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1 Editorial
 2 Lottery Luck in the Library
 5 Bits & Pieces
 7 "Missing" Strathspay Records are not Missing!
 9 The French Connection
 10 William Robertson of Alvie
 11 HFHS Projects
 12 HFHS Strays Index
 15 Memoir of the First Duke of Sutherland
 17 Reflections on Years of Research
 18 Members' Research Interests
 22 E-Mail Address Update
 23 Queries (976-984)
 25 Reply to Query No. 945

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EDITORIAL

I began my last editorial with a reference to the Northern Hemisphere weather, trying to entice me to spend a greater proportion of my summer time in the garden. Well, now I don't have to succumb to my conscience, as it is dark now at 5 o'clock and will soon be dark at 3.30 in these high northern latitudes. The garden takes care of itself for the next 5 months and I can get down to some uninterrupted, guilt-free research at last!

My latest meanderings have taken me to both the National Library in Edinburgh and to the Library at Inverness. At the former, I was fortunate enough to spend a whole day in the fascinating company of the Sutherland Estate Papers, which the Sutherland family has loaned indefinitely to this institution. At the latter, I have been beavering away at the excellent film copies of the Old Parish Registers, and in particular, those relating to Clyne in Sutherland.

With the benefit of these experiences, I now know how many gems of information can be gained, by chance or by accident, when either casually browsing through the records or by coming across something unexpected or out of place. An occasion like this happened at both Libraries (see following article), so I now almost expect this kind of 'chance' find on every random search!

These are the rewarding times whilst wading through reams of information, and it just adds the cream on the top. Having read many of your articles, even during the years before my current appointment, I now understand the kicks you have been blessed with as you come across that magical missing link.

A local issue which has recently raised its head in this part of the world, is that of windfarms. The Government has decreed that the energy companies must meet quite stringent targets using renewable energy, and it is wind power that has been opted for in the first instance. The energy companies have been put into a corner and forced to select sites which meet their own criteria, i.e. upland, windy location, fairly level terrain, ease of access, proximal to transmission lines. They have also been restricted by other factors, such as, outwith Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and National Scenic Areas as designated by Scottish Natural Heritage, outwith Ministry of Defence low flying areas, remote from centres of population. By default, this effectively leaves the eastern strip of coastland north of the Black Isle up to Cathness, and this is the area which is being targeted first.

I don't expect too many people are actually anti-renewable energy, but when it comes to despoiling the unspoilt wilderness of the East Sutherland countryside, I am dead against it. It is only unspoilt once. It is an area which has remained untouched since the evictions nearly 200 years ago, and these 65m high columns with 30m radius rotors extend the height of the windmills to nearly 100m. Erecting these monsters will create scars on the extremely fragile landscape, such as wide access tracks and new quarries which will be visible for centuries, and archaeology including some pre-clearance homes and land of our ancestors and the setting in which they lie, will inevitably become irreversibly altered.

I know that I am being a complete NIMBY, but I do hope that sense will prevail and either less sensitive locations are selected, or that maybe offshore sites can be developed, away from the natural beauty of any wilderness areas.

LOTTERY LUCK IN THE LIBRARY

By Nick Lindsay

With the nights now drawing in, as I alluded to in my editorial, my attention has turned to research of the indoor variety. For a long time now, I have wanted to visit the National Library in Edinburgh to see the wealth of archive material including maps, for which they provide an excellent website (www.nls.uk/digitallibrary/map/index.html), and this only serves to whet the appetite. An opportunity arose for me to visit, so I grabbed it with both hands and was delighted with what I found. I now can't wait for the next visit and have already planned my strategy accordingly! Simmering away in the background, I have also been visiting Inverness Library on a fairly regular basis, tapping into the rich pickings available in the Reference Room, but mainly concentrating on the Old Parish Registers of Clyne Parish.

The Sutherland Estate Papers have been loaned indefinitely to the National Library, which is perfect from an archive perspective and also if Edinburgh is your residence, but it has its drawbacks for me having to make a 500-mile round trip to access documents relating to an estate whose seat is only 4 miles away! The Inverness Library offers film and fiche facilities for several censuses and all of the OPRs in the Highlands, and the relative convenience of Inverness, only an hour away from Brora, allows me greater access to these records.

In the National Library, I spent a couple of hours on the previous evening trying to pick research needles out of the massive haystack-of-an-index relating to the Sutherland Estate Papers alone. I would advise a pre-research visit, if only to register and become familiarised with the procedures and the layouts. The staff were extremely helpful and I was barely able to select and reserve the maximum six bundles allowed to be viewed at a time from the fairly mind-boggling index. There was just so much to choose from, that if I had have been able to find the hypothetical needle from the hypothetical haystack, I could have been in a position to be able to use it, with the aid of an accompanying blindfold, to select my research material! My choices, I was assured, would be awaiting my return first thing the next morning.

Anyway, sure enough, my dusty bundles were lying on the shelf, along with those of my other fellow researchers as I arrived eagerly the following morning. I felt extremely privileged to be able to actually handle these delicate and, in some cases, very fragile historical documents, some of which may have been untouched for generations or even centuries.

This unhindered accessibility did concern me a little, as either by accident or (perish the thought) by unscrupulous design, these irreplaceable archives could be damaged or destroyed and lost forever. Alternatively, however, it is this same unhindered accessibility that makes this kind of individual research such an exciting and rewarding past-time, so maybe I am being just a little too cautious. After all, the Library staff can't consider this type of handling to be such a risk, employing such an open policy.

By late afternoon, after an incredibly informative whole day, I had come to the end of my first six bundles – which is extremely daunting as there are many hundred similar bundles just waiting for my eyes to gaze upon them. I then began book-marking those items which I wished to be copied. This was the sensible part of the Library's security, for it is the staff alone who perform these functions, before handing over the copies or forwarding them on to a postal address. Any items can be photocopied at whatever size is required (a very reasonable 25p for an A4 sheet and 30p for A3), and items may also be scanned in electronic form or photographed.

My discoveries? There were so many which came to light that day. Completely unrelated to my own research, I came across a small notebook from the estate of Gordonbush, on the shores of Loch Brora, dating back only to the early 20th Century and containing apparent random, day-to-day scribbblings. It contained references to a Robert Trussler, the family whom I knew was the subject of a great deal of worldwide research by Anne Dunnett, a friend from the Caithness Family History Society. Bob Trussler, it turned out, was Anne's grandmother's brother. It was only minimal information, but *anything* is better than nothing! It read 'Robert Trussler, age 31. 9 years including war at Gordonbush as minderkeeper (sic. maybe underkeeper). 4 years Dunrobin, ghilling and trapping. 35/- per week, suit of clothes, lunch money, bothy fire required. 10/2/21.' Informing Anne of this after returning home, she expressed her delight and was definitely going to follow it up at a later date.

There were the names of workers engaged at the Brora Colliery, Salt Pans, Brick Works and Lime Kilns recorded on monthly payrolls and their job descriptions in the early 19th Century. I even discovered that there was a hitherto unknown Pottery in the village, obviously taking advantage of the kilns used at the Brickworks. There were many names of the staff of, and suppliers to, the House of Dunrobin in a 17th Century day book. Amongst the fascinating entries was the ability to purchase fresh oranges and lemons for a few pennies, and presents of lace handkerchiefs and foodstuffs to given out to staff at Christmas.

There were records of tradesmen engaged in the demolition of the old Clyne Parish Church and the rebuilding of the new one in 1775, currently standing as a poignant roofless ruin at Clynekirkton. And there were records of 'delivery notes' for the timber delivered by ship used in the new church, accompanied by what would be considered today to be an unusual demand.

Lovat 26th April 1775

Following the itemisation and quantities of the delivered timber, it went on.....

*The bearer is to deliver the wood as mark'd on the margin
on the other side – his first to unload what's for Dornoch
at the Little Ferry & then proceed to Brora –
Upon his delivery of the above quantities you'll please
pay him £3.10/- freight & 2/- as Drink money.*

Sir,

*Your Very Humble Servt
John Haywood*

Underneath was a receipt for the payment.....

Dunrobin 1st May 1775

*Received by one Alexr Jaffrey Mr of the Janet
Of Burghead from Capt James Sutherland at
Dunrobin by the hands of Dugald Gilchrist
Of Lothbeg three pounds twelve shillings
Sir as the freight & drink money
Above mentioned of the timber on this
Within and delivered at Fferryroad(?) Brora*

If you don't ask, you won't get!

BITS & PIECES

By John Durham

Both Nick and I are delighted to see that this journal contains several contributions of at least one page from members. As most are responses to items that have appeared in previous journals this means that our efforts are being read. As a result readers will not have to endure yet another extract from the long-running Durran saga, at least not until next time! In addition to these welcome contributions from members, I have obtained a number of short snippets of information from various sources and brought them together under the above heading.

Alexander Scott Robertson

On reading the request for information on this man, 'a natural bonesetter', in the last journal Hugh Barron (member no. 449) recognised the name. He writes "I had heard of Alexander Scott Robertson from the late John Macdonald, a native of Milfiach, Kirkhill who became lecturer in Celtic at Aberdeen University. He said that Sandy's Gaelic was particularly good and that he had a great knowledge of Gaelic songs, the stories behind the songs and of their composers. He was full of the old lore of the surrounding districts. He was a shoemaker and worked as such at the Cameron Barracks in Inverness and possible elsewhere too. An old directory of 1885 shows that he lived at Balmain Street, Inverness. Some years ago I chanced to come on a short note on his death in the *Inverness Courier* of 26 January 1926. It said he was born in 1857 and 'came to the district 31 years ago' and also that his skill as a bonesetter came from his grandmother in Glenurquhart. He was known locally as Kahoof because of a deformed foot and John Macdonald told me that he was said to be illegitimate."

Members' Research Interests

Kenneth Ross (member no. 673) wrote in with a plea for members to supply a little more detail when indicating their areas of research. One example he quoted was ROSS in Ross and Cromarty. He writes "Members living south of the border or overseas may have no appreciation of the fact that living within a relatively small area of Ross & Cromarty, at any period in the past, there could well be hundreds of Rosses." He then suggests that a forename, the date of some event and some associated names - parents or offspring would be helpful.

GENfair

Members attempting to pay their subscriptions using the website <www.GENfair.com> recently will have discovered that it has been temporarily suspended. This was not due to any problem of a financial nature but as the result of the serious family illness. We have received a message recently to the effect that business will be back to normal sometime around the end of this month. So far this year a large number of members (131) have availed themselves of this simple method of both paying for their membership and purchasing publications. Those of you who have tried to use the site over the past month should try again in a week or two.

New in the Library

The following documents have been kindly donated to the society - Monumental Inscriptions for the Mill Street Graveyard, Ullapool and a List of Deaths from the OPR for Kilmorack Parish. We have purchased two new books as follows: -

Returning to a regional level, Inverness Library, there is so much information to be gleaned from the OPRs, beyond simple family history links; the evolution of local place names, information on the occupations of the inhabitants, the fashion of Christian names, the development of surnames and by-names, the influence of 'new' names arriving in the area during the occupation of the land by sheep, population statistics/estimates, annual birth rate comparisons, and the effect on the Disruption in 1843 when the Free Church was created at the expense of the majority of the established church.

In amongst all of these general interests are the snippets, the gems, the stories. At the top of Page 68, in the second volume of Clyne Birth and Baptism Records, is a curious entry, written in longhand form, rather than the tabular entries which occur throughout the rest of the book.

It reads: *Alexander, son to Alexander Sutherland Begg, Officer of Excise and Jane Mary Traill Calder, was born at Macduff, County of Banff, on the 18th day of March 1843.*

George Calder, son to Alexander Sutherland Begg, Officer of Excise and Jane Mary Traill Calder, was born at Macduff, County of Banff, on the 21st day of January 1845.

David William, son to Alexander Sutherland Begg, Officer of Excise and Jane Mary Traill Calder, was born at Elgin, in Murrayshire, on the 23rd day of November 1846.

Reading this, I was confused as to why these entries, for births well outwith the parish, were recorded here. The following lines, underneath the above entries gave part of the reason....

Extracted from Mr Begg's family Bible, at Clynelish, this first day of December, one thousand eight hundred and forty seven years, by me -

R Bruce, Session Clerk of Clyne

The first tabular entry below, returning to the usual format, explained the mystery further, as a son, Marcus, had been born to Alexander Sutherland Begg and Jane Mary Traill Calder on 11th September, 1848 at Clynelish. It appears that the Session Clerk had transcribed into the Clyne Parish records earlier birth entries of the Begg family from their own family bible at the time they registered the birth of, or baptised, their new son Marcus.

Why he did this remains a mystery. Maybe, they hadn't been entered before in the parish records of their own birth; maybe this was a disenchanting Free Church family returning to the Established church following a move to a new area or maybe it was just a keen early genealogist adding additional family information. Whatever the reason for its presence, to the likes of us modern day researchers, it is an unexpected bonus, which someone, somewhere, may just be waiting for.

As the saying goes, it could be you!

"MISSING" STRATHSPEY RECORDS NOT MISSING!

By George Dixon

In the last issue of the *Journal* (August 2002, p 20), you reprinted a strange letter originally published on page 12 of the *Strathspey and Badenoch Herald* of 31st January 2002.

In it, the writer, a Mr Adrian Grant with an address in Fife, claimed to "have rectified" the faults of "those who did the original cataloguing" of the Seafield Papers in the Scottish Record Office / National Archives of Scotland, "and those who have, since that time, taken a particular interest in them" but "did not have the imagination to appreciate the importance of these records, nor see fit to alert General Register House" – which in fact accommodates them; perhaps the writer was thinking of New Register House – "and/or local history centres etc. as to their existence".

The first volume of the handlist – not catalogue – of the Seafield Papers, one of the largest and most heavily used collections of estate papers in the NAS, was prepared by Mr Andrew Anderson, Curator of Historical Records in the SRO, an eminent Scottish archivist, in 1965-66. He was careful to draw attention to the bundle in question and his description – "1719-71. Minute books, baptismal registers and other papers of Kirk Session of Duthill" – has been available to researchers in Edinburgh for the past 36 years.

Having Duthill forebears myself, I first made extracts – occupying some seventeen pages – from these "Missing" records in May 1974. In her useful volume, *Pre-1855 Gravestone Inscriptions on Speyside*, first published by the Scottish Genealogy Society in 1977, Miss Alison Mitchell drew her readers' attention on p 40 to the fact that the OPRs for Duthill could be supplemented by the "Minutes": 1719-20, 1731-6, 1761-4; proclamations & baptisms: 1719-60 in file GD238/5221". In the 1980s, the late Mrs Margaret Mackenzie, an able and most generous genealogist, made a full transcript of the genealogical contents of the bundle, and distributed typescript copies quite widely. I certainly received a set in Stirling and I believe the Reference Room in the Farraline Park Library in Inverness may have been another recipient.

So much for the originality of Mr Adrian Grant's discovery: his claim has value only as a public exhibition of his own ignorance of Grant-related records. That the records in question are in GD248 not the GRO, I should add, stems from the fact that James Grant (1733-1821) was parochial schoolmaster and session clerk of Duthill in the early 1760s, prior to becoming first clerk and then factor to Sir James Grant of Grant (1738-1811). It is possible, incidentally, that more manuscripts in the hand of that particular schoolmaster/clerk/factor survive than in that of any other 18th century Highlander.

But the originality of Mr Adrian Grant, and of his "small group of co-volunteer colleagues" who have "been researching the origins of the Chiefs of Grant for a couple of years now", is not confined to "discovering" the above Duthill bundle. As Mr Edward A. Grant put it in *Craigellachie*, vol. XXIII, no's 1-2 (Spring/Summer 2000), p 4, "Their observations ... culminated in the discovery of an old book entitled *Genealogical Collections*, published in 1750. The book had gathered dust in a library in Minnesota, until one chapter led to a discovery". As another of the "researchers", Mr Steve Grant put it in *Standfast*, no. 14 (Winter 1999), p 16, "The discovery of this book by Phil Moody of the USA was enormously exciting", since it contained "the Cromdale text" (or Cromdale Text", to quote the headline in *Craigellachie*). One can imagine the group's untutored delight at the "discovery": The book

1. Discovering your Scottish Ancestors by Linda Jonas & Paul Milner. ISBN 1-55870-599-6. Although really written for researchers in the U.S.A., this book covers all aspects of researching your family in Scotland. As well as describing how to use the various sources available to researchers on the Internet. This is an excellent guide for beginners and also more experienced researchers.

2. Census Returns for Orlrig Parish 1841 by Caitheinn Family History Society. This contains a transcription of each entry in the 1841 census for Orlrig grouped by enumeration district along with an index. The physical boundaries of each enumeration district are also included in this volume.

Clyne Kirkton Cemetery

Due to the appalling weather on the day, Nick Lindsay was unable to make the journey from Brora to give his illustrated talk "Clyne Kirkton and its grave mistakes" to the society last month. At the last committee meeting it was agreed that, subject to the weather being less capricious this time, Nick will give his talk to the society on the 17th December. This will replace the advertised "Question and Answer Night". If he is unable to make the journey from Brora that night we will revert to the original format, so please turn up in any case.

Statutory Registers – the Future

Some of you, who have persevered in reading this far, may remember that Clyne Heritage Society (my local group) had corresponded with the Registrar General of Scotland when the Statutory Registers for Sutherland were removed from Brora to neighbouring Caithness.

Well, in this month's copy of the Aberdeen & North East Scotland Family History Society Journal, the Chairman reports the following:

"The General Register Office in Edinburgh has an ongoing project to digitize the Scottish Statutory Certificates of Birth, Marriage and Death. We are hearing, from contacts at the registrars offices, that after the digitisation has been completed the original certificates held in the regions will be destroyed. Yes, I said DESTROYED. The copies of the original certificates held in Edinburgh will be retained."

This is at a variance with a reply from the Registrar General, received by Clyne Heritage Society in November 2001, when he stated that they would be stored at a location as yet undetermined. If, in the intervening 12 months, the policy has been changed from storing the records to destroying them, then I am sure that local family history societies or local heritage societies would welcome the chance to store the registers, on behalf of the space-saving GRO. I, for one, would be delighted to have the opportunity to be a guardian of the local Statutory Registers.

Requests for Help

Finally, we have received two requests for assistance from members who have local knowledge of a particular area. Jim Graham (member no. 1842) wonders if anyone can help him with research c1799 in the Parish of Snizort on the Isle of Skye? Then Mrs Lynn McDonald (member no. 1936) asked if any member has knowledge of the Ullapool and particularly Ardharnish area of the Parish of Lochbroom?

THE FRENCH CONNECTION

By Catherine Russel

changed everything", declared Mr Edward Grant. Grants on both sides of the Atlantic are now in consequence being assured that far from being Norman-French in origin as has long been accepted by historians, the "Cromdal Text" demonstrates that the Grants descend from "Haeken Grandt" in mediaeval Norway. Haeken was, their dusty discovery assures us, "Lord High Protector of that Kingdom", and descended from "Wifa ... The First King of East Angles in The Year of Christ 575" and - still more awe-inspiring - from "The Champion Ouden alias Wodine (much extolled among The Poets for his Heroic Actions especially in Norway & Saxony)". To be descended not merely from Lord High Protector Haeken but also from King Wifa and from Woden (remember Wednesday?) - and so, according to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* under 855, over a further 23 named generations, from Adam himself - would indeed place Clan Grant upon a genealogical peak.

Is it true, however? A century or so ago, the Library of the University of Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA, would have, as a subscriber to the Scottish History Society, received, like hundreds of others across the globe, including "Inverness Free Library", a copy of volume 1 of *Genealogical Collections concerning Families in Scotland, made by Walter Macfarlane 1750-1751 Edited from the Original Manuscripts in the Advocates' Library, by James Toshach Clark Keeper of the Library* (S.H.S., 1900). Pages 103-117 of that late Victorian volume print "The Genealogy of The Grants said to be written by Mr James Chapman Minister of Cromdale &c in Anno 1729". So much for the uniqueness of that revolutionary discovery in America - scores, if not hundreds of copies of the same book are sitting on library shelves across Britain.

As the son of an Inverness merchant, the Rev. Mr Chapman was not by birth or upbringing from Strathspey. He was licensed to preach by the presbytery of Dalkeith, south of Edinburgh, married a daughter of an Inverness provost and settled at Cromdale within 2 miles of Castle Grant in his mid-twenties, on being admitted minister of the united parishes of Cromdale, Inverallan and Advie in 1702. Various manuscript versions of his purportedly genealogical compilation survive in GD248. The least corrupt is probably that in GD248/30/3 which I noticed in 1975 was endorsed by the noted Jacobite lawyer, Colquhoun Grant (who had been baptised by Chapman): "Mr James Chapman's History of the Grants - a Bad History, ill copied", with, alongside, an even more succinct and damning verdict, "Stuff" (as in "stuff and nonsense"), in the hand of Sir William Fraser (1816-98), Deputy Keeper of the Records of Scotland, the leading Scottish family historian of his age.

The forthcoming battle between the primary sources in the Seafield Papers and elsewhere, as quoted and elucidated by Sir William Fraser and accepted by historians ever since, on the one hand, and the Adherents of the Cromdal Text, on the other, should make an entertaining spectacle for Highland family historians. It will have general value, however, only as a reminder that real history, as distinct from mere fantasy, is evidence-based, valid only in so far as it is founded on a competent appraisal of the relevant surviving contemporary documents.

P.S. If Mr Adrian Grant were to dig deeper in the near twenty tons of GD248, he could make a third "discovery" - the "Obligation" of 6th May 1789, its text in the hand of the above mentioned James the Clerk, whereby his forebear, "Alexander Stewart, heather thatcher in Grantown" bound himself to maintain the heather thatch he had placed on the Kirk of Inverallan for seven years "perfectly sufficient and Watertight".

I intended to write to you [editor] in June after reading your very interesting article on Old Clynekirkton churchyard in the May issue of the HFHS Journal but unfortunately too many unforeseen events got in the way.

I am now taking advantage of a prolonged flight delay to write this in an airport lounge. Please forgive the somewhat erratic handwriting and improvised missive.

The inscription commemorating John Mackay is curious in several respects. I would even say, subject to correction by experts on 18th century French, that the language itself is strange. I believe it would have been more normal, perhaps, at the time to say "Ci-gît". It is possible, of course, that the inscription was copied from a previous period.

Anyway, I was wondering if you have considered a Canadian connection. I was in Quebec Province in June and was astonished to see that the role of the Scots (who started to emigrate c1750-1760) was even more important than I had imagined. (The real founding father of the Bank of Canada, John Richardson, was a Scot as were several of his associates). Many Scots who settled there permanently or worked there temporarily would have become "bilingual" by sheer necessity. Some married into families of French descent. Perhaps John Mackay had emigrated there and/or the mason carving the stone? (or had the mason been given a model to copy?) I think it is a possibility worth considering. It seems to me more plausible than a Jacobite connection, although I will try to investigate the latter hypothesis. As far as I know, most of the Jacobite supporters died in exile in France but he may have been an exception.

As to the "gR" I am almost 100% sure it is "WR". The letter W, in fact, did not exist in the alphabets of a number of European countries (French, Italian etc.). Where it did occur (in foreign words or, for example, in Flemish words in the north of France), it was usually transcribed as an "g". In fact, this was standard "graveyard" practice in France and French-speaking Canada. Although I don't remember any examples in Scottish churchyards, I may simply have overlooked them or automatically equated 8 & W. However, I suspect that since May, other readers will have elucidated both problems.

Let me say, as someone who at least for the moment cannot be directly involved, how much I appreciate the work being done by HFHS teams in recording these inscriptions. My own maternal family came from the Beaulieu, Inverness and Loch Ness area and I have been appalled by the steady deterioration of our graveyards over the years.

Incidentally, I was in Moy churchyard in August and believe it would merit a revisit, as would Daviot. I noticed in Moy that a large part of an old gravestone had obviously been recently removed. My experience in other churchyards has convinced me that it has probably not been removed for restoration purposes or taken to a museum but simply stolen. Others will no doubt follow suit.

I will try to visit Brora (and the Old Clynekirkton graveyard, of course) on my next visit "up north". By then, I'm sure the mysteries will have been resolved.

WILLIAM ROBERTSON OF ALVIE

By Margaret Allan

I am answering a query in the August 2001 Journal entitled 'HFHS Strays Index'. Perhaps I should be replying to Alan Ross direct but as my reply is somewhat lengthy, and could be of general interest, I felt it more appropriate to reply to you.

It refers to a William Robertson in the part highlighting the parish of Alvie and refers to his death in 1874 aged 75, in Victoria, Australia. I have made a very large family tree of Robertsons who were in Alvie in the 18th and 19th centuries and I know exactly who William Robertson was. He was born on 7th Oct 1798 at Dunachton, parish of Alvie, the son of Donald Robertson (1755-1828) and Christina McBain, grandson of Duncan Robertson (1716-1776) and Margaret McPherson of Alvie and great grandson of Duncan Robertson (dates unknown but obviously born before 1700) and Beatrix Shaw.

I am enclosing various documents (photocopies) that show that he emigrated to Hobart, Van Dieman's Land (later Tasmania) arriving there on 30th Dec 1822 on the ship "Regalia". His brother John also went with him, and as you can see from a 'potted' biography, they did extremely well. Amongst other notes of interest, William sent three of his sons to be educated at Rugby School, England and of these three sons, one went to Cirencester Agriculture College, another went to Trinity College, Oxford and the third to Wadham College, Oxford. I find this a wonderful example of grit, determination and sheer hard work -- to have emigrated from a small croft in Alvie and fifteen years after emigrating he was able to send the first three sons to boarding school in England.

I have also included some letters he wrote home to the only brother who remained in Scotland, and as you can see he sent home money regularly to this brother (who remained at Alvie). Two other brothers, James and Daniel also emigrated to Van Dieman's Land arriving there 2nd May 1825 and they both prospered too. I had already made a family tree of Robertsons (my husband's mother's family) that went back to a James Robertson (1767-1856), my husband's great grandfather.

In about 1996 I was contacted by a John Robertson in Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia (who is a member of HFHS). As far as I remember, he had read that I was researching Robertsons in the parish of Alvie, and he discovered that Donald Robertson, the father of William Robertson was a brother of James Robertson, my husband's ancestor. John Robertson had collected a huge amount of information on the Tasmanian Robertsons (they moved from Tasmania to Victoria and New South Wales after a few years) and between us we have compiled this vast Robertson tree. I have been able to give him information on the Robertsons who remained in Scotland and he gave me the Australian side. My Robertson research extended beyond my husband's direct ancestors to include several others who remained here, once I had made contact with John Robertson of Tasmania.

Incidentally, I have already lodged copies of family trees that I have made of Allans (my husband) and Macgillivrays (my husband's grandmother) with the Archive Department at Inverness Library and Alastair McLeod has seen these and I believe they are available to the general public on request. When I have completed the many sections of the Robertson "tree" I intend lodging those too with the Archive Department. I didn't want my hard (and most enjoyable) work to disappear when I leave this world!

HFHS PROJECTS

MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS

By John Durham

As promised, Jonathan McColl has completed the meticulous updating of his previous work in St Clements Churchyard in Dingwall. To keep the price at the £4.50 that the original publication cost we have produced the revised edition in A4 format. Jonathan has incorporated a number of pictures and drawings along with footnotes referring mainly to the sources of the many biblical and other quotations that were transcribed from the stones.

Following our success in completing Croy Churchyard a number of competing events - visitors, holidays and weather - to name a few, have resulted in a temporary halt in the checking process. This means that the transcriptions done by Angus Bethune in the burial grounds at both Daviot and Gollanfield cemeteries will have to wait until the weather and particularly the light improves before they can be worked on.

In the meantime one of our members, Mrs Margaret Moodie, who lives on Raassy, has sent us a copy of her work in transcribing the inscriptions on memorial stones in Raassy Cemetery. She has included several photographs and once the transcriptions have been input to computer and indexed a copy will be lodged in the society's library at Farraline Park in Inverness. I am still awaiting a reply from Kilmuir Community Council on the suggestion that they transcribe the memorial inscriptions in the Kilmuir Burial Ground on the Isle of Skye.

INDEXES to 1851 CENSUS RETURNS

By John Durham

There is some excellent news to report on this project considering this period covers the summer period. Donnie Macleaman completed his transcription of the census for Kilmuir Easter and his work has been input, indexed and was published yesterday! Copies will be available for sale at the next meeting. Margaret and Billy Mackay have finished their work on transcribing the census returns for Assynt in Sutherland and sent me a disc with the data on it. Work on checking it will start in a couple of weeks and it shouldn't be too long before it too is available for members to purchase.

As our copies of Wick Landward ran out it was decided to repeat the exercise we did with Killearnan and produce a revised version that conformed to the standards we have adopted with the other census indexes. These include making sure that all wives are indexed under their married name and parishes of birth outside the county are transcribed in full. As the original work was done using a hand-held film reader it is not surprising that the occasional error in transcription turned up. This process has been completed and the revised version was published on fiche rather than as a booklet like the original. This was due to the number of pages exceeding the limit for producing booklets at a reasonable price.

Now that the nights are drawing in, I am sure our regular volunteers will be raring to get stuck in with transcribing the census for the next parish on their list!

HFHS STRAYS INDEX

By Alan Ross

Here we are, almost at the end of yet another year. Where has it gone? Time has once again been precious and circumstances have meant that I have spent a greater part of the past year away from home. Data has, however, continued to be entered on the Strays Database, albeit slowly, and the entries now stand at around 6,500, with still more in hand to be added.

For a long time now two members, Donnie MacLeman and Rhona Johnstone, have been absolute stalwarts in supplying information. Donnie has been supplying MacLennans and a few others, from all over the Highlands, whilst Rhona is methodically extracting all Highlanders from the 1851 census who strayed into Perthshire parishes. Between them they have contributed almost half the total database. For this I cannot thank them enough, knowing the time that they spend in extracting this information.

During one of those very rare occasions I get to surf the web, I came across a site <www.curiousfox.com> that may well prove useful to genealogists. I discovered it at the end of October, and it had only been running a couple of weeks, so information was limited. I do believe that it has great potential once it has been accessed by a large number of people.

From time to time something of great interest arrives in my post. One such letter arrived in mid-September from Noreen Macdonald living in Michigan, USA. Although it lists just three strays from one family, it contains a wealth of further information, including family group sheets, census extracts, an obituary and copies of three of the finest portrait photographs that have ever been sent to me. If anyone can link to this family the extra information will be of immense value to them.

The story is of three brothers of the Macdonald family. This family itself came from the bleak coastal hamlet of Applecross on the south west coast of Ross-shire. The 1891 census shows 50 year-old Murdo Macdonald, a crofter, and his wife Mary (Murchison), aged 48, living with six of their eight children - Finlay (18), Murdo (14), Donald (12), Kenneth (10), Mary Ann (8) and Janet (5). The 'missing' children were Annie, who had died in 1875 at the age of 4, and Annabel who was about 16 in 1891 and who does not appear on the census for Applecross. She herself is apparently a 'stray' at this time, as she was staying in a neighbouring village on the night of the census. Two of the brothers, Murdo and Donald, emigrated to Canada via the USA in about 1909, where they settled and became farmers. The third brother who strayed was Kenneth. He gained his master mariners certificate in Glasgow, before moving to London when he married in 1920. Kenneth received an OBE in 1914 and a good account of his life is given in an obituary in the January 13th 1962 issue of the Dingwall newspaper, *The North Star & Farmers Chronicle*. All of the other children stayed around Applecross and are buried in the local cemetery, although the eldest son Finlay also became a master mariner.

Noreen is the daughter-in-law of Kenneth and it just goes to show what detailed information can be found when someone sends in those few extras. This paperwork is, of course, stored and ready to be made available, along with Noreen's contact address, when someone relates to these individuals. Naturally not all entries have this much detail, so it is nice to sometimes be privileged to that little bit extra. I am indebted to Noreen for her generous supply of information to the Strays Database.

Continuing from where I left off in the last issue, are the next batch of strays from Inverness.

Surname	Forename	Chy	Parish	Birth	Year	Age	Event	Source
HUGHES	Kate Campbell	INV	Inverness	1916	76	Death	MI / Young / NSW / Aus	
HUME	Ann Jean	INV	Inverness	1851	10	Census	1851	Census / Dull / PER
INNES	Elizabeth	INV	Inverness	1851	38	Census	1851	Census / Dalry / AYR
INNES	James	INV	Inverness	1806		Birth		Duffrin County Archives / Ontario / CAN
INNIS	James	INV	Inverness	1870	64	Death		Duffrin County Archives / Ontario / CAN
JAMESON	Isabella	INV	Inverness	1851	3	Census	1851	Census / Candor / NAI
JOHNSON	Emma E.	INV	Inverness	1881	19	Census	1881	Census / Hillington / MDX
JOHNSTONE	Elizabeth*	INV	Inverness	1851	40	Census	1851	Census / Knockbain / ROC
JOHNSTONE	Kenneth	INV	Inverness	1851	50	Census	1851	Census / Knockbain / ROC
JOHNSTONE	Elsop*	INV	Inverness	1851	36	Census	1851	Census / Duffuss / MOR
JUNIOR	Mary	INV	Inverness	1851	6	Census	1851	Census / Knockbain / ROC
JUNIOR	Mary	INV	Inverness	1851	9	Census	1851	Census / Knockbain / ROC
KEMP	Ann	INV	Inverness	1851	23	Census	1851	Census / Glasgow Barony / LKS
KENNEDY	George	INV	Inverness	1851	28	Census	1851	Census / Peterhead / ABD
KENNEDY	Bethie	INV	Inverness	1851	18	Census	1851	Census / Candor / NAI
KENNEDY	Donald	INV	Inverness	1851	40	Census	1851	Census / Clieff / PER
KENNEDY	Mary	INV	Inverness	1881		Gen Info		Family / Alberta / CAN
LESLIE	Ann	INV	Inverness	1851	30	Census	1851	Census / Rosekeen / ROC
LISTON	Margaret	INV	Inverness	1851	8	Census	1851	Census / Knockbain / ROC
LISTON	Margaret	INV	Inverness	1851	8	Census	1851	Census / Knockbain / ROC
LOGAN	Finlay	INV	Inverness	1851	37	Census	1851	Census / Knockbain / ROC
LYON	Mary	INV	Inverness	1851	33	Census	1851	Census / Contin / ROC
MacAULY	Janet*	INV	Inverness	1901	80	Death		UCI / Hazelwood / VIC / Aus
MacBEAN	Jeese*	INV	Inverness	1871	30	Census	1871	Census / St. Andrew & St. Leonard / FIF
MacCLOUD	Flora	INV	Inverness	1757		Marriage		PR / Pottem / WIL
MacDONALD	Ann*	INV	Inverness	1851	20	Census	1851	Census / Forthingall / PER
MacDONALD	Henry	INV	Inverness	1881	26	Census	1881	Census / Kendaal / WES
MacDONALD	Hugh	INV	Inverness	1881	21	Census	1881	Census / Urray / ROC
MacKAY	Murdock	INV	Inverness	1866	75	Census	1866	Census / Casho & Leavesson / HRT
MacKENZIE	Alistair Evan	INV	Inverness	1990		Death		N.Z. Herald / NZ
MacKENZIE	Donald	INV	Inverness	1878	90	Death		News Obit / Winnipeg / Can
MacKINTOSH	Alexander	INV	Inverness	1851	78	Death		Royal NZ Fencibles 1847 - 1852 / ISBN 0473047160
MacKINTOSH	Archibald	INV	Inverness	1835		Death		Census / Kilarrow / ARL
MacKINTOSH	Janet	INV	Inverness	1881	80	Census	1881	Death / Relative / Ulverston / CMA
MacKINTOSH	William	INV	Inverness	1850	31	Death		Census / Hillington / MDX
MacLENNAN	Alexander	INV	Inverness	1851	15	Census	1851	MI / Earley St Peter / BRK
MacLENNAN	Annilla	INV	Inverness	1881	70	Census	1881	Census / Urray / ROC
MacLENNAN	Christina	INV	Inverness	1881	6	Census	1881	Census / Urquhart / ROC
MacLENNAN	David	INV	Inverness	1891	13	Census	1891	Census / Fodderty / ROC
MacLENNAN	Duncan	INV	Inverness	1871	17	Census	1871	Census / Dingwall / ROC
MacLENNAN	Hugh L.	INV	Inverness	1861	22	Census	1861	Census / Rosemarkie / ROC
MacLENNAN	John	INV	Inverness	1851	32	Census	1851	Census / Dingwall / ROC
MacLENNAN	Widow	INV	Inverness	1871	73	Census	1871	Census / Dingwall / ROC
MacLENNAN	William	INV	Inverness	1861	32	Census	1861	Census / Dingwall / ROC
MacLENNAN	William	INV	Inverness	1891	42	Census	1891	Census / Fodderty / ROC
MacPHERSON	David	INV	Inverness	1833		Witness		Census / Dingwall / ROC
MALCOLM	Mary Ann	INV	Inverness	1851	13	Census	1851	News / Da's Mar / Montreal / Can
MALCOLM	Mary Isabella*	INV	Inverness	1991		90	Death	Census / Contin / ROC
MARR	Isabella	INV	Inverness	1987		99	Death	News Obit / Carman / MAN / Can
MARSHALL	Ann	INV	Inverness	1871	41	Census	1871	Stroud / GLS - Times Colonist / Victoria / BC / CAN
MARTIN	William	INV	Inverness	1901	85	Census	1901	Census / Drycott / DBY
MARTIN	William	INV	Inverness	1891	60	Census	1891	Census / Dingwall / ROC
MARTIN	William	INV	Inverness	1901	70	Census	1901	Census / Dingwall / ROC
MARSON	Marianne	INV	Inverness	1881	41	Census	1881	Census / Hillington / MDX
MATHIESON	John	INV	Inverness	1851	31	Census	1851	Census / Aberdeen West / ABD

