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Old Cures from Sandy MacLean My name is Alexander J. MacLean. I was born in Foot Cape, Strathlorne, in 1893. In the month of September, too, at 1:30 p.m. They had it marked here, you know. (Were you bom with anything special--like, did your feet come first?) Oh, no. Too bad my feet didn't come first. I could cure lame back. Now, my father, he was troubled with a--oh, an awful lame back. It may be once a year--they'd have to carry him up to bed. Bring him down again and put him on the couch in the kitchen. Oh, lame back. So, we had a m.an at the Banks--his name was Dougald Maclsaac. He was bom feet first, and he knew that--and he came to the house. He said, "What's wrong?" Well, my father told him. "Well, well, well, take him off the bench, and lay him on his belly on the floor." And they did that. Took off his shoes and his stockings. And he started down below and he walked up on his back, and he turned around and he walked off it then. From that day to the day he died, I never heard him complaining of anything at all, at all, at all. Now, the same's the King's Evil. There's sickness that's known as King's Evil. And that kept me practically out of the war, too. I had it here (on your hip), right a- bove here. And they can operate. It fills, and kind of a water runs out of it, and it goes down. It'll start filling where they operate--filling again then. The doctors won't let on that there's such a thing at all, at all. I suppose because they can't cure it. I was operated on there, then. Dr. MacLeod from Mabou. You can feel that now. See the way the bone is there. (Yes, sort of a lump and a groove.) See. And when I was getting examined for the army, it was a Dr. MacDonald that was examining me--it was at the Town Hall in Inverness--he'd be around to Dan J. Campbell's, the violin player. Well, I stripped off. He said, "What's wrong here?" Well, I told him. "Aw, yes," he said, "he cut a cord there that he shouldn't have, and it grew in." Well, that was that. And then, I was flatfooted. You know, they were awful particular in the army. First World War, you know. Said, "You're flatfooted." "Well, yes," I said, "but I never found that bothering me or anything." "Aw," he said, "you put on a full pack and go on a ten-mile route, and you'll find out that it'll bother you then." And that settled my business in the army. (So he knew you had the King's Evil.) Yes. He noticed that right away. And I had that slashed down by Dr. Gunn, Dr. MacLeod in Mabou--all right, it'd go down. Then it would start up again. Then there was an old Gillis, down north of Inverness here. Aw, the roads were in bad shape. I had an uncle here by the name of Hector. He jumped on horseback. He drove down to this Gillis's place, and he took him on horse? back with him and took him up. Gillis would be between--oh, coming up near 70 then. And he came in and he looked at it. "Aw, yes," he said, "that's King's Evil." He rubbed his hand on it, you know. He said, "I never rubbed my hand on a person in my life but was cured--it cured com? pletely." And all right--he stayed all night. Before he went to bed, he rubbed his hand on me again. And he went to bed. In the morning he got up and he did the same thing. And he asked for water in a porcelain basin, not in tin or anything like that. They gave him the water, and he washed his hands in it. He got a quart bot- tle, and he poured the water into the bot? tle. And he told them, "Put that now in a place where it won't be on iron. Don't put it near



the stove or near the sink. Put it on the dresser, on the wood. And during the day sometime, get cotton batting or something, wet it with it, and soak it on there." Well, my uncle drove Gillis home. It started to heal up. And I never--from that day--had any trouble. (When he put the water in the porcelain ba? sin, did he put a coin in there, too?) No, no, no, no. It was only he washed his hands in it and told them to keep the bot? tle clear of the sink or iron--put it on the dresser, on the wood, because if you put it on the iron, it's gone. (Did he say anything in Gaelic?) No, no. (The power was in his hands?) Yes. (Did he know why he had the power?) Being the seventh son. Duncan MacLeod down here, he was the sev? enth son of' the seventh son--his father was the seventh son and he was the seventh son--and there was a little MacDougall girl at the Banks, she had trouble here, you know. (On her eye?) Yeah. And it kind of filled up. Water would come out of it. She had aunts in Boston. They took her up there and they got specialists up there to look after it--aw, they treated it for a whole week, and it wasn't getting a bit, at all, at all, better. So, she came home. Somebody suggested to her then, go down and see Dr. MacLeod. I don't know if there was anything said then or not, about him being a seventh son--but she came down to see him. He was looking at her eye, you know. He never let on anything. He said, "Well, you go home now, and be sure and come down tomorrow. And I'll see .what I can do for you." She did. He was rubbing her eyes again. She went home. (Sandy

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