

MacRae, John ^[1]

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by Richard Walser, 1991

fl. 1774–80

John MacRae, Loyalist poet and song-writer, born in Kintain, Scotland, was a recognized Gaelic poet and singer



Photo is courtesy from North Carolina Highway Historical Marker Program. The marker is located in Moore County.

^[2]r before sailing for North Carolina in 1774 and settling on McLendons Creek (now in [Moore County](#) ^[3]). In Gaelic, his name was Iain mac Mhurchaidh 'ic Fhearchair. MacRae was among the Highland Scots defeated in February 1776 by the Patriots at [Moore's Creek Bridge](#) ^[4], where his son Murdock was fatally wounded. During the [American Revolution](#) ^[5] his Loyalist sentiments kept him in trouble, his taxes were increased, and finally, if legend can be trusted, he was captured and put to death in retaliation for the fierce devotion to George III expressed in his songs.

His patriotic and autobiographical poems, his lyrics, and his much admired lullaby, "Duanag Altrium," were all written in Gaelic. Most of them were composed during his North Carolina sojourn and, it is said, are still sung and recited in Nova Scotia and Scotland. MacRae's songs and poems are included in [Gaelic Bards from 1715 to 1765](#) ^[6] (1892) and [Mactalla nan Tur](#) ^[7] (1901), collections compiled by A. Maclean Sinclair.

References:

Charles W. Dunn, "A North Carolina Gaelic Bard," *North Carolina Historical Review* 36 (October 1959).

James MacKenzie, "The Odyssey of John MacRae," *State* magazine (Raleigh), 1 Dec. 1971.

Additional Resources:

"John Macrae." N.C. Highway Historical Marker K-43, N.C. Office of Archives & History. <https://www.ncdcr.gov/about/history/division-historical-resources/nc-highway-historical-marker-program/Markers.aspx?sp=Markers&k=Markers&sv=K-43> ^[8] (accessed March 6, 2013).

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[American Revolution \(1763-1789\)](#) ^[9]

[Biographies](#) ^[10]

[Immigration](#) ^[11]

[Poets](#) ^[12]

[War](#) ^[13]

[Writers, journalists, and editors](#) ^[14]

Authors:

[Walser, Richard](#) ^[15]

Origin - location:

[Moore County](#) ^[16]

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Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.^[17]

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