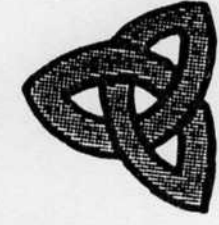


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JOURNAL

Vol. 24 No. 1

November 2005

ISSN 0262-6659

Published by
The Highland Family History Society
Comunn Soinntearachd na Gaidhealtach

November has arrived – and I have to say at an apparently astonishing rate! It only seems like last month since I was doing this for the previous edition of the Journal and I now seem to measure my life in three-monthly Journals these days!

In the last Editorial, I wrote (at some length!) about the resources available in the National Map Library in Edinburgh. For regular voyeurs of this column, you will know that I have an unhealthy fascination with place names, and I have again attempted to quench this thirst with a further visit to Causewayside in Edinburgh. Deeper investigation of the indexes led me to some more maps of the Sutherland Estate collection which I had, hitherto, not discovered.

One of these was a 'new' map of Strath Brora, made by a James Roy (any relation to the other Roy, William, of Military map fame?) in 1814. It was large and difficult to handle, being more than twice the size of an A0 sheet and made at such a large scale it showed individual buildings and their outshots (that is, small juts out from the main building line, similar in size and outline to modern day porches). This map would have been impossible to copy, but I was able to nip out and purchase some large sheets of tracing paper and reproduce the information in a slightly crude, but very effective way.

Another map which had previously escaped my attention, measuring over 6m in length (would you believe?), detailed the townships and farmsteads in the Strath of Kildonan, around the same time (and possibly by the same mapmaker) as the Strath Brora map above.

Furthermore, amongst this latest gold mine, were two bound volumes of plain pages with pasted, hand coloured maps of individual farms, extending from Strath Fleet to Navidale, covering the entire east coast of Sutherland. These dated to around 1770, with one volume consisting of maps made by Home (whose detailed and beautiful maps of Assynt farms in NW Sutherland have recently been made available on the excellent NLS website - <http://www.nls.uk/digitalibrarv/map/index.html>) and the other by a surveyor named Kirk.

Home's volume comprised 12 separate maps of farms from Strath Fleet to Doll and Kirk's completed the section from Brora to Navidale. They are very detailed, showing locations of the houses of main tenants and their cottars and are a fantastic pictorial record of East Sutherland life before the Clearances, some 40 years later. All of these beautiful works of art and similarly wonderful sources of information really should be made more widely available and I was very keen to get these wonderful additions to our local heritage copied. However, after making this request, I was told that they could not be photocopied as this might damage the bound volumes.

I was, therefore, curious to discover how Home's maps of Assynt (also in a bound volume) had suddenly appeared as downloadable images on their website and quizzed a member of staff. She informed me that the local group, Historic Assynt, had funded the digital imagery of these maps (at the cost of several hundred pounds) for their own research purposes. The spin-off to the Map Library and to the rest of the map-using community throughout the world is that, once the Assynt group had received their images themselves, they were made available for all to see on the website.

So, armed with this information, I have returned home with the aim of getting 'our' maps digitally copied for our own use and, in doing so, making them available on the NLS website for a wider audience. So, watch this, or rather, the National Map Library's website space, for future progress!

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ROOTS OF STONE

Talk given to the Society on 27th September 2005
by Hugh Allison

Where does a book begin? - I have no idea what the catch-all answer to that question might be? As I say in the opening pages of "Roots of Stone" - I suspect that every book's beginnings are as different from each other as are those of the authors who write them. Can you see it? - that historic moment when D. H. Lawrence decided to write "Lady Chatterley's Lover" - was he digging the garden, having his tea, or perhaps amidst the household accounts. By the same token, where did "War and Peace" by Leo Tolstoy, or "The Shining" by Stephen King, begin. The tabloids tell us that Harry Potter was conceived due to J. K. Rowling's lack of cash - but where did she find him? - I don't know?

So probably, one of the biggest and most intriguing set of questions to put to an author is - "Where and why did your book begin, and what was your motivation". I do say, in "Roots", that my book began in Nairn, on a lovely sunny day in May 2002. That is completely true. That was the moment when, like a bloom on a flower, the idea of a book unfolded in my mind. The seeds, however, were planted earlier. My parents were always intensely interested in Scottish history, and, probably as a direct result of that interest, I, myself, studied Scottish History at Glasgow University. This would stand me in good stead later. My mother, in particular, spent decades undertaking rigorous research into familial and social history. As you would expect of a Doctor like her, she adopted very logical and empiric methods, and the results are therefore clear, verifiable and accurate. This she then gathered into loose-leaf format, one for each of her grandchildren, with some spare copies, for those as yet unborn.

At the time that she undertook this, I was working in the Cultural & Leisure sector of local government, until a spell of particularly poor health in 1999 resulted in retreat from the Council. After some physical rehabilitation came the opportunity to reappraise and re-evaluate directions. This led me, in my new life, to the decision to use my knowledge of Scottish history to help visitors to Cullooden Battlefield. It was while there that I showed my mother's work to historian - Ross Mackenzie. He was very impressed, and as an aside, suggested that I should investigate the option of publishing it, for the specialist market.

I thought no more about it, for nearly a year. Then, as described in the opening sequence of "Roots", as I sat, one May afternoon in 2002, by the Links, the seeds bore a flower. As I sat there, enjoying the weather, I was pondering what to give my mother for her birthday. It came to me that I could write a book for her birthday. It wouldn't be finished in time for that year, but would perhaps be achievable by one of her forthcoming birthdays. I could use her research as one vein of rich ore, but I could blend it with many other sources too. This would help to ensure that the end product would satisfy more than just a specialist market, and would be a rich mix of big picture Scottish history, combined with the most exciting findings that her decades of research had uncovered. The resultant work should be a readable and broad history of Scotland - with universal relevance for the reader, but also encompassing a wholly unique slant, showing how ordinary people, indeed all of us, fit into this picture.

As is stated on the first page of the introduction - "This book is an exploration into how real people and real history are one and the same. If there is a coded message within these pages, it is that the building blocks that history is constructed from are the lives of each and every one of us. We pull down books from the shelf and let them fall open at stories of heroes and villains and tales of derring-do. But, as we read of those long-ago times, it can be easy to lose the sense of the real people behind the action". One theme of this work is to put those real people back at the centre of the historical picture. So I let the idea marinate over the next few days, and then I decided to create what I called "a storyboard". This could

be described as a sketched outline of the whole book. It helped me to see where the book would begin, what course it would follow, and where and how it would conclude. I felt that this creation of an outline would give me the confidence to begin.

The Storyboard identified main chapter content for me, and highlighted the particular topics in which I might need to undertake further research. It also imposed a broad structure, and a conclusion at which to aim. And so I was finally ready to put pen to paper. As the Prologue took shape, however, it became evident that the reader deserved, and would expect, certain further information, beyond just scene-setting and background. They would require reassurance regarding the story's relevance to them, and they would also benefit from clarification on the *raison d'être* for the book. Not so much my motivation in writing it, - more what overall message is conveyed.

I addressed both the questions of relevance and the matter of *raison d'être* in the closing words of the Prologue -

"I intend to draw a number of tales capable of illuminating the mist that is 'times past'. I will draw from royal bloodline and I will draw from crofting hearth. They will be tales taken from through the ages, sometimes of the good and sometimes of the wicked, sometimes telling of grand passions and the clash of armies, and sometimes telling of the quiet satisfaction of an everyday task completed. More than anything, this is the tale of my mother's family - the tale of all the ones who came before and who can still be felt in the blood at times when any deep emotion is stirred. You know that! You will have felt it yourself at all of those deep points in your life. I hope that this book may encourage you to find out more about those who came before you."

So there was my aim, my outcome, clearly and rather scarily stated, in black and white, on the page. I had set myself no small task, and so now I waited, needing Chapter One to begin - it looked like thisand therefore I waited some more and nothing changed and while I waited, it didn't matter how hard I looked, the page was still white. And then whither the page the blanker the mind. If this whole book-writing thing has reinforced any view of mine - it is the simple fact that for writers there is nothing so out and out paralysing as the sight of a blank page. The white page is the author's real bogeyman. Once you write something, anything, then it's so much easier to work with it. You can cut it, change it, transpose it, and whatever you do, you're developing it, and as such, you are at least active, in the telling of your tale. So my big piece of advice today is - when you see a perfect white page scrawl on it, because, just like following tracks in the snow, you never know where your marks will lead. In that same spirit, I began a journey across the white fields of my book and the tracks ultimately led me to the opening words of Chapter One.

Once I finally got going, the chapters came fairly quickly. The storyboard was a real help in keeping me focused, at this point. However, in all honesty, I would have to admit that sometimes the tale took on enough of its own shape to grow organically, outwith the bounds set by the storyboard. This is inevitable, and I have long since accepted that if a story has power and place, then it also has certain independence. It will not be diminished by artificial constraints and will strive towards full and flamboyant disclosure.

I did find a certain joy in having an uncensored voice, with which to expound the truth as I see it. This on such issues as "The Massacre of Glencoe" - (no clan battle, but instead, a British army ethnic cleansing operation, at the specific and written behest of the Secretary of State), and the shame behind the Highland Clearances. I also found myself, almost by accident, in the arena of social comment, when considering the poaching activities of the famous Gaelic Bard - Rob Donn. He proposed the saying '*is ionraic a' mhèithe na feidh'* (Righteous theft is the killing of deer). This challenged the gentry far more seriously than his Jacobite leanings, and he was temporarily exiled to Fresgill, on the Moine. And so, with disclosures like these, and also with structural tweakings, the final shape of my narrative

emerged. While close to the storyboard plan, it also reflected the needs of the story. In summary, there are minor changes, regarding which years are covered in which chapters, but the largest change was the addition of two "interludes". This gave the space and time to investigate a number of sidebar issues, and the development of some of the most powerful clans and families in the north.

The biggest surprise to me, as the story unfolded, was the importance of certain places of power, in the landscapes of the tale. Dunadd, ancient capital of the Scots, together with Lochindorb, and Kintail Mackay, all make their presence felt – and especially Castle Tioram. It was the power thrumming in these places that gave me the idea of asking my eldest daughter, Lindsay, to draw some accompanying illustrations using this passage as inspiration - "Loch Moidart is steep-sided and its islands are thickly wooded. Out on the horizon are 'The Small Isles'. The strand at Dorlin is the whitest of sand, curving out into a tidal spit, pointing out towards the rocky islet offshore. Atop that islet stands the great strong bulk of Castle Tioram, encircled by a mighty curtain wall through which only one door beckons. And so this is my place of places. Here I can sit and watch the sun dropping from the burnished heavens towards a sea of mellow gold and as the world darkens, the castle stands silhouetted against the sky and seems to live again, hiding age and condition under a cover of night."

I felt that the resulting pictures add a haunting quality to the book, and perfectly counterpoint the descriptive passages which impart that strong sense of place. However, these pages also contain a lot of hard facts, and while lyricism has its place, there is also an onus upon the writer to do everything possible to ensure the accuracy of any assertions. While actually producing the body of the text I concentrated on creating material which met three criteria – Firstly, I strove for a feeling of authenticity and familiarity, in the background; secondly, I worked to achieve accuracy in the detail of the historical fact; and lastly, in the spirit of the storyteller, I attempted to create a narrative which would firmly draw the reader ever onwards.

I tackled each of these as follows:-

The authenticity of the background comes only with extensive readings covering the same time period. A lot of the titles included within the bibliography were read more to instil that familiarity with the requisite time period, than to supply particular information.

In attempting historical accuracy, I used the 3-source rule throughout – (i.e. corroborating your position by reference to three independent sources), and this helped me to safely navigate most of the troubling periods of the past. And of course, where corroboration isn't forthcoming, it's important to use a form of words which recognises that, such as: - "The third sideline that I want to look at is that of Malcolm MacHeth, who was a grandson of Malcolm III and Margaret (through either their son Ethelred or Alexander)." Thus we acknowledge that there are questions regarding the parentage of this individual, but due to the certainty of grandparentage, in reality, for our purposes, that is sufficient information.

Finally, in regard to creating a story which grips the reader, and encourages them to dive into the next chapter, I took the advice of Stephen King. He wrote a book called "On Writing" which is full of useful advice, and supportive comment. Reading this probably helped me with techniques like ending chapters with questions, or with little teasers like: - "Aodh Roy and his brother (probably Neill-Naverigh Mackay) were both at fateful Flodden in 1513, when their King, James IV, fell along with 10,000 other good Scots. They survived the battle. By the time they got home to the north Coast, however, they found that the impact of Flodden could be felt in every corner of every land-holding in the country. The rules had altered, the players had changed places and they hadn't seen any of it coming."

The book was progressing reasonably well, but I still wasn't wholly home and dry. I had begun Chapter 9, which took me through the 18th century – and still my work in progress lacked a name. I was fervently hoping that I wouldn't be left in that quandary familiar to new parents, who haven't yet settled on a name, by arrival time. I really didn't want my new book to come into the world without a title. And then suddenly, and thankfully, the problem was resolved – the name came forward – unexpectedly presenting itself from amidst a passage illustrating the north coast - "The power in the land sleeps most lightly in the far north. The landscapes are deep and old. The rock foundations of the West Moine are amongst the oldest known, and in places where the soil is thin, the bones of the world show through, upthrust against the sky. Norse myth and Celtic legend intermingle here in pools amid the heather – groundwater from which the wellsprings of creativity flow. And if you listen very carefully, just when the northern light is at its most luminous and when the wind is blowing through Strathmore, you may like to think that you hear words on the wind. Words inspired by this remarkable place and by the remarkable and hardy people who live here."

The name – "Roots of Stone" just seemed to lift from that narrative the way a rock carving can spring into relief when the sun hits it just right. And so now I had a name that I felt had the right strength and shape. This gave me the impetus to finish the book. The whole completed tale contains work from many generations. My great-great-great-great-grandfather, the bard, Rob Donn, is given an appendix, for his verse, while my great-grand uncle and grandfather are both represented by their original pipe tunes. My mother's research, my own research and words, and my daughter's pictures are all integral too. All in all, six generations contribute to the finished article. This gives weight to the words in the Epilogue:- "We, none of us, live alone. Our tales are intertwined and to have a tale that touches other lives and then not to tell it is to live in darkness."

And so, at last, this particular tale was told. But what was I to do next? I gave lots of thought to whether to publish, and indeed how to publish. I could go to what is called the vanity press, and pay, to have the book produced. There is nothing wrong with this, and for many people it may be the right choice. I chose not to, for two quite specific reasons. Firstly, I had seen TV documentaries on how some, less scrupulous, vanity press business deprived people of their life savings and more. Secondly, I felt that being carried by a reputable publishing house was a good form of quality control. In other words, if my book was poor, then no-one would run with it, and consequently I would be saved the embarrassment of having such work on open and public show. Alternatively, if the book was good, then and only then would it make its way into the public gaze.

My next step was to make a list of companies who regularly published books of a similar type. I did this by going through all the shop stock at Culloden a I have here one page of the list I made – and indeed the responses. I was never downhearted by rejection letters, again because of Stephen King. He tells a salutary tale in his book, "On Writing", about hanging all of his rejection letters on an eight-inch nail, in his study. Eventually the weight of letters pulled it out of the wall, and so he replaced it with a butcher's hook.

The last name on this page, Mainstream Publishing, decided, in September 2003, to go ahead and publish. They are a good-quality publisher, based in Edinburgh. They have published, amongst many other titles, such books as Jim Hunter's "A Dance called America". Once they had made their initial tentative offer, and I had accepted in principle, they then sent a contract. Then came a round of drafts, proofs, & editorial tweaks, which took some months. I was happy though, because I truly felt that their suggestions, although minor, did improve the polish and the flow of the completed work.

One of the most exciting moments for me was when I received the proposed book jacket, from the designer – Lizzie Cameron. I believe that this was probably the moment when it all became real for me at last. She had done such a good job. The cover conveys the essence

of the book so well, and it's an added extra that it portrays the house in Melness which my grandfather built for my great-grandmother. I have noticed, too, that a good cover helps to draw attention to a book, as it sits quietly upon the shelf. By January 2004, "Roots" was at the printers, and the launch party was set for Bannockburn, at the end of March. The book itself would be out in mid-March however, and available by mail order as from that time. Strangely, the first copy that I saw was in a house in suburban Brisbane, in Queensland, Australia. It was the 15th March, 2004, and I was in Australia for a very specific reason. What reason? Well, that, as they say, is a whole other story!

Once the idea of "a whole other story" had arisen, it was closely followed by a question. What story is waiting to be added to the Book of All Tales? After considering that question, I began writing "Rivers Running Far". Emigration was an issue touched on towards the end of "Roots of Stone", and, given the image I had carried since youth, of my father's people flowing out from Scotland across the world, it seemed like it should be the central thread to the story waiting to be told. The Story of those who went away!

Working on "Rivers Running Far" enriched my life beyond any of the expectations I previously have entertained. It is a book which has required much research, leading me, in turn to me working with many remarkable and uplifting people. They brought an energy and sense of excitement to this project of mine, and the help and assistance of so many willing and enthusiastic individuals significantly lightened the burden of that research, and added the element of fun. Writing this book created the opportunity to get to know relatives from three different continents, who up until this time were only known by me as names on charts. Another unforeseen outcome was being able to enjoy the truly warm and welcoming hospitality of these family members, in the United States of America and in Australia.

I must also endorse the discovery which I spoke of, in "Roots of Stone", that the old Glasgow maxim of 'one singer, one song' doesn't hold in the world of writing. There are parts of the lives of many people contained within these pages. Anecdotes and information were tendered willingly and in anticipation of the finished story. This help, advice, and material, from people here and abroad kept me encouraged and productive. It also created a welcome obligation upon me to ensure that I finished the work.

My father coped with great diplomacy during the many visits in which I questioned him about some detail, or other, with regard to early family life. I was very gratified one day, however, when my mother remarked how our conversations resembled those that took place in times past, between older and younger members of a household. It was the old, time-honoured way of learning about one's own individual heritage. That type of family interaction has, in part, become a casualty of the modern lifestyle, and its gradual disappearance is another good reason to add this story to the Book of All Tales.

The diaspora of the Scots is a phenomenon which touches the lives of tens of millions of people worldwide. My book contains more questions than answers. I hope, however, that this is part of its universal relevance. The set of factors leading to emigration are different in every case, as are the outcomes of the decision to leave. There is no single conclusion, and so, instead, I sought to identify general trends, and the questions with which anyone can begin to investigate their own forebears' motivations. The aim of this work is broad, combining findings from scholarly and archival sources with the varied real life experiences of many individuals who went out across the world. The story ranges from the Stone Age through to the present day, and the reader finds the action coming at them from four different continents.

I "storyboarded" this work in the same way as I did with my first book, and so I am able to share with you here the broad structure and content of the tale. In brief, the content can be summarised thus:-

Prologue The Prologue opens on a misty morning in Lanark. The tale begins with a stranger walking by, and the reader follows. As the mist dissipates, so does the mystery surrounding the stranger, and the words begin to describe the very axle around which this whole work revolves - introducing questions like why and where people go, what they experience, and how it changes them.

Chapter One Looks at Tinto Hill, in Lanarkshire, home of some ancestral Mintos. The reader travels ever farther back in time, hearing tales of Covenanters and Royalists, Wallace and Marian Braidfoot, Iron Age Forts, Bronze Age Cairns, and Stone Age Hunters. This land has been settled for millennia, and asking the question "why do people stay" can often be as productive as asking the question "why do they go". The chapter ends by introducing the concept that people move on because of a force, and that this force can be internal desire or external duress.

Chapter Two The second chapter is set in the ancestral Allison lands of the lower Clyde Basin. After a peaceful opening in the Iron Age things soon get shaken up by Agricola's Roman invasion. We follow many generations until 1792, and in conclusion, compare and consider the principles enshrined in 3 very significant historical documents - Calgacus' address, The Declaration of Arbroath, and The Declaration of American Independence.

Chapters Three and Four These cover Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian eras, 1747-1921. Within these years Scotland was subject to huge change. This was the time of the agricultural improvers, the industrial revolution, and the Age of Enlightenment. Following the Napoleonic War, it was also the period characterised by the Radical Wars and the Chartist movement. The international situation in Europe becomes ever more tense, throughout the early years of the twentieth century. Yet the young Minto girls, Ruth and Mary, seem not to notice, deciding therefore to take a holiday in France at the end of July 1914. So part of Chapter Four is Ruth's previously unpublished diary, of a young Scots girl trapped in France at the outbreak of the Great War. Many Mintos are lost in the conflict, but not Ruth. Alexander Allison, despite a very active war, also survives, and as the light fades, on Chapter Four, we see these two becoming married, thus binding the families together.

Chapter Five is the story of George and Agnes Minto, and their five sons, who emigrated to Queensland, Australia in 1911. As George was a master-blacksmith, the reader is treated to tales of smiths and smithing, as well as family anecdotes. The Mintos travel on the Otway, narrowly avoiding nautical tragedy. But it is only a few short years until George is killed in World War I, leaving Agnes widowed with five boys on an unfamiliar continent.

Chapter Six America was John Allison's continent of choice, though given his desertion from the British army in the mid-nineteenth century, it was perhaps more necessity than preference. He entered the United States by the Canada Route and was soon embroiled in the American Civil War. After heroic service, he settled near Cincinnati. He was finally pardoned by the war office and permitted to visit Scotland around 1910. Then the shadow of World War I fell. But when it lifted, old John still had all his boys, and by 1921 was celebrating his 90th birthday.

Chapter Seven Here I look in context at everything we have learned about emigration in the course of the narrative. By use of many sources and actual examples, the concept of external and internal forces are revisited. The nature/nurture debate explained, and the patterns that govern choice of destination examined. There is also a definition of culture, together with some thoughts regarding the part that it plays in the emigration game.

Chapters Eight, Nine and Ten deal respectively with Scotland, Australia and America through the twentieth century from around 1920 onwards. As with the earlier chapters, these

use the descendants of the Mintos and Allison as a vehicle to illustrate a number of points. The Chapters, however, are also full of tales and stories from the broad canvas of the twentieth century. The Roaring Twenties, the Great Depression, and the Second World War all provide a wealth of material. We also meet the descendants of emigrants, and ask how they're faring.

Chapter Eleven and the Epilogue These, together, bring the tale to its conclusion. They look at differences between Scotland, Australia, and America, and consider how these affected descendants of emigrants. Questions of coincidence, and questions regarding traditions are examined. There is an open-handed comparison of some differing views on the importance of knowledge of family roots, and some indicators of future developments.

The book concludes with an invitation to scattered family to come and visit us here in Scotland. Working on "Rivers Running Far" has been an education in itself. I have had to undertake huge amounts of research, in all kinds of unusual places. [a number of documents and photographs were displayed at this point] These overheads give just a flavour for the number of places where I have been searching for information. I have also looked through regimental rolls, ships lists, government documentation, and old newspapers.

As well as Scottish sources, I have been assisted by the Townsville Maritime Museum, and the Australian National Archives in Brisbane and Canberra. Local genealogy societies in the USA have also been very helpful, as has the Warren County Museum in Lebanon, Ohio, and the Salem Township Public Library in Morrow.

All in all, it's been a bit of a journey. But one in which each stage has been a real revelation. I feel genuinely enriched by the experience, and I hope that I've managed to extend some of that feeling of wonder to you, tonight.

BITS & PIECES

We are still continuing to receive contributions from members in response to articles that appeared in previous journals. Some members have been encouraged to pen pieces of at least one page in length which we are happy to include either in this section or elsewhere in the journal. This time we have two such weighty contributions. That on DNA by Alan McKenzie appears on page 12, while on page 15 you will find the obituary referred to by George Campbell in the first snippet below.

COMET II

The article by Karin Thompson on the Comet II disaster resulted in the following e-mail from George F. Campbell – "I was just getting over the surprise of finding my own name in the August edition when, just over the page, I found another familiar name with connections to my family. Sir Joseph Radcliffe was an avid deerstalker and in the early part of the 19th century, he leased Gaick deer forest near Kingussie for a number of years. It was sold in 1830 by the Gordon Trustees to MacPherson of Ballindalloch but I am not aware of when Sir Joseph's tenancy began.

The head stalker on the forest for 30 years was my great great grandfather William Mackenzie, born in 1800. He was actually in the employ of the landlord rather than the tenant (which wasn't always the case) so it seemed a little odd when I read in his obituary that, upon his retirement, Sir Joseph awarded him a pension for life. I do not know if Ranald Mackenzie was related, but if he was, then it might explain the pension."

McGILANDRISH/McGILLIVRAY

Lesley Instone from Invercargill, New Zealand e-mailed us on the above subject: - "I read your Society's Journal on a circulation list through my membership of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists, and would like to comment on the recent discussion about a possible connection between the surnames McGilandrish and McGillivray.

I believe that the name McGilandrish is much more likely to be connected to the name Gillanders. I have Gillanders ancestors, mainly from Contin in Ross-shire and believe that one or two early references to these families in the early OPR for Contin and Urray parishes and adjacent parishes (late 1700s) have recorded the name as MacGillanders and on at least one occasion as MacGilandrish.

I have not previously come across any suggestion that there might be any connection between Gillanders and McGillivray, and would be very sceptical of anything purely from the Internet without reputable sources for the information."

HIGHLAND COUNCIL ARCHIVES – TRANSFER OF RECORDS

Nancy Forsyth of Avoch e-mailed to comment on the above article that appeared in the August Journal:- "I agree wholeheartedly with the article by Malcolm Bangor-Jones. Our Avoch Parish Church records, which date back to 1728, were transferred, along with others which the church held, to 121 George Street, Edinburgh, because the Church of Scotland asked that all records held up to 1900 had to be sent to them. We understand that they are now held in Register House. Four large boxes left our home, as it was the custom that Session Clerks were responsible for the safety of church records. Before they left, I copied some snippets, thank goodness, as we would not have known that our Women's Guild was one hundred years old (and still going strong!) and also that our church hall was built largely due to a donation from the Baird Trust.

The records were in perfect condition when they left here. We did ask for them back a few years ago, but we were advised that we would have to have a safe place for them to be deposited. My reply was "We managed to look after them for 250 years, so what's the trouble? We would be delighted if they could be sent to Inverness."

LOST COUSINS

I don't know if any other member has come across this intriguing website. The idea behind it is, like all good ideas, very simple. Contributors enter into a database all the members of their family tree that appear in the 1881 census in the UK. Each person entered is designated as being a direct ancestor, a blood relative or a relative by marriage. The process of entering the names is very straightforward and quite easy to follow. Once you have entered all those relatives that you found in the census the system then checks to see if anyone else has entered the same data. If so, an e-mail is sent to A indicating that B has input the same person and giving them the e-mail address of B.

There are other benefits of registering on this website - free access to the 1901 census for England & Wales for a month was one recent one, as was a 20% discount to register with Ancestry.com. This latter site offers a full index searching facility along with digital images of all pages from the 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891 and 1901 census returns for England and Wales. Other similar offers will be available as the Lost Cousins site www.lostcousins.com adds more and more members. They issue regular bulletins and our society was featured recently. This exposure resulted in a surge in hits on our site the day after it was e-mailed to all those registered on the Lost Cousins website.

use the descendants of the Mintos and Allison as a vehicle to illustrate a number of points. The Chapters, however, are also full of tales and stories from the broad canvas of the twentieth century. The Roaring Twenties, the Great Depression, and the Second World War all provide a wealth of material. We also meet the descendants of emigrants, and ask how they're faring.

Chapter Eleven and the Epilogue These, together, bring the tale to its conclusion. They look at differences between Scotland, Australia, and America, and consider how these affected descendants of emigrants. Questions of coincidence, and questions regarding traditions are examined. There is an open-handed comparison of some differing views on the importance of knowledge of family roots, and some indicators of future developments.

The book concludes with an invitation to scattered family to come and visit us here in Scotland. Working on "Rivers Running Far" has been an education in itself. I have had to undertake huge amounts of research, in all kinds of unusual places. [a number of documents and photographs were displayed at this point] These overviews give just a flavour for the number of places where I have been searching for information. I have also looked through regimental rolls, ships lists, government documentation, and old newspapers.

As well as Scottish sources, I have been assisted by the Townsville Maritime Museum, and the Australian National Archives in Brisbane and Canberra. Local genealogy societies in the USA have also been very helpful, as has the Warren County Museum in Lebanon, Ohio, and the Salem Township Public Library in Morrow.

All in all, it's been a bit of a journey. But one in which each stage has been a real revelation. I feel genuinely enriched by the experience, and I hope that I've managed to extend some of that feeling of wonder to you, tonight.

BITS & PIECES

We are still continuing to receive contributions from members in response to articles that appeared in previous journals. Some members have been encouraged to pen pieces of at least one page in length which we are happy to include either in this section or elsewhere in the journal. This time we have two such weighty contributions. That on DNA by Alan McKenzie appears on page 12, while on page 15 you will find the obituary referred to by George Campbell in the first snippet below.

COMET II

The article by Karin Thompson on the Comet II disaster resulted in the following e-mail from George F. Campbell – "I was just getting over the surprise of finding my own name in the August edition when, just over the page, I found another familiar name with connections to my family. Sir Joseph Radcliffe was an avid deerstalker and in the early part of the 19th century, he leased Gaick deer forest near Kingussie for a number of years. It was sold in 1830 by the Gordon Trustees to MacPherson of Ballindalloch but I am not aware of when Sir Joseph's tenancy began.

The head stalker on the forest for 30 years was my great great grandfather William Mackenzie, born in 1800. He was actually in the employ of the landlord rather than the tenant (which wasn't always the case) so it seemed a little odd when I read in his obituary that, upon his retirement, Sir Joseph awarded him a pension for life. I do not know if Ranald Mackenzie was related, but if he was, then it might explain the pension."

McGILANDRISH/McGILLIVRAY

Lesley Instone from Invercargill, New Zealand e-mailed us on the above subject: - "I read your Society's Journal on a circulation list through my membership of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists, and would like to comment on the recent discussion about a possible connection between the surnames McGilandrish and McGillivray.

I believe that the name McGilandrish is much more likely to be connected to the name Gillanders. I have Gillanders ancestors, mainly from Contin in Ross-shire and believe that one or two early references to these families in the early OPR for Contin and Urray parishes and adjacent parishes (late 1700s) have recorded the name as MacGillanders and on at least one occasion as MacGilandrish.

I have not previously come across any suggestion that there might be any connection between Gillanders and McGillivray, and would be very sceptical of anything purely from the Internet without reputable sources for the information."

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