



Clan Barclay International Newsletter
Aut Agere Aut Mori

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Barclay Broadside

January 2024



Greetings Clan Barclay! I hope your new year is off to a wonderful start!

A fellow member of Clan Barclay shared with me a message from a friend of hers, the Baron of Largo:

Would you like to be Baron Largo? This Scottish feudal title is for sale. The Barony of Largo is one of the most historic Scottish feudal titles. It entitles the holder to be called Baron Largo, including on their passport and driving license, and to the use 'of Largo' after one's name. No new Scottish feudal titles have been created since the Act of Union in 1707 and this is a unique opportunity to purchase a bit of Scottish history. The title entitles the holder to a coat of arms, robes, membership of the Scottish Convention of the Baronage of Scotland (<https://www.scotsbarons.org/>) and to appear at various historic ceremonies. The title is being reluctantly sold by a British historian, who inherited the title from his father.

Largo is a small village on the Fife coast, near St. Andrews (<https://lowerlargoholidays.co.uk/lower-largo-fife/>) and is famous as the birthplace of Alexander Selkirk, who inspired Robinson Crusoe. The barony is associated with Sir Andrew Wood's Tower, a scheduled monument in the grounds of the ruins of Largo House, and the last surviving fragment of the medieval Largo House built in 1491 by a famous Scottish sea Admiral, Sir Andrew Wood, Lord High Admiral and sometimes known as the Scottish Nelson (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrew_Wood_of_Largo). The first grant of land to Andrew Wood was in 1477 and Largo became a barony in 1513.



Largo House

For more information, please see these links:

- [Largo House Heritage](#)
- [The Durhams of Largo House](#)
- [Scottish Barony Register](#)

If you would like to inquire about the Barony of Largo, you can be in touch with me at leah@clanbarclayinternational.org, and I will pass along your interest to the current Baron of Largo. Please only inquire if you have a sincere interest in making the purchase. (Note that Clan Barclay has no interest or involvement in the sale and are just sharing the message.)

Yours aye, Leah

Message from the the Maor

Maor/mu:r/- clan factor (doer/maker), supervisor, officer
By Leah Parker, MAEd

Barclay Connections - Robert Burns

Over the past several months, we have been exploring connections between members of Clan Barclay and important historical figures. I could not let January go by without finding a Barclay connection to Robert Burns, Scotland's famed national bard. One of Burns' most well-known works, "The Battle of Sherramuir," was inspired by a poem originally penned by John Barclay the Berean. Robert Burns Night is celebrated the world over every year on 25 January to commemorate the day of his birth, so happy birthday, Rabbie! And slàinte mhath to you, Clan Barclay! To your good health!



Slàinte! | Courtesy: Leah Parker



St. Andrews University |
Courtesy: Leah Parker

John Barclay was born in 1734 at Muthill in Perthshire and was the son of Ludovic Barclay, a farmer and miller. Unfortunately, beyond this, we know little about Ludovic or the Barclay line to which he belonged. John Barclay studied theology at St. Andrews University and began to preach for the Church of Scotland in 1759. After finding himself at odds with his parish minister, Rev. James Jobson, he was appointed as assistant to Antony Dow. During this time, he published several controversial pieces and succeeded in ruffling more than a few feathers.

By 1772, John Barclay was rejected as successor to Dow and was refused by the presbytery and then General Assembly to advance in the church. Barclay went on to found his own church in Edinburgh. His followers were called Barclayans, Barclayites, or Bereans. As Bereans, they were named for the “noble” people of Berea who “received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day” (Acts 17:11). Barclay’s Berean Church had congregations in Scotland, London, and Bristol. As a minister, John Barclay lived in Edinburgh in what is now the Parliament House Hotel. His works include hymns, poems, paraphrases of the psalms, and a book titled *Without Faith, Without God*. One of his works, “Dialogue Between Will Lick-Ladle and Tom Clean-Coque” became the inspiration for Burns’ “The Battle of Sherramuir.”



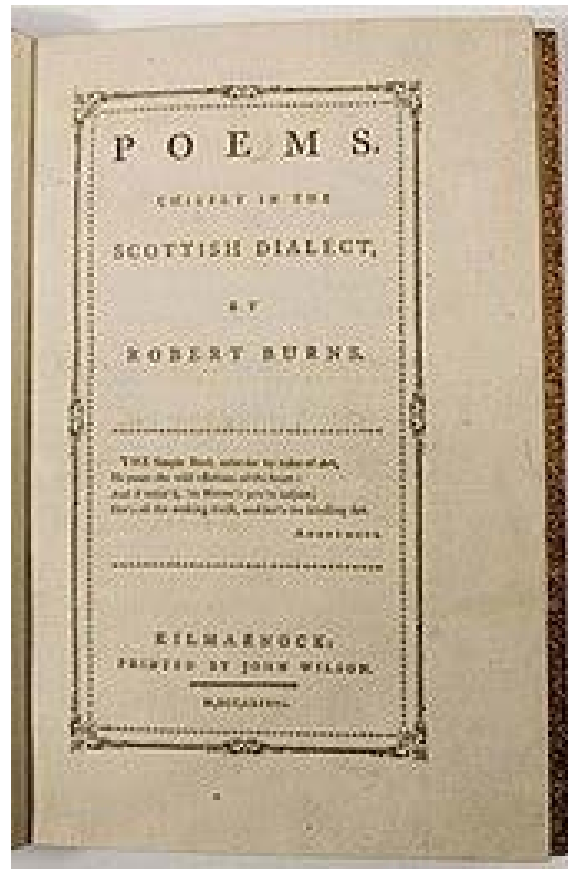
Parliament House Hotel Edinburgh

Robert Burns was born on 25 January 1759 in a house built by his father in Alloway, just south of Ayr. His parents were William Burnes and Agnes Broun. William Burnes and his family lived in relative poverty, enduring a life of demanding farm labour, but William taught his children reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, and history.

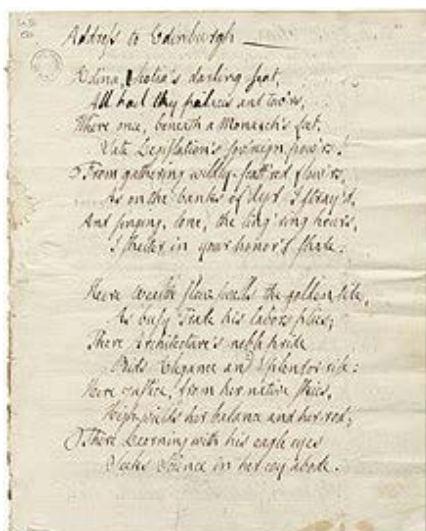


Burns Cottage in Alloway | Courtesy: August Schwedfeger

Young Robert was allowed to attend the Dalrymple Parish School in mid-1772 before returning home for harvest work in 1773. During the harvest of 1774, at the age of 15, Burns worked alongside a girl his same age, Nelly Kilpatrick, who is said to have inspired his first poem, "O, Once I Lov'd A Bonnie Lass." In the following years, Burns busied himself not only with farm work, but also at least a few love interests and attempts at writing poetry. He published his first collection, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*, also known as the *Kilmarnock Volume*, in 1786, which enjoyed great success in Scotland. Burns eventually married Jean Armour in 1788 after she bore him twins. Her father initially forbade the marriage, but eventually agreed to the union. Burns fathered twelve known children, nine with his wife Jean.



Title Page of *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* or the *Kilmarnock Volume*, by Robert Burns



Manuscript of "The Battle of Sherramuir," written in Burns' hand

I am unsure of how Burns became aware of Barclay's poem, "Dialogue Between Will Lick-Ladle and Tom Clean-Coque," but he had written his first adaptation, "The Battle of Sherramuir," by 1787 and revised it after 1790. The revised version was published after his death in *The Complete Poetical Works of Robert Burns: With Explanatory and Glossarial Notes; And a Life of the Author* in 1800. Listen to "The Battle of Sherramuir" at this [link](#).

Other well-known works by Robert Burns include “Auld Lang Syne,” “To a Mouse,” “Tam O’ Shanter,” “A Red, Red Rose,” and “Scots Wha Hae,” but these, of course, are only a tiny fraction of his approximately 716 known published poems and songs.

Robert Burns died on 21 July 1796 at the age of only 37 years old. His funeral took place on 25 July on the day that Jean Armour gave birth to their son, Maxwell. Burns was first buried in a corner of St. Michael’s Churchyard in Dumfries, but his body was moved to a more auspicious location in the cemetery to the recently constructed Burns Mausoleum in 1817, and his wife Jean was laid to rest there in 1834.



Burns House Museum In Dumfries



Burns Mausoleum



Grave of John Barclay

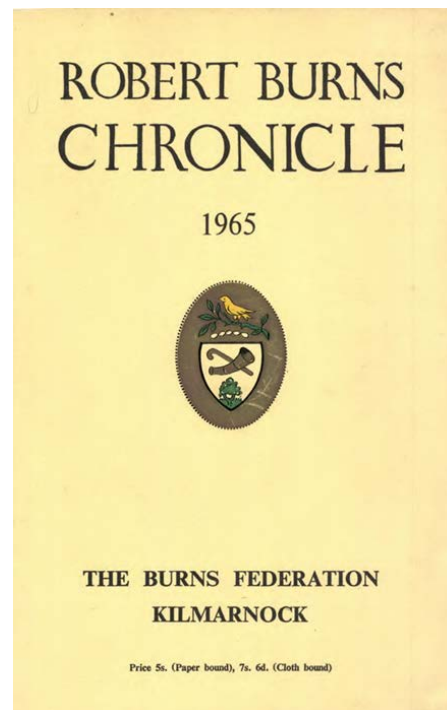
John Barclay died rather suddenly during prayer, perhaps fitting for a church leader, at the home of a friend in Edinburgh on 29 July 1798 at the age of 64. He was buried at the Old Calton Burial Ground not far from his Edinburgh home.

If you are exploring Scotland and would like to visit some sites important to Robert Burns and John Barclay the Berean, check out these places:

- [Burns Cottage Museum in Alloway](#)
- [Burns House Museum in Dumfries](#)
- [Burns Mausoleum in Dumfries](#)
- [Barclay Home in Edinburgh](#), now known as the Parliament House Hotel (You can even book a room there!)
- [Barclay Grave at Calton Burial Ground](#)

Along with your visit (either in person or virtually), be sure to [listen to “The Battle of Sherramuir.”](#)

You may find this 1965 edition of the [Robert Burns Chronicle](#) interesting. Scroll through the old advertisements and read some of the work presented. Do a word search for “Barclay” (press Control + F on Windows or Command + F on Mac and type Barclay into the search window). You will find John Barclay the Berean highlighted and a few Barclays listed as secretaries of the organization. Perhaps you will find a name with which you are familiar!





Clan Barclay International

Be in touch: leah@clanbarclayinternational.org

Visit our website: www.clanbarclayinternational.org

Explore the Barclay Surname Project at FTDNA:

<https://www.familytreedna.com/groups/clanbarclayproject/about/background>

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