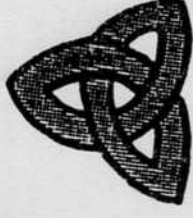


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Belated Happy New Year's greetings! Another year has passed, and another year closer to retirement! I am not wishing my life away, but I do wish that I had more spare time to devote to my interests. Envy is not a good thing, but I imagine that many of the membership are in the (presumably) fortuitous position of enjoying their hard-earned and well-deserved retirement. It is then that time can be dedicated to long-postponed hobbies, such as family history research, which, I am now well aware, can be a very protracted process.

At present, with another 20 years to go until retirement, unless I am made an offer which I cannot refuse (don't think so!), I have precious little time that I can really get into research in a truly all-consuming way. I want to spend time at New Register House. I want to spend time in the National Library of Scotland. I want to spend time in the National Map Library. I also want to spend some time in Nova Scotia. This all takes time (and, of course, money!), but if I was retired, like some of you, then I would be able to go at my research full-tilt!

Whatever happened to the 'leisure society' that was predicted by the powers-that-be a few decades ago? As a twenty-something, I was always looking forward to the time (in my mid-forties, I liked to think) when I would be winding down to an early retirement and just popping into work for maybe the odd two or three days a week. I imagined I would then be able to spend the rest of the working week doing just what I pleased, whether it be roaming the hills, conducting my research or writing that novel that is supposed to be in all of us. Where mine is just now, I'm not too sure and, if there is one lurking there, when it will actually be born is a huge problem for me to contend with.

Now it's all too clear that this carrot-dangling was complete hogwash; just propoganda invented to keep me hard at it, with Utopia beckoning tantalisingly just around the corner. As I get ever closer, the goalposts would be moved further away, so that I couldn't even kick the ball that far anymore anyway! If anyone knows who it was that promised me the garden full of roses, I would be very grateful if they could let me know. I might drop them a line.

What we seem to be faced with now (in the UK anyway), is the prospect of having to work till aged 75+, because of the failing endowment mortgages and pensions and the lack of youngsters filling our places because of falling birth rates. They say that the compensation is that we live longer now than we used to do. They don't know; we don't work till we're 75 now. All I'll be fit for at 75 is to drop! And then where will my research be? And my novel?

No. It looks as though my research for the next 30 years will be conducted from the occasional evening opening hour or two in my local Brora Library. Oh, and I might snatch the odd half an hour at lunchtimes during my 6-day working week glancing at some magazines or websites. And my novel will just have to be the amassed collection of my Editorials, lifted straight from dusty back numbers of HFHS journals. These, I am sure will go down a storm in the bookshops of the world, being reserved for the exclusive use of various Insomniac Societies around the globe.

Sadly, I think I'm just destined to carry on like this, as normal, earning an honest crust and trying to entertain the HFHS readership on the 'page that no-one else wants to fill' before the serious stuff begins on Page 2. So turn over now, all you lucky silver surfers, and get stuck into the first journal of 2003 and I'll start thinking about the next journal's editorial and being that little bit closer to retirement. Can't wait!

CAPTAIN JAMES MACPHERSON 78th HIGHLAND REGIMENT MURDERED AT PROBOLINGGO, EAST JAVA 1813

By E Edwards McKinnon

Author's note:

I wrote an article based on one that appeared in the Jakarta Highland Gathering Magazine in 1993 for the HFHS Journal of February 1996. Since then I have been in contact with Col. John Macpherson, late Australian RA, and prepared the following manuscript, which has been edited and added to by Col. Macpherson. In its new form I believe that it will be of further interest to members of the Society as it gives rather more genealogical information than the earlier version.

Within the walls of the former Dutch Vereenigde Ost-Indische Compagnie factory at Probolinggo in eastern Java lies an inscribed stone dedicated to two officers of the 78th (Highland) Regiment of Foot (Ross shire Buffs) who were murdered on 18th May 1813. The stone, now sadly neglected, was once part of a memorial erected in the *padang* or town square (Plate 1) by the officers of the regiment to their fellow officers who had been murdered by a band of insurgents. The incident, in which the Officer Commanding 78th Highlanders, Lt. Col. James Fraser and Captain James Macpherson were killed, was one that marked the service of the 78th during the British occupation of Java between 1811 and 1816.¹ Probolinggo is a small port town situated on the northeast coast of Java, some 150 kilometres east of Surabaya in an area long famous for the production of mangoes.

The memorial stone is no longer in its original position in the square. The memorial erected by the 78th has long since disappeared. The epitaph, carved in granite, now lies behind the modern Camat's (Subdistrict administrator's) office, just north of the modern railway line, at Desa Mayangan, Kecamatan Mayangan, in Probolinggo.ⁱⁱ

Losses in action during the five years that the regiment served in Java were relatively light. The 78th saw action on a number of occasions, including that at Weltevreden and the assault on the lines of Cornelis (the area of Jakarta now known as Jatinegara) in August 1811, which effectively broke the Franco-Dutch hold on Java. Captain James Macpherson had been wounded at the assault on Cornelis, but despite the inadequacy of the medical support of the period, had recovered.

Units of the regiment were also in action at Jati ngaleh, Srandol, above Semarang, the final action of the Java campaign and again, later on, in the assault on the *keraton* at Yogyakarta in June 1812 and in punitive expeditions to Bali and Sulwesi in 1814. On the other hand, between the time the regiment left the Portuguese enclave of Goa on the west coast of India in 1811 and its return in 1816, almost nine hundred men died of disease.

Captain James Macpherson was the second (?) son of James Macpherson and Margaret Loggie of Cawdor and Ardersier. James Macpherson Senior was for many years the factor of the Cawdor estates. James junior may have been born whilst his father was at Cawdor. Two of his brothers, Duncan and Ewen both served in the Second Battalion 78th in the campaign against Napoleon in Europe and saw action at Maida in Sicily (where Captain Duncan Macpherson was wounded) and elsewhere.

James Macpherson junior was sixteen years old (?) when he was commissioned into the 9th (Reserve) Battalion as ensign on 9th July 1803. He served with the second battalion 78th and gained his lieutenantcy on 17th April 1804 and was further promoted captain on 25th October 1810. He later transferred to the first battalion and saw service in India where the battalion was stationed on garrison duty at the Portuguese enclave of Goa, between 1806 and 1811.ⁱⁱⁱ The battalion had been sent to Goa as part of the British effort to stem the threat of French invasion in the east after Napoleon's armies entered the Peninsula.

He was in action at Weltevreden, and again in the main attack at Cornelis, where he led two companies that proceeded along the dyke of the Slokan to prevent a dam being breached by the enemy. In this action he was wounded in a personal encounter with a French officer. He was also present at the action at Jati ngaleh,^{iv} near Semarang, the final action of the Java campaign.

Following the action at Jati ngaleh, in late 1811, the 78th were posted to Surabaya in eastern Java. In the early nineteenth century, Surabaya was still secondary to Gresik, a riverine port and naval base some distance inland. There was, however, a Dutch fortification, Fort Ludovic, commanding the harbour of Surabaya, which had been taken on the arrival of the British fleet. Initially the battalion was stationed in the fort. Quarters there were unsanitary and far from satisfactory and there were numerous losses due to disease. Malaria as well as water-borne diseases were very prevalent. The barracks at "Sourayabaya were very indifferent" v. "Together with the easy access which the men had to native liquors"^v they became very unhealthy, losing during some months from twenty to twenty-five men."^{vi} The battalion was then moved in to new cantonment at Denoyo, a short distance outside of the town where conditions improved considerably.

During the period the battalion was at Surabaya, parts of eastern Java were seething with discontent. During the latter part of the period of Dutch sovereignty, in December 1810, General Daendels, the then Governor-General of Java, had 'sold' rights for the exploitation of taxes in three areas in Eastern Java to certain rich Chinese merchants in exchange for what became known as 'Probolingo Paper'. A condition of the sale was that the new owners should also buy up fifty thousand new notes and pass them on to a reluctant public who regarded them as worthless. The wily merchants, however, paid their debt in the same currency, citing Daendael's proclamation that the paper should be regarded as the equivalent of silver. The Honourable East India Company who were then responsible for the government of Java inherited the debts of the former Dutch administration, a situation which caused Stamford Raffles, the Lieutenant Governor, considerable financial embarrassment.

One of the Chinese merchants involved in the deal, named Chan Pit, the *Kapitan Cina*^{viii} of Probolingo, purchased the areas which form the present day *kabupaten* or regencies of Probolingo and Besuki, two areas which were then so ruthlessly exploited by their new owner that in consequence, large numbers of peasants were dispossessed. The resulting discontent caused hundreds of displaced peasant farmers to revolt.

At the beginning of May 1813, Lieutenant-Colonel James Fraser, Officer Commanding the 78th at Surabaya, was on duty in the vicinity of Pasuruan. He went to visit the *Kapitan Cina* of Probolingo, accompanied by Mrs Fraser, Captains Thomas Cameron and James Macpherson and Lieutenants Charles Robertson and Alexander M. Cameron.

On the afternoon of the 18th May, a report was brought in to the Kapitan China that a considerable force of malcontents was present in the neighbourhood. On the suggestion of Colonel Fraser, the Kapitan China, imagining that such a force would be easily dispersed, armed his retainers and whatever other men he could rally from the immediate area, and set off to the place where the 'banditti', as they were described, were said to have been seen. The Kapitan China's force of retainers was accompanied by Colonel Fraser's party in their carriages.

Having gone some 10 kilometres, they were informed that the rebels were close at hand, where upon the Kapitan China, Colonel Fraser and the other officers dismounted from their carriages and proceeded on foot with the retainers. They had gone but a short distance when suddenly, the insurgents having been concealed in bushes, appeared as if from nowhere and attacked them. It was a classical ambush. Having no stomach for a fight, the Kapitan China's retainers turned and fled instantly. The officers who appear to have been the only ones with firearms made several ineffectual discharges with their pistols and fowling pieces. On trying to regain his carriage, Captain Macpherson, who was still in a weak condition, slipped and fell. He, Colonel Fraser, who was also exhausted from fatigue, together with the Kapitan China and some others, were captured and carried off prisoner. The Kapitan China, for whom the insurgents would have had no liking at all, appears to have been despatched almost immediately.

The other officers in the party regained their carriages and retreated in haste to the Kapitan China's house in Probolinggo. There Captain Cameron, after a futile attempt to rally the already thoroughly frightened retainers of the Kapitan China to defend the house, succeeded in obtaining a small boat in the harbour and conveying Mrs Fraser back along the coast to the neighbouring port of Pasuruan. Lieutenants Robertson and Cameron managed to escape by another route overland.

News of the incident which led to the brutal murder of the two officers and the Kapitan China reached Surabaya about nine o'clock the following morning, the 19th May, where Major David Forbes, the Second in Command, made immediate preparations to march against the insurgents. Almost one hundred of the fittest men from the grenadier, rifle and light companies were mounted on ponies^x and placed under the command of Captain Macleod, supported by Lieutenants Pennycook (who also had been wounded in the assault on Cornelis), and Waters. Thus mounted and equipped, they left Surabaya about 1 p.m. advancing along the military highway constructed by Dandaels, arriving at Pasuruan just before midnight, having covered a distance of approximately 65 kilometres. Night falls quickly in the tropics. It would have been dark by soon after six o'clock.

At Pasuruan, the party was met by Captain Cameron and Lieutenant Robertson, who informed them that the whole of the eastern area of Probolinggo was up in arms. The insurgents, who were then advancing on Pasuruan, had acquired five small field pieces to boost their armaments. After a brief halt, the detachment continued along the road the direction of Probolinggo. About an hour and a half after daybreak on the 21st June, they discovered numbers of insurgents positioned in the fields on either side of the road, with three of the guns covering their approach. The guns opened a smart, though rather inaccurate fire on the column which, advancing in two divisions, one on each side of the tree-lined road, soon drove the enemy from his positions with the loss of the guns and a number of men.

A little later and some five kilometres further on, now in the vicinity of Probolinggo, the column discovered another large force rallied under two yellow flags^x and supported by the two remaining guns. Having covered over 100 kilometres in eighteen hours without any respite, Major Forbes halted and dismounted the column to allow the men, who were by that time much fatigued, to take a drink of water before proceeding to the attack. In the rear were a number of provincial horsemen^x armed with swords and pistols and a party of irregulars from Pasuruan.

Mistaking the halt as wavering and indecision, the force of insurgents, estimated to be some 2,500 strong advanced boldly and rapidly to within about 100 paces of the party's position. They then charged. Moving rapidly in a close, compact body, at the same time setting up a most dreadful, bloodcurdling yell, they bore down on the small group of Highlanders who were drawn up at the sides of the road.

Faced by this onrushing mob of howling spear-men, the 78th, formed up and were brought to the aim. They retained their fire until the enemy were barely a spear's length from the line. The shock of the first and ensuing volleys at such close range, even with the highly inaccurate firelocks of the early nineteenth century, were such that they immediately checked the charge and caused the insurgents to retreat with terrible loss. When the gun smoke cleared, more than one hundred and fifty of the rebels were seen lying dead on the spot. One of their chiefs penetrated the line but was killed in the attack and two others, taken alive, were summarily executed later that afternoon. The men of the 78th suffered only a few wounded in this engagement.

The detachment then proceeded directly to Probolinggo House as it was assumed that the rebels would attempt to rally and hold it. Probolinggo had been, by this time, completely ransacked. Having lost their principal leaders, however, the insurgents rapidly melted away. They disappeared without any further attempts to attack the detachment.

That same evening, 21st June, the bodies of Colonel Fraser and Captain Macpherson were recovered, tied up in sacks and brought in to the house. Captain Macpherson's body was 'much mangled and pierced quite through with a number of wounds'.^{xii} Both officers were interred in the square at Probolinggo, where a monument, now lost, was subsequently erected in their honour.

Order having been restored, the detachment returned to Surabaya on the 25th May 1813. With the loss of Lieut. Colonel Fraser, Major Forbes took command of the 78th. The battalion later moved into more comfortable quarters at Denoyo, where the number of deaths from fever decreased rapidly.

Following a report of the action submitted to Batavia, the following general orders were issued:-

General Order by the Commander of the Forces

*"Headquarters, Weltevreden,
4th June 1813*

"The commander of the Forces feels the greatest satisfaction in publishing to the troops the following general orders, conveying the thanks of the Government to Major Forbes and the

detachment which acted under his orders so successfully against the insurgents of Probolinggo. The Gallantry and Zeal of the meritorious officer had long been appreciated by the Commander of the Forces, who requests Major Forbes' acceptance of his sincere acknowledgement for his eminent services on the present occasion, and that the same be communicated to the officers and soldiers who so well maintained the high reputation of their distinguished corps."

A General Order was issued also on the same day by the Lieutenant-Governor, Thomas Stamford Raffles, which praised the conduct of Major Forbes and his detachment in dealing with the situation at Probolinggo. It read:

"The Honourable, the Lieutenant-Governor in Council has much pleasure in expressing his cordial approbation and acknowledgement of the zealous and gallant conduct of the detachment under Major Forbes, of His Majesty's 78th Regiment, in the attack and dispersion of the banditti recently assembled in the province of Probolinggo.

"The rapid advance of the detachment and their gallantry on the scene of action cannot be sufficiently praised, and the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, at the same time that he offers his particular acknowledgements to Major Forbes for the energy, decision, and judgement personally shown by him on this occasion, directs that the thanks of this Government be communicated to the several officers and soldiers of this detachment for the eminent gallantry and conduct which they have displayed.

"It is with a sentiments of deep regret that the Lieutenant-Governor in Council has received the intelligence of the fate of Lieutenant-Colonel Fraser and Captain Macpherson, of His Majesty's 78th Regiment. The death of these officers, the former of whom had been distinguished in a long career of active service in India, must be considered a public loss, and it is deeply aggravated by the melancholy circumstances under which that event took place.

By order of the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

(Signed) C. Assey, Secretary to Government

By this time, Chan Pit, the Kapitan Cina of Surabaya was thoroughly frightened and requested the government to repossess the lands that he had bought from Marshall Dandaels. In an effort to settle the situation, Raffles agreed, subject to the confirmation of the East India Company directors in Madras, that the government should take back the lands from him. In settlement of the debt, it was also agreed that Treasury Notes, bearing 6 % per annum were to be issued in exchange for the Probolinggo paper, at rate of forty Spanish dollars for every one hundred Netherlands Rix dollars promissory note, a discount on the original face value of the paper.

Four months after these tragic events, the regiment now commanded by Major David Forbes, was again ordered to Semarang. They embarked in transports and sailed from Surabaya westwards along the north coast of Java to Semarang where they arrived on the 28th October 1813. Here the battalion was split into two detachments with Headquarters and five companies quartered at Ungaran some distance inland on the road from Semarang to Salatiga. The remaining five companies were quartered in a new cantonment at Srandol on the high ground above the city of Semarang. They remained in this posing on garrison duty until the following April 1814, when Major General Nightingall, the Commander-in-Chief, was preparing for an

expedition to Bali and Sulawesi. In view of an impending action, they were subsequently ordered to return to Surabaya.

This incident, tragic though it was, is also of particular interest in that this may be the first recorded example of a Highland regiment being used as mounted infantry. The 78th were a regiment who, in later years particularly, were completely dedicated to the wearing of the kilt in all circumstances. It is not recorded, although it seems likely, whether or not they wore tropical white canvass fatigue dress to save wear and tear on their kilts whilst stationed in Java. This was certainly the custom with some of the other Highland regiments in India during the mid nineteenth century. From purely a practical point of view, it seems possible that such a dress may have existed and that it would have been adopted as more practical for such a mission rather than wearing the kilt on pony back. The wearing of trows or tight-fitting tartan 'trousers' was, after all common among Highland chiefs in the c18th when travelling on pony or horseback. Whatever the circumstances, it shows the resilience of the men who may well have been unfamiliar with riding, to adopt a new mode of mobility when circumstances demanded.

Problinggo epitaph: 1813

SACRED

TO THE MEMORY OF

LIEUT. COL JAMES FRASER AND CAPT. JAMES MCPHERSON
OF HIS MAJESTY'S 78th HIGHLAND REGIMENT

WHO WERE BARBAROUSLY MURDERED BY A BAND OF INSURGENTS
NEAR PROBOLINGO ON THE NIGHT OF THE 18th
OF MAY 1813

THIS MONUMENT IS ERECTED OVER THEIR REMAINS BY THEIR BROTHER
OFFICERS AS A MARK OF THE HIGH ESTEEM IN WHICH
THEY HELD THEIR WORTH
AND
VIRTUES

ⁱ The Java campaign of 1811 was overshadowed by the events in the Peninsula and has been sadly neglected by military historians. A number of articles in the Journal of the Military History Society deal with various aspects of the campaign. My forthcoming monograph, 'The 78th in Java 1811-1816' will, however, cover the experiences of the 78th during this most interesting period of the British occupation.

ⁱⁱ For details of the inscription, see the above.

ⁱⁱⁱ There were several transfers between the 2nd battalion, which acted as a training element and source of manpower, and the 1st battalion whilst the later was stationed in India. There was a large transfer from the 2nd Battalion then stationed in the Isle of Wight of all who were fit for service in the east' to Goa in late 1810.

^{iv} Referred to simply as 'Jati' by Davidson. ('History and Services of the 78th Highlanders' Edinburgh: Johnston, 1901).

BITS & PIECES

Members are continuing to send it comments on points raised in previous articles and also contributing new ideas. We will therefore use this section of the journal as a platform for these musings from members along with items of general interest that come to our attention. Those that refer to previous items will get priority. If your contribution doesn't appear this time, it will only be because we have run out of space.

Registrars and Local Offices

Alistair Cameron, a 'rebellious retiree', who doesn't always read family history magazines in sequence, comments on the reference to Registrars and local offices in the August 2002 journal. He says - I was "caught" browsing at NRH, just as I found accidentally a vital connection, which I had not aimed to find. Was shown a Notice on the wall, which supported what you reported viz ".....specific target to be researched....." The situation seems to be; there is no RIGHT of access to the registers, just a long-term CONCESSION that tolerates unsupervised reading of the same. I hope that concession is never revoked.

Since the concession allows us to snoop upon the private lives of living citizens (a 2002 birth marriage or death registration is readable by the public), the potential for abuse by confidence tricksters, detectives and providers of false passports, I fear that "Invasion of Privacy" activists or others, could enable that revocation.

Sutherland Estate Papers

Shirley McCormick e-mailed from 'a very chilly Nova Scotia' to comment on Nick's article in the previous journal. "I have just read "Lottery Luck In The Library" and enjoyed learning about your good fortune with research in Sutherland Estate Papers. Great fun sorting the papers out, but time consuming as well. However, it must have been rewarding to come upon such 'finds'.

While reading a listing of inscriptions from a very old cemetery in Pictou County, Nova Scotia I came upon the name of Hugh McDonald, a native of Rogart Parish, Sutherland, Scotland. He died at Lime Rock, West River, Nova Scotia on November 15, 1866, aged 95 years. This might be a tidbit of interest for your records at some time in the future, or so I felt.

Unfortunately we have never been able to discover exactly where our MacLeod ancestors originated, although the obituary for our Gt Gt Grandfather George McLeod, states he came from the Parish of Clyne, Brora in particular. He and brother James, who had been a soldier, emigrated to Nova Scotia in 1814, and came to work for their Uncle James McLeod, who came over in 1773 on board the ship *Hector*. He and his wife Christian Urquhart had no family. After working for their Uncle for seven years they each bought land from him, and lived out their lives in Pictou County. George b. 1795, d. 26 Dec 1882, and his older brother, James b. c 1783, d. 9 Feb 1844, aged 61. Family legend has it that James, as a young man, helped his father on the Sutherland Estates and at least once he helped drive cattle to market.

Unfortunately James' home was destroyed by fire and all the family records went up in smoke, as did his old army uniform, which might have told us which regiment he was with before migrating to Nova Scotia. They also were reputed to have had a brother, Andrew, who did not come with them. James and George married Sutherland sisters, each had 8 children -

^v See: Neil Currie, in Raffles, 'History of Java' II (1817), and below, who notes that disease and casualties in Surabaya gradually diminished 'as the men were successively accommodated with good barracks at De Noyo.'

^{vi} Presumably 'arak' - a potent but not unpalatable liquor distilled from rice or *tuak*, produced from the fermented sap of the *aren* or sugar palm (*Arenga pinnata*, Merr). The juice of the *aren* was also used to produce the celebrated Batavian *arak* (Raffles, History of Java, I p.188)

^{vii} Currie, *ibid*.

^{viii} Both Thorn ('The Conquest of Java', London: 1815; reprinted Singapore: Periplus, 1995) and Davidson (History) refer to him as the 'China Major'.

^{ix} Thorn notes that 'horses were borrowed from officers and other individuals, 'Conquest', p. 307. Local Japanese horses tend to be quite small compared with European hunters but would have no doubt been capable to carrying a full grown European male.

^x Thorn, 'Conquest' p. 307, attributes the yellow flags to being 'the standard(s) of the Soosoohoonan' which gave rise to the conjecture that the ruler of Solo 'must have been party concerned in the revolt.' He says, however, that the chief, who was later slain, had proclaimed himself the 'viceregent of Mohomet' in which case he was, or probably considered himself, of aristocratic rank.

^{xi} Thorn, 'Conquest', p. 308, refers to these 'provincial' horsemen in support as *Djyang Secars*, a term that I have not yet been able to interpret. The second word, '*secar*' is reminiscent of the Indian term '*sikar*' or hunter.

^{xii} Thorn, 'Conquest', p. 308.

THE FUTURE OF GENfAIR

There have been a number of queries from members about the situation with GENfAIR, the website through which members can join the society, renew their membership and order publications from the convenience of their home using a credit card.

Mike Spathaky, who ran the GENfAIR site on a day-to-day basis, has decided that he personally does not wish to continue doing so. In his e-mail to all suppliers he says "I am keen that it should survive and have been actively seeking ways in which this might be achieved. I am very keen that someone who understands the world of family history and has its interests at heart, so that GENfAIR continues to serve the needs the UK Family History Societies and our other suppliers, should operate it. I hope to be able to make an announcement in a short time now and I hope it will be seen to be a positive outcome."

I hope that he finds such a person as the GENfAIR site as our participation in this venture has been very successful as far as myself is concerned. It allows instant access to the full list of our publications and by ordering on-line savings in both time and postage can be made. It has been particularly useful to overseas members who do not have sterling bank accounts and who would incur bank charges in paying in their own currency. I hope the site is back on-stream before long.

but we don't know which naming pattern they used - both first sons were named William, and second sons, Donald/Daniel. Ho hum!

The Kilmorack Fiery Cross

Kilmorack Heritage Association is appealing for help in their latest venture. During the preparation of the books on the history of the Parish, they accumulated a considerable amount of material on local men and women who served in the armed forces. It was intended that this material should form an appendix in one of the books, but as it turned out, there was simply not enough room to accommodate it. In conjunction with the local British Legion, they are embarking on a separate study of all the servicemen and women who were born in, lived in, or who were commemorated in the Parish. This covers all periods from Culloden to the Gulf War.

They are appealing for help in identifying all eligible people. To give two examples, they have an almost complete list of those who served in the Boer and Great Wars, but as to those who served in the Crimea and Second World War, far less. The Data Protection Act covers information relating to those still alive, so they need specific permission to use personal information, but they think that nevertheless there is considerable scope for interesting stories to emerge that ought to be preserved for posterity. If you have any relevant information please contact Sue Thomson, North Lodge, Beaufort, Beauly, Inverness-shire. (01463 783168) E-mail <john@northlodge.freecserve.co.uk>

SAFHHS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Tay Valley Family History Society will host the 14th Annual Conference of the Scottish Association of Family History Societies on Saturday 26th April in the Bonar Hall, University of Dundee. Entitled "On the Move", the conference will deal with migration within Dundee and Tayside. In addition to the usual lectures and bookstalls, there will be archive displays from the National Archives, and also from the archives of Dundee City, Fife, Angus, Dundee University, and Perth and Kinross.

The Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorne will open the conference. The morning session will include a talk by Mrs Patricia Whatley on 'Sources for the study of Migration in Tayside' and followed by Dr William Kenefick on 'A Tale of Two Port Cities - Glasgow and Dundee compared'. In the afternoon a panel chaired by Professor Chris Whatley will each give a short talk on their speciality, followed by a question and answer session. On the panel will be Karen Cullen on 'The Poor on the Move in the 1690s', Murray Watson on 'Invisible Migration - Revealing the English' and Chris Whatley on 'Stepping Stones to Dundee 1790 - 1850'.

The conference will run from 9am until 4.30pm; the conference fee is £10 per person with lunch an additional £10. Application forms may be obtained from the Miss D. M. Henderson, Conference Secretary, 3 Lammerton Terrace, Dundee DD4 7BP. Please enclose a S.A.E. with your request.

If any HFHS members attending the conference could help out at the society's table over the lunch period for 30 minutes or so, it would be much appreciated.

HFHS PROJECTS

MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS

By John Durham

Due to the adverse weather conditions over the past three months, there has been no progress in checking either Daviot or Gollanfield. If we get a reasonable Spring this year I hope to have more encouraging news to report next time. The transcriptions of the memorial stones in Raasay Cemetery by Margaret Moodie have been input to computer. By the beginning of March a copy of these transcriptions, along with an index, will be lodged in the society's library at Farraline Park.

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

Another successful period with the publication in the past four weeks of four more indexes to add to the two produced during the previous quarter. Once the Xmas and New Year festivities were over the checking of Assynt could begin and it was the first to be published. The next index was created from a copy of a transcription of the returns for the Parish of Lochbroom held in Ullapool Museum very kindly offered to us by the museum. Because of the number of pages exceeded the maximum for producing it at a reasonable price in booklet form it had to be converted to fiche. Soon after that Anne Maciver, who had previously been responsible for transcribing both Edderton and Logie Easter, completed a similar exercise for the Parish of Fearn and it was published as a booklet.

As there were only a few copies of Kincardine (with Croick) remaining, it was decided to produce a revised edition rather than reprint the original 1986 copy once again. When this and the other early indexes (Killearnan, Kiltearn, Knockbain, Tain and Wick Landward) were being worked on the transcription of the information was often made using a hand-held film reader. These images were quite small so that not surprisingly some errors were made in transcription and these have been corrected in the new editions for Killearnan, Wick Landward and now Kincardine. In that particular parish the place of birth was omitted on the original and this vital piece of information has been added. Details of the cost of these new publications will be found on page 27 of this journal.

For the future Anne Maciver is already hard at work on the Parish of Nigg and, after completing that, will then move on to the larger Parish of Tarbat. That will complete the east side of Ross-shire. We will then be left with the parishes of Gairloch, Applecross and Lochcarron on the west. Could we please have volunteers to work on those three parishes? Margaret and Billy Mackay, continuing to progress through Sutherland alphabetically expect to start work on Clyne soon. This then leaves us with most of Inverness-shire and the Isles to complete the whole of the area our society covers. This will mean more volunteers.

THE "MISSING" STRATHSPEY PAPERS

A reply by Adrian Grant

George Dixon (November 2002) does himself and your members no favours - rather great disservice. It is sad that his so effusively paraded discourtesy extends even to his failure to use the stamped addressed envelope I sent him with a letter seeking to benefit from just some of what he may know - and surely there must be some things - even if only to refuse my request. As an evident follower of 'Standfast' and 'Craigellachie' he might have offered pointers he thought useful.

1. Register House (West, New, General: it's all <nas.gov.uk> to me, but I think he will find that I was right first time): The fact remains that when I enquired after the "normal" microfilm of the missing Duthil Parish records, not only was it not available, the authorities regarded these records as missing. The converse also holds - those in charge of the Seafield Papers were unaware that the relevant authorities did not have a copy. Dixon cannot squirm his way out of this one with a quite poor (now that I've seen it) typescript known hitherto not to the competent authorities, but only to a small self-appointed clique. Of course the records have been available also to those whose psychic abilities include knowing to search the Seafield Papers Catalogue for records which should not be there and should be elsewhere, but this is to dance on the head of just one of the angels who are dancing on the head of a pin. If what Dixon says is true, that 'Miss Alison Mitchell drew her readers' attention on p 40 to the fact that the OPKs for Duthil could be supplemented by the "Minutes": 1719-20, 1731-6, 1761-4; proclamations & baptisms: 1719-60 in file GD238/522/1" this would indeed lend further confusion, as the records in question are in GD 248, not 238.

2. Clan Grant Research:

(a) Timescale: Given that Dixon is not stupid, I can only suppose he seeks deliberately to mislead your members about the state of the research into the origins of the chiefs of Clan Grant. The decision to engage in a proper research project was taken in January 2000. He cites comments eg in 'Craigellachie' of Spring 2000 when no more than kite flying had taken place and before any useful conclusions had been drawn and entirely veils the many updates provided inter alia in 'Standfast' since that time. Members who are less interested in Dixon's vainglorious posturing can visit my own website - <www.clangrant.org.uk> - to see some of the conclusions the research group has reached.

(b) Historical figures: 'One can imagine the group's untutored delight at the "discovery" writes Dixon. Half true. We were untutored - no disgrace there - but the manifest problems with the chronology actually gave us more headaches than delight. Indeed so grave are they that it would be only too tempting to dismiss the whole work. But is Dixon's knowledge really so limited that he is unaware that Hakon Ladrjarl in Riki ("The Great", 7995) was indeed Protector of Norway, or that Wifa was indeed the first king of East Anglia and indeed forebears of our own dear Queen) did claim such ancestors and in this respect the Cromdale Text only associates itself with that tradition - which I personally regard as hugely unimportant.

(c) 'Discovery': As for Dixon attempting to belittle the word 'discovery', people are always discovering things - a little bistro in the back streets of Edinburgh, the Seychelles as a holiday destination, the joys of sex - none of them genuinely new or wholly unknown hitherto. I am

Not long after writing the above I went to the library to do some research while my car was being serviced and I spotted Donnie MacLennan with his head buried in a microfilm reader as usual. I mentioned that, as most of the indexing of most of the Ross-shire parishes was nearly complete, we needed to turn our attention to Inverness-shire. To set the ball rolling Donnie immediately offered to work on the Parish of Kirkhill. Do I hear any more offers to help?

SCOTTISH NATIONAL BURIAL INDEX (SNBI)

By Sandra Norton

First, an apology for not issuing an SNBI update in the November Journal. This was due to a sudden family illness.

Thanks to the many HFHS volunteers over the past three years the six counties for our Society's SNBI remit i.e Caithness, Sutherland, Nairn, Argyll, Inverness-shire and Ross and Cromarty have all reached at least the data input stage.

Caithness has only four parishes, Bower 1790-1795, Dunnet 1751-1756, Reay 1783 to 1791 and Thurso 1681 with death or burial records. The Thurso register was too damaged for us to use but the other three parishes are now prepared for CD Rom.

Sutherland County again has only four parishes with burial registers. Kildonan 1831 and Lairg 1804-1844 parishes are completed, as is Dornoch 1841-1854. Loth 1830-1849 and Dornoch 1841-1854 have been inputted onto database awaiting the final checking process. Thanks to Olwen Jones, Jan Hitcham, Elsie Fraser, Iain Fraser and John and Beryl Durham for assistance with transcribing and inputting data for these parishes.

Unfortunately Nairn has only one parish, Auldearn, with a burial register. However, this dates from 1721-1854, has 1360 entries, and notes name, age, burial date and cause of death in many cases. This was recently prepared for CD Rom thanks to Will Morrison, Margaret Shand, Heather Bain and Olwen Jones some of whom also helped with the above Caithness parishes.

I am happy to give an update of progress on the Inverness-shire, Ross and Cromarty and Argyll parishes, most of which are completed, to any HFHS member who contacts me. I shall give a fuller update of progress on these in the next issue of the Journal.

I now need assistance again with INPUTTING DATA for Inverness burgh, by far the largest burial register with many thousands of entries dating from the 17th century. I have divided the records into batches, which volunteers have transcribed and checked. Please contact me by e-mail or in writing if you can help.

Finally, a particular mention to those helpers who have continually offered to transcribe, check and input many "batches" over the course of the project. They are Olwen Jones, Elsie Fraser, Susan Boag, Jan Hitcham, and Nancy White. Will Morrison continues to oversee and prepare the final database, not an easy task. Appreciation is also due to those of you who have assisted with all the SNBI burial records.

