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EDITORIAL

Floundering around, seeking inspiration, for what will be my personal milestone 10th edition of your journal, I have been thumbing through some of the past issues. What inspiration I discovered! It is nearly 22 years since the first edition appeared in December 1981, and around 90 issues have followed since.

I am still a novice when it comes to editorials, having followed in the extra-large footsteps of the founder editor Duncan Ross (now editor of the weekly Northern Times in Golspie, Sutherland) until he was admirably succeeded in the Spring of 1989 by Jonathan McColl. So I often feel as though I have these two worthies looking over my shoulder, tut-tutting and casting each other disdainful glances, when I am compiling these page-fillers on my trusty pc.

Flicking through the pages of the early journals, there are so many interesting and informative articles, that the journal itself has become a wonderful archive resource. John Durham continues to update the global index to all of the journals and, with nothing better to do, I have counted that there are in the region of 400 articles which have been published in the journal. In subject matter, the list goes from Accidents to World War One (nothing quite beginning with Z yet, so that would be a first!), with an extraordinary wealth in between. Emigration, General, Military and Monumental Inscriptions are the leading topics, with the MacKenzies out in front - in double figures - for the number of articles about a family name. Sutherland just pips Caithness for the number of articles relating to Highland areas.

There are some fascinating articles which you can pick out from the index. I have to confess, I have not read them all (I would need to have acquired my 4-day working week to achieve that - still ongoing, by the way), but those which have succumbed to the Editorial scrutiny have been richly rewarding and very interesting indeed.

Browsing through Edition No 1, there were no articles as such, rather informative items and pleas from the editorial committee for feedback, together with general snippets of helpful information and news. The copy I have in my possession doesn't look quite as professional as the journal of today; it bears small blemishes on the front cover and the text inside is typed and photocopied. But then, I am sure that the print run was considerably less than the thousand or so which comes off the press each quarter nowadays.

It was interesting to note in Edition No 2 (April 1982), that the publication date was apparently delayed 'as a result of a recent addition to the Editor's family tree'! I wonder how that would go down today!!! Don't worry, it's not on the current Editor's agenda! He (Duncan Ross) can also be credited with the first article 'proper' entitled 'Family History on Film', which outlined his experiences of converting old cine film to 'Super 8'. Oh how times have changed!

Years later, a simple, but effective short article appeared in August 1996. Written by Valerie Walduck of Gympie in Queensland, Australia, it was simply entitled 'Why I joined the HFHS'. It just goes to show that anyone can pen anything (no disrespect to Valerie), from the brief and basic to the deep and academic. I would welcome any articles - no matter how short and plain - for publication in future journals. I look forward to hearing from you!

Don't worry, I'm not going to go through each past journal, one by one (you can contact me personally if you suffer from insomnia). However, I am suggesting that, especially if you are one of our recent members, you get hold of a copy of the Index, which you can then browse

through at your leisure, and you may find an article of interest – or better still, your personal missing link. Back issues are available from the Society, and, if these are out of print, then a request for individual articles would, I'm sure, be looked upon favourably.

BITS AND PIECES

Quite a few bits of information turn up from time to time in the post or over the Internet and this page is where they will appear. As there has been a shortage of major articles possibly due to the fine weather we having had this summer I am able to include several items this time. Some of the information is right up to date but the first three items refer to articles going back as far as August last year. Apologies to those who sent them in for the delay but at least it proves that everything you send us will appear in due course.

Register of Corrected Entries

Following the article on the subject in the August 2002 Journal, member Dinah Smart wrote in as follows.

“You published an article asking ‘have any of you been fortunate enough to discover the initials RCE on the edge of a birth or death certificate ... in Edinburgh?’ I have been so fortunate, and I thought the following might be an interesting and somewhat amusing story for your magazine. On my aunt’s birth (born 5th July 1899) certificate it states:

‘For clarification of child’s name see RCE, Vol IV, Page 170, 24/07/1899’.

I duly consulted the book and found the following:

‘In the 1st column of entry no. 419 in the register book of births for the year 1899, for Annie substitute Johan MacLeod. The above alteration is made on the authority of a certificate in the form of schedule (D) under the hand of Rev. Norman MacLeod D.D., minister in the parish of Inverness.’

When researching I found that my grandmother’s mother’s name was Johan Morrison (nee MacLeod), and my grandfather’s mother’s name was Annie Grant (nee Sinclair). Of course, I can only guess why my aunt’s name change happened! Perhaps my grandfather (William Grant) came back after registering my aunt’s birth and told my grandmother that he had named the baby Annie after his mother. I presume that my grandmother didn’t approve and wanted the baby to be called after her mother Johan MacLeod. Since finding out this piece of family history I contacted my cousin in Glasgow, but he never knew about the name change at all, and in fact he said he’s not sure whether his mother (my aunt) knew of it! Hence, I’ll never know why the name change occurred, but I suppose the above might be a probable explanation.”

Letter to the editor

The following e-mail was sent in by one of our members, Ross Barker. It was dated 26th February 2003 so he is referring to Nick’s February editorial rather than the one that he composed in May.

‘I am one of the USA members, my mother having been raised in the Morayshire environs. As a retiree of some 7 years, I got a big kick out of your latest editorial. So much so, that I had to read it to my wife, Helen – one who is not into genealogy at all, likely because she was adopted and rejected her birth family. We were laughing out loud – with you, not at you. I retired at the age of 65, not so much because I had to, but the previous month I had remarried to my friend of 20 years, long after a marriage of 29 years that produced four great children.

Last October I had the privilege of visiting Scotland for only the second time, the first (I had waited a lifetime!) in 1998. Among other traveller aids, this time I came equipped with a list of the best ice cream shops in all of Scotland. On one beautiful (but rainy, of course) Sunday, I was making my way northward toward our destination, John O’ Groats and Dunnet Head, with my Tain cousins, with whom I had been staying. We paused at Golspie to see the old railway station – where a Dornoch cousin’s father had been stationmaster at one time (William Ross, if you’re keeping records) – and then continued onward.

When we were passing through Brora, my handy ‘list’ told me that Capaldi’s was a must stop. But alas, they didn’t have either of the two highly recommended flavours – Blue Cloud being one of them, supposedly a rhubarb-flavoured ice cream. I had to settle for Rum & Raisin, but that could easily have been added to a list of favourites. Another favourite, one that became a passion, was Icky Sticky Toffee Pudding, and I could have easily spent a week in the Eagle Hotel in Dornoch just to indulge myself.

So much for my tour of Brora. Sorry I missed you! But the trip to the far north was well worth it. As I found in most of Scotland, the weather changes faster than it does on the edge of Lake Michigan. [not this year! Ed.] So, while it was rather blustery, the rain was off and on, and my first visit to the north mainland was well worth the wait. We even sneaked into the grounds of the Castle of Mey for a couple of photos by the cannons (my timing missed the castle tours earlier last year – the first to be offered, as I understand).

Pardon me for rambling on and on, but as I headed out to my mail box today, I had a hunch that two items were ‘due’ in the mail: my quarterly issue of Scottish Life, and either one of my two family history society journals (the other being the Aberdeen & North-East Scotland FHS one). And the hunch paid off in both cases. So far, though, I’ve made it only to your editorial, but I have high hopes for the rest of the issue and the Scottish Life magazine.

As I have more relations in Scotland than in North America, it feels more and more like ‘home’ to me. I was born here, but as my mother, Ethel Ross, had never become an American citizen, I took her ashes with me this past visit – she died in 1999 at 102 – and distributed them in the waters of the River Spey, close to the family home at one time in Knockando. The big irony of this is, I realised only later, was that all her long life she was a strict teetotaler, possibly from being raised by an often-soused grandmother (Knockando is the home of three distilleries). It occurred to me that from the point of the river where I placed her ashes to the mouth at the North Sea, I once counted some 47 distilleries, and likely many of them obtain their water supply from the Spey. Irony, big time!

Thanks for all you do for the organisation. I’ve been enjoying your work in the Journal, and I’d encourage you for patience in awaiting that magical day when you can work on your novel (but 75??? Yuck!). I’ve always said that it’s too bad the overseas members can’t easily get involved more, such as helping with MIs. I was able to assist Sandra Norton with some BMD transcribing about a year ago. It was a proud couple of months for me at the time.”

The Foundling

In my article in the February 2003 journal on the short life of Williamina Allan Durran, I wrote "Hopefully there are descendants of her children alive today in whom the memory of her existence will live on". As to whether her memory has lived on I cannot say, but she did have further descendants as her daughter Isabella Brims married and had four sons. I am grateful to one of our members, Ian Aitchison, for this additional information. Ian has been researching the name Swanson in Caithness for a number of years and during that time he and his wife Christian have transcribed many thousands (currently 59,000) of Caithness birth, marriage and death entries. Each year they spend a week at New Register House and on average manage to add about 750 new entries during their visit there. Of these records some 10,000 are for the name Swanson.

From among the latter records Ian was able to tell me that Isabella Brims married David Swanson in 1910 and they had four sons: - David, born 1912; Donald, who died 1915; John, who died 1972 and Angus Sinclair Swanson, who died 1996, aged 80. He has no further details on the eldest son David and, although Angus married Robertina Macleod in 1954, there is no evidence that they had any children. However, there is still the chance that the elusive David or Williamina's illegitimate son, James Manson (Durran), born in 1873, have kept this strange family tree alive.

1851 Census Index for Lanarkshire on CD

The Lanarkshire FHS has recently finished the project to compile an index for each of the 37 parishes in their area. As each parish was completed it was published in booklet form. With the completion of this massive project they have decided to produce a CD containing all the entries in the 37 parishes. It displays exactly the same information as appears in the booklets and the 173,344 entries cover the most densely populated county in Scotland.

The cost of the CD is £20 for members of Lanarkshire FHS and £25 for non-members. Anyone interested in obtaining a copy should contact - Lanarkshire FHS, c/o Local History Laboratory, Motherwell Heritage Centre, 1 High Road, Motherwell, Lanarkshire ML1 3HU. E-mail: <info.LFHS@aol.com>.

Kilmorack Heritage Association

Sue and John Thomson have been busy once more and this time the results of their hard work is a video entitled '*A Celebration of Kilmorack's beauty*'. It is a journey through the parish of Kilmorack starting in the Fraser lands of Beauty and moving up the glen into the Chisholm lands of Strathglass including Glenstrathfarrar, Glen Carnich and Glen Affric. Included is the Beauty pipe band. The film is 38 minutes in length.

The selling price of the video is £11-95 plus p&p and will be available in both NTSC and PAL versions. The only countries not covered will be France and its former dependencies. Sue says that they have nothing against the French but their association cannot afford to produce them for such a very small market.

Anyone wishing to purchase the video or any other of their publication should contact Sue Thomson, North Lodge, Beaufort, Beauty, Inverness-shire. (01463 783168) E-mail <john@northlodge.freeserve.co.uk>

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE INVERNESS AREA IN THE 1840s

By Peter Zentler Munro

The idea for this article grew out of a chance discovery from a Valuation Roll, that Robert Munro, one of my 3 greats grandfathers, was not penniless, as I had thought I knew, up until that time. I discovered that he was the owner of a large tenement house, with an annual rent of £10, in which lived 6 families. I later saw a letter at the Scottish Records office showing that he had applied for a job as a carpenter, and had asked for a wage of 17s per week. So far as I can determine, he didn't get the job, however, I don't know whether it's because he asked for too high a wage, or for some other reason. Neither 17s (or 85p) per week, nor £10 per year seems very much to us today - but what did it mean for the average working person in the early 1840s?

The bulk of the information for this article comes from the Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law (Scotland) which was published in 1844, and therefore deals with the poorer people in the population at that time (rather than what most of us think of as poor people nowadays.) I have also referred to the New Statistical Account 1845 (NSA), and the Inverness Courier. Prices in this report were in the pounds, shillings, pence currency system, and £1 equalled 20 shillings (20s). One shilling equals 12 pence (12d).

There is a book, *The State of the Scottish Working Class in 1843* by Ian Levitt and Christopher Smout (published by Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh, 1979 - ISBN 0 7073 0247 1), which summarises the information in the Report; it covers the whole of Scotland, and I recommend this book to anyone who wishes to understand life generally at that time, or to fill in the background to their ancestors. The book is, however, now out of print.

This article deals with Inverness parish only. The report's data comprised answers to a 70-question survey, sent to the minister or some other qualified person, in all the 906 parishes in Scotland, and they also interviewed "notable" people from each area. The information below comes mainly from the answers given by Alexander Rose, minister of the High Church; but also from the minutes of evidence given by him.

Other people giving evidence were: James Scott, United Associate Church; James Kennedy, Independent Church; Charles Fyvie, Episcopal Church; William Munro, Gaelic Church; Archibald McLean, Bailie; John McDougall, elder of West Church; Peter Anderson, solicitor; William Welsh Forbes, medical officer to Inverness dispensary; Robert Alexander Manford, surgeon; Edward Ellice, MP; James Suter, merchant; William Cumming, assessor and superintendent of the poor; Archibald Bremner and Thomas McKenzie, teachers; Alexander Forbes, chemist; David Fergusson, meal dealer; Rev Donald McDonald, assistant and successor to Alexander Rose; John Inglis, MD; John McIntosh, hemp manufacturer; James Sutherland, Provost; Adam McBain, elder.

The population in 1821 was 12,264; in 1831 14,364; in 1841 15,308, the population density was under 18 people per km². The average rent of arable land was £1 to £2-10-0 per acre per year, but £5 in the vicinity of the burgh. There were about 620 families employed in agriculture, and about 1150 in trade.

Diet

According to the minister, the principal diet of the labouring classes was oatmeal, potatoes, milk, herrings, and haddock. Presumably herrings were always salted, though this was not stated. This is a little surprising, because responses for other parishes mentioned meat, usually pork, being eaten occasionally. The New Statistical Account said "Labourers and farm-servants generally live on potatoes with milk, oat and barley-meal prepared in various ways - to which the wealthier tradesmen are enabled to add fish and butcher-meat."

Farm servants had small gardens or kail yards, and quite probably grew cabbage, or kail for eating, but it is strange that neither poultry nor eggs is mentioned. Perhaps everyone had poultry, and it wasn't worth mentioning. Although in much of Scotland, bread and tea or coffee had taken the place of porridge, it seems to have been absent from the Inverness area.

Prices

Questions were asked about prices over the previous 5 years a) of oatmeal, b) of potatoes, c) of coal, or other fuel; and about rent of a cottage (in 1843). The questions were not well phrased, do the answers reflect the wholesale or the retail price, did the respondents remember the prices over the last 5 years, and how did they do the averaging? Common sense suggests that respondents would give the retail price; but many people would have bought by the sack of oatmeal, or potatoes, or by the ton for coal, because they have storage space; whereas poorer people or urban dwellers would buy in smaller quantities.

Oatmeal: £1 per boll (140 lbs); a small cartload of peats: 1s; potatoes: 9s per boll; fir firewood: 2s 6d per cartload; oak firewood: 5s per cartload; coal: 9d to 10d per imperial cwt (112 lbs).

Oatmeal prices appear to have increased from 1838 to 1839, and dropped for the rest of the period. What is surprising is that costs were very variable and significantly more than the average in Scotland. Prices in Daviot, Dores, Kirkhill, Moy, and Pettie were 18s, 19s 6d, £1 1s, 19s 6d respectively per boll, the average for Scotland was 17s. Potato prices varied considerably, 10s in Daviot and Moy, 12s in Dores and Kirkhill, but only 8s 6d in Petty, in any case, many of the poor would be growing their potatoes. Coal prices seemed to be pretty standard, though many would use peat; the poor on the poor roll would get free coal, or pick up sticks. For Moy, it was stated that a labourer's family would spend £1 per year on peat. Coal was sometimes priced by a barrel of 2 1/4 cwt, other times by the cwt.

According to the Inverness Courier, prices at the meal and provisions markets were:

	23 January 1842	24 January 1843	New Statistical Account
First oatmeal (boll)	16s 6d to 17s 6d	16s to 18s	
First oatmeal (stone)	1s 3d to 1s 8d	1s 6d	
Second oatmeal (boll)	16s to 17s	14s 6d to 16s	
Peasemeal	15s 6d to 16s	15s 6d to 16s	
Potatoes (stone)	3d to 6d	3d	3d
Beef (lb)	5d to 7d	5d to 7d	4d to 5d
Veal (lb)	4d to 5d	4d to 5d	2 1/2d to 5d
Mutton (lb)	5d to 6d	3d to 5d	3d to 5d

Pork (lb)	4d to 5d	4d to 5d	3 1/2d to 4 1/2d
Eggs (dozen)	6d to 8d	7d to 8d	
Fowls	1s 1d	1s 1d	9d to 1s
Chickens (pair)	9d	9d	4 1/2d to 6d
Ducks	1s	1s	8d to 1s
Fresh Butter (lb)	11d	11d	
Salt Butter (lb)	12d	12d	
Coals (cwt)	9d	9d	
Haddock (3 to 6)			6d
Skate			3d to 1s
Cod (piece)			1d to 1s
Herrings (10 to 50*)			6d
Salmon (lb) (most going to London)			1s to 1s 6d
Grilse			5d
Geese and turkeys			2s 6d to 3s 6d

Table 1 - Provisions Prices

* Herrings varied in price considerably because boats rarely left the fishing ground.

The rent of a cottage paid by labourers was said to be £1 10s to £3 per year. These cottages would also have had small gardens or kail yards. According to the NSA "House rents for the better classes are moderate £15 to £50, shops the same". Levitt & Smout say that the rent of a cottage was clearly phrased with a Lowland labourer in mind, where the cottage would be a one roomed (or less often a two roomed) home of a very humble kind. W W Forbes said that in the Merkinch and the Green of Muirton where the larger portion of the poor were to be found, the houses were anything but comfortable having earthen floors, small windows, insufficient ventilation, they were very dirty, and had stagnant water and dung hills (in some cases, for growing potatoes) close by.

Another parliamentary report, the Sanitary Report, offers the following information:

Place	Cost of Building	Annual Rent	% of Rent to Labourer's Total Expenditure
Inverness	£30 to £80	£1 to £3 a room	About 10%

Table 2 - Cost of Building and Rent

Farm Workers and Farm Wages

The wages of 19th century farm workers are difficult to estimate, partly because they were paid to a considerable, but variable extent in goods, and partly because there were different types of farm workers.

Male Farm Servants (Hinds)

These were usually hired by the year, or sometimes by a half-year. Some would be cottagers (normally married), others (normally unmarried) lived in a bothy or lived in the farmers own

