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EDITORIAL

Year 17, that's now ten years since I and John Durham graduated to the position of editing this journal. If you work hard, keep your hair clean and put on a fresh collar every day, you too could get to where we are today!

This time we go across the seas where so many Highlanders went and made or carved out or just obtained a living for themselves and their descendants without benefit of welfare state, so this journal spends a fair time in Canada. And on a related subject, we welcome Alan Ross as our new strays co-ordinator, who will tell you all about it in these pages, so now as well as the constant appealing for articles and book reviews for the journal I can now add a call for any information about people who strayed from the parishes of their birth, whether they flew just a county or half a world away.

Having myself performed so poorly with the National Burials Index, it is extra-pleasant to welcome David Gardiner both to the Society and to the Task, a description of which I optimistically penned in the February edition of our Journal at a time when I believed I could still handle it myself.

Visiting in the past so much as I do, as I refuse point-blank to dwell there, the modern world sometimes feels it has a job to catch up with me on occasion. But it succeeds, most obviously in my own method of making a living where I show people how to use the expensive computers my firm lends each of its members, so I am becoming adequate at finding why a network printer won't print, or why one particular persons computer always crashes, or running classes in how to use spreadsheets, or setting up a projector attached to a computer so that a visiting executive does not need to print out actual plastic overhead cells for a lecture, or fixing file servers after a power cut, or making sure the boss has a network access point just when and where he suddenly needs one.

"You have a love affair with computers," is a very false accusation levelled at me quite often. Yes, of course I employ the gadgets myself, but unlike many other IT professionals I do not consider them an end in themselves but merely tools to do a job. A powerful and expensive tool to perform quite a varied set of jobs to be sure, but so is a kango-hammer that a reasonably skilled and strong person can use to tear up a bit of street. But I do use them: my old Apple is nice to look at and has a better drawing program (for graveyard maps in our series of Monumental Inscriptions booklets) than the flashier ones in other computers; the offices portable Dell is great for working on away from a desk doing things like entering the lines straight from a microfilm of parish registers in a library, or at home typing things in company rather than locked away in my Womb at the back of the bedroom; and the desktop PC in that Womb surrounded by the files and books full of maps or quotations or family history notes, and attached via phone-line extension to the outside world where the Internet lives, so that I can work in peace and quiet far from the madding family when necessary, sometimes in adding to tree databases and the composition of the Magnum Opus of my own family history. And emailing to and from people around the globe. And searching out Boer War history and the words of German songs and the whereabouts of the Endeavour. Now that I am taking two sets of evening classes (in Genealogy, not computers) the gadgets get shown off and talked about even more. Sigh, if only plumbing and tiling the bathroom, and taxi-ing the daughters to pubs, and going to work in the day job did not interfere so with my hobbies.

TALES OF THE YUKON

by Brian Webster

Colin SINCLAIR, born c1770 and Elizabeth McLENNAN of Lochuskie above Maryburgh, gave birth to a number of sons, Donald (27 Jul 1795) being one of them. This same Donald married Isabella (MACINTOSH or FINDLAYSON) and they in turn had six sons and a number of daughters. Two of these sons, Donald (3 Nov 1833) and Murdoch (13 Jun 1837) emigrated to New Zealand in the 1860s and there are still two stone houses in Auckland which they built.

Two other sons, William (12 Oct 1832) and John (26 Apr 1841 - my great-grandfather), emigrated to Canada where, with a man named Harron, they were sub-contractors in building our parliament buildings in Ottawa. John was married to Catherine McKAY of the Knockfarrel Allotments (1 Aug 1847) and before they left the Highlands, she gave birth to my grand-uncle Kenneth (23 Feb 1871) at Maryburgh. The second son was my grandfather, Donald SINCLAIR, born in Ottawa 3 Jan 1873. His mother died in 1875 as did a younger brother, Alexander, and they are buried in Ottawa along with 'Mrs William SINCLAIR, 1852-1874'. Needing someone to look after the two boys, John SINCLAIR returned to Scotland where his wife's relatives at Knockfarrel raised them. John SINCLAIR re-married and his second family still lives at Lochuskie.

Kenneth and my grandfather Donald, returned to Canada in the spring of 1893 having read glowing literature concerning the vast new Dominion opened up. "*We came out to go farming and make a fortune - but we didn't.*" says a report of 1940. I was present as a little boy when my grandfather was interviewed and I am quoting from that report for this article.

Arriving at Winnipeg, the plans to begin farming were quickly discarded when both brothers decided to join the Northwest Mounted Police. They were at once sent to Regina (still the training centre) for a 3 month's course in riding and drilling and in police duties. On completion of the training course the two brothers were sent to Maple Creek, the headquarters of 'A' Division and consisting of about 100 men policing the section of the plains now embraced by south-western Saskatchewan. The original headquarters of this Division was Fort Walsh in the Cypress Hills - erected in 1873 to keep an eye on Sitting Bull and his tribe, then being protected on British territory. Fort Walsh was closed in 1885 and moved north to Maple Creek on the newly-completed Canadian Pacific Railway line.

Both men rode on patrol to visit the various posts - Eastend (east-end of the Cypress Hills, and one day's ride east of Fort Walsh en route to Sitting Bull's camp at Pinto Horse Butte), Fairwell's Post, west of Eastend; Ten-Mile Post, still further west and Madison Lodge, the westernmost post of 'A' Division, beyond which lay the Macleod Division in present-day Alberta. Willow Creek was located in the south-west near the U.S. border. The posts were a day's ride apart and three men were stationed at each post.

Prairie fires and cattle rustling were chief of the policeman's worries in those days. "*Police of the present-day [1940 interview] maintain cattle rustling is still common, but in those days it was carried out on a larger scale than now.*" Mr SINCLAIR declares. One of my grandfather's memories was that in fighting the May prairie fires, he often drove a water wagon, and once he discovered that his eyebrows had been singed off

Soon after coming to Maple Creek, he also recalled, a herd of American cattle had to be driven back to the boundary. Indicative of the sparse settlement was the fact that not a shack was to be seen southward from Eastend to the boundary [44 miles]. There was no town between Maple Creek and Swift Current on the main line of the C.P.R. [70 miles].

Chief ranchers in this part of the country at that time were the '76' - named after its brand and the Bloom Cattle Co. from Havre, Montana. These cattle companies gave employment to many early cowboys from Britain, America and Australia. Most of them remained as pioneers. Large herds of cattle from the U.S. drifted into Canada to graze, the country abounding in lush grass. In addition to the ranches, Indians roved the country, engaged chiefly in hunting antelope, deer and coyotes.

In 1895 a call was issued to the police for volunteers to go to the Yukon and Constable Donald SINCLAIR volunteered. In May 1895 a company of two officers - Supt. CONSTANTINE and Inspector STRICKLAND and their wives and families, a doctor and twenty constables, set off for the Yukon. The trip was by boat from Seattle through the Bering Sea and the mouth of the Yukon River, the ship being ice-bound for a week in the Bering Sea.

While the ship's progress was impeded by floating ice, some of the men set out in small boats for a nearby island. Here they made the gruesome discovery of a number of human skeletons and whale-bones, and to confirm their story, one of the men brought with him a skeleton which he hung at the foot of his bed. It was later learned that whisky runners had visited the island and procured all the furs owned by the Indians who perished in a subsequent famine.

The last lap of the journey was made by flat-bottomed boat up the Yukon River and finally, toward the end of July, the party arrived at its destination - Forty Mile - two months after Donald SINCLAIR had left Maple Creek. Forty Mile was a pretty village the size of Conon Bridge, situated at the junction of the Yukon and Forty Mile rivers. It served as a supply base for the surrounding country which was populated by about 500 white prospectors and numerous Indians. Mrs CONSTANTINE and Mrs STRICKLAND were the first white women in Forty Mile.

On arrival at Forty Mile the police immediately began erecting buildings for police headquarters - three dwellings for the officers and the doctor, a dispensary, blacksmith and carpentry shops. A guard-house and a big barracks to house the 20 men. The whole was surrounded by a palisade at two corners of which were located block houses. These block houses commanded a view of every direction and enabled the besieged to shoot at invaders if necessary. The necessity never arose.

Soon after reaching Forty Mile, my grandfather met with an accident and provided the doctor with one of his first cases. In erecting the police buildings the lumber was hauled a quarter of a mile from the sawmill by dog-sled and Donald SINCLAIR was engaged in hauling with two teams - his own and the team owned by the sawmill company. The teams began fighting and while trying to separate them, one of his own dogs bit Donald's arm. He carried the scars for the rest of his life.

Patrolling of the Yukon was by boat in summer and by dog sled in winter, though the constables were engaged mainly in keeping warm during the winter. Donald found the climate

extremely cold. Temperatures of 50° - 60° below zero Fahrenheit were common and a drop to 70° below was experienced frequently during the five winters he spent in the area. Summers in the rolling, wooded country were very pleasant. Though the warm weather arrived earlier, the ice on the Yukon River did not break up until the end of May and ice began forming in September. For six weeks in summer it was never dark and for three months in winter the sun never appeared.

Life in the Yukon must have been monotonous for the young constables. There were no radios, much less T.V.'s to bring news and entertainment, no planes to bring mail and supplies. Mail was received only once a year, in July, and rarely another boat came through in August of the same year. On going to the Yukon, the police signed on for two years and at the end of that time practically all left the force to seek for gold. Though prospecting had been carried on for years, the big strikes were made on Bonanza and Eldorado Creeks in 1896 and the big rush started in 1898. People flocked in from all parts of North America, from Britain, Australia, Africa and New Zealand.

Donald SINCLAIR staked a claim, number 45, below George CARMACKS's original discovery on Bonanza Creek, on August 24 1896 - just a week after the original discovery. This claim was not filed until Sep 18 1896 and worked after Donald had left the force and his brother Kenneth had joined him from Maple Creek. My grandfather's watch chain was decorated by gold nuggets when I was a child - the results of his efforts.

From Circle City, a town on the Yukon River in Alaska, the prospectors passed through Forty Mile en route to Dawson City, about fifty miles distance, and the centre of the Rush. In winter, many of them suffered such severe frost bite that they had to remain a month or more at Forty Mile for treatment before pushing on to strike locations. Soon, however, Forty Mile was deserted as the detachment itself moved to Dawson.

During the whole sojourn in the Yukon, my grandfather did not see much stealing or crime of any kind. The saloon was the first building in any town, but when the prospectors arrived from a six-month's absence in the wilds, they could not be blamed for celebrating a bit before going out again. I can remember my grandfather saying that the pianos never stopped playing all night and day! Troublesome characters were generally locked up over night, given a supply of provisions, placed in a boat and told to 'beat it' across the boundary line.

In 1900 Donald SINCLAIR went back to Scotland for a visit, leaving Kenneth established on a homestead ranch in the Cypress Hills which he had patrolled from Maple Creek. Back in Scotland, Donald met Isabella McKAY of Blarnabee, Strathconon and they were married in Inverness, Jan 30 1901.

Donald bought [or leased] Docharty Farm and three girls were born there, my mother being one of them. However, Scotland did not suit my grandfather's health so in 1906 he returned to Canada and homesteaded there, three miles from his brother Kenneth. My grandmother and the three girls came out in 1907, (leaving her mother at Strathconon) by horse and cart, and arriving by train at Gull Lake, Saskatchewan, on the flat plains, only to face a 25 mile wagon ride to the homestead. She could not get over the number of 'rats' running free as they started out, but my grandfather explained there were 'kophers' in Rickardson's Ground Squirrel, native to the plains

En route to Gull Lake the travellers saw stark evidence of the severity of the winter of 1906-07, a period marked in Saskatchewan's history as the most severe winter in history. The railroad fences were lined with bunches of cattle carcasses and the coulees [small side valleys] were dotted with dead cattle which had succumbed to the terrible cold. Of my grandfather's herd of 150 head of horses, only 40 survived.

My grandparents lived on their homestead until 1921, when he disposed of the property and bought another ranch 15 miles away in the hills. Keeping abreast of the times and changing conditions, he built three earthen dams on his property. In 1937, the worst drought year in history, he obtained 25 loads of feed from his irrigated land when not a single load was grown within a ten-mile radius of his ranch. Three more children were born to my grandparents, and nine children to Kenneth SINCLAIR and his wife. Three of Kenneth's boys met their cousins at Lochusie during World War II and in recent times we have all met some of the Lochusie folk who have come to this country.

Because the Yukon Gold-Rush was so close to the American Territory of Alaska, it was necessary that a British presence be there, not only to keep the peace but to claim the territory. These pioneers were responsible for keeping this country as part of the Commonwealth and of the greater Highlands.

*'Gu ma slan do na fearaithe
Chaidh thairis an suan'*

SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION of FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETIES
10th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Lanarkshire Family History Society look forward to meeting you at the 1999 Conference in Hamilton Town Hall, Lower Auchingramont Road, Hamilton on Saturday 24th April 1999. The theme for the Conference is "Lanarkshire, It's Life and Labours" and will feature the following speakers and topics.

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Lorna Davidson | New Lanark - People and Cotton |
| Gavin Sprott | Rural Life and Industry |
| Neil Ballantyne | Growth of Industry in North Lanarkshire |
| Frank Rankin | Working Memories - Archives in Business |

The doors will be open at 9am for registration and to allow delegates to have their first look around the book stalls, which will be set up in the Main Hall. The Conference will commence at 10am and following the closing speeches at 4pm, the book stalls will remain open until 5pm. Lunch will be served in the Lesser Hall between 12.15 and 2pm. The cost of the Conference will be £8 and the cost of lunch, if required, an additional £9. Application forms are available from the Conference Secretary: Mrs Golda Morrison, 'Alt-Na-Strubbain', 10 Loudon, Valleyfield, East Kilbride G75 0QT. Tel: 01355 908055. Please enclose a SAE.

HFHS STRAYS INDEX

by Alan Ross

Since I recently took on the role of Strays Co-ordinator and my name appeared in the last issue of this journal, I have had a number of enquiries via e-mail as to just what is a Strays Index. No doubt many of you would ask the same question so I will start by saying that a 'Stray' in the purest form is a person who has an event reference outside their Parish or County of birth. A simple example of this would be of my grandfather. He was born in Inverness but married in Huntingdon, which is now in Cambridgeshire. Another example would be of James Robertson who appears on the 1861 census for Avoch as a six-month-old son of Alexander and Williamina Robertson. James has his birth parish listed as Avoch. In the 1871 census he is still there as an eleven-year-old son naturally with the same birth parish. However in the 1881 census although the family still lives in the same house James is not listed. He is now a 'Stray'.

The role of a Family History Society Strays Co-ordinator is to store and index information that comes to him/her from various sources. How does it all work you ask? Going back to James: a person looking through the 1881 census for a small village in Northumberland finds a twenty-year-old James Robertson working as a gardener on a local estate. James lists his birth parish as Avoch, ROC. That person, being a good, helpful researcher, makes a note of the census entry and forwards it to the Strays Co-ordinator of the Family History Society that covers that county. The Co-ordinator then adds those details to his database. In due course someone researching the Robertsons of Avoch cannot find any reference to James after that 1871 census entry. He is one of those that has 'disappeared'. He/she then contacts the HFHS Strays Co-ordinator to ask if he has any James Robertsons in his database. Information on that surname is then passed to the researcher who has now found a lost ancestor.

Data for the index is gleaned from many sources such as Census Returns, Parish Registers, Memorial Inscriptions, Emigrant lists and newspaper clippings to name but a few. As the HFHS covers the counties of Caithness, Sutherland, Ross and Cromarty, Inverness and Nairn, we have an unique situation as most societies only cover one county. It is therefore possible for a person born in Caithness to turn up in Nairn as a stray. Many societies have massive indexes, so if you are looking for someone in a particular county, then send that area's Strays Co-ordinator a letter. Who knows, you may find that missing link that has always eluded you.

The Highland Family History Society's Strays Index currently stands at just over 800 entries. I will be adding another 2,000-plus entries, mainly from the UK census over the coming months. I would ask all members and non-members alike to add to this index by sending any snippet of information that they come across during their research. (Details of what to send can be found later in this article). It is my intention to produce a new Index sometime in the New Year which will replace the one currently held in the Society library in Inverness. Regular annual updates will be added. Another intention is to provide a regular article in this journal with information taken from the database.

Anyone wishing to obtain information from this index should note the following. Information will be supplied to HFHS members free of charge provided a large SAE is enclosed. Please include your membership number. Non-members of the HFHS are asked to pay £1 per name for any information supplied on that name. Cheques etc. to be made payable to the Highland Family History Society.

The parcel of HFHS Strays paperwork has now at last safely arrived (it took nineteen days to come from Inverness to Witney via Parcel Force), and I am busy checking through it. Some more information has also already arrived from a lady in Australia. Looking through what people have sent in over the years there are a fair amount of newspaper cuttings, some of which include some very good photographs and to end this first article I will mention a few things that have caught my eye so far.

My first reference is of a letter kindly sent to The Librarian at the County Library in Inverness from a lady living in Bristol, England during August 1989, asking if there was a local society that would be interested in the enclosed contents. Quite naturally it was eventually passed on to the Strays Co-ordinator of the HFHS. In her letter the lady states that she had just spent time in Alaska and in particular in the small town of Skagway. Whilst there she visited the old cemetery nearby and came across the grave of one Rev. Archibald John CAMPBELL, who was born in Laggan, Inverness-shire in 1834 and was buried in this small cemetery in 1899. She goes on to point out that his burial was at about the same time as the great Klondike Gold Rush. Realising the far-flung locality she photographed the stone, and also enclosed that with her letter. This to me is a fine example of what a Stray's Index is all about, and I thank that lady for her effort. I am sure that one day someone else will also wish to thank her.

If you would like to contribute to this index please send any information, however small. I guarantee none of it will be wasted.

Information Requested

If possible the following will help when accumulating the information

- . Surname (Capitalised if possible e.g. ROSS)
- . Forenames
- . Title, if any (Sir, Rev, Dr.)
- . Reference place (the out of county city/town)
- . Reference County/State (the County/State within which the reference place lies)
- . Highland city/town referred to (e.g. Avoch or ROC if there is no reference)
- . Reference details of the information (e.g. where found)
- . Details of the information (e.g. aged 22, Born Inverness. Wife Mary Ross, residing at 31 Turl Street, Oxford, England)
- . Age
- . Date of birth
- . Type of entry (e.g. Census, Manorial Record, Service record etc.)
- . Senders name and address (yours)

Please include as much information and, if sending newspaper clippings, ensure that the name of the newspaper and date are included. Any photos are also useful.

Contact

Write to - Alan Ross, Strays Co-ordinator, Highland Family History Society, 89 Burwell Drive, Witney, Oxon. OX8 7NE, England or e-mail 106073.2337@compuserve.com

RECENT COMPUTER PRODUCT RELEASES from the MORMON CHURCH

Personal Ancestral File 3.0 Companion

This windows-based product is an upgrade from the previous version and is designed for use with personal ancestral file 3.0 (PAF) on home computers. It will help the home user print quality genealogy charts and reports using any available printers fonts.

It includes these features:

Outline Descendant Report, which prints descendants in an indented list by generation, one line per individual.

Kinship report, which prints all the relatives of an individual, indicating relationships and common ancestors.

Ahnentafel Register reports, which prints a register (book) report of an individual's ancestors, complete with an index.

Family Ordinance Summary, which summarises ordinances performed for individuals up to their Pedigree Chart, which now prints the family group records associated with pedigree charts. Users can choose sequential or non-sequential pedigree numbering.

Family Group Record, which now prints multiple family group records for a selected number of ancestral generations.

History List, which saves a list of the last 40 individuals viewed for each PAF data file.

The minimum system requirements for PAF companion 2.0 are:

Windows 3.1 or higher; windows 95, 98 or NT; Personal Ancestral File 3.0 or later; 4 MB of RAM; VGA monitor; CD-ROM or 3 1/2 inch high density floppy disk drive; 6 MB of free hard disk space. The new version (item no. 50041) in the form of one compact disc is available at £8.50 inc. VAT & Postage.

1851 Census - Devon, Norfolk and Warwickshire

The 1851 census covering Devon, Norfolk and Warwick comes as a single CD, is fully indexed and gives names, ages, relationships, occupations and birth places. This item (no. 50096) is available at £3.65 inc. VAT & Postage.

Family History Source Guide

The Family History Source Guide comes as a single CD and is a very good "how to" guide to tracing your ancestors. It contains guides, hints, addresses of libraries, sample letters to get information etc. for researchers to follow. This is ideal for those new to family history research, but also contains useful information for the more experienced user. This item (no. 50176) is available at £10 inc. VAT & Postage.

British Vital Records Index

This windows-based resource file comes on six compact discs for home use and contains information on more than 4.7 million christenings, births and marriages that occurred in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland from 1500 to 1888. This information has been gathered as part of the Mormon record extraction program, and although some of this information is duplicated on the IGI, some of it is new. As more information is extracted, additional CD's will be issued. The minimum system requirements for PAF companion 2.0 are: Pentium Processor (or equivalent); windows 95, 98 or NT 4.0; 8 MB of RAM; SVGA (2556) monitor; 8 speed CD-ROM; 25 MB of free hard disk space. This item (no. 50028) is available at £13.50 inc. VAT & Postage.

Australian Vital Records Index

This windows-based resource file contains information on christenings, births and marriages that occurred in Australia. This information has been gathered as part of the Mormon record extraction program and although some of this information is duplicated on the IGI, some of it is new. As more information is extracted, additional CD's will be issued. The minimum system requirements for PAF companion 2.0 are: Pentium Processor (or equivalent), windows 95, 98 or NT 4.0; 8 MB of RAM; SVGA (256) monitor; 8 speed CD-ROM; 25 MB of free hard disk space. This item (no. 50095) is available at £14.50 inc. VAT & Postage.

1881 UK Census

It is expected that the 1881 Census for England, Wales & Northern Ireland will be released on CD in February 1999. This will be fully indexed country wide by name with direct links to "as it was originally enumerated". A price and availability for this has not yet been released. It is hoped that the 1881 census for Scotland will also be issued but there is currently a dispute as to who has the right to publish it. The Scottish Record Office, owners of the original copyright, say they want to publish it (and probably charge a fortune for it). However, the Mormon Church own the extracted copyright and would like to publish it at its usual giveaway price. It will be interesting [to see] who wins. Each will have to get the authority of the other in order to publish!

1880 US Census

This is due to be published in full in June 1999.

All advertised products may be purchased from the following address:

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
The Distribution Division
399 Garretts Green Lane
Birmingham B33 0UH
Tel: 0121-784-9555

CAITHNESS FINLAYSONS ON CANADIAN FRONTIERS

by Angela Finlayson

When a splendidly stamped envelope arrived with First Day Cover commemorating 125 years of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 1873-1998, I resorted to my family files. The letter came from fourth cousin Bruce HALLIDAY in Ontario. Bruce's grandmother and my grandfather shared a great-grandfather who was also ancestor to my husband David, and to young FINLAYSONs in to-day's Caithness.

This forebear was Donald FINLAYSON who married Bessie BRIMS in 1776 and who farmed in Bower. As a tenant, Donald had no spare land for his youngest son, James, born in 1793, so James worked in Wick as a cooper. Then, after his eldest son Donald, born in 1827, emigrated to Canada in 1850, James and the remainder of his family followed him in 1854. They settled in a village called Paris in Ontario, where there was work for coopers making barrels to hold a product of Gypsum which was marketed as 'Plaster of Paris' (following the example of the French capital).

Keeping to traditional naming patterns, Donald named his eldest son, born in 1851, James. It was this James, aged 22, who joined in 1873 what was initially called the North West Mounted Police. James kept a diary during their first major operation, intended to establish law and order between the Manitoba boundary and the Rockies.

Between June and November 1874 they covered 1172 gruelling miles, starting from Lower Fort Garry, and eventually founding Fort McLeod on an island in Old Man's River. Extracts from the diary appear in an appendix to *'The Aucorn Finlaysons in Canada'*, a privately printed book, written in the 1960s by Bruce's father, Clarence HALLIDAY, whose mother Janet was sister to James (and to three other venturesome brothers of whom more later!)

Clarence drew on an official history of the N.W.M.P. recording that 300 men set out "from Dufferin (later called Emerson) in Manitoba, with freight, wagons, cattle for food, field guns, mortars and farm machinery, across the plains to Old Man's River, in what is now southern Alberta, where they built Fort McLeod and took up the task of policing 300,000 square miles of wilderness".

In his diary James reveals some of their hardships omitted in the official account, including the poorly organised supply of food and inadequate arrangements for the horse and oxen transport. As early as July 15: "For supper, nothing" July 16: "one flapjack for breakfast, supper the same as dinner, nothing. Hunger and thirst are two of the chief complaints". Aug 12: "After eight miles our horses are done out". There were temporary improvements, as on Sep 2 when they saw: "about one thousand buffalo today; had a good feed of buffalo liver", but by Sep 11: "Horses and oxen dying fast". Sep 15: "All hands had to walk and drag the poor horses along. Had to give up one of my blankets to put on my horse".

It was not surprising that James mentions many men deserting. On Sep 27 he wrote: "If the people of Canada could see us now, with bare feet, not one half clothed, half starved, picking up fragments of food left by the American troops and hunting buffalo meat and having to pay for the ammunition used in killing them. I wonder what they would say of Colonel French?" This was the officer-in-charge, who next day went for help to Fort Renton in Montana. James

commented: "If Canadians knew what this expedition will cost I think Col. French would get his discharge. He left here with the best wishes of the men that he may never come back".

Despite the discontent, the stamina of the men who remained on the trek is frequently implied in the diary. Life at Fort McLeod must have come as a great relief and James himself ended his diary with the resolve of a contented 'Mountie': "I have a good billet and I will try to keep it".

We know little more of James except that he died in 1892 aged 41. His two immediately younger brothers, Donald, (born in 1853 - just before their parents emigrated) and John (born 1855) did not live as long as he did. A diary written by Donald throws light on incidents in their adventurous career which ended tragically in 1889 when they were in their mid-thirties.

Donald and John began work with the Hudson's Bay Company (H.B.C.) at an early age and soon became expert at fur-trapping. They were said to be very knowledgeable about the north-west and particularly good at establishing easy relations with the Indians. They soon took up homestead land (160 acres each) in the fertile Carrot River Valley. There, a small community grew up to which Donald gave the Indian name, Kinistino.

Homesteading activity, however, did not fit well with H.B.C. employment and the brothers left to work as independent fur traders. Relations with the Indians were said to be cordial because they gave more generous treatment for their furs than did H.B.C.

Over the years, Donald and John cherished an ambition to explore the far north-west although warned of the barren lands which only maintained wildlife in brief summers. They had set their hearts on reaching Lac du Brochet where even the H.B.C. had no Post. In July 1888 Donald's diary records how they left Kinistino and built a boat near the forks of the North and South Saskatchewan rivers.

By August 2 they reached Cumberland House, a H.B.C. Post, some 200 miles down river. Here the brothers joined with five companions and continued north in two boats covering some 500 miles and reaching another H.B.C. Post at Pelican Narrows. The travel was arduous, for instance, Aug 13: "Four rapids within 3 1/2 miles of Beaver Lake (Amisk), tough wading to our waist, water swift, stones sharp. Hanging on to grass, bushes, trees, anything to get hold of pulling up boats". Sometimes it was exhilarating: "I enjoy the sailing immense(ly) It is a fine life".

A further 20 miles took them up the south end of Reindeer Lake, where on Sep 4 the FINLAYSONs began to build a camp. Around this time their companions left to follow individual hunting expeditions. During the next three months Donald and John constructed a substantial cabin and platform. Entries explain activities: "Cut pine logs from 6 to 9 inch through;" "built balance of house walls;" "carrying moss and layers of clay and sand mixed with water for roof;" "average catch of fish to-day 20 - trout, perch, whitefish;"

In November, Reindeer Lake began freezing hard. One entry shows how their fishing methods adapted: "Killed 11 large trout to-day, have 18 hooks set. We bait our hooks with about 3 ins of meat of the whitefish and use about 30 ft of line, cut a hole in the ice, drop our bait down, tie the other end to a forked stick."

HFHS PROJECTS - CURRENT STATUS
by John Durham

By November 15, Donald was recording their preparations for travel north: "Hunt birch for flat sleigh, found some fair trees about a mile back in a small creek ... John ripped out one board for a flat sled, a good sound one."

On December 8 Donald wrote: "Left about noon for north of the lake with 350 lbs (food and gear), two dogs, John and I to draw and push. Camped about 8 miles. One upset and portage." Ensuing pages tell tersely of the freezing cold and the frustration caused by finding so many bays and islands in the lake. These factors, together with the absence of game and fish, now that they were in 'The Barrens', combined finally to defeat them.

At last, on December 21, Donald had to record: "Out of food, will return home [to base camp]." Entries over the next days indicate increasing weakness - December 27: "Tired out. No one knows what starvation is unless they have experienced it." December 28: "We have 2 small cuts fish, 9 fish tails, and 75 miles to travel." December 31: "Came about 12 miles, both well played out. Last of fish. Tea for supper." January 1 1889: "Dinner one fish tail and cup of tea. Supper, snowshoe strings, stewed; within 15 miles of shanty, will try to get home tomorrow." There the diary ends.

Men from the H.B.C. found their frozen bodies on January 21. Donald's diary must have made agonising reading for family members and, even now, it can hardly fail to affect distant relatives as a record of courage and enterprise, characteristics combined perhaps with stubbornness and rashness. Probably the H.B.C. men considered that the FINLAYSONs had been rash in disregarding warnings about venturing so far north so late in the year.

A younger brother, Charles, born in 1862, seems to have been less adventurous, living until he was 80. He left a brief diary covering two months in the summer of 1887 during which he went from Paris, Ontario, on foot and by ox-cart to visit Donald's homestead at Kinitino. He was delighted with the scenery and the wildlife, mentioning beaver, otter, fox, bear, moose, wolf and mink. His brothers took him to visit nearby Indians and he wrote: "Some of our best friends are of the Duck Lake. One called the 'Grasshopper', and 'Tape-sing-a-nape', who when he was about to die, left my brother Donald, as chief in his stead."

This was the summer before Donald and John made their final journey and they must have been already planning it. Probably it was their sister Janet, born in 1860, who preserved their diaries. Reading these was important to her son Clarence, who, after documenting his father's people, the HALLIDAYs, turned to the FINLAYSONs, remarking that it was emigration to Canada which had enabled a HALLIDAY from Dumfries to meet and marry a FINLAYSON from Caithness.

STOP PRESS

Since writing the article which appears on the following pages I read a booklet, which lists all the indexes to census records in Scotland currently published. Included were indexes to the 1851 census of all the parishes of both Inverness-shire and Ross-shire! Until these indexes, produced on microfiche in Australia, have been checked, a hold on the indexing of the Burghs in these two counties has been made. However, by the time you receive this I shall have had a chance to look at one of them, so please contact me if you are interested in helping

From time to time in the past, our esteemed editor Jonathan has referred to indexing and transcription projects being undertaken by members of the Society. The increase in the number of pages in the Journal has created an opportunity for a regular feature on this subject. It will include a report on the current status of each of these projects, and most probably be peppered with the occasional request for more volunteers on current projects. It will also give you, our members, the opportunity to put forward suggestions for possible future projects.

Monumental Inscriptions

The checking process at the Chapel Yard in Inverness continues, in spite of the current somewhat inclement weather. The Parks Department have recently carried out a severe pruning of the foliage in the burial ground. A number of memorials, which were previously imbedded in the middle of trees and bushes and/or covered in ivy, are now clearly visible. This has allowed the eight sections, into which the burial ground has been divided for recording purposes, to be more clearly defined. It also means that if the weather is reasonable over the winter months, the next phase of re-checking each and every inscription may be completed in time to allow publication in May/June next year. It has been decided to include the 75 memorial inscriptions found in Greyfriars Churchyard as a ninth section. This publication, along with that for the Old High Church, which was available in September 1997, should cover most, if not all, of the earlier memorial inscriptions in the Royal Burgh of Inverness.

Those of you who read my article in the previous Journal will recall that I reported that 1,177 inscriptions had been checked and amended where necessary and 88 inscriptions, which Sandy Gallies had noted during his original work in the churchyard, were still to be located. Since then there has been a flurry of activity with the result that 1,907 memorials, out of the latest estimate of 2,133 in the churchyard, have completed this second phase, while Sandy's unmatched inscriptions are now down to 43. Hopefully by Christmas this phase should be complete and the final checking process can commence. Then all that remains is to index the entries and we will be in a position to publish our results.

My thanks to those of you who rose to the challenge made in the previous Journal of identifying the occupations referred to on these stones:-

In memory of John MACPHERSON, lister in Inverness, who departed May 30th 1737; and in memory of his first spouse Magdalin KEILOCH, who died 30th Sept. 1730; as also in memory of Mary MACKENZIE, his second spouse.

In memory of Lachlan DALLAS, pewterer and burghs in Inverness; and his spouse Beatrice RICHIE who died 17 June 1746; and their children.

As all of you who wrote in quite rightly indicated, a lister was another name for a dyer. The name lister does not appear in any of the more usual dictionaries, so some previous knowledge or research was necessary for that one. The second was easier as this occupation was simply a variant spelling of pewterer, someone who works with pewter.

