

A SKETCH OF THE MUNRO CLAN

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A sketch of the Munro clan by James Phinney Munroe

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JAMES PHINNEY MUNROE

**A SKETCH OF THE
MUNRO CLAN**

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THE MUNRO CLAN

ALSO

OF WILLIAM MUNRO WHO, DEPORTED FROM SCOTLAND,
SETTLED IN LEXINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS, AND
OF SOME OF HIS POSTERITY

TOGETHER WITH

A LETTER FROM
SARAH MUNROE TO MARY MASON

DESCRIPTIVE OF THE VISIT OF PRESIDENT WASHINGTON
TO LEXINGTON IN 1789

BY

JAMES PHINNEY MUNROE

BOSTON

GEORGE H. ELLIS, 272 CONGRESS STREET

1900

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PREFACE.

In 1898 was published in Inverness, Scotland, a "History of the Munros," by Alexander Mackenzie, M.J.I., a gentleman distinguished not only for his elaborate histories and genealogies of no less than eight of the leading Scottish clans and for his other historical writings, but also for his splendid work before Parliament and before certain of its commissions on behalf of the crofters of Scotland. Largely through his exertions was passed the Crofters' Act, giving security of tenure and compensation for improvements to a class of small tenantry whose sufferings and disabilities had been, if possible, worse than those of the tenantry of Ireland in their darkest days.

Learning that this "History of the Munros" was in preparation, I entered into correspondence with Mr. Mackenzie, and was so far fortunate as to induce him to include in his genealogy as many of the American branches of the Munro Clan as the limited time before publication would permit us to follow up. His untimely death on the 22d of January, 1898, and the long illness preceding his lamented decease, made it impossible for him to realize this plan farther than I, with little time and still less experience in matters genealogical, had been able under his direction to carry it. Therefore it is that the only American branch of the clan to appear in Mr. Mackenzie's History is that of William Munro, the first settler of the name in Lexington, Massachusetts.

As, however, this bare and imperfect chronicle, confined almost exclusively to the direct male line of a single branch, covers more than fifty large octavo pages, it is plain that a thorough geneal-

ogy — even of those branches whose history it might have been possible to ascertain — would have been a stupendous task, with results greatly exceeding the necessary limits of Mr. Mackenzie's volume.

So far as Scotland is concerned, this of Mackenzie's is probably the final history of the Munro Clan. With a strange fatality, it cost the lives of three distinguished men who successively had undertaken it; and, while later researches may bring to light much additional detail of the complicated story of this great clan, a work so heavy in labor and so light in pecuniary reward is not likely — at least, within several generations — again to be undertaken.

In America, however, the field is practically new; and the results of genealogical inquiry would be, as has been abundantly shown by my own limited researches, rich in interest and in honor. It is earnestly to be hoped, therefore, that some leisured member of the clan, with a taste for historical research, will do for the American branches of the family of Munro what Mr. Mackenzie has accomplished in so satisfactory a way for the roots and trunk.

Meanwhile, hoping to stimulate interest in the family history, and believing that this can be done more quickly and fully by a little volume published in the United States than by a large one issued in Scotland, I offer this quite informal abstract of Mr. Mackenzie's six hundred pages, presenting it not in any way as a substitute, but simply as a foretaste of his History, scarcely a page of which but breathes such valor and romance as wholly to overshadow the imaginings of the industrious historical-novel mongers of the day.

I gladly avail myself of this opportunity to express my profound obligation to the many Munros, Munroes, Monros, and Monroes who so cordially helped me to assist Mr. Mackenzie, and especially to put on record my indebtedness to the late John Goodwin

Locke and the late Hon. Charles Hudson, but for whose patient and difficult researches — embodied in the “Book of the Lockes” and in the “History of Lexington, Mass.” — it would have been impossible to trace without incredible labor the numerous and wide-wending descendants of the thirteen children of old William Munro, that virile Scotchman who, banished for fighting for the king in England, engendered a huge posterity to fight against the king in America.

