



# Chief of Chiefs

The Worldwide Organization  
For MacAlpines

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## The Newsletter Of The Clan MacAlpine Society

*Remember the death of Alpin!*

### Upcoming AGM in Costa Mesa California, USA

Each year, the Society sponsors an Annual General Meeting (AGM) to which **all Clan members are welcome**. The focus of the AGM is to provide an opportunity for our Clan to gather together in a celebration of our heritage, to discuss issues of importance to the Clan and the Society, and to develop the kinship ties that bond us together.

**Costa Mesa  
California, USA  
Memorial Day  
Weekend May 29-  
30, 2010  
Orange County  
Fair & Event  
Center**

<http://www.scotsfest.com/index.htm>

Our 2010 Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held in conjunction with Scots Fest 2010 (sponsored by the United Scottish Society) at the Orange County Fair & Event Center in Costa Mesa, California, USA on Saturday, May 29, 2010. A one-hour meeting will take place on the festival grounds. For those interested, we will also be heading to a local restaurant that evening to enjoy a casual dinner together.

As is noted on the Scots Fest website the host hotel is the Irvine Marriot (949-553-0100) with rooms for \$119.00 per night. However, some rooms are available at a reduced rate (use the code "United Scottish.")

We hope to see you there!

**UNITE! UNITE!  
UNITE!**

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**Society members at the Burns' Supper in Stockholm, Sweden Finn and Leizel Alpin and Bo ("Bosse") and Monika Bjerkerot who were also with the Society at the Gathering in Edinburgh. Bosse is a descendant of the old dynasty through Norway.**



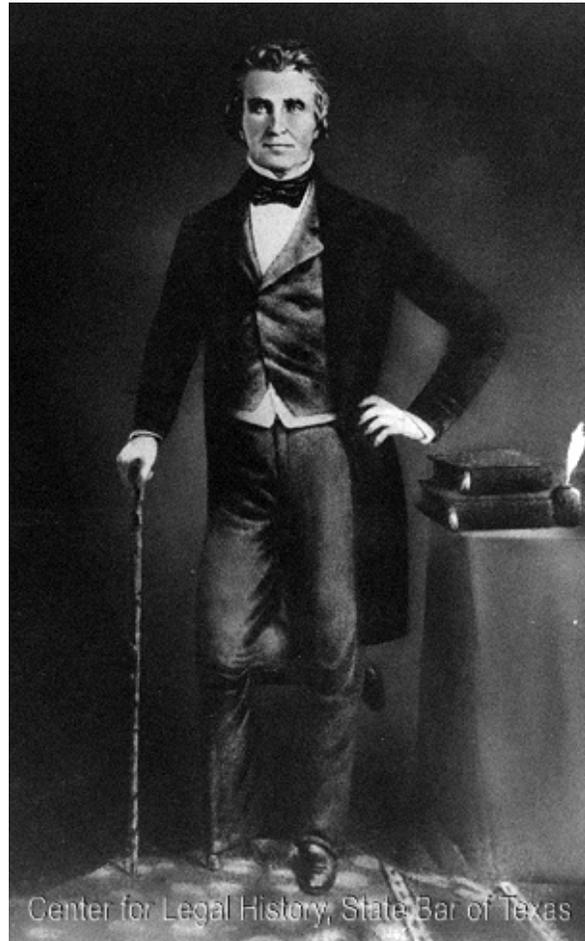
**Lt. Neil McAlpin late of His Majesties 74<sup>th</sup> Highland Foot, arrived with Cornwallis's army in America in 1778.**

**Wounded four times during the war, he settled in the Gaelic speaking community of North Carolina and became the patriarch of one branch of the McAlpin's of North Carolina. His descendents migrated to Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas.**

## **Robert McAlpin Williamson,... "Three-Legged Willie"**

was born in Clark County, Georgia around the year 1804. His mother died shortly after his birth, and his father left him and his two older siblings to be raised by their paternal grandmother in Milledgeville, the new capital of Georgia. He grew up as a member of a prominent family, and counted numerous lawyers, the state's governor, and a future justice of the United States Supreme Court among his extended family members. During his childhood he attended the best schools in the area.

At the age of fifteen, Williamson became ill with "white swelling," later known as tubercular arthritis, a tubercular infection of the bone that usually affected children, caused a painful swelling of weight-bearing joints, and resulted in deformities of the lower extremities. He was confined to his bed



for months. His right leg became paralyzed below the knee, and he drew it back, wearing a the wooden leg from the knee to the ground, which resulted in his widely-known title of "Three Legged Willie"

During his illness and recovery, Williamson studied mathematics, Latin, and literature, as well as law, and he was admitted to the bar in 1824 or 1825 at the approximate age of nineteen. Following his admittance to the bar, he is believed to have practiced law for about a year in his the office of his uncle, Judge Duncan Campbell.

Williamson left Georgia around the end of 1825, spent some time in Alabama and New Orleans, and arrived in San Felipe de Austin, Texas, the rough-and-tumble capital of Stephen F. Austin's colony, in June 1827. Why he came to Texas is unknown, but stories persist that he may have fled after wounding an adversary in a duel over the affections of a woman. Whatever his motive, Texas suited his independent spirit and sense of adventure.

In San Felipe Williamson became friends with Stephen F. Austin and William B. Travis. He practiced law and co-founded a newspaper, the *Cotton Plant*, in 1829. By 1830 he had been appointed the first prosecuting attorney for the San Felipe district. He served as editor of the *Texas Gazette* and then the *Mexican Citizen* until 1831.

Williamson moved to Mina (now Bastrop) in the summer of 1835 and was a delegate to the Consultation in November 1835 that set up the provisional government prior to the Texas Revolution. There he was made major of the Texas Rangers. Despite his disability, he was a capable horseman and a skilled marksman. He fought Comanches on the frontier and Mexicans in William H. Smith's cavalry company in the battle of San Jacinto, reportedly wearing a coonskin cap with nine tails attached.. He received 640 acres for participating in the battle of San Jacinto.

In December 1836 the First Congress of the Republic elected Williamson judge of the Third Judicial District, which automatically made him a member of the supreme court. He is said to have held the district's first court session under the shade of a large oak tree next to the site of the Colorado County courthouse in Columbus.

Williamson was a colorful character, and numerous legends about him persist. The most famous of these, though it varies according to its source, involves the first court session held in Shelby County. The region was known for its lawlessness during the violent years of the Regulator-Moderator War, in which two rival vigilante groups battled for control. As court was about to convene, a man stood before the court and made a motion

that the local citizens had declared court should not be held. When Williamson asked the grounds for his request, the man reportedly plunged a Bowie knife into the table that served as the judge's dais, and stated in effect, "This is the law that governs here." Judge Williamson rose to his feet, drew his pistol, laid it on the table next to the knife, and replied, "If this is your law, this is the constitution that overrules it." The trial proceeded without further interruption, and this moment in Texas legal history provided subject matter for a painting that has hung for many years in the Texas State Bar building in Austin.

At the close of his first circuit in 1837, Williamson was married, and the couple settled in Washington County and started a family that eventually included seven children. Williamson resigned his position on the court in January 1839. The following year he was elected to represent Washington County in Congress. He served in the House in the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Congress, in the Senate in the Eighth Congress, and in the House again in the Ninth Congress. (His Senate seat in the Eighth Congress was contested, and he eventually lost the seat.)

After annexation, which he had advocated so strongly that he even named one of his sons Annexus, he served in the Senate of the first two legislatures, retiring in March 1850. As judge and lawmaker Williamson became the subject of numerous legends inspired by his personal characteristics, his unique decisions, his adroitness as a campaigner, his amusing legislative manipulations, and the succinctness of his oratory.

He ran unsuccessfully for lieutenant governor in 1851.

In 1857 Williamson suffered an illness that left him mentally impaired. He died in Wharton on December 22, 1859. He is buried in the Texas State Cemetery; Williamson County is named for him.

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**IF YOU HAVE NEW CONTACT INFORMATION, PLEASE LET US KNOW!**