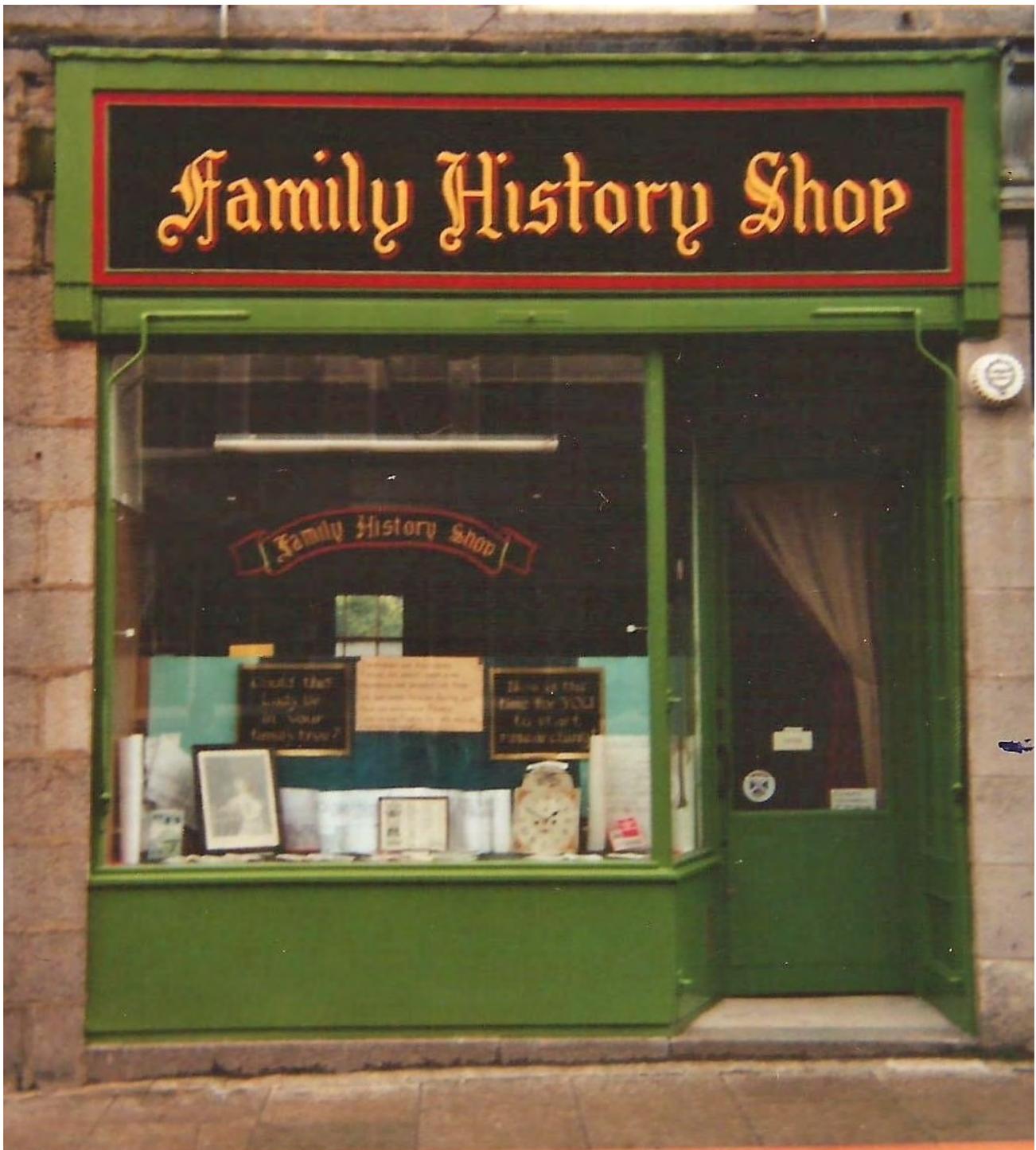


# Aberdeen & North-East Scotland Family History Society

Journal No. 162 • February 2022



## Membership Details

**New members** pay the annual rate, and your subscription runs for exactly one year from the date on which you join. Further details are available on our **website**. Membership of the Society entitles you to receive the quarterly Journal. There is a discount for e-members who opt to download the Journal digitally instead of receiving printed copies.

**Family membership** is available for two named persons at one address. Please nominate one surname for registration purposes.

From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020, the 12-month subscription rates (choose printed or e-Journal) are:

Ordinary membership:	£25·00	Ordinary digital (e-Journal only):	£18·00
Family membership:	£30·00	Family digital (e-Journal only):	£24·00

## Payment

You can pay online at our website (PayPal: account or cards), by post (credit/debit card or cheque), by Direct Debit, by Internet Banking, or in person at our Family-History Centre. 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%.



### **Internet Banking:**

**Bank:** Clydesdale Bank plc, St Nicholas Branch, 62 Union Street, Aberdeen AB10 1WD

**Account name:** ABDN & NTH EAST SCOT FAMILY HISTORY SOC

**Account number:** 90100648

**Sort code:** 82-40-00

**IBAN:** GB92CLYD82400090100648

**BIC/SWIFT:** CLYDGB21250

*Include your membership number in the payment reference, and also e-mail [renewals@anesfhs.org.uk](mailto:renewals@anesfhs.org.uk) so that we know you've paid!*

**Direct Debit:** e-mail [renewals@anesfhs.org.uk](mailto:renewals@anesfhs.org.uk) for details.

**Cheque:** GBP (Sterling) only. Pay: Aberdeen & NE Scotland FHS.

**Website:** You have to register first (see below). Then select "The Society / Members / Renew my membership" from the menu. All payments are processed by PayPal. If you don't have a PayPal account, be sure to select "*Check out as guest*" when PayPal asks you to log in.

*As website renewals are processed automatically, renewing via the website greatly assists our hard-pressed volunteers. Thank you.*

### **ANESFHS website and Members' Forum**

In order to get the most from your Society membership, you should register on our new website. Go to [www.anesfhs.org.uk](http://www.anesfhs.org.uk) and click on the Register link at the top right of the screen. For further assistance, please visit [www.anesfhs.org.uk/how-to-register](http://www.anesfhs.org.uk/how-to-register)

Once you have registered, you can access our growing list of very useful members-only features:

- All our Journals from 1979 onwards
- Monumental Inscription look-ups for many North-East Scottish graveyards
- A Members' Forum for exchange of ideas, assistance with "brick walls", and much else.

### **General Data Protection Regulations, 2018**

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

We may occasionally send e-mails to Society members only, concerning Society membership, appeals for volunteer help or promotional information, using the e-mail address you have provided. You may choose to unsubscribe from these e-mails. For further details of data protection, please contact the Society in writing.

# Journal of the Aberdeen and North-East Scotland Family History Society

Issue 162, February 2022

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*Cover photograph: the Society's original premises, at 152 King Street, opened in January 1987 in a former butcher's shop. We soon outgrew this tiny space, moving in 1994 to 164 King Street ("Research Centre & Shop"), and later expanding into 158–164 (now our Family History Centre).*

## Society Reports, News and Information

### Jean's Box of Photos

The cover image for this edition of the Journal was found in a box of Jean Shirer's photos. It's funny how we all have a box of photographs somewhere. Various memories of people and places are captured in these little snapshots of time. Jean's is no different.

It soon became apparent that Jean's box of photos was a treasure trove of the Society's history. As a founding member, she was in a unique position to document and archive the evolution and growth of the Society over a period spanning decades.

In reviewing the hundreds of photos that Jean took, it becomes clear that one of her passions was outings to record graveyards. She always had a camera at the ready to capture not only the many gravestones, but also the hard-working volunteers in action.

Jean fondly referred to some of the regular volunteers at these outings as "The Graveyard Gang". There are many photos of the "Gang" at work – but Jean was nearly always the one behind the camera. This photo is a rare exception, where some of the "Gang" can be seen in all their glory.

The passion and enthusiasm of all of the volunteers shines through in the many images, demonstrating a camaraderie towards a common goal (completion of another MI booklet).



*The Graveyard Gang (from left to right):  
Jean Shirer, Sheila Spiers, Margaret Brown, Jim Shirer*

Jean's treasure trove is not just limited to photographs. There's a wealth of newspaper articles, posters about past events, and membership statistics. Of particular note is a *Herald & Post* article from 24<sup>th</sup> February 1990 entitled "City Shop That Sells History". It states: "In the past three years ... membership has grown by about 2,000 with applications from all parts of the world. Each day a group of volunteers report to the shop to help deal with the non-stop flood of inquiries and inquirers, with a daily postbag that includes requests from many parts of the world." The article continues: "One notable recent recruit ... is the US Ambassador to Britain, Mr Henry E. Catto, who ... has been provided with details of his family background in the Buchan area". I am sure that he is just one of many notable members that we have had over the years.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to Jean for her diligent work and preservation of the Society's history. Her collection documents the Society's progression from its humble beginnings, where a group of like-minded people with a common goal of promoting family history went on to create ANESFHS as we know it today.



*Examples of excellent “book” work: carefully uncovering buried stones in Auchterless Kirkyard on a Society Graveyard Outing in days of yore.*

*Auchterless is among “ANESFHS unpublished MIs (members only)” on our website.*

*The Society is very grateful to Susan Freer for scanning Jean Shirer’s old photographs.*



## Editorial

This Journal issue returns to full size and quarterly schedule after the blip last time round. Apologies to all members who were confused, annoyed or inconvenienced by any of the knock-on effects. With a backlog of articles for this issue, there is again no Queries section; but it'll be back for the May Journal along with the return of the Diary page.

If you like (or *don't* like) what the Society is doing, please write in to the Journal!

[journal@anesfhs.org.uk](mailto:journal@anesfhs.org.uk)

Ivor Normand

No. 4161

## Chairman's Report

Our Family History Centre at King Street remains open, staffed by helpful volunteers who would love to welcome more visitors. See our website; and please do visit.

Jean Shirer (No. 14; obituary, Journal 161) left the Society a small legacy in her will. We are most grateful for this final act of kindness. Her papers and photographs are yielding a great deal of interesting material about the Society's history since 1978.

The Society is a member of the Scottish Association of Family History Societies. The 32<sup>nd</sup> annual SAFHS Conference, this year themed on "Hard Times", takes place online on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2022, facilitated by Emma and Graham Maxwell ([www.scottishindexes.com](http://www.scottishindexes.com)) as a day of Zoom webinars. See [safhs.org.uk](http://safhs.org.uk) for information and how to register.

ANESFHS will organise the 33<sup>rd</sup> annual SAFHS Conference in April 2023. We'd hoped to return to hosting live talks and even a family-history fair, but this becomes impractical when ongoing Covid uncertainties make planning so difficult. Instead, we aim to host an online-only Conference. More information will be made available as soon as possible.

On 19<sup>th</sup> March 2022, the Society will hold its Annual General Meeting, followed by a talk. As in 2020 and 2021, these will be online via Zoom, and all members are welcome.

*chairman@anesfhs.org.uk*

Ivor Normand

No. 4161

—oOo—

## Members' Meetings: Aberdeen

The Society has been without an Aberdeen-based Syllabus Secretary since before the pandemic. Aberdeen meetings are still being held online only, co-ordinated by members elsewhere in Scotland who already have other heavy commitments within the Society. It remains uncertain whether Aberdeen-area members want to resume face-to-face meetings. As spring and summer approach, we hope members *will* want to meet again in person. There's no substitute for a cup o' tea and a guid blether. Do *you* want to help organise?

Meanwhile, see our website's "Events" tab for how to obtain an invitation link to any Society online meeting in which you are interested. Always scroll down the event page to find where to register. When you click "I will go ...", you'll be sent an automatic e-mail containing the invitation link. If this doesn't seem to arrive *immediately*, it'll be because it's somehow been filtered to your Junk or Spam. Always remember to check there, rather than e-mailing the organiser just before or after the start of a meeting:

### 20<sup>th</sup> November 2021: Anne Park, "Researching a war memorial"

Anne Park is our expert on First World War "deid mannies" and how to research them. Her abiding passion is war memorials, researching details of the casualties, and adding these to her huge Roll of Honour in the members-only area of the Society's website.

This colourful presentation used case studies from the Dyce War Memorial to illustrate her methods of researching WW1, also mentioning WW2. Starting with the names on any memorial, she explores all available resources to tell a story about the men, hoping to help others to find a hint or two, or to help point them towards finding extra information they might need for expanding their family history. Newspaper archives (BNA, or FMP, or NLS) are particularly well worth searching.

A lot was discussed in this meeting, and our participants typed various useful information into the Zoom Group Chat. Just a few examples:

- <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/lifestory/3803494>;
- <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/advanced-search> still offers free downloads.

See also <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=ARTqYPggJWE> for Anne starring in what is hoped to be the first in a series of Graveyard Guardians videos!

## 15<sup>th</sup> January 2022: Beginners' Meeting

This annual meeting, again held online, featured short presentations on the vast range of resources held in our Family History Centre at King Street and available on the Society's website, whether publicly or in the members-only area when you log in. We particularly welcomed some first-time visitors in this e-meeting. Seasoned members were happy to jump on their queries and try to find answers online. The new visitors were even happier at the great results obtained! Some non-members were so impressed that they joined the Society straight afterwards. All our meetings offer this level of friendly help.

The Society's website is where to register for invitation links when meetings are opened.

*chairman@anesfhs.org.uk*

Ivor Normand

No. 4161

—oOo—

## Moray/Banff Group Report

Our meetings continue to take place online and to be very popular with Society members across the globe. Following on from our October meeting of "Tips, Troubles and Tales from the Censuses", our November topic was "Vital Registration: Tips, Troubles and Tales" – and we had another lively meeting, this time with just over 90 participants.

December saw a combined meeting for a Christmas Social, with the Moray/Banff Group hosting on behalf of the whole Society. Given the Covid restrictions, this was a "bring your own bottle and mince pies" occasion online – but we had around 50 participants, all with well-decorated wooden spoons for the occasion. It's always good to have time for chat – and we certainly made the most of this friendly and festive occasion.

Having worked all our members really hard since the summer break, tackling brick walls, censuses and vital records, it seemed a good idea to begin the new year with a more gentle meeting, so our January topic was "The route to my roots: why I started my family-history research". It turned out to be surprisingly popular, with well over 80 participants, and it was so interesting to hear the various tales about what had started us on this fascinating journey. For some it was when they inherited some interesting pieces of family-history documentation, while for others it was a change in family circumstances. The reasons were varied and highly individual to the person recounting them.

February saw us tackling the first of two meetings about places. We have regularly held "bring along a brick wall" meetings, but these have always focused on people, so this time we decided to take on the challenge for places. This first meeting concentrated on finding places here in the North-East, often just small crofts, and for this we used the modern "Streetmap" website alongside the maps stretching back to the 1500s which can be found on the excellent National Library of Scotland maps website. With a full house of 100 signed up to join in, it promised to be a busy afternoon – and, as we ended up with around 90 participants, it was indeed a lively meeting. For our March meeting, we will be looking

at websites that enable you to find out more about the places where your ancestors lived, the houses, the villages and the towns, so that you can put some “flesh on the bones”.

The future of face-to-face meetings is still uncertain. The Elgin Library meeting rooms had opened up, though with strictly limited numbers which would not have accommodated our meetings, but have since closed again as Covid numbers have risen. We have booked the Activities Room from April but will have to wait and see how things develop. In the meantime, please continue to enjoy our online meetings!

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Mary Evans

No. 1975

—oOo—

## Edinburgh Group Report

### Ken Nisbet, “The Home Front and the Great War (1914–22)”

13<sup>th</sup> November 2021

This was our Group’s second meeting in “hybrid” format, with a small number of local members joining our speaker in our usual Royal Scots Club venue, and over 40 other attendees “Zooming” in from around Scotland, England, Ireland, Canada and the USA. We were glad of in-house help with the new technology of not one but two big digital screens on wheels. Our mastery of the audio and the video is catching up with the 21<sup>st</sup> century! By the time of our next meeting, there’ll surely be no stopping us.

Ken Nisbet is a highly experienced and knowledgeable researcher and speaker, and we are lucky to have him available. Family historians mostly look at the Great War through researching the service records of their relatives who served in the Armed Forces. In this talk, Ken looked at research that can be carried out on those who remained at home, and the war’s impact on the role of women in society: how the war affected work; what you ate; where you could go; what you could do in your leisure time.

Ken’s talk also considered the impact of DORA (the Defence of the Realm Act, 1914) and how many things that are associated with the Second World War experience in fact came out of the Great War. We learned a lot, and participants made good contributions in the typed Chat and in Q&A after Ken’s presentation. Just a few of many examples:

- [www.scotlandswar.co.uk](http://www.scotlandswar.co.uk) is excellent and well worth exploring.
- See the British Red Cross website for details of the British Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD). These volunteers could be Red Cross / St John’s / St Andrew’s-trained nurses (female usually) and stretcher-bearers / (male).
- For WW1 records of nurses, see <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/british-army-nurses-service-records-1914-1918/> (descriptions include “a very average nurse” for the granny of one of our members).
- See <https://www.secretscotland.org.uk/index.php/Secrets/PoWCampSummaryWWI> for information on WW1 prisoner-of-war camps in Scotland.

Our Edinburgh Group meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> January was cancelled amid Covid uncertainties. Our next is on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, with a talk on Jacobites from historian Jenn Scott. This will be “hybrid” again, and registration will open soon for attending online (scroll down the event page to register for an invitation link). But, if you live within reach of Edinburgh, we’ll be delighted if you can come along and join us to make it a real meeting once again.

*edinburgh@anesfhs.org.uk*

Ivor Normand

No. 4161

## Glasgow Group / London Group Report

### Ken Nisbet, “How to get the best out of ScotlandsPeople”

27<sup>th</sup> November 2021

The Society’s London Group and Glasgow Group co-presented this talk, with Ken Nisbet addressing a Glasgow Group audience in person, and broadcasting online to an audience of over 100 worldwide. Storm damage across Scotland and England prevented many other sign-ups from joining in, so the Society may well re-run this talk later in 2022.

Access to primary sources in public archives and record offices is still limited by closures, shortened opening hours and travel restrictions. The ScotlandsPeople website is very useful, but the pay-per-view pricing model is far more expensive than the daily £15 charge for unlimited image views on site in the ScotlandsPeople Centre in Edinburgh (and in associated venues elsewhere in Scotland). This is a particular problem for research queries that return a long list of possible registrations.

Ken’s talk used the ScotlandsPeople website to demonstrate search techniques we can use to reduce the number of images we need to view. He gave us a comprehensive overview of records available on this site in addition to Statutory Registers and Old Parish Registers.

#### General guidance

Ken urged us to read <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/guides>, the Help and Guidance pages. The National Records of Scotland (NRS) website has an A–Z of Research Guides, such as the Parishes and Registration Districts of Scotland Guides, which are documents listing the Registration Districts by name and number, with the dates when they changed: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/guides/statutory-registers/registration-districts>

Also, [https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Scotland\\_Civil\\_Registration](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Scotland_Civil_Registration) has an overview of the Statutory Registers for Scotland.

#### Website guidance

- Use search wildcards; search without a surname; use the Search Options.
- Search using a middle name; or maiden names; or a range of years.
- Always check that you haven’t inadvertently left a previous search term in one box!
- Search death registrations using the mother’s maiden name.
- Sort the results to group index records for the same event.
- Use the index of deaths to find a woman’s maiden surname.
- Use a birth in Scotland to find the date and place of a marriage elsewhere.
- Report errors in the index; and always download the images you’ve paid for.

#### Use other websites alongside ScotlandsPeople

ScotlandsPeople is the only website with images of the statutory registers of Births, Marriages and Deaths for Scotland. However, decades ago the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints microfilmed registers from 1855 to 1875, 1881 and 1891, and recently they scanned these microfilms. You may view these images at an LDS Family History Library or a Family History Centre. These images are not available to view online.

FamilySearch has transcribed a high percentage of birth and marriage records from 1855 to 1875, and these transcriptions are available free to view on their website (after user

registration). You may also view these transcriptions on FindMyPast. You can use these transcriptions to identify which image you want to download from ScotlandsPeople.

### **Divorces**

From 1945 onwards, the Register of Corrected Entries of marriage registrations gives the date and place of divorce. This applies only to marriages that took place in Scotland.

The Divorces Register has divorces from 1<sup>st</sup> May 1984 onwards. The certificate gives few more details than shown in the index; it includes the parties' names and addresses.

The National Records of Scotland index has divorces prior to 1984. The legal papers for divorces are closed for 100 years; however, NRS might provide an extract with details of living persons redacted. You may view older papers on site in Edinburgh.

Refer to the NRS Research Guide at <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/research-guides/research-guides-a-z/divorce-records>

### **Adoptions**

Prior to 1930, adoptions were arranged privately, and so the NRS has no record of these. The Adopted Children Register is not online, and the adoption records are closed to the general public for 100 years.

Refer to the NRS Research Guide at <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/research-guides/research-guides-a-z/adoption-records>

### **Still births**

The Register of Still Births is not online. Registrations are open only to close relatives.

### **Church registers**

These are the Old Parish Registers (OPRs) of the Church of Scotland, the Roman Catholic Parish Registers (CPRs), and some registers from Other Churches – not including Jewish, Quakers or Methodists. There are still many records for other churches held by the National Records of Scotland that are not yet on ScotlandsPeople.

### **Other events**

Most of these events were in the Roman Catholic Church, such as confirmations, converts, communicants, sick calls, *status animarum*, first confessions and seat rents. See the NRS Research Guide at <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/guides/catholic-parish-registers>

Currently, there are only two non-Roman Catholic congregations in the Other Events.

### **Births and baptisms**

The initial search form does not offer first and second parent names in the search criteria, but the results screen offers these attributes in the filter criteria. Often, the forename of the mother does not work in the filter.

### **Church of Scotland Old Parish Registers**

The date column is the date of the baptism, not the date of birth, even if the date of birth is given in the OPR. "FR" numbers are the frame numbers of the images on the microfilm. ANESFHS and the Scottish Genealogy Society each hold a full collection of microfilms for the whole of Scotland. The images are available also at LDS Family History Centres or FamilySearch affiliate libraries. Refer to

[https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Finding\\_Sources\\_for\\_Scotland\\_Births\\_and\\_Baptisms\\_Using\\_Microfilm\\_6,035,516](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Finding_Sources_for_Scotland_Births_and_Baptisms_Using_Microfilm_6,035,516)

Ancestry has transcriptions of the OPRs, which they license from FamilySearch and continue to update. FindMyPast has a record set *Scotland, Parish Births & Baptisms 1564–1929* which was compiled from transcriptions by Family History Societies and others from the Church of Scotland and other church OPRs.

### **Marriages**

Banns were called in the parishes of the bride and the groom; if they were from different parishes and the records survive, then the banns will appear in the index for each parish.

FindMyPast has a record set *Scotland, Parish Marriages & Banns 1561–1893* which was compiled from transcriptions by Family History Societies and others from the Church of Scotland and other church OPRs. Ancestry has transcriptions of the OPRs, which they license from FamilySearch and continue to update.

### **Deaths and burials**

In OPRs, these records are often missing for whole parishes.

FindMyPast has a record set *Scotland, Parish Deaths & Burials 1564–2017* which was compiled from transcriptions by Family History Societies and others from the Church of Scotland and other church OPRs. It includes mortcloth fees and bell-ringing fees.

For Roman Catholic deaths, use the FindMyPast record set *Scotland Roman Catholic Parish Burials*, which has records pre- and post-1855 and the same digital images that are sold by ScotlandsPeople.

Ancestry has *Scotland, Non-OPR Deaths and Burials Index, 1673–1855* which they license from Scottish Indexes for the convenience of their members. These records are available at no charge at <https://www.scottishindexes.com/deathsearch.aspx>

### **Kirk Session records**

You can browse the watermarked images for free, but you must pay to download them without the watermark.

The Virtual Volumes available on ScotlandsPeople are a subset of the Virtual Volumes that are available to view on site in the NRS and local archives, which hold church records under the charge and superintendence of the Keeper of the Records of Scotland. For example, a Place Search for “Urray” on ScotlandsPeople finds no Virtual Volumes – but a search of the NRS Catalogue found 14 records for the Urray Kirk Session.

Birth, marriage and death records that appear in the Kirk Session records are free to view. These events do not appear in the nominal index to the Old Parish Registers. Search a range of years around the event – often, baptisms of a family of children appeared together when the minister visited.

Prior to the 1843 Poor Relief Act, the Church of Scotland Kirk Sessions administered poor relief in their parish. Payments to paupers often appear in the Kirk Session Accounts. The date when payment ceased might suggest the pauper’s date of death.

### **Valuation rolls**

These documents are indexed for ten-year periods from 1855 until 1915, then five-yearly until 1940. Images exist for other years which can be viewed for small rural districts.

Some Valuation Rolls were printed; the others are in manuscript. They can be used to confirm a house and/or street name read from a certificate. Some addresses in tenements include the floor/level, which you won't find in other documents.

### Legal records

*Military Service Appeals Tribunals* were established after conscription started in 1916 during the Great War. Records survive for the Lothians and Peeblesshire. The fee to view is 20 credits. There is a lot of information in the index.

*Soldier's and Airmen's Wills* were written by the (WW1 or 2) soldier or airman in his paybook, and are often very simple. It costs you ten credits to view the whole document.

*Wills and Testaments* from 1513 to 1925 are on ScotlandsPeople. Beyond 1925, search in the NRS. The confirmation date might be years after death, and so search for a range of years. "Eik" is an additional document for assets found after the original document was registered. Ancestry has the record set *Scotland, National Probate Index (Calendar of Confirmations and Inventories), 1876–1936*.

On ScotlandsPeople, viewing the whole document costs 10 credits regardless of the page count. Usually you will pay 10 credits for the Will and another 10 for the Inventory.

### Census returns

*1881 census*: the LDS transcription is free to view, and you can save the results as PDF files. The search form includes address, census place and birth place rather than county and district. You can search this transcription by occupation. For example, a search for occupation of "Policeman" and birth place "Ireland" finds 80 policemen born in Ireland.

*1911 census*: ScotlandsPeople has exclusive rights to the 1911 census for Scotland, which is informally called the "Fertility Census" because it asked women to declare the number of years in the current marriage, the number of children born alive within that marriage and the number of these children still living. These counts might be a clue that some of her children were born and had died between the census years.

Search for the missing children in the Statutory Register of Deaths using surname with no forenames, both genders, year-of-death range from the parents' marriage date to 1911, and age range 0 to 5 for the county and district of residence. If you are fortunate, you will be able to identify the unknown children by their mother's maiden name.

Our speaker willingly answered lots of questions from our in-person and online audiences, who all showed their profound appreciation.

*murray.archer@btinternet.com*

Murray Archer

No. 7770

Many thanks to Murray for this report, abridged from a much more comprehensive Journal-busting original version with illustrations. The Society is working on a new area of our website where in due course we may place such larger items for members' benefit.

A report of our February "Members' Day" meeting on Kirk Session records will appear in the May Journal. At our next meeting, on 14<sup>th</sup> May, ex-policeman Gary Lawrie will talk on "Applying police skills to family-history research". This will be "hybrid" again for our distant members – but do please come along and join us in the Kirk Lounge.

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Ivor Normand

No. 4161

## Australia and New Zealand Chapter

Because of ongoing uncertainties about lockdowns, and the distances we all have to travel to meet in person, it has been decided to merge our Brisbane and Melbourne Groups into one group covering all of Australia and New Zealand. We have been welcoming more attendees from New South Wales and from the northern hemisphere in our online meetings, and we feel that a merger is the best way forward for continuing to benefit from each other's knowledge and from our shared membership of such a great Family History Society. From time to time, we can still hold the odd get-together.

We now have a full programme of meetings lined up for 2022. These will be timed so that others beyond our area can take part too! See the Society's website for further details of timezones and to register for an invitation link in the weeks before each meeting. Our meetings will run from **4pm to 6:30pm (AEST)**. Our dates, speakers and topics are:

19<sup>th</sup> February – “Scots in the West Indies”, Trish Adams

21<sup>st</sup> May – “5<sup>th</sup> Gordon Highlanders (social perspectives)”, Carolyn Morrissey

20<sup>th</sup> August – Roadblocks; DNA Q&A; “Is that really my ancestor?”; show-and-tell (in no particular order)

15<sup>th</sup> October – “The mobile Scot (Europe)”, Ann Swain

*australia@anesfhs.org.uk*

Julie Fleming No. 22166

—oOo—

## Southern Ontario Group Report

### 20<sup>th</sup> November 2021

We met online again, and reviewed the usual protocols and welcomes, with around 32 attending from across Canada and the UK. Our main presentation was “Making our Remembrances Personal” by David Joiner, a high-school geography teacher, on how he had used geotechnology to discover the location where his great-uncle Charles Joiner, born in 1885, had died in the Great War. The family came from the Forgue and Huntly areas of Aberdeenshire, and Charles was one of seven children born to George Joiner and Elizabeth Jessie Robbie. In the 1891 census, they lived at Menie Lodge, Belhelvie parish.

David explained how he had used search tools at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) website to find Charles's regiment and further details, along with the memorial where he is remembered with honour. Further online searches yielded more about the Royal Berkshire Regiment and its movements during the war, including the events related to Charles's death on 28<sup>th</sup> April 1917. Fellow member Anne Park helped David find a newspaper website with Charles's obituary in the *Aberdeen Evening Express*.

Georeferenced maps of Vimy Ridge illustrated how the actions of Charles's 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Berkshire Regiment, were linked to protecting the flank of the Canadian victory at Vimy Ridge earlier in April. War Diaries from the National Archives provided much detail on what the regiment endured on the day of Charles's death in the Battle of Arras.

David then found a map of the trenches drawn shortly after his great-uncle's death. On the map, he could determine exactly where the regiment was positioned and their objective: bayonet and rifle trenches. He then overlaid the trench map upon a present-day remote-sensing image of Monchy-le-Preux. The farmer's field where the trenches were originally

dug still showed indications of the First World War trenches. David noted that this was only visible with Google Earth surface images taken in 2006; searches with images from other years did not show the presence of the trench system.

David went on to show photos of the Arras memorial cemetery taken during a trip to the battlefields, and told of how he had had help from many others to obtain a rubbing of his great-uncle's name located high on the monument wall.

From there, his touring group went to a local consignment shop, very near the trenches, where local farmers who had discovered items in their fields could bring them in to sell. David was hoping for a hat-pin from his great-uncle's regiment, and was told not to raise his hopes too high for something so specific. Lo and behold – the very first pin he was shown from a small drawer in the shop was from Charles's regiment. This felt very personal, as it may have come from a friend, or even from Charles himself.

David has made framed shadow boxes for his family containing some of the information he has discovered about Charles Joiner. Since doing this research, he has been able to find records and grave sites for several other family members and has been able to add trench maps to their family-tree profiles. This whole experience has made Remembrance Day much more personal for David, and he proudly carries the regimental pin to any services he attends.

All in all, this was a very informative and enjoyable presentation, with lots of comments in the typed Chat area about how much everyone enjoyed it.

After a break, Rod Coates gave a brief presentation on a dog-tag that he had inherited from a family friend, Frank McRae, which prompted Rod to research Frank's CEF file available at the Library and Archives Canada. Rod read through some of the injury reports and war diary entries, and was also able to visit Arras in 2011 to retrace Frank's steps.

Gail McHardy-Leitch next spoke about some of her McHardy and Dunbar ancestors that she was researching; and Anne Park again was able to help share some records with her.

John McLean spoke on the death of his grandfather during WW1. Surprisingly, his grandmother had found out about it through a newspaper article, and not from the War Office. John was also able to visit France to do further research on his grandfather.

Catharine Mitchell spoke about her grandfather, Alexander Mitchell, who had lived in Inverurie. She could not find any records on him, and suspects that they may have been destroyed during the 1940 bombing of London, as many records were.

Finally, we ran a poll on our interests for future meeting topics and went over what was planned so far for 2022. On 26<sup>th</sup> February, we look forward to an online presentation on "Aspects of Illegitimacy in Scotland" by Alex Wood, a genealogist in Scotland. This meeting is now open for registration on the Society's website. On 30<sup>th</sup> April at 1pm local time, we'll have an online tour of the University of Guelph library's Scottish collection – the largest such collection of material outside of Scotland. More details to follow.

Thank you to all who attended. If you have any comments or suggestions for future meetings, you can always contact one of us.

## Graveyard Clarifications

*Journal 161 carried a report of a talk given by Gavin Bell. This unrecorded talk was delivered live to our Edinburgh Group and simultaneously via Zoom to a wider audience – the Society’s first attempt at a hybrid meeting. There were one or two technical hiccups, which may explain how a couple of Gavin’s points came to be misreported. The Editor has apologised and is happy to set the record straight. Gavin writes:*

When recording a gravestone inscription, I do not in fact recommend the use of Latin “[sic]” to flag up unusual spellings. My custom is either to append a blanket note to a transcription: “spellings as on stone”, or to give a more specific comment: “alternation of Esselment / Esslemont as on stone”.

And, on the question of “correcting” inscriptions by reference to alternative sources, I most definitely **did not** suggest: “*Always consult other sources, preferably official*”. On the contrary, I pointed out that, because Session Clerks, registrars and other officials were, just as much as monumental masons, entirely dependent on the quality of the information supplied to them by the family of the deceased, the only safe proceeding is for the transcriber of Memorial Inscriptions to report, as accurately as possible, what is actually on the stone, leaving the individual family-history researcher free to weigh up any conflicting evidence (which may well include information not available to officialdom, such as letters, wills, or entries in Family Bibles).

To the note on the possibility of bringing draft MIs to publication, I would add that this query arises often, and that the reason for not publishing them is that they are not in a fit state for publication. I have had a major input to the publication of something over 20 MI booklets, and most of these did previously exist as “draft” or “unpublished” versions. It is useful to have these earlier versions for cross-checking, but all have exhibited errors or omissions in the MI text, or the plans, or both. It takes time to bring a “draft” MI up to publishable standard; so, in the meantime, we have made some of the more extensive “drafts” available (on an “as is” basis) to Society members on the ANESFHS website.

In 2002, Journals 84 and 85 (Aug, Nov) listed 100 sets of “draft” MIs for burial grounds which were then held in our Library. By 2021, some 51 of these had been completed and published by ANESFHS, while a further 23 have for some time been available online as described above (there were originally around 30, but this number has been whittled down by the publication of fully-corrected booklets). Of the remainder, a couple have been published independently, and several are known to be seriously incomplete or faulty.

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Gavin Bell

No. 4085

—oOo—

## Library Report

I was sorry to learn of the recent death of Dr David Northcroft, who was well known in Aberdeen for his interest in the lives of people in the North-East. We have four of his books in the Society library, *Grampian Lives* (2 vols) and *Aberdeen Lives* (2 vols), and they provide a fascinating insight into the social history of North-East Scotland in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The books are presented in an easily accessible format which is both interesting and entertaining, and they give a real feeling for what life was like for earlier generations. A lot of it will evoke memories in those of us of a certain age!

Dr Northcroft taught English at Aberdeen Grammar School, then became a lecturer at Aberdeen College of Education, where he was Vice-Principal by the time he retired. On retiring, he intended to write a popular, non-academic history of Scottish schooling – and this he did with *Scots at School* (2003) and *North-East Identities and Scottish Schooling* (2005). But, as he talked to people about their schooldays, he realised that nobody confined themselves to talking about school. It was always the school as part of the community, and people's lives and experiences at the time.

His focus widened, and what had begun as an early retirement project became the biggest compilation of oral history in the North-East of Scotland. By the time his fourth book was published, he had more than 600 taped interviews and had talked to over 500 people. He had started by talking to his relatives and friends and to weel-kent faces in Aberdeen, but he soon realised that “everyone has a story to tell”, and he talked to the “ordinary” folk whose lives may have seemed to them ordinary, but reflect a different way of life from the life we know today. These interviews were informal and generally took place in people's homes. A friend of mine recalls how her mother, born in Inverurie in 1915, caused some concern when she rang her daughter to say that this nice man had phoned and was coming to see her to have a wee chat about her life! As Dr Northcroft said in an interview (*Press & Journal*, 23 Dec 2021): “I soon discovered two things. Firstly, that everyone has a story to tell. And secondly, North-East people are warm and hospitable and they demonstrated it by giving their trust (and their fly cups) to me – in most cases a stranger.”

The two volumes of *Grampian Lives* focus on the experiences of people from the rural and coastal parts of the region, while the two volumes of *Aberdeen Lives* cover life in the city. All four books are well illustrated with contemporary photographs belonging to the people interviewed. Together they form an invaluable social history of our North-East region in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, told in the words of people who have lived through a time of great change. What hasn't changed, though, according to Dr Northcroft, is the values of the region: “stoicism, reliability, respect for the climate, soil and sea, an abiding sense of communal solidarity and a warmth and willingness to help our fellow men and women” (*P&J*, 19 March 2018).

Dr Northcroft's archive will be donated to Aberdeen University, his *alma mater*, where it will be accessible for researchers in due course.

*Grampian Lives: Living through the twentieth century in the small towns and settlements of North-East Scotland. Volume 1: Early century lives and memories, 1900–1950* (Inverurie: Leopard Press, 2010). ISBN 978-0953453467

*Grampian Lives: Eyewitness accounts of growing up in the towns of North-East Scotland. Volume 2: Twentieth-century lives and memories, 1950–2000* (Inverurie: Leopard Press, 2013). ISBN 978-0957099920 \*

*Aberdeen Lives: Aberdeen at work and play. Volume 1: 1901–2000* (Inverurie: Leopard Press, 2017). ISBN 978-0957099982

*Aberdeen Lives: Aberdeen at war and peace. Volume 2: 1901–2000* (Inverurie: Leopard Press, 2019). ISBN 978-1916261402

\* The Society used to sell all four volumes, but the only one we have left is *Grampian Lives* vol. 2 (code LP137; see our website).

## 100 Club News: Volunteer Needed

With regret, and after many years of administering the 100 Club, I have had to resign on grounds of ill-health. One of the Society's hard-pressed volunteers is kindly monitoring the 100 Club e-mail address on a temporary basis. If the 100 Club is to continue, we need a new Secretary. This would be an ideal job for a member living in or within reach of Aberdeen. Please contact the address below for more information.

If no volunteer is forthcoming, we would have to wind up the 100 Club. Participants would be asked to cancel their own standing orders, as banks require this to be done by the individual and not by the Society. It would be a shame if such a long-running aspect of the Society's activities had to end in this way. Please consider joining the King Street team and giving some of your time to this good cause. Meanwhile ...:

The 100 Club gives our members the opportunity to win a cash prize while also supporting the Society's work. All you need is a UK bank account, wherever you live. The fee for each number held is £12 per annum and is payable annually, in May, by banker's order.

The payout is always 50 per cent of the income, and there are four prizes in the monthly draw (1<sup>st</sup> 20 per cent, 2<sup>nd</sup> 15 per cent, 3<sup>rd</sup> 10 per cent and 4<sup>th</sup> 5 per cent of the income). **You must be a current member of the Society.** If you decide not to renew your ANESFHS membership, please **also cancel** your standing order for the 100 Club.

The draw takes place monthly, and **we now pay winners via online banking. We need to be kept up to date with any changes to 100 Club members' bank-account details.** Winners are also announced in the Journal. For further details, please see the current Information Booklet on our website.

	1 <sup>st</sup> prize		2 <sup>nd</sup> prize		3 <sup>rd</sup> prize		4 <sup>th</sup> prize	
	No.	Mem. No.	No.	Mem. No.	No.	Mem. No.	No.	Mem. No.
<b>Nov</b>	10	Graham Collie 20933	121	Margaret McDowall 18020	24	Fiona Gaskell 17588	103	Kathleen McLeish 17352
<b>Dec</b>	75	Margaret McDowall 18020	18	Angus Pelham Burn 19808	29	Edith Stuart 4659	70	Karen Yeoman 7283
<b>Jan</b>	15	Norma M Boston 14252	39	Elizabeth Jordan 18139	69	Sarah Martin 3884	72	Fiona Gaskell 17588

[100club@anesfhs.org.uk](mailto:100club@anesfhs.org.uk)

Teresa Shewell

No. 4883

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## Letters to the Editor



Dear Editor,

### **Aberdeen Origins**

I am glad to renew my Society membership for another year. You will see by the number that I have been a member for some time.

I was born in Aberdeen in 1947, my parents living at 18 Craigie Street in one room. My grandparents lived on the floor above. My parents had met during the war when my father's Royal Navy ship put into Newcastle-upon-Tyne. They married in June 1945.

They tried to settle in Aberdeen, but there had been no money to continue my father's education beyond school-leaving age – a common story no doubt – and finding work with a “career path” was therefore difficult in post-war Aberdeen. My Mum worked as a waitress in a rather good café/restaurant on Union Street by the bridge, on the first floor.

Anyway, Dad did find work with a Ford garage in Aberdeen, and with the owner's help he then moved south, with my Mum and myself, to a management position in a Ford garage in Stockton-on-Tees, joining there some friends from Aberdeen, Bessie and Laurie Kemp (who also taught Scottish dancing in Stockton in addition to their day jobs). We all led a very happy life there. Our first flat was around the corner from the Presbyterian Church of St Andrew and St George, so we felt very much at home. I attended Sunday school, Girl Guides and youth club there, and was in the choir for eight years until I went away to college. We all were taught dancing by Bessie and Laurie! Stockton and the surrounding area had many Scots living there, thanks to the iron and steel industries and the large chemical works of ICI. In due course, on the death of my grandfather, my grandmother – a great Salvation Army lady – came to live with us.

My mother's family, being “Geordies”, lived about 40 miles north of us, and in the early days conversation was a challenge, as I'm sure you can imagine when Aberdonian Doric met broad Geordie!

My father loved his childhood and life in Aberdeen. He did not have the easiest start in life and was adopted as an infant; we still have the solicitor's letter signed by his birth mother transferring his care to his adoptive parents. His adoptive parents were poor, but they loved and cared for him and were wonderful grandparents to my brothers and me. Dad enjoyed his education and wanted to be a dentist; we have his final school certificate giving all his results, which were excellent. However, the money was just not there. He worked at Rubislaw Quarry when he left school; then, as war approached, he moved to a munitions factory, working 12-hour shifts. He volunteered for the Royal Navy, joined as soon as he turned 18, and served on the *Devonshire*, protecting the Atlantic convoys.

Over the years there were many happy visits to Aberdeen, but one in particular stands out when my parents, my husband and I and our children holidayed there. My father, like all grandparents, was keen to show his grandchildren the places of his childhood and youth. He walked us into every corner of Aberdeen, along the beach, into the wonderful parks, and to where he had lived, gone to school and worked. We saw where he had learnt to ice-skate, and learned all about his love of Carcone's ice cream, Bendylow's pies and his favourite Aitken's morning rowies – the last of which he always filled a suitcase with to

take home to his Aberdonian friends in Stockton. Later, we came to an agreement with Aitken's to have fresh rowies posted to him. As we stood beside the Mercat Cross, he told us how he was taken there on Saturday mornings to the Timmer market, where he was treated to a comic and a bag of sweets. We all learned so much that holiday.

At home in Stockton, our family diet regularly featured stovies, Scotch broth and split pea soup, keeping up Aberdonian traditions in other ways. My husband and I met when I was at college in York, and have been married 52 years.

I and my family have visited Aberdeen and Deeside regularly since we left, always incorporating some family-history research. Of course, the growth of information on the Internet has been a tremendous help. However, I would like to thank you and your team over all the years I have been a member of this Society for your unstinting work in making records and publications available and for being inspiring and helpful beyond measure when I have visited. The Society in Aberdeen has always been for me the benchmark of service to be desired within Family History Societies and County Record/Archive Offices around the country. I have worked as an archivist and visited many record repositories while tracing my own family background, and know too well that even today expectation can fall short of reality. Thank you.

With best wishes for the Society's future – and, Covid permitting, hope to see you in 2022.

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Eileen Maughan

No. 877

### **“How to get the best out of ScotlandsPeople”**

I really enjoyed Ken Nisbet's talk in November to our combined London and Glasgow Groups, and was shocked at how little I knew about the SP website. I had learned how to research with the great big handwritten index books in the 1980s.

Ken's best tip, and I still can't get over it, is on organising results: when your search gives, say, 30 results, you can re-sort the list any which way by clicking on the column headings. For instance, click on the Forename heading, and the list sorts alphabetically by Christian name. Click the Year heading, and the list sorts by increasing year; click again, and it reverses. If you are in the OPRs, click on the parents' names, and it groups all children by family. I really cannot believe I did not know this – and I use it ALL THE TIME now!

I was helping someone from overseas and couldn't find her family. I recalled Ken had told us to use the Help button, and I found there were lists of parishes split across counties – and I found the answer (her parish wasn't in the county I had first thought of!). This was especially useful, as the Dundas Room at the SP Centre in Edinburgh (the only room open to us just now) has no books. They have all been removed for fear of catching diseases!

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Sally Low

No. 1441

### **18<sup>th</sup> - and 19<sup>th</sup> -century Pugilism in Scotland**

I am trying to complete a book on 18<sup>th</sup> - and 19<sup>th</sup> -century pugilism in Scotland, and wonder if any members might be descended from pre-1900 boxers or maybe had come across Scottish fistic references relating to this period not online (perhaps in books on local history?). Any help at all would be extremely gratefully received. My postal address is: 29 Wellesley Crescent, Potters Bar, EN6 2DG, England. Thank you – in hope!

*tonyprhist@gmail.com*

Tony Gee

## Articles

### Why is Great-Grandfather in the Wrong Graveyard?

We recently received an enquiry from a member who had bought a copy of our MI booklet for Lonmay New Kirkyard and was surprised not to find her grandparents listed. She had previously visited (and photographed) the grave, and even had a copy of the lair purchase certificate. In a moment of panic, I wondered whether we could possibly have missed an entire gravestone – but then I recalled that the parish of Lonmay is actually blessed with no fewer than four separate burial grounds:

1. The ancient Lonmay Kirkyard in the centre of the parish (*published as AA175*)
2. A second ancient site in the coastal village of St Combs (*published as AA184*)
3. Lonmay New Kirkyard, with burials starting around 1908 (*published as AA086*)
4. Lonmay Cemetery, opened in 1938.

Burials continued at the two ancient sites until the 1970s and at the New Kirkyard until 2012, while the Cemetery remains open for business.

On checking, I established (to my relief) that the enquirer's grandparents actually lie in a grave in the Cemetery, rather than in the New Kirkyard. In confirming this, I was greatly assisted by work done some years ago by a Society member who had examined the Lonmay burial records in detail. He found that, in line with the practice I described in my previous article ("Why Can't I Find Great-Grandfather's Burial Records?", Journal 160), the graveyard managers of Lonmay kept two types of burial record: Burial Registers (listing all interments in simple date order), and Lair Registers (showing on one page the plot's owner and the names of all those buried in it). He photographed and indexed both.

But, in locating our enquirer's grave via these transcribed records, I discovered serious errors in the corresponding information offered on the "Deceased Online" website. At Lonmay, they have followed their usual practice of digitising and indexing only the Burial Registers, and omitting the Lair Registers. As a result, they have fallen into a huge trap.

My ANESFHS colleague's work had established that, while the Registers for Lonmay New Kirkyard and Lonmay Cemetery make use of similar pre-printed blank ledgers, they actually exist as physically separate volumes. The New Kirkyard Burial Register has 27 pages, covers the years 1908–2013, and has graves numbered 1–319. The Burial Register for Lonmay Cemetery has 39 pages, covers the years 1938–2013 and has graves numbered 1–758. Unfortunately, Deceased Online failed to notice this and have, in effect, lumped together the records for two separate grounds as if they were just one big happy graveyard. The overlapping dates and grave numbers thus offer much scope for confusion.

To take an example: in the case of my original enquirer, as well as the family members she thought were buried in the Cemetery (and who are commemorated on a gravestone there), Deceased Online would have saddled her with three complete strangers who are, in fact, buried down the road, in the New Kirkyard, where they are also recorded on a gravestone. The information in the two memorial inscriptions is confirmed by the relevant entries in the Lair Registers for the New Kirkyard and the Cemetery. Similar mix-ups have been confirmed for a number of other Lonmay burials.

Alerted by this, I began to suspect that, as there are other parishes that have than one graveyard, similar muddles might be found elsewhere – and, unfortunately, this proves to be so. For example, in the parish of Aboyne, the main kirkyard lies beside the Green in

Aboyne village – but there is a separate and smaller burial ground at Kirkton of Aboyne, a mile away to the north-east, and an even smaller cemetery in Glentanar, two miles away to the west. However, searches for individuals known from Memorial Inscriptions to be interred in any one of these three places are all lumped together by Deceased Online as being buried at “*St Machar’s Glentanar*”. The reason for this becomes apparent if you elect (for £2.00 at pay-per-view rates) to view a “*Burial Register Scan*”.

DECEASED	Designation and Residence, and if Child, Name, Designation, and Residence of Parent or Guardian	AGE	WHERE INTERRED			Depth of Grave in feet
			Section	Class	No.	
	Isidie Dinnet		Glen Tanar			
	Davidson - Alldinnet Aboyne		Aboyne			
	Pine Villa Aboyne	81	Kirkton			
	John Allan - The Kennels, Glen Tanar	82	Aboyne			
	The Glentanar					

As you see from this extract, under the heading “*Where Interred*”, entries do not specify the requested lair number of the burial, but say simply “*Aboyne*” or “*Kir(k)ton*” or “*Glen Tanar*”. It would appear that the three separate burial grounds in the parish are being managed out of the same office – but Deceased Online have misinterpreted the situation and are showing all burials as taking place at Glentanar, the smallest burial ground of the three! And, as no lair number is given, it is not possible (at least from the data which Deceased Online makes available) to tell who else might be buried in the same grave.

A similar situation exists in the combined parish of Keithhall & Kinkell, where there are burials in the two original kirkyards, and also in a third burial ground at Monykeggy. Keithhall and Monykeggy lie about half a mile apart, and Kinkell is 1½ miles distant from both. Images of Burial Registers available from Deceased Online show that records for each burial ground are kept on separate pages, each clearly headed “*Keithhall*”, “*Kinkell*” or “*Monykeggy*”. Unfortunately, Deceased Online have assigned all these records to a single (fictitious) burial ground, which they call “*Keithhall, Kinkell, Monykeggy*” – and since there are (as at Lonmay) overlaps in the lair numbering, the result is a set of entirely spurious “*Interment Details*” (£1.50 a pop at pay-per-view rates) which combine burials in one or more of the burial grounds.

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Gavin Bell

No. 4085

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## Thirty Years’ Service – but Never Wore a Uniform

### The story of Aberdeen’s first policewoman, Miss Margaret Flaws (1901–73)

Women’s rights and place in society were big issues in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The right to vote has dominated the history books, but there was also law and order, the police service, and what role women should play in that area. Gradually, despite considerable opposition, it was accepted that there were benefits to having trained women in the police force – and so they began to appear. Dundee has a wall plaque to “*Jean Thomson – First Scottish Policewoman*”. In May 1918, Jean was the first to be appointed and paid as a uniformed policewoman in Scotland. Emily Miller had been appointed and paid in Glasgow in 1915,

but her status was more as a Lady Assistant to the police. Resistance to the whole idea continued until well after the official Baird Report of 1920 into the employment of women in the service. The response of the Stirling Town Clerk quoted in that Report was typical of the attitude in Scotland at that time: “We neither need them nor want them”.

However, Glasgow and Dundee pressed ahead, and others followed. Aberdeen was slower than the other cities, though there had been a Court Sister very usefully at work there since 1913, her work overlapping with many of the early policewomen’s duties. Only in 1928 did the city’s Chief Constable agree to a woman formally joining his force. Selected from among many applicants, and appointed on 6<sup>th</sup> July 1928, was Miss Margaret Flaws, who was to serve in the Force until retiring in 1958 as a sergeant.

Margaret Jane Calder Dearness Flaws was born on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1901 at Kintrae cottage in New Spynie parish, near Elgin. Later statements, in the press and elsewhere, that she had been born in Fintray, Aberdeenshire, are in error. Her parents, William Flaws, steam craneman, and Margaret Dearness, had married in July 1897 in South Ronaldshay, Orkney, the bride’s birthplace and home island. The Flaws and Dearness families were Orcadian, though young Margaret’s father and Flaws grandfather had both left for employment on the mainland. Her father had actually been born in Fordyce, Banffshire, and spent most of his working life there, latterly alongside *his* father, John. Tragedy, however, struck the family in March 1905 when John died aged 73 on the 4<sup>th</sup>, and William died aged only 38 on the 11<sup>th</sup> – both at home, at Burnside Cottage, Fordyce. John died of bronchitis, William from tubercular meningitis and pneumonia.

Young Margaret and her mother left Banffshire at end of 1907 when Margaret snr, aged 35, remarried. She married in Edinburgh, to a much older widower, police sergeant James Scott. James, now 57, had been serving in Edinburgh for many years; but his deceased wife, Helen, had been from Portsoy, and it seems likely that she had been a friend or neighbour of the Flaws family there, which is how James and Margaret met.

Before joining the police, James had been a regular soldier in the Scots Guards and already had a grown-up family. It was presumably his police work and status that impressed his stepdaughter. The family remained in Edinburgh until Margaret’s teens, then moved north to Hatton of Fintray in Aberdeenshire, where Margaret soon won certificates for her schoolwork and, later, prizes for whist! Her mother, widowed for a second time, lived on for many years and eventually moved into Aberdeen, where she and her policewoman daughter lived at 52 Mastrick Drive until the mother’s death from cancer in 1960.

As a PC, Margaret Flaws’ main duties involved women and children, their care, protection and supervision; but she was also involved in crime detection (CID) work. Like most policewomen in the earlier 20<sup>th</sup> century, she wore no uniform – and in fact never wore one in all her 30 years in the Force. She was seemingly a busy constable and was described as a kind and understanding person whose work among women and for underprivileged families was outstanding.

She soon became a well-known figure in Aberdeen and was often called upon to speak about police work, and in particular about the role of a policewoman, to public meetings and various organisations, such as Townswomen’s Guilds, charities and nurses’ groups. She worked alongside the probationary service, and together they once famously disputed the opinion of Arthur Woodburn MP, Labour Secretary of State for Scotland, who argued that adult-orientated films, and in particular “kissing”, was resented by youngsters and also

helped to cause juvenile crime. Margaret, who made it her business to attend all the children's film clubs in the city regularly, disagreed, and added that the most popular films among youngsters were those featuring animals and children themselves.

Her work and influence were soon highly valued by the Chief Constable. After much argument in the Council, another policewoman was appointed to the city force in 1933 to assist her. Georgina Duncan, aged 24, the sixth of seven in a farming family at South Faddenhill, Millbren, was selected from a number of applicants. Her father, George, had worked his way up from labourer to overseer and then to self-employed "farmer", and his industrious and determined attitude appears to have been shared by daughter Georgina.

More policewomen were by then being appointed in a number of cities, but Aberdeen still had just the two until after 1945. Others from Aberdeen who were keen to serve had to travel elsewhere to do so. Several went to London and joined the Metropolitan Police. In 1947, however, applications for additional women constables were invited for Aberdeen. Applicants had to be single, aged between 22 and 35, physically fit, at least 5' 4" tall, and preferably holders of the Senior School-leaver's certificate or its equivalent. They had to be *tough*, observers stated, as they often had to endure taunts from male colleagues and the public; and their training involved self-defence, including martial arts such as ju-jitsu.

When Margaret was promoted in 1952 to sergeant, the Aberdeen Force had eight women. She had responsibility for the seven constables and was still active in the CID, as well as in all matters that especially concerned women and children. Policewomen had not had the power of arrest until 1924. Until 1968, if a policewoman in Scotland married, she had to resign from the Force – a bar that had been rescinded in England and Wales in 1946. Margaret Flaws remained single, so was unaffected; Georgina Duncan likewise. When Margaret retired, Georgina was promoted to sergeant in her place.

After the award of her Long-Service medal and her retirement in 1958, Margaret became a well-known personality throughout the North-East. Numerous societies and communities called on her to speak about her own experiences, police work in general and children's issues, and also to sponsor and judge local competitions. In one typical October, the press reported that she had spoken to the Banffshire Institute and to meetings in Fordyce, Cults, Kintore and Fintray. When she travelled abroad, which she enjoyed doing in retirement – to New Zealand and South Africa for instance – she was called upon there too, for Burns Suppers or other occasions. She sponsored Christmas parties for children, and supported the Scottish Junior League of Pity and the Royal Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children, being elected a committee member (and vice-chair of the local branch) of the RSSPCC. She also served as a committee member for the St Clair's Home for Girls in Great Western Road, and the Aberdeen Shiprow Tavern's charitable action group.

At the end of the 1960s, Margaret's health began to fail, and by 1972 she was a patient in Aberdeen's Morningfield Hospital. There she died on 4<sup>th</sup> January 1973, aged 71. She was cremated two days later. At that point, the North-East was busy trying to combat the unwelcome spread of what was known in Scotland that year as "the English 'flu". She, however, died from other causes.

Margaret's life had affected and influenced many individuals and families, as well as the wider city of Aberdeen itself. So passed away an unsung but true pioneer in the public role of women in society and an effective champion of children and the underprivileged.

# Record of Ancestors

Membership No: **7779**  
 Name **Alison SMITH**  
 Address **Macduff, Banffshire**

Date **9 Aug 2021**  
 e-mail **brian.alison.smith@gmail.com**

Your Father's Father

3 **Andrew INGRAM**

*Born* 28 May 1873  
*Place* Grange, Banffshire  
*Married* 7 Jul 1911  
*Place* Keith, Banffshire  
*Died* 14 Apr 1943 (69)  
*Place* Grange, Banffshire  
*Occup.* Farmer

Your Father

1 **George Bremner INGRAM**

*Born* 16 Jan 1921  
*Place* Grange, Banffshire  
*Married* 1952  
*Place* Aberdeen  
*Died* 2011 (90)  
*Place* Keith, Banffshire  
*Occup.* Teacher

Your Father's Mother

4 **Isabella BREMNER**

*Born* 10 Feb 1880  
*Place* Grange, Banffshire  
*Died* 1970 (90)  
*Place* Grange  
*Occup.*

You

**Alison INGRAM**

*Born* 11 Dec 1952  
*Place* Kirkwall, Orkney  
*Married*  
*Place*  
*Occup.* Retired genealogist

Your Mother's Father

5 **William John MILNE**

*Born* 10 Feb 1882  
*Place* New Pitsligo, Tyrie, ABD  
*Married* 23 Apr 1923  
*Place* New Pitsligo  
*Died* 1 May 1971 (89)  
*Place* New Pitsligo  
*Occup.* Tinsmith

Your Mother

2 **Irene MILNE**

*Born* 16 Dec 1926  
*Place* New Pitsligo, Tyrie parish, Aberdeenshire  
*Died* 2017  
*Place* Elgin, Moray (91)  
*Occup.*

Your Mother's Mother

6 **Jessie Ross STRACHAN**

*Born* 28 Jun 1903  
*Place* Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire  
*Died* 16 Oct 1995 (92)  
*Place* Muir of Fowllis, Leochel-Cushnie, ABD  
*Occup.*

**To all Society members:**

If you have found new information since you first sent in your chart - or especially if you have *never* sent a chart in! - then please send in your latest version, with extension sheets as required. Don't worry about gaps, but try to fill in as many names, dates and places as you can.

Please send your chart to [charts@anesfhs.org.uk](mailto:charts@anesfhs.org.uk), or by post to Aberdeen & NE Scotland FHS, 158-164 King Street, Aberdeen AB24 5BD.

		15	<b>John INGRAM</b>	<i>Born</i> 1796	<i>Place</i> Gartly, Aberdeenshire
				<i>Married</i> 14 Jun 1818	<i>Place</i> Deskford, Banffshire
				<i>Died</i> 1847	<i>Place</i> Deskford
					<i>Occup.</i> Crofter
7	<b>Andrew INGRAM</b>				
	<i>Born</i> April 1831				
	<i>Place</i> Deskford, Banffshire				
	<i>Married</i> 17 Sep 1864				
	<i>Place</i> Ordiquhill, Banffshire				
	<i>Died</i> 12 Apr 1911 (79)				
	<i>Place</i> Grange, Banffshire				
	<i>Occup.</i> Farmer				
8	<b>Margaret BREMNER</b>				
	<i>Born</i> 1848				
	<i>Place</i> Rothiemay, Banffshire				
	<i>Died</i> 1936 (87)				
	<i>Place</i> Keith, Banffshire				
	<i>Occup.</i>				
		16	<b>Margaret SCOTT</b>	<i>Born</i> 1796	<i>Place</i> Deskford, Banffshire
				<i>Died</i> 1 Nov 1865 (68)	<i>Place</i> Grange, Banffshire
					<i>Occup.</i>
		17	<b>George BREMNER</b>	<i>Born</i> 11 Mar 1813	<i>Place</i> Grange, Banffshire
				<i>Married</i> 2 Sep 1848	<i>Place</i> Cullen, Banffshire
				<i>Died</i> 17 Aug 1897 (84)	<i>Place</i> Ordiquhill, Banffshire
					<i>Occup.</i> Farmer
		18	<b>Helen CRUICKSHANK</b>	<i>Born</i> 1820	<i>Place</i> Fergie, Aberdeenshire
				<i>Died</i> 1863 (42)	<i>Place</i> Fordyce, Banffshire
					<i>Occup.</i>
		19	<b>William BREMNER</b>	<i>Born</i> Dec 1786	<i>Place</i> St Luke's, Chelsea, London
				<i>Married</i> 1 Aug 1818	<i>Place</i> Deskford, Banffshire
				<i>Died</i> 3 Jan 1864 (77)	<i>Place</i> Grange, Banffshire
					<i>Occup.</i> Farmer
9	<b>William BREMNER</b>				
	<i>Born</i> May 1821				
	<i>Place</i> Grange, Banffshire				
	<i>Married</i> 24 Dec 1875				
	<i>Place</i> Grange				
	<i>Died</i> 21 Sep 1910 (89)				
	<i>Place</i> Grange				
	<i>Occup.</i> Farmer				
10	<b>Ann REID</b>				
	<i>Born</i> June 1839				
	<i>Place</i> Grange				
	<i>Died</i> 17 Jan 1924 (85)				
	<i>Place</i> Grange				
	<i>Occup.</i>				
		20	<b>Jane STEVENSON</b>	<i>Born</i> 1797	<i>Place</i> Fordyce, Banffshire
				<i>Died</i> 11 Jan 1888 (91)	<i>Place</i> Grange, Banffshire
					<i>Occup.</i>
		21	<b>John REID</b>	<i>Born</i> 8 May 1805	<i>Place</i> Grange, Banffshire
				<i>Married</i> 11 Apr 1832	<i>Place</i> Grange
				<i>Died</i> 29 Dec 1889 (84)	<i>Place</i> Grange
					<i>Occup.</i> Farmer
		22	<b>Isobel MORRISON</b>	<i>Born</i> abt 1810	<i>Place</i> Keith, Banffshire
				<i>Died</i> 28 Apr 1888 (78)	<i>Place</i> Grange, Banffshire
					<i>Occup.</i>
		23	<b>James MILNE</b>	<i>Born</i> 1802	<i>Place</i> Rothiemay, Banffshire
				<i>Married</i>	<i>Place</i>
				<i>Died</i> [emig. to USA]	<i>Place</i>
					<i>Occup.</i> Clerk
11	<b>George MILNE</b>				
	<i>Born</i> 16 Jan 1842				
	<i>Place</i> Rothiemay, Banffshire				
	<i>Married</i> New Pitsligo, Tyrie, ABD				
	<i>Place</i> 20 Jul 1869				
	<i>Died</i> New Pitsligo				
	<i>Place</i> 18 Mar 1925 (83)				
	<i>Occup.</i> Whitesmith				
12	<b>Helen MILNE</b>				
	<i>Born</i> 24 Jun 1851				
	<i>Place</i> New Pitsligo, Tyrie, ABD				
	<i>Died</i> 20 May 1930 (78)				
	<i>Place</i> New Pitsligo				
	<i>Occup.</i>				
		24	<b>Margaret LESLIE</b>	<i>Born</i> 23 Dec 1821	<i>Place</i> Rothiemay, Banffshire
				<i>Died</i>	<i>Place</i>
					<i>Occup.</i>
		25	<b>James MILNE</b>	<i>Born</i> 18 Jun 1810	<i>Place</i> Plaidy, Turriff, ABD
				<i>Married</i> 14 May 1837	<i>Place</i> King Edward, ABD
				<i>Died</i> 29 Dec 1896 (86)	<i>Place</i> New Pitsligo, ABD
					<i>Occup.</i> Handloom weaver
		26	<b>Elizabeth TAYLOR</b>	<i>Born</i> 1814	<i>Place</i> St Nicholas, Aberdeen
				<i>Died</i> 11 Jun 1899 (85)	<i>Place</i> New Pitsligo, ABD
					<i>Occup.</i>
		27	<b>James STRACHAN</b>	<i>Born</i> 1848	<i>Place</i> St Combs, Lonmay, ABD
				<i>Married</i> 19 Oct 1871	<i>Place</i> Lonmay, Aberdeenshire
				<i>Died</i> 9 Mar 1895 (47)	<i>Place</i> St Combs, Lonmay, ABD
					<i>Occup.</i> Fisherman
13	<b>James STRACHAN</b>				
	<i>Born</i> 7 Apr 1873				
	<i>Place</i> St Combs, Lonmay, ABD				
	<i>Married</i> 24 Jun 1896				
	<i>Place</i> Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire				
	<i>Died</i> 23 Jul 1940 (67)				
	<i>Place</i> New Pitsligo, Tyrie, ABD				
	<i>Occup.</i> Baker				
14	<b>Jeannie Ann LESLIE</b>				
	<i>Born</i> 28 Oct 1877				
	<i>Place</i> Rosehearty, Pitsligo, ABD				
	<i>Died</i> 8 Mar 1975 (97)				
	<i>Place</i> Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire				
	<i>Occup.</i>				
		28	<b>Rebecca WHYTE</b>	<i>Born</i> 1851	<i>Place</i> Inverallochy, Rathen, ABD
				<i>Died</i> 3 Feb 1894 (43)	<i>Place</i> St Combs, Lonmay, ABD
					<i>Occup.</i>
		29	<b>Forbes LESLIE</b>	<i>Born</i> 1842	<i>Place</i> Rosehearty, Pitsligo, ABD
				<i>Married</i>	<i>Place</i>
				<i>Died</i>	<i>Place</i> Rosehearty?
					<i>Occup.</i> Carter
		30	<b>Jessie ROSS</b>	<i>Born</i> 1847	<i>Place</i>
				<i>Died</i> 1929	<i>Place</i>
					<i>Occup.</i> Domestic servant



names a few times over the years.) It had grounds of just over 21 acres, and two lodges. John Harper lived in one of the lodges and went on to have five more children: Janet (born 1881), my grandmother Margaret Annie (1883), John (1885), Mary Christina (1888) and Jean Isabella Mathieson (1892).

John's employer was Mr (later Dr) Clement Stephenson, an eminent veterinary surgeon, who lived in the other lodge. Since 1871, he had been the tenant of Balliol College Farm, Longbenton. He had taken over the outgoing tenant's stocks and crops, and gradually he acquired Aberdeen Angus grazing heifers, as well as some Shorthorns and Galloways. He carried out some cross-breeding very successfully, but found that the nature of the land and the cold climate was unsuitable for some breeds, and by 1880 it was Aberdeen Angus heifers he was purchasing and breeding from. He was soon showing animals and gaining success with his stock at the summer shows. In 1885, he had the champion at Birmingham and at Smithfield. The prestigious Smithfield Show was held annually in the Royal Agricultural Hall in Islington, by the Royal Smithfield Club. Dr Stephenson had a long and successful show record, and the Balliol College Farm became a name to conjure with. (My mother remembers that her mother had some framed prize certificates, which were hung on the walls of their kitchen.) Dr Stephenson has been described as one of the earliest and most outstanding breeders of Aberdeen Angus in England, as well as one of the greatest cattle-breeders anywhere. His produce was sold to America, Canada, Australia, Tasmania, Argentina, India, Russia and Honolulu. (My mother's Aunt Annie told her that a large room in Balliol College Farm had pictures of cattle hanging on the walls, and there was a long table at which prospective buyers from various parts of Britain and overseas could sit and discuss business.) By 21<sup>st</sup> June 1906, John Harper was described as the manager of the farm, and the family were living there.

Margaret Annie was devoted to her mother but probably didn't have anything like the same feeling for her father. According to my mother, she didn't talk much about him or her childhood. From what she did say, he seems to have been very stern, and of an uncompromising religious faith. The children's playthings and books had to be put away on Saturday nights, not to be brought out again until Monday. The only reading matter permitted on Sundays was the Bible. He could be very severe; if any member or members of the family displeased him, he would refuse to speak to them, often for as long as a fortnight. Apparently the only time he softened up a bit was when the cattle had done well at Smithfield. He would be in a good mood when he came home, and there would be presents for the family. He seemed to have been an unsympathetic sort of man, for according to Margaret Annie he wasn't very kind to her mother when she was ill.

By 1908, John had retired to Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne, where Christina died of cancer on 15<sup>th</sup> May. By June when his daughter Janet married, John was also dead. My mother thought John could have returned to Scotland, but despite all my endeavours I have been unable to find any record in England or Scotland. His brother Peter and wife are both buried in John Knox Churchyard, Aberdeen. I have not found any of the other siblings.

My mother was secretary of the East Yorkshire FHS when she lived in Beverley, so I appreciate what ANESFHS does for its members. She never knew how her mother Margaret Annie Harper met her father Stanley Armstrong Charlton, who was a Newcastle man. I only worked it out in 2020, completely by coincidence. It was another Scottish connection – but that's a story for another day.

## Hannah's Story: From Aberdeenshire to New South Wales (1830)

In 1830 in Scotland, Hannah Garden would have been hard to miss in a crowd. Described as five feet nine inches tall, with a ruddy complexion and many freckles, hazel grey eyes and brown hair, Hannah would have been much taller than her contemporaries. In this period of time in Scotland, the average height of women was just over five feet.

I have this wonderful description of Hannah from her convict indent (or "indenture") – an official list of convicts being transported aboard a particular ship. In 1830, Hannah was apprehended, accused and convicted of stealing from clothes lines as she wandered through the countryside from Aberdeen to Portsoy, accompanied by four other relatives. Hannah stated she was returning to her mother, who resided in Portsoy. All five were sentenced to transportation to the Colony of New South Wales for a period of seven years.

“All pleaded Guilty to Eight Acts of Theft

1. Burnside, Parish of Lumphanan and County of Aberdeen; various articles of clothing from John Dunn and his wife Jane Merchant.
2. Burnside; various articles of clothing from Isobela Spring or Sherrat (widow) or Mary Sherrat or Cromar (widow).
3. Mains of Kincaigie, Parish of Tarland and County of Aberdeen; various items of clothing from James Forbes (farmer) and his wife Isobel Hunter.
4. Poultry House, Mains of Kincaigie, Parish of Tarland; two live ducks from Charles Thomson (farmer).
5. Tarland, Parish of Tarland; a ruffle of muslin for the neck and a night cap of white cotton cloth from James Thomson (carrier) and his daughter Ann Thomson.
6. Northfauld or Norryfauld in the village of Tarland and in the County of Aberdeen; various items of clothing from Alexander Falconer (farmer) and his wife Janet Wilson.
7. Old School House of Tarland in the Parish of Tarland; various items of clothing from James Smith Jnr (labourer) and Charles Grassie or Grassick (farmer).
8. Tarland; various items of clothing from Henry or Harry Esson and his wife Elizabeth Esson and her sister Margaret Esson.”

Here is Hannah's statement, taken from a full copy of her trial papers (marginal note: “Pannel Garden”):

“At Aberdeen the 21<sup>st</sup> day of April 1830 years

In presence of William Watson Esquire Sheriff Substitute of Aberdeenshire

Compeared Hannah Garden residing in Portsoy in the County of Banff, with her mother Jean Young, unmarried aged nineteen years, who being Judicially examined Declares That she has Just now seen her fellow prisoners Jane Young, James Gordon, Elizabeth Gordon and Margaret Young, and knows them all – That Elizabeth Gordon's proper name is Elizabeth Young, and she is the Declarant's Aunt – That the Declarant knows George Murray at Easter Carnie in the Parish of Skene, and the Declarant and these three women, and James Gordon slept in Murray's barn one night about the middle of the week before last; but she does not recollect the particular night – That next day they all went westward in company together along the Turnpike road, leading to Tarland, and Jean Young had an infant child with her. That they passed thro' the Echt and Drumlassie Tollbars, and at the Echt bar they got some green Kail from the Toll Keeper's wife for their dinner. That when they reached Lumphanan the Declarant and Margaret Young passed on a little before leaving Jane Young, Elizabeth Gordon, and James Gordon to follow behind – and when the Declarant and Margaret Young

had got a little to the west of Tarland, the three others overtook them, but the Declarant did not then observe any Bundles with them – That then the whole party proceeded in company together to Donside, and they crossed the Don beside the Church of Towie. That it was dark when they passed the Village of Tarland and between Tarland and Towie they met some people returning home from a Marriage. That on their reaching Donside the Declarant first observed some bundles of Clothes with Jean Young, Elizabeth Gordon and James Gordon, but the Declarant does not know where they got them – That near Glenkindy the Declarant and Margaret Young left the others and went to Portsoy by Auchindoir and Huntly, and the Declarant's reason for parting with them was that she wished to return home to see her Mother. That the Declarant herself did not steal any Clothes, on said occasion; and she did not leave any Clothes on Donside when she parted with the others except a wrapper of a red ground and a striped Petticoat; both which articles the Declarant now sees and the same are Labelled by the Sheriff and the Witnesses to this Declaration, as she cannot write – All which she Declares to be truth and that she cannot write. (signed) Wm. Watson, W. Simpson, Chas. Mackenzie, Geo. Cockburn.”

*Aberdeen Journal* issue 4294 of Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> April 1830, recorded on page 3:

“On Tuesday week, two women, calling themselves Hannah Garden and Margaret Young or Gordon, were brought to this place, in custody of William Symon, or (Symen) Messenger, Banff, and lodged in jail. They belonged to a gang of vagrants, some of whom were apprehended a week or two ago on suspicion of having committed several acts of theft in the neighbourhood of Turriff.”

Hannah Garden arrived in New South Wales on the convict ship *Earl of Liverpool* on 5<sup>th</sup> April 1831. The ship's indent said that this convict was 20 years old, could read, was Protestant and was not married. Her native place was Aberdeen, and her trade was recorded as “housemaid, all work and farm work”. Her offence was recorded as stealing clothes, and she was tried at Aberdeen Court of Justiciary on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1830.

It is recorded in Aberdeenshire, in this period of time, that most of the land was owned by about half a dozen “heritors”, who employed their own staff, including a “tacksman” who managed the land leased out to tenant farmers, plus labourers. In Scots law, heritors are defined as “a proprietor of a heritable object”, and a tacksman is defined as “one who holds a tack or lease of land from another; a tenant or lessee”.

Of the lowest social status and wealth, agricultural labourers or farm servants had no land, and moved around often to find work on the larger estates or with tenant farmers. Single or widowed women were particularly disadvantaged and affected, and would often be required to travel around to where the work was available. In 1830, whether Hannah and her companions were part of this lowest stratum of the population is one theory. After all, the two oldest women were widows and would need to earn a living somehow.

Jean Forbes or Young was a widow aged 32 and a travelling seller of needles and thread. Elizabeth Young or Gordon, Hannah's aunt, a widow aged 50, had the same occupation. James Gordon was aged only 14 and a labourer and a herdsman sometimes at Redhythie near Portsoy. Hannah Garden, as stated above, was single and at the time of her crime 19 years old and described as a “housemaid, all work and farm work”. Margaret Young, also 19 years old, was said to have no fixed place of abode; and no way of gaining a livelihood. Margaret Young and James Gordon were half-siblings.

It would have been a cruel journey for them all, travelling by foot from Aberdeen to Portsoy in April 1830. It would be hard to believe they were travelling by choice. The

average minimum temperature in Aberdeen in April is 3°C (37.4°F). Aberdeen during this time of year is known as a chilly month. The average maximum daytime temperature lies around 10°C (50°F). The sun can occasionally show itself.

In the period 1820 to 1850, many in Scotland were faced with the prospect of starvation. When the potato crop failed in the late 1830s and again in the late 1840s, emigration seemed the only option for many Scottish families. This was especially true for Highland families forced from their home during the “Clearances”. It was not until the Emigration Act of 1851 that emigration became more attractive to the poorest, with the Highlands and Islands Emigration Society set up to manage the process of resettlement.

Against the backdrop of these unsettled times, this group of four women and a boy would have found it difficult to eke out a living. When the five were brought before the court, there was no mention of previous arrests or convictions. They were described as vagrants, people without a settled home or regular work wandering from place to place, and living by begging – and that is probably an apt description for Hannah and her companions.

Hannah married twice in New South Wales and had nine children, of whom six survived to adulthood. Her first marriage was to Patrick Hall (died 1840). Their children were:

Charles Patrick Hall, born 5<sup>th</sup> November 1836  
Bridget Mary Hall, born about 1837  
Sarah Sophie Hall, born about 1838  
Mary Ann Hall, born about 1839 (died as a baby).

Hannah Garden’s second marriage was to Andrew Glannon. Their children were:

Margaret, born 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1845  
Elizabeth, born 27<sup>th</sup> July 1847 (died as a baby)  
Andrew, born 8<sup>th</sup> November 1849 (died as a baby)  
Thomas, born 14<sup>th</sup> February 1851  
Louisa Esther Rose, born 1855.

I descend from this last child, Louisa Esther Rose Glannon. Hannah is my great-great-grandmother. Her ancestry in Scotland remains a mystery. From court documents and convict documents, her birth is said to be around 1811. On Hannah’s Australian death certificate, her father is recorded as John Garden, and mother Jean Young. Hannah’s ancestry has been my brick wall for over 15 years. Hence I relate her story in this Journal, in the forlorn hope that someone else also recognises this little group of vagrants and is able to assist me in my quest to find out more about Hannah Garden’s ancestry.

## Sources

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British Library Newspapers

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National Records of Scotland: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/>

New South Wales State Archives: <https://www.records.nsw.gov.au/>

NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/births-deaths-marriages>

## Robbie Emigration to the USA

Two websites offer a great deal of information about, and much insight into, the lives of the millions of people who emigrated to the USA during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup>: <http://www.castlegarden.org> offers free access to a database of information on 10 million immigrants who passed through America's first official immigration centre, Castle Garden, from 1830 to 1892, while <http://www.ellisland.org> provides free access to another 65 million arrival records of immigrants, most of whom passed through Ellis Island, which opened in 1892.

I was interested to discover whether any of my own ancestral family had emigrated to the USA and thought that, with a relatively uncommon surname, it could prove to be an easy task. However, I was surprised to find that the Castle Garden site provided details of 23 Robbies who were among the earlier arrivals, while the Ellis Island site gave information on another 334 Robbies who emigrated to the USA from various parts of the UK between 1892 and 1954 – many more than expected.

Since my own ancestral home is the parish of Birse, I was particularly interested in Robbie emigrants from North-East Scotland. The task proved longer and more difficult than I had imagined, largely because ships' manifests are sometimes long, often incomplete, variable in the information they provide, and sometimes illegible. Yet these apparently dry records can, with patience, imagination and informed speculation, produce interesting stories.

The dearth of information about places of birth and last residences on the Castle Garden site meant that it yielded no results for me, although I do know from other research that at least two Robbies from North-East Scotland had emigrated to the USA in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and made successful lives for themselves.

My first cousin four times removed, **William Frederick Robbie** (1822–1913), emigrated to join the gold rush to California in 1848 or 1849. He was born on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1822 at Ordy, Birse, the fourth son of Isaac Simpson Robbie (1786–1879) of Back Ennochy, Birse, and Jean Walker (1788–1873) from Tullich, Glenmuick. William was the grandson of my notable ancestor Francis Robbie (born in Balfiddie, Birse) and his first wife Mary Small (1760–86) from Birmingham. See ANESFHS Journals 92 and 93 (Aug and Nov 2004) for my two-part article, "Francis Robbie of Birse (1753–1839)", drawing on my biography, *A Son of Birse: The Life and Times of Francis Robbie (1753–1839), Farmer and Soldier*, which may be consulted in the Society's library at King Street.

On hearing of the discovery of gold, William Frederick saw an opportunity, abandoned his shoemaking business in Aboyne and took ship to America, accompanied by two friends from Finzean whose passage he helped to pay for. We know nothing of William's voyage, the names of his companions, the ship they sailed on, where they landed or how they made their way to California. We do know that in the US census of June 1850 William is recorded as a miner, aged 28, born in Scotland, and living in Yuba County, California in a mining town by the name of Rough and Ready.

Life in Rough and Ready was, as its name implies, harsh and demanding for men living in tents with few, if any, domestic comforts. William seems to have done quite well initially, as the early gold-hunters found nuggets in the gravel of streams. However, life became harder as the easy finds dried up and miners had to pan for gold in the stream beds, staking out claims to land and digging mines. There was much discontent in the town, with claim-jumping, government taxes and a breakdown of law and order. Things got so bad that a

town meeting was held to discuss the problems, resulting in the decision that the town should secede from the Union and deal with its own affairs. The “Great Republic of Rough and Ready” was proclaimed, answerable only to its own citizens. A President was to be elected, a Cabinet formed, and a Secretary of State and a State Marshal appointed.

We do not know to what extent William was involved in these momentous events, but certainly he must have witnessed them. The Republic was, in fact, short-lived, lasting about three months before it was dissolved, and Rough and Ready rejoined the Union. William himself, it appears, was a victim of claim-jumping, which the authorities did little to control, so he returned to Scotland “with considerable savings”. However, he was soon on the move again, joining the gold rush in Australia in 1853, where he was once again to witness momentous events as well as becoming extremely rich. For the full story of William Frederick, see my article “William Robbie, Gold-digger: From Birse to Ballarat”, in Journal 129 (Nov 2013).

Another **William Robbie**, but unrelated, who successfully emigrated to the USA was born in Old Deer on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1849, the son of James Robbie (1828–66) and Elspet Webster (1822–65), both of Old Deer. William travelled to the USA at the age of 16 and set up as a tombstone-maker in Chico, Butte County, California. He was later joined by his brother, John. Their father had been a stonemason back in Old Deer.

In California, William married Harriet (Hattie) Schuster (b. 15<sup>th</sup> July 1856), whose parents were French, probably from Alsace-Lorraine: Jean B. and Johanna Shuster. William and Hattie had sons George William (b. 1887) and John Warren (b. 1889), and twin daughters Mary Catherine and Elsie (b. 1892). William’s business prospered, and he became a member of Chico’s Board of Trustees (Town Council) and President of the Board (Mayor) from 1907 to 1919. He died on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1929, aged 79, and was buried at Chico.

An early entry on the Ellis Island site tells of three generations of the same family from Aberdeen who sailed from Glasgow on the *Ethiopia*, arriving in New York on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1894. **James Robbie** was 59 years and 6 months old, and a labourer. His wife (forename not supplied) was a housekeeper, and 50 years and 1 month old.

The couple were accompanied by, presumably, their son, his wife and their children. **Alex C. Robbie**, aged 27 years 8 months, was listed as a farmer; and his wife Mary A. Robbie was aged 24 years 5 months and recorded as a “help”. With them were their daughter Betsy A. Robbie (9 years 3 months) and their son W. R. Robbie (5 years 10 months). The family had nine pieces of luggage and were bound for permanent settlement in Cedar County, Iowa. Unfortunately, this family does not tally with any of the data on my tree.

On 25<sup>th</sup> September 1897, **John Robbie**, a granite-polisher from Aberdeen, aged 39 and married, arrived at Ellis Island from Liverpool on the *Lucania*. He was already a US citizen living in Quincy, Massachusetts, and was travelling with another granite-polisher, William Farquharson from Aberdeen. John had clearly emigrated young and had made a successful life in Massachusetts, as he was recorded as *going home*. He was next recorded in 1923 when, aged 65, he passed through Ellis Island, having sailed from Hamilton, Bermuda on the *Fort St George* with his son James (aged 36) and James’s wife, Florence (33), all on their way home to Quincy. Unfortunately, no occupations are listed.

On 15<sup>th</sup> May 1898, a **William Robbie** from Elgin arrived at Ellis Island aboard the *Mongolian (1891)*, which had sailed from Glasgow. He was 24, single, and an engineer. His destination was Pittsburgh, where he had lived previously in 1895.

On 5<sup>th</sup> August 1906, **Francis Robbie**, aged 22 and single, from Aberdeen, arrived in New York on the *Umbria*, which had sailed from Liverpool. His occupation is given as boilermaker. He had \$55 in his possession, and he had a friend, Mr Garrett, who lived in Antioch, Lake City, Illinois. He was bound for Easter, Massachusetts, and was travelling with another boilermaker, Robert Deans, also from Aberdeen.

**Ethel Robbie**, aged 22 and single, sailed from Glasgow on the *Columbia* and arrived at Ellis Island on 26<sup>th</sup> September 1909. Her occupation is not given, but her destination was Brooklyn, to join her aunt, Mrs Herald, at 392 Bainbridge Street. She was born in Aberdeen, which was also her last residence. She was 5' 6" tall, with a fair complexion, fair hair and brown eyes. Her mother was Mrs Robbie of 29 Wales Street, Aberdeen.

**Maggie Robbie**, a domestic worker, aged 23 and single, left Glasgow on the *Tuscania* and arrived at Ellis Island on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1916 bound for Holyoke, Massachusetts. **Alexander George Robbie**, her brother, was already living at 52 Waltham Street, Boston. Her father is given as Alexander Robbie, Woodside, 435 Great Northern Road, Aberdeen. Maggie, born in Barra, Aberdeenshire, was 5' 1" with a fresh complexion, fair hair and grey eyes.

The next Aberdonian I found was a seaman, **Duncan H. Robbie**, aged 23 and single, who arrived in New York from Liverpool on the *Baltic* on 19<sup>th</sup> September 1921, travelling to Chicago, Illinois, where he was to join a friend, John Sim, at 1154 East 43<sup>rd</sup> Street. His father was G. Robbie of 36 Gilcomston Steps, Aberdeen. Duncan was 5' 7<sup>1/2</sup>" tall with a fair complexion, fair hair, grey eyes and a mole on his right cheek!

Duncan appears to have been travelling with some of John Sim's family, because also on board were John's mother Jane (57, housekeeper) and three siblings – Robert (26, baker), James (24, trimmer) and Jeannie (15; no occupation). All were bound for Chicago to join John. Another brother, Peter Sim, was listed as a saddler in Lumphanan, Scotland.

None of these Robbies could be matched with names on my family tree. However, I have been able to trace the movements of family members emigrating to the USA from other parts of Scotland, since many of my North-East ancestors migrated south during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, mainly to Edinburgh and Glasgow. The information in the manifests has enabled me to discover some details of their lives and physical appearances, and to piece together some interesting stories. Although the process can be slow and laborious, it is worthwhile to visit the sites.

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## Two Men at Culloden

### *or A Sad Tale of Ups and Downs*

This is a meandering tale – but there is always method in my tangents. As well as being a fanatical genealogist and a social-history enthusiast, I am a Royalist. So, you may be able to imagine my excitement when I began to discover that my ancestor was a Jacobite.

My father's paternal family all came from the Black Isle, just beyond the ANESFHS geographical area. They were poor tenant farmers, so the furthest back I have been able to travel, in 50 years of research (yes, I started when I was 12), has been in whatever church records exist – and only to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Alexander More, my 3g-grandfather, died in 1860, so his death certificate shows his parents, John More and Isabella Stewart. They appear in no extant records whatsoever – but they did have a tombstone engraved to

John's father, another John More, who died in 1789. And that's where I was. Stuck in a tiny parish, with poor ancestors who were also very well behaved and do not appear in Kirk Session records or the newspapers. Spelling was not my ancestors' forte; we were "More" for a century, then "Moir", with the occasional mis-spelling in between.

I had always wondered what effect the Battle of Culloden had had on them. They came from all the parishes on the south side of the Black Isle, but mostly Avoch, and perhaps would have heard the echo of the cannon, seen the smoke and smelt the gunpowder on that day in April 1746. Were they supporters of the Pretender, like me? Would they have hidden fleeing rebels in their homes? Would they have experienced disruption when Government troops came looking for Jacobite supporters?

I have begun typing up all my notes to try to write a story of the family. While searching for my McLean ancestors in Assynt, on the north-west coast, I found a list, drawn up by the local minister, of men who had not taken part in the 1745–6 Rebellion. Aha! If there were lists of men who had *not* fought, would there be lists of men who *had*?

I consulted my friend – Google. Eventually, I found a link to a website which had a copy of a book printed for the Scottish History Society in September 1890 which, in turn, was a copy of a list drawn up in 1746 for the Government's Commissioners of Excise! Titled "A list of persons concerned in the Rebellion", it is well organised. By county, it details the names and parishes, the reason for being on the list, and the current (as of 7<sup>th</sup> May 1746) whereabouts of each person. There was also a second list which detailed the witnesses to prove that those on the first list were rebels and to show their assets!

You are on the edge of your seat! So was I, as I scrolled down page after page to find, in the first section:

"John Moir, Templand, Avoch, Ross – was in arms with the Rebels"

and in the second:

"John More, Templand, Avoch, Ross – [*blank, as he was just a tenant and had no estates or monies*]".

Templand is a farm where I have found my family! In both the above lists, he is with two others from Avoch, one a William Man from the same farm and parish; and I know these families are connected. I am certain this John Moir/More is "mine" – and could he even be the John More whose gravestone shows he died in 1789? I really was very excited!

The following weekend, by chance, a re-enactment society was in action for the Battle of Prestonpans anniversary. Of course, I went. I talked with some of the Jacobite men, and they were a little dismissive of my Google findings and pointed me to a book, *No Quarter Given*, which, they said, was a full list of the men who would have been "paid" – a Muster Roll of the Jacobite army. I walked up to the National Library of Scotland, in Edinburgh, fully reopened now, to read the book. Hmm ... it really is just another list of soldiers, but it does put them into regiments, which is very helpful, rather than counties. I was not convinced that the book or the website contained a full list – some names in one but not in t' other, and vice versa – but I was pleased to see an entry for:

Moir, John, Templand, Avoch [*then blank as to whereabouts*]

So, he was on the Muster Roll and shown with the Earl of Cromartie's regiment. No sign of the two men with surname Man; but there were others from the area:

Jacque, Donald, 58, Beggar or Ale-seller, Avoch, Ross; taken prisoner and transported  
Moir, Kenneth, Brog-maker, Miltoun of Ord [*then blank*].

Neither list gave any details as to the Moirs' whereabouts, and I was surprised to see how many were shown as "taken prisoner, transported". However, now knowing the regiment, I started investigating the Earl of Cromartie – and this is where it all began to go wrong! The Scottish History Society, in reprinting the 1746 list, had added footnotes, and I was able to find out about the Earl.

*George Mackenzie, Earl of Cromarty – this rebel peer, with his son, Lord Macleod, and the clan Mackenzie, were engaged for the Pretender almost exclusively in their own district, against the loyal clans in Sutherlandshire on the one hand and the troops under Lord Loudoun on the other. They were not at Culloden, for on the previous day they were attacked by the Earl of Sutherland at Golspie and routed, and Cromarty and his son, with 150 of their men, taken prisoner. The Earl and his son were taken to London for trial. The father was sentenced to death, but reprieved, chiefly through the intervention of his lady, who presented personally a petition to the king. The estates were forfeited. The Earl died in 1766. His son, styled Lord Macleod, received a pardon in 1748, served for some years in the Swedish army, and afterwards in the British, where he rose to the rank of General. He raised the 71<sup>st</sup> Regiment of Highland Light Infantry, which he commanded in India. The estates were restored to him in 1784 and he died in 1789.*

So, they were *not* at Culloden. So close. So far. At least John Moir was fighting for the Jacobites: he must have been one of the few to have escaped (in the Muster Roll, most of the regiment were transported – and there is a detail that there were 200 men in total, and 178 were taken prisoner or died) from the surprise attack by the Earl of Sutherland, who, on the other side of the country some years later, cleared my McLean ancestors from their homes in Assynt. John was one of the lucky ones – if the numbers are to be believed, only 22 of the Earl's men survived the attack. In fact, quite a few of these were from Redcastle, close to Avoch, and I hope they were a tight-knit group who knew, and looked out for, each other – I'd like to think so.

I had been keeping my second cousin, Catherine Mackay (née Moir), abreast of all my findings, and she was as thrilled as I was, but asked me to look for a couple of men on her mother's side who *were* from Aberdeenshire. She remembered that about 20 years ago she had been researching at ANESFHS in King Street, aided by the "wonderful" Violet, who found that Catherine's 3g-grandmother, born in 1792, was the illegitimate daughter of a Charles Hackett, who himself was the son of Charles Hacket(t), the Jacobite Collector of Cess (taxes). Catherine didn't have much information on Charles senior, so I looked at my notes and promised to go back to the National Library, feeling a bit like Father Christmas checking who was on the "naughty list"!

If you have ancestors from the North-East, please do consult the resources available, as the list of rebels includes 220 men from Aberdeenshire, 200 from Banffshire and 388 from "Elgine" (Moray). The reasons for their inclusion are varied. Here is a selection which caught my eye from the Aberdeen list – and you'll see that it also records where they were a month after the battle:

"Carried Arms at the Battle of Culloden and was very active in unloading the Spanish Ship at Peterhead and transporting the Arms – Lurking"

"Carried arms as an Officer at Culloden – Kill'd"

“Bought and Furnisht Shoes for the Rebels, did not appear in arms but was very active in spiriting up his neighbours to rise in the Rebellion – Not known”

My favourite reasons from the whole list of 2,520 names are:

“Suppos’d to be a Spye”

“Wore a white Cockade in his Hat”

The occupations of these North-East men are also shown. There were Merchants, Beggars, Gardeners, a Picture Drawer, Barbers and Glovers, Labourers, Farmers, Salmond Fishers, Shipmasters, Blacksmiths, a Silversmith’s Apprentice, a School Boy and an “Extraordinary Tidesman”!

I can be easily distracted, but did focus enough to find Charles Hacket from Aberdeen, described in the Rebel list as “Acted as Collector of the Cess for the Rebels”, though his location in May 1746 was not known. On the Muster Roll, he was not in any particular regiment, but instead was under the heading of the Pretender’s staff. Furthermore, this list showed that he had been taken prisoner and, wait for it ... *Transported*. This was a blow, and unknown to cousin Catherine.

*No Quarter Given* (the Muster Roll) has a very detailed list of references, and I was able to order one of the cited books – a specific list of Aberdeenshire and Banffshire Jacobites. This is a fabulous work which I highly recommend to anyone with Jacobite families. I found the Hacket family headed by an elder Charles, described as “a violent Jacobite who aided and assisted the Rebels” and who had three sons who came out for the Pretender – Charles, who was the Collector of Cess, Alexander, and the youngest son, James, who is described as “lurking” after the battle and who, according to the book, may have escaped to France by 1748 and might have drawn a pension from the King of France himself! Regarding Charles, Catherine’s 5g-grandfather, the notes show that after the battle he skulked about the country, “his doings during the next few years lost in obscurity”.

Cousin Catherine knew that Charles had eventually married Helen Smith, daughter and heiress of Patrick Smith of Inveramsay, a well-known Jacobite family, but she did not know where he had been between 1746 and his marriage in 1762, nor how he had accumulated funds to become a “Merchant of Aberdeen” and marry into such a wealthy family. I had to go back to the library – again!

There had been a second reference noted beside Charles Hacket’s name, and I checked this in the NLS. Once again, I recommend that you visit if you have ancestors who had been involved in the Rebellion. I am indebted to the Scottish History Society: all their publications are on the open shelves in the NLS, and I consulted the three volumes of *Prisoners of the ’45*. Listed there, in volume 2, was Charles Hacket, indeed taken prisoner – and, furthermore, taken to Carlisle and then Lancaster Castle. The book showed he was transported on 8<sup>th</sup> May 1747 to Antigua. I couldn’t believe my luck!

Sometimes it is good to be a tangent-er: this pointer to Antigua jiggled something in my memory. Wasn’t there a ship which ...? Volume 1 contained much information as to the transport and condition of prisoners, which is very sorry reading indeed. Few lists remain of prisoners who actually landed at their destinations (there are lists of men who died in captivity); but this is not the case for the *Veteran*, which sailed from Liverpool to the West Indies on 8<sup>th</sup> May 1747, because it was captured by a French ship and brought on 30<sup>th</sup> June to Martinique, where all the prisoners were released! The only time when pirates have

been blessed! But, was Charles Hacket on board? Well, there was correspondence from the shipmaster, who tried to claim his money (I think they received between £5 and £10 from the government for the transportation) – and he included a list of the prisoners' names as evidence. Where was this list?

I'm tempted to leave you guessing; but the Editor would have none of it. The relevant correspondence is held in the State Papers, which are now on microfiche; but I found the list through searching in the National Archives' online catalogue, and then via Google I found a wonderful, unknown person who had found and transcribed the list. Yes, Charles Hacket, from Aberdeen, aged 20, called a "Writer's servant", is on the list as having been aboard the *Veteran* bound for Antigua, released by the French and escaped in Martinique.

How Charles survived, made some money, and came home ... well, that's Catherine's story! There we have it. I can, I think, say that my ancestor – be he my 5g-grandfather, or a brother or cousin, or even a 6g-grandfather – fought for Charles Edward Stuart, the Pretender, the Bonnie Prince. Cousin Catherine's ancestor, another 5g-grandfather of hers, definitely had a very colourful life – probably not actually fighting at the battle, but definitely imprisoned, transported and rescued.

And, I shall be proud of them both.

### Sources

[www.highlanderjuan.com](http://www.highlanderjuan.com) (or type "persons concerned rebellion 1746" into your search engine); or consult *A List of Persons concerned in the Rebellion 1745–1746*, ed. Rev. Walter Macleod (Scottish History Society, 1890), available on the open shelves at the NLS.

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### Stranathraw Willie: A Life Lived

While searching old newspapers with just a family name and a place, I happened to find the name of Stranathraw Willie. Just as my own Main ancestors had done, Willie's parents, William Main and Jean Craig, had moved a few miles south in Kincardineshire from Portlethen to the new fishing village of Stranathro in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. They were probably my distant relatives. Willie's story, while interesting in itself, also provides a historical perspective because of the impact two pieces of legislation that were reported in the same newspapers had on him.

The Lunacy (Scotland) Act, replacing existing madhouse legislation, came into force at the start of 1858 and remained in effect until 1913, when it was superseded by the Mental Deficiency and Lunacy (Scotland) Act. The 1858 Act was intended to provide safe and appropriate care for those whose families could not afford private care, and for inmates of existing Royal Asylums where there was poor oversight. On 18<sup>th</sup> November 1859, it was reported in the press (*Montrose, Arbroath and Brechin Review*) that Stonehaven "was visited lately by one of the medical officers of the Lunacy Board, the result of which is

that two of our most noted fatuous lunatics have been lodged in the Montrose Lunatic Asylum". One of them was William Main, aged 43, better known as Stranathraw Willie.

One of the doctors who examined him on admission stated simply that "his appearance and whole demeanour show that he is of unsound mind". Another doctor considered his bodily health and general condition to be good, but noted his great restlessness and continually wandering around the countryside. Willie was said to be occasionally subject to fits of passion against other people for supposed injuries. Although this had led to complaints from people in his home village, the press report of his involuntary admission to care declared that he was a great favourite among the townspeople and would be "remembered by young Stonehaven throughout the present generation".

Stranathraw Willie was indeed remembered in the town some 30 years after he was taken from it. The *Stonehaven Journal* of 15<sup>th</sup> May 1890 published "Johnnie Nukkel's Lectures", a series of personal recollections of incidents and people in Stonehaven. In one of these, Willie was an unlikely participant.

Corn Laws restricting the import of cheap grain from Europe to Britain were the subject of much divisive political debate in the 1840s before their repeal in 1846. An open letter (*Press & Journal*, February 1844) addressed to the Lord Lieutenant of Kincardineshire was signed by a list of several hundred "noblemen, gentlemen, owners of land and farmers" requesting an urgent meeting because repeal would pose a serious threat to the "agricultural interest". Some of the townspeople of Stonehaven, however, were more interested in cheaper food and made plans to burn an effigy in the Market Square of the Duke of Richmond, who was actively campaigning against repeal.

A stuffed figure with a long pole up its back for carrying was assembled in an auld garret on Allardice Street and suitably dressed in a grey wig, a satin lum hat, a black dress coat, light pantaloons and a big white collar and napkin. It was about 10 feet tall, and nobody would volunteer to carry it – but Stranathraw Willie then took the matter in hand. The effigy was hoisted on his shoulder, "an' awa he ged, as weel pleas'd an' prood as ane quid be". By the time he reached the Market Square, several hundred people were following and cheering him on. Willie made good progress, kicking out at anyone who tried to stop him, until he encountered a group of navvies who had finished their day's work nearby, constructing the railway that would soon link Aberdeen with the south. They tried to take the effigy from him, but Willie "wis made o' guid stuff an' stood his grund" as long as he could. Several stand-up fights then began for possession until the navvies, under the watchful eye of the bobbies, realised it was in their interest to withdraw. When the fire was finally lit, and Willie saw his "mannie" burning, he "grat and cry'd puir ka-ta".

### **GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH**

Research undertaken in North-East records, also at the  
National Archives of Scotland and New Register House  
All enquiries welcome

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Willie remained in the Montrose Lunatic Asylum until 1877, when he was transferred to the Combination Poor House in Stonehaven. He died there of heart disease in 1888 at the age of 72.

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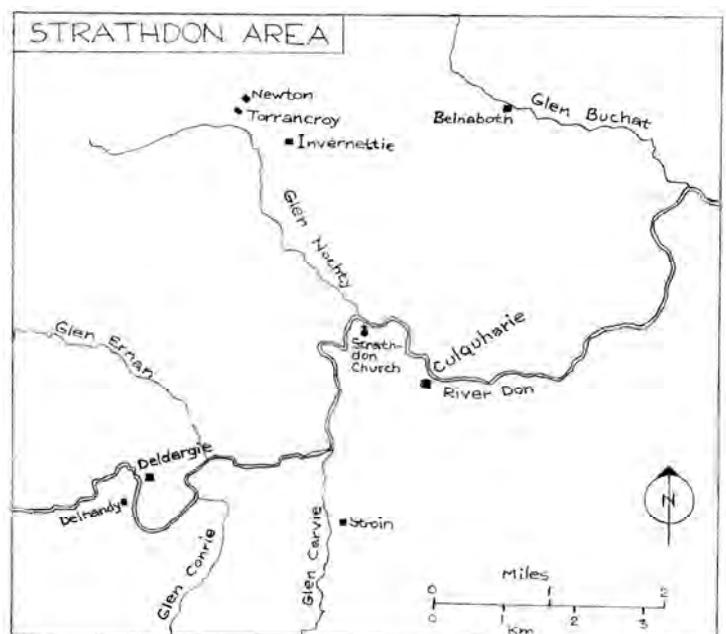
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## The Life and Times of Arthur Kellas, 17<sup>th</sup>-century Farmer and Soldier

My Kellas ancestors are one of my few lines which I have been able to trace back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, although the details of relationships are not always clear. The identities of my 4 x great-grandparents Alexander Kellas and Elizabeth Grassick are known from the 1867 death certificate of their daughter Jean in Peterculter, Aberdeenshire. Censuses and Old Parish Records (OPR) then revealed that Jean had been born in 1779 up country in Strathdon. This large hilly parish, formerly called Invernochty, lies about 45 miles west of Aberdeen astride the boundary between the formerly Gaelic-speaking east Highlands and the Scots-speaking Lowlands.

Jean and at least five of her six known siblings were born at Newton of Invernettie, a farm in Glen Nochy, north-west of Strathdon village. This information proved vital to tracing my ancestry back another four generations. Though I have been unable to trace her mother's origins, her father was almost certainly the Alexander born in 1736 at Newton of Invernettie to an Arthur Kellas. OPR baptisms do not name his mother; and there is no record of Arthur's marriage. The only likely baptism record for Arthur is in 1714 to a John Kellas at Belnaboth in the adjacent Glenbuchat parish (Belnaboth is only two miles to the east in the next valley, but over a range of hills rising to nearly 2,000 ft or 600 m). A witness to the 1714 baptism was a Michael Kellas, also in Belnaboth, who may have been John's brother. Michael being an uncommon name at the time, he is probably the one who was a tenant in Clashnoir on the Invernettie estate when it was sold in 1738, thus pointing to a link with the Glen Nochy Kellases. Clashnoir was possibly located near a feature a short distance west of Newton called Clais Mhor (big cleft).

This is where the relationship between a number of Kellases in the area seems hard to determine with any certainty. The fact, however, that in Strathdon kirkyard almost all Kellas gravestones are together in a row of 11 suggests strongly that all the Kellases are indeed related. Also listed as tenants in the 1738 rental roll are John and Arthur Kellas in Newton. It seems possible that this John was the one who was previously a tenant in Belnaboth. The last-named Arthur could be John's son, who would have been aged about 24 in 1738. John Kellas may in turn have been born in 1683 at Rin(d)stroin, Strathdon parish, the son of Arthur Kellas and his wife Janet Taylor. This scenario would fit neatly with the traditional Scottish naming pattern.



Rinstroin is almost certainly Stroin in Glen Carvie, a side glen just south of Strathdon village. In the Poll Tax Roll of 1696, Rinstoun is listed between Lochans and Meikle Glencarvie, and forms part of Candacraig estate, owned by the Andersons. Roy's map of c. 1750 shows the three clachans of Stroin, Meikle Glen Carvie and Loch grouped close together. "Ri" is a corruption of the Gaelic *ruigh* meaning "shieling", and may just have been dropped. The second syllable is a corruption of Gaelic *sròn* meaning "nose", or hill spur. Unfortunately, I have found no record to link this Arthur to Glen Nocht. On the other hand, the 1696 Poll Tax Roll records an Alexander Kellas as a tenant in Newton (of Invernettie), so he was probably the one who had children at Newton in 1705 and 1709. His first recorded child was John, born in 1693 at Torrancroy, adjacent to Newton in Glen Nocht, who could be an alternative candidate for the father of the Arthur born in 1714.

I started writing this article thinking that Arthur Kellas and his wife Janet Taylor were likely to be my ancestors, but my further researches persuade me that my line is more likely to go back to the above Alexander and his son John. If Arthur and Janet are my ancestors, they would be my 7 x great-grandparents. Even if they are not, they are very likely to be related in some way. Before going into their lives in more detail, it may be of interest to relate the family legend explaining the presence of the surname Kellas in the parishes of Strathdon and nearby areas.

The story is that three brothers, possibly Irish and originally called MacDonald, escaped a massacre in the 1640s and were given refuge in the Kellas area of Dallas parish, Moray. Then in the 1650s they had to leave suddenly, one of them settling in Strathdon and two in the Cabrach, a parish split between Banffshire and Aberdeenshire. There they adopted the surname Kellas. It has been speculated that the MacDonald brothers had fought at the Battle of Auldearn near Nairn in 1645 during the Civil War (War of the Three Kingdoms), in which a Royalist army supporting King Charles I faced the Scottish Parliamentary army. The Royalists were commanded by the Marquis of Montrose, assisted by Alasdair MacColla (Sir Alexander MacDonald), their army consisting partly of west Highlanders and partly of Irishmen. The Irish contingent were sent by Randal MacDonnell, Marquess of Antrim, whose family were the Irish branch of the Clan Donald. The legend that the Kellas brothers might have been Irish MacDonalds therefore seems plausible. On this occasion the Royalists were victorious, but of course eventually lost the war. It may be relevant that, following the eventual takeover by Oliver Cromwell in Scotland as well as in England and Ireland in the 1650s, a party of his men are believed to have caused damage to Elgin Cathedral. Royalist supporters in the area may have felt in danger, Kellas lying only about eight miles (13 km) from Elgin.

Unfortunately, a Y-DNA test taken by a direct male-line descendant of the Kellases of Strathdon does not show any MacDonalds among his few matches, so the truth of the legend cannot be verified.

Arthur Kellas and Janet Taylor married on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1682 in Strathdon parish, the OPR entry describing them as "Arthur Kellas in Rinstroin and Jannet Taylor daughter to John Taylor in Cottown of Culquharie". Janet's family home lay half a mile east of Strathdon Kirk and across the Don from the present-day Colquhonnies Hotel. The couple set up home at Rinstroin. Soon afterwards, on 20<sup>th</sup> September, Arthur was one of many people subject to a legal procedure known as a decret of law-borrows. This seems to have been applied for by Alexander Gordon of Abergeldie, Commissioner for the Earl of Huntly, chief of Clan Gordon, in connection with a clan feud between the Gordons and the

Farquharsons, who were allies of the Forbeses. The purpose of the action was to prevent any of the named persons from harming or molesting Alexander Gordon, under pain of heavy fines. Many on the list were Forbeses and their tenants in upper Donside.

After the birth of their first child, John, at Rinstroin the small family moved to Delhandy, also in the parish, where they remained for several years, having two more children, Arthur and Janet. This farm lay on the right bank of the River Don, about four miles upstream from Strathdon Kirk. By 1690 they had moved again, to Deldargie, on the left bank of the Don just west of Inverernan and opposite Delhandy. Another two children, Isobel and William, were born there. These baptism records do not name Janet, although it is clear that she was the mother, a witness to two of the baptisms being her father, John Taylor, described as his (i.e. Arthur's) goodfather, meaning father-in-law.

By 1695, the growing family had moved out of Strathdon to Hillockhead in the parish of Leochel, about 15 miles (24 km) to the east. A second William was born there, the first having presumably died young. It was obviously important to Arthur and Janet that the name should be reused. A witness to the baptism of the first William was a William Kellas in Rinstroin, who was likely Arthur's father or brother.

In 1696, both Arthur and Janet are recorded on the Poll Tax Roll at Hillock of Leochel, which may be the same farm. Arthur was described as a "sub-tenant (no trade)", meaning that he farmed a small area of land which he rented from a tenant farmer, rather than being a tradesman, e.g. shoemaker. Hillock was on the Craigievar estate, owned by a branch of the Forbes family. It is presumed that Arthur was also a sub-tenant on the Strathdon farms, which might explain the frequent moves. In these pre-enclosure times, farming was organised differently to today. Each farm was worked jointly among several tenants. Similarly, the tenants' houses and other farm buildings were grouped together in a ferm-toun (Lowlands) or clachan (Highlands). In the Poll Tax Roll for Leochel parish, Hillock had two tenants, three sub-tenants, wives and several other residents listed – a total of 17 adults, excluding children. This gives a good indication of the late 17<sup>th</sup> century's high density of rural population. There were a lot of mouths to feed if the harvest was bad.

I had also found an entry on FamilySearch for the baptism of a child in 1698 in the East Lothian parish of Prestonpans, the parents being Arthur Kellis and Jonet Taylor. As Prestonpans is a very long way from Aberdeenshire, it seemed unlikely that this record could relate to the same couple. I decided, however, to spend some ScotlandsPeople credits to obtain the entry. This read: "Arthur Kellis and Jonet Taylor a soldier in Colliers Regiment in Captain Cambells Company had a daughter baptized Jean". The reason for the couple being in Prestonpans was now clear – Arthur had joined the army.

This led me to wonder why a married man, probably nearly 40 years old, with a wife and as many as five children, should decide to enlist. The answer is likely to be simple – hunger. In the late 1690s, famine stalked the land. This was in the depths of an era now known as the "Little Ice Age" when, as crops failed throughout northern Europe, many people died of starvation. The parishes of upper Donside are likely to have been particularly badly affected. Hillock of Leochel lies at an altitude of over 900 feet (280 m), meaning that even at the best of times grain production must have been difficult.

In addition to the bad economic situation, exacerbated in Scotland by the disastrous Darien Scheme involving the establishment of a colony in Central America, the political situation in Europe was very volatile. Within the British Isles, the turbulent period leading to the

overthrow of King James VII / II in 1689 had ended with the installation of William and Mary as joint monarchs and the defeat of James's forces in Ireland. As well as now ruling in England, Ireland and Scotland, William still held his position as *Stadhouder* of the Dutch Republic, the *de facto* ruler. The Dutch had been at war with France on and off since 1672. Throughout this period, and for many decades previously, the Dutch army had included a Scots Brigade, usually made up of three regiments and numbering 4,000–5,000 men. The brigade had even helped the Dutch to gain their independence from Spain.

In the 1670s, one of the regiments was commanded by Colonel Sir Alexander Colyear. His sons, David and Walter, in turn took up service in the Dutch forces, both eventually commanding their own regiments. The elder, David, succeeded to his father's knighthood and later became Lord Portmore, then the Earl of Portmore etc. David was given his own command around 1689, while Walter got his position in 1695. The Nine Years War was raging, in which France was pitted against a wide alliance of countries including the Dutch Republic or United Provinces (equivalent to the present-day Netherlands, colloquially called Holland) and Great Britain (in regal union). The war was ended by the Peace of Ryswick in 1697, following which the Scots Brigade returned home with the British army. It was stationed in Scotland before taking up service again for the Dutch by 1699. In that year, it was stationed at Namur in present-day Belgium, which was garrisoned by the Dutch army despite being within the former Spanish Netherlands.

The relationship between the Scots Brigade, the Dutch army and the British army was complicated – but, as all were ultimately under the command of King and *Stadhouder* William, they can be regarded as parts of a whole. Of course, Scotland and England were still separate independent countries prior to the Union in 1707, although linked by a shared monarchy. Both Colyear regiments may have been stationed in Scotland at the time of Arthur and Janet's daughter's baptism on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1698, so it is not possible to say for certain which one Arthur had joined. It may have been Walter's, as his representative is known to have been recruiting in 1696 in Banffshire, the next county to Aberdeenshire. Whether Arthur had been in Holland with his regiment before 1697 is also not known. As to the Captain Campbell mentioned in the baptism record, I have not been able to identify him. It is also not known if Janet and the children remained in Strathdon while Arthur was in the army, or whether they were able to accompany him to the Continent.

Following the outbreak of the War of the Spanish Succession in 1702, the regiments of the Scots Brigade were again in action. As I have not found any record of Arthur or Janet after the 1698 baptism, they must be regarded as disappearing from history.

The above story illustrates the difficulties of research into lowly families in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but also that a small slice of luck can reveal how events in the outside world could have an impact even in remote parts of Scotland.

### **Additional genealogical notes**

Sir (David) Alexander Colyear was of the Robertson family from Struan/Strowan, Perthshire. His father adopted the surname Colyear, according to legend, after making his escape to the Netherlands from Scotland on board a collier ship (coal carrier). He married Jean (or Johanna) Murray and died on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1680, possibly at Bergen op Zoom, Netherlands.

David Colyear was born in 1657 in North Brabant, Netherlands, son of the above Alexander and Jean. He died on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1730 at Weybridge, Surrey.

Walter Philip Colyear was born on 27<sup>th</sup> August 1658, possibly at 's Hertogenbosch, Netherlands, son of the above Alexander and Jean. He died on 4<sup>th</sup> December 1747 at Maastricht, Netherlands.

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### Peter Milne, the Tarland Minstrel

The strathspey is a distinctive form of North-East Scottish fiddle music and dance, with its stately long–short, short–long exaggerated rhythms. Asked to name a strathspey master, you might suggest James Scott Skinner (1843–1927), a native of Banchory, the flamboyant "Strathspey King". In fact, Skinner himself believed that his early mentor, Peter Milne (1824–1908), was "one of the grandest strathspey players that ever graced Scotland" – and Milne turns out to be at least as colourful as his pupil.

Peter Milne (pronounced "Mill") was an itinerant violinist and dancing master who made a meagre living in the 1850s "fiddling at dances in barns, bothies and lofts in the Deeside district". He employed young James Skinner, then about 9 years old, to accompany his fiddling by "vamping" on a cello. According to Skinner:

It was nothing too unusual for Peter and me to trudge eight or ten weary miles on a slushy wet night ... The barns in which the dancing took place had earthen floors and were not always quite level. Planks laid in sacks of corn turned on their sides formed the sitting accommodation. Tallow dips mounted on wooden brackets supplied the lighting.

It sounds a tough existence – but Peter Milne was like a father to the boy Skinner, whose professional musical career had been precipitated by his own father's untimely death. Milne later helped Skinner's career in another important way by introducing him to William Scott of Peterhead when the younger man wanted to train as a dancing master.

Peter was gifted and also restless. He became a successful orchestra leader, first in Aberdeen and then in Edinburgh and Leith (Gaiety, Prince's and McGork's Theatres). Then he moved to Manchester and may also have played in London. When Skinner met Milne towards the latter stages of Milne's career, "he was preparing for a flitting, which all through his career was quite a passion with him". When Skinner asked where Milne was off to, he said it was to be "nearer my work". When asked what that work was, he replied: "Lord, man ... I hinna got a job yet!"

Part of that restlessness may have been due to his use of opium, then freely available over the counter as pain relief or as a stimulant, taken by Peter for rheumatism, that was perhaps caused by those damp excursions to play in barn dances. On a trip to Lumphanan, Milne sent his young accompanist to the druggist for some snuff and opium, with a spare coin for the boy to spend as a treat: “That’ll get ye a piece [snack] tae yersel, Jimmie”. The lad spent the money on a snuff-box for Milne instead. On learning this, Milne burst into tears, saying “Awa’, ye saft-herted loon ... tae buy a snuff-mill an’ ye hungry!” The opium came in solid form – and, after chewing it, Milne became bright and optimistic, always anticipating the “crooded” house and enthusiastic audience they would have.

He was an inspiring musician who loved his craft, saying he was “that fond o’ ma fiddle I could sit in the inside o’t and look oot”. That strange perspective may have been the opium talking – but the Scottish music histories credit him with some innovations in notation (Alburger, p. 181), and he published a collection of strathspeys in 1870 which ran to five editions and included some of his own compositions.



*Peter’s memorial at Tarland, by kind permission of “Garioch Graver”; see <https://www.aberdeenremembers.co.uk/>*

Perhaps inevitably, Milne’s career began to slide, and he took to busking for coins on the Forth ferryboats at Queensferry along with a blind harmonium player. When the ferries stopped running after the Forth Bridge was built (1890), Milne returned to Aberdeen, where a friend’s horseplay, removing the seat from under him as he made to sit down, resulted in hospitalisation and long-term disability. He was an invalid for ten years, dying of “senile decay” in 1908 at the age of 83 in the Aberdeen Poorhouse at Newhills. He was buried in an unmarked common grave.

Fellow musicians cherished his memory and later erected memorials to him. This one, outside the cemetery at Tarland, was erected in 1932 after a collection was raised by an ex-pupil, Alex Innes. More recently, Paul Anderson MBE, himself a highly respected Tarland fiddler, set about identifying Milne’s grave site, and in 2007 a stone was erected (see next page) to mark that spot in Nellfield Cemetery, Aberdeen. Peter’s love of music was passed on to some of his descendants. His eldest daughter, Wilhelmina, married an Irish musician, Henry John O’Neill, and many of their 12 children became professional musicians.

### **Peter Milne’s family tree**

Although he is known as the Tarland Minstrel, Peter’s baptism was recorded in nearby Kincardine O’Neil on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1824. His parents married in Aboyne before later settling in Tarland. His father and grandfather (both Andrew Milne) were tailors, and his brother – yet another Andrew – followed in that same trade. He also had at least two sisters: Jane, who died aged 14 and is buried with their parents in Aboyne; and Isabella, a laundress, who lived in Tarland but died in 1895 in Aberdeen, with Peter registering her

death. Peter's mother Elspet was a Cromar (as was Paul Anderson's grandmother), and Peter is named after his maternal grandfather.

Peter's wife, Isabel Watt (shown as "Elizabeth" at marriage), was the eldest daughter of William Watt, an Aberdeen brewer, and his wife Catherine Black, who had five children baptised in St Mary's with St Peter's RC Church. Peter and Isabel themselves had at least eight children, born variously in Aberdeen, Manchester and Edinburgh. The first two were born in Aberdeen, and their baptisms are also entered in the records of St Mary's with St Peter's. The birth of the second child, Georgina, in August 1855, was also recorded in detail in the newly introduced Statutory Register, which states that the parents were married in 1852 and confirms they had one child, a daughter, still living.



*Nelfield stone C111 (ANESFHS MI booklet AA083; photograph by Gavin Bell)*

However, the Statutory Record of Marriage for the couple dates only from March 1861, which is the marriage date in the birth records of their later children. Peter's age is given as 36 and his wife's as 25, making her 17 when their eldest child Wilhelmina (Minnie) was born in 1853. They may have made a marriage by declaration when expecting the first child, and regularised the situation in 1861. The family tree gives ample evidence to suggest that Milne's home life was frequently disrupted – the residence recorded for each event is usually different – and the constant moves may well have contributed to Isabel's death aged 47, the cause being cited as epilepsy and "del[irium] tremens".

For all the ups and downs, Peter Milne seems to have been regarded as warm-hearted and kindly. Perhaps the best image to end on is the one reflected by Skinner in the tune he called *Peter Milne*, inspired by Peter stroking a cat and murmuring endearments "spoken caressingly to La's cat" – could La be his wife Isabella? – with the words "Cattie, Cheetikie, Pussikie" matched to triplets in the music.

Peter's family was prolific, with at least 35 grandchildren, and interesting kinks in the family tree. It proved impractical to print a full tree with this article; but the Society plans to make material like this available via a new area in the Society website in the near future.

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[Archive – Fiddles and Fiddlers \(nafa.net\)](http://nafa.net) – this gives a good account of Peter's career.

[Scottish Fiddlers – Peter Milne \(nigelgatherer.com\)](http://nigelgatherer.com) – this site lists tunes composed by Peter.

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