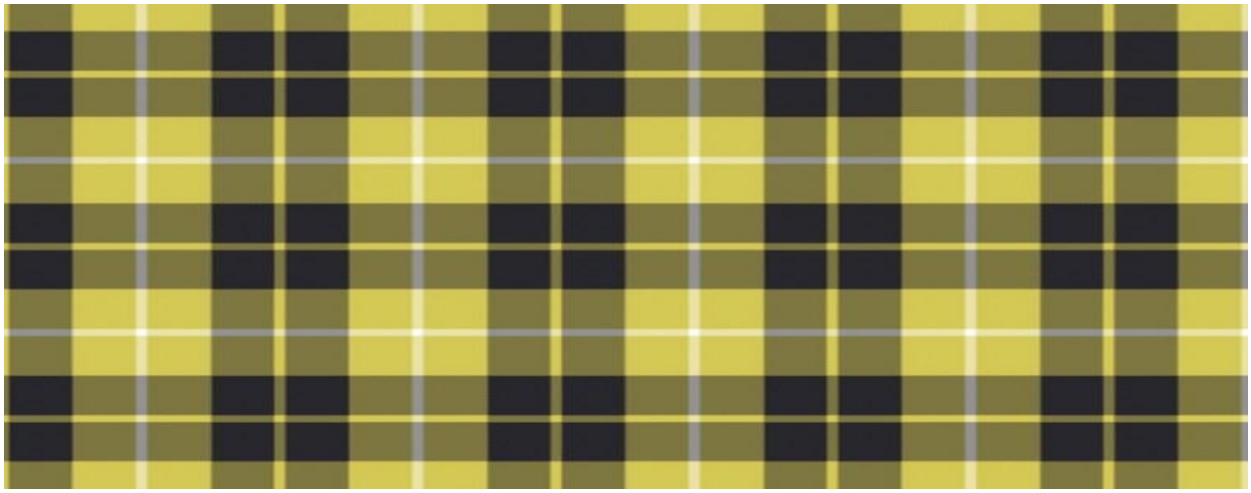
Clan Barclay International Newsletter
Aut Agere Aut Mori

Barclay Broadside

October 2021

From Chief Peter:

Aut Agare Aut Mori
Congratulations on the first edition of the Clan Barclay newsletter.
My very best wishes to all members of our great Clan.
Yours Aye,
Peter Barclay of Towie Barclay and of that Ilk



Welcome to the reboot of the *Barclay Broadside* and to our inaugural electronic edition.

From Chief Peter:

I am delighted to appoint Leah Parker as Maor
and Tim Barclay as Filidh to Clan Barclay.
Peter Barclay of Towie Barclay and of that Ilk

Message from the the Maor

Maor/mɯːr/– clan factor (doer/maker), supervisor, officer
By Leah Parker, MAEd

Greetings from the US! I am a Barclay on my mother's side. As an historian and genealogy researcher, I am proud of our Barclay roots and want to preserve our history and share it far and wide. I am the administrator of our Clan Barclay International website, editor of the *Barclay Broadside*, and co-administrator of the Barclay Surname Project at Family Tree DNA (https://www.familytreedna.com/groups/clanbarclayproject/about/background), along with Tim Barclay, our chief historian and geneticist. The Gaelic word *maor* was used to designate a clan factor, supervisor, or officer. As Tim Barclay put it, the *maor* was historically the chief's "right hand man." I am profoundly honored to be appointed the Clan Maor by Chief Peter Barclay.

View of Towie Barclay Castle through the Gate | Courtesy: Leah Parker

A Barclay Ghost Story

As Halloween approaches, we are reminded of ghoulies and ghosties and long-legged beasties and things that go bump in the night. Is there a corner of Scotland untouched by them? Certainly, Clan Barclay has our very own spectres, and this story features a very helpful ghost who visited at just the right time!

Grave Marker for Captain Robert Barclay Allardice | Courtesy: Humphrey Barclay

Part I: By Humphrey John Barclay,
Chief of the House of Barclay of Mathers and Urie

Ury was a Scottish estate of rolling hills and woods, south of Aberdeen, reaching towards the sea at the fishing village of Stonehaven and adjoining the great fortress of Dunnottar Castle (below), once guardian to the Scottish Crown jewels, which to this day towers forbiddingly on its rocky promontory above the shore.

Dunnottar Castle | Courtesy: Humphrey Barclay

Ury House (below) had been built in the 1670s by Colonel Robert Barclay Allardice's great-great-great grandfather, the first Laird Colonel David Barclay, when he acquired the estate on which the previous house was burnt in 1645 by Royalist troops. Somewhat grim, even formidable in appearance, it featured within yards of its front door a Quaker Meeting House added after the Colonel David Barclay's conversion to the faith, which formed a vital element of his life, and that of his son, the celebrated Quaker Apologist Robert Barclay Ury II, and for many generations of the family thereafter.

Ury House and Quaker Meeting House | Courtesy: Humphrey Barclay

The family was thus brought up in a forbidding, if characterful, turreted Scottish manor house. It was said to be "far from homely" – "a curious old house with hiding places for times of danger," according to Elizabeth Wheeler in 1840. In Ury IV's time, she adds, "There was no hall door and the only entrance was at the top of the house" so that (according to another source) visitors had to be hoisted up to the third floor in a basket! Elizabeth continues: "His son had a doorway cut out in the usual place, but the walls were so thick and hard that the masons could carry away in their aprons at night all the stuff they had hacked out in the day." Samuel Galton's diary written in 1839 confirms this, and records that staircases had "subsequently been cut out of the solid wall." And Arthur Kett Barclay wrote in 1854: "The low battlemented basement entrance, of much later date than the Bairn or fortress itself, is out of character." There was some decoration inside "in Italian fresco style," but its stone walls would have been bare to our eyes, dimly candlelit, and certainly cold except when in front of roaring fires in the great hall and kitchen. Outside however, the huge grounds of the estate offered endless scope for play and adventure. This view (below) is from the

north part of the estate, looking towards the sea past the Howff burial ground hidden in the trees.

Ury Howff Burial Ground | Courtesy: Humphrey Barclay

Elizabeth Wheeler recalls that "the farming was splendid, and we walked through a field of wheat which was taller than a man." Ury was a Spartan sportsman's house, and largely unchanged since the time of the Great Master, Robert Barclay Ury V, father of Captain Robert Barclay Allardice. In tune with the Captain's life, there were sporting pictures all over the Hall, Porch and Dining Room, and no concessions were made to effeminacy or comfort. A visitor wrote: "I do not recollect seeing even an armchair in the house. For those in the dining room, if the seats of them were made of hearts of oak itself they could not be much harder than they are, and the backs of them are as straight, and nearly as high, as a poplar tree. I believe there is a sofa in the drawing-room, but as for ottomans and footstools, and such like, you might as well look for an elephant at Ury."

This was the house where the Pedestrian, Captain Robert Barclay Allardice, and his spinster sister Rodney lived, and where **the gloomy Great Hall became the setting of one of the best ghost stories ever…**

Part II: Found in A *History of the Barclay Family*, Part III, pp 231-233:
Before saying farewell to the old House of Urie one more story remains to be related. The reader may form his own judgement on its authenticity….

"Lindley Murray Hoag, when he visited Aberdeen, expressed a wish to visit Ury, and Captain [Robert] Barclay [Allardice] hospitably invited him to stop there and sleep on his return journey to the South, adding that by doing so he would see the place both by daylight and by candlelight. It was a raw afternoon in October when Hoag started and by the time the conveyance reached Ury he felt himself thoroughly chilled, and requested to be allowed to go straight to his room and have a basin of gruel in bed. The next morning, at breakfast, they were standing as people do before the fire, when Hoag, looking at an old portrait of the soldier who fought 'ankle deep in Lutzen's blood,' remarked, 'Ah, there is my friend of last night.'

"'Not quite,' said Miss [Rodney] Barclay. 'That is an ancestor of ours who has been dead nearly two hundred years.'

"'Oh,' said Hoag, 'he looks like the old gentleman who came into my room last night.'

"At this juncture breakfast was served, and Captain Barclay seemed deep in thought. At last he said, 'Will you please tell me, Mr. Hoag, who it was that came into your room last night and what was he doing there?'

"'Well,' replied Hoag, 'I was just going off to sleep when there was a knock at the door and a sweet old gentleman very much like that portrait came into the room, and he apologised for disturbing me. He then went round to the foot of the bed and opened a cupboard in the wall at the other side, taking out some old papers which looked like parchments.'"

"'Did ye ever hear the like o' that!' exclaimed both the Barclays. 'Why, there is no cupboard there.'

"Captain Barclay remained thinking, and when breakfast was over he said, 'Mr. Hoag, will you please do me the favour of showing me exactly where the old gentleman found the papers?'

"They all three went upstairs, and sure enough there was no appearance of any cupboard, but the wall sounded hollow. Barclay tore off the paper and found some wooden boarding. This he broke off with the poker, and an iron door was laid bare. He tried fruitlessly to open this and then sent for a blacksmith, who found and opened a safe door…and in the safe were the missing deeds [the family had urgently been searching for because they were needed for legal matters regarding the estate].

"Miss Barclay ever after used to speak of entertaining angels unawares whenever she related the circumstances of Lindley Murray Hoag's visit to Ury."

From this incident it would seem that a portrait of Colonel David existed in 1849, but it has never been traced and there is no other record of it.

Ury Howff Mausoleum | Courtesy: Humphrey Barclay

Filidh's Feature

Filidh /fil/– clan genealogist, historian, storyteller, poet
By Tim Barclay

Hello from Australia. I'm Tim Barclay, Clan historian, geneticist and co-administrator with the Clan's FTDNA Project.

This is 'Fillidh's Feature', a short piece designed to share with Clan Members some of the more significant genealogical and historical discoveries that have been made in the last few years and continue to make as our research continues.

The term *filidh* was used to describe a class of hereditary poets and counsellors in Gaelic culture and each clan's filidh was responsible for preserving, amongst other knowledge, the oral history and genealogy of the chief and his family. Arguably, the *filidh* tradition is not applicable to any modern genealogical work: recent and continuing discoveries continue to overturn significant portions of the traditional histories of many clans. This could hardly be called "preserving." However, such a view depends not only upon the various *filidhs*' knowledge being impeccably preserved across centuries but that – crucially – it was then accurately transcribed and edited into the printed traditional histories. In most cases, these histories were first printed not more than two centuries ago, and there is no reason to suppose the errors they contain are of any more ancient origin than this. It should also be remembered that history is, of course, written by the winner.

Far from working against the *filidh* tradition then, modern research is restoring the traditional knowledge of the *filidh* that was lost when the surviving clan and family histories were committed to paper.

I look forward to learning more with you all along the way.

Connection to History: The Battle of Hastings

By Tim Barclay

The date 14 October 2021 will mark 955 years since the Battle of Hastings that brought Duke William of Normandy to the throne of England. Somewhere, amongst the ranks of the 8000 or so men who formed the invasion force, was the man who would become the first provost of Berkeley, in Gloucestershire, under Earl William fitz Osbern, one of Duke William's closest counsellors and greatest supporters. But just who was this individual?

Previously, it was believed that Roger de Berkeley, who appears in the Domesday Book of 1086 with his brother, Ralph, and with significant holdings in Gloucestershire, was the same as first acquired Berkeley from fitz Osbern. However, a re-examination of the evidence published in 2017 found this Roger was active until at least the late 1110s and his son, Roger junior, was so-called at his death in 1127, indicating his father was then either still alive or only recently deceased. It is thus inconceivable Roger senior was born any earlier than the 1050s, indicating he could hardly have succeeded to such vast estates in the highly competitive atmosphere following Hastings. Instead, there must have been an earlier 'Berkeley', presumably Roger senior and Ralph de Berkeley's father.

The name of Roger and Ralph's father has not been preserved, but the discovery of his existence led to the revival of an older hypothesis forwarded by Beryl Platts, that Roger senior and Ralph de Berkeley were members of the

powerful de Tosny family of Normandy. Though Ms Platts based her identification on now-discredited ideas of heraldic similarities between descendants of the family, William fitz Osbern was first married to Alice de Tosny, daughter of Roger de Tosny of Conches, and her elder brothers Ralph and Robert profited from this kinship. Conches had died in battle in 1040 and it has been thought for many years that he likely had a posthumous son, with various proposals made for his identity. Ultimately, none of these proposals were successful, but the evidence from both the re-evaluation of 2017 and subsequent genetic testing, is that this posthumous son was the same as the first Berkeley.

Clan Barclay International

Be in touch: leah@clanbarclayinternational.org
Visit our website: www.clanbarclayinternational.org
Explore the Barclay Surname Project at FTDNA:
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