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EDITORIAL

Red Hector: A Detective Mystery Solved

The coincidences in this game continue to fascinate. Having written the piece for the last Journal's Editorial, I sat back, safe in the knowledge that I wouldn't have to trouble the old grey matter too much (with apologies to my employer!) until the next edition. However, as it turned out, my intentions were to be completely thwarted almost as soon as my own copy of the Journal had arrived through my letter box.

I received a telephone call from probably our latest member, Gordon Elliot, whose signature on his application form was barely dry. He recounted to me his astonishment which occurred on reading the Editorial in his first journal, which concerned a story about George MacBeath of the Doll in Brora, Sutherland (see what you missed if you didn't read the last Editorial - go and read it now!). He had just visited the Highlands and established contact with George at his croft, which is where his own grandfather had been born and, further, they both shared the same great-great-grandfather too!

The regular reader of this column, correction, there now must be two, going on the information above, may recall that I have been researching a series of articles about place names in the parish of Clyne. They were written by Frank MacLennan and appeared in the local newspaper, the Northern Times, in the 1950s. One of the place names refers to a bay called Red Hector's House, below George's croft, although Frank could not pinpoint who Red Hector was, nor where his house could be found.

During the preparations for Clyne Heritage Society's annual summer exhibition, entitled 'Brora - Crofting and Fishing', which opened in the Brora Library in July, I came across the name of Hector 'Roy' on an old Sutherland Estate map of the crofts of Doll in 1820. It was against the same croft as George MacBeath's today. It was all beginning to fit into place. Roy is a local 'by' name, possibly derived from the Gaelic *Ruadh*, meaning red, and this is just too much of a coincidence not to have been the croft of the 'Red' Hector in Frank's Place Names, who gave his name to the bay below what is now George's croft.

With Gordon Elliot's information of a Hector MacRae being born on George's croft in 1848, it was not difficult to conclude that 'Red' Hector was an antecedent MacRae, and I set about searching my Old Parish Register records. Sure enough, a Hector MacRae (with three spelling variations: McCra, McRae and McCraw) lived in Dole of Brora, and was married to an Anne Matheson. The records showed that they had 6 children between 1800 and 1812, none by the name of Hector. However, in 1853, another Hector McRae appears in the records, this time living in Lower Brora, and he had a son Donald to his wife Margaret Sutherland. The Hector born in 1848 is not in the records. The 1851 Census, however, records both of these younger Hectors, aged 25 and 4.

So, there are some gaps in the record, but it does seem clear that old 'Red' Hector MacRae occupied George MacBeath's croft even before the Sutherland Clearances, and the croft remained in the MacRae family, until George's father took it over in 1933. Gordon's own information, recently received, confirms that young Hector (b.1848) was a son of William MacRae, who was the son of who I am calling 'Red' Hector. William MacRae's sister, Ann ended up a spinster in George's house, until she married J Auld in 1903. He died only 2 years later and she died in 1933.

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Some time ago I also joined two of the Yahoo website's "Groups," one being for the Aberdeen and Northeast Scotland society's members and the other called "Scots Origins." While I have yet to unearth a goldmine of information on my forebears, little helps and minor connections keep popping up, and from time to time I will re-post on the websites the several surnames of my greatest interest. One never knows when or from where the next connection will surface. One of the persons who answered my query a few years ago - a member of the Aberdeen group - was so helpful and friendly that, upon my first visit to Aberdeen in 2002, invited me to park my rental car at her home in the suburbs and together we took the bus to the center city to attend the monthly meeting of that society. All to save me the possible stress of center-city traffic (along with much information about her married surname - the one of my "missing" maternal grandfather, Alexander Ritchie).

So, Nick, while I know I haven't "topped" the George and Christina story, I feel that the best things I have done for myself in my genealogy searches have been my memberships in the two societies, Highland and Aberdeen. I don't know why various persons feel the need to resign. I can only hope it is not due to a dearth of information, as each journal issue coming to me is poured over with great fascination and interest. One of those new members - even the ones looking for surnames NOT connected to mine - might just have a clue for me some day. That's the hope of our wonderful searching for connections to the past - all done for future generations.

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We were collected from the airport by Joy, a very pleasant Saga lady Representative and safely delivered to, and installed in, our hotel. Part of the programme comprised talks about life on Tenerife, one of which was by Joy's [second] husband Patrick on the trials and tribulations of emigrating to Tenerife. She and her husband moved there only two and a half years ago, and it transpired that 'Tenerife time' is only half as slick as is Highland Time! However, during the talk I realised that Patrick's accent was familiar - he and I both hail from Derbyshire. Chatting afterwards, I discovered that their previous home was just over the border into Cheshire in a hamlet named Rainow near Macclesfield, so I commented that I had ancestors there in the early 19th century, and that my maternal grandfather was born in another nearby hamlet called Pott Shrigley [Wood of the Shirkes].

Patrick replied that Joy came from there, and volunteered that her mother's maiden name was Brown. Whoops! - "So was mine" I replied - this calls for an investigation. What about other peoples' names? Sadly, she had few references with her but would contact the family back home. Apparently, there was a Great Uncle Rheuben Brown, siblings Mary and Martha; no stunning revelation here. Umm, I wondered - checking on my Family history there was my Gt Gt Grandfather, James born in 1843, and indeed a brother Rheuben Brown, a fairly unusual name, born in 1845. In the meantime, Joy offered to email me with what she knew when she had dug into the files. Soon she did so to the effect that a relative still had the family certificates and her Rheuben Brown was indeed born in Pott Shrigley in 1845. Wow!! It MUST be one and the same - could there possibly be two Rheuben Browns born in the same year in the same hamlet of a population of under 400 souls? Not altogether likely. Looking up the plot of relationships shows that we must be straight Third Cousins, without any removes!

An interesting aspect to this was that our Gt Gt Grandfather Thomas Brown was a bargee based in Pott Shrigley. His 'housekeeper' was Esther Bann, and the Bishops register for Macclesfield shows that they were married in 1851 on the same day that their first four children were Christened! Presumably he moved to and fro along the canal and every time he passed Pott Shrigley he popped in for a few home comforts, until Esther put her foot down with a firm hand and demanded he make the family legal. Apparently a bargee was the lowest form of human life at the time! Good job my father's family weren't into family history at the time as they were a fairly well-off lot from the Derbyshire-Cheshire-Staffordshire area! The only one of my father's uncles I ever met was quite well off, when he married they had the same maid, Rose, from day one to the end of their days. His wife was a tall elegant lady from Brechin, but that is another story, and largely un-resolved. She was unusual in that she was the only Brenda Murray in the whole of the UK in the 1881 census!

Another curious coincidence is that Patrick's son is an engineer, recently moved to this area, and he lives a few hundred metres away in the same village as we do! Patrick and Joy are visiting him this August for a couple of days, one of which happens to be my 75th birthday - it will be an extended family re-union!

As there is a little space left on this page I have a contribution to this theme. Last December my elder son Peter was on holiday in Australia. At a party he got into conversation with an unaccompanied young lady. She said that her boyfriend had returned to the Shetland Isles. "My father was born there," said Peter, and on being asked where, replied "Scalloway". "That is interesting," said the young lady, "my father is a doctor there". Peter response was "So was my grandfather, and my father was born in a house called Ingaville" To which the young lady replied "But that is the house I was brought up in". Some coincidence!

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A HERRING ASSIZE INCIDENT at TOBERMORY in 1711

By E. Edwards MacKinnon
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John MacKinnon of MacKinnon,² better known among his clansmen as *Iain Dubh*, was obliged to appear at the Court in Inverary, Argyllshire in June 1711 following charges laid against him by John Campbell of Barvullin, the pursuer, and Gilbert Edington, procurator fiscal, "for the violent ryot and other crimes aforementioned" contained in a criminal libel and precept raised against him regarding an incident at Tobermory in March of that year. The rights to the fish in the highlands and islands seem to have been contested between the Islanders and the Crown for some time. This was not the first time the MacKinnons were involved in a fight over fish. In 1586, one John MacKinnon of Loch Slapin was charged with making south country fishermen pay large extractions to be allowed to fish in the loch.³ During the seventeenth century, there were often disputes relating to the demands of the Islesmen to allow others to lift fish from their lochs.⁴

John Campbell of Barvullin was deputed by the Duke of Argyll to collect what was known as the assize herring, a tax levied upon the exploitation of herring⁵ from the waters of the west coast of Scotland. Archibald, the former wily Duke of Argyll had, by means of a tack or lease dated 27th June 1698, obtained the right to collect these dues liable thereon, "within all the bounds of the isles great and small, lochs and creeks from Pentland firth to the mule of Galloway or any part thereof, or where the sea flows within

¹ John Cameron (ed). *Judiciary Records: Argyll and the Isles 1664-1705*, (2 vols).

Edinburgh: J. Skinner & Co., for The Stair Society, (1949). I am most grateful to Jo Currie for bringing this important source to my attention.

² In the *Judiciary Records*, (61), pp. 276-289, the name is recorded as John MacKinvine of Strauraill (sic). Iain Dubh would have been aged about 30 at this time.

³ *Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis*, Edinburgh: Iona Club, (1847), p102.

⁴ On local levies made upon shipping, see: A report by Lord Lorn and the Bishop of the Isles regarding fishing in the Isles, 1634. This report of a meeting at which Lauchlan Charles MacKinnon appeared for the Laird of MacKinnon, states that it was "the ancient custom to everie one of thame in whose boundis the herring fishing fell oute, to exact of everie barkt and ship resorting thereto for ankorage or ground leave one barrrell of ail or mell in the owners option; and for ilk anker layed on shoare sax shilling caucht pennies; and out of every last of herring slain there, thrie punds money; Togsadder with the benefite of everie saturdayes fishing: And that now they exact only from ilk ship and bark that comes to the herring fishing, threttie sax shilling Scottish money and for ilk ship that comes to the grey and white fishing Twentie markis". *Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis*, p. 108.

See also: A Proclamation by the Privy Council regarding Fishing, 1635 in which it is "Inhibiting all and sundry persons inhabiting the Isles of this kingdom from resorting to any of the lochs where fish are taken, but such as have warrant from their masters and landlords and that they be furnished with nets," *Ibid*, p. 111. The Landlords named in this instance are: Earl of Seaforth, MacDonald of Sleat, Macleod of Duivegan, MacDonald of Clan Ranald, MacNeil of Barra and MacKinnon. Landlords were authorised only to warrant their own people the right to fish.

⁵ I am not at this point sure how this assize or tax was to be levied. This may have been a tax levied on boats used in the herring fishing, rather than on the catch itself. At the end of the c17th, Hebridean herring fishing appears to have been largely in the hands of the Dutch See: I.F. Grant, *The Social and Economic Development of Scotland before 1603*. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, pp. 314, 315.

the river of Clyde" for a period of 19 years from the 1st July 1698. Not only was he and his deputies or substitutes authorised to collect tax, but also to hold courts of judiciary "within any nearest bounds and seas for administration of justice and punishment of transgressors for observing good order amongst the fishers, merchants, makers and owners of the said herring" This authority was further assigned in July 1702 to one Daniel Campbell, merchant in Glasgow and thereafter in October 1707 to James Montgomerie, also merchant in Glasgow. In September 1710, this authority was again further assigned to John Campbell of Barvullin who, in March 1711 had gone to Tobermory to collect the amounts outstanding, due for the years 1707 to 1710. Campbell had seemingly set up his court on MacKinnon's land at Tobermory, as this was "the next sea port to the place of the herring fishing and most commodious and convenient for the pursuer to hold courts for uplifting the assize duties and punishment of transgressors within any part nearest the bounds and seas" specified in his assignation. Indeed, long before the modern settlement of Tobermory was set up by the British Fisheries Society in the 1790's, this sheltered harbour, known as *Ledaig* (safe harbour) in Gaelic, had long been an important anchorage for shipping plying as far afield as the Baltic and the Mediterranean.⁶

Iain Dubh and his tenants kept their own boats at Tobermory and carried on their herring fishing during the season, and from there sold their catches to other merchants. In consequence, they were considered to be liable to payment of the aforementioned assize dues on the herring and to be obedient to the declaration of the duke's court that assessed and levied the dues.

On this occasion, as the court had been set up on his land, and not that belonging to the duke, who by that time already owned extensive tracts of land on Mull,⁷ Iain Dubh may have seen this as a preliminary move towards a take over of Mishnish. It would have been a continuation of the conquest of Mull so successfully completed by the dukes of Argyll only 23 years earlier. Iain Dubh had taken exception to Campbell's presumption, especially as he claimed that this act on his land was a precedent and had never been done before. On the 7th or 8th March, the day after Campbell's arrival, he and a group of some eighteen followers, who included his baillie and tacksman, Neil MacKinnon in Ardmore; John Og McLean of Ballichtrich; Allan McLean younger of Innerscaddell; Charles McNab in Sorn, with Patrick McLean, John Nicoll, and Hugh Livingston all from Sorn; Hugh McLean from Lephine with Donald McLean; Kenneth McEachern in Penalbannich with Eachern McEachern and Lauchlan MacKinnon of Ardmore with Malcolm McLeod,⁸ most variously armed with guns and swords, descended upon Campbell of Barvullin, who

⁶ Jo Currie, in her book *Mull and Its People*, Edinburgh: Birlinn (2000), p. 31, notes that Tobermory (as a settlement) did not exist apart from the well at the site of the old MacKinnon chapel on the hill overlooking the harbour and a change house or inn that was located near the shore.

⁷ By about 1700, Argyll had come into possession of all of the former MacLean lands of Duart. The loss of MacLean's estates began about 1672 and ended with the flight of Sir John MacLean to France in 1688. This was a private war of expansion carried on against the MacLeans through legal channels by Argyll. The injustice of Argyll's case was well known in the Hebrides. MacPhail, *Highland Papers*, Vol. 1, Edinburgh: (1914) pp. 242-337.

⁸ These were, of course, the major farms on the Mishnish estate: Ardmore, Ballichtrich, Lephin, Penalbannich and Sorn.

at that time was in the house of one Colin Campbell, change keeper at Tobermory. Here, in the turf-built change house at Tobermory Campbell had produced papers, saying that these were his authority to assess and collect the duties.⁹ Although Colin Campbell had no English and was illiterate, he later gave witness in court at Inveraray to the effect that he had been told that the papers produced by Barvullin related to the herring assize.

Iain Dubh, having entered the house, sat down and engaged the pursuer in conversation. The tax related in some way to Saturday fishing, which up until then had been the prerogative of Iain Dubh and his predecessors. This amenity was apparently now claimed by the Duke of Argyll. Having conversed for some time with Barvullin, Iain Dubh seemingly then rose to his feet and declared that "he and his men were in no way liable for assize herring or the duties thereof" and he desired Campbell to remove himself and his court from his land. Furthermore, Iain Dubh shouted orders to his tenants who were still waiting outside the house to ignore the court.

Campbell continued to insist that he was empowered to hold courts for the assize duty. By this time Iain Dubh, whom it seems was a hot-tempered individual, had become quite angry. He threatened to trample upon Campbell.¹⁰ A scuffle ensued during which Iain Dubh took Campbell by the front of his waistcoat, causing the buttons to come undone. At this point, all those in the house got to their feet and John Cameron, younger of Callart, tried to restrain Iain Dubh. What transpired next is not exactly clear, but apparently Neil MacKinnon of Ardmore took hold of Barvullin whilst Iain Dubh struggled with Callart. Seemingly, Barvullin made no opposition to Neil MacKinnon's move, though it appears that somehow Barvullin's hand was cut and bloodied. Barvullin was desired to go out of the house which he did. Whilst this commotion was going on inside the house, part of the house which was made of *faill*,¹¹ was pulled off,¹¹ exposing a hole some six feet across.

Apparently once outside the house, Iain Dubh once again requested Barvullin to leave his land.

The Assize comprised several local notables: James Fisher, provost in Inveraray; Dugald Clerk of Braleckan, commissar of the Isles; Angus Campbell, captain of Dunstaffnage; Dugald Campbell of Glentfechan; Donald Campbell of Lossit, Baillie of Muckam; Patrick Campbell of Kilduskland; Alexander Campbell of Clermamacry; Achibald Campbell of Blarintibbert; Patrick Campbell of Raskellie; Archibald McTavish of Dunardarie; Patrick McArthur of Imishdrynich; Alexander Duncanson, baillie of Inveraray; Donald Campbell, former Baillie of Inveraray; Malcolm Campbell, brother to Durcan Campbell of Aiskinish and Donald McCallum of Poitalloch. Obviously, with this assemblage of Campbells and retainers it is highly unlikely that the outcome of the assize as far as Iain Dubh was concerned could ever have been anything different than that which transpired.

⁹ The establishment of the court is described as "fenced a court by virtue of Her Majesties warrant". *Judiciary Records*, p. 278.

¹⁰ "he would trample on Barvullin upon the midline." Cameron, *Judiciary Records*, p.

¹¹ *faill*, a flat sod of turf, formerly used extensively for house building in Mull.

The hearing in Inveraray continued from the 29th June up to 18th July, when Allan McLean younger of Inverscaddell, was omitted from the list and Allan MacLean and John Macpherson of Ballchitrich were added. John Robison in Som, along with Patrick McNab and Robert McLean who did not appear at the court were found to have failed to comply with the summons and were ordained to be "denounced as rebels and put to the horn and their moveables to be escheat."¹² A roll to that effect was to be affixed to the tollbooth door.

The plaintiffs, represented by Charles Stewart, writer in Inveraray, had put up a multiple defence. First and foremost they claimed that the accusations were not based upon any crime because it was not based upon any law or Act of Parliament, "it being an undoubted principle in law that where there is no law, there is no transgression." There followed a series of denials which argued that the accusations were for various reasons, all irrelevant.

On the 20th July, the Lord Justice Deputy, found the case against John Og McLean, Allan McLean, Charles McNab, John Macpherson, Patrick McKean, John McNicol, Hugh Livingston, Eachern MacEachern and Malcolm McLeod to be not proven.¹³ They were therefore absolved of the charges and dismissed.

Iain Dubh, Neil MacKinnon, Kenneth McEachern, and Lauchlan MacKinnon were not so lucky. The assize found, with only one dissenting voice, that of James Fisher provost of Inveraray, that they had come armed to the house of Colin Campbell and opposed Campbell of Barvullin and furthermore that Iain Dubh had indeed expressed that he would not allow the Queen to hold courts for the assessment of the herring assize on his land. The hearing was adjourned until the 3rd August.

On resumption of the court, John Campbell of Barvullin claimed expenses disbursed during the course of the action and damages amounting to £1,592 and 2d. Scots (equivalent to £130 sterling). On consideration of the verdict of the assize, the judge imposed a fine of £50 sterling on Iain Dubh and a fine of £10 sterling each upon Neil MacKinnon, Kenneth McEachern and Lauchlan MacKinnon. He also ordained that Iain Dubh should find sufficient caution that he should not exact the Saturday fishing or otherwise hinder the uplifting of the assize herring duty there or in time coming and conform to the law in pain of £20 sterling. In consideration of the amount of expenses and damages, the judge found Barvullin's claim for £1,592 2d Scots to be excessive and reduced the amount to £30 sterling.

¹² To put to the horn meaning literally "to be denounced as a rebel, or to pronounce a person 'an outlaw,' for not answering to a summons. In Scotland the messenger-at-arms goes to the Cross of Edinburgh and gives three blasts with a horn before he heralds the judgement of outlawry. "A King's messenger must give three blasts with his horn, by which the person is understood to be proclaimed rebel to the king for contempt of his authority." - Erskine: *Institutes*, book ii, p. 5.) To escheat: 1. confiscation, reversion of property to the State etc. in the absence of legal heirs, 2. property so affected)

¹³ A peculiarity Scottish decision, the case against the defendants was 'not proved' by the prosecution and the case was therefore dismissed.

The various witnesses to the case also required that their expenses amounting to a sum of £9 sterling be reimbursed. In respect of these amounts, the judge awarded John Og McLachlan a sum of 32s; to Colin Campbell, 30s; to Donald Johnston, 10s. to John Cameron in Drumfin, 10s., to John Cameron in Ardracosh, 6s. to Donald McKellar, 6s., and to John Campbell, 6s. John MacKinnon (Iain Dubh), Kenneth McEachern, Neil and Lauchlan MacKinnon were all to remain in ward until such times as they had fulfilled their respective obligations under the sentences. In other words, the fines were to be paid before they would be released.

An undated letter in the National Library of Scotland MacKenzie of Delvine's papers almost certainly refers to this situation:¹⁴ Iain Dubh was undoubtedly for ever short of cash, as there was a general shortage of silver in the Highlands during this period, and this situation would be no exception.

[Undated: (1711); (Inveraray)]

I am us'd here more like a common malefactor than one defending his own right in a modest and discreet way, and if my lawyers had continued in their first resolutions of making one appeal when my innocence might meet with some vindication, perhaps our enemies would have thought of a parley and would give better terms then will now be sought or obtained, for I see the more I yield they like all ungenerous persons continue most unmerciful and I but this day sought to breath a quarter of one hour out of this dungeon and it was denied me, the judge throws the blame upon the provost and he cares not for fear of offending the higher powers give any freedom that without the judges desire and approve of: it among other good usage when I sought one entail of my sentence before I sent of with one double and that was denied me, but when I was this day resolved to instrument I got it. you will see as to the fine since they resulted upon any I do not wonder it should be so much but for the damages and imprisonment upon it, which you know we did not look for: is what I shall never digest and though I need to be involved in law processes yet considering this is one extraordinary abuse. I shall never sit with it but seek for redress through at a distance and attended with never so much trouble and grievance since I can no way have it nearer hand, they can go no greater length with me and I think it is now high time for neighbours to take the alarm at the approach of so wicked and so formidable ane enemy there is ane part of my sentence that the Saturday's fishings which though it may appear to be of very small importance, because of the penaltie mentioned, yet considering how dangerous it may be for neighbours and me both that I should be comfortable here for things done in the isle of Sky, or make any step in order so that us what I stumble very much at, for its there whole designe here I oft told Sir Donald, that this shou'd be the principle justiciary seat and all the islanders even the very remotest be obliged to answer. To it which will be a terrible grievance and may be of the consequence every way for the civil part of this sentence that of the damages will I think suspend and for ye criminal part the grand cure must be used, or then you will immediately order me to acquiesce to ye sentence by finding caution and giving security for ye soumes and for ought I can see, there is nothing now will do but paying the money or I be out of their hands for that is spoke of among some of them for my part I can now bear the

¹⁴ National Library of Scotland: MacKenzie of Delvine Papers, Ms No. 1376, ff.96-97.

worst of it in confidence that you among the first of my good friends will concur with others in advising all the necessary steps in order to redress as you have always been in of less consequence, please to shew yourself generous and of (oblif)dgmg to.

Your most faithful servant,
Jo Mckinnon

This incident would, undoubtedly, have coloured Iain Dubh's decision to turn out with his clansmen in 1715, and again in 1719 and 1745. The fines imposed in Inverary were, for that period during the early eighteenth century, quite substantial and indeed must have rancoured with all four of the defendants. Moreover, the loss of the value of the Saturday fishing, traditionally regarded up until that time as a prerequisite of the Laird, doubtlessly must have caused additional irritation. Thus, in all probability, were sown the seeds of future rebellion and eventually, in turn, the demise of the House of Kilmorie.

Coming so soon after the Union of the Crowns in 1707, and the dissolution of the Scottish parliament when the entrepreneurs of the Highlands and Islands had been put at considerable economic disadvantage due to the imposition of a tax on salt required to preserve the fish that they sent to both the Baltic and Mediterranean, the imposition of the assize on herring must have added injury to the perceived insult of having a court set up on his own land at Tobermory. Nor was this Iain Dubh's only brush with the law. He seems to have been almost continuously in and out of trouble throughout his life and was of course attainted for his part in the rebellions of 1715 and 1719. But all said and done, he was but a man of his times.

Postscript.

The lands of Mishnish were eventually sold in 1780 by Charles, Iain Dubh's son of his old age and the last 'laird of MacKinnon'. Charles had succeeded to a greatly reduced patrimony and mounting debts. Mishnish passed to the Campbells of Knock, who were thereafter known as of Mishnish and Knock and who, along with the Duke of Argyll, in the late eighteenth century sold part of their lands to become what is now the village of Tobermory.

This case is also important as it is apparently the only documentary evidence that exists denoting who lived where on the Mishnish estates at this time. Rent rolls and the like which would no doubt have existed, appear to have been long since lost.¹⁵

Acknowledgement: I would like to thank my colleague Gerald McKinnon, Prince George, B.C., who read an earlier draft of this paper for his several helpful suggestions.

¹⁵ See: Jo Currie, Mull, p. 397

HFHS PROJECTS

MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS

By John Durham

The indifferent summer we are having has meant that only one of the three burial grounds we aimed to complete this year has been finished so far. With the not inconsiderable help of Anne Robb, who did the initial transcription of the majority of the upright stones, Dore's Churchyard has been published. This was in spite of the midges that appeared on more than one occasion while Graham Tuley and I were doing the checking. It is hoped that once these insects have calmed down, a start can be made on checking the 500+ stones that Angus Bethune has already transcribed in Urquhart on the Black Isle.

A perusal of the transcriptions in Dore's has resulted in a number of oddities. For example, several persons who were living in and/or died in Inverness are buried in Dore's. If you know that your ancestor was living in Inverness and have been unable to find a monument to him/her in Inverness itself, perhaps you will find what you were looking for in Dore's.

Then there were an unusual number of accidental deaths, fifteen in all. With Dore's being on the shore of Loch Ness the chance of a drowning accident in the loch was always a possibility. In spite of that only three persons were drowned on the loch, four elsewhere in Scotland and one at sea. Another three died as the result of car accidents, one on the railway and one as the result of a training accident in WW1. The final two were brother and sister and the inscription on their memorial reads as follows: -

Sacred to the memory of Malcolm FRASER, late farmer, Drummond, Stratherrick, who was deprived of his life by an accident on his way from Inverness on 2nd Dec^r 1871, born 1st Dec^r 1838; also his sister Margaret, who was also deprived of life by the same unfortunate accident, born 20th Oct^r 1831. (base) This monument is placed in memory of the deceased by the bereaved and afflicted brothers - 1872.

The inscription intrigued me so I paid a visit to the Inverness library and, on looking through the microfilm of local newspapers, soon found what I was looking for in the Inverness Courier of Friday 7th December 1871.

Melancholy Accident - A Brother and Sister Killed

We are sorry to have to record a sad accident which occurred early in the morning of Saturday last, causing the death of a farmer named Malcolm Fraser, and his sister Margaret Fraser, residing at Drummond, Stratherrick. On Friday night they started for home with a horse and cart from Martinmas market at Inverness, and proceeded along the road with some companions till they came to a place where the roads parted within about a mile of Dalerag. There the brother and sister bade good-bye to the rest, and took the road towards Whitebridge. Below Dalerag farm there is a small burn where horses generally stop to drink water. Arriving near the spot the horse turned off the road, taking a short way to reach the water; and it seems that the wheel of the cart must have come in contact with a stone or some obstacle, as it was found capsized and the horse lying on his side in the stream.

Both the unfortunate persons were in the cart at the time; Malcolm fell right under the cart, and the boards of it lay across his sister's breast. They were partly in and partly out of the water, the stream having become dammed up by the impediment. In this state brother and sister were found lifeless at nine o'clock on Saturday morning, and it is supposed that the accident had occurred about four o'clock. Malcolm was thirty-two years of age and unmarried, and his sister was thirty-seven.

Notice that on the memorial the dates of birth (pre-1855) of both the brother and sister are recorded. Monumental inscriptions can contain a considerable amount of information about several members of the same family and are an often-neglected genealogical source. Not only do you find information relating to members of the family who lived in the local area, but also to those who moved out and died elsewhere. The following inscription is an excellent example of what I mean: -

In affectionate remembrance of Mary, widow of the late John FRASER of Midtown of Ness Castle and daughter of the late Malcolm and Margaret FRASER, for many years farmer, Aberchalder, born 1st August 1808, died at Ness Castle Lodge 17th May 1889; also of the above named John FRASER, born 7th September 1809, died at Midtown July 1853; also of Isabella, daughter of the above, born 17th July 1841, died at Inverness 17th July 1869; also of Malcolm, son of the above, born 25th June 1839, died at Glasgow 16th November 1891; also of Alexander FRASER, died at Midtown 1849, aged 73 years; also of Isabella MACKENZIE, wife of the above, died 1838, aged <blank> years; also of Margaret R. HARDINGHAM, died 22nd April 1909, aged 49 years, the beloved wife of John FRASER, 18 Pailton Square, London, interred at Fulham Cemetery; also Alexander FRASER, died 20 April 1912, aged 77, Superintendent Ramsgate Cemetery for 41 years and interred at Ramsgate. (base) Erected by John, son of the above John and Mary FRASER.

How many different sources would you have to look up to get all the above information? The reference to the parents of someone born in 1808, who were presumably born c1780 means that events covering a period of about 130 years are to be found recorded on this stone. This is why it is important that societies like ourselves as well as local heritage groups record these inscriptions before they succumb to corrosion or worse. It is also important to record the information accurately and in full. In spite of the condition of the stones being the best we have recorded so far, comparison with the publication *Inverness District East - Monumental Inscriptions pre-1855* shows a 30% error rate in accurate transcription as well as the omission of thirteen pre-1855 inscriptions that we recorded.

INDEXES to 1851 CENSUS RETURNS

By John Durham

This summer quarter is always bad for this project and this one was no exception. Angus is still trying to follow up the possibility that someone may have done a transcription of Gaithloch, which along with Applecross, are the last two parishes on the mainland in Ross-shire to be indexed. Billy and Margaret Mackay hope to resume work on Eddrachillis soon.

