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highland family history society

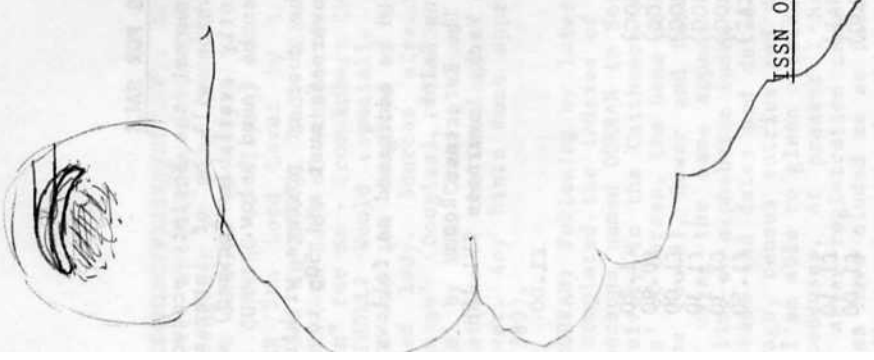


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E D I T O R I A L

Thank you for all the help and encouragement. My wails of self-pity have brought me several methods of investigating areas Furth of Scotland, one being inter-library loans of Registers and Censuses of Canada. The equivalent of the S.R.O. or P.R.O. is P.A.C., the Public Archives of Canada, which lives in Ottawa, and I have amazed my local librarian by ordering some of their microfilms so I'll wait and see. Might it be helpful to our membership to compile a list of major national sources for various countries in a short article in the Journal?

Gordon Richardson (member no. 23) has offered me his thoughts on that Old English letter 'yogh' (Anglian, not Aughan, my co-editor has great difficulties with my handwriting). The bigwigs had names like Mingyis or McKenyie, spelt with a 'yogh' by those who could write, pronounced correctly by everyone. When type appeared in the 15th century, the available letter most like it was 'z', so that was used. But by Victorian times, more universal literacy led to snobbish Correctness wherein the spelling must be right so anyone who didn't know a Mingis or capercaillie personally would pronounce them Menzies or capercaillzie!

My second puzzlement was mark/merk. The OED spelling was 'mearc' and 'ea' is normally said as the 'a' in 'mammy'. It developed into the two English spellings and pronunciations, but most Scottish accents say 'mairk', so I'd bet three ha'pence to a shilling that that's how the Old English said it too.

The third puzzlement concerned the use of the word "decay" as a cause of death. Dr Sandy MacLennan (member no. 430) wrote to say that the word was an obsolete synonym for "consumption", i.e. pulmonary tuberculosis. The early deaths of the two young men in the same household, the "bleeding from the mouth" (though really from the lung) both go some way to confirm this diagnosis. He goes on to say that the date of the first printed use of "decay" in this sense noted in the OED is 1725. Sir Kenneth seems to have been using it a little earlier than that.

Rosemary Bigwood returned to take us beyond the OPRs. She mentions how inventory valuations can be depressed with descriptions like 'old Bible', 'lame horse' and so on, to give less tax to pay anyone. I believe these can also reflect the neighbour's approval or disapproval of the deceased person and his/her taste, and also whether the valuer has hopes of buying the goods from the inheritors.

The wills sometimes even show the positions of objects in the rooms and location of rooms in the house. I also get a shiver when the valuer comments on items in one room which includes "the bed on which the corpse lay".

NEWSPAPERS & THE FAMILY HISTORIAN

by Lesley Black
(Talk given to the Society 24th April 1990)

When you look at newspapers, instead of doing your own family history, you start to do everyone else's as you get so involved in it.

The first Scottish Newspaper was the *Mercurius* started in 1651, not much use for family history because it was mainly news from south of the border and all to do with politics. Before 1800 there are no really early newspapers in this part of the world. Edinburgh is the earliest with the *Evening Courant*, then the *Caledonian Mercury*, then Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dumfries, Greenock and Kelso. Most newspapers at this time were weekly or every two or three days, and they tend to take *The Times* and rehash its news, again not much use for family history.

To find what is available go to this book "A Directory of Scottish Newspapers" produced by Joan Ferguson, secretary of the Scottish Genealogy Society. You can look up an area like Inverness and find a list of which ones are published, when and where they can be found now. As an example the *Inverness Journal* and *Northern Advertiser* ran from 1807 to 1848. Some are in the National Library in Edinburgh and the British Newspaper Library at Collingdale. They are also held by R. Carruthers & Son, Bank Street, Inverness and Aberdeen University. One problem about a book like this is that it is quickly out of date with collections moving to new libraries or being changed to microfilm, but they are still good general guides.

If you want to find what newspapers are published now, perhaps with a view to putting an ad. in looking for relatives, "Benn's Press Directory" is available. For instance I looked up Argyll & Bute and found the *Oban Times* and *West Highland Times*, (one newspaper) and was told where it circulates, where the the head office is, who to write to and who owns it.

What do you find from newspapers? Most of us think of births marriages and deaths, or as they were called, Domestic Occurrences. The *Aberdeen Journal* 1758 includes these Domestic Occurrences. "Last week the Honourable Lady Sinclair of Invercauld was safely brought to bed of a daughter" and the absconding school teacher Mr McGillivray who was "apprehended at Edinburgh on suspicion of being the person who wrote the counterfeit bank notes ... but he is not the man who escaped from Banff prison some time ago." So these Domestic Occurrences are local news really. The next one is of a boat the "Charming Nellie" taken by a French privateer, and the next of money donated to the Infirmary.

By 1812 when this *Inverness Journal* was printed it is much more like our births marriages and deaths. "At Dalhousie Castle the Countess of Dalhousie was safely delivered of a son." "At the

manse of Bechelvie (just outside Aberdeen) the marriage of Rev. Robert Scott of Glenbuchat to Miss Mary M Forsyth, daughter of the late James Forsyth minister of Bechelvie." "At Charleston, North Carolina (the death of) R Johnson Esq., late of Finsbury Square. He was the oldest male branch of the Johnsons of Pamphry and had he lived he intended to claim the dormant title of Marquis of Annandale."

These people are of the upper echelon of society, not your Agricultural Labourers like my ancestors, they wouldn't appear in those columns at this time. In the 1850s here is a birth from the *Buchan Observer* "at 22 Windmill Street, Peterhead on 16th inst. the wife of George Cowie, Sawyer, of a son." The poor women never got called any names, just "wife of" and the children seldom got named either, and you sometimes got entries mixed up between the births and death.

On to marriages. This is from a 1749 *Glasgow Courant* : "On Monday last Mr James Johnson, merchant in this place was married to Miss Peggy Newall, a young lady of great merit and a fortune of £4,000" which was probably the most important factor and comes up quite often. It might be nice to find that out about an ancestor, but again it's upper/middle classes and all my ancestors never had any money anyway. Later on in an 1829 *Dumfries & Galloway Courier* : "At Maxwellton on Tuesday last by the Rev W Dunlop, Alexander Dobie, receiver of the customs at the grain market in Dumfries aged 70, to Agnes Clark aged 72. This is the third time the amorous and venerable bride has paid her devotions at the shrine of Venus." You can see you get much more information than just the straight "married such and such" and a date.

Now deaths. A newspaper entry only gave "Peter Gatt, died 29th Sept 1837 at Porter's Lodge in Troup" but a week later his obituary appeared although he wasn't famous and hadn't a lot of money and gives more detail. "... aged 75 years 3 months. For more than 46 of these years he was a sincerely attached and faithful servant to the family of Troup. A sailor in his youth and having in that occasion lost his left leg in 1790 he was soon after employed by the peculiarly amiable laird of Troup, Dalgetty, navigating the pleasure boat. He not only promoted the delightful aquatic pleasures of the family and their numerous friends, but became very adept in every department of the household service."

I found this entry because the *Aberdeen Journal* is indexed up to 1861 and there were two entries for Peter Gatt. Later, in 1913, the *John O Groats Journal* has "at Strathcull, Halkirk, Caithness on 30th December, Marjory the youngest daughter of Donald Bain, farmer Strathcull aged 53 years. US & Canadian papers please copy." That is another clue to tell you a lot of the family has emigrated. I also have entries from a New Zealand paper which often says in it "Scotch papers please copy."

Just as nowadays, when someone dies in peculiar circumstances you get something in the newspapers. **Aberdeen Journal** 9.5.1838 "On Thursday forenoon James Innes, a very honest and unobtrusive fish dealer, while on the discharge of his duty seemed fatigued. While rolling his barrels up the street, he appeared to rest himself on the shaft. He fell back and those who saw him, conceiving that it was accidental, ran to help him out. They found him dead." You can see the interest in this, there may be a gravestone but obviously no death certificate. You get a description of what happened to him, obviously a heart attack.

One question I am often asked is how to find out about an ancestor who died at sea. It is very difficult but one source is a newspaper because it is an unusual type of death. This is from the **Elgin Courant** "Lossiemouth man drowned. Schooner Conquest, 59 tons, of Stornoway and commanded by Capt. Junor from Lossiemouth was capsized in the Forth yesterday morning and three of the crew drowned." There then follows what happened with details of the crew giving you a scenario of how someone died.

All of us probably have someone involved in the First World War, winning medals, coming home on leave, or dying. "Cpl William Denholm, son of Mr & Mrs Robert Denholm of Dalshalloch House. They have received a letter from Lt Robert Anderson of the Royal Scots Fusiliers to say that their son had been killed in action on 23rd April by a shell. An excellent gunner, well liked by the men and officers. He was quiet and liked books. He was above 21 years and before the war had been employed by the New Cumnock Collieries" and like most newspapers they have a picture of him in uniform.

I have another example in my grandfather, who didn't die in World War I or I wouldn't be here, he won some medals. He was a cantankerous old devil who died when I was about six. Before he died he destroyed everything and I have tried to find out everything I can about him including looking up all the newspapers. This article from the **Cumnock Chronicle** tells of him winning his medals.

This is something else you can do, using the shipping intelligence which most newspapers have. They give the names of the ships and the owners, when they left and when they arrived. For instance the "Sally-Ann" owned by Rogers of Liverpool left Aberdeen on the 16th inst. for Beirut. If you know that your ancestors were on certain ships you can see them leaving port and arriving. I have followed people when I know where a ship has gone but not exactly where it went down, by going through the shipping intelligence you can point to within a month or so and then you know other sources and records to go for.

Often at the end of the intelligence you get little stories: in March 1848, HMS Cayafort has just arrived in Portsmouth and

had spoken with the Monarch out of Aberdeen the previous December and obviously sent word to Aberdeen; "In Wick on March 11th, the Scotia a schooner of Wick was driven ashore this evening behind the South Quay from anchor in the bay and it is expected she will become a total wreck. The crew was saved." You also find for seafaring ancestors that if they passed examinations for promotion it would get written up in the newspapers. In an 1883 **Peterhead Sentinel** just under the shipping intelligence, "William Neil Crimond passed examination as Mate before the local Marine Board at Aberdeen last week." That opens up a lot of other sources for you like checking for his Mate's Certificate, and it gives you a starting point to know when he passed his exam.

Sometimes it is quite good to have criminals in the family because they are the ones who get recorded. An 1848 Aberdeen paper had a write-up of an Inverness Sheriff Court case where five named shoemakers and a boot closer were guilty "by threats and intimidation or by molesting or obstructing others from carrying on their trades or businesses." They'd set up The United Operative Boot & Shoemakers Friendly Society and were forcing people to join them and pay money. The **Inverness Courier** in 1894 had A Case of Reckless Driving where "Alexander McMillan pleaded guilty to having on Jan 11th when driving a horse attached to a cart at the corner of Petty Street and Inglis Street knocked down and seriously injured a woman named Mrs Munro at the same time driving in a furious and reckless manner."

Other ways you can find out about ancestors is in the advertisements. "John Gardiner respectively intimates to his friends that he has just received a supply of fashionable muffs and tippets" and if he was your ancestor I'm sure he wasn't just selling them to his friends. Another section was sequestration for the people who went bankrupt and not necessarily from the area: this 1801 **Dundee Advertiser** has a merchant in Dornoch and one in Dundee, merchants in London, Glasgow & Leith and one in Stonehaven. If you find someone here the good thing is that the sequestration papers are in the S.R.O.

This next example is from **The Times** of June 1837 and shows a list of people who emigrated from Portsmouth to Montreal on the ship the **Burrell** in 1835. This is for an English parish but I have seen similar lists for Scottish ones. **The Times** is indexed and although you wouldn't get the individuals' names in the index the ship will be. Just about every issue of **The Times** between 1800 and 1850 has listings of emigrants. These are useful because passenger lists weren't kept officially until about 1890 because no-one cared who left. (Canada might have kept lists as they wanted to know who was coming in.) There is a complete set of **The Times** on microfilm in the Aberdeen University library and the index as well.

Another thing I noticed is that The Times was good at covering Scottish events such as the clearances and the crofters. Their journalists were at the Braes in the 1880s and at Croick Church in 1845. The Times was sometimes instrumental in getting things done.

Here is another of the sort of things you might find. This is the Volunteer Ball at Rogart in 1894. They went on at great lengths about how the hall was decorated with Chinese lanterns and Sutherland tartan all over. There was a string band and pipers and all danced until Sam. About 70 ladies in attendance are listed and then all the men present who weren't volunteers.

There are other periodicals too. Lloyd's List is for your seafaring ancestors because you get the ships who arrive. It comes out every Friday and has little stories of the ships and what happened to them if they were damaged or lost.

Organisations publish journals which you can look back in, like the 1901 Dundee YMCA Advance. It has the obituary of a sort of step relative of my husband. "James Mathers a member of the Bible Class with which he had been connected for about seven years died on 27th June. He was one who came with great regularity. His was a lingering illness but as long as he was able to walk the distance he came to the class."

Now looking at more modern newspapers, here we have a 1977 Guardian. My husband traces everyone called Diack so was interested to see an article on rugby and the name of the president of the African Amateur Athletics Association is Lumin Diack of Senegal. Apparently there is a host of Diacks in Senegal and he wonders where they came from. So there is a modern newspaper still being able to give you questions about your ancestors.

"Directory of Scottish Newspapers".

Compiled by J P S Ferguson (NLS 1984)
"Local Newspapers in England & Wales 1750-1920".

Compiled by J S W Gibson (FFHS 1987)
"Family History from Newspapers".

Eve McLaughlin (FFHS 1987)
"Unpublished Personal Name Indexes in Record Offices & Libraries".
Compiled by J S W Gibson (FFHS 1987)

"Directory of Library Services for Local Historians".

Scottish Local History Forum (SLHF 1988)
"Sources for Scottish Genealogy & Family History".

D J Steel (SOG 1980)
"Benn's Press Directory".

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CORRECTION: Following a move 18 months ago the correct address for Christopher Morrison (see p. 15 of Journal Vol. 9 No. 1) is now 7 New Street, Paisley PA1 1XU. (Tel: 041 887 3055)

THE VOYAGES OF 'CLANSMAN' AND 'PERSIAN' IN 1857 by Maureen D. McDonald

My interest was sparked by an extract from the 'Inverness Advertiser' dated July 28th 1857, which was published in Journal No. 18 in April 1986. This gave an account of the departure from Rodil on board the 'Clansman' steamer, of sixteen families, about 100 adults, bound for Van Diemen's Land. Could my McDonald family have been among those who left Harris on board the 'Clansman' on 13th July 1857?

In the 1851 Census for Harris we find living at Quidnish, my husband's great-great-grandfather John McDonald, a farmer of 20 acres, his wife Mary (nee Campbell) and their children Angus, John, Ann, Alexander and Norman. At Lechlie the household of Angus Morrison, his wife Margaret (nee McDonald) and their children Angus, John, Neil, John (sic), Margaret, Elizabeth and Murdo.

The younger John McDonald was married to his second cousin Margaret Morrison at Manish, Isle of Harris on July 10th 1857 by Rev. Alexander Davidson. As my entire McDonald family, including John and his bride Margaret were on board 'Persian' when it departed Liverpool on 16th July 1857, I have presumed that they were among the families who left Rodil on the 'Clansman' 3 days earlier.

A search of Lloyd's List at the Guildhall Library does not show an entry for the 'Clansman'. Lloyd's List does not ordinarily record the movements of coastal vessels and it seems that is why the 'Clansman' is omitted: her captain, John Rankin, held a certificate of service for home trade passenger ships only, and could not have taken the vessel out of British waters. It would appear that our family changed ship at Liverpool and Lloyd's List does show that the 'Persian' left Liverpool for Hobart on July 16th 1857.

There were six families of McDonald's on board the 'Persian', all of whom came from Harris. There is no actual list left in existence to prove the McDonald's were on the 'Clansman', but having the date of John & Margaret's marriage, and having the shipping list which shows our McDonald's on the 'Persian' departing Liverpool with so many other families from the Isle of Harris on July 16th... it seems highly unlikely that there would have been another vessel or way of getting from Harris to Liverpool between 10th and 16th July. Putting it all together I now feel we have a picture of the last week before our family sailed for Tasmania.

Both Mary & John McDonald left sisters in Harris. Mary's sister Catherine was married to John McKay of Ardslave and John's sister Ann was married to Roderick Macauley. Descendants of both these families live on Harris today.

BEYOND THE OLD PARISH REGISTERS

By Rosemary Bigwood

(Talk given to the Society 25th September 1990)

Most people will have a clear idea of where they want to start research on their family history and in Scotland this is usually in the statutory registers of birth, death and marriage - which commenced north of the border in 1855 - and in using the census returns 1841-1891, followed by the Old Parish Registers for the pre-1855 period. You will know that they are a fascinating and frustrating source of information - incomplete, irregularly kept, inconsistent in the details they give and full of unexpected and interesting details. They are, however, the richest source for learning about past generations but on exhausting what can be mined from them, many people give up and call it a day. But this is where the real "adventure" starts and tonight I am concerned with some of the other source materials which may be of interest and value to you in your searches.

To start with I shall say something about wills - or testaments as they are often called in Scotland, the term referring not only to the record of the factual wishes of the dead for the disposal of their goods and appointment of their executors, but also to the inventory of their movable estate. Not everyone left a will - even many well-off persons omitted to make one - but it is surprising how many testaments for the very poor people there are. It might happen for instance that a widow wanted to give her husband a good send off, inviting the neighbours in to a funeral feast with whisky and oatcakes and tobacco. If she registered an inventory of his goods - his few cattle or bags of corn in the barn - then she could defray the cost of his funeral against the value of the possessions.

Executors were usually close relatives and when the person had written his own will, there are often useful details of his children and relatives. I always become curious when perhaps one son is left an annuity rather than a share in the estate; one starts to wonder whether he was a black sheep, likely to waste his inheritance. As well as the names of members of the family, one can also glean a lot of information about how they lived, and what they did as the inventory which is an integral part of most testaments will often list all the stocking of the farm, sometimes the furniture in the house or the items of clothing in the wardrobe.

Grain which had already been sown in the ground before the person died was valued on what might be harvested and it throws light on farming of former times that in the 17th century, grain - whether it be oats or barley - were usually estimated to the third or fourth corn - in other words for each grain sown, the farmer would only expect to reap three or four grains - a very poor yield by modern standards. Incidentally, don't worry if having read an inventory of one of your ancestors, you

Mary McDonald's brothers Roderick and Charles Campbell had already emigrated to Australia in 1852 and John's brother Murdo had gone to Canada about the same time.

There was an outbreak of fever on board 'Persian' during the voyage resulting in 8 deaths. Amongst the many who were ill were Mary, Margaret, Ann and Alexander, but they survived to land in Hobart Town on October 31st 1857.

During the following four years in Tasmania, John & Margaret had three children - Angus born 1858, John born and died 1860 and Catherine born and died 1861. They moved to Victoria in late 1861 where another son Murdoch was born in 1862. On August 17th 1864 Margaret and her infant daughter Margaret died as a result of childbirth and are buried in Branxholme Cemetery. John was left to raise the two small boys on his own. Angus married Mary McKinnon in 1885 and had a family of 8 children, descendants of whom live throughout Queensland. Murdoch married Caroline Humphries in 1893 and had two children, descendants of whom live in New South Wales.

Angus McDonald married Christine Morrison in Hobart on March 26th 1861. Christine was the daughter of Donald and Effie Morrison; and she and her family had also been on board the 'Persian'. Angus and Christine settled near Wallacedale in Victoria. They had no family and are both buried at Branxholme, Victoria.

Norman McDonald married Jane Cameron in 1866 and had a family of 10 children. They lived in the Audley and Telangatuk district of Victoria and their descendants live throughout Victoria today. Norman and Jane are buried at Harrow. Ann was a witness to her brother's marriage at Branxholme in 1866, but I can find no trace of her after that.

Alexander is last known to be in Hobart Town when the family arrived in October 1857. Family hearsay indicates that some member of the family went to New Zealand. Maybe it was Alexander?

Mary McDonald (nee Campbell) died at Camp Creek, Audley on October 11th 1864 and her husband John died at Condah on July 17th 1884. They are both buried at Branxholme.

Thus we have a brief outline of one of the families that left Harris in 1857 on board the 'Clansman' for Liverpool en route to a new life in Australia.

< < < S T R A Y S > > >

Death certificate from Unrelated Certificates Index - J. Webster.

Donald CAMERON born Contin, Scotland; 25 years in Australia; died 14 Nov. 1889 aged 44 at Brisbane, Qld, Aus.

come to the conclusion that he must have been down and out since everything is described as 'broken', or the beasts as 'old' or 'flame' - this was only a ruse to keep down the value of the estate so that the church officers would levy less tax. Things haven't changed in this respect!

Up to 1823, the main responsibility for recording testaments rested with the Church - or Commissary Courts - who were also concerned with cases involving disputed settlements, slander, divorce and separation. After that time, most of this work passed to the sheriff courts or in some cases to the Court of Session. It is, however, important to remember that a testament was a legal document and as such might be recorded in any court which was competent to do so. Unlike the organisation of the church which was a hierarchy, working up from kirk session, to presbytery, synod and assembly, the government of the country, particularly up to the eighteenth century, was not so cohesive.

The sheriff courts were responsible for a wide range of civil and criminal administration (including keeping of registers of deeds) throughout Scotland, but cutting across their jurisdiction were the powers which had in the past been granted to ecclesiastical and lay magnates - the Lords of Regalities - who had almost royal powers (again both civil and criminal) in their territories. Regalities, and also Stewartries and Bailiaries which had similar remits had the right to keep registers of deeds - as did the Royal Burghs and therefore you may find a disposition or settlement of an ancestor in the records of any of these courts.

Returning now to the Church which held sway over many other aspects of life in the parishes, particularly in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The parish registers were kept under the direction of the kirk session but this was only one part of their sphere of influence and the information recorded in their minutes has been termed "possibly the greatest untapped source of information about social conditions in Scotland from the sixteenth century." The main concern of the session was in keeping of good moral order in the parish : pursuing the inhabitants for fornication and adultery.

To give you some idea of how assiduous the kirk officers were, between 1560 and 1600, the kirk session in St. Andrews heard no less than one thousand cases concerning the moral and marital lapses of their parishioners. For us today the value of these records is that the Sessions were not content only with scratching the surface of scandals; they probed to the very core. This has resulted in a unique record of social life through the centuries, concerned with all classes of society and particularly the poorest members about whom it is often difficult to find much information.

The offenders and their family, friends and neighbours were all summoned to appear before the session and to give evidence,

and the minutes record verbatim what was said. In pursuance of the moral order of the parish, the kirk session was often involved in investigations into irregular marriages and the records concerning these cases can often fill gaps in the parish register. By the second half of the eighteenth century in some areas - particularly in central Scotland - nearly one third of all marriages were irregular, i.e. not performed before the parish minister.

The problem facing the minister was to discover whether in fact a couple had been married at all. There was a number of "professional" performers of marriage in Edinburgh and the ministers were quite grateful to these persons since they were known and the minister probably only had to make a token disapproval by fining the newlyweds. When the marriage was reputedly performed by an unknown, or merely before witnesses (which was quite legal), then the situation was more difficult and there was clearly an honest desire by the minister on many occasions to find out whether there was a victim in the case. In Stranraer in 1774 Janet Campbell declared she had been married a fortnight earlier to John Mean, skipper of a sloop, in the house of the ship's carpenter and that they had slept together as man and wife. He denied it, saying that when he was drunk his friends had put him in her bed.

You will always find in tracing your family history that it pays to have a few sinners in the family - saints do not leave so many records behind them - but you may well come across your ancestors in the kirk session records for very minor misdoings - for breaking the sabbath (hairdressing was a popular and forbidden pursuit), letting their dogs fight in church, for swearing - or they may appear as innocent witnesses. Some of the records which have survived are fascinating in drawing attention to a whole family drama. In 1748 Benjamin Forbes, son of Edinglassie, was named as father of an illegitimate child. He was clearly terrified of his mother and wrote the following letter which has survived with the kirk session minutes :-

Margte

I received Note from you which concerned your being with child, which I'm sorry for. However your best is to leave the Town and go up the County among your Acquaintances, for my Mother will be unsupportable if she find you out to be with Child in her Service. Since you lay the Blame on me, I can't help it but since you do, if you have a Boy you'll call his name Findlay. I'm just going to sail, so your best take my Advice and leave the Town.

I am,
Your friend
Benjamin Forbes

but often more detail is given such as occupation and place of residence.

The records of various kinds of taxation can reveal quite a lot about our ancestors and their way of life. Arguments about paying taxes seem always to have been endemic. In 1691 hearth tax was charged on all householders in Scotland to raise money to pay for the army. The poor were exempt and there were arguments about whether people like the minister and the public hangman should also not have to pay. Many others escaped as it was found to be too expensive to employ collectors and some collectors went in terror of their lives. The collector in Clackmannanshire complained of "so much ill will by the people I am exposed to in this employment" and in Perthshire some collectors had to employ an armed guard. Unfortunately, these problems have resulted in a very incomplete list of householders in Scotland but having said that - many persons are named.

A couple of years later another tax was introduced called the Poll Tax. This was levied on individuals, not households, only children and the poor being exempt. Not all the lists have survived but where they have, they do provide useful information, some of the returns (as in Aberdeenshire) being very detailed. Things haven't changed over the centuries and while many complain today about their inability to pay the tax, the same was true then. In one household, a printer named Robert Swan took the opportunity to try to escape responsibility for paying for his wife claiming that "he has none in his family but Marion Flucker his wife who is worse than nothing."

In the second half of the eighteenth century, the exchequer was again needing funds and decided to levy taxes on a whole range of commodities - clocks, watches, coaches, farm horses, houses, shops and windows. I sampled a whole lot of these returns thinking that some might be useful sources of information about our ancestors and was very disappointed. Tax evasion seemed to be the order of the day. For instance, St Andrews in 1797 - with a population of about 4500 and some well-heeled householders - only paid tax on 10 clocks and watches, while the village of Monimail with a population of under a thousand paid tax on 27 watches and clocks. However I did find one tax which seemed to be paid by a lot of people - the farm horse tax, and the returns do provide information about even small farmers throughout Scotland at the end of the eighteenth century. It names individuals, states where they were farming and how many horses they possessed which gives some indication of the size of their holding.

Trade returns may not sound a very fertile field for ancestral research but quite a lot can be found in these records. Import and export trade with foreign countries and coastal trading in some commodities was closely controlled and the Collector of

P.S. If the child be mine It's been gotten when asleep. However when I return to the country I shall find the certainty of that and take care of it if it be mine. Adieu.

The kirk session minutes may also include many other interesting details - list of testimonials brought by people moving from one parish to another, details of pew rents, names of communicants or heads of families, sometimes including information about when people died or left the country or parish; and descriptions of burial lairs - again often naming several generations of a family.

The kirk session was also responsible for the care of the poor but the records are usually disappointing genealogically - in most cases only mentioning that a certain sum of money was paid to the poor or widow so and so. Sometimes however, there are interesting cases when one parish argued with another about who was responsible for the maintenance of an indigent person.

There was a certain James Dickie who was born in 1798 in Kilmaurs, Ayrshire who moved with his parents when he was eight years old to Irvine. Young James went to sea when he was eleven and sailed either from Irvine or from Greenock; as time went on, he seems to have made Greenock his main port of call, boarding there between voyages though he often went to Irvine to see his mother. The Irvine kirk session - who did not want to have the cost of looking after James Dickie now that he was unable to earn his living - maintained that Greenock was the man's main parish of residence since when he went to Irvine his visits never exceeded two days, sometimes they were for only one night and he never brought his trunk or clothes with him when he came to Irvine and these - his clothes - were always washed in Greenock - therefore that was where he belonged. So if you want to establish residence in a place, get your clothes cleaned there!

Presbytery acted as the higher church court and the records are not as useful to the family historian - though cases which were thought to be too serious for the kirk session to decide, witchcraft, repeated wrong-doing or incest, were passed to them. The Synod records are interesting in throwing light on the life of the times and a certain number of names occur in the records but they are certainly not a first call on one's time. The Assembly records, however, contain some rather unexpected gems. I found that in the first half of the eighteenth century - often a difficult time in one's research when the parish records are perhaps becoming a bit thin on the ground - there were records relating to disputed calls to ministers when there was a vacancy in the parish. These calls resulted in signatures being taken from heads of families in the district as to whether they supported the call or not. In some cases illiterate men only signed their initials - helped by pencilled dots under the letters which they had to join up -

(for criminal offences) or Court of Session for civil matters - is bound to leave some records. **Precognitions** - the evidence heard in cases - have been indexed and make fascinating reading, quoting verbatim what was said and done. The only problem is in trying to use this material to build up the family history since it is clear that often there was no strict adherence to the truth.

The offender was usually poor but honestly trying to look after an even poorer widowed mother, living in a close in a large town - or so he said. Verification of the facts is frequently not easy! The Scottish Record Office staff have recently done a most valuable piece of work in indexing all large productions which were brought as evidence in cases in the Court of Session. These productions include leases, tenancy agreements, charters, account books, testaments and in one case a section of the Inverkeithing baptismal register covering the years 1711-1744 which fills a gap in the records held in New Register House!

There is a number of productions which concern Inverness people - advertisement books for the Inverness Journal dating to 1818; the account book of John Noble, merchant there in 1760 and details of other and fox skins sent by him to London; ledgers of Alexander and James Johnston, fleshers in 1852 or of David Spence, shoemaker and repairer in 1841.

I have mentioned only a few of the sources which you may use in documenting Scottish family history. I do not have time to deal with land records, estate papers, legal documents, registers concerning debt, and with the endless variety of local records. I can only hope that perhaps I have whetted your appetite to go and see what there is for yourselves.

< < < S T R A Y S > > >

B.C. Genealogical Soc., Richmond, Canada.
Catherine MORRISON, born c 1794- 1807, Eddrachillis, Sutherland, Scotland; married c 1825 Robert MACKENZIE/McKENZIE; died 16 Oct. 1889 aged 95 at Michigan U.S.A.; buried at Kintore E. Nissouri twp Oxford Co. Ontario, Canada.

MEMBER'S CHANGES OF ADDRESS

- 246 Mr J M Sutherland-Fisher, North Cadboll House, North Cadboll, Ross-shire IV20 1TN
- 706 Mr Victor Sutherland, 10132 Pleasant Street, Sidney, V8L 3P4
British Columbia, Canada
- 745 Mr Donald J M Cameron, Basement Flat, 2 Tavistock Terrace, London N19
- 768 Mrs Margaret Edgar, c/o The Ceillidh Place, West Argyle St., Ullapool IV26 2TY

Customs at each port had to keep detailed returns of all ships coming into or leaving a port with dutiable goods. These records name the ship and where she was registered, where she was bound or where she had come from, the contents of her cargo, the name of the master and also of the local merchant who was responsible for the cargo. From studying these ledgers, one gains a fascinating insight into the trade of any port - and also can build up a comprehensive picture of all those who were merchants in the district. Some of these records go back to the sixteenth century - and there is a fairly complete series from about 1742 for most districts.

Each port had quite a large staff of customs men to deal with this work and salary lists are extant which give useful information about the persons concerned and sometimes about their families as well. A most useful card index of excise officers with details of their careers and where possible of their families was compiled by the late Mr. Mitchell and this can be consulted at the Scottish Record Office.

Once you have established in which part of the country your ancestors lived, you will find that there is a wealth of local records which will repay examination. If the family you are tracing lived in a burgh, you may be particularly lucky. Burghs were towns - often quite small - which were given special trading rights to encourage trade in the area and to foster diligence and the keeping of good order. They had a high degree of self government and administered much of their own justice. You will therefore find lists of burghesses who were admitted either because they were the son of a burghess, because they had served an apprenticeship, purchased the right or married the daughter of a burghess - this was to uphold the matrimonial value of daughters of burghesses who wished to get them off their hands!

You will also find minutes of the town councils which ordered the life of the burgh and these make excellent reading. You will find details of the management of the town herd, driven through the streets to the town muir each day; of the quarantining of persons suspected of carrying the plague (stripped of their clothes and dumped on a neighbouring island or housed on desolate moorland); of the regulation of the town water supply to prevent people retting their flax about the drinking water supply; of behaviour at weddings when it was decided that the practice of horsemen galloping down a main street firing guns might be dangerous. But in addition to accounts of day-to-day life, you may also come upon very informative lists of people who lived in the burgh - names of people who lived in a certain district, those of a particular profession or those who were liable for taxation.

As I have pointed out before, crime in a certain respect does pay dividends to the genealogist since the criminal - up before the burgh or sheriff court or at worst before the Justiciary

MEMBER'S RESEARCH INTERESTS

624 Mr Alistair Cameron, 32 Cobram Road, Cheltenham, N.S.W. 2119, Australia
An update from Alistair, who has now left the Highlands having been much in evidence in the library these past few months. Covering the period 1790-1880: 1) ROSS & Cromarty CAMERON Contain, Strathgarve and Urray; CAMPBELL in Croftnabaul, Urray; HENDERSON in Teandalloch, Urray; MACDONALD in Strathgarve, Contain; MACKENZIE in Ardnagrask, Urray and Bogbuie, Urquhart & Logie Wester; MACLEAN in Ardnagrask, Urray; MacPHAIL in Easter Kinkell, Urquhart & Logie Wester; MORRISON in Urray? 2) Inverness JOHNSTON and LAWSON in Petty; McINTOSH in Fisherton, Petty. 3) Renfrew CARSON in Greenock. 4) Lanarkshire CLYDE, HENDRY, NEILLY? and WARN? in Govan; JOHNSTON in Holytown, Bothwell. 5) Argyle DUNN in Dunoon. 6) Berwickshire FERGUSON and MICKLE in Coldingham?

726 Mrs Anne MacIver, 'Tarradale', 4 Brinckman Terrace, Westhill, Inverness
Interests include MacGREGOR in Kincardine - any period; ROSS in Edderton, Tain & Kincardine pre-1855; MacMILLAN in Stornoway & Uig; MACRAE in Stornoway and NICOLSON in Stornoway & Skye - all for period 1800-1899.

809 Mr Dennis O Huggard B.E.M., 71 Tirimoana Road, Glendene, Auckland 1208, New Zealand
Researching John HA(U)GGARD, a farmer and vintner in the Beaulieu area who married first Christian BAIN and then Margaret ROSS; Samuel HUGGARD, a son of John who married Margaret MacKINTOSH in 1832 and any other HU(A)GGARD's in the Black Isle, Kilmorack and Inverness areas. He wonders if John who would have been born c1785 was a son of Walter SAGARD and Katarine ROSS?

NEW MEMBERS

815 Mr Cambell McRae, 19 Palmerston Road, Wallasey, Wirral, Merseyside L44 3DT
Principal interest in the name McRAE in Strathpeffer from 1700-1899 and in Leith from 1800-1899. Also in Inverness SMITH & McBETH/McBEATH from 1700-1899.

816 Mr Roderick F Gow, 'Kenya', Victoria Road, Little Neston, South Wirral, Cheshire L64 4BR
Interests include McLEAN first in Groy and then with LAWSON, McQUEEN and FRASER in Ardcloch from 1780-1899. Specific interests in John GOW from Kirkwall and his great grandfather Alexander McLEAN b. March 1802. The latter served in the 93rd Highlanders from 1824 to 1843, when he was discharged due to ill health. He then married M LAWSON 23/04/1847 and died at Achagour in 1868.

817 Mr W D A Tucker, West Shortwood House, Bear Lane, Budleigh Salterton, Devon EX9 7AQ
Has links on his father's side to Inverness.

818 Mrs Louise Corbet Nissen, 6 Long Street, Pt. Vernon, Hervey Bay, Queensland, Australia
Her grandfather was Alexander Corbet, who was born in Ferintosh. He emigrated to Australia on board the 'Eagle' in 1860 along with his wife Margaret ??? and six children - Margaret; Alexander 10; Isabella 8; Janet 7; Christina 5 and John 3. They settled in Bendigo, Victoria and in the late 1880's Alexander went to join the "gold rush" in Gympie, Queensland.

819 Mr Martin R Jones, 70 River View, Putson, Hereford HR2 6EA
Interested in the families of four couples - Alexander & Jane FRASER, who married 1852 in Inverness; Donald & Janet WILLIAMSON c1830 in Halkirk; Donald & Elizabeth SWANSON m. 1817 in Thurso and William & Annie ALEXANDER m. 1824 in Thurso.

820 Miss Eileen de Ville, 275 Dysart Road, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 7LP
In England researching her own surname in Braughing, Herts. In Edinburgh RAMAGE 1800-1899 and LAWLER 1870-date. Closer to home in the Highlands SMITH in Inverness and Forbes 1800-1899 (Mr Francis SMITH was Adjutant in the 1st Regiment of the Inverness-shire Local Militia in 1814) and LAWLER in Inverness-shire. Particularly interested in gaining more information on John Baillie Rose LAWLER born c1810 Croft. Known facts: - 1834/6 Gamekeeper to Raigmore at Drakies, Inverness. 1839 Excise & Inland Revenue cutterman at Borlumberge. 1840-1 County Constable, Inverness 1843 Excise & Inland Revenue Atalanta cutter, Inverallan. 1851 Excise & Inland Revenue cutterman at Grantown. 1852 Excise & Inland Revenue Atalanta cutter, Inverallan. 1893 Died Musselburgh. Pensioner of Inland Revenue.

821 Mr Alistair Macleod, c/o 1 Porterfield Bank, Inverness

Those of you who have visited the library will recognise this new member as the recently appointed full-time genealogist for the Highland Region. His research covers the whole Highland area for all periods.

822 Mr W P Fraser, 27 Pict Avenue, Inverness IV3 6LX

Researching FRASER in Abriachan pre-1800, NOBLE & CAMPBELL in Killearnan pre-1815.

823 Mrs Elsbeth Mitchell, Woodways, Harthope Place, Moffat, Dumfries-shire DG10 9HX
Interested in MYRON in Brora & Golspie in the 1840s; MacGREGOR

