging Argyll 895 men were killed in cold blood, 'without battle or skirmish having taken place' (MacBain and Kennedy 1894:II. 183). These claims may be exaggerated, since such actions were seen as something to be proud of, but they indicate the character of the war. Folk traditions are full of stories of casual and indiscriminate killings (Campbell 1885:199; Campbell [n.d.]:218, 224-5, 230-1). 'When they hade waisted Ardgylly they leaftit lyke ane desert' noted a Royalist historian probably writing in the 1660s (Gordon 1844:98, and preface p. 41).

It is therefore hardly surprising that when the Covenanters, and the Campbells in particular, finally turned to subduing the remnants of Montrose's army they seldom

showed much mercy. Driven back to the Highlands by defeat at Philiphaugh, Montrose disbanded his army on the King's orders in 1646 and went into exile. But Sir Alasdair MacDonald (he had been knighted by Montrose) and most of the Irish and MacDonalds had not shared in Montrose's defeat. They had deserted him before Philiphaugh, insisting on returning to Argyll to re-occupy former MacDonald lands and indulge further their hatred of the Campbells. They refused to rejoin Montrose after his defeat and ignored the King's orders to disband: they were fighting for clan, not for King Charles. They had recently been reinforced by men brought from Ireland by Antrim (Hill 1873:446-8) and were determined to remain in arms until they could negotiate terms allowing them to retain at least some of their conquests. But with Montrose out of the way Alasdair and his men were isolated: the Covenanters could concentrate their forces against them. First to suffer were the Lamonts. They had fought for the Campbells until 1645, but had then changed sides and joined the successful rebels. As their chief later admitted he had proceeded to burn 'all the Campbells, their houses and cornes, and killed all the ffenceible [men capable of bearing arms] and armed men hee could overtake of them', signing a bond with Alasdair MacDonald 'for the ruin of the name of Campbell'. In 1646 the Campbells took revenge on their former allies. The Lamont lands in Cowal were invaded. Thirty-six leading Lamonts and their supporters were hanged, at least thirty-five others (perhaps over a hundred) were shot, hacked and stabbed to death by their captors (McKechnie 1938:168-93; Cobbett 1809:1379-87).

The following year the Covenanters sent an army further west under Lieutenant General David Leslie, a veteran of the continental wars who had led the Covenanters at Philiphaugh. Alasdair had spent the winter in Kintyre with his men: the narrow peninsula should have been defensible but he appears to have made no preparations to resist, though it was obvious attempts would be made to drive him out. Though a brave fighter and an inspired leader in battle he lacked generalship. David Leslie and the Marquis of Argyll (who commanded a regiment under Leslie) were at Inveraray on 21 May with perhaps 2,500 men. Three days later they marched into Kintyre, charging and scattering about 1,300 of the enemy at Rhunahaorine, killing sixty or eighty of them. Alasdair fled almost immediately with his Irish troops and probably most of the MacDonalds to Gigha and thence to Islay, thus deserting many of his Highland allies. Alasdair claimed he would soon return with reinforcements to relieve them, but this was a vague hope rather than a concerted plan: no preparations had been made to enable those left behind to hold out (McKerral 1948:53-6). The tradition which portrays Alasdair hacking off with his sword the fingers of those who clung to the gunwale of his boat as he sailed suggests a panic flight, those who remained being left through shortage of boats (Matheson 1958:43-5, 83).

The position of Alasdair's deserted allies was hopeless. They wrote to Leslie asking for pardon: he replied that had they been genuinely repentant they would not have let Alasdair and the Irish escape. Most of the now-reluctant rebels fled south until they could go no further, shutting themselves up in Dunaverty Castle. A few remained in

the House of Lohead or Lochkilkerran (the present Cambeltown). By 31 May Leslie had accepted their surrender and advanced to Dunaverty (Additional Parliamentary Papers: no. 51, Leslie to Committee of Estates, 31 May 1647). On the garrison refusing his summons to surrender he captured an outer ditch, killing forty defenders and cutting off the castle's water supply. Traditional accounts speak of a long siege, lasting until mid July (*e.g.* Dunaverty 1928:1-13; *NSA* 1845:VII. 425). In fact the castle surrendered within a few days—the massacre (which may not have taken place until several days after the surrender) was over by 6 June (Wodrow MS: folios 179-80).

The surrender and subsequent massacre attracted little attention at the time, being seen merely as incidents in a long and brutal war. Jean de Montereul, a French agent in Edinburgh, heard and believed exaggerated rumours that 400 out of 800 men, women and children in a fort in Kintyre had been treacherously killed after surrendering on promise of quarter, a hundred of those spared being sent to serve in the French army. He wrote of this to Cardinal Mazarin on 15 June (Montereul 1898-9:II. 169). But written accounts of the massacre probably did not circulate widely until after the restoration of the monarchy in 1660. The best known and most influential account appeared in the memoirs of Henry Guthry; though not printed until 1702 these circulated in manuscript in and after the 1660s. Guthry had been a Covenanter at the time of the massacre, but wrote his memoirs as a staunch Royalist with a deep hatred of his former colleagues. He claimed that 500 men were massacred after surrendering on the promise that their lives would be spared. David Leslie had been reluctant to allow the massacre, but had been persuaded to order it by Argyll and John Nevoy, a minister who had been appointed to act as chaplain to one of the regiments of the army. Guthry portrays Leslie, Argyll and Nevoy subsequently walking 'over the ancles in blood', and Leslie saying to Nevoy 'Now, Mr John, have you not once got your fill of blood' (Guthry 1747:243).<sup>1</sup> Apart from this last circumstantial touch about walking in blood (which Guthry may have intended only as a figure of speech) there is nothing inherently improbable about Guthry's account. But one must remember his bias: elsewhere he shows little regard for accuracy when heaping abuse on the Covenanters, and we do not know where he got his information about the massacre from. One likely source for some of his points is an account drawn up for the MacDougalls in 1661 (Macphail 1916: 248-60). They had joined the Lamonts in turning on the Campbells in 1645 and suffered heavily in the massacre, but as the only MacDougall present at Dunaverty who survived was a child, the reliability of this source is open to question. It agrees with Guthry that the garrison was promised quarter and that its 500 men were then 'cruellie and inhumanelie butchered in cold blood', many MacDougalls among them. Only the child, John MacDougall younger of Dunolie, was spared (*APS* 1820:VII. 338-9). A surviving list of names of some of those killed, perhaps prepared in connection with this MacDougall account, gives ninety names: forty-nine are leading MacDougalls, the rest probably their followers (Macphail 1916:255-9).

So these two royalist accounts are in agreement as to the circumstances and size of

the massacre, but lack of information as to the sources from which they are drawn leaves them open to question, and it seems likely that one of them is partly based on the other. And a third royalist account, with much greater claims to credibility, contradicts them on important points. In 1661 the Marquis of Argyll was tried for treason, convicted and executed. The charges made against him included an account of events at Dunaverty. Now these charges are clearly inaccurate in many places in that they seek to exaggerate the personal responsibility of Argyll for events, but they are often fairly accurate as to the events themselves and were probably partly based on information supplied by former covenanters. In the case of Dunaverty David Leslie, by 1661 a confirmed Royalist, may have been consulted. According to the account of the massacre in these charges only three to four hundred men were in Lothead House and Dunaverty. The former surrendered on the promise that their lives would be spared, but the castle garrison surrendered 'to be disposed of at the mercy of the kingdom'. Argyll then caused 260 or 300 of them (not all of them) to be killed. The rest were handed over to Captains William Hay and Archibald Campbell for service in the French army. Fifteen or sixteen gentlemen who had been promised quarter at Lothead were also killed (Cobbett 1809:1410, 1461-2).

Now one would surely expect the charges against Argyll, if anything, to over-estimate the size of the massacre and stress the treachery involved. Instead it explicitly states that the garrison surrendered at mercy, not on promise of quarter, that it was much smaller than Guthry claims and that not all the men were killed. The more extreme Royalist claims, it might be surmised, were not included because Argyll would have been able to call witnesses to disprove them. The likelihood of this account being, on the whole, accurate therefore seems high, and it is notable that Argyll in his defence only questioned it over his personal responsibility, claiming that it had been a council of war which decided on the massacre (though without denying that he was a member of that council). He also insisted that Lothead as well as Dunaverty had surrendered without any promise of quarter.

The account of the massacre given at Argyll's trial receives support from the most detailed surviving description of events. Sir James Turner was, like Guthry, a Covenanter turned Royalist. Unlike Guthry he had personal knowledge of events, for he served in Leslie's army as adjutant general. This he justifies in his memoirs on the grounds that since Alasdair MacDonald had deserted Montrose and refused to disband as the King ordered, it was his duty as a Royalist to join the Covenanters against him! According to Turner there were 300 men in Dunaverty. After their water supply was cut off and forty of them killed they desired a parley. Leslie insisted that they surrender 'on discretion or mercy'—not his mercy but that of the kingdom. Turner told the garrison of this, and it then surrendered. After a few days 'they were put to the sword, everie mothers sonne, except one young man, Mackoull, whose life I beg'd' who was sent to France with a hundred countrymen who were smoked out of a cave. Turner says he had got Leslie to say he would spare the garrison, but that after two days

irresolution during which John Nevoy 'never ceasd to tempt him to that bloodshed' Leslie changed his mind and gave orders for the killings. Turner regretted the massacre and Leslie's weakness, but emphasised that he was quite justified in acting as he did by the customs of war (Turner 1829:45-7). This account is in agreement with Guthry's only in giving much of the responsibility for the massacre to Nevoy. In a long list of criticisms of Guthry's memoirs Turner bluntly calls the statement that quarter had been promised 'A fearfull ly', 'A most false calumnie', adding that on first laying siege to Dunaverty Leslie had offered quarter but that it had been refused. The massacre 'was crueltie enough; for to kill men in cold blood, when they have submitted to mercie, hath no generositie at all in it'. Leslie had told Turner he would not have allowed it but for Nevoy 'put on by Argile'. But Leslie had not broken his word, and by the laws of war a garrison which once refused an offer of quarter could subsequently expect no mercy. As for Leslie's walking in blood, he was not even present at the massacre (Turner 1829:240).

Turner's detailed account has been questioned, it being suggested that (since he had been a senior officer with the army) he was concerned to minimise the massacre (*e.g.*, Macphail 1916:249, 251). If this were so one would have thought Turner would have made a much more convincing defence: he makes no attempt to disguise his disgust at what happened, and certainly does not indicate that he felt any personal responsibility for it, which might have led him to play it down. But what gives most support to Turner's account is how closely it agrees with the Argyll trial account, which might almost be called the official Royalist version. To prefer Guthry's and the MacDougall account to these seems to be surrendering critical judgment to preconceived dislike of the Covenanters. Turner, incidently, appeared as a witness at Argyll's trial, and stated that he had never heard Argyll try to persuade Leslie to carry out the killings, though he might have done so in private.

Such are the printed accounts of the massacre. One further fragment of evidence we owe to Turner. In 1662 he signed a statement relating that at the surrender of Dunaverty one of the garrison, Angus MacEachan of Kilellan, gave him a little box of papers concerning his lands. This Turner was to give to Argyll, to uphold the rights of MacEachan's children to the lands. MacEachan gave the papers to Turner since he did not know whether he was going to be killed or sent overseas. Can one suggest that his doubts as to his fate is another indication that the garrison had not been promised quarter? MacEachan was duly killed in the massacre, and Turner carried out his promise by giving the papers to Argyll, who in 1659 restored MacEachan's lands to his son (Macphail 1916:258-60).

Examination of the printed evidence suggests that the Argyll trial account and Turner's are the most reliable, but the facts that all the evidence comes from Royalists (or Covenanters turned Royalist), writing years after the massacre, are drawbacks. These doubts and difficulties are largely removed by a newly discovered, though tantalisingly brief, account. This was written not only by someone involved, but was

written immediately after the massacre by someone willing to take some responsibility for it on himself. Thomas Henderson had been clerk to the committee of estates with the Scottish army in England and in 1647 was David Leslie's secretary (*APS* 1872:vi.ii.329). On 6 June 1647 he wrote from 'Lochkilcheran' (Campbeltown) to Sir Archibald Johnston of Wariston, the Lord Advocate. His letter, hastily and untidily written, reads as follows (abbreviations have been extended in italics):

For the *right honorable* the Lord Advocat  
Right honorable,

I wrot to *your Lordship* by Lieutenant Colonel Strachan, and now I can add but litle to the publict letter *which* will shew you that wee haue mad great execution upon the rebels, killed thrie hundreth that were in this fort of Dounaverty, Non [*'escaped'* crossed out] were spared but fourscoir who were permitted to goe to france with Captain Campbell, and Captain Hay; The *General Lieutenant* [Leslie] had euill will to let execution be done—but the truth is, Mr John Neaue [Nevoy] and I were instrumentall in it. But I will not writ to *your lordship* more particularly of this busines, wherewith I am not well pleased.

It is strange wee haue not yet heard anything of Captain Lieutenant Dicks ships[.] I know not wherefore they were appointed to attend upon thir coasts or to assist the Army: In my opinion the better part of the Enemy that wes in kintyre at *our* coming heer, is quit outt of, and the rest so scattered, and euanished that this countrey is wholly delyvered from them, and secured; I shall say no more but that I am

*your Lordship's*  
Most humble  
seruant

Lochkilcheran  
6 of June  
1647

M Th Henderson

(Wodrow MS: folios 179–80<sup>2</sup>.)

Alas, Henderson has nothing to say about the terms of the surrender, and the public letter he refers to is lost: it has, indeed, been suggested that David Leslie's despatch describing the massacre may have been destroyed deliberately (McKerral 1948:67). But what Henderson does say confirms the Turner and the Argyll trial accounts. It agrees with the Argyll account in making those sent to France part of the garrison, and with Turner's as well in putting the number killed about 300. The only part of Guthry's account confirmed by Henderson is Nevoy's unsavoury part in inciting the massacre.

It appears, therefore, that there is little doubt that about 300 men were killed at Dunaverty; and it is almost certain that the garrison had surrendered unconditionally, so that though the massacre was merciless it was not treacherous. The manner of death of those not spared and sent to France is uncertain: Turner's statement that they were put to the sword need not be taken literally. One tradition speaks of the men being thrown over a cliff (Matheson 1958:45; Willcock 1903:204n), another of their being tied in pairs and shot (Campbell 1885:225). According to legend those given the task of carrying out the executions were Campbells related to women and children who



had been herded into a barn and burnt alive on Alasdair MacDonald's orders (Campbell [n.d.]: 242). A few individuals were spared, such as the son of MacDougall of Dunolie, and the grandson of MacDonald of Sanda—both Sanda himself and his son being killed (*ibid.*; Dunaverty 1928: 13; *APS* 1820: vii. 340). MacDougall of Kilmun is said to have been saved by Argyll after shouting in five languages 'Is there anyone here at all who will save a good scholar?' (Matheson 1958: 45; Campbell [n.d.]: 242-3). Apart from the list of the MacDougalls and their supporters, and the names of a few individuals of importance (Campbell 1885: 225-6) the identity of those who died is unknown: many of them were probably MacDonalds.

Having disposed of Dunaverty David Leslie crossed to Islay. Alasdair MacDonald fled to Ireland (where he was killed a few months later) leaving a garrison commanded by his father in Dunyveg Castle. This soon surrendered on promise of quarter after Col Keitach himself had been captured (treacherously, some said). The terms granted to the garrison were honoured, but Col was later executed on Argyll's orders. Meanwhile Leslie moved on to Mull to stamp out the last traces of resistance, killing all the Irishmen he captured (McKerral 1948: 69-72; Turner 1829: 47-9; APP: no. 52, Articles of surrender of Dunyveg, 4 July 1647, and no. 54, Leslie to Committee of Estates, 5 July 1647).

The Dunaverty massacre appears to have aroused little comment at the time: horrible as it was, it was too far from unique to attract much attention. Several motives had contributed to the massacre, as well as to the other cold-blooded killings of the war: the religious fanaticism represented by Nevoy, the hatreds roused by clan feud and civil war, the endless thirst for revenge whereby atrocity breeds atrocity. If David Leslie was reluctant to allow the massacre this certainly was not because he feared censure from his superiors: on the contrary, he evidently expected censure for sparing the garrison of Dunyveg, for he explained in great detail why he had seen fit to grant it terms—'what I did I was forced their to, which was contrar my desyre'. His army lacked food, fuel, ammunition, scaling ladders and all other materials necessary for a siege, Dunyveg was strongly fortified and well manned, and the summer was 'almost spent'; 'so that wherein I have done amisse cannot be impute to me it being none of my fault' (APP: no. 54, Leslie to Committee of Estates, 5 July 1647). The convenanting régime and many of its supporters wanted revenge on those who had defeated them in battle, devastated their lands and massacred hundreds, and Leslie feared (it would seem) that his bloodless victory at Dunyveg would not be popular. Especially bitter was feeling against those like the Lamonts and the MacDougalls who had deserted the Covenanters when Montrose had seemed likely to prevail, turning on the Campbells to try to destroy them. The massacre at Dunaverty is not excusable, but it is understandable.

Nor was such bloodthirstiness anything new in Highland history: it was not introduced into traditional clan warfare by the religious disputes of Catholic and Presbyterian and the wider issue of Covenanter versus Royalist. Neither religious dispute, constitutional conflict, nor 'exotic theories' had played any part in such events as the suffocation

of the MacDonald population of Eigg in a cave by the MacLeods (1570s), the massacre of MacLeod men, women and children in Coigach by other MacLeods from Lewis (1590s) or the burning of a congregation of MacKenzies in a church by MacDonalds of Glengarry (1603). Traditional Highland warfare might be no more brutal than that of the Lowlands, but it was no less brutal either: the massacre at Dunaverty introduced no new brutality to the Highlands.

## NOTES

- 1 The first edition of Guthry's *Memoirs* (1702:199), taken from a different—and usually inferior—manuscript agrees with the second in its account of the massacre.
- 2 Thomas Henderson's letter has previously been overlooked because of a series of mistakes made by Robert Woodrow. In listing the letter in the list of contents of the volume containing it he misread the signature as that of Alexander Henderson (the famous covenanting minister who died in 1646) and the date as 1641 instead of 1647. Finally, he confused matters further by identifying 'Lochkilcheran' as being in Ireland.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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