

# bíoblaíocht fíamháil bíoblaíocht fíamháil



# comunn sloinntearachd na gaidhealtachd

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Comunn Sloinntearachd na Gaidhealtachd

## HEIRLOOM NIGHT

(Held on 26th January 1993)

### **Gordon Richardson**

This is a relic of a past social custom, quite active until about 60 years ago. A card case for visiting cards. The same thing used now by businessmen with name and address. A man had a small card and a woman had a big card. You used it on going on social visits and you left your card to show that you had called. The recipient was normally expected to return the call.

Some lady had this reasonably elaborate case. The pencil is still there, still got lead in it. A little piece, you could say it was plastic but it is a type of celluloid and you can write on it and rub it off again. This particular one is hall-marked 1897 and has a monogram on it. "H.M.R." was born in 1851, a granddaughter of a not-very-important laird in the East Neuk of Fife and she married my grandfather in 1879 to become my grandmother in due course. She lived until 1936.

This photo was taken a long time before this was done I think, perhaps not so very long after her marriage. The house, which is now occupied by my first cousin once removed, was built by my grandfather at the time of his marriage. He is the great grandson of this couple and the last time I was there that chair was still in the house. So it gives it a certain amount of interest.

It is an interesting curio and a nice little piece of silver.

### **Donald Maclean of Dochgarroch**

Well my family heirloom isn't as old as that because it is 1913. Silver watch, which was given to me by my Uncle Charlie when I started school at the age of 8. The watch has had two rather interesting experiences. When I was in Oxford it fell out of my pocket into the river, over the edge of the barge. Fortunately there was a boatman who got some machine to look into the water and, as he saw my watch, the mud covered it. He just saw it in time and so rescued the watch.

Then ten years later I had it propped up against the window in the bathroom. The window opened and it fell out and that time it had to go to be repaired. It is still going very well. It has got my initials on the back and I keep it on the table by my bed and, as I wind it up every night, I think of my kind Uncle Charlie.

Charles Foster of a Northumberland family, was a naval architect and designed ships. He was 48 years old. He had

retired from being a naval architect when he married my Aunt Jessie in 1911. I was a little boy at the wedding, 5 years old. I remember the occasion. My little brother and I were dressed up in naval suits and were pages at the wedding. Uncle Charlie died 10 years later in 1921 at the age of 58 and Aunt Jessie survived him for about 40 years. She died in Barbados, where she had settled, at the age of 85.

Charles Foster's one passion in life was heraldry. He was a very good kind uncle and he taught me the rudiments of heraldry, which I have enjoyed ever since. He was a marvellous designer writer. We have his books all hand written by him. I have brought one along to show you. It has got coats of arms, inscriptions underneath, all done by hand with never an error.

A wonderful man and very very kind and so that is my heirloom about Charlie Foster.

### **John Durham**

I have brought along three heirlooms which relate to a man with the same name as myself, whose untimely death by drowning at the relatively young age of 27 has an element of mystery about it which has fascinated me for some time.

Coincidentally the first heirloom is, like the previous one, a silver watch. On closer examination the hallmarks on the case and the back of the watch do not tie up. This discrepancy gives an indication of the date of the tragedy. The main part of the watch is hall-marked 1887, whereas on opening the back we find it was made in 1892. The initials on the back, JD, are still those of the owner but, as he was no longer alive in 1892, could be those of his father James.

My second heirloom is the Masters Certificate granted to John at Greenock in May 1887. I suspect that, as this date is the same as the earlier hallmark, the watch was almost certainly a present from James to his son on gaining the certificate at the relatively young age of 24.

The third heirloom is a card which announces the impending departure of the steamer "Morven" from the Eastern London Dock for the British West India Islands in March 1890. The next the family heard of John was a telegram from the owners of the "Morven" informing them that their eldest son had drowned off the island of St Kitts on May 3rd. That date is also my birthday and the coincidence is another reason for my wanting to find out more about the incident.

Last year I went to the Guildhall in London to look at the maritime records that are held there. They showed that John had been the master of the "Morven" since 1888. That year it had

been to the West Indies and the South Pacific and, in the following year, to the Baltic and the White Sea where he had run aground and only got off 10 days later.

When the ship went aground on May 3rd 1890, he was the only member of the crew to perish. I suspect that a cousin of my father was close to the truth when, while reminiscing about the family, she wrote "... John, ship's captain, who went down with the ship in the traditional way and is buried in St Kitts".

The watch was on his body when he died and was returned to his father with his other possessions. Quite possibly the back was damaged at the time and his father had it replaced in 1892 once he had recovered from the devastating news of the loss of his eldest son of whom he must have been very proud.

When I retire, it is my intention to visit St Kitts and see if I can find out what really happened on that fateful day over 100 years ago. Did Captain John die accidentally or was the fact that having run the vessel aground for the second time in a year preying on his mind? The possible loss of his certificate may have led him to take the honourable way out.

Laurie Draper

I will probably make the loudest noise with this one. (A gong).

I know very little about it. It was given to me by a great aunt not too long before she died. She was born in the 1860's and it was a wedding present from her mother. My part of the family lost contact with the main part of the family because my grandfather was killed by one of his own horses in 1910 and my grandmother had no connection with the rest of the family.

My grandfather's family were fairly extensive land owners in Staffordshire and Leicestershire. My grandfather was a manager of the family mill and he also ran the local taxi service. He was taking some boys back to college in Leicester and he opened the gates, took the horses through, shut the gate, went back and one of the horses bolted and he was killed. My grandmother was left with six children and my great grandfather died shortly afterwards, it is said from shock at having lost his favourite son and my grandmother lost contact for whatever reason. I suspect the "I am not accepting charity" philosophy. Virtually no money came from the Draper family to my grandmother and she struggled desperately with six small children and that was the end of contact with the main family until I managed to open it up again just temporarily.

When I first had a car in the 1950s I thought I would really like to go and see these people, my Great Uncle Andrew and Aunt

Brenda. She said "I am terribly delighted to meet you and I am terribly sorry to tell you that you don't figure in our will, would you like this?" Andrew was the youngest by a long way of that family. None of the others were alive. So at least it was nice to meet him.

MARY JONES (Essex)

I always wear my locket so I have got an heirloom in that. The locket itself is a very recent present that was given to me by my dear husband with my great grandmother inside it, is definitely an heirloom, except that this is a recent copy of a photograph which was not left to me. I come from a quite large family and this lady had five children and they had between them about twenty more and isn't family history marvellous the way you link up again with people who you tend to have forgotten?

I let it be known that I was researching the history of the ancestors in general and that I had just found out something about Adelaide Mitchell and one cousin said "Oh, I've got a photograph of her".

She was born about 1840 and we know she lived till around 1910, so we think she was about fifty in this picture. She herself is wearing a locket with a chain, right down here. My cousin Myra inherited that locket from Grandma who had inserted in it this photograph of Adelaide, who was her mother.

I started looking for Adelaide Mitchell in 1840. Found one for the right year and thought I had better look at all these Mitchells and see and there was yet another Adelaide Mitchell in the same quarter but in a different area and I thought, "Oh, two in 1840. I had better look through the other quarters and make sure". Sure enough before I had finished I had got three Adelaide Mitchells all born in the same year.

I know how I solved that one. I had also inherited a tiny little birthday book and in that book was Adelaide Peasman, her later married name, with her birthday in December and that was the only one of the three that was in December. I don't know how I would have cracked it otherwise. On the other side of the locket I have got our own family. We have two or three more grand children since then and now I am wondering when this will become an heirloom.

This one is very very special. It was taken in the summer of 1949 and it is my parents and my brothers and sisters and spouses and children. My parents had twelve children and this is the only snap that we have ever had taken of the whole family all together. We have had many family photographs taken since and a few before but always someone has been missing.

Someone was ill, someone was in South Africa. Someone was work and couldn't be released and had to stay and so on and this is also special as it was just a few years before my father died and all my brothers had come back from the war.

They had all been doing either war service or war work in various capacities and they had fortunately all come back. We all got together in the garden of the house where my parents had lived since 1910 when father built it and sitting on the grass here with the big brother sitting in the front and the grand children because he was taking the photograph. One of those early ones when you could set the time switch and hurry up and sit down and there it is.

#### Dorothy Booth

This old bible has been in the family for ten generations - I am the eleventh. My gt-grandfather, John Hyslop, mentions it in his book of reminiscences, and was obviously very proud of it. It originates with the Armstrong branch of my mother's family who lived in the area around Langholm, Dumfriesshire. It was printed in 1664, the date is easier to see at the beginning of the New Testament. It is now very fragile. Inside there is an inscription which says JEAN ARMSTRONG and underneath is ALEXANDER ARMSTRONG (sic) HIS BOOK September 16 1694.

We assume that 1694 was the year in which Alexander died. His son John was born in 1632, so Alexander must have been born sometime in the early 1600s. His name is mentioned in the parish register of Stapelegortoun as a witness at a baptism in 1669 but otherwise nothing more is known. His wife, Priscilla, was the sister of Sir Thomas Armstrong who was executed in 1685 for his part in the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion.

His son John never owned the bible as he pre-deceased his father, but he is quite an interesting character in his own right. The information about him comes from a diarist called Thomas Beattie of Meikledale who wrote a gossipy diary in the late 18th century and he gave a lot of historical details about local families in the 17th century.

About this John Armstrong he writes that "in a drunken frolic" he married Margaret Murray. He also said that he was a very bold, strong and resolute man. He was known to have fought in duels, and he readily joined his uncle, Sir Thomas Armstrong, in Monmouth's rebellion. He managed to escape after the battle of Sedgemoor but after many dangers and perils was eventually captured. Found in his pocket was a Captain's Commission signed by Monmouth, so he was thrown into prison in Edinburgh Castle, where he lay until it was noticed that he was declining. The Earl of Cromartie exerted some influence and got him out of prison and he went home, to die later in 1685.

John's son, Thomas Armstrong inherited the bible when his grandfather died in 1694. Thomas married in 1705 Jean Elliot, daughter of John Elliot of Thorlieshope, and gave the bible to her. Thomas seems to have done quite well for himself and acquired several farms in Ewesdale and Eskdale, some through his marriage. Thomas had a son John, who took over his father's farm of Potholm in the parish of Langholm. He married Margaret Elliot, daughter of Henry Elliot of Lodgehill.

John and Margaret had eleven children and I am descended from number 7, also called John. I don't know why the bible came through this son as he had two older brothers. This John's baptismal entry is interesting: - "1742 July 14 John, son to Mr John Armstrong and Mrs Margaret Elliot". With the baptismal entry there is also a note which says that the titles Mr and Mrs indicated their social status. However the social status didn't last long. Margaret died after eleven children and John married again and had another nine.

It is rather ironical that the John, baptised in 1742 and of good social standing, is described as a farm servant when he marries Mary Telfer in 1768. This John Armstrong eventually died in 1826 at Bloughburnfoot and is described as a shepherd.

John's son James Armstrong was the next owner of the bible. He was a meal dealer and had a shop in Langholm and a carrier's business. He seems to have been an entertaining character from his grandson John Hyslop's account of him in his book. James married Isabella Park and apparently gave the bible to her as she had written her name in it. She died before her husband so James Armstrong gave it to his grandson, John Hyslop, for whom he had a special affection. This John Hyslop is my gt-grandfather. My grandfather Robert Hyslop inherited it on his father's death along with all his papers appertaining to his writings. As my mother and I are only children there hasn't been any problem about inheritance!

#### Lorraine Maclean of Dochgarroch

Mine is a picture of a shipwreck. The painting was done on March 24th, 1898 and she ran aground the night before so it was March 23rd. She was the "China" and it was a scandalous affair altogether. My father's parents were both native-born Australians and they had settled this side. They had been out in Australia with their daughter, visiting the family and one of the uncles had come out in the "China".

She was a brand new ship and it was her first voyage as the flagship of P. & O. The captain was the Commodore of the Line and Uncle Hugh said to the family that she was the most awful boat that he had ever sailed in. She pitched and she rolled and she stood on her nose and nothing would induce them to step on

her again but my grandparents had booked their passage. So in due course off they went on the return leg of the maiden voyage and the 23rd March was the captain's birthday and so he gave a jolly party, to which my grandparents went.

Not everybody was there as there were said to be two men who were walking round the deck and one said to the other "I think we are going to run ashore" and the other said "In that case we would be better at the other end". So they didn't do anything about it but just walked back to the other end. It was quite sensible of them.

The ship was four days ahead of time and forty miles off course. They were belting up into the bottom of the Red Sea and there is a little island in the mouth of the Red Sea just off Aden called Perim and on it at that time a lighthouse with at least two keepers. The duty keeper said to his pal, "Is the light burning". There was this great beacon going round like this you see so his pal said "Sign the book. You are off duty, sign the book to say the light is working". So he wrote down the time and asked "Why?"

"Look out there, there's a great ship rushing up the channel; they are all either mad or drunk on board and they will be ashore in next to no time".

So up came the "China" and rammed her front end onto the rocks and nobody was hurt except the poor "China". Here they are all getting into little boats and being landed. In due course, doubtless on the 24th while Mr Hammond, whoever he may have been, was sitting on a coral rock. "View from the Coral Beach", very particular and he sat and did his little drawing and they all had of course great big Victorian trunks. We have plenty of them at home, great curved tops and they were all opened and inspected and they were all perfectly alright until they got to Granny's.

Granny had got on the top of her box carefully packed a lyre bird's tail. It looks like a lyre and the sailor who opened the box said "If I had known that was on board I wouldn't have sailed".

Shows you how right he was but we had it until my Grandfather died and Granny left the house in 1938 when she thought it would be a pity for us to have bad luck so she had it burnt and shortly after that the great sulphur-crested cockatoo, which was also shipwrecked, he departed to wherever great sulphur-crested cockatoos go to.

His name was Jacko, he survived the shipwreck and he lived on to 1938 but during the 1st War he felt he should do something about it. There was a shortage of this and that and they were all on rations so he laid two eggs. So never say he didn't do his best.

Anyway P&O were terribly ashamed of all this as you can imagine. They ferried off the people to Aden and put them on to any passing ships and got them home. They held the enquiry at Aden, so nobody could get to it. They broke up the "China" faster than you could say 'knife' all except the boilers and if you go sailing, as nobody does now, down the Red Sea to get to Australia, or even India, you will see the boilers of the "China" still sitting there. They never managed to get them off.

Oh yes, the captain of the ship, poor chap, he was retired. From that day to this the captain of an P&O ship never dines with passengers.

(to be continued)

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#### An open letter from Certain Inverness Members to the Membership as a Whole.

We receive enquiring letters from many people, frequently members of the HFHS, but often from non-members who have written to local newspapers, museums, local authorities and even tourist boards. Sadly the letters often come in the form "My gt-gt grandfather, John Mackenzie, came to Ontario from Ross-shire (or even just 'Scotland!') in the middle of the last century, what can you tell me about him?" We say 'sadly' because in an Ross context that name is something like Tom Jones from Wales or John Smith from London, or maybe better, Fred Kryanowski from New York, as the name could be a translation or an anglicisation from another language such as Gaelic or Polish. To turn the highly improbable into the feasible, if we were to be told that one John Mackenzie was 40 when he left Gairloch in 1839, one of us could perhaps have a quick stab at it.

But then we get into the realms of what can we offer? We are not professional genealogists offering a service for money with which to make a living, but people who work at other things during the day and enjoy looking up our family trees at night, and while doing so will often do a bit for someone else who has written nicely to us from a far-off land. After all, we too might need the same help from them one day. The main thing we do as a Society though is to publish the queries, so that someone else, already at work on that line of enquiry, can write to an otherwise unheard-of cousin.

Here are a few other points we find that we need to make quite frequently to hopeful writers from afar.

Always write dates in the form dd-mm-yyyy, that is, like 4 May 1849. We're not being pernickity, we deal in many centuries and

countries here and an American would read 4.5.49 as April 5th, but in which century?

Always give everything you know about the family, not just the parents' names, but uncles, aunts, occupations, places and so on. If you have a marriage certificate giving names of witnesses these might be the clinkers to an identification. Given a choice of Gairloch John Mackenzies, is your one the one with a wife named Janet or the one with a wife named Christian? Does your one have three young children in 1851 or had the family all left in the 1840s? It also does not endear one researcher to another if they find that they have done many hours of looking up reams of records to pin down lots of children and great aunts while being uncertain whether the enquirer knew that much already.

We use the IGI too, it is internationally available so you probably looked it up just like we do, so your search will have found what we find there. It would have been nice if your enquiring letter had mentioned that you had, if you had, so let us assume you hadn't. Birth records prior to 1855 in Scotland and 1837 in England do not exist, only baptism records, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (the Mormons) has published the baptisms from the various old parish registers of the Church of Scotland, which is presbyterian in doctrine. If your family dissented and belonged to a Baptist or Episcopalian church, or was Methodist or Catholic, or after the Disruption of 1843 went with any of the Free Churches, then the records weren't in the old parish registers or the International Genealogical Index. Also, even if burials are recorded in the OPRs, the Mormons have not included them in the IGIs.

The Society has available in Inverness the IGI fiche for the Highlands and Islands counties of Shetland, Orkney, Caithness, Sutherland, Ross & Cromarty, Inverness and bits of Nairn and Argyll too. We also have fiche of an index to the OPRs and are allowed access to the Highland Regional Council's microfilms of the OPRs themselves. All of these records generally speaking go up to the 1870s, so we cannot help with finding your grandparents unless you are 100 years old or more. Write to the Scottish Record Office, HM Record Office, Register House, Edinburgh EH1, for information on non-Kirk ancestors, and always include stamps for the answer.

We never recommend any professional genealogists, although the SRO will happily send you a list, and the only one we will advertise is Alistair MacLeod, who works for the Highland Regional Council and is based in the Reference Room at the main library at Farraline Park. Apply to him for his scale of charges and what he can offer.

If you send us a question, please do not expect an answer at all if you have not sent return postage. Please do not expect a fast answer as we have to fit in with other things, Jonathan

McColl and Loraine McLean live miles outside Inverness so are not there very frequently, even less so with time to do any searching. Please remember the difficulty with which bricks can be made without straw and supply as much straw as you can in the shape of trees or IGI-derived information.

Please make the questions as detailed and specific as you can in terms of family names or years or parishes/villages/estates. If you plan to visit Inverness and would like to meet any of us, please let us know ahead of time, as we have day-jobs or live some distance away. If you go into the library, please remember that Alistair MacLeod charges a fee for his time and works for the HRC, not for us, so do not expect him to drop everything for you, even if you do share an interest in family history. Also, while the library staff remain as always extraordinarily friendly and helpful here, should you wish to use the fiche or films or have access to our own archive, please be prepared to show identification, preferably including our membership card, security is getting tighter all the time.

Please remember, and do tell all your friends too, that we offer the Journal as the ocean-going yacht from which you can throw out your fishing lines. We, the Committee, merely drive the boat.

#### MEMBER'S CHANGES OF ADDRESS

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#### DEATHS

486 Mr Kenneth Finlayson, 'Silverglade', Croy, Inverness

528 Mr John Grant, Ballantruan, 405 Thames Highway, Oamaru,  
North Otago, New Zealand

563 Mr John Nicolson, 2 Hill Place, Thurso, Caithness

967 Mr David J Dunbar, HQ AAFCE, BFPO 109

## SIMPSONS IN THE CANADIAN FUR TRADE

by Donald Whyte

The important part played by Scots in the Canadian fur trade is fairly well-known. The Hudson's Bay Company (hereafter HBCo), chartered in 1670, employed Scots from the 1680's onwards, mainly Orcadians. Their main opposition came from the French, but after the Conquest of Canada in 1759, other trappers began to appear at Montreal. At first they were only in small groups, but in 1783 an alliance was re-organised by Simon McTavish to become the (New) North-West Company (hereafter NWCo). The names of the partners sounded like a roll-call of the Scottish clans, and they became bitter rivals of the HBCo, especially after 1812, when Lord Selkirk organised his colonisation of Red River. After much strife, the two companies formed a coalition in 1821.

### THE MAN AND THE HOUR

Clearly bad feelings continued and there was need for a new and inspiring leader who could unite the factions in a common cause. That commander was found in George Simpson, who became a power in the land and earned the familiar name of "The Little Emperor". Born at Loch Broom, Ross-shire, he was a natural son of George Simpson, himself the eldest son of Rev. Thomas Simpson (1718-86), minister at Avoch. The future fur-trader extra-ordinary was reared by an aunt, Mary Simpson, wife of his paternal uncle, Alexander Simpson, schoolmaster at Dingwall. Of those early years little is known, and although George Simpson became a prodigious letter and journal writer, he tells us nothing about his schooldays.

In 1809 we find him clerking with the firm of Graham & Simpson, sugar-brokers in London. His paternal uncle, Geddes Simpson, was a partner. The firm became Graham, Simpson & Wedderburn. The new partner was Andrew Wedderburn, who assumed by Royal License in 1814 the surname of Colville. He was associated with his brother-in-law, Lord Selkirk, in the scheme to colonise Red River, and like him a partner of the HBCo. Colville was chiefly responsible for bringing George Simpson into the company, and probably assisted his meteoric rise to fame. Andrew Colville was himself Deputy-Governor, 1839-52, and Governor, 1852-56.

### EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD

George Simpson arrived at Montreal, via New York, in 1820, and in May of that year was on his way to the north-west. During the 'outfit' of that year he was stationed at Athabasca, where he experienced the hardships and privations of the fur-trappers. He brought to the rivalry with the NWCo, conspicuous tact, and his ability, shrewdness and energy marked him out for a wider sphere of labour. His talents brought him a spell as Governor of the Northern Department, and in 1821, when the two

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great fur companies merged, he was rightly judged to be the new leader. Accordingly he was appointed Governor-in-Chief of Rupert's Land and General Superintendent of the company's affairs in North America.

Apart from his consummate tact, he was the first leader who fulfilled that duty imposed by the charter: the task of exploration and geographical discovery. To his skilful direction and the eagerness with which he assisted Franklin, Richardson, Ross, Back and other explorers, enormous progress was made. It was he who sent out Dease, Thomas Simpson (his cousin), Rae and Anderson, all of whom received co-operation at trading posts of the HBCo. The profits of the company also increased during his forty years in office.

The merger with the NWCo had placed the entire country north of the US boundary in the hands of the HBCo, and the number of posts steadily increased. In 1840 there were about 110 forts or factories. The HBCo made no attempt to colonise British Columbia until 1843, when Victoria was founded on Vancouver Island. In 1849 the island was granted to the company under the stipulation they should colonise.

### AN EXTENSIVE TRAVELLER

Simpson was no desk-bound executive, but frequently went on long journeys, inspecting posts, and making sure accounts were properly kept. He travelled all over the vast territories, visiting such places as Red River and Norway House (Lake Winnipeg), Moose Factory (James Bay), Athabasca and the Great Slave Lake, Columbia and Vancouver. He saw the country at first hand and shrewdly took stock of personnel. Simpson even kept a 'character book' in which - as in modern personnel systems - appraisals were made.

In 1841, "The Little Emperor" was knighted at London by Queen Victoria, and soon afterwards he went on a trip around the world, via Alaska, Siberia and Russia, sleeping night after night in a jolting carriage. On an earlier trip to London, he had married his cousin, Frances Ramsay, daughter of Geddes Simpson. They had five children. In a land where white women were few and far between, most men in the fur trade had 'country wives', half-breeds or Indians, and Frances stirred up some animosity among those who took Simpson's rejection of a half-bred or Indian wife as a slight upon their own partners. Not that the Governor was averse to such women, having fathered several swarthy children himself.

He seems not to have shown any affection towards the mothers, but he did contribute to the upkeep of his natural children. In his later years Sir George made his home and his headquarters at Lachine, on the St Lawrence, near Montreal. In 1860, the man who had so adroitly controlled the vast business of the HBCo passed away after two apoplectic strokes. He had previously

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#### FOR FURTHER READING

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#### HFHS Family Trees

As a follow up to my notes on the keeping by the Society of a file of family trees, here are a few points brought to my attention, i.e thumped down in front of my nose or across the back of my head.

1. Please mark any submissions to us, preferably on each page, with a clear date so that we know when it was compiled and so that we'll know which ones to supplant when future editions appear.
2. Also add name and address of the supplier, even if the address may not be valid after a few years, for anyone using the resource for their own research will want to contact you.
3. Once I get 'em, they're in our files, but feel free to update them as often or seldom as you like.
4. Every element of our so-called small collection is highly important and the HRC is kindly copying it to hold in a separate cache. Ours is in Farraline Park library.
5. I have decided that I like PAF.
6. The bad news is that we have no-one to answer questions on these trees, especially if no stamped addressed envelope comes with the query, so they are definitely for reference only. I am sadly too aware of the frustration that sentence can give.
7. Here followeth the list of the current collection, just mentioning the surnames involved (in bold for the main ones), but I shall improve with practice and one day specify areas in place and time as well. I have naturally an ordered index of these names.

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entertained the Prince of Wales, and this prompted Chief Trader Jougald McTavish to write: "The little Emperor's light has gone out just after he basked in a final blaze of glory".

#### RELATIVES IN THE TRADE

Like many others in the fur trade, Gaels and Orcadians alike, numerous members of families were involved. Governor George Simpson had three cousins in the service of the HBCo. Aemilius Simpson (1793-1831) was the first of these. He was the son of Alexander Simpson, schoolmaster, by his first wife, Isobel Mackenzie, and had served in the Royal Navy before entering the hard service of the HBCo as a surveyor and hydrographer, in 1826. He served at Red River, Pembina, the Columbia district and Vancouver. On the west coast he captained the HBCo ship *Cadboro*, diverted at one period to help build Fort Langley, on the Fraser River. He was given the rank of a chief trader in 1830, and did valuable work in talks about the partition of the Oregon boundary, and in negotiations with the Russians at New Archangel.

Thomas Simpson (1808-40), a half-brother of Aemilius, joined the HBCo soon after graduating at Aberdeen in 1828. He accompanied his cousin the Governor on his tour of the Southern Department in 1829. After a season as a clerk at York Factory, he served at Red River, where he saw much of his relative, George Simpson, and developed a caustic criticism of him and the company. A vigorous man, desk work irritated him, and he was better suited to scientific exploration. He was appointed a member of an Arctic expedition under Peter Warren Dease, conducted 1836-39, and wrote an account of the exploration. Thomas was given the rank of a chief trader in 1829. Thomas River, in the Yukon, was named after him. He died in mysterious circumstances at Turtle River.

#### TRADER AND AUTHOR

Alexander Simpson, brother-german of Thomas, also served with the HBCo. Born about 1810, he entered the service as a clerk in 1830. He worked at Lachine, Moose Factory (James Bay) and probably in Columbia. In 1839 he was sent to the Sandwich Islands and was promoted to chief trader in 1841.

Alexander was the author of *The Life and Times of Thomas Simpson, the Arctic Explorer* (London, 1845). In this work he accused their cousin, Sir George Simpson, of blocking promotion and exploiting his subordinates' careers for his own personal honour. He also gave it as his opinion that the death of his brother Thomas at Turtle River was caused by half-breeds who believed he carried papers about the much sought-after North-West passage. Some said that Thomas committed suicide, which is unlikely, and it seems much more probable that he was killed by Indians.

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Other people's ways of doing their trees have been arriving. Alistair Cameron from Lorna Doone, I mean Brigadoon, I mean somewhere in Australia, is a great fan of PAF and has used it to great effect, putting my 800-name tree in the shade of his family sequoia. I do hope some of the improvements offered in the latest version will be applied to the Apple Mac program one day.

Angela Finlayson sent me a set of photocopies of Finlayson drop-charts containing hundreds of names from Caithness and which have the added interest of having been started a century and a half ago and been carried on ever since by the family. However, I agree with Angela that its numbering system is too cumbersome (e.g. Fc7(3)1(1)) either to computerize or to extend to other existing trees for a putative combined index.

Another 'family tree' I have been sent on loan is that of two Sutherland brothers, Walter and Joseph, born in the 1750s who emigrated to Canada. It is a hundred-page well-illustrated volume listing hundreds of descendants, coded decimally (e.g. the second child of number 4 is 42), and belongs in the archive of the Clan Sutherland Society in Dunrobin Castle.

#### HFHS TREES FILE

1. Anderson/Bruce, computer listing of 1851 and 1861 census for Caithness. Other names mentioned: Alexander, Bannerman, Bremner, Bruceald, Collins, Cormack, Corner, Creach, Dallas, Davidson, Dunnet, Farmar, Forbes, Fraser, Gardener, Gavinson, Grant, Groat, Hendy, Ireland, Levack, McDonald, McLean, McKay, Manson, Miller, More, Munro, Murray, O'Brien, Phimister, Robertson, Robson, Simclair, Stephen, Sutherland, Taylor, Wares, Whyntie.

2. Cameron, pedigree. Other names mentioned: Campbell, Dunn, Henderson, Johnston, MacDonald, Mackenzie, Maclean, MacPhail, Thornhill.

3. Corbet, pedigree. Other names mentioned: Jones, Nicol, Nicholls, Tebbutt, Woolard.

4. Duncan, PAF family record. Other names mentioned: Hendry, Millar, Sanderson, Snelgrove.

5. Finlayson, drop charts. Other names mentioned: Allen, Alexander, Andrew, Bain, Brims, Bruce, Budge, Clyne, Coghill, Gibson, Howell, Kirk, Manson, Murray, Nicolson, Sinclair, Sutherland, Tait, Taylor, Waters, Whyte, Williams [more to add]

6. Gilbert, pedigree. Other names mentioned: Brittain, Bruce, Clark, Frere, Ilett, Kensey, Rumball, West, Yardley.

7. Ingram, pedigree. Other names mentioned: Alexander, Anderson, Beaton, Booth, Brodie, Cameron, Cheyne, Craib,

Edmonstone, Ferguson, Fraser, Gall, Johnston, McIntosh, McLeod, Mathew, Milne, Morrison, Robertson, Ruddoch, Smith, Taylor, Webster, Wilson, Wright.

8. Jamieson, descendants list. Other names mentioned: Armstrong, Best, Bradshaw, Brenton, Carr, Chisholm, Clark, Cowan, Crane, Grossen, Davis, Finley, Greenwood, Hallowell, Hollinsworth, Holt, Hopkins, Judge, Kellough, Lang, Lowe, Mathieson, Minnicola, Moon, Myles, Nesbitt, Philp, Pipher, Robertson, Rosevear, Stevenson, Sutcliffe, Tapley, Teschekalin, Vandusen, Walker, Warrington.

9. McAskill, drop chart. Other names mentioned: Gillingham, Matheson.

10. McColl, PAF pedigree and family record. Other names mentioned: Alcock, Annesley, Belden, Buchanan, Butler, Corrigan, Curtis, Dunham, Figg, Fisher, Garner, Gathard, Gaut, Groves, Hall, Hollar, Hopcroft, Hunson, Lamb, Leonard, MacQueen, Moxon, Osborne, Paterson, Payne, Peacock, Peel, Potter, Powers, Prigg, Shipley, Smith, Warren, Wilkinson, Woods.

11. McLennan, pedigree. Other names mentioned: Anderson, Bain, Darroch, McLeod, McKenzie, More, Warrilow, Webster.

12. Massey, pedigree. Other names mentioned: Calder, Fowler, Mackay, Ross, Sutherland, Tubb, Waterton.

13. Norrie, PAF family records. Other names mentioned: Benson, Friesen, Goddard, Gossen, Grant, Jackson, Kasper, Lyman, McBean, McEwan, Macilvain, Mackenzie, Morrison, Reid, Rose, Ross, Schroeder, Stronach.

14. Sutherland, drop chart. Other names mentioned: Anderson, Beavis, Bowden, Cullum, D'Arcy, Ellis, Faulkner, Franks, Hadley, Harris, Hempel, Hibberson, Hollister, Hodda, Horton, Jack, Johnson, Jolly, Kent, Kohne, La Fontaine, Luncy, McBean, McFarlane, Mackay, McPherson, Maxwell, Miles, Mulder, Nesbit, Nevin, Peach, Reid, Thomas, Walbran, Watts, Worrall, Wright, Wylie.

15. Turner, pedigree. Other names mentioned: Bain, Carr, Couper, Dreaver, Gibson, Hay, Kent, McFadyen, McGlashen, McKenzie, Morrison, Purves, Seatter, Simson.

16. Wilson, pedigree. Other names mentioned: Haskell, Jamieson, Main, Ralph, Smith, Vass.

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If you are one of those who has watched me struggling with flapping papers in gale force winds while checking the details on the gravestones in St Clement's in Dingwall which Sandy

## I AM ON A LUCKY STREAK!

by John Durham

Those of our readers with nothing better to do may have spent an idle minute or two reading the small pieces I have penned as fillers at the end of articles in previous journals. The point I have been trying to make in these snippets is that family history research takes time and patience and that the answers to questions can come from the most unexpected sources.

"Did they or didn't they?" on the subject of the discrepancy between comments made by the local minister on emigration in the 1841 census and newspaper reports of the time, which I produced for the last journal, is a good example. As a result of it I received a letter from Douglas Cameron (member no 902), whose wife is a MANSON and descended from Anne DURRAN, a sister of my gt gt grandfather, who married a Sinclair MANSON.

In his letter he mentioned that a granddaughter of Sinclair and Anne, Janet (Jessie) DICKSON, had emigrated to Canada in the 1890's in the company of the family of William DURRAN, a carpenter. At this point, those of you who have long memories and are still awake, will immediately exclaim "That is the answer to query no 391 in the February 1991 journal", and you would be right. From a study of the valuation rolls of the period, I knew that William and his family had left Wick between 1892 and 1893 and now I know where they went. I have since discovered that Douglas Cameron had not seen the original query and consequently did not realise the significance of the information he was passing on to me.

In the November 1992 journal I mentioned that, after trying unsuccessfully for a number of years, I had finally established where a Donald BANKS and Jessie ROBERTSON had settled in New Zealand. Christina Mitchell (member no 968) had put me in contact with a Beth Roose, who was researching the name BANKS, and she unknowingly gave me the information that the couple were buried in Rangiora. About 4 weeks ago I received a letter containing a photograph of the gravestone with their great grandson, my third cousin, standing alongside. He had written to Beth Roose and she had passed my name on to him!

As if that wasn't enough excitement, a week previous to that, I received a letter from Australia which started "I noticed in the 1984 Genealogical Research Directory that you were interested in the name TALL". From the little information supplied in the letter it turns out that the correspondent is a fourth cousin. Well worth the wait of nine years.

The past 12 months have brought news of cousins in Australia, Canada and the U.S.A. The need to meet them all will be a good excuse for taking a world cruise when we retire. Genealogically I have had a very lucky year. Perhaps it's your turn next.

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Gillies had noted earlier, why didn't you come in and give either of us a hand instead of shaking your heads sadly, tapping them softly with an index finger, and passing on about your other business?

## HRC & HFHS

The Highland Regional Council has allowed us for many years to use the Reference Room in the main library at Farraline Park as our base. Robert Stewart, the Region's Archivist, also has the Genealogist in Residence, Alistair Macleod, under his aegis and the rising pressure of work has forced them to lay down firm rules of access to services. We share resources in that we own the IGI fiche and census microfilms, the Region owns the OPRs on microfilm and the readers and both own books. Members of the Society and the public may use all, but photocopies of HFHS library material must be paid for (at a reduced rate for the HFHS) and are only permitted with written permission from either the HFHS or the author.

Please note that if you are visiting Inverness there are no concessions to HFHS members who wish to use the Genealogist's consultation periods, he does not belong to us! Please do not be upset if identification is requested when asking for HFHS material, and our membership card will always be a useful thing to carry with you. Finally, you will find that both Archivist & Genealogist have ready welcoming smiles and are very valuable to anyone researching family or local history in the Highlands of Scotland.

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

(on a brass plate inside St Clement's Church, Dingwall)

To the glory of God and in memory of Thomas Wilmor Mackenzie, a native of Ross-shire, who landed in New Zealand in 1840, the first British settler to sleep and hoist the British flag in Wallington. The first newspaper apprentice, and afterwards father of the New Zealand press, founder of the "Independent", the "New Zealand Times", the "New Zealand Weekly Mail", and of the New Zealand press gallery in Parliament, one of the founders of the Home for Aged and Needy, the New Zealand Boys Institute, the Oddfellows Lodge, the Widows and Orphans Society, and the Scotch Church which called Mr McPharlane the first presbyterian minister. One of the first apprentice freemasons, and afterwards Grand Warden of New Zealand Grand Lodge, past president of the Grand Board of Benevolence. Died as he lived, a gentleman and a worthy son of Scotland.

[Jonathan, as a student of things Dingwallian, would like to hear how this chap is viewed in NZ, if he is remembered there too.]

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MEMBER'S RESEARCH INTERESTS

- 991 Mr William D Macdonald, 67 Highburgh Road, Glasgow G12 9EW  
Researching MacDONALD in the Trotternish and Portree areas of Skye and the Strontian, Knapdale and Jura areas of Ardnamurchan in Argyll.
- 992 Mr George Hugh Macdonald, 6 Stewart Drive, Stornoway  
Isle of Lewis PA87 2TU  
Researching MacDONALD in the Kilmorack area from 1745. Able to give general advice on families originating in Stornoway or the Isle of Lewis. Interested in making contact with families connected to Sir Hector A MacDONALD and James Ramsay MacDONALD, Labour's first Prime Minister.
- 993 Mr Ivor S Lowson, Flat 8, Pitkerro Court, 16 Alloway Terrace  
Dundee DD4 8AH  
Researching ROSS in Mey and Wick c1818; REID in Wick c1818 and STEWART/MILLS in Aberdeen c1820.
- 994 Miss Catherine E Benzie, 248 East 3600 North Lot #37,  
Twin Falls, Idaho 83301 U.S.A.  
Researching McDONALD in Inverness 1800-1860 and Oban in 1900s; DICKSON in Strathspey 1800-1860; FRASER in Inverness c1920 and McKENZIE in Greenock 1900-date.
- 995 Mr Douglas W Truran, P.O. Box 2, East Wareham,  
MA 02538 U.S.A.  
Researching MATHESON/NICHOLSON/MORRISON in the Isle of Skye pre-1841. Presently searching for the parents of Donald MATHESON who was born in Skye c1822 and emigrated to Canada between 1830 and 1840.
- 996 Mr Ralph Waugh, 45 Celtic Drive, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia,  
BYX 3G5 Canada  
Researching REID in Brahan Castle, Dingwall 1784-1811 and ROSS from an unknown area 1800-1840. John REID was born 14 July 1784 and Alexander ROSS was born 1800, had a wife Ellen? and a son David born 1827.
- 997 Mr Robin C Sutherland, 6G Deemount Terrace, Aberdeen AB1 2RX  
Researching SUTHERLAND in Clyne 1740-1880.
- 998 Mrs Janice E Mills, 25 Bell Lane, Brantford, Ontario  
N3T 1E1 Canada  
Researching URQUHART in Nairn 1800s and in Alness pre-1810; BAIN in Kiltlearn pre-1800; McLENNAN in Nairn 18?? and MITCHELL from an unknown area in the 1840s. Cannot find the birthplace of Elizabeth MITCHELL, her 8t grandmother. On marriage certificate her parents are listed as Alexander MITCHELL and Isabella DUNBAR.

- 999 Mrs Barbara Tomlinson, Fern Bank, Main Street, Burton,  
Carforth, Lancs LA6 1LW  
Researching SWANSON and DONALDSON in OIRIG for the period 1700-1800.
- 1000 Mr Murray A Macdonald, 79 Mappleton Drive, Mansfield  
Notts NG18 3RF  
Researching MacDONALD in Inchberry/Kirkhill 1800-1845 and in Kiltarilty 1800-1841. Particularly interested in the family of William MacDONALD born 1807 and Mary FRASER. They were in Inchberry Cottage from 1851 to 1881 according to census records.
- 1001 Mr James N Kerr, 338 Palace Road, Kingston, Ontario  
K7L 4T3 Canada
- 1002 Mrs Marion McQuay, 6313-90 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta,  
T6B 0P1 Canada  
Her grandparents emigrated to Canada in 1882. Researching CAMPBELL in Leckhelm, Ross & Cromarty and McLEOD in Elphin, Sutherland.
- 1003 Mrs P A Bartram, 67 Garstons Orchard, Wrington, Bristol  
BS18 7LZ  
Researching MacKENZIE in Inverness; in particular a Williamson who lived at Ashton Farm in 1909/1910.
- 1004 Mrs Shirley Hay, 13 Martin Road, Fairfield, Dunedin 9001,  
New Zealand  
Researching MANSON and BRIMS in Bower in Caithness.
- 1005 Mr Colin Stewart, "Riverside", Huntly Street  
Inverness IV3 5JM  
Researching MURCHIE on the Isle of Arran for at least 1000 years, particularly in Catacol Bay.
- 1006 Mr Murdoch Livingstone, 24 North Street, Sandwick  
Isle of Lewis PA86 0AD  
Researching MACLEAY/LIVINGSTONE/GILLANDERS in Applecross, Plocton, Wester & Easter Ross for all periods. He is also interested in sailing ships and trading schooners based in the West Coast of Scotland in the 19th and 20th centuries.
- 1007 Mr Mike Carter, Bradmar, Westthoughton Road, Adlington  
Chorley, Lancs PR7 4EU  
He is doing historical research for the last century in the Kirkhill area of Inverness-shire. Would appreciate advice on suitable reading matter on the area.
- 1008 Mr Duncan J Chisholm, 14 Crewdson Road, Oval, London SW9 0LJ  
Researching CHISHOLM in the Fodderty & Urray areas pre-1855 and in Inverness to the present time. His investigations are at an early stage.

