

George Montgomery, *The Montgomery Syndrome: The Roots of Family and Personal Identity in Fact, Fable and Folklore* (Edinburgh, Scottish Workshop Publications, 2015), 308pp.

We keep a fairly close watch on publications dealing with the Montgomery heritage. Imagine our glee in coming across recently the above publication in a secondhand bookshop in London's Charing Cross Road!

The title is most encouraging, and the inside back cover actually lists the Clan Montgomery Society International among four resources ("Address Notes").

However, looks can be deceiving. The book (obviously self-published) is a strange pot-pourri. There is some correct historical information provided (none of it original and all of it available in such sources as B. G. de Montgomery's standard work on the history of the family). But any valuable data are mixed with a staggering quantity of utter irrelevancies (e.g., "The Haggis Tsunami"). Personal reflections and opinions make up most of the book. There are no footnotes or scholarly documentation.

It is painfully obvious that the author has used his Montgomery name as an excuse to write about anything and everything that interests him--even though the likelihood is slim that others will share even the smallest degree of parallel concern for his opinionated meanderings.

Perhaps the most irritating inclusion is the author's lengthy effort to promote an obscure Jewish mysticism (the Kabbala or Cabala). In the course of this, he attempts to trash all "literalist fundamentalist views of finding sense into [*sic*] scriptures." For readers with a penchant for the bizarre, I immodestly recommend the section evaluating Cabala in my book, *Principalities and Powers: The World of the Occult*. But as for what Cabala has to do with Montgomery history, I am at a total loss to understand.

In a word: here is a Montgomery book Montgomerys—and non-Montgomerys—can avoid with no problem.

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