

The Clan MacLaren Society of North America has a genealogy committee (see the Society Genealogy Brochure for more details). I am the PATTERSON/MacPATRICK surname genealogist for Clan MacLAREN. However, I am not just tracking those PATTERSONs who are clearly identified as being MacLARENs (since this is so difficult to do). As the PATTERSON surname genealogist for Clan MacLAREN, I will track all PATTERSONs. I am currently building two PATTERSON databases -- PATTERSON marriages and PATTERSON immigrants. I also have acquired the Social Security Master Death List.

This Death List is quite an interesting resource. There are over 36,000 PATTERSONs and 1,300 PATERSONs listed, giving social security number, date of birth and date of death. Although social security is relatively new, some of the births precede social security by many decades. The listings I obtained have 98 PAT(T)ERSONs born between 1850 and 1859. Some of these individuals lived quite long lives. For example, Idesta PATTERSON, born 21 January 1857, died December 1968 -- an age of 111 years. Idesta's social security number was issued in California and she most likely died in California. Delbert PATTERSON, born 30 March 1856, died December 1967, aged 111 years. Delbert's social security number is one of those issued to railroad workers.

I intend to continue to amass information on PATTERSONs. The more information I collect, the more I will be able to help PATTERSON searchers trace their genealogy. I do have an extensive genealogy library and am now collecting any and all PATTERSON information that I can find. Hopefully, this effort will reach critical mass some time in the future and I will be able to help many PATTERSON searchers.

Let me conclude by asking for your help. If you have PATTERSON/MacPATRICK information (or MacFEAT, MacFATER, MacPHATER, etc.), please send me a copy. Let me know about your family. If you are a genealogist, send your family group sheets,

descendant charts, pedigree charts, as well as copies of your source records. (Send me your questions and dead ends also -- I'll see what I can do to help.) With your cooperation, I'll be able to build a PATTERSON/MacPATRICK database that will be of help to all.

### **Clan MacLaren Society of North America:**

We invite you to join the Clan MacLaren Society of North America. You can join by visiting the Clan MacLaren tent at a Highland Games or visiting our web site.

**Home Page:** [www.ClanMacLarenNA.org](http://www.ClanMacLarenNA.org)

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## **WHO ARE YOUR PATTERSONS?**

by

**Robert D. (Bob) McLaren**

Who are the PATTERSONs? Frank Adam, in his book *The Clans, Septs & Regiments of the Scottish Highlands* (Johnston & Bacon, Stirling, Scotland, Eighth Edition, 1984, First Published, 1908), includes in Clan MacLAREN septs:

*PATERSON, MacPATRICK.* -- In bonds of manrent given by the MacLARENs to the CAMPBELLS of Glenurchy in 1559, and also in 1573, occurs the name of "MacPATRICK". PATERSON is but a Lowland rendering of the same name. MacPHATER and MacFEAT are equated with PATERSON.

Alan McNie, in *Clan MacLaren* (Cascade Publishing Company, Jedburgh, Scotland, 1986) includes under associated names of Clan MacLAREN:

*PAT(T)ERSON; MacFATER, MacFEAT, MacPATRICK and MacPHATER,* Gaelic variables of PAT(T)ERSON. Many PAT(T)ERSONs with early origins in MacLAREN county are considered associated

names. The name PAT(T)ERSON is one of the most frequently occurring surnames in Scotland.

Note that McNie does not use the term sept. I understand that sept is really a misnomer when applied to the Scots (it is an Irish term). What are normally called the septs of a clan consist of a variety of surnames -- some spelling variations of the clan name (such as Law in our case), some other families that sought the protection of a larger clan, and some that actually derived in some fashion from the parent surname. According to Margaret MacLaren (mother of our Clan Chief), the latter is the case for PATTERSON. In *The MacLarens, A History of Clan Labhran* (Lowe and Brydone Ltd., Thetford, Norfolk, Great Britain, Second Edition, 1976) she discusses the Septs of Clan Labhran:

The second group includes the largest and best known sept of the clan the PAT(T)ERSON, with the Gaelic variations, MacFATER, MacFEAT, MacPATRICK and MacPHATER. The earliest reference to a PATERSON is to Duncan PATERSON who was implicated with other MacLARENS in the killing of the Vicar of Balquhider in 1532. He may be the Duncan, son of Patrik M'EWYN V'LAURANE mentioned in the Bond of Manrent of 1559 but both Duncan and Patrick were favourite MacLAREN names and it is not possible to make a positive identification. There were of course PATERSONS from other parts of Scotland who were not MacLARENS but those from Balquhider and Strathearn belong to Clan Labhran.

So the origin of the PATTERSON surname in Clan MacLAREN could be from descendants of this Patrick MacLAREN (PATTERSON means son of Patrick). Or the PATTERSON surname could have risen a number of times from various Patricks in Clan MacLAREN. In any case, the PATTERSON surname is long associated with Clan MacLAREN.

Margaret MacLaren makes an interesting point in the paragraph above. She notes that PATTERSON is not necessarily a MacLAREN surname. Philip D. Smith, in *Tartan For Me!* (Heritage Books, Inc., Bowie, Maryland, 1992, Expanded Fifth Edition), shows PAT(T)ERSON associated with four other clans -- LAMONT, MacAULAY, CAMPBELL, and FARQUHARSON. In these cases, the surname most likely also arose from a son of a Patrick. Frank Adam does give some explanation for the name PATTERSON in three of these four other clans. For Clan LAMONT, Adam states:

*MacPATRICK, PATRICK.* -- The above are aliases of the LAMONTS, descended from Baron MacPATRICK, who was the ancestor of the LAMONTS of Cowstone.

For Clan MacAULAY, Adam writes:

*MacPHEDRON, MacPHEIDIRAN.* -- By both Buchanan the historian, and Maclan, the MacPHEIDIRANs are alluded to as a sept of the MacAULAYs of Ardincaple, Dunbartonshire.

For Clan CAMPBELL, Adam has:

*MacPHEDRAN.* -- The name of a small Argyllshire sept, whose ancestor, Dominic MacFEDERAN, was, by the 1st Lord CAMPBELL of Lochow, granted the lands of Port Sonochan on Loch Awe, along with the office of "porter and hereditary *ferrier*" (*i.e.* "Ferryman").

Adam, in his discussion of the septs of Clan FARQUHARSON, does not show any PATTERSON, or any surname that could be translated as PATTERSON. Therefore, I don't know where Philip Smith derived the association of PATTERSON with Clan FARQUHARSON. Finally, given the frequency of the appearance of the PATTERSON surname, I suspect that this surname also arose at other times and places in Scotland.

The PAT(T)ERSON/MacPATRICK surname has a number of spelling variants, as can be seen from the discussion above. (Remember, not too long ago spelling was a creative art, especially when an English speaker tried to write down Gaelic names!) Smith does list a number of such variants associated with Clan MacLAREN. These are:

MacFADE	MacPHAIT
MacFAIT	MacPHAT(T)ER
MacFAT(T)ER	PATRICK
MacFATE	PEATRIE
MacFEAT	PEATRY
MacFEET	PETERSON
MacPEETERS	PETRIE
MacPETRIE	PETRY
MacPETRY	

(I'm sure that if we sat down and concentrated we could come up with more possible variants.) While most of these names are variants of PAT(T)ERSON/MacPATRICK, in at least one case, the name does not have to derive from PATTERSON. The surname PETERSON can be a spelling variant of PATERSON; however, PETERSON also means son of Peter and is a common Germanic surname. I would expect the latter explanation as the origin of most PETERSONs.

So much for the question, who are the PATTERSONs? Now for the second question -- "I'm a PATTERSON (or PATRICK, or MacFEAT, or ...) and want to know of what clan are my PATTERSONs?" Because of the widespread occurrence of the surname, this is not an easy question to answer. Ideally, you would have to trace back your ancestors to their original territory in Scotland and then find out what clan was in that area (if indeed your PATTERSONs were associated with a clan). This may prove to be a very difficult, or impossible, task. Clan MacLAREN, however, welcomes all PATTERSONs.