

The first MacEachern in Antigonish County appears to have been a Donald MacEachern who came from Inverness-shire, possibly Knoydart, Scotland. There is a reference to a Donald who came out from Knoydart about 1786 and settled briefly at Little Harbour, Pictou County, before moving east. There is also a reference to a Donald who settled at Cape George Point around 1801. In the case of both men, the father's name is given as Ronald. Although I cannot be sure, I suspect these two were the same Donald MacEachern.

Land registry documents indicate Donald MacEachern of Cape George Point was married in Scotland to a woman named Christian and they had children born there but the youngest family members were born at Cape George. There were five sons: Alexander, Archibald, Ronald, John and Lachlan. John and Lachlan were both born in NS. There is at least one daughter, Elizabeth, and it is possible there were other daughters.

Based on bits of information from a variety of sources, it seems we are descended from **John**, son of Donald the Pioneer, while the MacEacherns at Lanark are descendants of **Lachlan**, son of Donald the Pioneer, and Gerard MacEachern on the Marsh Road is descended from **Alexander**, son of Donald the Pioneer.

By 1817 Donald the Pioneer appears to have died and his land was divided among his sons. There is a record to show four of the sons purchased parcels of the original grant at that time. There is no indication a fifth son, **John**, bought or inherited a portion of the land.

John, son of Donald, married a St. Andrew's woman named Kate Gillies, pronounced (and later spelled) Gillis. She was born in Morar on the west coast of the highlands of Scotland and came to Antigonish County, with her parents Big Angus Gillies and Mary MacDonell, in 1801, when she was eight or nine months of age. Her family settled on the west side of the South River at Dunmore, near St. Andrew's.

John and Kate had a son Donald born in 1826 or 1828. His grandchildren Joe and Penelope MacEachern both believed he was born at Lakevale but his parents lived for many years at Keppoch. John MacEachern is likely buried at Keppoch although we have no record. There may have been a large family but to date I have only been able to identify one sister, Catherine, born about 1842. She was still living at Keppoch when she

married in 1869. It is possible this MacEachern family actually lived in Black Brook, Pictou County, which was on the East River St. Mary's side of Keppoch Mountain.

I have no idea when **John** MacEachern died but Kate died in 1891, at the home of her son Donald, in St. Andrew's. Her obituary states she was the relict (widow) of John MacEachern, Keppoch, Ohio.

Donald, son of John and Kate, married Penelope MacGillivray of St. Andrew's. She was a Bridge MacGillivray, from a pioneer family so named for their proximity to the first bridge across the South River which was near the road that now leads to the village. The Bridge MacGillivrays lived only a short distance downriver from Kate Gillies' family.

Donald and Penny lived directly across the river from the Bridge farms and operated a tannery on the riverbank for many years. He was more commonly known as "Tanner" MacEachern. They had a family of seven, six sons and a daughter. Penny died there in 1895. Three of the sons, Angus, Allan and Alexander all went to the Boston area while a son Hugh died at St. Andrew's and the only daughter Mary died unmarried at Croft, Antigonish County. Son Lachlan married and lived on the Tanner's property at St. Andrew's.

The oldest of Tanner and Penny's children was **John** MacEachern. He was born at St. Andrew's in 1857 and attended St. F.X., living with his father's cousin, Msgr. Hugh Gillis. Msgr. Gillis was born in Dunmore, the son of Kate Gillies MacEachern's sister, Isabella who married a Gillis from Dunmore and later moved to Glen Alpine or Pinevale. Msgr. Gillis was parish priest at St. Ninian's for many years and had a long association with St. F.X.

John MacEachern became a teacher and was popularly known until his death in 1935 as "Teacher MacEachern." Teaching eventually took him to Cape George where he bought a property on the South Side, once owned by John Campbell, pioneer. It was across the road from the school and only a short distance from the pioneer MacEachern property at the point. He married Janet "Gow" MacDonald of Big Marsh and they had a large family. The name Gow comes from the Gaelic "gobha" meaning blacksmith and dates back to Janet's grandfather, Dougald MacDonald who came out from Moidart, Scotland with his wife Ann and young sons in 1801.

Donald “Tanner” MacEachern lived the last years of his life at Cape George with his son John “Teacher” MacEachern. Tanner’s son Lauchie inherited the property at St. Andrew’s but Tanner was considerably fonder of Teacher’s family than of Lauchie’s wife, as the story came down through the years. He died at Cape George in 1909.

Teacher MacEachern and Janet Gow MacDonald had a large family: Joe, John R., twins Hugh and Vincent, Penelope, Dougald, Mary C., Annie Jane and Cameron. Dougald died at age 8, Mary C. at 14. Vince was killed in the closing days of the First World War on Nov. 6, 1918 and is buried in Valenciennes Cemetery, in France.

Only Joe, Hugh and Annie Jane married.

Janet and Teacher both died at Cape George, she in January, 1935 and he in May, 1935. Teacher MacEachern’s obituary states his word was as good as his bond.

Teacher’s oldest son, Joe, was raised at Cape George, and married Annie MacGillivray of St. Andrew’s, another Bridge MacGillivray. They lived briefly at Cape George and their oldest son Vince was born there. A year or two later they took over a large part of the original Bridge MacGillivray land grant at St. Andrew’s.

Most of the descendants of Donald, the pioneer at Cape George Point, remained at Cape George for many generations. John’s move to the Keppoch and later, Teacher’s move to Cape George, led to the belief that the Teachers were “a different crowd” from other MacEacherns at Cape George but if you go back far enough you will see this appears not to be the case.