

years of his life Meagher's Grant became his centre, his ministry being devoted to the settlers on the Lower Musquodoboit, the Shubenacadie and Gay's and Stewiacke rivers.

Mr. Murdoch's manuscript diary is oftentimes exceedingly interesting; thus in December 1792 he tells of the coming of two men for him with whom he sets out travelling twelve miles through the woods to Gay's River; next day they cross the Shubenacadie, breaking the ice with a pole, walk ten or twelve miles and on the third day travelling a little further he fulfils his errand in performing a marriage service. On the fourth day he visits, on the fifth he is detained by a very severe snow storm at Fort Ellis, but nevertheless crosses the river, preaches to a full house on Sabbath and baptizes a child, and in the afternoon walks to another house and conducts a baptism service. All the next week he visits on both sides of the river, preaches on Sunday and on Monday sets out for home taking a different route, so as to call on some otherwise unreached settlers. Reaching home he spends the rest of the week in preparing two discourses for the next Sabbath. Such was the work of the ministry in these parts in the days of that faithful Donegal Irishman, Rev. James Murdoch, a graduate of the University of Edinburgh, and of the Divinity Hall of the General Associate Synod of Scotland. On the 21st day of November, 1799, he was drowned in the Shubenacadie River in the fifty-fifth year of his age, and the thirty-third year of his ministry, all but one year of it in this province. He, by the way, had a leading part in the ordaining, at the first Presbyterian Ordination in Canada, that of Rev. B. R. Cumingoe, of Lunenburg, on July 3rd, 1770, in St. Matthew's Church, Halifax, a service honored by the presence of the Governor of the Province and members of his Council.

Beamish Murdoch, the Nova Scotia historian was a grandson of the clergyman, Mr. Gavin L. Stairs, of this congregation, a descendant.

The fact that there were Gaelic people, a few along the Shubenacadie and a considerable many along the Kennetcook and at Nine Mile River would have been sufficient to bring thitherwards the Rev. Dr. James McGregor, of East River, Pictou. But to the credit of the Hants County Highlanders they were *after him first*.