

híghlanò family history society



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EDITORIAL

Welcome to year 11 of the Society, and to this journal.

Thank you to those who have sent in lists of addresses. We are working on a way of presenting them and now have a reasonable collection for Canada, Australia and New Zealand. A lot of Highlanders went to France and South Africa and large bits of the US of A too....

For those who have asked, the book 'Cromartie' was written by Eric Richards & Monica Clough, and was based on extensive forays through the Cromartie muniments surviving in Castle Leod and the Scottish Record Office. The publisher is The Aberdeen Press. While I did not enjoy the book sufficiently highly to carry it about and quote to every person I met, I did think it timely.

So often books are written about either the rise (and sometimes fall) of a powerful individual or family, or about the distress given to populations by remote landowners, but this was the first book on a Highland aristocratic family that I've read which put in mutual context the life and times of the laird, his family and his tenants and neighbours, and because of it I am a smidgeon more sympathetic with "the rich man in his castle".

And that immediately reminds me that I'd be grateful for a little publishable something from the knowledgeable out there all about the reasons for bits of counties being found scattered throughout others. Cromarty in Ross is the most obvious and well-known one, but on an 1860s map I have there are also bits of Nairnshire in Inverness and Elginshire, and bits of Banff in Aberdeenshire.

The precis-ing of the lectures seems to be popular, several members have suggested that they make them feel closer to the centre of things in Inverness, so we will continue to print them in the journal. Please forgive us for the odd omission, for some are not easy to write down from the tape, where the speaker wanders about the room or has the perfect timbre of voice to make the tape gather in just a rumble. Once we put the machine beside the water heater so got the wonderful sounds that that makes!

At the last meeting of the Society our chairman made a plea for members to come forward with ideas and bright suggestions for subjects or speakers for us to approach to address us in Inverness for the 1993-94 season. How about it?

The 5th AGM of the SAFHS is being hosted by us in Culloden Academy on 25th September 1993. This is your first of several warnings. If we can persuade those members of this and other FHSs who dwell outwith our area that Perth, Edinburgh, Dundee and Glasgow are not actually further away from us than we are from them it should be a sellout. Watch this space for news of whom to contact for buying tickets and for volunteering to man the barricades and don't forget to tell all you friends.

THE HIGHLAND REGIONAL ARCHIVE
THE GENEALOGICAL SOURCES IT CONTAINS

by Robert Steward
(Talk given to the Society 28th January 1992)

This talk celebrates 20 years of professional archive work during which I have seen a terrific growth in interest in family history which is the main part of an archivist's work. In Leeds in 1972 we dealt with 500 queries a year on genealogy, in 1990 when I left Northumberland (one of the smaller counties) we were dealing with up to 7000 a year.

I intend to talk about the sources in the Regional archive that can assist family historians. I am still having to learn a great deal about the sources I hold, and about the peculiar and special legal and admin and local government setup in Scotland and in particular the Highlands. Although I am not part of the library, I and the archive are based here, which is a great help in consulting its local history and genealogical sources. When I hear colleagues in the south say that they don't know how to manage on their thirty-five staff I sometimes smile to myself. The challenge of managing on my own in an area the size of the Highland Region, and trying to fit in a public service amongst all the other duties does give cause for wry amusement at times.

What is an archive? It is really any document produced in the course of some administrative process: the minutes of the society, club or institution; it is proof of something happening, and thus rather legal. Archives are different from a collection of independent manuscripts that have just been brought together, however interesting they may be. We would never think of tearing a page from a register. While the information might still be on the paper, once it has been separated from the actual register it loses all integrity or historical or even legal significance, which is why part of the archivist's job is listing and arranging records in the structure that created them.

I have been faced with recreating order in the Inverness Burgh over the centuries to try to get records to fit into this administrative process. It means understanding the court system and the legal systems of the burgh. I tend to differentiate between two types of record; one helps to put ancestors in a certain context for a particular parish; and the more fun ones that add bits of colour to the family tree, the odd black sheep who may have ended up in a criminal case.

The bulk of our collection is the records of the local authority; the District or County Councils and their predecessors, the Commissioners of Supply and one Burgh, Inverness. The oldest records we have of Inverness Burgh date from the 1550s. The Commissioners of Supply predate the county council usually to about the 17th century.

The most popular source in the archive must be the annual valuation roll which was produced each year from 1855 to 1975 and thereafter more irregularly. They identify owner and occupier for each property and there is nothing equivalent to it in England, so it was a pleasure to come across it here. It has its limitations, they tend to give only the principal owner or occupier and don't often list everycroft. Although I said they should start from 1855, here in the Record Office there is only Inverness-shire. We have a manuscript copy for 1855 that covers the islands and the area around Fort William and the printed series starts in 1869. There is a separate series for the Royal Burghs, for Inverness we have from 1876, Nairn from 1920 and Wick from 1883. Other Royal Burghs we don't have, but more may come later when I can get copies from the SR0. I have brought a valuation roll for the county of Inverness 1918-19 and one for Ross and Cromarty for 1868-9 which is their earliest.

Electoral registers, now that was a mystery when I came up. I was used to great runs of them and they are just not to be found. I have even tried the National library of Scotland and the only ones they have are from 1947-8 to date, nothing earlier. We have a few strays; 1891-2 in the Fraser MacIntosh library, and a few for the burgh in the archive; some from Sutherland, a nice little run from 1832 to 1859 of electoral registers. Here is the list we have of freeholders of Inverness-shire in 1788, the franchise list of those who had the parliamentary vote. The Assessor's Office in town has the only near complete set from the late 19th century, and only for Inverness-shire and Burgh. I am hoping to acquire them.

I have borrowed this one, for 1918-19, from them and opened it at a page for Glenmoriston. This name is Thomas Grant, Mason, living at INCHVULGAL. Then look at the electoral register, and in the same parish are two Thomas Grants, one a farmer in INCHVULGAL (with his wife Annie) and Thomas Grant, mason, at May Cottage BALNACLACH in Ugbuhart. Thus we have two different addresses for the mason between the electoral register and valuation roll, and a farmer living at the valuation one. So you see the usefulness of being able to compare sources. There are occasional valuations of mainland owners, and Inverness-shire has one for 1691 which seems to have been reproduced at regular intervals. In 1788 and even in the early 19th century people seemed to be using the same basic valuation roll as in 1691. Always be wary of things like that.

When my grand archive depository is established a lot more records have been promised; the Kirk session and sheriff court records and all the others down in Edinburgh. Another county-wide series of records are the old Registers of Sasines. This is one record I have actually been able to acquire from SR0. We have the abridgements indexed by place and person for the five counties from 1781-1960 which briefly describe every property transaction where land was transferred or a mortgage happened. It has its limitations, it doesn't include leasing or tenancy, and most

people leased their properties. Your own property may be recorded in it and they are nicely indexed. We have some for the Inverness Burgh, in the original format and dating from 1607-1869. Fraser MacIntosh did a kind of index to them for 1637-1809 arranged by year. The records can tell a genealogical researcher the names from whom property was inherited and where they were living but they may have registered after the actual date of conveyance, and remember that Cromarty was separate from Ross-shire prior to 1889.

If your ancestors were poor or criminals you are more likely to find them in the archives, and this applies in the Highlands as elsewhere. I was delighted to come across the Poor Board Records. They start in essence from 1845 and the wealth of detail staggered me, and there is no equivalent south of the border for the detail that the Poor Law records give. This is one for Inverness Burgh in the 1860s and gives name of applicant, residence, county of birth, condition, age, occupation, whether disabled, name and ages of dependants, other information. The parochial boards do not have the detail of Inverness Burgh and they vary depending on survival rates. I am still digging them up from all over the Highlands.

Inverness Poorhouse or Workhouse records are in Inverness but not in my hands because of the accident that the old Culduthel Hospital succeeded the workhouse so they are in the hands of the Health Board archivist and are actually in the Royal Infirmary. I have had a look at the registers and books from the poorhouse and they are fascinating.

Then there are the court records, masses of them. Inverness Burgh is the jewel in the crown but I shall touch on other records relating to the county. The Burghs date from 1556 and the court books themselves from 1621. The main series of Sheriff, High and Burgh Court; a wider spectrum covering the Sheriff county series; the Sheriff's High Court, the Justices of the Peace.

Here we have a massive series of court process papers telling a lot from the 18th and early 19th centuries including actions for debt, instructions from court, the town councillors, manager of the jail. Death warrants, including that of the last man to be hanged in Inverness. Transportation orders and banishments. These have been largely summarised and indexed by Mr Lawson's assistants in these three catalogues.

I always like physical descriptions of people to make ancestors come alive. Here is a Sheriff court record from 1837. The county of Inverness-shire received information that James, "son of and residing with Alexander Gordon at Drummond Parish did last night in the dwelling house of Drummond wickedly and feloniously attack and assault the said Alexander Gordon his father and Catherine Gordon his mother". It is rather sad. James was "aged 22, five feet, complexion dark, hair brown, eyes grey, never in jail before, offence assault, can read and write, is committed by his

father who is sober and industrious, the son is by trade a hostler and his character is not good".

I can't say what happened to him, but his sentence may be in another part. There are a lot of transportations, of course many following Culloden. This is a list of persons transported to the plantations in America, with their aliases, all of them prisoners, this being a bond for the person transporting them. Some of the names are "Angus MacPhee, Donald MacWilliam, Kenneth MacWilliam, William MacBain sometime bachelor in Forres", all held prisoner in the Tolbooth.

There are other matters to do with the post-'46 such as the sentence on William MacPherson for using a tartan plaid in 1752. Numerous ones for illicit distilling, you can't move for those. In the Licensing Office last year they showed me records for the 1960's of illicit distilling in back rooms of houses in Aviemore, it still goes on.

Then we have banishments. Here is Ann Fraser in 1753, charged with stealing and receiving 'Geneva Spirit' gin, "out of the house of Andrew Ross, Chelsea Pensioner of this Burgh and likewise having been found in a loose way with several of the military in the Burgh." I do remember in Northumberland the magistrates being faced with all these rogue Scotsmen, as it was the first place in England they landed in after being banished from Scotland. There is an indignant note written back to Scotland saying "we don't want them, and can we send them back?" and the magistrate says no; so a lot of cross-border administration strife went on.

The Royal Academy is celebrating its 200th anniversary and I'm always looking up records for it and its predecessor the Grammar School, and here we have a claim on the 10th April 1750 from petitioner John Shaw, a writer in Inverness. William the petitioner's son, aged ten years "or thereabouts", (he wasn't sure of his son's age?) was coming from the Grammar School, and one Angus Sutherland, vagrant and strolling beggar, did seize upon his said son's hat and did tear the same into pieces. I wonder what the story is behind that, maybe the son was taunting the beggar.

Another here from Ness Castle which has quite a lot of interesting information in it. "Margaret Mackay, servant maid to Capt Thomas Fraser of Ness Castle was violently attacked this day while innocently employed watering some linen in her said master's garden at Ness Castle within the parish of Dores. Donald MacPherson, also servant to the said Capt Fraser is accused of violently laying hold of her, striking her to the ground with a view to ravish or murder her, which obliged her to cry loudly for assistance, by which the female servants in the house were alarmed as well as the other servants at work in the fields at a great distance. The usage given her on this occasion she did not choose to describe, but she was greatly hurt attempting to

deprive the said Donald Macpherson of his wicked intentions." It is quite large, and lists all the servants who were witnesses. Obviously it would be difficult unless you knew your relative was a servant in Ness Castle at the time, but if you were able to tie it in, it does bring a bit of colour into the family history scene.

Turning to other aspects of the archive, education has always been a personal interest for me. I am going through the records for Inverness Royal Academy for instance and it was the main Highland school and its admission registers do survive from something like 1810. Admissions registers for schools generally have also come our way. This is one for Gulduthel School, giving dates of admission, name of child and parents and the date of the child's birth. These are very important documents, not only for genealogists, but they are accepted by the DSS as proof of the age of a person if the birth wasn't registered. These only really survive from the reform of education in Scotland in 1873.

If your ancestor was a teacher, the records go back much further because we have many of the records of the numerous voluntary societies that managed or looked after the Highlands as they would claim: the Gaelic Society or the Scottish Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge. The SPCK we have up to the 1750s in which are listed the teachers sent out to the remote areas and a fascinating record this is on the spread of interest in education in the Highlands.

An earlier form of education was the apprenticeship system. The main records we hold there are the Inverness Apprentice Registers starting in 1738, which detail the apprentice, master, trade and relationship to the master. Here are photocopies of some of the early pages, as the original is quite big. 1760 Alexander Mackenzie, son to Donald Mackenzie, labourer of Inverness. They tend to be arranged by the guilds. Inverness managed seven guilds and we have records for six of them I learned today: tailors, hammersmiths, weavers, wrights, shoemakers and skinners.

The Guild Records deserve much greater study because not only do they come from Inverness but they manage a much wider area. The earliest is the Tailors from 1650, and the Skinners from 1738, the Weavers 1710. This is a list of the weavers in 1738, including John Young, Alexander Morrison, John Ross, George Lockhart, James Gollan, and papers connected with them. Here is a little petition from the 1750s, where they are much distressed for a lack of a young man with the capacity to be a reed maker and they are wanting to get permission to have one brought in. The control of trade between the Burgh and Guilds was very close.

Here are many of the numerous indentures. This is one between Andrew MacIntosh, shoemaker, burgess and Alexander Davidson, son of Alexander Davidson, Reeve(?) to Alexander Fraser, Torbreck, apprentice six years 1794. I know that some people trace their family tree purely using guild records, and not parish registers

because they know that son followed father in the guild. If you become a freeman of the Burgh through serving your apprenticeship, you are liable to be on an electoral list and I have one here for 1833 which is in effect the electoral register for Inverness for that year.

Moving to cover tax for a moment. There is a little series of window tax payments for Inverness in the 1760s and of the 110 people listed it gives their trade or occupation. All the prominent people of the town would be listed here, but unfortunately I do not have any of the other burghs in it. Even more interesting is this tax roll for 1720 for Inverness, actually arranged by streets, and I am not aware of any others like this of such an early date.

Licensing is another source of local government activity, if your ancestor was licensed to run a pub we have a set, again for Inverness Burgh, but there may well be records around the region in other burghs from 1760. This is 1766 for all the licensed victuallers and the widows and mistresses seem to be in the majority. The men don't get much of a look in for running the pubs of Inverness in 1766. There is a run of these from more or less 1765 to the 1960s, although with a gap between 1800 and 1856. They might yet turn up.

A bit outwith Inverness, you will be aware of the reference library's holding the Crofters Commission Report 1884 and the Royal Commission on the Highlands 1892 with their detailed verbal accounts of crofters giving their evidence, or remembering the Clearances. I am hoping to develop from these, get more copies from the SRO, or more details of the returns to the actual Crofters Commission.

In addition there were organisations such as the Board of Destitution, and again the SRO holds these registers, and again I have been making copies of them. This one is of Plocton, and lists the men and women by family in a state of destitution and what aid was going to be given to them, it is like a census of the time. 1848: Alexander Campbell, aged 38 and his wife aged 46, William 16, Mary 12, Neil 11. William was a fisherman and the work they were going to give him was working on the road. His wife was to be given work spinning, their eldest son netting and the other children school. This is just one example of what I believe I should be working at: bringing more of these records back, or copies of them.

This week I had a query from someone who wondered if an ancestor in the Dornoch area had suffered in the Meikle Ferry disaster in 1811 when over 100 people drowned. We have the subscription book from the fundraising, and it lists all the persons drowned by name and then members of their families.

Finally regard the physical descriptions of people, in a ruinous house in the High Street, which I think I think a customs house, in

the attic were found some records. I scrambled around trying not to put my foot through the ceiling (having done that once at a solicitor's office when the solicitor was sitting below) and there was a whole lot of record cards of naval volunteer reserves prior to WWI and a list by name - Alexander Brown, 18 Brown Street, Inverness, fair, brown and a physical description; William Macaskill, describing even the scars on his knuckles and index finger and his tattoos. Accompanying these were one or two letters from relatives.

Many of these court cases as well as these other records show how the past can be made to live.

HEIRLOOM NIGHT
(Held on 25th February 1992)

Members had been invited to bring along heirlooms, not necessarily of genealogical significance, and to give a short informal talk about their background to the audience. As the evening was such a success it is to be repeated on the 26th January, when we hope more members will bring along some of their treasured mementoes.

Donald Maclean of Dochgarroch

This is a leather postbag, I think in use somewhere between 1837 and 1839, marked A. Maclean, Dochgarroch. Allan Maclean was born in London in 1790, the son of a soldier who bought him a commission in the Argyll Fencibles at the age of four. He was an ensign, or in modern terms a 2nd lieutenant, but when his regiment was sent to Ireland, he couldn't go and his name was rubbed off the register.

When he was ten his father had retired from the army to live at Dochgarroch, so Allan was evidently educated at Inverness, but he got a job in the Royal Naval Pension Office at Greenwich, where his uncle Lachlan Maclean was the boss. When he was 42 Dochgarroch was sold, but Allan was allowed a 7-year lease on it and he retired from Greenwich five years later (i.e. 1837), which is why I know the dates this postbag was in use, and succeeded his father as Chieftain a couple of years later.

He was a Senior Bailie, and eventually became a director of the Royal Academy, and of the Infirmary, and an elder of the West Kirk. He died in the Old House of Drummond in 1876 when he was 86 and was buried in Prior's Yard.

(The postbag itself was lockable, with a key in the post office and one at the home. The postie would carry one bag to the house, and would swap it with another to take away the outgoing letters.)

Dorothy Booth

This (in its leather case) is a telescope which belonged to a famous marksman: Pte McVittie of the Langholm Volunteer Corps, so he was a Borderer. The inscription on it reads "The Regimental Prize won by Robert McVittie Sept 9th, 1865" in Manchester.

On this family tree here is Robert, in the family always called 'Bob the Shot'. He was born in 1839, and his father was brother to my great grandmother. When his wife died there is a story that all twelve of their children stood around the bedside, and after that he married again and had another half dozen, so it makes tracing the McVittie tree complicated to put it mildly.

This book by my great grandfather, "Langholm As It Was", in the section 'Some Eskdale Men', gives quite a bit about him. He was known throughout the world as one of the most famous rifle shots in the British Isles and won many important prizes. As early as 1869 he shot for Scotland in international matches.

In 1876 he was one of the representatives of Scotland at the centennial matches in New York when America, Scotland, Canada, Ireland and Australia competed in the most famous rifle match in the history of long-range shooting. On the first day Scotland led, and McVittie was top scorer with 209 out of a possible 235, the biggest score in a long-range match and the third largest on record. This portrait was taken on that occasion, and that is the rifle he used.

He was quite an imposing man altogether. During his various visits to America the press made much of this marksman, including reporting interviews he hadn't had and photographs for which he had not sat. One paper described him as English, and the best shot in England. The Scottish-American Journal at once corrected this, saying that he was a Scotsman, and best shot in Great Britain. In 1885 the Volunteer Record surveyed its readers for the best all-round shot in the world and McVittie headed the list by an enormous majority.

He moved to Toronto and his prowess with the rifle was recognised in the Canadian press. He won many important prizes in Toronto and Ottawa, and more than once shot at Bisley in the Canadian team.

My grandfather as a boy used to accompany McVittie to meetings, and spot or mark for him using this telescope to tell the marksman whereabouts his shot had hit the target so he could adjust for the next one. He was very proud of this honour. In 1917 he was in Ireland and with the war on there were no passages across the Atlantic for civilians so he stayed with relatives, and I think that's when he gave the telescope to my grandfather. He died in 1918.

Barrie Tulloch

First, this is one of the (carriage) lamps off the spring cart my husband's grandparents used when they went to church seven miles away at Auldearn. My sister-in-law has the other. You can see that it still has a candle in it, I think bought in a shop because the ones they made on the farm themselves were a yellow colour.

My husband's aunt gave me this brooch and told me never to part with it. She had it from her aunt when she was 18, and had been born in 1879. She knew nothing about its history, and when she went to Raigmore Hospital in Inverness to have her eyes tested a coloured doctor was surprised to see her wearing it, and explained what the various stones represented. I have found out since that it represents the ancient Egyptian Ma'at, Goddess of Righteousness and Truth. This is a picture of Aunt Liz wearing the brooch. She worked for the government in Regina and was there during the First World War, but came back and married in 1920.

Hamish MacLennan

This is a sampler. It is dated 1889 and has the name Lizzie Inglis and was done by a great-great aunt of mine. The symbol on it looks like an '8', which may have been her age when she did it. She was daughter to a gamekeeper in Stratherrick. I have traced the Inglis's, not a Highland name, and I found them in 1829 in Alness in Strathruisdale. They must have come up with the sheep. They were in Lochcarron in the 1830s and I wondered how they got there from Strathruisdale, especially with wife and child.

Anyway, it was said that two sons went to New Zealand, and I know that one came to Kiltarlilly, and brought his parents with him. Lizzie was housemaid at Killin or Strome Lairg Lodge, Stratherrick and she fell in love with a valet there, Robert Francis. She was only 16 or 17 when they went off together. They travelled about a bit and settled in Sussex, where my father visited them during the war. Lizzie's son Gerald started visiting us when he was in Perth and headed for Inverness where he believed he had relatives, and from the early 1950s he had holidays here. He ultimately retired to here and this sampler is one of the things I inherited.

Elizabeth Sutherland

My heirloom is very small, a tiny lock of hair. It came with other bits and pieces to me when my aunt died, she was unmarried like many of my mother's family. The name Hobbs on the label is a clue. My research led me to discover that the hair actually

belonged to Ann Johnson who married Paul Hobbs in the little village of Medmenham on the Thames. The minister there had been very interested in old records and published a book, giving an illustration of a page from 1758 of the Medmenham register. Quite by chance on the page was the marriage of Ann and Paul!

They had a daughter who married her first cousin and Ann went to live with Hannah after her husband's death. She died in 1822 and the lock was found in her effects. The label says "Ann Hobbs, died February 22nd, 1822, aged 88" and on the back is written "Grandmother". Then a cousin Mary who, having no family, wrote to my aunt saying she ought to have it, being somewhat younger. My aunt also had no family so passed it to me.

I knew nothing about Mary until by chance I found in the 'member's interests' in the Wiltshire Family History Magazine the entire Chilvers family, so we now have a link with that family and keep in regular touch.

Willie Fraser

I had these beautiful silk postcards framed, after they had been in a drawer for years and years. They were sent home from France in the First World War by my uncle, to my mother and aunt. He was in the Royal Scots.

(Willie passed around the embroidered silk postcards for us to admire. The tape recording is unclear at this point.)

Mary Murray

For a long time we couldn't find my gt-gt-grandfather. My great grandmother unfortunately married in England, so all her marriage certificate says of him is "William Campbell, Soldier". The Wick census told us she was born in Kent, and that was that. Then one day when visiting my mother she came out with a fragile, folded paper saying "I think you should have this" and at the bottom was William Campbell, Colour Sergeant, 72nd Highlanders.

The letter describes a visit to Lisbon to Gibraltar, and the various places they visited until they arrived in Britain and then were sent to Ireland. Next step his papers: by trade a baker, born North Church parish, Edinburgh, attested for the 72nd on 21st September 1839 at the age of 16 9/12 years, and this took us to the OPR where we found he was the son of James Campbell, printer, and Christian Reid, born 11th January 1823. Good, we were getting somewhere.

I had been told that my gt-grandmother was one of 17 children and we had hoped that his papers would tell us where he had been

stationed, and we'd find where the other children had been born, we knew of eight of them through my mother. No such luck. There was William born in Aberdeen and then a big gap until after he came out of the army and a census says that two of them were born in England, but where? Two other daughters born in Aberdeenshire and another in Leith. His obituary in an Edinburgh newspaper tells a little more about him: drill-instructor in various places, in 1874 joined 1st Midlothian Rifle Volunteers, medal from 72nd for long service and good conduct. But nothing about the children.

We have gone all over Scotland where we think the military could be. His wife was Irish and he married her in Ireland in October 1846. The letter was dated June 1846, so we know he didn't waste much time when he got there.

----- 0 0 0 -----
Lorraine Maclean of Dochgarroch

(Lorraine produced a small turned wooden wand)

This is a picture of an "Ancient tree on the site of Temple" in Glenurquhart from the book 'Urquhart and Glenmoriston' by Doctor William. It is now accepted that St Ninian, sensible chap, came to the Glen in the 4th century, and the story is that he sat under that ash tree, but I think it is more likely to be the child of the child of the child of the one he sat under.

In the 1930s they wanted to improve the road and stuck more or less in the middle was the ash tree and none of the locals would put a finger to it. Eventually the only thing they could do was to bring workmen all the way out from Inverness, and they chopped it down. Captain Willie was passing on his lawful business and managed to get some of it, which he had turned, and gave me a bit of St Ninian's Tree.

Now that I have unearthed it, I shall get a little silver plaque stuck on it otherwise it could easily be thrown away unrecognised.

----- 0 0 0 -----
Jonathan McColl

The chap in this drawing was not a Scot, but Irish and proud of it. William Potter was my mother's great grandfather. When he was 16 he joined the Royal Navy as he "wasn't going to be a clochopper all (his) life." Those were his very words, I remember them well.

As my passion for family history got around I started finding out who had what heirlooms, and I now have two of the three medals you can see on his chest, and part of those binoculars. Here is

another photo of him as a younger chap. Are any of you brilliant at naval uniforms so that you can tell me what his rank was, or when it was taken?

William composed poems. His son wrote them out again and the notebook now belongs to an Australian cousin who sent me copies. He pattered about the world in the Navy and after twenty-odd years of that he retired to Co. Wexford in Ireland to become the clochopper after all. He was one of the coxwains of the local lifeboat for the next 25 years too. I've seen pictures of those lifeboats: they went off to sea in a row boat, with five pairs of sweeps to move it, and only went out when there was more water up in the air than underneath. On one occasion in 1877 the Austrian barque Nanta left Glasgow (I had to bring in a Scottish connection somewhere) and it hit the sandbanks off Cahore.

They tug at the oars, every muscle they strain;

But the tide is against us, we see;

And also the storm and the cold pelting rain;

As well as the heave of the sea.

And the other thirty verses are in the same vein. Reading them you can just see the wooden boat stuck on the bars and moving up, down, back and forwards and the rowboat going up and down, and how could anyone have the nerve to jump except that they knew the choice was of the devil or the deep, blue sea.

For his part in rescuing thirteen Austrians the Emperor Franz Josef of Austria-Hungary sent him this Silver Medal of Merit which my uncle with his great respect for antiques used as a keyfob for years. William also got a few quid, some of which he blew on this portrait photograph with his wife, and when I look at her I can see why he went to sea for 50 years.

These are the binoculars from the drawing, missing their extensions and some of the leather coating. I can imagine using them to spot that ship on the sandbank. The poem misses the family rumour (and so does Franz Josef's declaration of his pleasure in sending the medal) that William was blind drunk when he went out, although I dare say that by the time he was finished he had well and truly sobered up. He is also said to have returned for the ship's cat.

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Neil Murray

Here is an old photograph showing an oldish man outside his shop: D R Williamson, Grocer and Spirit Merchant, in Lerwick. The young girl next to him is my grandmother and he is her stepfather. This watch is his, and appears in all the photos we have of him. We also have other bits and pieces of his, his vesta box, ring and such.

What was special about him? He was spoken about with affection because he sold the best beer in the whole of Shetland, I am told on good authority. The first memory I have is being in his house in Lerwick; he had died in 1922 but his wife was still living in it.

He was born in Burravoe in Yell in 1845. He went to sea for several years and then worked for the Leith Dock Commission for several more. Afterwards he came to Lerwick and purchased those premises, the 'Cockstool', to carry on business for 30 years and he extended the building substantially. Then the enlightened planners in the 1970s demolished the beautiful house. It overlooked the harbour and Bressay Sound. When he retired, he returned to Burravoe where he had built a house called 'Fairview', and he also spent three or four months a year in Leith.

His brother was master of the St Giles, one of the North boats plying between Aberdeen and Shetland. In September 1902 he wrecked the ship off Rattray Head in Aberdeenshire and the newspapers carried the story in detail. Another relative grounded the St Sunniva, another of the ferries, off Mousa in the 1930s. He'd been caught in fog, as had Capt Williamson off Rattray, and thought he was off the Fair Isle, not Mousa.

By all accounts D R Williamson was a pleasant man and I have fond memories of his house, and his wife, my gt-grandmother, lived to a great age so I had more tales of him from her.

So things like this ordinary watch, not worth very much at all, are priceless really and part of the family.

AM I ON A LUCKY STREAK?

Following my success in finding American cousins, which I recounted in "There's Always Tomorrow's Post" in the previous journal, I have had yet another piece of good fortune.

When my great grandparents James Durran and Elizabeth Robertson married in 1859 one of the witnesses was Donald Banks. Seven years later he married Janet, a younger sister of Elizabeth. On the marriage certificate his address is given as Pleasant Side, New Zealand and I naturally assumed that, following the marriage, they had emigrated there. Over the years I have tried without success to find evidence to confirm this.

When Mrs Christina Mitchell joined the Society a month ago I noticed she lived in Mount Pleasant Road in Wellington, NZ. I wrote to her mentioning Donald's name and asking if Pleasant Side rang a bell with her. It didn't but she knew someone who was researching Banks from Calthness! She has supplied me with the date of arrival and the name of the ship Donald first went out on in 1861. Then in a postscript she casually mentions that a Daniel Banks and his wife Jessie Robertson are buried in Rangiora!!

OLD PETTY CHURCH by Gael Thompson

I was very interested in the comments under CURIOSITIES in PETTY OPR in the previous edition of the Journal. Although my great-great grandfather John Mackintosh owned and lived in Garlick Hill Farm house in Auldearn where his eleven children were born (the youngest my great grandfather who was resident in the name of Henry Horsley Robinson Mackintosh you in more detail some day soon!) his origins were 'of Petty'. The complexities of trying to establish which of the many John Mackintoshes born in the time period was my John is a story, in itself, but here I would like to point out my difficulties in finding the 'old Church' of Petty.

Whilst visiting the area in the summer of 1989 we were staying with friends at Clava Cairns. My time was rapidly running out. We had spent the day visiting farms in the Auldearn area, of family significance and also visited Culloden field. I mentioned to my hosts about 9pm about my sadness at not having got to see Petty Church and Cemetery. They advised me to go now as there were still many hours of daylight left.

We did, but had quite a frustrating experience. Our hosts had told us the exact location, but on arrival at the Church, it was too modern, and had a very 'new' cemetery. Down a small road opposite we could see houses. I went and knocked at the door and an elderly gentleman came out. For the next twenty minutes we tried to 'communicate' - it was almost impossible with my New Zealand accent and his very pronounced, should I say, Scottish 'burr'.

We could have been talking an entirely different language! Fortunately I remembered - speak slowly! The miracle happened - suddenly there was a dawning of understanding between us and he redirected me via Castle Stuart and up the hill. But still we couldn't find it. We found signs to Fisherton and Wester Dalziel both places of interest in my family history, but for ages not the Church. We were about to give up in sheer disgust when my husband said perhaps the steep 'driveaway' we keep passing might lead somewhere.

We tried it, found a sharp left turn around a hedge at the top and felt we were in somebody's private property, but then around the next turn was the Church. What a magnificent looking building. We were very impressed with the churchyard too. By far the best maintained that we had found. Unfortunately though nothing that tied in with our family history.

We were quite disappointed to find 'For Sale' signs on the Church, and also to realise that it was derelict. I wondered why the church was abandoned. It looked to be in such good condition except for all the broken windows, and the signs that

said 'Do Not Enter - Dangerous'. Had it perhaps been desecrated?

The location of Old Petty Church does not appear on Ordnance Survey maps and there is no signposting whatsoever to guide the visitor to the area. It is a very important Church in terms of local history - could not a move be made to have directions of some sort erected to help the hapless tourists?

THE 1881 CENSUS PROJECT

We're looking for volunteers to help computerise the entire 1881 census. The Genealogical Society of Utah is a non profit-making organisation supported by the LDS church and has been running the operation for a few years down south, and it has now arrived here. They ask FHSs to act as local organisers and I'm it for us. At home I have nearly a thousand batches of photocopies from the microfilms of the enumerators' lists and each one needs to be copied in nice neat capital letters onto standard forms for someone else to check and someone else again to type into a computer somewhere. Each batch contains a few hundred names and some are clearer than others, but no-one's in a desperate hurry.

Aside from me, I have only a couple of volunteers at the moment for transcribing or checking, so if you'd like a batch (or twenty!) let me know. The batches I have are all for the parishes in the entire counties of Inverness and Ross (including Lewis, Harris, the Uists and Small Isles), Sutherland and Gathness and a chunk of Nairn, so you are welcome to request those which especially interest you and I will try hard to accommodate you.

Orkney has been distributed to various transcribers already and Shetland is in the hands of the Shetland FHS. The Glasgow and West of Scotland has Argyll, so contact those societies for those parishes. I'm Jonathan McColl and my address is 13 Mill Street, Dingwall, Ross-shire IV15 9PX.

As the expense of posting is so significant, and the GSU isn't paying it, it would be far easier if you were perhaps to belong to a local history society or some such and therefore might care to coordinate your own collection of volunteers in the transcribing of all the returns for your area; if so, just say. To live near a fish-farm can be an advantage as I can generally arrange delivery and collection fairly easily and I'm sure the haulage contractors I use won't mind in the slightest being used as collection points, although I haven't asked them yet.

The project is estimated to take maybe three years to do so let's get on with it and we will reap the benefit with fiches of the database sorted by surname/forename, surname/birthplace surname/census place and census place volume/ enumeration district, all by county and there will be a national index too.

MEMBER'S RESEARCH INTERESTS

943 Miss Morag Mathewson, 4 Byrdock Close, Lightwater Surrey GU18 5YP
Researching MacLEOD in Halkirk pre-1827; DOUGLAS in Bower pre-1833 and MILL in Bower pre-1833. Especially interested in children of John MacLEOD & Elizabeth MacLEOD c1825; George DOUGLAS & Janet MILL c1830 and John MacLEOD & Elizabeth DOUGLAS c1860.

944 Mr Ray McDermott, 10 Thomas Street, Preston 3072 Victoria, Australia
Researching McDIARMID in Kincardine 1800+ and in Assynt 1840+ and McLEOD in Kincardine 1800+.

945 Miss Margaret Souter, 8 Hamilton Crescent, Elgin Morayshire IV30 2NW
Researching McDONALD in Ardelach and Edinkillie 1760-1840; STROTHER in Forres and Petty 1800-1900; TOLMIE in Petty 1770-1850 and SOUTER in Alves 1750-1900.

946 Mr Peter Macrae, 9 The Heights, Foxgrove Road, Beckenham Kent BR3 2BY
Researching MACRAE, McRAE or McGRA in Kilmorack, Killarilly, Kirhill, Killearnan and Urray 1800-1890; in Inverness, Urquhart, Croy & Dalcross, Petty and Cawdor 1820-1860 and in Nairn and Forres 1860-1940; MACRAES in Strathglass 1400-date; SMITH in Inverness/Dores 1800-1860; WILSON in Inverness 1800-1860; FRASER in Daviot and Cawdor 1850-1870; MACKENZIE in Urray, Urquhart & Easter Ross 1800-1850; TOLMIES in Black Isle 1800-1899; ALEXANDER in Forres/Edinburgh 1800-1890; GORDON in Duthil/Rothesmurchus 1740-1820 and CHISHOLM in Strathglass 1200-date. General interest in MACRAES worldwide and particularly interested in CHISHOLM and MACRAE with Strathglass origins.

947 Miss Isobel F White, 32 Clarendon Road, Linlithgow EH49 6AN
Researching FRASER in Petty 1750+ and BARRON in Kirhill 1750+. Also interested in the history of Newton Post Office and East Kerrogair Farm, both in the parish of Petty.

948 Mrs Norah Parry-Davies, Vallima, Stoke Climsland Callington, Cornwall PL17 8NY
Researching GRANT in Parish of Abernethy pre-1803; ANDERSON in Carbridge c1850 and FRASER ??? c1850.

949 Mr D P Ross, 104 Hargham Road, Attleborough, Norfolk NR17 2HQ
Researching MACLEOD in Thurso and Halkirk c1857.

950 Mrs Morag Phillip, Kinnudie Farm, Auldearn, Nairn

Researching FRASER in Bona/Abriachan, Lochend c1809; MACKENZIE in Gairloch c1827; GRIEVE in Inverness-shire? c1823; MACKAY in Farr c1812 and CAMPBELL in Farr? c1812.

951 Mr William D MacMillan, 'Enrick', 16 Woodside Drive
Forres, Moray IV36 0UF
Researching MACMILLAN in Glenurquhart back to early 1700s.

952 Mrs Helen M McCorquodale, 'Marchmont', 13 Dalnabay
Silverglades, Aviemore PH22 1QD

953 Mrs Leonie MacDonnell, 14 Lansdowne Street, Sale 3850
Victoria, Australia

Researching MACDONELL in Glengarry in the 1700s. Donald MacDONELL is said to have been the 7th laird of Lundie and his 3rd wife a "MacDONALD from Islay". They had at least two sons Allan & John and the family emigrated to Canada in the early 1700s, settling in Martintown.

954 Mrs Mary H Leitch, 46 Millburn Gardens, Largs
Ayrshire KA30 9NF
Researching a number of names - BREWSTER in Nigg / Fearn / St Madoes, Perthshire and Ontario; ROSS in Tarbat; HENDRY in Fearn; JACKSON in Kinnoull / Nigg and Fearn; FORBES in Dundee and Redgorton, Perthshire; GARDINER in Redgorton / Garmouth, Moray; ANDERSON in Redgorton; DRUMMOND in Kilrenny.

955 Mrs Joan Henshilwood, 20 Mirrlees Drive, Glasgow G12 0SH

Researching McPHERSON/MCAULLY/BRUCE in Loth; MATHESON in Helmsdale and Laing; BRUCE in Helmsdale. All for the period 1800+.

956 Mrs Flora Campbell, 1 St Clement Avenue, Dunblane
Perthshire FK15 9DC
Researching (1) in Sutherland - MACKAY in Farr 1750-1800; MACKENZIE in Strathnaver 1700-1800; MACLEOD in Assynt 1750-1830; (2) in Ross-shire - UROUHART in Poolawe 1780-1850; MACDONALD/MACLEAN in Inverasadale up to 1860; ROSS in Gairloch 1800-1900; MUNRO in Poolawe 1800-1900.

957 Miss C M Moore, 13 Spottiswoode Street, Edinburgh EH9 1EP
Researching MOORE/MOIR/MOOR in Dunnet and Olrig pre-1855; MOORE in Creich 1855+; DUNSCAN in Clyne pre-1830; MURRAY in Creich pre-1855; DENON in Creich pre-1820.

958 Ms Catriona Stirring, 15 East Champanyie, Edinburgh EH9 3EL
Researching McDONALD in Bower and Reay c1850; ROSS in Kincardine c1770, Tain c1850 and Edderton c1820; AIRD in Kilmuir Easter and Logie Easter c1820; ROSE in Fearn 1780-1860 and Tarbat 1850+; MCKENZIE in Invergordon c1820; MCKAY Kilmuir Easter 1790+; FRASER

in Resolis 1769+; MUNRO in Nigg c1777; FERRIER in Dornoch c1820; MARCHDALE/MARSHALL in Dornoch c1820.

959 Mr Angus W Bethune, Cuidrach, 5 The Meadows
Muir of Ord IV6 70L
Researching BETHUNE in Dingwall, Fodderty and Urray pre-1855; CLOW (from Perthshire) in Snizort, Isle of Skye pre-1855.

960 Dr David Seaton, 67 Swanston Avenue, Edinburgh EH10 7DA
Researching FLETCHER in Argyll 1700-1825; McDONNELL or McDONALD in Argyll 1700-1825; MORRISON, MUIR, CLARK and GALBRAITH in Campbelltown 1700-1799.

961 Mr Donald Lockhart, 1732 North Troy Street, Apartment 743
Arlington, Virginia 22201, U.S.A.
Researching LOCKHART in Nairn, Ardclach and Glenferness. His grt-grt grandfather was a bobbin maker named John LOCKHART, who lived in Glenferness in the 1870s and is buried in Forres.

962 Mrs Lucille Campey, "Long Acre", 41 Lanvaair Drive
South Ascot, Berkshire SL5 9LW
Interested in all Scots who emigrated to Canada during the period 1770 to 1870.

963 Mr Earl R Ross, 30750 Ivyglen Court, Bingham Farms
Michigan 48025 U.S.A.
Researching ROSS in Cawdearg and Greenyards, parish of Kincardine; MacGREGOR/MACKAY in Kincardine; MACKENZIE, MACRAE, MATHESON and MACLEAN in parishes of Lochalish, Kintail and Glenshiel.

964 Mrs Joyce Irvine, 5 Rosebery Street, Aberdeen AB2 4LN

965 Mr James McPherson, 129 Friars Croft, Kirkintilloch
Glasgow G66 2AX
The West of Scotland representative of the Clan McPHERSON Association. He would be happy to receive any information with special interest of McPHERSON's in Craignish, Glassary and Isle of Mull. Anyone asking for information should send a SAE. His own research interests are, in addition to the above, CAMPBELL in Craignish & Glassary in Argyll pre-1800; MCKIGGAN in North & South Uist 1800-1900; McLEAN in North Uist c1868; McMASTER in Morvern c1830; in the Glasgow area McINNIS in Gorbals c1813; Milton c1859 and Anderston c1865; McPHERSON in Lightburn pre-1883 and Parkhead pre-1938.

966 Mr Iain Fergusson Fraser, 31 Raillies Avenue
Brisbane Glen, Largs, Ayrshire KA30 80Y
Researching FRASER in Inverness pre-1800; McBEAN in Inverness pre-1858 and HARDIE in Ardersier? pre-1854.

967 Mr David J Dunbar, HQ AAFCE, BFP0 109

