

*Aberdeen and North-East Scotland
Family History Society*

Journal 143 - May 2017



Alexander and John Macdonald

c. 1915

Membership Detail

New members pay the annual rate, and their subscription expires on 31 December irrespective of the date on which they join. But, from September, they may opt to pay a subscription equal to one and one third times the annual subscription, which covers membership for the remainder of the current year, plus the whole of the following year. Further details are available online. There is also a reduction of £4.00 for e-membership.

Family membership is available for two named persons at one address. Please nominate one surname for registration purposes. The 2017 subscription rates are as follows with a £3 reduction for digital copies only of the Journal:

Ordinary membership	£21.00
Family membership	£27.00

Renewal forms for overseas members are sent out each August, and for UK members they are sent out each November.

Payment

We can accept payment by cheque, VISA, MasterCard, Delta, Maestro or Solo in sterling. Overseas payments by credit card pay the UK, Sterling rates.

Members with a UK bank account may elect to pay subscriptions by Direct Debit, Members are also able to pay online at www.anesfhs.org.uk



Cheques should be made payable to: ABERDEEN & NE SCOTLAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

All subscriptions or membership enquiries should be addressed to:

The Membership Department, 158–164 King Street, Aberdeen AB24 5BD

No receipts will be issued unless return postage is sent.

Members who are UK taxpayers may sign a *Gift Aid* declaration (forms supplied on request) and so increase the value to the Society of their contributions by 20%.

Please note that members who wish to research in our Centre, to place Journal queries or to have research undertaken must have paid their subscriptions for the current year.



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Members' details are stored on computer for administration and research purposes only, and will not be given, lent or sold to any third party. We require only your name and address – other details are optional.

Occasionally, the Society may contact a selection of members to inform them of, or seek volunteer assistance at, some event that may be of interest to them. If you have supplied an e-mail address, then this contact may be by e-mail. Should you not wish to be contacted in this way, please inform the Society in writing.

Journal of the Aberdeen and North–East Scotland
Family History Society
Issue 143 May 2017
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Society News

Summary of audited accounts for 2016 presented to AGM March 2017

ABERDEEN & NORTH EAST SCOTLAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY
(A Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2016

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds General Fund	100 Club	Total Funds 2016	Total Funds 2015
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Incoming resources from generated funds -					
Voluntary income -					
Covenants and gift aid		£7,061		£7,061	£6,474
Donations		3,789		3,789	3,340
Legacy income					5,000
Annual fees			£1,570	1,570	1,717
Investment income -					
Interest received		51		51	100
Incoming resources from charitable activities -					
Subscriptions	2	62,701		62,701	54,374
Publication sales		29,710		29,710	31,833
Research and queries		2,976		2,976	2,145
Other incoming resources-					
Other income		186		186	212
		=====	=====	=====	=====
		£106,474	£1,570	£108,044	£105,195
		=====	=====	=====	=====
Resources expended					
Charitable activities					
Direct charitable expenditure	3	£84,043	1,656	£85,699	£108,065
Depreciation		4,423		4,423	4,712
		=====	=====	=====	=====
		£88,466	£1,656	£90,122	£112,777
Governance costs					
		1,000		1,000	1,000
		=====	=====	=====	=====
		£89,466	£1,656	£91,122	£113,777
		=====	=====	=====	=====
Net incoming resources		£17,008	£(86)	£16,922	£(8,582)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		207,075	3,437	210,512	219,094
		=====	=====	=====	=====
Total funds carried forward		£224,083	£3,351	£227,434	£210,512
		=====	=====	=====	=====

ABERDEEN & NORTH EAST SCOTLAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY
(A Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2016

3 TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED – CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

GENERAL FUND

	Direct Charitable Expenditure	Deprcn	Govern Costs	Total 2016	Total 2015
Publications cost of sales	£19,806		-	£19,806	£24,268
Provision of slow and non-moving stock	-		-	-	5,000
Society journal	17,977		-	17,977	20,010
Postages and journal distribution	11,976		-	11,976	14,933
Stationery and office supplies	3,255		-	3,255	1,961
Insurance, heat, light and telephone	8,970		-	8,970	9,710
Rent	6,900		-	6,900	6,900
Rates	2,547		-	2,547	3,955
Equipment repairs and maintenance	1,614		-	1,614	1,969
Meeting expenses	1,623		-	1,623	1,257
Affiliation fees and subscriptions	2,204		-	2,204	2,187
Advertising	-		-	-	-
Internet and IT expenses	793		-	793	1,478
Accountancy fee			1,000	1,000	1,000
Professional fees	-		-	-	750
Bank and credit card charges	2,794		-	2,794	2,934
Sundry expenses	6,479		-	6,479	6,079
Foreign exchange (gains)/losses	(5,935)		-	(5,935)	2,482
Building and library repairs	3,040		-	3,040	803
Depreciation		4,423	-	4,423	4,712
	=====			=====	=====
	£84,043	£4,423	£1,000	£89,466	£112,388
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
100 CLUB					
Building and library repairs	£845	£ -	£ -	£845	£563
Prizes etc	811	-	-	811	826
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
	£1,656	£ -	£ -	£1,656	£1,389
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

A more detailed copy of accounts for the Society, SC012478, is available via OSCR website (Office of Scottish Charity Regulator). I am happy to send out full scanned copies of the audited accounts by email on request. If emailing is not an option, but you would still like your own full copy, please contact me at 158-164 King Street, Aberdeen, AB24 5BD.

J Maria Cameron No. 9680, treasurer@anesfhs.org.uk

An Update on the Granite Roots Appeal

With our February Journal, the Society launched our Granite Roots Appeal as a way of raising money to make improvements to the Research Centre. It has been wonderful to see the response that people have had to the appeal. The little notes that have been included with donations have been so touching to read – whether it be to donate in memory of one of our treasured volunteers (such as Violet Murray and Molly Sinclair) or a donation made by one member as a thanks for all that the Society does for family history research. Currently, the donations total just over £15,000 with contributions coming in from around the world.

Our most critical need is that of an overhaul of our IT infrastructure. Over the years, the IT system has grown in what can best be described as a patchwork fashion. Mend and make do? We have done that. However, we need to make sure that our IT system is **'future proofed'**.

It is all systems go here at King Street and we are pleased to report the following Granite Roots status update. We commissioned a Business Analysis report on our current IT system and processes. This is the scoping exercise to help us produce an IT strategy to allow us to design and implement the changes efficiently.

We have also had meetings with representatives from Business Gateway Aberdeen City and Shire to seek advice on identifying companies to undertake the IT infrastructure modernisation.

Being that the installation of the new IT system will cause a bit of upheaval to the Centre, it was thought that this would be the best time to upgrade our Research Room. We want to create a better working environment.

In addition, we want to provide a disabled toilet and lift to allow better access. An architect has generated plans for this work. This was not an easy task as a suitable location had to be identified for the lift which will minimise disruption.

We understand that this is an ambitious appeal. Our 40th anniversary is approaching in 2018 and with your help we hope to create an updated, fresh, modern and well equipped Research Centre that can be enjoyed for generations.

A note about donation by cheque: In our Granite Roots Appeal leaflet, we mentioned that donations can be made by cheque, however, we failed to advise that cheques should be made payable to 'ANESFHS'. Apologies for this oversight and a big thanks to those who graciously rewrote cheques.

Susan Freer

100 CLUB

The 100 Club gives our members the opportunity to win a cash prize while also **supporting the Society's work. All that you need is a UK bank account, wherever you live.** The fee for each number held is £12.00 per annum and is payable **annually, in May, by banker's order.**

The payout is always 50% of the income, and there are four prizes in the monthly draw (first 20%, second 15%, third 10%, and fourth 5% of the income). You must be a current member of the Society. If you decide not to renew your membership, please also cancel your standing order for the 100 Club.

The draw takes place monthly, and cheques are posted to winners immediately. Winners are also announced in the Journal. For further details, please see the current Information Booklet. If you would like to join, then please email Teresa Shewell, No. 4883 at 100club@anesfhs.org.uk

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Winners of 100 Club, November - March

	No	1st	Mem No.	No.	2nd	Mem No.	No.	3rd	Mem No.	No	4th	Mem No.
		£26.60			£19.95			£13.30			£6.65	
No v	43	Douglas Johnston	4892	103	Kathleen McLeish	17352	9	Marjory Edward	4196	53	Ian Grant	18498
Dec	13	William Low	484	2	Ian Mackie	16568	32	Isobel Noble	1397	27	Th. Wilson	17077
Jan	29	Edith Stuart	4659	25	Cath. Kirkwood	14069	11	Sheila Armstrong	9082	74	Wm Munro	8229
Feb	79	Angus Pelham Burn	19808	137	Moira Wilson	3231	96	Margaret McDowall	18020	139	D. Smith	14618
Mar	14	Jane Wynn	11882	29	Edith Stuart	4659	106	Herbert Longmore	1023	11	Sheila Armstrong	9082

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Meeting Reports

Aberdeen – 18 February 2017 – Gordon Casely – So you want to have your own Coat of Arms

We were pleased to welcome back Gordon Casely to give us a talk on another aspect of heraldry. He is well known for his knowledge of heraldry and for the work he does for its promotion in Scotland. He was a founder member of the Heraldry Society and holds the honorary position of Herald to the Chief of Clan Irvine. He also assisted the Society with advice to obtain our own Coat of Arms.

The aim of his talk was to sell the idea of heraldry to the members and explain to his audience the procedure for applying for and obtaining a personal Coat of Arms. He also suggested that Heraldry could be useful in tracing family history. In Scotland, all persons being treated equally, means that we are all entitled to have our own Coat Arms, unlike England where only persons of some standing qualify.

To demonstrate how simple heraldry can be, he showed the Scottish and English flags, both very simple examples, and then the Welsh one which has the addition of the dragon. He then turned his attention to personal Arms, which mostly consist of a shield, crest and motto. Throughout his presentation he used many illustrations to explain how a Coat of Arms is made up. He started by using his own as an example, which he inherited from his father and grandfather, and which will be passed on to his eldest son. He explained how other members of the family could use the same Arms with marks of difference. He very kindly provided me with copies of some of the examples he used in his presentation.

In Scotland the Court of the Lord Lyon is the official heraldic authority and anyone who wishes to obtain personal Arms must submit a petition to the Office of the Lord Lyon by sending a letter to him for a Grant of Arms. The petitioner will have to meet with the Lord Lyon. Once the Arms have been granted the petitioner will receive a letter patent. In order to qualify you must be resident in Scotland for three years. The cost of the granting of Arms to an individual is £2500 in Scotland but an amount much more than that in England. Scotland can claim to have the most regulated system in the world for the granting of Arms leading to the purest array of Arms in the world.

In some cases a person may be able to trace their ancestry back to an ancestor who already had a grant of Arms and they could be entitled to obtain a 'matriculation' to show their place in the family, provided they can prove that their family tree links them to the ancestor. The Society has a number of books and encyclopaedias on Scottish clans and families in its library where you can check to find out if your family already has an Armature.

Once you have been granted a Coat of Arms there are many ways you can use them. Looking around in Aberdeen, the Arms of the city can be seen on buildings, badges, banners, books, bollards, signs, stationery, flags, furniture, cutlery,

crockery, uniforms, vehicles and on the Council website. In our own Society the Arms are used on the website, posters, journal, correspondence and membership cards. It is now easy in this electronic age to transfer Arms onto T-shirts, ties, scarves, mugs, glassware, bookplates, business plates and all the other items already mentioned.

Unfortunately, the speaker was unable to complete his presentation when the technology failed and he had many more illustrations to show the audience. However, an interesting question and answer session followed. In answer to a question on mottos he said that any language could be used provided a good reason is given **to the Lord Lyon for its use. An example of this is the Society's Doric motto 'Aye tyaavin awa'.**

This was a very interesting talk but much of the content depended on the many examples of Arms the speaker used in his presentation to describe how they are designed. Perhaps he managed to persuade some of our members to consider applying for their own Coat of Arms.

Kit Corall, No. 1000

Edinburgh – 8 April 2017 – **Members' Day** – The Great War

Our theme for the meeting was members' connections with and researches into WW1. Displays of memorabilia, photographs, stories and factual accounts provided a broad sweep on the times, triumphs and tribulations of that period, with much lively discussion continuing over tea and coffee.

Convening the meeting, Ivor Normand (no. 4161) began with a focus on his research into the WW1 deaths of descendants of his Banchory-Devenick Patersons. Showing an impressive pile of print-outs, he illustrated the breadth of international input in tracking so many descendants. Few of us could achieve such a tome of evidence – testament to many years of diligent and collaborative family-tree research.

Patsy Mair (no. 102) brought an eclectic display of just some of her collection of secondary memorabilia from WW1, gathered over many years and found in diverse places: badges, mementos, awards, art objects, magazines, programmes, jewellery. Her dedication to this task was evident and would put many a museum **collection to shame. Details of the "for what and whom" had been difficult to discover, but diligence over time revealed the depth of emotion and respect underpinning such simple and cheaply made artefacts. Many attending could relate to some of the objects and appreciated Patsy's depth of knowledge.**

Betty Jordan (no. 18139) showed a photo from her sitting-room wall of the steamship RMS *Omrah*, built at Fairfield's Shipyard, Govan, and launched on the Clyde in 1898, where her maternal great-grandfather from Ireland had worked at that time. Built for the Orient Line, she sailed regularly between London, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand carrying emigrants, returnees, the mail and the first Australian Wallabies rugby team to play in England, until she was

commandeered as a troopship in 1917 to take 600 men to war. As they departed, they were given comfort packs by Mrs Sarovich; and one grateful recipient sent her back a letter of thanks, literally as a message in a bottle. While going through the Mediterranean in a convoy, the *Omrah* was torpedoed by U-boat 52 and sunk, but with only one life lost and, unfortunately, all the longed-for mail. Nine years later, the letter in the bottle finally reached its destination after being found on an Australian beach. It was signed by Malcolm McIver of the 14th Reinforcements, 6th Battalion, reg. no. 4565. Was he a Scottish immigrant, and did he survive the war? More research needed. Betty also brought along the three key books that have aided her WW1 researches (see below).

Tessa Catto (no. 20521) spoke about her father-in-law's family and their links with **Robert Gordon's school. The family lived in the farmhouse now associated with Annie Lennox. The family's son-in-law** in the Medical Corps was the only one of the family killed in the war. One was shot in the eye but survived and returned home to play rugby for the RG team. Another son kept a notebook throughout the war and eventually became a parson. Yet another son became a pathologist studying cholera and, ironically, died of the disease later while in India.

David Paterson (no. 6475) showed a wonderful photo album from his father-in-law, **Aberdeen's "swimming mannie" until 1961 and a weel-kent Aberdonian** character who had been a cavalry man in WW1. The album includes a photo of the Scottish Horse group, probably taken just before leaving for the battlefields – a treasured photo of the braw young laddies who galloped into war for king and country. This group was trained as cavalry at Blair Atholl before sailing to Gallipoli, where 40% of casualties caught trench foot, **but David's father-in-law and the latter's brother returned. His citation has been lost; does anyone know how to get it replaced?** This was another heroic story, raising more questions and usually with no-one left to answer them.

Dave Harper (no. 6457) was on holiday from Salt Lake City with his wife, visiting another member. His family left Scotland for New England, then Halifax NS, then Utah. One antecedent was a nurse in WW1 who lived to be 102 years old. She worked in Field Hospital no. 10 in France. **Dave's grandfather was awarded the BEF medal for best surgeon by the International Red Cross.** Dave described **"trench art" artefacts made by US, Australian, New Zealand and Canadian soldiers** who were not allowed to return to their home countries until the end of the war. They made such items from brass bullet shells to while away the long hours; today these items are very collectable. Canada, despite a relatively small population, suffered 100,000 WW1 deaths – worst of all in the Battle of Vimy Ridge.

May Wilkins (no. 9610) brought along a beautiful collection of silk hankies and embroidered cards in a tin box from the period. These were made and donated by the women of France and Belgium in gratitude for the part played by the foreign soldiers come to help liberate Europe. The items were given to the soldiers so that they could write in pencil on the back to send home to their mothers, wives **and sweethearts. May's father's father died in 1917 at Camry. His son had been** born in 1914, so he never knew his father. **Another male on his wife's side was** at Gallipoli, first in the 11th Dragoons, then an Irish regiment, later the Royal Engineers. The Royal Flying Corps had a hankie embroidered with an aeroplane copied from photos taken out there. The cards' **messages included accounts of** the mud, beer and getting thinner and more war. Such beautiful items and intentions in such adversity!

Rosemary Philip (no. 4652) gave a report on her uncle, Harold Philip, who fought in France as a young artillery officer. On 21 March 1918, he had fire directed on to a group of Germans; only one of them was left alive. Later the same day, **Harold was captured; and Rosemary provided a summary of today's access to WW1 PoW files, including the Geneva Red Cross online with index cards to follow up, lists of PoWs and many photographs on the Internet. Harold's medal card is marked "Exonerated Officers List", meaning simply that there has been a check to confirm that a captured officer had not been reckless or cowardly before his medals were awarded.** The story of how that sole survivor, Cpl Walter Junk, later contacted Harold and they exchanged many letters over 30 years, is an example of the role that serendipity sometimes played in the outcome of events.

It was agreed that this had been a most interesting meeting, even though we missed sitting in the warm sunshine as were the folks in the garden across the square!

WW1 books for research evidence:

Peter Cooksley, *The Royal Flying Corps 1914–1918* (Spellmount, 2014).

Alan Moorhead, *Gallipoli*, with introduction by Sir Max Hastings (Aurum Press, 2015).

Malcolm Morrison, *At the Going Down of the Sun: The Great War and a Rural Lewis Community*, compilation from original local research and documents in English and Gaelic (Acair Books, 2014).

Betty Jordan, No. 18139

Moray/Banff Group

Our topic for January was *What's in a Name?* while February saw us grappling with the complexities of DNA. None of us was an expert in this field but with the help of books and magazine articles and a look at a few DNA profiles which members have had done we were able to spend a useful afternoon learning more about this fascinating subject. It was particularly interesting to see how quickly the field is progressing.

At the March meeting we all worked hard to decipher the handwriting on many old documents while in the recent April meeting we were able to sit back and enjoy an excellent and informative talk by James Nock, our Local Heritage Officer. James took us first of all through the Moray LibIndx, pointing out aspects which we had not necessarily been aware of and which would enhance our use of this excellent resource. He then told us about the many resources available to us through the Archives and rounded the afternoon off by showing us a selection of beautiful old books dating back to the sixteenth century which document some of the history of our local area for those times.

The number of people at the meetings continues to grow and it is very satisfying to see the group thriving.

Mary Evans, Co-ordinator, Moray/Banff Group

Bruce Henderson Award

Bruce Henderson was a very active member of the Society in the 1980s and was Chairman for a time. When he died his wife donated a sum of money to the Society with which we decided to introduce the Bruce Henderson Award – a silver salver, presented annually since 1991 for the best original piece of work.

The basic rules are that it should be an original piece of research with obvious north-east family history connections, with an index. The winning entry is **published by the Society and the winner's name inscribed on the salver.**

The latest winner of this Award was Duncan Cumming. His work entitled *John Cumming of Elgin and Aberdeen Ship Master 1805-1856* will be published by the Society next year. Congratulations, Duncan - and our thanks to everyone who submitted entries.

Do not forget that you too could be a winner! Write up your research and submit your work for consideration by our Publications Committee. Details on rules and guidelines may be obtained by contacting jean.shirer@anesfhs.org.uk

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GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH

Research undertaken in North-East records, also at the
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All enquiries welcome

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6 Bayview Road, Inverbervie, Montrose DD10 0SH
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From the Editors

This journal has been delayed by about a month getting to most of you and we are very sorry that it has happened. However some years just do not start well or end well and 2017 has **been one of those for us. Firstly Bill's** mum died after a long illness, and secondly Lesley fell, damaging her right arm making it difficult to type and format articles. So apologies again but things are beginning to get back to normal – whatever that is!

Many of you have been asking how to format and write articles – there are some instructions on the inside back cover of every journal. We also have a sheet of more detailed instructions, if any prospective authors would like these please email the editors.

However here are points to consider when writing an article – they should be produced in Verdana font size 11, with headings in Verdana 14 and in bold. We use a mix of upper and lower case throughout the journal. The use of these fonts etc are to make the journal as easy to read as possible. Footnotes are not used in the journal as this causes formatting issues, so they should be incorporated throughout the text or left out – perhaps put in any reference list. Paragraphs and quotes are not indented and only single quotation marks are used throughout. A good length for an article would be about 500-2000 words approximately 1-4 pages. We hope this helps prospective authors.

Have you ancestors who died in WW1, or who were awarded medals for bravery, or a story about their time in the war? We would like to have an article about them in the Journal and especially around a time that commemorates an event for them.

Your articles, views and ideas would be appreciated. Bill and Lesley Diack, Editors, No. 155, journal@anesfhs.org.uk

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 <p><i>history</i> SCOTLAND Stephen A. Law, Steven Dale, Mark Lee</p> <p>King Canute's Story Sultrageth Gru-Gaelic America</p> <p><small>Presented on the basis of the original drawings. Published by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.</small></p>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">History Scotland Magazine</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Full colour, lavishly illustrated Scottish history & archaeology magazine Keep up to date with the latest research and new discoveries!</i></p> <p>Annual subscription - 6 issues: UK: £22 • USA/world: \$50 • Europe: Euro 36</p> <p>Post a cheque - payable to <i>History Scotland</i>. Credit Card / Switch payment - include start & expiry date, Switch issue number and security numbers - <i>last 3 on the signature band</i>. Phone in your order - or place an order on our website. Gift Subscriptions also available.</p> <p>HISTORY SCOTLAND, P.O. Box 28269, Edinburgh EH9 1ZH, Scotland Tel/Fax 0131-668 4864 E-mail info@historyscotland.com</p> <p>Subscriptions / back issues on-line : www.historyscotland.com</p>
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&c, &c

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Harpsichord, Clarinet, &c

Large collection of Single Songs, set to

music, at different prices.

Commissions thankfully received, and carefully answered

This advertisement appears at the beginning of John Burnett's *Catalogue of the Aberdeen Circulating Library*, published in about 1796 and for sale at six pence, which is held in the National Library of Scotland. It lists an amazing variety of paper to choose from. Pot paper was so called because its watermark was a pot, but I should love to know what blossom paper was. Burial letters were printed letters to notify of a death with spaces left to fill in the name of the deceased and details of the funeral. Wafers, made of flour and water, and typically small, round discs, were used to seal letters in the days before envelopes. Camel hair pencils were fine brushes (rather than pencils) used by water colour painters and made usually of squirrel hair, camels not being frequently found in Aberdeen. **The confusion of brush and pencil may come from the French 'pinceau' which is a paint brush.** Sliding pencils were simply propelling pencils. Shining sand and sand boxes were the alternative to blotting paper. **An etwee (from the French 'étui')** was a little decorative case made of silver or some rigid material to keep things in like cosmetics or sewing utensils. A hussiff (or hussif, a contraction of housewife) was a small sewing kit with basic essentials like needles, thread and scissors, especially convenient for travelling. Neil (more usually Niel) Gow was a very well-known and popular Scots fiddler of the eighteenth century who composed many songs and dances.

So many of these items are sadly no longer in use. Letter writing is fast becoming a forgotten art, as email takes its place and much of the equipment involved in writing letters in the past already seems to us quaint. But our descendants will **rarely have the pleasure of reading 'real' hand written letters from us or even letters at all**, because how many of our email messages are going to survive? **They are totally ephemeral. I can't help feeling that equipped with an elegant ebony inkstand or a brass inkpot and some best black ink, I might have shown greater enthusiasm for writing letters.**

In this catalogue John Burnett described himself as 'Book-seller, Stationer, and **Printer At Shakespear's Head, end of the Broad-street, Aberdeen**'. But he also ran the Circulating Library of more than 6,000 volumes 'of the latest and best authors' on subjects ranging from Ecclesiastical History to Agriculture and from Voyages to Philosophy. He had taken over the 'Extensive, Valuable and Well-selected Library, formerly belonging to Messrs A. Angus & Son', having purchased it in 1795. Just to give you the flavour of it, here are a few of its titles: Essays on Laughter, with the Art of exciting it 2s 6d; History of the World, from the Creation to the present Time, by Question and Answer 3s; Haunted Priory, a Novel 3s 6d; Young Lady Conducted from her leaving the School to her entering upon the World 3s; **Apparition, a Tale by Mrs Fuller in 2 vols 7s; Holwell's Narrative of the English Gentlemen suffocated in the Black Hole at Calcutta 1s 6d;** and many more. You need never have been short of reading material in Aberdeen at this date! The prices of library books are given in the catalogue so that, if your book went astray or was damaged, was written in or had any pages torn, you knew just how much you would have to pay to replace it. If you lived in Aberdeen, it cost 10s 6d a year or 3s 6d a quarter for the use of one book at a time, but for 15s a year or 5s

a quarter you were allowed to borrow two books. Subscribers in the country were allowed more books at a cheaper rate.

By 1805 and probably sooner **John Burnett's shop was in Castlegate, the building** that now houses Old Blackfriars pub and restaurant at 52 Castle Street, on the corner of Marischal Street. The house was built in 1763; you can find the date if you look carefully on the skewput. Go inside and you quickly become aware that this is an atmospheric and historic building with low beams on the ceiling and evidence of many alterations over the years. John Burnett also did bookbinding at the back of his shop, and my great-great-grandfather, John Philip, was apprenticed to him as a bookbinder from August 1802 until John Burnett died in **June 1806. Although as a result of his master's death, he never formally** completed his apprenticeship, this never held him back. From August 1806 until the **end of May 1807 John Philip worked in the 'selling shop', before he set up in** business on his own account in Lodge Walk. I like to imagine him selling all these stationery items as well as books.

Rosemary Philip, No 4652

Did you know?

Emigrant records - new links on our web site

Did your ancestors emigrate from Scotland? In the 'Information' section of our web site, we have recently added links to 2 free database services that provide transcriptions of passenger lists of ships that sailed from Scotland.

One is the Scottish Emigration Database, a compilation of data prepared to underpin a research project undertaken by the University of Aberdeen. The project was intended to examine patterns of emigration based on an index of passengers by name, origin, occupation, ship, destination, date, etc. This database currently contains the records of over 21,000 passengers who embarked at Glasgow and Greenock for non-European ports between 1 January and 30 April 1923, and at other Scottish ports between 1890 and 1960.

The other is a huge and still evolving collection of data compiled by the Immigrant Ships Transcribers Guild, a voluntary organisation, listing passengers from all over the world who arrived in ports throughout the U.S.A., some as early as during the 1600s. This lists passengers on each ship, the ports from which it departed and at which it arrived, together with any available information about their individual origins, occupations, etc., and can be searched by name, or browsed by country of origin and ship, etc.

Ian M. Johnson

How much would you bet on who James parents were?

As a long term reader of the journal I am surprised that there has not been more discussion on when one can or should make a clear attribution about parentage based purely on circumstantial evidence. How much evidence do you need and how much do you need to check that there are no alternative answers? Let me give you a case study and perhaps you could let me know what you think.

My G-G-Great Grandfather was James Allanach. I know that because my G-Great **Grandfather's baptism is recorded in the Strathdon parish register along with his parents James Allanach and Isabel Rennie. James and Isabel married in Strathdon in 1812 (1). Isabel's parentage is known from her death certificate.** James though is another matter, there is no documentary evidence that explicitly tells us who his parents might be. We do not even know how old he was. It was only after many years searching that I found his death in February 1841 in the Strathdon Church Accounts book. Such a pity that he died just before the 1841 census.

ScotlandsPeople identifies only one James Allanach baptised between 1771 and 1796 in the whole of Scotland and he was baptised on 21 October 1774 at Strathdon and his father was **Duncan Allanach. Duncan's gravestone also tells us** that his wife was Sophia Glass. Well that seems clear!

I can remember the excitement of my father and I when we found this baptism on the IGI. We were so pleased we sent copies of this new addition to the tree to all relatives including our American cousins and in the computer age it was still possible to trace this original tree on several sites. However it was not just us who made this connection many other researchers did too so just about everyone who has 'found' **James father identifies him as Duncan.**

So what's the problem? Well, maybe there is not one, but for one thing this would make James 38 when he married in 1812 and that would have been very unusual at that time.

Secondly it has become clear over the years that there are a significant number of missing baptismal entries in the OPR. There are 14 Allanachs from Duncan himself born around 1749 to 1835, mostly in Strathdon, who do not appear and have been identified by census, death registration or in the records of their children. So by the law of averages there must be a good many others who died before the 1841 census and the introduction of official death registration that we are unaware of and among them may be one or more called James.

Thirdly there is the problem of the names of his children. It was customary at the time to name children after their paternal and maternal grandparents as well as their parents, and this was largely confirmed by James son John (mother, father and paternal grandfather) and grandson Francis (father, mother, both grandfathers, one grandmother and two great grandmothers and a great

grandfather). It is notable that James himself did not name any of his 10 children either Duncan or Sophia.

However, the names of the children do allow an alternative theory about James parents as his first two children were called Penelope and John. Penelope should have given us the greatest clue because the OPR only lists 9 births with that name in the whole of Aberdeenshire between 1740 and 1780. Unfortunately no links have been established but one of the Penelopes was the daughter of Charles Anderson of Candacraig, Strathdon born in 1746. The subsequent history of this Penelope is unknown but the Anderson family owned land where Allanach members were tenants at both Camisour and Glen Conrie.

One other name from James and Isobel's children may help. George is an uncommon name amongst Allanach families and there is only one known earlier example and that was for a son of John Allanach of Camisour. (The last reference found for an Allanach at Camisour was in 1793.)

This is interesting because James probably had a relation called John Alnach (Allanach). The basis for this idea comes from the fact that all the children of James and Isobel born between 1812 and 1824 were recorded at Dalrossach farm. We now know that a John Alnach had the tenancy of Dalrossach from 1802 (MS2849 Leith of Glenkindie & Freefield papers 1600-1900. Held at Wolfson Reading Room, Aberdeen University) to at least Oct 1810. It could, of course, be a coincidence that James and John were linked to the same farm, but given the large number of farms in the area that James could have lived at and the fact that Allanachs had not been associated with Dalrossach before, it seems unlikely. Therefore John and James were likely to have been related, John probably being either a brother or father. On that basis if John was the father then obviously James could not be the **son of Duncan. It is also doubtful that he was a brother to Duncan's son John. There are several reasons for this firstly Duncan's son John was younger than James and unlikely to have precedence on the tenancy, secondly there are two John Allanach's recorded in 1810 (Aberdeen Commissioners of Supply Assessed Tax Records (AS/Acom/14/34) one farming Dalrossach and the other Toldichull and as the latter is where Duncan had farmed this is likely to refer to his son.**

Perhaps it is now appropriate to mention that there are no parish records for the birth of a John Allanach at about the right time either. However as already noted there was at least one John Allanach in the parish who was producing children at **Camisour between 1783 and 1793. So a theory that James' father might have been called John is worth considering, especially as he named his first son John.**

Let's park that thought and return to the problem of James marrying at the late age of 38. It would not be unusual for him to have been previously married and for his first wife to have died, so is there any evidence for this? Well, there are no marriage records but a James Allanach is recorded in the parish register as having a daughter Christian in 1804 at Boghead with Jean Henry.

This unfortunately opens more leads because there is a previous entry in the register for a daughter called Jannet with Jean Henry, also at Boghead in 1800 but in that instance James surname is Stuart. They apparently continued to live there as the 1841 census records a James Stewart, 75, blacksmith, and Jean Stewart, 80 at Boghead and so this seems unlikely to be our James. However that does not rule out another James Stuart.

The story of the interplay between the names Stuart and Allanach is a long one and deserves an article in its own right but for our current purposes it is only necessary to note that our James was sometimes called one and sometimes the other. At his marriage he is referred to as Allanach and his wife, Isobel, and children always used that name whilst he was alive. However, the christening records for his children born 1812-24 give his surname as Stuart. The censuses record the family as Allanach and four children married between 1838 and 1851 are also married under that surname. However, a gradual reversion then takes **place, first with James' daughter Jessie who had an illegitimate daughter baptised as a Stewart in 1859 and when James' wife, Isobel, died in 1873 her name is recorded as Stuart.** Also the children of their daughters Penelope and Isabel **usually referred to their mother's maiden name as Stuart. Their son George** also called himself Stuart but other children of James & Isobel used Allanach.

So we should also be looking for the birth of a James Stuart. There were 39 James Stuarts listed as baptised between 1770 and 1796 in Aberdeenshire. James was an agricultural labourer, **as noted on Isabel's death certificate**, and may have crossed parish boundaries for work but many of the 39 baptisms were in unlikely places. However that still leaves too many options to follow up. There were 4 recorded in Strathdon. We could also look for those with a father called John – one in Strathdon and two in neighbouring parishes to the south from which several families are known to have migrated.

I look forward to spending many happy hours trying to follow up these families, but expect only limited success given the incomplete records of the time. It is worth stating that although James seemed to have used the two surnames interchangeably no written record has been found associating Duncan Allanach with the surname Stuart – it does not appear in the baptism records of his children, none of his children have been found to have used the surname, and it is not used on the pay list of the Strathdon Volunteers nor on his gravestone.

I have been researching this family for 40 years but it appears that the more you find out, the less you know! Usually there is nothing to lose by a researcher giving their own take on a family tree but suppose there was money at stake. Given the evidence collected how much would you bet on who James parents were? And if this has at least raised a doubt that Duncan may not be James father on how many other occasions might the seemingly straight forward answer to identifying an ancestor when using circumstantial evidence be called into question.

When you need to find a qualified genealogist

Every family historian knows the thrill of making new discoveries about our ancestors. Sometimes, though, our progress is hampered because we are unable to access the types of records which would take us further along our journey. This can happen because of distance from archives, because we do not have the necessary time, or because we are unsure which particular sources would be most useful in different circumstances. So what are the options available?

One solution for ANESFHS members is to request help from the research team. These experienced volunteers will consult locally held records for a very modest charge. Nevertheless, their time is limited and there may be a long wait for the information you are seeking.

An alternative is to use a professional genealogist to carry out research on your behalf. Until recently, without any formal criterion required to operate a research business, it has been difficult to distinguish between the various services on offer. That situation has now been changed with the establishment of the Register of Qualified Genealogists, an organisation which came into existence in December 2015 and serves to address the issue of professional standards. Membership is restricted to researchers who have attained a relevant academic qualification at postgraduate level and who adhere to a professional code of practice. Further information is available at <http://www.qualifiedgenealogists.org>

At present the majority of Qualified Genealogists are based in the UK, with a handful operating overseas. A number of researchers offer specialist services such as heraldry, house history or military research. So next time you feel the need for expert assistance, it might be worth checking whether a Qualified Genealogist can help to further your research.

Alison Smith, No. 7779

<p>The publishing of this article is no indication that the ANESFHS endorses the services of this organisation or any individual qualified genealogist and members must remember that there is a cost for this service.</p>

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Skene Craig

Skene Craig (named after both parents, James Craig and Margaret Skene) was born in the Parish of Belhelvie, Aberdeenshire and baptised, 12 September 1803.



He travelled out to Australia as a Contractor for Supplies to the developing town of Melbourne as one of the first Pioneers in 1825, aged 22. His title: Commissariat Officer at Moreton Bay. He went out on the **ship** 'City of Edinburgh'. Here he met and married Mary Panton, of Leith, Midlothian, in 1831, in the Scots Church, Sydney. **Mary was the daughter of one of Sydney's first postmasters, George Panton of Leith and Maria Ker, of Culross, Scotland.** (Photo to left)

Then in 1836 he and Mary travelled to Melbourne with Captain Lonsdale in the 'Stirlingshire' as Contractor for the colonial service. In 1838 he was a general merchant in Collins Street. In 1840, he went into business with one Alex Broadfoot, trading as 'Craig and Broadfoot' until 1844 when the two men fell out, and even came to blows, and was resolved in a duel at dawn, which fortunately both men survived. He lived in a thatched cottage in Collins Street, on the banks of the Yarra, which he painted and planted many acres with some of the first vines, which still survive today.

In Melbourne, he and Mary had a son, born in 1834, who died the same day and was the **first grave in the town's cemetery**. His second son, Frederick, fared no better. He was born in 1835 and died in 1837. Then two daughters followed, Maria Louisa in 1839 and my Great Grandmother, Georgiana in 1844. (She married Major General Charles Heathcote of the Bombay Army in 1864)

In 1852 when the two girls were thirteen and eight years old their mother Mary, died and Skene Craig decided to return to Scotland, keeping his business interests going. They travelled with Charles La Trobe, the Lieutenant Governor of Victoria, on the 'Golden Age' in 1854, and the girls were some of the first women on the trip, via the Pacific and overland, across the isthmus at Panama.

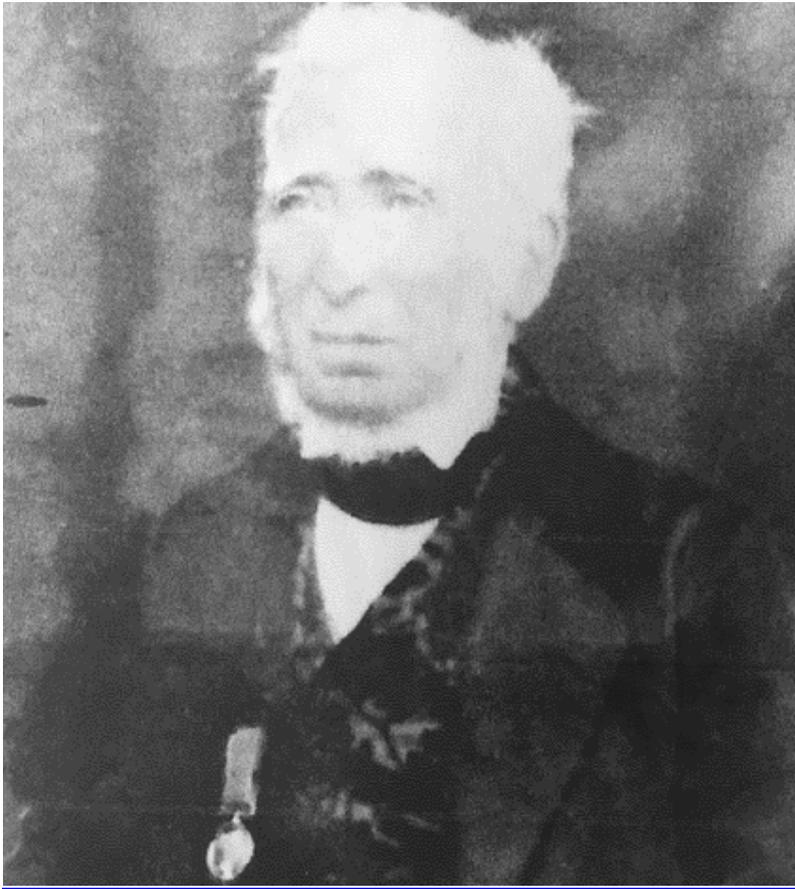
They went to live in Craigevar Castle near Aberdeen. When the cold grew too much for the girls, who were used to warmer climes, Skene took them all to Enfield, London. Here both daughters married, and a year later, in 1864, Skene married Zenobia St Aubyn. A mature marriage for both, and there were no children; but she was a loving step mother and many wonderful letters survive.

They eventually went to Torquay to live, where they led an active life, keeping a fly and trap. Here he died, described as 'gentleman' in 1879, aged 76. Zenobia continued to a grand old age as a woman of good works in the town and memorialised Skene in a stained glass window in Marazion church opposite St **Michael's Mount**, home of the St Aubyn family. He was buried in Torquay where his grave says: Skene Craig 'one of the founders of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia'

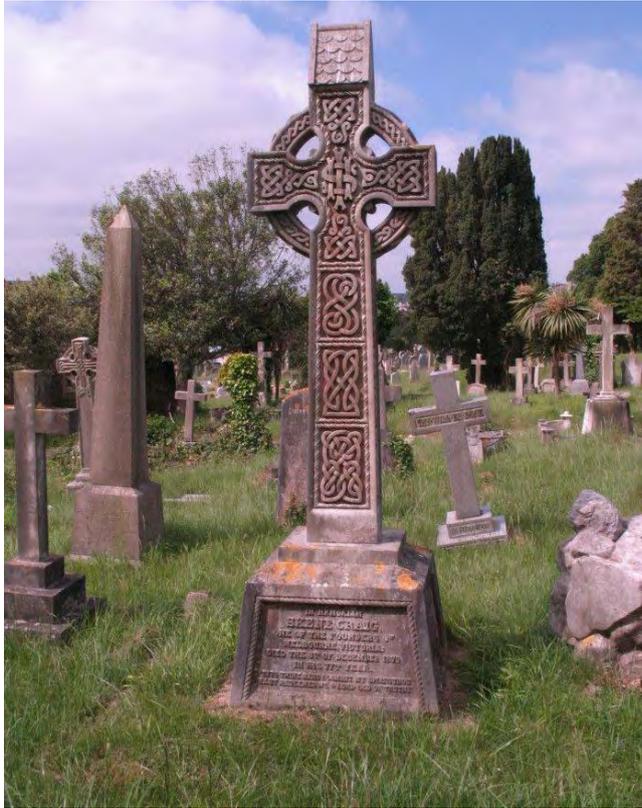
I am interested if any members can help me trace family homes or graves or any information about work of Skene Craig. I live near Torquay, Devon and I want to come and study my family origins this summer.

Fiona Green, No. 20212, fionaskene@hotmail.com

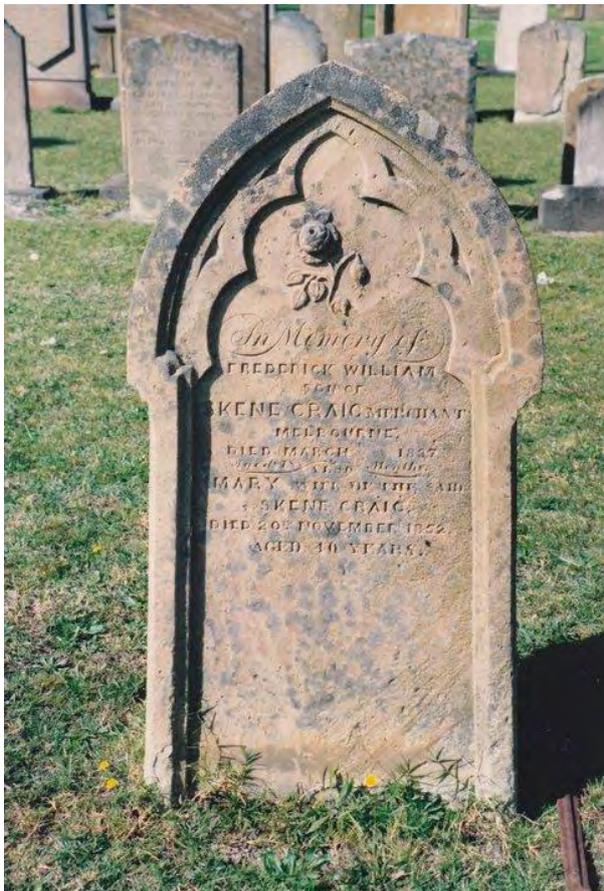
Skene Craig as an old man



Skene Craig and his wife



Skene Craig's grave in Torquay



The grave of his wife & two boys in a Melbourne cemetery



Skene Craig's watercolour of his cottage by the Yarra in Melbourne



Craigievar Castle – this photograph is used by kind permission of the National Trust for Scotland.



Cabrach old school (above) where Thomas Robertson taught – see pages 29-34
And below is the schoolhouse which housed a family of 10 and their live-in servant.



Thomas Robertson's gravestone at Upper Cabrach Kirkyard



Margaret Milne, missionary in Madagascar

In late July 1865, five months after leaving her Aberdeenshire home, Margaret Milne composed a letter to officials of the London Missionary Society advising them **of her safe arrival in Madagascar's capital:**

Antananarivo, July 31st 1865

My dear Sir,

It is with feelings of deep thankfulness to God for His persevering care both by sea and land that I now write to you from the capital of Madagascar. We have been mercifully preserved amid many dangers and difficulties and here we would seek to raise another Ebenezer and consecrate ourselves anew to the service of God.

A native of New Pitsligo, Margaret was just twenty-three years old when she left Britain in February 1865. For the final leg of the voyage she was accompanied by another missionary from the neighbouring parish of New Deer. Margaret Ironside had been married barely two years when her husband Alexander Irvine died en route to a posting in the Loyalty Islands and a rendezvous was arranged in Mauritius for the two Margarets, who continued their journey to Madagascar together. Having grown up within a few miles of each other, they were already well acquainted.

Female company must have been very welcome to the young male missionaries who had already been in Antananarivo for three years. By the end of November, the Society's printer John Parrett was writing home to report:

My dear Sir,

I have much pleasure in writing to you by this mail, and informing you that I was married to Miss M. Milne on the 1st of this month.

In fact two weddings were conducted on that day at the British Consulate in Tamatave, since romance had blossomed between Margaret Irvine (née Ironside) and the Rev. Joseph Pearse, who had also been widowed. In the course of time the British community was considerably augmented by the arrival of young Parretts and Pearses.

Having set up a printing press and taken on native apprentices, John Parrett was kept busy supporting the work of his missionary colleagues. However, his correspondence to the Society's officers in London illustrates the problems which arose as a result of unreliable communications and interruptions in the supply of

paper. The activities of French missionaries also caused frustration, as revealed in his letter of December 1879:

The Jesuits have flooded the country with Popish prints, and we can hardly enter a native house (in the country especially) without seeing pictures of the Virgin, Saints &c on the walls. The missionaries generally are anxious to check the spread of these pernicious and objectionable prints...

Missionary children received their early education in local schools but as they grew up, arrangements were made for them to attend boarding schools in the UK, whole families returning together on furlough. In her memoirs written in 1949, Elizabeth Parrett describes the first stage of the ten day journey from Antananarivo to Tamatave undertaken in 1873 by the Parrett and Pearse families, with four and five children respectively:

We all went in palanquins carried on men's shoulders. At night we stopped at a native village, commandeered a good hut (...), put up the camp beds and mosquito curtains and, after a meal of rice and chicken, slept soundly till early morning. (...) It was quite a cavalcade as each palanquin had 6 or 8 bearers, 4 at a time with 2 or 4 to relieve at short intervals. Then there were the cooking utensils, bedding, food, clothes and luggage.

The prolonged stay in Britain provided the children with an ideal opportunity to get to know their grandparents and other relatives and to adapt to the British climate. A winter visit to Aberdeenshire left a lasting impression on eight year old Elizabeth Parrett:

Going home for Christmas, there was a heavy fall of snow and as the railroad stopped at Strichen, four miles from New Pitsligo, we had to go the remainder of the journey in a gig. We got into a drift and were half frozen when we reached my grandmother's. I can remember now, sitting on her lap in front of a blazing fire, while she took off my socks and chafed my feet.

When the period of furlough came to an end in 1875, both couples returned to Madagascar to resume their duties, leaving their children behind in the UK to pursue their education. The 1881 UK census shows Edward Parrett at the age of thirteen as a boarder at the school for sons of missionaries at Blackheath in Kent, where Alexander Pearse aged twelve and his ten year old brother James were also pupils (GRO 1881 RG11, Piece 0730, Folio 83, Page 15 GRO 1881 RG11, Piece 0730, Folio 83, Page 15). Meanwhile the Parrett girls, Elizabeth aged fourteen and Maggie aged eleven, were attending Marsh Street Mission School in Walthamstow, Essex (GRO 1881 RG11, Piece 0730, Folio 83, Page 54). They had familiar company, since the Pearse girls (Annie aged fourteen, Margaret, thirteen, and nine year old Rosa) were also scholars in the same establishment. Charles Parrett,

who was just eight years of age, was staying many hundreds of miles away with his Milne grandparents in New Pitsligo (GROS 1881 RD 227B, ED 2, Page 26).

Following another period of furlough for John and Margaret Parrett, they returned to Madagascar in 1888 with their daughters, while their sons continued their schooling in the UK. By this time John had resigned from his missionary work and had accepted a position in the service of the Malgasy government. Teaching a group of local schoolchildren occupied some of Elizabeth's time, but the family had sufficient leisure to enjoy a varied social life. An interesting account of the annual Fandroana festival is given in Elizabeth's memoirs:

In the north-east corner of the big palace a corner was screened off by scarlet curtains and here water was heated for the Queen's bath (...). Then she retired behind the curtains and had her bath. She emerged resplendent in a crimson velvet dress with much gold embroidery and with a crown on her head - the



ceremonial one with the seven 'fingers' in front. The Prime Minister carried a pannikan of the bath water and the Queen dipped her fingers in it and sprinkled all those to the great door. There she sprinkled the soldiers and the cannons were fired and everyone lit a small bonfire in their yards and on the hillsides.

This way of life came to an abrupt end in 1895 with the French occupation of Madagascar and the exile of Queen Ranavalona III. The Parrett family, acknowledging that they had no further role in the country's government, sought a new future elsewhere and eventually settled in Tasmania, where John and Margaret ended their days. Despite increasing difficulties and dangers, Joseph and Margaret Pearse remained working alongside other LMS missionaries in Madagascar until 1904 and spent their final years in rural England.

Archival material relating to the London Missionary Society and other British missionary organisations is held at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

Shrouded in Mystery – An Aberdeenshire Brick Wall

John Mitchell was the informant when his mother, Jane Mitchell, died in Udney in 1920. He listed her age as 97 years and the name of her father as Ernest Smith. He gave her **mother's surname as Bowman, but** her Christian name was unknown.

Jane Smith cannot be found in the 1841 census, but is listed in the 1851 census. She married James Mitchell later in that year. In this census and the majority of the succeeding censuses she is recorded as being born in 1829 or 1830. In all of them her birthplace is listed as Old Deer.

An Ernest Smith, born in Fraserburgh in 1796, married Margaret Hendry in Old Deer in 1822. They had three daughters, Mary (1823), Margaret (1826) and **Elizabeth (1834). Margaret Hendry's death cannot be found, but Ernest married** Mary Winifred Greig in Old Deer in 1838. They had four children. Ann (1840), Janet (1843), James (1846) and William (1850). Ernest died in Logie Buchan in 1871.

On the off-chance that Miss Bowman had Jane illegitimately, I checked whether the baptism of a Jane Bowman was recorded in the Old Parish Records of Old Deer but to no avail.

No further records were available for me to search in Australia and so I sought the help of the ANESFHS. Jean Irvine checked the records of The Episcopal Church of Old Deer and The Kirk Session Records for Old Deer and Ellon. In none of these records were Miss Bowman or Ernest Smith called to account for their behaviour.

I have traced the Mitchell ancestors back to Rora in the parish of Longside in the 1640s, so if the names associated with Jane Smith are known to any members of the Society I would be most pleased to hear from them.

Avril Mitchell, No. 8141, avmitch73@gmail.com

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Thomas Robertson and Helen Ellis



The date of these photographs is unknown but they were taken at the same time, so it is possible that they were formal portraits taken at the time of their marriage in 1878.



Thomas Robertson - An Old Parochial Schoolmaster

My great-grandfather, Thomas Robertson, was Schoolmaster at the Lower Cabrach from 1865 until his death in 1909. He seems to have been quite a character and **the proverbial 'pillar of the community'** – by all accounts, a man of strong views and not afraid to express them – and although he may have been greatly respected, one wonders whether he was held in any affection. I suspect he would not have been a comfortable person to live with. He was involved in two *causes célèbres* during his time at Lower Cabrach, both of which are interesting.

Thomas was born on 7 May 1840 at Bodibae, a croft in the district called Upper Cabrach. This has sometimes been listed as Banffshire and sometimes as Aberdeenshire, but whatever the official geographical location, it is, even today, a remote part of the N. East of Scotland. He was the seventh of nine children of Thomas Robertson and Helen Duncan. According to the 1841 Census, his father was a farmer and Bodibae appears to have been a sizeable holding, supporting no less than 3 households. Unsurprisingly, there appears to be very little information **extant about Thomas's early life** – the passion of parents for recording all their **children's doings and taking almost daily photographs is a modern trait!** We know, however, that he received his early education at the parish school under William Ronald, M.A. He then went to Aberdeen University and graduated in 1862. After teaching for short periods at Granton, Boharm and Tunbridge Wells, he received an invitation to return home, where he taught for almost half a century. (Aberdeen **Daily Journal**, 25 March 1909, in the report of Thomas's funeral)

One might ask how a lowly farmer in remote Banffshire was able to send one of his children to university, but clearly Thomas must have been a pupil of ability and it is possible that Mr Ronald took an interest in him, coaching him to the necessary academic standard and persuading his parents to afford the fees – who knows? However it was achieved, Thomas graduated, became a schoolmaster and was virtually 'in harness' when he died. A paragraph in The Aberdeen Journal of Wednesday 15 March 1865 notes his appointment, *'Mr Thomas Robertson, presently teacher in the French English School in Tunbridge Wells, county of Kent, has been appointed schoolmaster at Invercharroch, parish of Cabrach.'*

The school and schoolhouse at Lower Cabrach had been built on a site granted by the Duke of Richmond in 1863, this having been largely brought about by the efforts of the minister, Mr Smart, who remembered the long trudges of his boyhood to the Upper Cabrach or to Dufftown. The first Schoolmaster was a Mr Kissick from Portsoy who came in 1864 and left the following year, which was when Thomas was appointed. (2) I have tried, unsuccessfully, to obtain information about the 'French English School' in Tunbridge Wells – it would be fascinating to know how a Scotsman came to teach so far from his home ground; also to know more about the school itself and why it was called the 'French English' School, and about the process by which Thomas was invited to become the Schoolmaster at Lower Cabrach – how different from any system of appointment operating today!

In 1878, at the age of 38, Thomas married Helen Ellis, a 19-year-old **farmer's** daughter from a farm called Easter Cairncoullie, Leochel Cushnie, Alford. One wonders how this marriage came about - perhaps Helen had gone to work as his housekeeper, for a single professional gentleman in those days would certainly not have attended to his own cooking, cleaning and laundry. This, however, raises several interesting questions: how she knew of the available situation, the fact that she was willing to go so far from home at a time when travel was not easy, and why Thomas did not appoint someone more local. The 1871 Census tells us that his youngest sister Mary, aged 22, was keeping house for her brother, but the next Census did not take place until 3 years after Thomas and Helen were married, so it would be difficult to establish just how and when Helen came to the Cabrach. Nowadays eyebrows would almost certainly be raised at an educated man marrying a girl half his age who had possibly had only a basic education, if any. We must remember, however, that Victorian men did not generally expect wives to be their intellectual equals - their job was to keep the house and provide a **legitimate outlet for their husbands' sexual needs, the natural** outcome, of course, often being a succession of pregnancies. This was certainly the case with Helen, for she bore Thomas 8 children - 5 girls and 3 boys - between 1879 and 1897 (see Appendix). Helen was 38 by the time her last child was born - comparatively **old for childbearing in those days. Of course the wife of someone in Thomas's** position would not be expected do all the housework herself and at the time of the 1881 census the Robertsons employed a live-in servant, Annie Shand.

However typical of his time Thomas may have been in many respects, in other ways he was an enlightened man for he educated his daughters as well as his sons, and four of his daughters followed him into the teaching profession. Marianna, Isabella and Flora (my maternal grandmother) all trained as primary school teachers at the Church of Scotland Provincial Training College in Aberdeen. The youngest daughter, Ida, graduated from Aberdeen University in 1920 and **taught in secondary education. Thomas's second son, Norman had also** graduated from Aberdeen University and trained as a teacher but was killed in WW1.

[And as an aside, those who questioned the value of educating women 'because they were only going to marry and be housewives' would have been silenced by the fact that Flora was widowed when her oldest child, my mother, was only 13 and Flora was able to return to the profession she had trained for before her marriage in order to support herself and her 3 children. Had she not had this training, the prospects for her and her children would have been dire.]

Thomas was a schoolmaster in the old 'parochial' mould. A report in the 'Banffshire Journal' following his death writes that '**Being a 'parochial', he viewed the advent of School Boards with suspicion, if not absolute distrust. To such democratic, or as it might be, autocratic, interest in educational affairs, he never took kindly ...'** It is apparent that Thomas's view was that his authority was absolute.

It was the existence of the School Boards which was the catalyst for the first of the *causes célèbres* referred to above, which occurred in 1873, the year that they came into being. The recently-elected Board had agreed that the schoolroom might be used for the holding of religious services by Presbyterian ministers, lectures on scientific subjects, the exchange of library books etc. A minister from Banff, Mr Murker, came annually to the Cabrach to preach, under the terms of the will of a local farmer who had left a legacy for that purpose and in 1873 he had sought, and been granted, permission from the Board to use the schoolroom as the meeting place. When the minister arrived, however, the school was locked and the service had to be conducted in the open. Thomas was summoned to appear in front of the School Board but it appears that he ignored the summons; however, a subsequent complaint was made that he had refused admittance to the members of the old-established library and he was again summoned to appear, which he did. When asked why he had omitted to ensure the school was open, he asked the Board whether he was being censured for neglect of his duty as a headmaster. He was told that the offence was his failure, on two occasions, to ensure that the **school was open, Thomas's reply was that he was employed as the Schoolmaster, not doorkeeper!** To this, of course, the Board had no answer but it was subsequently agreed that a keyholder should be appointed, with authority to open up the schoolroom for such occasions as the School Board should see fit.

Sometime afterwards another meeting was held, Thomas, of course, having no authority to prevent it; however, the following morning he walked around the schoolroom poking into nooks and crannies and sniffing the air, then said to his assembled pupils that 'this is not a fit place in which to absorb learning this morning. It is filthy and it stinks.' He then dismissed the school for the day. There was a further meeting of the Board to consider this as an extraordinary item and it was decided to seek a ruling from the Board of Education in Edinburgh.

Viewed objectively, its ruling was fair, and probably the only possible reasonable decision in the circumstances. It confirmed the status quo, stating that the School Board had authority to grant or withhold the use of the schoolroom as it saw fit but the Schoolmaster was not bound to attend and open doors; nor was he obliged to see to the locking up. The ruling also made clear that the school had to be left clean to the satisfaction of the Headmaster. There had, however, been some previous 'internal politics' in the deliberations of the School Board. The Clerk of the Board - the same William Ronald under whom Thomas had received much of his education - had already resigned, and after a further stormy session, the Chairman also resigned. In the Aberdeen Journal of 25 March 1874 we read that:

'There has been a hot and long discussion in the Cabrach School Board over the refractory conduct of Mr Robertson, the schoolmaster of Lower Cabrach School, who has been a thorn in the side of the majority of the Board for some time. An opinion was read from the Edinburgh Board, in answer to a memorial, stating that the local Board had full power to hold their meetings in the school after the regular

lesson hours, and to allow ministers to preach in the schoolroom on Sunday. The Chairman (Rev. Mr Smart, parish minister) said the teacher continued to hold out the majority from the school by locking the door, and it was moved that should immediately be taken before the Sherriff. The discussion terminated in the Chairman and Clerk resigning their offices.'

Whether or not Thomas was ever, in fact, taken before the Sherriff I do not know but it seems unlikely, given that he remained in post until his death in 1909, following which we are told that **'the Board was able to assert itself, and the teachers appointed since have been essentially modern.'** (Taylor, James ed. Anderson, Janet - Cabrach Feerings; Banffshire Journal Ltd., 1920; Ch. VI)

The second *cause célèbre* was in 1881 and was widely reported both in the local and in the Aberdeen press as 'The Cabrach Slander Case'. A farm servant named John Duncan raised an action against Thomas in Banff Sheriff Court alleging that in February and April 1880 Thomas had on numerous occasions, both verbally and in a series of letters, referred to him as a thief, and had remarked to his sons, in the presence of the other scholars, that 'they could not help their father being a thief'. The background to the case indicates that there had been bad blood between Thomas and Mr Duncan for some time. Thomas did not deny making the alleged remarks but pleaded a) that he had spoken under provocation as Duncan had recently been instigating complaints against him as the schoolmaster and b) that the remarks were justified as Duncan had taken some peats from a stack 'appropriated' by him (suggesting that he did not own the said stack). Duncan, **naturally, did not admit there was any truth in Thomas's allegations and sought damages of £50, which in 1881 would have been a small fortune to a farm servant.**

Sheriff Scott Moncrieff gave judgement in November 1881, finding that Thomas's remarks were indeed actionable and that he had failed to justify them or tender 'a sufficient' apology for making them. He therefore found against Thomas but awarded Mr Duncan damages of £1 1s, though Thomas had to bear the costs of the proceedings. The derisory size of the damages suggests that the Sherriff had, perhaps, more sympathy with Thomas than he would be able to admit and I guess that Thomas would have been astute enough to realise this and even derive some satisfaction from it, despite the Sheriff's judgement.

About a year before his death Thomas suffered a severe illness and was granted **several months' leave of absence. He** resumed his duties in the autumn but at Christmas his health again gave way. He battled on until the end of February, when he had to cease from sheer exhaustion and he died on 18 March 1909.

'As he had often expressed the wish, he died practically in harness, his latter days showing that indomitable and unyielding spirit by which his whole life was actuated, and which bore him firmly, even triumphantly, through the stormy passages incidental to the life of an old parochial such as he was.' (Banffshire Journal, March 1909)

Given what we know of Thomas's personality, it seems likely that there were more not reported in the press! The account of his funeral in the Aberdeen Daily Journal relates the many achievements of his life and his active participation in the life of the parish. He had been instrumental in the raising of funds to build six bridges over streams between Cabrach and Dufftown; he was an elder of the Kirk, had acted as Session Clerk and also Precentor, and had held singing classes throughout the district to augment his choir. At the time of his death he was Chairman of the Parish Council. Clearly a man of great ability, while greatly missed by some, there can be little doubt that members of the School Board, heaved a sigh of relief.

Children of Thomas & Helen Robertson:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Thomas Silvester, 11.12.1879 – 29.9.1964 | Emigrated to Canada |
| 2. Marianna Helen, 17.12.1881 – 25.1.1948 | Became a teacher |
| 3. Isabella, 25.1.1884 – 18.6.1949 | Became a teacher |
| 4. Flora, 23.8.1886 – 22.5.1979 | Became a teacher; married a farmer, John Merson, 20 years her senior and had 3 children – Helena Mary (my mother) b. 1917, William John b. 1920 and Frederick Stanley b. 1922 |
| 5. Norman John, 5.10.1889 – 30.5.1916 | Graduated MA from Aberdeen University in 1914; trained as a teacher but was killed in WW1 |
| 6. Georgina, 20.6.1891 – May 1970 | Made an unfortunate marriage; subsequently went to Australia and kept house for her brother Frederick |
| 7. Frederick William, 21.11.1892 – Nov. 1956 | Emigrated to Australia and became a fruit farmer |
| 8. Ida, 20.4.1897 – 22.7.1968 | Graduated MA from Aberdeen University in 1920; became a teacher of French |

Postscript:

The original Lower Cabrach School and schoolhouse are still there, though sadly derelict. When I visited the Lower Cabrach in 2015 I was told that The Cabrach Trust was in negotiation with the Local Authority with a view to converting the school into a Community & Heritage Centre - a proposal of which, I suspect, Thomas would have disapproved!

Acknowledgement:

My interest in Thomas was sparked largely by an account of the 'School Board' **affair in 2 articles by the Huntly Express's 'Roving Reporter'** on 10 and 17 April 1959. This gentleman had clearly completed a huge amount of research and his articles provided most of the information which I have included. I have a copy of the first of these newspapers and the staff of the Huntly Express kindly allowed me to visit their archives and take a digital photograph of the second piece which concluded the story.

Jenny Jones, No. 18591, jenny@newbyendfarm.co.uk

Alexander Macrae McDonald

In just a few weeks it will be a hundred years since my great grandfather Alexander Macrae MacDonald died in Iraq. When I went to live in Qatar in 2001 he was the first person my best friend found information for to start my family tree project and just a few months later history was repeating itself when the second gulf war started and its progress could be watched on the news 24 hours a day.

Alexander was born on the 4 February 1889 at 10 Short Loanings, Aberdeen. His birth was recorded in the Register of Births for the Aberdeen District of the Parish of Old Machar and County of Aberdeen and the entry tells us his name was Alexander Machray McDonald and his parents were David McDonald, combmaker and Elizabeth McDonald maiden name Taylor,

Alexander was the youngest of 4 children and had 2 brothers and a sister. He probably never remembered his mother as unfortunately she died in 1890 when he was 18 months old.

The 1891 census records show that while his two older brothers stayed with his father, he went to live with his Aunt Christina Mckenzie (nee McDonald) and Elizabeth, his sister went to stay with her Aunt Ann Colvin (nee McDonald). When the 1891 census was taken his Aunt Christina was living at 37 Commerce Street, Aberdeen, which is close to the harbour and was probably convenient for his Uncle Neil McKenzie who was a master mariner. Alexander was significantly younger than his cousins so was the only youngster in the household.

After his father remarried for the second time in 1896, it looks like Alexander rejoined his family. The 1901 census shows us that the household at 80 Leadsie Road, Aberdeen must have been quite crowded because in addition to his brother **John and sister Lizzie, 5 of his stepmother's children were also living there.** The census describes Alexander as being 12 years of age and the space for his occupation is blank.

He married my great grandmother Mary Ann Jean Duncan on the 5 of April 1913 at 12 Belgrave Terrace, Aberdeen. At that time Alexander was a ship and house **painter and lived at least for a little while at 22 Jack's Brae, Aberdeen but I have** no idea where or for whom he worked. Their marriage certificate makes interesting reading as Alexander is now a 'Macdonald' instead of a 'Mcdonald' and he has declared Isabella MacDonald (nee Mutch) as his mother. While she is probably the only mother he ever remembered **she was in fact his father's third** wife. Alexander and Mary Jane were married according to the forms of the United Free Church of Scotland and the Minister was John Allison from the Belmont Street

Free Church. they had a son, named Alexander McRae MacDonald (known in the family as Sandy) in 1915 and a daughter, named Mary Georgina MacDonald (known in the family as Zena) in 1913.

Alexander and his brother John decided to 'join up' and the photo on the front cover, probably taken around 1915 shows Alexander (standing) and John. I have **not found Alexander's enlistment papers but his medal record says he was a Sapper in the Inland Water Transport, Royal Engineers and served in Mesopotamia. John's enlistment records reveal that he enlisted on the 27th of November 1915 and he was 5 foot 2 inches tall and had a wife and 2 daughters named as dependents. As best I can tell he was also in the Royal Engineers and was posted first in Thermopoly (sic -in Greece) from 1915 to 1917 and then he was in France.**



It is hard to find information on the Mesopotamian Campaign. This may be because the British did not see the area as strategically important. At the beginning of WW1, the Ottoman Empire controlled most of the Middle East. The British response after declaring war on Turkey in 1914, was to send a force of mainly Indian troops to safeguard the Anglo-Persian oilfields and the pipelines that transported the oil to Abadan on the Shatt al Arab river.

Another reason that this campaign may not be well documented is that the events in Mesopotamia did not make good propaganda at home. The British forces were not always on the winning side, casualties from disease and the inhospitable climate were high and the Turks and 'native' Arab tribesman treated prisoners very badly.

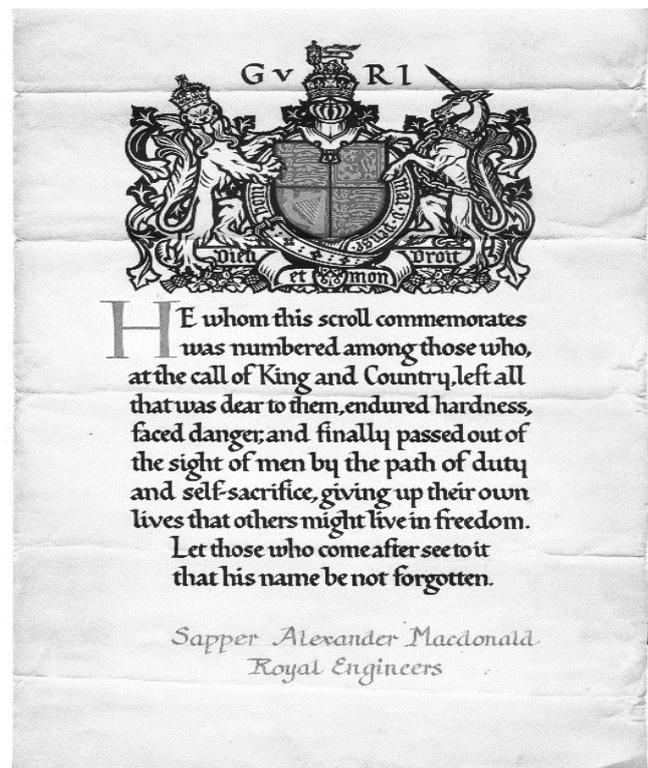
There are few personal accounts from the campaign, but the ones that describe conditions on the forced 'march' from Kut in 1916 make harrowing reading, however it looks like Alexander was part of the force sent in after the siege of Kut. He was probably stationed at least part of the time in Basra which was the base of the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force from 1914. From the small amount of information I have been able to find, it looks like the Inland Water Transport and Docks part of the Royal Engineers became engaged in Mesopotamia in the summer of 1916. Their establishment comprised 465 officers and 1,394 other ranks (one of which would have been our Alexander).

During the last half of 1916 the Tigris Corps were engaged in trench warfare. The main differences from the Western Front being the heat which was described as being 'so scorching that men would climb out from between the furnace like walls and risk a bullet', the flies and finally the sand storms which 'left their clothes impregnated with thousands of irritating grains that would take days to get rid of'.

One of the reasons that the early engagements had not been successful was that the main supply line for the troops was the River Tigris, which at some strategic points dried up in the summer and cut the supply line. By the time General Maude made his push north towards Baghdad at the end of 1916 some things had improved significantly. Accurate maps were available as there were 24 aircraft equipped with cameras that could provide information on Turkish troop movements. Equipment and supplies were becoming more available as the port at Basra was reconstructed, roads were built alongside the rivers and railway lines between key points in the area were laid. I think that the Royal Engineers would have been involved with all of these infrastructure projects and in addition pontoon bridges were used at least twice on the advance towards Baghdad in the first quarter of 1917 and I believe their construction would also have been something the Royal Engineers would have been responsible for.

The information I have found relating to the Mesopotamian Campaign is very general. I can find no mention of any incident where Alexander might have sustained the injuries which caused his death. All we can really tell is that being a part of this campaign was no picnic.

Alexander died in Makina Masus, Mesopotamia (now Iraq) on the 14th of June 1917 from the effects of burns. He is mentioned at the War Cemetery in Basra, Iraq and according to the medal records held in the National Archives he was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal. There is little left to remember the young Aberdonian except the scroll sent to his widow and the framed picture which was preserved in a loft for decades.



Dad's story

This is the unfinished life story of Charles Buchan Milne sent in by his eldest daughter who lives in Italy teaching English – she would welcome any information.

'It has been suggested to me on more than one occasion that I should write about my early life so that my children may know a little more than the snippets and occasional reminiscence type of anecdote that they may have heard over the years. I am therefore acceding to this request and not for any reason that my account is of any great interest. It may however, give some explanation for any 'peculiarities' I may have displayed in later life.

I am eschewing modern aids such as word processors and computers- innate **perversity of what there may be more evidence!!! it is difficult to operate one's** memory of early life from what has been derived from the gossip and reminiscences of other people.

I was born in the Police Station of Kennethmont- the second son of John Milne – Police Constable - and Jessie Birne who was a second wife. My brother John ,3 ½ years older, was born at Ballater where my father would have met my mother who was 'in service' in Aboyne. He had 3 children from his earlier marriage (In fact there had been **6 children from John's first marriage 3 had died before Charles** was born) Lizzie, Helen and David. I do not know nor ever heard of any bad feeling that resulted from this re-marriage. My mother was born in Fraserburgh, daughter of Police Sergeant- 5 daughters and one son who was a banker- emigrated to Canada and died in Winnipeg in his 20s. From imagination based on fact, when my grandfather retired he moved to Aberdeen, a two flatted house 638 King Street- a tenant upstairs, an elderly spinster- a nice house, four rooms plus kitchen (in 2016 saleable value £ 217,000). I have a very faint vague memory of living in a sombre gathering in King Street which I later took to have been my **grandmother's funeral** (Grandmother Birnie died before this in 1923).

Without consulting death certificates, I cannot give exact details, but when I was about 2 ½ my father was killed. It was only when I may have been in my late teens, that I learned that there was a possibility that he committed suicide. Like many people, he had a plot alongside the railway line and was walking home. Needless to say, it was not a subject for discussion! The insurance company paid up a small sum accepting it as an accident (the death certificate says suicide) This caused a rift between the two sets of families. The relatives of the other children tried to claim this money or part. I have to go by stories. We had to move from the Police Station and as my grandfather was a widower- the sequence of events is vague- it seemed that his daughter could house-keep for him and give us a home. My mother received no wages ever - she got house-keeping money and we lived off a very small police pension. However it was a roof over our heads.

Because of the other family's behaviour my grandfather banned them from coming to visit us. So for many years I did not know that I had half- sisters or what half-sisters were. Going back I think the three children may never have stayed with grandparents but I cannot verify this now.

I do not think that it was a happy home although perhaps it was. My grandfather was the boss- known to neighbours as Sergeant Birnie (James Birnie), boots immaculately polished by my mother, off for his walk, walking stick and moustache. I think that my mother was frightened of him-if we kicked chuckies on the slabs she would be out with her brush. He would sit in the greenhouse with his newspaper. His reading was Burns and Charles Murray. John and I went to Aberdeen primary school, about 200 yards up the street. We went to the Life Boys and the Boys Brigade and St Machar Church Sunday School. My grandfather gave us one penny each on the day he got his monthly pension.

I may have been around 7 when my mother had a serious operation and her life, I think, was despaired of. John and I were sent to live with our aunt- her husband was a banker, no family- in Westburn Drive. This was one of the unhappiest times of my early life. My aunt and uncle were kind, but I can still feel almost the experience of being in the playground of Kittybrewster School, knowing nobody and my mother possibly dying.

However she survived, and eventually life resumed at King Street. I used to read a lot, I bought comics, second hand, from a 'well -off ' boy who got a comic every day. My mother got the Peoples Friend! I think that I would have been a well behaved, well turned out little boy who did his lessons and said my 'wordies' (prayers) every night. We would have gone short holidays to relations or friend. An aunt of my mother at Rothienorman was a great favourite as well as the uncle.

John had gone on to Gordon's College and I later got a bursary to go there and then-The timing escaped me but my grandfather decided to sell off the house and live with another daughter - Homeless and about moneyless. However the wife of a man across the street and died and he 'sublet' us 2 rooms- a living room and a bed-room. There was a sink but no running water- you could get rid of it - we carried pails of water from the wash -house downstairs.

I lived there until I was married at the age of 30. John had left school and was at **the School of Architecture. There were plenty of boys as poor as I was at Gordon's** but perhaps living in good quality tenements at worst. You were often asked by boys and girls to parties at their houses- sometimes it hurt that I could never reciprocate. But I made good friends who did not mind such surroundings.

The cathedral minister helped my mother get any financial assistance that was available from charities. No DSS and you paid for the doctor. The accommodation situation eased strangely by the war. John was in the Auxiliary Air Force (a

Territorial Service) and was called up before war broke out in Sept 39. As he married while in the RAF this meant that he left home at 18 , apart from leave, never really lived there at home again.

I was still in the Boys Brigade and on Sundays taught in Sunday school, and went to evening Bible Class. I delivered evening and Sunday newspapers well over the **Bridge of Don and round by Brig o'Balgownie. So I always had pocket money.** I had always played football but in my 3rd year at school I started hockey. I usually played hockey at Seafield on Saturday mornings and football for the Boys Brigade at Hazlehead in the afternoons.

When the war broke out I joined the school Air Training Corps which met usually after school. I was not exactly a brilliant student at school- probably average describes my progress. I joined a nearby A.R. P. post around the age of 15 and learned about first aid etc. (Air Raid Precautions) I used to sleep there once a week on duty. I ca not remember if we got a small sum for that or not. The war **with blackouts changed everybody's lives. Neighbours you knew were killed.** Aberdeen was bombed. The town in complete darkness might sound a novelty but it was not.

What to do after school. Not so many options. I thought of the bank at 16- they did not want you after that . After Highers, what? We knew that we would have to join the forces sooner or later . unless you studied medicine or other 'important ' subjects. You were allowed one year of arts at university and I opted for that and went there in September 1942 choosing the three subjects, English, History and Moral Philosophy.

I enjoyed student life. I played university hockey, fire-watched in case bombs landed in the university buildings - paid 5/- (25p) for that .We played cards until late into the morning when we did this, sometimes bridge, sometimes poker. Not very many male students.

I had always had holiday jobs- employed by the Golf Courses and the Parks people and summer '43 labouring in Dounreay near Thurso, building the aerodrome- hard work but good fun. Most students had their fees paid by the Carnegie Trust. Your friends kept disappearing into the forces and you just waited. I was in the University Officer Training Corps-camps and parades. Rather than sit about and wait I started a second year at university but this was interrupted in February '44 when I was called up.

I enlisted at the Bridge of Don Barracks so I was able to go home occasionally which pleased my mum. After 10 months I was posted to Maidstone (Kent) Queens Royal Regiment. I was selected for officer training in Barmouth, North Wales and after (?) months training became an officer in the Cameron

Highlanders. I suppose it was wonderful everyone saluting you! My first posting was Elgin and then Dumfriesshire.

(part missing?) While in Nairobi I met my brother, now stationed at the aerodrome there. He was waiting for a passage home- he joined up in 1938- left the RAF in 1945. Life was good in Nairobi, I was almost my own boss and arranged my own trips. Where-ever I went I was accommodated at army units. Quite a good social life and you had your own 'boy' you keep your room clean and your clothes washed and ironed. I quite like Africans. I did think of remaining in the army, but no.

In August '47 I flew up to Egypt and a night in the Sudan and waited for a ship to take me home. Landed in Southampton, and was issued with an outfit of civilian clothes 'demob' suit, short socks, shoes, hat and a train ticket home! Back to 2 rooms and an outdoor toilet-no more officer's life, back to being a student.'

Charles Buchan Milne, author of the above was born in Kennethmont on 7 July 1924, died 2002. He graduated with an M.A. in 1949. He was the son of John Milne, policeman. Military service, interrupting university course, 1944-47: commissioned into Cameron Highlanders 1944; served with King's African Rifles in East Africa and India until discharged. Teacher at Kaimhill from 1951. Married in Aberdeen, 15 July 1954, Phyllis daughter of Andrew Mathieson, Laurencekirk.

Alison Milne, martinezmilne@hotmail.it
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Maroeuil British Cemetery

I was very interested to read in the February 2017 Journal, No. 142 about Captain G A C Moir of the Gordon Highlanders and particularly that he is buried in Maroeuil British Cemetery.

My father's cousin, Albert Bryce, Private 268355 1st/6th Bn., Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) is also buried there. He was the youngest child of Helen Jane Leask (a Shetlander), and James Ewen Bryce of Aberdeen. He was killed by a shell bursting on Sunday, 1st April 1917, aged 27. My father was in the area with 404 Highland Field Company, Royal Engineers (51st Highland Division) from Aberdeen. When he heard the news he went and made a cross for the grave. He was told that there was not a mark on him. Albert was killed by the impact.

My father always wanted to revisit the trenches and in 1970 my sister and I took him back. We visited Maroeuil Cemetery near Bray and it was a beautiful and peaceful place. At that time it was in the heart of the country, surrounded by fields. While we were there an elderly lady with her daughter and granddaughter came in and sat on the grass in front of the stone of remembrance for a quiet conversation. I thought it was a lovely touch.

Christina L Booth, No. 1958

Queries

143/1

Grothenwell/Mackie/King

John Frederick Grothenwell, Seaman and Christian Mackie married at St. John's Episcopal Chapel, Aberdeen on 13 February, 1820. Witnesses were Alexander Walker and William King. William King (70) appears in the 1841 Aberdeen Census with Ann King (45). In the 1851 Census he is recorded at Gordon Street, Aberdeen as a widowed 81-year-old retired Cabinetmaker born in England. The widowed Christian Grothenwell (52) is recorded as his resident Housekeeper. Her daughters Ann King Grothenwell and Isabella Walker Grothenwell were living nearby.

Any information about William King, Alexander Walker or Christian Mackie's parents would be appreciated.

Kareen Edwards, No. 698, kareen.edwards@yahoo.co.uk

143/2

Robertson/Forbes/Simpson

I am interested to know if anyone is researching John Robertson , export provision merchant in Aberdeen, married Margaret Forbes in 1821. Banns were called in Chapel of Garioch and North Church, Aberdeen. Margaret, born 1799 in Inverurie, was the daughter of Alexander Forbes and Margaret Simpson/ Simson.

John Robertson and Margaret Forbes had 3 children - John Forbes Robertson born 30/1/1822 in Aberdeen, Margaret Robertson born circa 1824 in Aberdeen, Mary Cruickshank Forbes Robertson born circa 1828, Aberdeen.

I know that John Robertson's wife Margaret Simpson died 24/08/1881 at 20 North Broadford Aberdeen, I do not have **any record of John's** [merchant] death which I suspect was circa 1833 as his wife took over his business in 1833/34.

Lesley Connell, No 5464, Lescon@ntlworld.com

143/3

Gordon/Seaton

Seeking information on brothers David (born Mar 20, 1736 in Kinnethmont) and William Gordon (born April 18, 1736 in Kinnethmont), sons of Jesse Gordon. DNA testing has proven that my ancestor David Gordon (Born 1770, NC, USA) and Robert Gordon (Born 1773-1785, NC, USA) are closely related and descended from the Seaton-Gordon line from Huntly, Aberdeenshire. Probable fathers of David and Robert are David and William respectively, both of whom are believed **to have been born in Scotland.** Scotland's People research identified the above sons of Jesse Gordon as possible ancestors. Did they emigrate to the colonies prior to 1770?

Mark Pittenger, No. 21323 mandmpittenger@comcast.net

143/4

Officer/Anderson

I am looking for the baptism or birth of Barbara Officer born c. 1826 in Fraserburgh. Is George officer, an ironmonger in Fraserburgh her father? From her death certificate she was the illegitimate daughter of Eleanora Anderson (1789-1867) and George Officer. As Eleanora was descended from the Andersons in Philorth and Cairn of Pitblae, there are also connections with the parish of Rathen. Was her birth/baptism perhaps registered with the Episcopal church? Was her illegitimate birth recorded in the Kirk Session records? Any information appreciated.

Elizabeth Moir, No. 20239

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Some notes on the Town and County Bank

Banks had been established in Edinburgh for before the idea of a joint stock bank reached Aberdeen. Nevertheless the Town and County Bank in Aberdeen was the first outside of Edinburgh. There were already two provincial banking companies in Aberdeen, the Commercial Banking Company of Aberdeen and the Aberdeen Banking Company, when The Town and County Bank was formed at a meeting at The New Inn in 1825. It had its head office, designed by Archibald Simpson in 1826, at 93 Union Street which was demolished in 1971 for British Home Stores.

The bank was happy to serve Aberdeen and area. Nevertheless, by the end of 1826, it already had four branches, and by 1837, 13 branches. The bank moved its head office across the road to 62 Union Street in 1863, to a building designed by James Matthews (now the Clydesdale Bank).

By 1899, besides the head office, the Bank had branches in Aberdeen and the County, at: Northern, 322 George Street (corner of Spring Garden) designed by J R McKenzie in 1880; Harbour, 33 Regent Quay (on the corner of Marischal Street) designed by R G Wilson in 1901; Western, 262 Union Street; King Street, 133 King Street; Market Street, 180 Market Street; Mile-End, 64 Belvidere Place.

The directors in 1899 were: John Fyfe, granite merchant; David Littlejohn, Advocate; James Badenach Nicolson of Glenbervie; Alex Milne Ogston, manufacturer; Alexander Stuart of Laithers; John Whyte, advocate; Alexander Hall Wilson, shipbuilder.

By 1907 both the banks were falling behind in facilities and scale, and there was a lot of duplication and so they amalgamated as The North of Scotland and the Town and County Bank Limited. These banks are now part of the Clydesdale Bank whose archives are held by Aberdeen City Archives and the National Register of Archives (Scotland). You never know what you might find there for your family.

Bill Diack, No. 155

Offers of help

Calling Blackhall, Dalgarno, Pirie, Riddoch and Winchester researchers

I have many years of research available under my family names: Blackhall, Dalgarno, Pirie, Riddoch and Winchester. These are all in the Banffshire, Aberdeenshire, and Morayshire areas.

I am quite shocked at the number of errors on Ancestry.com, and advise people not to take the info as gospel. If fellow researchers would like to email me at bjuneyoung@shaw.ca with names they are interested in, families, marriages. I would be happy to see if I can help. I just want to share my research. No cost is involved

With the Dalgarnos, I have also constructed trees for London, Liverpool, and Durham Dalgarnos, Canada & Australia.

All my research is backed with BMDs, Census records, and M.Is. I also have many BMD certificates I could share.

June Young, bjuneyoung@shaw.ca

]

Craighead and Milne

Some 50 years ago we purchased a leather-bound '**Brown's Bible**' from a second hand bookshop in George Street.

Pasted inside was a family tree for a couple, Alexander Craighead and Elizabeth Milne, and the births of their eight children:

Margaret 1821

Alexander 1823-27

Ann 1826

Mary 1827

John 1830-1860

George 1833-1906

William 1837

Charles 1839-44

So six children may have survived to adulthood; if any member is a descendant we would be happy to reunite them with their bible.

May Amar, mayeamar84@gmail.com

Note – the Diary dates section of the journal is being discontinued by popular demand. There is a more up to date section on the website which is current and searchable

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Journal Submissions

Submissions to the Journal are always welcome – but please send text and images separately, without embedding images in a document. The email address is journal@anesfhs.org.uk The next Journal will be published in August 2017. The last date for submissions is 6 July 2017. Articles or extracts may be **published on the Society's Internet** website or re-used.

Format – Please type your article on a computer and send it as an email attachment, using font Verdana, size 11. Hand-written submissions will NOT be accepted. *Illustrations* – If you submit an illustration, then keep it simple. We have limited space, and the A5-size format means that the quality may be somewhat less than you expect. Send the highest-resolution images that you can, as separate files from the text. Please label photographs etc with relevant titles. *Length* – Keep it short. We have limited space, so articles will be edited. If you have a really long tale to tell, then why not write it in several parts? No footnotes.

Advertisements – Electronic copy only. Note that the original size of the Journal is A4 before photo-reduction to A5, and so a quarter-page advert should be prepared as 175mm(w)x60mm(h).

The rates for advertisements, per issue, are:

- £30.00 (black and white) or £45.00 (colour) per quarter-page (doubled for a half-page).
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Writing to the Society

Please send all correspondence to The Family History Research Centre (address on back cover). To help us be more efficient, please detail your requirements on separate sheets (with your name and membership number) according to the service you wish or which office-bearer you wish to write to or use the appropriate email address (see opposite page) to minimise delays.

Change of Address

If you have access to the Internet, then *PLEASE* use the special form on our website to notify address/email address changes. This form is processed automatically on receipt, ensuring fast **service and saving our volunteers' valuable time**. Otherwise, please write to the Membership Department *quoting your membership number*.

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Queries are accepted from paid-up Society members free of charge. Non-members should donate £1.00 per query (or postage stamps). Up to four queries per person will be accepted per calendar year. The parts of a multi-part query count as separate queries. Each query will show the submitter's name and membership number and (e-mail) address. The query service is intended for ancestor research.

Please email Journal queries separately from other correspondence to the Journal editors, with your name and membership number on each request. Queries received close to our publication date will appear in the following Journal.

Family History for All

Family history/genealogy researcher Pg.Cert.

I can help you with your family-history search, tailored to meet your needs, whether that is answering one question or researching an entire family line.

Call John Owen on 01330 823230 to have a chat, or drop me an e-mail: familyhistory4all@btinternet.com with any questions.



Centre Opening hours

Monday to Friday 10:00am to 4:00pm
Saturday 10:00am to 1:00pm

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Local Holiday Closures: 10 July and 25 September

Christmas and New Year closures (2017/18)
Closes 4pm on Friday 22 December 2017 and reopens at 10am on
Thursday 4 January 2018

See website for further details

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