

Aberdeen & North-East Scotland Family History Society

Journal No. 160 • August 2021



*“The Emigrant” monument, Halifax, Nova Scotia.
Photograph by kind permission of Marjory Harper.*

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

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

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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 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

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 160, August 2021

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Society Reports, News and Information

Chairman's Report

Our Centre at King Street reopened on 4th May with all anti-Covid protocols in place, and our volunteers have been glad to see visitors beginning to return. As this Journal went to press, you may have noticed from our website or social media that we were closing our Centre for a week after an external Covid contact alert. Having taken this precaution, we expect to reopen from Tuesday 3rd August for business as usual. To prepare for your visit to our Centre, please read our Covid-19 Safety Policy and other guidelines. Full details can be found on our website.

At the time of writing, we await a Scottish Government announcement that should help to determine whether we can resume face-to-face members' meetings. For the time being, we intend to continue with our very successful and popular online meetings while also exploring the feasibility of in-person meetings. As ever, see our website for the latest.

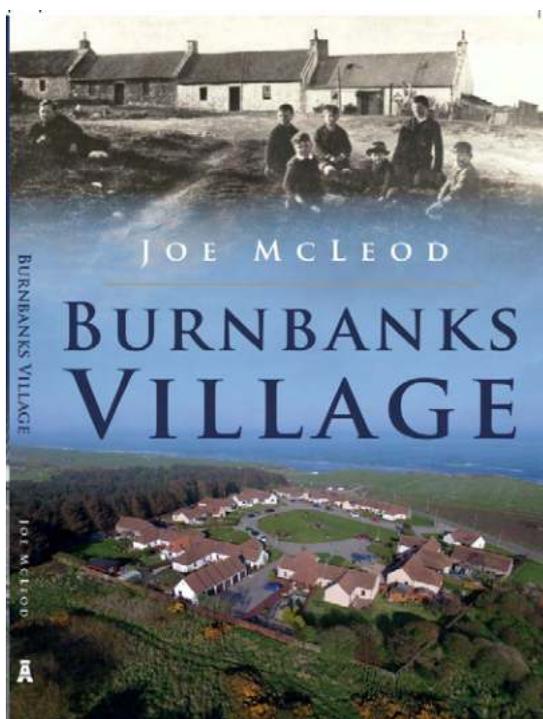
If you pre-register for one of our online meetings and then find that you cannot attend after all, you can log back into our website and opt for "I will not go to this Event". This will cancel your registration and will greatly help with our admin. On two occasions, we have had to turn away late applicants when a very popular meeting has filled up beforehand – only to find that several pre-registrants then failed to show up or to send apologies.

Journal 158 carried an obituary of genealogist Rosemary Philip (no. 4652), who enjoyed helping to organise our Edinburgh Group meetings. We were delighted to learn recently that Rosemary has generously left the Society a legacy of £10,000 in her will. We have written to her niece with our grateful thanks and to enquire whether Rosemary left any directions for how we should put this legacy to best use for our members.

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Ivor Normand

No. 4161



Burnbanks Village, on the coast just south of Aberdeen, has been in existence for over 200 years, but from the 1950s onwards it lay in various stages of dereliction, and it was finally abandoned in the early 1980s, leaving shattered ruins and roofless shells.

It was resurrected in 1992 – and now, nearly 30 years later, it is a fantastic place to live, with a deep community spirit.

This newly published book features stories about the hard day-to-day struggles of life in the old village. There were shipwrecks, accidental or sudden deaths, an alarming amount of suicides, a heartbreaking incidence of cholera, and casualties of war. Villainy, thefts, assaults, fights and bigamy all feature, as well as births, marriages and deaths.

Alongside the often darker history of the village, there are many human stories of families living healthy and happy lives, albeit in basic conditions.

<https://burnbanksvillage.co.uk/> £15 plus postage

Isobel Noble (1933–2021)

The Society was sorry to receive news of the death on 16th July of one of our early members and most dedicated volunteers. Not many visitors to King Street will have met Isobel, but she was a faithful and stalwart worker behind the scenes.

Isobel joined the Society in 1987 as no. 1397, and soon found her niche in the library downstairs. As well as helping generally, she catalogued journals from up to 100 other FHSs in Scotland and throughout the UK and abroad. When we received members' family-history research files, Isobel was responsible for binding them and arranging them in folders, which form part of the many resources available to our members. She also recorded books, microfilms and microfiches for library use. She was one of those valuable people who work quietly and unobtrusively and was very self-effacing.



For many years, Isobel also served refreshments at our monthly public meetings along with her friend Elizabeth Maclean. Latterly, Isobel began to find the stairs at the Centre difficult to manage, but she struggled on until her mobility problems made getting about too much of an effort.

Isobel was born and brought up in Aberdeen, and lived all her life in the family home in Rosehill. She shared the house with a brother after her other siblings emigrated to Australia and New Zealand. On leaving school, Isobel trained as a seamstress and worked for many years at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, mainly in the Nurses' Home, where she was responsible for the uniforms. Isobel had a great interest in local history and was for many years very involved with the Aberdeen Town & County History Society. She also loved the poetry of Robert Burns and was a regular at meetings of the Burns Club.

Isobel continued to live alone for many years after her brother's death until it became obvious that she was struggling to cope, and eventually she moved into a care home. She spent her final years in Hamewith Lodge Rest Home, where she died.

Isobel and I "crossed swords" when I was Chairman and tried to persuade her to get rid of her dilapidated old desk and have a more practical, smarter desk beside the downstairs printer. Despite my attempts, she dug her heels in, saying she was perfectly happy as things were. I am sure she would be very pleased to see that her old desk is still going strong after all these years! I pass it every time I go to the printer and think of Isobel sitting there, working away quietly. We miss her.

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Liz Foubister

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—oOo—

Editorial

For the first time since I resumed Journal editorship (No. 145, November 2017), this issue contains no example Record of Ancestors chart because we have received no permissions. If you'd like us to publish a chart going back from yourself or from a particular ancestor, please send it in with your permission to print. It's a good way to find "new" cousins.

The articles in this issue are (loosely) themed on **emigration** from North-East Scotland. More submissions were received than would fit into one issue, so some others will appear in the November Journal. For a future Journal theme, another popular suggestion is **Military Ancestors** and associated research ... if that helps to guide your consideration of your next Journal contribution! We look forward to hearing from you.

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Ivor Normand

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—oOo—

Volunteer Profile: Rhona Robertson

Our Society has evolved over the years, and “new” volunteers contribute so much to our success but are not always known to many of our members. Volunteers in our Centre have the opportunity to meet you when you visit, but there are many others who toil unseen and unheard in the back office or at home. Names appear in the Journal – and these Profile articles put a face to a name and let us find out a little bit more about our various “teams”.

When the 1911 census was to be released, the suggestion was made that the Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire returns could be transcribed and indexed to make them more accessible for members. Volunteers worldwide offered their services and have been sending the results to Rhona Robertson (no. 17741), one of the two co-ordinators.



Rhona is a prime example of a Society volunteer who is not widely known to members.

Rhona was born and raised in Inverurie. An avid reader as a child, she decided her career had to involve books. On leaving Inverurie Academy, she followed their careers advice and applied for a post as library assistant in Aberdeen County Library in Crown Terrace. From there she went to Strathclyde University to qualify as a librarian, returning to the North-East to take up posts in – successively Cults, Culter, Ellon Academy and Meldrum Academy. It was during this time that she first met Helen Dewar (now her fellow 1911 census project co-ordinator) and Jean Shirer.

Rhona ascribes her interest in family history to listening to her 90-year-old grandfather reminiscing about growing up as one of 13 children raised in rural Aberdeenshire. The librarian instinct led her to document his stories. She contacted ANESFHS for advice, joined us in 2008 – and the rest, as they say, is history! When Rhona retired in 2010 from Meldrum Academy, Jean Shirer was quick to suggest that she became more involved with ANESFHS. Since then, Rhona has been involved, not only with the 1911 census project but also with book fairs, where she has a chance to meet fellow enthusiasts. She is full of praise for the many volunteers involved in deciphering the 1911 census, and feels that she has acquired a wide group of online friends!

Rhona has been married for over 50 years, has two sons and five grandsons, and jokes that she could start her own five-a-side football team. She enjoys reading (of course!) and knitting, and takes part in a local book group.

Rhona is always willing to stop what she is doing and help someone else. She is bright and cheerful and is a much-appreciated member of our “gang”.

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Members' Meetings: Aberdeen

All Society meetings are still being held online until further notice (from governments). We have been pleased to see many people joining in for the first time or the umpteenth time. Everyone is always welcome. See our website's "Events" tab for how to obtain an invitation link to any Society online meeting in which you are interested.

15th May 2021: Ken Nisbet, "The Register of Corrected Entries and how it can help your family-history research"

Expert genealogist Ken Nisbet talked in detail about Scotland's RCE (primarily of births and deaths) and the nature and range of changes that it may show to original entries. RCEs tend mostly to record changes to a child's name, or to establish the identity of a father, or to clarify a cause of death; but there also exist a great variety of more unusual or quirky corrections to original entries.

RCE amendments are shown on a certificate by a stamp and/or written entry in the side margin or at the foot. Online, or in the Scotland's People Centre, look out at the top of an image for a line alerting you to the existence of an RCE amendment (or, rarely, more than one). Click on that line, and it takes you to the relevant RCE image.

Ken's example RCE entries included one from Edinburgh that recorded three Macdonald children whose births in the 1870s and 1880s "have been legitimated by the subsequent marriage of the parents" in October 1899. Another, from a parish in Inverness-shire, was an amendment to an 1885 marriage: a farmer's wife had obtained a divorce against him on 13th March 1897. Two days later, the *Aberdeen Journal* carried an article giving lots of juicy details about this case of elopement with a servant.

Bigamy was another cause for RCE amendments. A marriage in Edinburgh in 1896 has this RCE note attached: "In the Sheriff Court of Midlothian held at Edinburgh on 3rd October 1898, John Anderson was convicted of the Crime of Bigamy in having entered into a diatrimonial connection with Mary Margaret Macdougall, his wife Jane Anderson being still alive and his marriage with her still subsisting". He was jailed for this crime.

Deaths to be reported to the Procurator Fiscal are "all sudden, suspicious, accidental, unexpected and unexplained deaths", or from work-related accidents, or occurring in legal custody. A death certificate may record a cause of death that is later amended, or its circumstances described in more detail, by an RCE note. Such cases may often lead to a Fatal Accident Inquiry that establishes the exact details and a verdict.

Mary Jane Pritchard (née Taylor), aged 39, died in Glasgow on 18th March 1865 of "Gastric Fever, Two Months". Her husband, the informant and the certifying doctor were all the same person: Edward William Pritchard, MD. A marginal note on the death entry directs to the RCE, where the cause of death is "From Tartarised Antimony, Aconite and Opium or one or more of them, or other poison feloniously administered in food, drink and medicine by her said husband, from December 1864 to date of death". Dr Pritchard was convicted of murdering his wife and her mother by poisoning them, and in July 1865 he was hanged on Glasgow Green in front of thousands.

Such notorious cases were always great newspaper fodder. So were suicides, which gave rise similarly to more detailed RCE amendments of the cause of death originally stated. We also saw the sad details of the death in 1901 of a 3½-year-old boy from "extensive

burning and consequent shock”, and in 1900 of a railway surfaceman from an accident at a goods yard. A body found in Torry Harbour in 1913, and a young victim of the 1876 Aberdeen ferry-boat disaster on the River Dee, were shown as further RCE examples complete with detailed newspaper reports.

19th June 2021: “Family history in the records of NHS Grampian Archives”

Fiona Musk, NHS Grampian Archivist, is based in the University of Aberdeen Special Collections Centre, The Sir Duncan Rice Library, Bedford Road, Aberdeen AB24 3AA. See <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/special-collections/contact-78.php> (or Facebook or Twitter) for the latest on availability under ongoing Covid restrictions; and contact Fiona on gram.archives@nhs.scot.

NHS Grampian Archives’ website is where to start your search for information on surviving records from more than 100 hospitals and health organisations in the North-East area. Records from the 18th and 19th centuries mostly cover general or specialist hospitals, cottage hospitals and asylums. Hospitals’ administrative and financial affairs feature largely, but there is also some information on managers, staff and patients, as well as on people who contributed via annual subscriptions, donations or legacies. Estate papers may also be found among some hospital records. There are also records from three poorhouses which became hospitals when the NHS was formed in 1948.

In general, records become harder to find as the 20th century goes on. The website gives detailed instructions on how to search the online catalogue. “Collections” lists all the hospitals and their reference numbers, from Aberdeen Royal Infirmary (GRHB 1) to Friends of Royal Cornhill Hospital (GRHB 66), plus other boards and committees etc. in the ranges GRHB A1–4, B1–14, D1–21 and E1–5. The website’s “Guides and Indexes” page contains further information, including a guide to using hospital admission registers.

Fiona had many useful example pages to show us. These included: Admission Registers for Royal Aberdeen Hospital for Sick Children, 1890; Turner Memorial Hospital (Keith), 1913; and Stephen Hospital (Dufftown), 1899; also pages from Stephen Hospital Wine Book, Kincardineshire Combination Poorhouse, and others.

To find information:

- Look for clues on certificates via “Scotland’s People” – especially death certificates
- Use online catalogues (Scottish Archive Network is a good starting point)
- Use resources available via ANESFHS and other organisations, e.g. Scottish Indexes
- Don’t be afraid to send an e-mail to ask someone – we’re all here to help!

Our attendees had many questions for Fiona, who promised to follow them up whenever she could revisit her workplace, as she was still restricted to working mostly from home.

17th July 2021: summer “extra” meeting

On a hot sunny day, we held another enjoyable online meeting to share discoveries, hints and tips, Q&A and general family-history friendliness before our summer break.

Details of our next meeting, on 18th September (again to be held online), will soon be on the Society’s website, where you can register for an invitation link.

Moray/Banff Group Report

Our May, June and July meetings have each had over 70 participants, showing that our online gatherings are still proving popular. With members attending regularly from Canada, Australia, the USA, Norway and Bermuda, as well as from all corners of the British Isles, it seemed appropriate to spend time looking at emigration and immigration, so we decided on this for the topic of our May meeting.

Members inundated us with a vast range of resources from all areas, and these provided a very useful handout. There were also some fascinating stories which were recounted at the meeting itself, ranging from very early emigrants in the mid-1600s to more recent emigrants from Scotland and also a few immigrants.

Our June topic was “Useful websites for North-East research”. Having planned for some members to talk in detail about websites that they were interested in and knowledgeable about, this proved so successful that we covered only a small proportion of our long list on the day. Doug Stewart opened with a detailed explanation of the extremely useful Moray Libindx, followed by Anne Park describing her extensive database of over 20,000 First World War casualties on her Roll of Honour. Ruth McIntosh spoke about useful websites for military research, also providing a comprehensive list as a handout, then moved on, as Secretary of the Moray Burial Ground Research Group, to explain that the MBGRG has now recorded over 92,500 memorial inscriptions from 54 locations, including many buried stones. Ivor Normand demonstrated the Memorial Inscriptions database on the ANESFHS website. In our general family-history chat after a tea break, it was decided to carry over to another meeting the remaining websites on what was still an extensive list.

Though we usually have July and August off, it seemed a good idea to meet online again in July, given a ready-made topic of “Yet more useful websites for North-East research”. With many sites still to cover, it was possible only to take a quick look at each, building up a list of sources that we hope will prove useful to explore. As one participant put it in the typed Chat: “Lots of new rabbit holes to fall into!”

For our next meeting, on Saturday 4th September, we are going with our now traditional first-meeting-after-the-summer-break topic of “Bring along a brick wall” – again to be held online. Even when “normal” meetings can be resumed, we do want to continue with our online meetings. Our meeting room doesn’t have built-in technology, and I’m not sure that my laptop and tiny projector will let us combine online with face-to-face, so we might have to get round this by having separate meetings. Either way, we are keen to maintain contact with our multinational participants!

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Mary Evans No. 1975

—oOo—

Edinburgh Group Report

Elaine Petrie, “Family History and Song in the Greig–Duncan Collection”

24th April 2021

Elaine Petrie (no. 22949) joined ANESFHS in 2020 and is already volunteering within the Society on a few fronts. We were delighted at her offer of this talk. The eight-volume Greig–Duncan Folk Song Collection is a North-East treasure of world-class significance, and Elaine was co-editor of volume 6.

This collection of some 2,000 songs was compiled nearly 100 years before it was finally published in full, with the last volume appearing in 2002. From 1904 to 1914, a New Deer schoolmaster, Gavin Greig, and an Alford minister, James Duncan, set about noting down all the songs people around them loved to sing. Their collection created a snapshot of North-East folk's wide-ranging musical tastes and also provides several fascinating family-history cameos, since many songs had been handed on between family members.

Greig and Duncan meticulously noted where and when they copied down songs from their neighbours and their extended families. They listed who the singers got their songs from – grandparents, fellow farm servants and so on. In addition, volume 8 contains biographies of the main singer contributors and can provide an intriguing starting point for families with North-East roots ... or who know that Granny had a party piece.

Very bravely, Elaine even sang some songs during her talk. Keeping things in the family, she related her material to a number of articles in previous ANESFHS Journals, and generated a lot of Q&A in the ensuing discussion. Journal 55 (May 1995, pp. 16–17) has a brief “Ancestry of Edvard Grieg, Composer”, for which Elaine supplied a family tree. She also followed up the meeting's discussion with a handout of some lyrics and links. Much more could be reported about this fascinating talk, which I'm very glad I could attend.

Our next Edinburgh Group meeting is on 11th September, when King Street's very own Gavin Bell will talk on “A Monumental Miscellany: MIs and More”. Later in August, we should know whether this will be online again, or if we can all meet in person – or both.

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Ivor Normand No. 4161

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Glasgow Group Report

Members' Day: “Heirlooms”

22nd May 2021

This was another online meeting attended by members from across Scotland, England and overseas, many of whom had heirlooms to show and describe, whether by screen-sharing or to camera. An online Scottish Indexes Conference was on at the same time, so quite a few of our members were tuning in straight from there to our meeting.

The range of objects on display was highly varied and interesting. Maureen Kerrigan had a medal from the Loyal Order of Ancient Shepherds, the reverse side showing: “LOAS St Mungo Lodge 1563 PRESENTED TO BRO. JAMES DUNLOP in recognition of his having passed through the Chairs 21st Dec. 1909”. Glasgow's Mitchell Library has records.

Various figurines were shown, and their stories told: dark wooden elephants from India; bisque statuettes (parrionware); an inkwell (Glasgow School of Design?); and we debated the merits of bone spoons for eating boiled eggs with. For any item of curiosity, Hazel Meldrum suggested uploading a digital photo to <https://lens.google.com/> for identification.

Anne Park told her story of a First World War “Dead Man's Penny” being found in a garden; see articles in Journals 57 (Nov 1995) p. 27 and 104 (Aug 2007) p. 38, and Journal 102 (Feb 2007) for a report on a talk Anne gave. Others in the meeting mentioned having a similar item, or a photograph of it, from an ancestor. John Urie (in Inverurie) showed a sewing sampler, made by an ancestor, which had come back into his family after he had bought it in an online auction from a collector who had bought it in 1972 in California.

Anne Illingworth showed a very fragile bible printed in 1793, with handwritten family information from the early 1800s. Buzzy Garden advised contacting a paper conservator. Hazel Meldrum recommended buying archival boxes to fit any size of books and bibles.

After a break, we tackled Graham Robertson's quiz on North-East parish names before continuing our conversations on and around heirlooms. Buzzy asked if anyone had a source for dating fans. Her mother had helpfully labelled some family items, and her brother had photographed family jewellery before it was divided among beneficiaries.

Sheila MacLennan quoted from *The Repair Shop*'s foreword: "Everyone has a story to tell. For those who can link their family history to a symbolic object, we at The Repair Shop can play a role in its retelling. We feel privileged at becoming a small part of history."

Our next Glasgow Group meeting is on 9th October, and the Society's website will show whether we're meeting in person again at last, or continuing online, or combining both.

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Ivor Normand

No. 4161

—oOo—

London Group Report

Mary Evans, "Working with Old Documents"

15th May 2021

Lockdowns are easing at different paces depending on where you are in the UK, never mind the world, so once more we were in a Zoom meeting. We welcomed a London Group record turnout of 53, including several new members – some new to our Group, some new to our Society altogether. Always great to see new folks!

Our own Mary Evans, convenor of our Moray/Banff Group, took us through some tips on working with old documents. Mary doesn't profess to be a handwriting expert, but she had lots of techniques and hints on how to try to decipher it. What is the document? What language is it in? How to look for common words, up- and down-strokes etc.? Mary talked us through examples for over an hour, and I think we all learned something new.

We do love a chat in our ANESFHS meetings, but we willingly cut this one short so that many of us could hop straight into our Aberdeen Group's online meeting that followed.

Please sign up for the London Group e-Newsletter if you haven't done so already (via "My Details" when logged in to the Society's website). Our next meeting is on Saturday 18th September at 12 noon. See the website for speaker/topic and whether we'll still be online.

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Sheena Clark

No. 19190

—oOo—

Brisbane Group Report

1st May 2021

This online meeting was attended by few Aussies, almost matched by members in Bonnie Scotland. Several had sent apologies, as some inter-state travel within Australia had been allowed, and many of us went on holiday as soon as we could before the next lockdown. We had a broad-ranging discussion about Scottish research resources and how to find records in Australia for people who came here. Below is a list of Australian sources.

If you're reading this Journal online, you can sign up for an invitation link to our next meeting, to be held online on Saturday 7th August. The Society's website will show any late change to the starting time. After that, our Group's next meeting is on 6th November.

Immigration sources for Australia

Australia was claimed as British in 1770 but was administered as separate colonies until 1901. It was not uncommon for people to arrive in one state and move to another. There was a lot of internal movement, as the population growth and infrastructure development was slow. A gold rush in the mid-1800s contributed to considerable internal migration.

Shipping records: <https://www.nla.gov.au/research-guides/finding-ship-and-passenger-records>

Digitised newspapers available for free from National Library of Australia. The papers reported shipping movements and internal coach movements: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/>

National Archives of Australia – immigration: <https://www.naa.gov.au/explore-collection/immigration-and-citizenship>

New South Wales

Archives (convict records, shipping, wills etc.): <https://www.records.nsw.gov.au/>

BDM searchable online: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/topics/family-history-search>

Immigration and shipping: <https://www.records.nsw.gov.au/archives/collections-and-research/guides-and-indexes/immigration-and-shipping#1Free>

Victoria

Public Records Office of Victoria (PROV) have assisted and unassisted passenger lists that are easy to look up online: <https://prov.vic.gov.au/explore-collection/explore-topic/passenger-records-and-immigration>

BDM Victoria searchable and downloadable (for a fee) online:

<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>

The State Library of Victoria links to family-history sites: <https://www.slv.vic.gov.au/search-discover/family-history-tools-resources>

Tasmania

BDMs are not yet electronic or searchable, but information on early immigrants has been digitised and is available via Tasmanian Archives and History Office (TAHO) below.

Libraries: <https://libraries.tas.gov.au/family-history/Pages/default.aspx>

TAHO: Names Index (many early records digitised, including shipping):

https://libriestas.ent.sirsiidynix.net.au/client/en_AU/names/?

Queensland

Assisted immigration, 1848–1912: <https://www.data.qld.gov.au/dataset/assisted-immigration-1848-to-1912>

State library advice: <https://www.slq.qld.gov.au/blog/shipping-and-immigration-records-online>

State library FHS page (many links for all states): <https://www.slq.qld.gov.au/research-collections/family-history/useful-websites-family-historians>

Archives (not much digitised): <https://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/arts/heritage/archives>

BDM Queensland (historical PDFs purchasable): <https://www.familyhistory.bdm.qld.gov.au/>

South Australia

Many records are not digitised or searchable; see <https://guides.slsa.sa.gov.au/bdm?u=767>

Southern Ontario Group Report

“Organizing Our Records”

29th May 2021

A changing of the guard (our Group co-organizers) went rather smoothly for our latest online meeting. Our 47 participants included new members, some visitors from other ANESFHS Groups, and “just curious” interested parties. To start us off, three members spoke about the software programs that they use for their family-history materials, and stressed the importance of backing up all that you have worked on.

John McLean introduced the popular **Family Tree Maker**. He went through its basics and explained the different pedigree-chart formats available. We were really interested in his story of how he had collected and organized all of his family-tree information and then had it published for over 100 relatives. This could recur as a future discussion topic.

Next, David Joiner talked about the advantages and handicaps of **RootsMagic**. David demonstrated how he added photos and documents and how he can receive “hints” from FamilySearch and/or other sites for review. An especially interesting feature was the mapping tool in which you could pinpoint certain events of a person’s life – where they were born, where they worked, where they were buried, and so on. Later in our meeting, David made a great discovery which you can read about on the next page.

Rod Coates then presented on **Family Historian**, a more UK-based program. Where the other two programs link up with hints from North American companies, this has links to MyHeritage and Findmypast. Family Historian also has a Map/Events tab; and especially nice is the option to view a historical map of the area. Rod then talked about the “Publish” tab and “User Support”, which are great added features.

After a few general questions, we split into online “breakout rooms” to go into further discussion and questions about the program we were most interested in. About half of the group went to FTM, with the other half being split between the other two programs.

After 20 minutes of very helpful discussions, we all reconvened for final comments and a poll to determine software usage. FTM received about half the votes, with the rest divided among RootsMagic, Family Historian, “other” or “none”. Carol Sklinar uses “Custodian”, especially for her One-Name Study. Bob Dawes reminded us that each program lets you save your tree as a GEDCOM file, which is portable between different programs.

Next, Susan Brouwer outlined future meetings and topics of interest. As a speaker for our online meeting on 25th September, we hope to have Lucille Campey, author of many books on the subject of Scots emigrating to Ontario. In November, in honour of Remembrance Day, David Joiner hopes to share how military records, geotechnology and luck helped him learn more about his great-uncle’s role and death in WW1. In early 2022, we hope to have a meeting on the subject of Kirk Session records and out-of-wedlock relationships in North-East Scotland – a topic that I’m sure touches many a family tree. In April or May, possibly our first “in person” meeting will give us a tour of the University of Guelph’s collection of Scottish history books, which is the largest outside Scotland.

It looks like an interesting upcoming year, and we welcome all who would like to join us.

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Susan Brouwer No. 20475
co-organizing with Rod Coates (No. 18349) and David Joiner (No. 16651)

Discussions and Discoveries

In the online meeting reported on p. 11, I learned many new things about these programs and picked up other helpful tips for family-history research. My RootsMagic presentation, and our subsequent discussion, drew an interesting comment from Barbara Dawes on a location discrepancy she wisely noted. In following this up, luck was on my side.

Our small-group discussion of RootsMagic held a poll on features to demonstrate in more detail on a shared screen. RootsMagic “Web Hints” was a popular request, so I showed how yellow “lightbulbs” for an individual indicate one or more possible record matches with an online database – in this case, FamilySearch.

My presentation had focused on examples involving my great-grandfather George Joiner (b. 1860, Huntly; d. 1911, Banchory Ternan), so I went to the RootsMagic main-window Descendants view to demonstrate Web Hint notifications. Of all the “lightbulbs” I could have picked in the resulting list, fortunately I chose the one for Arthur H. Groom, who had married my grandfather’s second-eldest sister, Elizabeth Jessie Joiner (b. 1887, Belhelvie; d. 1969, Huntsville, Ontario, Canada).

This showed a pending FamilySearch record hint for a marriage. On following that link, the details listed a 1916 wedding in England but showed no image of the marriage registration. My personal local records had only “Brighton” with no source, and just a hint that the wedding had been in Scotland.

Barbara correctly pointed out the discrepancy, which was a good reminder to us all to double-check information from online collaborative sources. There is a Brighton Road in Cupar, Fife, Scotland; there is also Brighton in Sussex, England (far from Aberdeen).

It was also mentioned in our meeting that British Newspaper Archive records were free that weekend. Next day, I decided to check the actual marriage announcement in the *Aberdeen Evening Express*, the newspaper listed as the source of the FamilySearch record hint. I have had a BNA subscription in the past, so I knew the search should go quickly.

Well, I found it: my great-aunt Elizabeth did marry Arthur Henry Groom on 4th January 1916 in Brighton, Sussex. It was *my* record that was incorrect. However, catching my eye were all the other abbreviations and the title attached to Groom the bridegroom:

GROOM–JOINER.—At All Saints’ Church, Brighton, Sussex, on 4th January [1916], Bombardier A. H. Groom, RGA, BEF, France, to Elizabeth Jessie, second daughter of the late George Joiner, gardener, Cairnton, Banchory, and Mrs Joiner, 196 Alabama Avenue, Rhode Island, Providence, USA.

“BEF” was the British Expeditionary Force. “Bombardier” was intriguing; and I quickly found that “RGA” was the Royal Garrison Artillery. I had known that this had been a short marriage: Arthur’s death in our family records was listed as 29th February 1916, less than two months after their wedding. We had simply assumed an accident or sudden illness – but the death of a BEF bombardier in 1916 leads one to other assumptions.

Returning to the BNA, my suspicions were confirmed. The loss of Arthur H. Groom was listed not in a “Deaths” column but in the “Roll of Honour” published in the *Aberdeen Evening Express* of 23rd March 1916:

GROOM.—Killed in action, “Somewhere in France”, on 29th February 1916, Bombardier A. H. Groom, RGA, son of Mr and Mrs Groom, 23 Victoria Road,

Addlestone, Surrey, and husband of Elizabeth Jessie Joiner, 41 Compton Avenue, Brighton, Sussex. Canadian and USA papers please copy.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission online database provided additional details. Arthur H. Groom, service no. 27309, RGA, 10th Siege Battery, died on 29th February 1916 and is buried at Dickebusch New Military Cemetery, plot 1.H.24, near Ypres in Belgium.

A War Diary obtained online from the National Archives for the RGA's 10th Siege Battery confirmed his death as the only loss of life that day, when enemy shelling targeted their gun emplacement in Flanders. The RGA had been firing on German positions in advance of British operations to retake the Bluff near St Eloi that were scheduled for early March.

The widowed Elizabeth's mother (her namesake), after her own widowhood in 1911, had emigrated in 1915 first to Rhode Island, USA, to join another of her children, and then crossed to Ontario to be with others of her children who had migrated to Canada. These others included my grandfather Edward Joiner (b. 1896, Belhelvie; d. 1966, Burgessville, Ontario). Elizabeth jnr followed in 1920 and would later marry Daniel Rogers in Ontario.

What was to be a quick look at one wedding announcement turned into an afternoon search through the online resources of the BNA, the CWGC, the UK National Archives, Google Maps and many other First World War information sources.

Thanks to one fellow member's sharp eye for detail, and another's comment during our online ANESFHS Southern Ontario Group meeting, another soldier lost during the Great War will be remembered by his relatives distant in place and time.

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David Joiner No. 16651

—oOo—

Publications List Update

Our Postal Sales volunteer is continuing to process and despatch your orders. On our website, you can browse our extensive "Publications for Sale" list. The latest in stock:

Caithness FHS

AN306 Stroma Cemetery MIs. £6.00 260gms

Local History

LT401 Old Portknockie, Findochty and Portessie – Collection of old photographs. DG Lockhart. £11.95 200gms

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Jean Shirer No. 14

Discover with me your ancestral roots in Aberdeen & NE Scotland!

Walk in your ancestors' footsteps, see sights they saw, breathe the air they breathed

I am a professional, qualified tourist guide, fully insured to drive and guide you



Elma McMenemy, Blue Badge Tourist Guide
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Library Report

Our Society library holds many books on the movement of Scots within the UK and throughout the world. David Dobson's books are particularly useful. Each focuses on a particular area in Scotland or abroad, and lists the people who emigrated/immigrated, giving names with brief biographical details. All his information comes from primary sources such as documents found in the National Records of Scotland or in local archives.

Another very useful resource is Professor Marjory Harper's two-volume *Emigration from North-East Scotland* (Aberdeen University Press, 1988). In volume 1, she studies major factors in emigration from the North-East, the means of transport, the reasons for choice of destination, and the conditions in early settlements in the period 1830–80. Volume 2 deals specifically with emigration to Canada in the 30 years before the First World War.

In 1790, Sir John Sinclair sent out a detailed questionnaire to every one of the Church of Scotland's 900 or so parish ministers. The results of this survey were published between 1791 and 1799 in 21 volumes as *The Statistical Account of Scotland* (known as the *Old Statistical Account*), providing an unrivalled account of life in 18th-century Scotland.

A second survey, usually referred to as the *New Statistical Account of Scotland*, was published between 1834 and 1845 and follows the same lines as the first. Together they provide a contemporary account of a Scotland in an age of significant change. Both these accounts have been digitised by the University of Edinburgh. They are free to search at <https://stataccscot.edina.ac.uk> and provide useful background information about the parish in which your ancestor lived.

There were 171 questions in all. Question 96 is particularly relevant, given the focus of this Journal. It asks: “**How many emigrated from the parish?**” Some ministers give extremely detailed accounts; others provide a bare minimum of information. Some cover emigration from the parish at length; others barely mention it. In some cases, of course, the population was relatively stable, with little migration. It's always worth checking.

We learn from the 1797 Account for the City of Aberdeen that the number of women in the city exceeds the number of men despite a greater number of male births. This is explained by the fact that most of the industries in Aberdeen, for example the bleaching and thread-making industries, employ mostly women, and that the main industry, of making stockings, is carried on almost entirely by women. As a result, while most of the women remain at home, the young men emigrate to other places in search of employment.

An in-depth study, *Parish Life in Eighteenth-century Scotland: A Review of the Old Statistical Account* by Maisie Steven (Scottish Cultural Press, 1995), makes fascinating reading. She starts with a chapter on how the Account came to be written; and subsequent chapters cover various aspects of life in Scotland taken from the accounts of the various ministers. Chapter 15 deals with emigration.

These are only a few of the great range of resources in our library which can help you to find out more about the Scottish Diaspora. In addition, many of the parish histories and autobiographies we hold give useful information about emigration from Scotland. As is always the case with family-history research, the more background information you have, the more meaningful your research becomes.

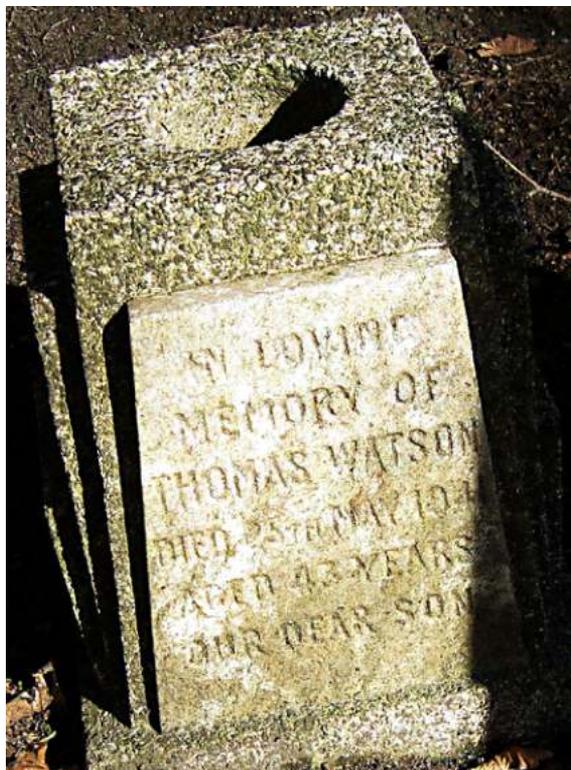
More Monumental Mistakes, or The Mystery of the Moving Memorials

The publication of a new MI booklet occasionally elicits queries about the accuracy of our versions of memorial inscriptions. We take every care to record epitaphs correctly – but stones can be hard to read, and we are always happy to check for possible misreadings.

But the recent appearance of *The Kirkyard of Nigg* (cat. AA075) prompted a different challenge. A Society member, whose family has long lived in Torry and buried their dead at Nigg Kirk, was quite happy with our transcription of a family stone, but thought that we had not shown it in the correct location on the kirkyard plan.

A quick trip to the top of Tullos Hill established that both transcription and mapping were as the booklet showed. So, what was the problem?

Our enquirer offered three pieces of evidence to back up his claim. The first was his childhood memories of family visits to the stone (supported by the recollections of a cousin) which suggested that we had placed the stone in the correct row, but around 15 metres too far south. We did show a stone in our enquirer's preferred location, but one with a completely different inscription.



The second piece of evidence was an old family photograph of the grave site – alas too fuzzy for the lettering to be read, but the shape of the stone is correct, and its location can be confirmed by reference to the position and outline of other stones in the background.

The final piece of evidence came from lair records. In our Nigg MI booklet, the numbering of the stones was based on the lair plan, and we had labelled the stone in question as B250 – but our enquirer knew, from previous enquiries to the City Council's Bereavement Service, that the Thomas Watson named on the stone was in lair B245. How was this circle to be squared? The truth began to emerge when we took a closer look at the stones in *both* locations. Can you work it out? See overleaf for the answer ...

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—oOo—



Anglo-Scottish Family History Society



<https://mlfhs.uk/anglo-scots>

We welcome this opportunity to introduce ourselves, being – as we are now – the UK's only Family History Society that focuses attention upon the interactions between two long-established neighbours through the lives of our ancestors.

The parent of the Anglo-Scottish FHS is the Manchester & Lancashire FHS (MLFHS), which was set up in 1964 in north Manchester by a group of Avro Aircraft workers. A notice was placed on the factory noticeboard, 27 people signed up ... and the first meeting was held at the local pub – where else?! By the end of 1964, this small gathering had

blossomed into the MLFHS, now with its own premises in Manchester Central Library under the title of **Manchester Ancestors**. From these rather humble beginnings, the MLFHS has developed into four Branches, namely Manchester, Bolton, Oldham and Anglo-Scottish. While our Bolton and Oldham branches are based in their respective towns, the MLFHS, including our Anglo-Scottish branch, is based in Manchester Central Library and enjoys a partnership with several other organisations based there, including Archives and Local History and the National Film Archive. Do have a look at the new website <https://mlfhs.uk>, with its information about our daily helpdesk (virtual just now), the online forum for members, the helpful videos and the extensive database.



The Anglo-Scottish branch developed from interest in an article in the MLFHS journal in 1976 titled “Scottish Immigration into Lancashire”. Many MLFHS members had Scottish roots, and sufficient of these came together and shared their research. This cooperation gave rise to a further publication, *Dictionary of Emigrant Scots into England*, which collated the names and details of those born in Scotland before 1855 but who lived, married or died in England. Interest in this project soon moved beyond England, however, and names and details also began to be submitted from Scottish emigrants abroad.

It was almost inevitable that those with Scottish roots would want a more structured and formal way to inform and enhance their family-history research. In 1982, the MLFHS committee agreed to the formation of the Anglo-Scottish Society as a branch of the MLFHS. Next year is therefore the 40th anniversary – and its influence over these years has continued, including its involvement in the establishment of the Scottish Association of Family History Societies (SAFHS) in 1986.

The branch’s initial focus, which to some extent remains today, was the influx of Scots into the Greater Manchester and Lancashire area. Consequently, a library of resources has been built up that identifies Scots who moved into this area, either as single persons or as families. As well as the *Dictionary of Scottish Emigrants* mentioned above, there is the record of over **10,000 Presbyterian baptisms** and the almost **80,000 Presbyterian Communion rolls**. A record of all the **baptisms carried out at St Paul’s Presbyterian Church in Wigan** gives the names, not only of the children and parents, but frequently also of the places in Scotland where one or both parents came from. Apart from these traditional records, there are more substantial documents that chart Scottish influence, from the Jacobite arrival in Manchester, through the Scots who fought for Wellington at Waterloo, to the journeys made by emigrant Scots to other lands.

The international dimension of the branch has developed over the years, and this is perhaps best illustrated by the **Scottish Marriage Index (SMI)**. One of the stumbling blocks for any family historian is when ancestors marry away from their birth parishes, particularly if they have emigrated. The SMI is built around the simple premise of a marriage where at least one spouse is Scots-born. Most marriages currently listed in the Index took place outside of Scotland, but some Scottish marriages are included where one spouse is well away from the parish of their birth. An entry in the Index will normally give four family names and so can be a great resource for family-history research. The Index remains a dynamic source of research as contributors from far and wide continue to add their relatives to it. Some contributors indeed have sent considerable amounts of information, including the marriages of the children of Scottish emigrants; and this extra information is made available upon enquiry via the website <https://mlfhs.uk/anglo-scots>.

The Anglo-Scottish branch meets on the third Saturday of each month at Manchester Central Library, where we host a variety of speakers on subjects relevant both to our Anglo-Scottish research and to broader topics of interest. Our meetings are prefaced by a helpdesk for two hours, when anyone can call in for assistance with their research.



During this period of Covid, all of these services have been offered through Zoom; but we look forward to reopening later this year. Along with the MLFHS as a whole, therefore, we continue to thrive and are always open to offering assistance and sharing experience. So, if you think you might have some links with our area of expertise, then drop us a line at angloscots@mlfhs.org.uk. Better still, if you have any ancestors who you think fall into the category for the **Scottish Marriage Index**, then send it to us, and we will add it to the database. You never know who you might link up with.

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Mark Campbell (Newsletter editor)

—oOo—

More Monumental Mistakes: Mystery Solved



This is the stone currently on lair B245, which is where our enquirer thought his ancestor was buried.

Rather more heavily lichened than the Watson stone, it is inscribed:

*“In loving memory
from
neighbours
and chums.
James Murray
died 9th Oct. 1942”.*

But the striking thing about this stone is its shape. It takes the form of a granite flower-holder, in the Art Deco style – which is exactly the same design as the Watson stone. It appears that, at some point, the two near-identical stones have been transposed!

How could this have come about? The Watson family regularly visited their grave, and we know from burial records that, while they are not mentioned on the stone, further members of the family were interred in the lair in 1948 and 1952. The mourners would surely have noticed if the inscription was wrong.

So, we are left with a mystery. Perhaps the same gremlins were at work who left a nearby “cross-on-plinth” stone wrongly assembled (see Journal 158, p. 27). But, whatever the explanation, the moral for students of graveyards must be that *“the stones do not always match the bones”*.

Stop press!

The member who reported the problem has now managed to effect a solution. Having presented his case to the Council’s Bereavement Services, he has (with their agreement) swapped the stones involved so that they each now stand over the correct grave.

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Book Reviews

Scottish Genealogy: The Basics and Beyond by David Dobson (Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2021)

I jumped at the chance to review this latest book by Dr Dobson, who has written over 200 books since beginning research on the Scottish diaspora in 1983.

The 157 pages contain five sections or chapters: “Getting Started”, “Major Record Sources”, “Church and Other Religious Records”, “Secondary Sources” and “Emigration”. There is an appendix of family-history societies in Scotland, as well as a topical index and a list of surnames given in example texts the author has pulled from the various sources. “Getting Started” lists 42 national, regional and local archives and libraries in Scotland. Each type of record reviewed contains a brief description and available information about publications, records in archives and libraries, and other sources.

“Secondary Sources” is the most detailed chapter with respect to records sources, and takes up about half the book. Also very useful is the chapter on Emigration, with material on emigration from Scotland to the Netherlands, Scandinavia, France, Poland–Lithuania, Russia, Germany, Southern Europe, Ireland, Australasia, Latin America, Africa, Asia, North America and the West Indies.

There is also an extensive list of military and other publications – but I wonder whether the publisher gave this book the full respect it deserves, as it seems to have been rushed to publication. There is so much data contained in this book that a detailed index of referenced publications and locations would be invaluable.

I look forward to a digitised version of this publication so that the listed records can be searched by location or record title. The book is available at the publisher’s website, <https://www.genealogical.com>, and via Amazon.

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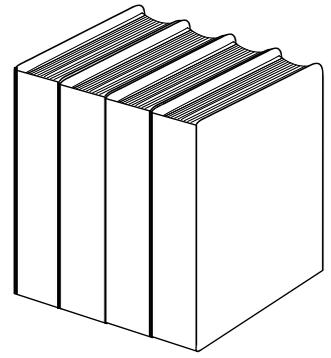
Mary Larson No. 14355

Burnbanks Village by Joe McLeod (Amberley Publishing, 2021), 160pp, £18.99, ISBN 978-1-3981-1091-5

Burnbanks Village is a cluster of 22 houses, just south of Aberdeen. Even today, you may struggle to find it named on the map – near the coast, between Altens and Cove Bay.

The expansion of Aberdeen in the mid-20th century breathed new life into many of the old clifftop fishing communities like Cove, Nigg, Findon, Old Portlethen and the Downies, transforming traditional single-storey stone cottages into picturesque commuter homes, or establishing modern new-build estates. Not so in Burnbanks. From a high point of 120 souls in the 1880s, the population gradually declined, and the hamlet became derelict and abandoned in the 1980s. A redevelopment programme in 1991–2 brought the village back to life. That’s when ANESFHS member Joe McLeod (no. 21957) moved into one of the redeveloped houses and became fascinated with finding out about the stories associated with the settlement.

McLeod has trawled the archives and has connected with former residents to create this well-produced little book with lots of high-quality photographs (including “then and now”



comparisons of derelict cottages with the modern homes), family anecdotes and short sections on the people and events associated with Burnbanks Village, past and present. It is not so much a history of the village as a kind of *pot pourri*, including incidents that have a tangential link to the area, such as shipwrecks and details of accidents on the cliffs and railway line near Burnbanks. There's a diverting range of topics: information on a cholera outbreak in 1866 is followed by a piece on the Inverurie-born artist James Cassie RSA (1819–79), who apparently was well known for painting maritime scenes along the coast between Nigg Bay and Stonehaven, long before Joan Eardley arrived in Catterline.

McLeod has done detailed research into Burnbanks residents named on the local war memorials, and acknowledges Anne Park and her huge WW1 Roll of Honour database in the members' area of our Society's website. McLeod, a subsea project engineer, is drawn to maritime events. In particular, he has compiled comprehensive material on the sinking of SS *Norwood* in February 1917 by a German U-boat.

McLeod writes in a conversational style, including photos of recent family and community events. The book will be of most interest to anyone with a connection to Burnbanks, and is worth a look if you have connections to any of the fishing villages between Nigg and Downies, as many of the family surnames are common to all these places.

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—oOo—

Why Can't I Find Great-Grandfather's Burial Records?

In Journal 157 (Nov 2020), Pauline Gerrard gave a useful breakdown of where North-East burial records are held (pp. 20–21, "Finding a Grave in Aberdeen City or Shire"). But there can be problems in making best use of these records. Access to burial records for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire has largely been outsourced to the pay-per-view website Deceased Online, so it is vital to understand both how that website works and the data on which it depends. As regards the data, there are three main questions:

Q.1: For which burial grounds do records exist?

Originally, every parish had a burial ground surrounding its kirk, but most have been extended over the years. These extensions are sometimes obvious, for example with a "new section" outside the original boundary wall, but the divisions will often be less apparent, marked perhaps by a subtly different alignment of stones. So, while many kirkyards and cemeteries will be listed as having burial records, these may well cover only the extensions. A further problem is that some burial grounds, or sections of burial grounds, may well be known under more than one name.

Q.2: For what time periods do records exist?

In the original kirkyards, rights of burial will have been established and maintained by tradition. Formal written records of burials and lair plans showing the locations of graves become widespread only in the later 19th century, with some only starting in the 20th century, either when a new cemetery was laid out, or when a new section was added to an ancient burial ground.

Q.3: What kinds of burial records are available?

Cemetery managers commonly kept two kinds of records: the "Lair Register" and the "Burial Register". The Lair Register has a separate page for each plot, usually headed

by the personal details of the lair owner, below which are added, over time, details of everyone buried in that lair (generally members of one family). The Burial Register recorded all interments in date order, one per line, so a family's burials will be dispersed across many different pages of the register.

Discovering what records are available for any given place and time depends ultimately on the extent and quality of the information supplied to Deceased Online by the owners of the data (Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council). An indication of this can be found via the "*Coverage*" link on the Deceased Online website, and this reveals significant differences in the information provided by the City and the County:

Aberdeen City

Just 10 burial grounds are listed, all of which are sites no longer in use for burials, and whose "historic" records have consequently been passed to Aberdeen City and County Archives for safe keeping. For each of these older burial grounds, details are given of:

- the total number of burials recorded
- the exact start and end dates for each burial ground
- the type of register available (Lair, Burial or other).

In some cases, there are additional notes to help researchers.

Aberdeenshire

For the County, Deceased Online give a list of over 150 burial grounds, but with no information on either type of registers available or dates covered. Starting dates for burial records (ranging from 1821 to 2009, with a median date of 1915) are available on the Aberdeenshire Council website, at:

<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/26329/burialgroundsdaterrecordscommencementdate.pdf>

All of the above has implications for using the Deceased Online website. The detailed "*Coverage*" information for Aberdeen City will give you a good idea of how likely it is to locate a burial in the City. For the County, you will have to cross-check with the Council website regarding dates included. And Deceased Online appear to have used only the Burial Registers, even where Lair Registers exist.

Assuming you are in luck with coverage, you will be faced with other questions. An initial search by name and date is free of charge and, provided you have registered with Deceased Online, will bring up a list of hits showing date and place of burial, with an invitation to "*Click on a name for further information*". This typically brings up a screen with two options:

Description	price		
Grave details and 7 other burials	£1.50	view	about ...
Burial register scan	£2.00	view	about ...

[◀ return to search results](#)

The "*Burial register scan*" (for £2.00) will most likely display a line of information on the person you searched for, surrounded by unrelated burials which happened to occur around the same time. The information will include a code identifying the lair (i.e. plot) where the individual is buried.

But, if you want to know who else shares the grave, you need to click the “*Grave details and X other burials*” option (for £1.50) – assuming, of course, that this is on offer, which is not always the case. If available, this will give you a list of names, with dates of burials (although, to see the full details of these individuals, you will need to call up the “*Burial register scan*” for each of them – at a further cost, in the example above, of £14.00).

But there can be a problem. Deceased Online appear to be identifying the “*other burials*” by matching up the “lair” code from other records in the Register. Unfortunately, it would appear that this “derived data” is not always reliable. The resultant errors will be dealt with in future articles.

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100 Club News

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 (1st 20 per cent, 2nd 15 per cent, 3rd 10 per cent and 4th 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. If you’d like to join, then please e-mail me (below).

	1st prize No. (£24.40)	Mem. No.	2nd prize No. (£18.30)	Mem. No.	3rd prize No. (£12.20)	Mem. No.	4th prize No. (£6.10)	Mem. No.
Feb	Fiona 24 Gaskell	17588	Catherine 45 Kirkwood	14069	Michael 110 Kennedy	15552	John 67 Corall	1000
Mar	William 73 Low	484	Maureen 4 Taylor	1553	Patrick 28 Boyne	8988	Ian Aitken- Kemp	4841
Apr	Patrick 59 Boyne	8988	Raymond 102 Mennie	11359	Janet 125 Brown	15008	Raymond 115 Mennie	11359
	1st prize (£23.00)		2nd prize (£17.25)		3rd prize (£11.50)		4th prize (£5.75)	
May	Teresa 92 Shewell	4883	Jeanette 124 Terry	14978	Elizabeth 86 Jordan	18139	Edna 50 Cromarty	2568
Jun	Moira 108 Copley	344	Angus 18 Pelham Burn	19808	John 46 Davidson	6455	Jean 65 Shirer	14
Jul	William 31 Munro	8229	Catherine 45 Kirkwood	14069	William 136 Copland	20126	Debra 114 Tomkinson	15015

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Teresa Shewell

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Letters to the Editor



Dear Editor,

DNA, and Connections Made in Society Meetings

The power of our Society's online meetings should never be underestimated. We have all met folks we might never have met in "normal" circumstances.

I took the plunge and had my DNA test done following one of our discussions. Helen Taylor has been an absolute star with helping me navigate matches and links. I discovered there was a setting on Ancestry I hadn't activated. During our Glasgow Group e-meeting in May, Helen screen-shared this setting that she said many people hadn't activated, and it would be really helpful. At random, she clicked on a name in her tree to show everyone – and I was amazed to see the names of John Innes and his wife Ann Cockburn. John Innes was my 4g-grandfather – how could Helen have him in her tree? What was the link?

Somehow I managed to keep quiet during the rest of the meeting. Helen and I spent that evening exchanging e-mails, then had an online chat the next day. Sure enough, we now find we are related: my 3g-grandmother and Helen's 2g-grandfather were siblings.

Had it not been for the discussions in our Society's online meetings, would I have taken a DNA test? I certainly don't think I, in London, would have met Helen, in Inverurie. In a further twist, when I realised what her Ancestry name was, it rang another bell – and we had exchanged Ancestry messages in 2017, but I had only just discovered this branch of my tree, and it was all too new for me to answer Helen's questions ... until now!

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US Immigration through New York, 1855–1924

As an American, it was interesting to read a perspective of an Ellis Island arrival from the sending country, rather than the receiving country (Journal 159, May 2021, pp. 27–30). My grandfather, James Wright (1880–1961), was born in Gamrie, Banffshire, son of an agricultural labourer (John Wright, born 1845). By 1891, the family had moved further south in Scotland to Carluke, Lanarkshire.

After completing his schooling, James became a painter (buildings, not landscapes or portraits!). He emigrated to the Colony of Natal (South Africa) in 1902. Family history (we all know that "family history" can be either the most reliable or the least reliable source of information) says that his intended mailed him: "You'd better return to Scotland quick if you still want me; other men are interested". And so, he returned to Scotland. He married Elizabeth Gilchrist Logan (1880–1967) in Glasgow on 24th October 1906, with his sister as witness. Family lore picks up again, and says they spent New Year "on the boat".

Not exactly. Ellis Island records show that James left for America, on the SS *Furnessia*, the same day he was married. By himself! It was a very short honeymoon. Presumably he went ahead to find work and housing. Ellis Island records of that era are very detailed, with 21 questions asked (after name), right down to "Do you have at least \$50 in your pocket?" A ship's officer certified that no alien (non-US citizen) "is an idiot or insane person or a pauper ... is a polygamist, or an anarchist ... or a prostitute". The ship's

surgeon certified that none suffered from a contagious disease. James passed all tests, crossed the pond and ended up settling in Princeton, New Jersey – a surprisingly upscale community for a poor young man.

Elizabeth left Glasgow two months later, on 29th December 1906, on the SS *Caledonia*, travelling with another young woman from her home town of Carluke. It was they who celebrated New Year “on the boat”. The ship’s manifest notes that Elizabeth’s husband paid her fare, she was carrying \$100 in her purse (overwritten as “\$75”), and she was joining her husband at 26 Chambers Street, Princeton, NJ. Alas, 26 Chambers Street is now a parking lot for a bank. However, fire-insurance maps of the time show the footprint and structure of their former home; and similar homes on an adjacent street still exist.

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Online Courses

From here in southern England, I am sure I am not alone in appreciating all the Society’s online meetings that have sustained us through the lockdown months. Thank you to all the organisers and speakers who have enlightened a long winter in so many ways.

In accessing our online meetings on my tablet device, I discovered FutureLearn – short online courses from universities and educational establishments worldwide, covering an extensive variety of topics. You choose a free taster course (three to six weeks), which is certainly not too arduous. If you wish to continue, there is a fee, and you attain recognised credentials on completion of the course.

I have tried several, including genealogy (from Strathclyde University), archaeology, Irish culture, and now Glasgow University’s course on the origins of the Scottish clan system, which is excellent. I have found several bits of information from all of them which have added to my own family research, most recently an ancestor born in 1737 – pre-Culloden.

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My Best “Wow!” Moment

I have been researching my family history for a very long time, starting with my father’s side. Once I had been researching for a while, my Mum said one day: “I wish you could find something for me; but it’s not to be”. I said: “well, you never know”. Mum kept insisting she didn’t know anything or anyone, and there was nothing to find.

I persevered! “Do you have any documents?” I asked. She had her birth certificate, and her marriage certificate to my father. I asked: did the information match? It did. My parents live in North-East Scotland, but I now live in London. I couldn’t explain how to scan a certificate, so she posted it to me! I was so nervous it would get lost – but it finally arrived. She had grown up in Kincardineshire – but it turns out she wasn’t born there.

Mum said she had always known she didn’t grow up with her birth family. There was never any secrecy about it, and she had always been told there was nobody to look for, so not to bother. She was repeatedly told this, so had no reason to doubt it. She had been given her birth certificate shortly before she married my father.

My daughter was looking into her family tree for a history project at school. We decided to put a post on an online forum asking for any information about a Jean Tulloch Stewart. Two days later, a woman replied saying I must be mistaken with the name, as the Jean I

was seeking was her mother-in-law, and she had known her. We exchanged e-mails double-checking information for some time, as I was adamant that I had the right name.

It became apparent that my granny was indeed this woman's mother-in-law, making her husband my uncle, though he is only two years older than I am. I had found a brother for my Mum. Then my new auntie said: "I have to tell you something else. You have found us – but my husband has a brother." Not only was I going to have to tell Mum I had found family, but I had found *two* brothers – and they were *her* brothers. I spoke to my Dad, and told him I was going to tell Mum. He thought he had prepared her – but actually when I rang, she had thought I was going to say I was ill! She didn't take it all in to begin with – not only did she have a brother, but she had two of them. To be told repeatedly there was nobody to find – and yet here were two brothers who were so much younger than her.

Mum was just about to celebrate her 65th birthday when we made this discovery, and we had to tell her that although she had assumed her mother had died a very long time earlier, she had only died a few years before. Not only had both sons grown up with her, but also she had lived to become a grandmother. Not the best news to impart. The siblings met – and wow, you can tell they're related: they all look so alike and are very like their mother.

Time rolled on five years, and my auntie texted to say she had heard from someone asking for information about Jean – just as I had done. I made contact, and the girl said: "I think we share a grandmother". Having been in this situation before, I said: "Tell me what you have, and I will tell you what I know". We decided to talk on the phone rather than ping e-mails back and forth to compare notes. My new cousin had her mother's adoption file, and told me where her mother was born – the same place my mother was born, six years earlier in 1944. Their mother's name was the same; the age matched. Both sisters were born in the same Glasgow hospital, but our grandmother was actually from Stirlingshire, 15 minutes' drive from where my "new" auntie had been brought up and still lived. My new cousin explained that her mother's adoption papers had been prepared before birth, and the name was changed after adoption. She wasn't sure of our connection, so I explained that she had discovered her mother had one sibling, but there were two more.

We had a chat about my mother not being adopted (no papers or records having ever been found); her mother being adopted; and our grandmother then having two sons and bringing them up. I called my Mum and said: "I found you two brothers for your 65th birthday; what would you like for your 70th?" "Aww, jees!" she said, "what have you found now?" "Well, what would you think of a sister?"

All four siblings look like each other and their mother, my granny. None has a father on their birth certificate – and the brothers say it was never mentioned. The brothers didn't know about the sisters, and of course each sister knew nothing about anyone. My Mum had no biological family until she was 65, and now she has a sister with three children and several grandchildren, a brother with two children, and another brother with four children and several grandchildren – and we have met a cousin whose father was Jean's brother.

I have lots of questions I may never get answers to. I have no idea how my mother came to live in Kincardineshire with this family who seem unrelated to us in any way. This was at the end of the Second World War; did records get lost or bombed out? Why was she told that nobody existed when her mother was clearly alive? The woman who raised her made no secret she wasn't her mother, so there was nothing to gain from this.

Queries

160/1 *GARDEN / YOUNG / GORDON*: Seeking b. date (c. 1811) and location for Hannah Garden, d/o John Garden and Jean/Jane Young. *Aberdeen Journal*, 28 Apr 1830:

two women, calling themselves Hannah Garden and Margaret Young or Gordon, were brought to this place, in custody of William Symon, 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.

Other gang members were Elizabeth Gordon or Young, Jean Young or *FORBES*, and James Gordon. It appears from the trial notes that all were somehow related to each other. At the trial, Hannah Garden was said to be returning to her mother's house at Portsoy. Hannah was transported to Australia, where in 1836 she m. Patrick *HALL*. After his death, she m. Andrew *GLANNON* in 1844. Hannah and Andrew are my 2g-grandparents. Any help at all in finding out Hannah's birth details and perhaps anything at all about her parents would be greatly appreciated.

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160/2 *ENGLAND / MORRISON / McINTOSH / FOWLER*: The surname England was unusual in the Aberdeen area, but a few Englands reside there. I am trying to build up info on the maternal side of my family tree, and any help would be appreciated. Unless stated otherwise, all known B/M/D events occurred in the Aberdeen parishes of Old Machar or St Nicholas.

2g-grandparents, Robert England (b. 31 Jan 1817, d. 22 Oct 1870), linen bleacher, and Hannah Morrison (b. 24 Mar 1821, d. 8 Jul 1895), m. 27 Jul 1838. Gt-gf George (b.c. 1837, d. 10 Jul 1910), blacksmith/engine-driver, Caledonian Railway, m. twice:

(1) on 14 Oct 1859 to Elizabeth McIntosh (b.c. 1836, d. 3 Mar 1872). Six chn (1871 census is best): Robert (b. 1859), Mary S. (1860), Esther S. (1863), Elizabeth (1866), George (1868) and John G. (1869).

(2) on 19 Jun 1874 in Aberdeen to Mary Fowler (b.c. 1845–7, d. 28 Nov 1897). Chn (1891 census is best), all b. Aberdeen: William Fowler (illegit. s/o Mary) b.c. 1867; Catherine (Kate, b.c. 1874), Andrew (b.c. 1875), Hannah (b.c. 1877), Williamina Howie (my grandmother, b. 3 Mar 1879), James (b.c. 1882), Alexander (b.c. 1884), Robert (1886; had Robert from 1st m. died?) and Francis (b.c. 1889).

On 23 Jan 1903 in Aberdeen, Williamina m. toolmaker William Ewing *WATT*, who had served with KOSBs in 2nd Boer War, 1899–1902. Their chn (from 1911 census): my mother Williamina Mary b. 12 Oct 1903 Inverurie (d. 3 May 1957 Greenock, Renfrewshire); Margaret Elizabeth (Madge) b. 13 Mar 1905 Inverurie; Katherine (Kath) b. 27 Jun 1907 Aberdeen; Elspet Rae (Elsie) b. 15 Apr 1909 Aberdeen.

Williamina d.c. 1929/30 on board ship to S Africa to join her husband (b. 5 Jan 1880 Strichen; d. 1 Mar 1943 Durban). The Watt family later moved to Greenock.

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Articles

The Amorous and Geographical Adventures of Andrew Edward jnr

In Journal 158 (Feb 2021, pp. 25–27), I wrote about my 2g-grandfather Andrew Edward. He lived on the same farm all his days, and his adventures were of an amorous nature – but his son, also Andrew, journeyed to far-flung parts of the world while not missing out on “sowing his wild oats”. Andrew junior was born on 9th May 1841 at South Kirkhill farm, Nigg, Kincardineshire, on the outskirts of the Aberdeen district of Torry. The second child of Andrew senior and his wife Janet Taylor, he left school to begin an apprenticeship as a mechanical engineer with an Aberdeen firm.

He was only 17 when on 31st October 1858 he was accused by a Margaret Wood from Torry of having made her pregnant. He denied this before the Nigg Kirk Session, but did confess his guilt with her 18 months previously. The child, an unnamed girl, was born on 29th November but died a few days later. On 19th December, Margaret was granted a certificate of poverty in order to prosecute Andrew as the father of her deceased child. There seems no further mention of the case, so it is not known if the child was his or not.

Two years later, Andrew was in trouble again when he was taken to court by an Elizabeth Cowie of Aberdeen, who accused him of being the father of her female child, born on 18th July 1860. In September, the Sheriff of Kincardineshire ordered him to pay her £1 10s expenses in connection with the birth, followed by £4 annually until the child reached 10 years of age. The child was named Williamina and was born at South Kirkhill, although Andrew was not named as the father on her birth certificate. Sadly, she died on 17th May 1862, having suffered a burn and also contracted scarlet fever.

Once again Andrew had to appear before the Kirk Session, when in September 1861 he and Helen Elmslie of Torry, a young unmarried woman (b. 1842 in Aberdeen), admitted their fornication. In Andrew’s case, this was described as “a bilapse if not a trilapse”. Twins Helen and Margaret Edward were born on 21st October 1861. Margaret died aged only six weeks, but Helen junior survived, got married and lived until 1927.

Andrew, by now no stranger to Kirk Session meetings, was summoned yet again, in February 1862 along with another young unmarried woman, Jessy Symon, who had recently given birth to a stillborn child. On 9th February, Jessy attended, but Andrew was said to be confined by a sore foot. There seems no further mention of this case, so again it is not certain if the child was his.

According to family legend, Andrew had got married and at some point had gone to Fiji. When I began my family-history research, that was all I knew of him. It took me many years to verify the truth of the story. Following the last Kirk Session mention in 1862, he disappears from records until 28th December 1866, when his marriage is recorded in Durban, Natal, South Africa, to Margaret Gavin (b. 1844), another Kincardineshire native. It seems unlikely that they had known each other in Scotland, as Margaret hailed from Laurencekirk, quite a distance from Nigg. In a book, *British Settlers in Natal*, Andrew is described as being of Isipingo, where he was an engineer on the Reunion Sugar Estate. The Isipingo area, lying a short distance from Durban, was the chief centre of sugar production in Natal. It is also stated that by 1882 he was living in the Fiji Islands. At last I had found some verification of the family legend. Given Andrew’s employment in a sugar mill in Natal, it was presumably that industry which had taken him to Fiji.

Further evidence of a connection between Aberdeen and Fiji's important sugar industry is the fact that some machinery, consisting of a steam engine and gear train, has survived in the remains of a sugar mill on the Salialevu Estate on the island of Taveuni. The gear wheels bear the words "Blaikie Brothers Engineers, Aberdeen 1863". Blaikie Brothers, of Footdee Ironworks, St Clement Street, manufactured many types of products, including sugar-processing machinery. The sugar industry in Fiji apparently developed after the collapse of cotton-growing there, following the end of the American Civil War in 1865. In the 1860s, there had been an influx of white settlers to grow cotton. It is possible therefore that the Salialevu machinery had originally been imported for a cotton plantation. The date 1863 may be significant, as it was the year after Andrew's last appearance before Nigg Kirk Session. Had he gone out to Fiji to install the machinery supplied by Blaikie's? If he had gone to Fiji in 1863, he may have thought the chance of a lengthy trip abroad could allow him to make a fresh start, free from his entanglements and responsibilities.

Margaret Gavin arrived in Durban in February 1866 with her uncle John and his wife. John Gavin (1821–75), also born in Kincardineshire, had arrived in Natal in 1850 and was a blacksmith, engineer and iron- and brassfounder in Durban. At least 30 relatives eventually followed on as settlers. Sugar-cane growing began in Natal in the mid-1850s and rapidly expanded. John Gavin got involved in the business, which led to his horrific death after falling into a pan of boiling juice.

After their wedding, Andrew and Margaret lived in Natal until setting sail on 6th February 1875 for Australia en route to Fiji. Their ship was the 194-ton schooner or barquette *Sarah Smith*, which was carrying a cargo of sugar together with five passengers. Light winds meant a slow passage of 48 days to Albany in Western Australia. There they took on water and supplies before continuing the voyage to Adelaide, arriving on 4th April.

Andrew and Margaret then continued their journey on the steamer *Coorong*, leaving on 6th April and arriving at Melbourne on the 9th. Three weeks later, on 30th April, they departed on the passenger steamer *Dandenong*, arriving at Sydney on 4th May. They left Australia on 10th May on the steamer *Rangatira* for Noumea in New Caledonia and Levuka on the island of Ovalau, which was the capital of Fiji at that time. They would have arrived to scenes of tragedy amid a measles epidemic, to which a large proportion of the native population fell fatally victim. (The return voyage of the *Rangatira* was, incidentally, to be her last, as she was wrecked on a coral reef near New Caledonia. Fortunately, everyone aboard was rescued. By coincidence, the *Dandenong* also foundered the following year, with considerable loss of life.)

Fiji had been annexed to the British Empire in the previous year, 1874. A big increase in sugar-cane growing soon took place, presumably leading to a corresponding demand for technical expertise in processing the raw material. As Andrew was already in the sugar business, he may have thought that Fiji would offer new opportunities.

No further records of Andrew and Margaret have so far come to light. Andrew's daughter Helen's marriage certificate in 1883 does not give him as deceased, though it is not known whether he was actually still in touch with his daughter and her mother. Helen's death certificate in 1927 gives Andrew as "deceased", the informant being Helen's daughter. Again the accuracy is not known.

I hope that this article may bring more information to light about the fate of Andrew and Margaret. Did they have any children? Did they return to South Africa, or travel on elsewhere after being in Fiji? Or did they remain in Fiji for the rest of their lives?

My thanks are due to Jennifer Wesley of Durban, whose research uncovered Andrew and Margaret's marriage in Natal and their voyage to Western Australia.

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Fiji Times online, 31st October 2010: "Silent history unveiled", by Serafina Qalo

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Censuses of Scotland

Newspaper shipping reports

Marriage certificates (Natal)

Robert Carson

No. 4293

—oOo—

Aberdeen, Scotland to Barre, Vermont: An Immigrant Experience

In the summer of 1901, Thomas Ingram set off from the port of Liverpool on the ship *Lucania*. He was a 27-year-old native of Aberdeen with only £7 in his pocket. He paid for his passage himself and was to meet a relative, Thomas Kesson, upon disembarking in New York City.

Thomas listed his occupation on the *Lucania's* manifest as "Mason". It is no surprise, then, that he made his new American home in Barre, Vermont. In the mid- to late 1880s and into the early 1900s, many Scots, like Ingram, immigrated to Barre – most of them originally from the Aberdeen area. Having learned their trade in Aberdeen's granite industry, they saw a future in Vermont quarry work. Chain migration was the natural result of Scots who had made the ocean crossing writing letters home or travelling back to Aberdeen. They carried news that Barre was similar in climate, paid better wages, and offered hope for a more democratic approach to labour.

The 1903 Barre City Directory lists Thomas Ingram as living in a boarding house on Maple Avenue and employed by the granite company of Innes & Cruickshank. In 1904, Thomas's wife and children arrived in the port of Boston on the *SS Republic*. Margaret was 28 years old, with sons James, age 7, and Thomas Jr, age 4. Thomas had paid their passage, and the ship's manifest noted that he met the three upon their arrival. Margaret had left her Aberdeen home with £30 in her purse. By 1904, the Barre City Directory reveals that Thomas continues to work for Innes & Cruickshank and the family is living together in a boarding house, this time on Pleasant Street.

Many of the Barre boarding house-keepers were Scottish women, the majority made widows by disease or fatal quarry accidents. Boarders paid about \$15 per month with three meals per day included, and sometimes laundry. Scots, newly arrived in Vermont, naturally aspired to move out of rented rooms and boarding houses and buy their own homes. The mansion of granite magnate George Mackie and others on Nelson Street in Barre were symbols of what could be: the turn-of-the-century American dream.

By 1905, Thomas is listed in the Barre City Directory as a stonemason, employed by Stephen & Gerrard, one of a large number of granite companies established in town by Scottish immigrants by this time. The Ingram family is now living in a rented house at 38 Long Street, a relatively quick social advancement. The 1910 census for Barre reveals the family had grown to include another two sons, aged 5 and 3. It records that Margaret had given birth to five children, four of whom were living.

An article in the *Barre Daily Times* from 25th October 1912 relates the story of Thomas's near-death. Having left his home at about 6:30pm to go to a neighbour's house for an evening of cribbage, he had come upon a live wire lying in the road. After he stepped on it by mistake, he evidently grabbed at the wire with his left hand to escape the shock and was thrown to the ground, where he was found lying with the wire still burning across his chest. Heavy rains had sagged the electrified overhead wire, charged with 2,200 volts, until it had rested on the road.

Thomas was transported to the nearby hospital and only regained consciousness later that night. The very next morning, however, he was miraculously declared out of danger and allowed to go home. Danger was not new to him, as granite-cutters faced difficult workdays. Quarry work often meant nine-hour, labour-intensive days; and life-threatening or fatal accidents in the granite sheds were common. Rock was cut out of the earth and shaped into heavy blocks of granite which were hauled to the cutting sheds – and, if they fell, they could cause terrible injury. Many workers found the labour harder than at home in Scotland. They lamented that there were no Saturday half-holidays as they had known in Aberdeen, though US wages were higher.

By 1890, a decade before Thomas Ingram arrived, Scots made up about 20% of Barre's population, including quarry workers from the Scottish Highlands. To honour Scottish contributions to Barre, these workers erected the Robert Burns Monument, arguably the most famous statue in Barre, in 1899 to celebrate the centenary of Burns's death in 1896. Surely, Thomas Ingram and his fellow Scots felt a great deal of pride each time "Bobby" came into view, and their home away from home felt more familiar for its presence.

On settling in their new Barre home, Aberdeen masons established their own Freemasons' Lodge, Presbyterian Church and Burns Club. The Barre Presbyterian Church's grey granite foundation was laid by local quarry workers in 1889. Another Presbyterian Church, made up mainly of Highland Scots, was established in nearby Graniteville, VT. Scottish Roman Catholics lived very much in the minority.

Clan Gordon No. 12 (Fraternal Order of Scottish Clans) was established to keep alive the culture of the homeland, to provide aid for granite-worker funerals, and to make sure the new US citizens were law-abiding. An annual Clan Gordon picnic was held in a park off the Barre–Montpelier road. There were games from home, like the caber-toss, and some Scottish Highland dancing. Favourite picnic foods included shortbread, oatcakes, "neeps" (turnips), and perhaps some delicious "stovies".

In 1917, Thomas Ingram was required to register for military service when the USA entered the Great War. His registration notes that he was not yet a US citizen. Although he had no physical disqualifications, at age 43 he was not called to serve. By 1919, Thomas was naturalised as a US citizen in Barre, VT. Margaret, James and Thomas Jr are also listed on the certificate as having been naturalised. The family had added a daughter by 1911 who, along with her two youngest brothers, were citizens by birth. Thomas appears in the 1920 Barre census still earning wages as a granite-cutter, and the family is now able to rent a larger house at 9 Bugbee Avenue.

Vermont's granite industry was successful because of men like Thomas Ingram: industrious, talented men who learned new and effective methods of quarrying, cutting and carving the beautiful Barre Gray granite. The introduction of pneumatic tools brought ever greater success, but the cost of that success was silicosis-related tuberculosis. The

pneumatic tools produced high levels of dust that lodged microscopic shards of granite in the stonecutters' lungs. Disease among the Barre workers became widespread. The span of a quarry labourer's working life was limited to about 20 years, and it was generally considered a long life to survive into one's 60s.

Thomas Ingram spent 37 years as a stonecutter in Barre's various granite sheds. He died at age 60 from silicosis, or "stonecutter's tuberculosis", after 15 months of struggling for breath. He had been a member of Clan Gordon and the Presbyterian Church and had joined the Granite Cutters' International union. Before his death, he likely participated in the numerous union strikes staged by granite-cutters all across the USA for better dust-reduction safety measures. In 1934, Thomas was laid to rest in Hope Cemetery in Barre, surrounded by hundreds of granite memorials that his cutting skills had made possible.

I never met my great-grandfather Thomas Ingram, although I visited Barre often with his son, my grandfather, Walter Ingram. Both were kind-hearted men who loved their families. Walter originally followed in his father's footsteps into work in the quarries, but left Barre at a young age, unable to tolerate the granite dust in his lungs. His new life as a golf pro in Ohio must have seemed quite foreign to Thomas, but he recognised it as a choice offering greater opportunity, and supported Walter's decision.

I rarely pass the granite counter in my own kitchen, or a design store granite display, without thinking of my granite-cutter ancestors, the Barre quarries, and the history of the men and women who crossed the ocean, leaving behind familiar Aberdeen for a world they did not know and perhaps could not imagine. Their legacy lives on in the amazing granite creations they have left behind (in both Aberdeen and Barre) for us all to marvel at and enjoy.



Circa 1932 outside their Barre home. Left to right: Thomas Ingram, daughter Annie, daughter-in-law Gladys Carr (wife of son Thomas), wife Margaret, son Thomas. In front: grandsons Thomas and James.

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Gray and Lamont Emigrants to America ... Twice

My father was a Norwegian from a large family whose Nordic lineage is traceable to the 9th century AD (and which also intersected with Scotland in the 11th century – but that is a tale for another day). My mother was an American only child of obscure ancestry who believed that her forebears had come to New York City from Scotland and England. This genealogically “unequal” marriage doubtless helped spur my mother’s interest in her own roots. With several early deaths in her family, an otherwise short bench of relatives, and a life spent extensively outside the USA, her knowledge of her own family history, however, remained minimal.

My research thus began with no inherited documentary evidence aside from some unlabelled photos and a few gleanings from my late mother: my grandmother’s maiden name (Helen Gertrude Gray) and her 1921 death year in New York City, plus her parents’ names of “Grandpa” Gray and Lillie (née Dougherty). The Gray ancestors were presumed to have come from Scotland. With those few bits, I made progress mapping out the lives and connections of Grays and Doughertys in NYC on my own. Only from contact with

previously unknown cousins did I ultimately gain information that enabled me to break through walls and start identifying my Scottish forebears.

From online research, and visits to the New York City Vital Records Office, I soon found that my great-grandfather “Grandpa” was George Gray (1865–1931), one of ten US-born children to James Gray (1827–1911) and Elizabeth England (1829–1912). Elizabeth was born in Somerset, England – but James was my Scottish ancestor, baptised on 2nd March 1827 in Old Machar parish, Aberdeen, to Andrew Gray (1802–80) and Ann Lamont (1806–91), my 3g-grandparents.

Andrew and Ann had come from rural Aberdeenshire: Andrew was born on Upper Brogan farm in Slains parish, 2½ miles north-west of Collieston; Ann was married from Skene parish (no birth/baptism record found for her). Andrew and Ann sailed from Aberdeen with their young children James and Dorothea aboard the British brig *Atlantic*, arriving in New York City on 11th June 1832. Andrew (and eventually his son James) – the descendants of generations of Aberdeenshire crofters – became gardeners, and by 1850 owned their own property.

My first outreach to a relative neatly confirmed my identification of four generations of Grays. This contact, a previously unknown second cousin, had retained a few old scraps of paper relevant to family history, including documents related to the Gray plot in Cypress Hills Cemetery, Brooklyn. Upon visiting it, I found my 3g-grandparents’ birthdates on the memorial Gray obelisk – a boon I hoped would help me locate their Scottish birth records and take me back another generation or more.



Helen Gertrude Gray
(1894–1921)



With Andrew Gray's birthdate in hand, I quickly identified the parents he had left behind when moving his young family to the USA: my 4g-grandparents James Gray (1780–1860) and Mary Bruce (1776–1851). This James was born at Nether Hawkhillock farm in the southernmost corner of Old Deer parish (later part of the *quoad sacra* parish of Ardallie), which I learned had seen generations of Gray births and deaths from at least the late 18th to the early 20th centuries. The farm, which still exists today, became central to mapping out family connections. Inter alia, it led me to my 5g-grandfather Alexander Gray, who died at Nether Hawkhillock on 29th August 1794, as had his wife, Christian Milne (1751–92). Alexander was born c. 1734 based on his death age, so I may be at a standstill with the Grays, as the Old Deer OPRs only begin in 1735. I have, though, found another set of 5g-grandparents in Slains parish – Mary Bruce's parents Alexander Bruce (d. 1827) and Margret Reit (d. 1822). I am also working to confirm Christian's parents as Andrew Milne (1704–87) from Rora/Longside and his wife Elizabeth Brydie (b. 1718), plus Andrew's father as William Milne (b. 1667?) of Rora, my possible 7g-grandfather.



While my Gray research in Scotland proceeded apace, I hit a brick wall with my immigrant 3g-grandmother Ann Lamont from Skene parish. Though hers was not a common name, I could find no likely Scottish birth record close to the birth year on her tombstone. My working hypothesis then became that a William Lamond (with wife and two children), named on the brig *Atlantic* passenger manifest immediately above Andrew Gray and Ann Lamont, was Ann's brother. This hunch has since been proven true. The Lamont brick wall held firm during a 2019 trip to Aberdeenshire to visit churches and farmsteads associated with my Grays, and for research at ANESFHS in Aberdeen and the National Records in Edinburgh. The first bricks in the wall gave way four months later: my online tree was spotted by an unknown distant cousin descended from Dorothea Gray (my 2g-grandfather James's younger sister, a toddler when the family emigrated in 1832).

Unable up to that point to trace Dorothea beyond her marriage to a Mr Gordon, I was unaware of information my "new" cousin now shared. Long after arriving in New York in 1832, my 3g-grandparents Andrew and Ann had later spent time back in Aberdeenshire before returning to the USA, where they had long made their home. They sailed from Scotland to New York in 1873, accompanied by their daughter Dorothea's youngest son, Louis/Lewis Gordon (aged 15). As a five-time emigrant myself, I am embarrassed to say it had never occurred to me to seek my 3g-grandparents back in Scotland, knowing that they had arrived in New York in 1832 and had later died and been buried there. And yet, there they were in the 1871 Scottish census, living in Inverurie with a Mary Gordon (née Lamont, 1803?–1887), who turned out to be an older sister of Ann's. Happily, the census also listed both sisters' birthplace as Kintore, Aberdeenshire. Eureka!

Neither Ann's nor Mary's birth appears to have been recorded, but thankfully Mary's death certificate included her parents' names. This enabled me to identify six further siblings, including the William Lamond who sailed to America with Ann – and Benjamin, a soldier whose brutal murder near Glasgow in 1826 was reported in the press at the time. I thus found Ann's parents: James Lamont (b.c. 1760) and Dorothea Delilah Ferguson (b. 1768), my 4g-grandparents. One difficulty in knitting Ann's siblings together was that Dorothea's name on the extant birth records of her children took many different forms:

Dorothy, Dalilah and Dolly, but never the full name. Thankfully, yet another distant cousin (also encountered online) confirmed from a written family history she possessed that Dorothea Delilah was, in fact, her full name. Another bit of icing on the analytic cake was finding that Dorothea Delilah was baptised in Skene parish, thus making sense of her daughter Ann Lamont's marriage there. Dorothea's parents (my 5g-grandparents) were William Ferguson (dates unknown) and Agnes Christie (likely b. 1729 in Echt). Agnes's parents were likely Alexander Christie and Isobel Mattie, but with more research required.

My research has found Gray and Lamont relatives scattered across the globe. Thankfully, they and their forebears were better guardians of family history than were my own direct maternal ancestors. Their willingly shared knowledge has shed light on the no-longer-obscure Scottish origins of a distant Norwegian-American (and now Scottish!) cousin.

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—oOo—

A Return Ticket to Hollywood

My great-auntie Mary Ann Morrison was born in Charlotte Street, Fraserburgh in July 1888, the second child and first daughter among eight children to James Stewart Morrison, a slater, and Mary Gordon (from a Rosehearty boat-building family). Auntie Mary went to the local school, then straight into domestic service in Aberdeen, and by 1911 she had become housekeeper to Alexander Walker (Chief Inspector of Schools) and his family at 39 Rubislaw Den South. Her two younger sisters, Jeannie (my maternal grandmother) and Nellie, worked with her at this house.

In the spring of 1914, Mary found work, via an agency, as a housekeeper in the USA. She sailed on 16th July from Liverpool to New York aboard White Star Line's *Baltic*, just over two years after the sister ship *Titanic* had been lost.

Mary's companions in 1st class were two English siblings, Cecil Geoffrey Howard, aged 4, and Katherine, aged 3, grandchildren of Ebenezer Howard, who founded the Garden City movement and was a shorthand writer for Parliament's *Hansard*. Geoffrey (1909–2002) later returned to England and went on to manage England cricket tours during the 1950s. Mary may have looked after the Howard children in London, and for a few more years in the Boston area, until she moved to a similar job in California with another family.

My cousin (via Nellie), Eileen Robertson, told me that Mary had been housekeeper to the film producer Louis B. Mayer, so I investigated further and discovered that he had first made his name as owner of a chain of theatres in Haverhill, near Boston. His parents had emigrated from Russia in the mid-1880s, and his life had been tough. He married in 1904, had daughters Edith (b. 1905) and Irene Gladys (b. 1907), and in 1919 moved his family to Hollywood. In the early 1920s, the teenage Edith contracted tuberculosis, so the family moved to a purpose-built, open-plan, large-windowed house on Sunset Boulevard. It is not known how the Mayer family knew of Mary Morrison; but the connection would probably have been Boston. Irene Mayer writes, in her autobiography *A Private View*:

A high-handed German nurse came to take care of Edie, and a mild reign of terror ensued. It was them versus us, a difficult and unnatural situation. Edie already isolated, became alienated. There was continuing friction between her and my father over who was to dominate our home. Finally they were no longer speaking, and it was decided to send Edith to the desert and create for her a whole new environment. The dragon lady

was replaced by a darling Scottish nurse who appeared to be no more than a jolly companion, which indeed she was.

This recounts Mary's arrival. Her world now revolved around a family that had become famous, as in April 1924 Louis B. Mayer became Metro Goldwyn Mayer's "top man" for the next 25 years, and his daughters Edith and Irene went on to marry film producers William Goetz and David O. Selznick respectively.

In the spring of 1926, Mary received word that her mother was seriously ill – but her mother died on 29th April before Mary could return to Fraserburgh. Travelling home to support her father and sisters would take time to arrange. All her travel was paid for by Mayer, with the comfort of knowing that she could come back. A long train journey to Halifax in Nova Scotia was followed by the Atlantic crossing aboard American Merchant Line's *American Banker*, to London, arriving at Royal Albert Docks on 10th April 1927. Soon after this, she took the train from Kings Cross to Aberdeen, and finally Fraserburgh.

She didn't return to the USA. She helped look after her father until he died in 1930; then she worked in Aberdeen, where she kept house to a family in Bay View Road, Springbank, before retiring to live next door to another sister, Jessie, in Walker Road, Torry, Aberdeen. During the war years, she gave financial help to her nephew George Jolly, Jeannie's son. When Mary became seriously ill in 1959, she moved in with Jeannie in Bankhead, Bucksburn, where she died on 7th June 1960. I remember Auntie Mary when our family used to travel by train from Preston in Lancashire to Aberdeen during summer holidays, and we visited quite a few relatives. She was a quiet and polite lady.



(L to R): Mary, Nellie, Jeannie

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—oOo—

Voyage of the *Oamaru*, 1877: The Matron's Diary

Built in 1874 at Greenock for the long-distance emigrant service, and operated by the Albion Shipping Company, the *Oamaru* was a full-rigged three-masted iron ship that made 25 emigration voyages between Glasgow and New Zealand ports. Conditions on board were somewhat better than a decade or so earlier. On the 1877 voyage, among the 240 on the passenger list, there were 62 single women and 13 children (aged 14 or under) in the unaccompanied women's quarters. The ship's Matron, who had oversight of the single women, was my great-grandmother Elizabeth Sangster. She kept a detailed diary of her duties and thoughts which has been handed down the generations. This gives insights into the operation of a migrant ship at the time and into the duties of a Matron.

Elizabeth was born on 29th December 1845 in Peterhead to Alexander Sangster and his wife Mary Beaton. The attraction of emigration was that two of her brothers, Lewis Beaton and Alexander, had previously settled in Invercargill, and two other relatives had emigrated to other parts of New Zealand; the reports of their life there were presumably positive. Elizabeth had not married but worked in her father's Turkish bath establishments in Peterhead and Aberdeen and also in the Aberdeen Hydropathic Establishment at Loch Head. Four or five years after her father's death in January 1871, she decided to emigrate to New Zealand and also to take along her widowed mother. Elizabeth's working her passage would have made this more financially feasible.

The *Oamaru* set sail from the River Clyde on 25th October 1877 and dropped anchor on 13th January 1878 after 81 days. Its first port of call was Bluff, the harbour for Invercargill at the South Island's southern tip, dropping off 70 of the 240 passengers. The ship then carried on to Port Chalmers, for the city of Dunedin, where the remainder disembarked. The call at Bluff was probably due to pressure from the Southland District, which had long claimed it was being neglected by the Government. The families destined for Southland had been supported by NZ Government-funded Assisted Passages or sponsored by existing residents of the district. An article in the *Southland Times* of 14th January 1878 lists the families who were supported and the other passengers who disembarked at Bluff. A list of unaccompanied women who disembarked was provided by the local immigration officer, Mr M. H. V. Lillicrap. A more complete list, reported in the total passenger list, is presented in this table (see Sources below). The newspaper article also gives some details about the ship *Oamaru*.

*Single women disembarked at
Bluff (13 entries):*

Currie, Margaret
(and Alexander, child)
Down, Rebecca
Ford, Mary and Sabrina
Irvine, Margaret
Mulligan, Kate, Anne and Mary
Nicoll, Elizabeth
Walsh, Kate
Sangster, Elizabeth
Sangster, Mary

Elizabeth's diary mentions some crew members involved with helping the single women. Three "Constables" were assigned to the single women, and they provided fresh water, food and other requisites. The cooks are not specifically mentioned, but Miss Sangster does comment that there was a baker on board and that meals were of good quality: "Every day there is meat for dinner, potatoes three times a week and very good soup very often, tea and coffee at their other meals, whichever they choose and always so much baker's bread, as there is a baker on board."

The ship's doctor is often mentioned. As well as tending to sickness, he was occasionally called on as an authority figure to administer discipline. There was a minister who took services; sermons using an appropriate text were sometimes on behaviour issues such as "loving your neighbour" or "not coveting your neighbour's goods", which might be seen as being directed particularly at the single people on board. Later in the voyage, a storm hit, and "one great sea came dashing in on us; the inside of our house was soon in a terrible plight, water washing all over. But the carpenter, such a kind man, came to their rescue and with his help and some of the girls we soon had things put to right again."

The quarters would have been cramped, and order needed to be established. Mess rosters were drawn up of ten single women passengers for each week, starting on 4th November. Most people served a couple of times or possibly more. The main national groups were Scottish and Irish. The diary author sometimes contrasts the two groups. Sometimes Irish women complained that they were singled out, but the Matron felt she was only reacting to behaviour and was even-handed. However, she did observe with one, presumably Irish, woman who was sick that she was shunned by the folk of her own faith and was tended for a considerable time by a Protestant.

If an incident was bad enough, or a person refused to apologise, the doctor was called in. Taking time on deck for fresh air was often an issue. In the worst instance recounted, late in the voyage, three women refused to get up, even in the afternoon. The chaplain and the doctor were called in, and eventually all the young women were returned to the dormitory, and the Matron was asked to lock the door at 4pm. She found the situation difficult, but after 1½ hours the doctor relented, and there was a brief respite before lights out.

On Sundays the work duties were reduced, allowing time for church services. These were conducted most Sunday mornings out on the poop deck, weather permitting. There was sometimes an evening service, and on afternoons there could be lessons for the children and youth. The services may have been conducted by a minister or under the direction of the doctor. Sometimes it was a common service, but more often separate Protestant and Catholic morning services would be held. Elizabeth's diary often gave her assessment of the quality of the service, or the conditions it was held in, or the effectiveness of the message; she obviously had a strong faith, and the services were very important to her.

Early in the voyage (diary entry 7th November), she records that they had witnessed "the solemn ceremony of a burial at sea": a baby had died of congestion or inflammation of the lungs. A newspaper reported that two babies died but three were born during the voyage.

Activities were organised during the week to keep the women occupied. Miss Sangster had come prepared with materials in her trunk to facilitate this: fabric so they could learn to sew dresses, wool for knitting, and notebooks and pencils for practising writing. She did achieve improvements in their sewing, but commented that when the dresses were completed and packed away for disembarking, some women returned to their slapdash ways. The copy books were marked later by the doctor at the end of the voyage.

The lessons were carried out, weather permitting, in the open air, to promote more healthy living conditions. By the time of this immigration voyage, better provision was being made for all passengers, and the single women had the use of half of the poop deck for fresh air and recreation. Elizabeth commented: "We are allowed the privilege of one half of the poop and a privilege it is. May we be able to see it as such."

Like most passengers, Elizabeth suffered from seasickness in the first eight days of the voyage. The weather had been very bad, and her first dated diary entry is 3rd November. After this experience, she thought she had found her sea legs. However, she suffered again when the seas subjected the ship to a rolling action. These seas were particularly severe in the Southern Oceans. However, on 24th December she could see the funny side, and wrote: "It was so uncomfortable rolling from side to side and everything around you tumbling about. It was worse just at breakfast time and I'm sure I could not help laughing, all the dishes rolling from end to end of the table, everyone clutching at something, their tea, water and everything rolling all over the place."

In contrast, the tropics could be very hot, and on a couple of occasions they were almost becalmed and were concerned at the slow progress. From mid-November, a sail was erected to provide shade, which made the poop area more practical. The hot weather led to a couple of girls fainting. Elizabeth suffered from a continual headache for some days from 25th November, and she doesn't report on crossing the Equator on 27th November. It was still hot on 1st December, and they were becalmed again, but by 5th December she is recording that it was cold again.

So, it was cooler for their Christmas celebration. On Christmas Eve, a number of women dressed up as characters and put on a performance. But the festivities were tempered by it being the first time many of them had been away from home; many were downhearted, and there were some tears. On Christmas Day, they put on their Sunday gear in order to remember that it was Christmas; and a nice pudding was prepared for dinner.

In late December near the end of the journey, the ship was speeding along but the weather was often unsettled. On the 28th it was wet, and the Matron read from a book the doctor

had given them to read about New Zealand. They were much pleased and interested by the accounts given of that new country. Activities were now being closed down, and the Matron's "box with the work" had been closed and taken out of the dormitory to be stored. On New Year's Eve, the sailors provided entertainment for the passengers, and this was repeated on New Year's Day.

There were still 12 more days until they reached port. On 12th January, Elizabeth wrote: "The girls just seem possessed tonight, one would think, only it is a little excusable. Yet it would seem to me to be a time for being quiet and thoughtful. Only to the young any change is pleasant, and the future looks so bright." At the end of the voyage, she summed up: "It has been quite a new experience to me and showed me a life in a different aspect from what I have seen before".

Postscript

Within 12 months of reaching Invercargill, Elizabeth was married, on 6th December 1878 to Andrew Fairbairn, a widower with three children. Elizabeth gave birth to five children: John Cook (1879), Elizabeth jnr (1881), Williamina (1884) and twins Charlotte (1886) and George (died at birth). Elizabeth carried on writing, with contributions published in the *Southland Times*. Also, as "Aunty Betty", she headed up the Clematis Clan when it first started for children to contribute to the newspaper. On a sad note, Elizabeth's mother Mary Sangster died by her own hand on 22nd February 1878, very soon after arriving in Invercargill. Elizabeth lived to age 89 and lies in Dunedin's Anderson Bay cemetery.



Elizabeth Fairbairn (from obituary article)

A transcript of Elizabeth's shipboard diary was made by her daughter Williamina Sangster Playfair, and the original was donated in 1968 to the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington, which is responsible for New Zealand archival records.

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Obituary for Elizabeth Fairbairn with photo, *Southland Times*, 18th October 1934, p. 8 (supplied by Invercargill Public Library, September 2013).

Passenger list (<http://freepages.rootsweb.com/~ourstuff/genealogy/Oamaru1878.htm>) for the *Oamaru*, departing Greenock 24th October 1877. [NB: later research has superseded some wrong genealogical information given in the note on Elizabeth Sangster at the end of this web document.]

Sangster, E., *Diary: On board the ship Oamaru from Glasgow to New Zealand*, transcribed by W. S. Playfair; copies held in family records.

See also my ANESFHS Journal articles: "Voyages of Discovery – A Visit to Peterhead" (Journal 110, Feb 2009, pp. 47–8) and "From Blacksmith to Hydropathist" (Journal 146, Feb 2018, pp. 29–31).

Aberdeen's Early Hollywood Connection

I had a cousin who was in silent movies ... I remember going to see one of her films ... and I had relatives in Buffalo ...

These were the words of my wife's grandmother, Gladys Rennie (née Brock), almost 40 years ago as we quizzed her about her family history – and so began our genealogy quest. Over the years that followed, we were able to add flesh to the bones of the story.

Our early researches revealed that Gladys's paternal grandfather, William Manson Brock, was born on 4th June 1836 in Thurso, Caithness. She had heard he had lost a leg during a conflict (later proved to be the Indian Mutiny) – but that's a whole other story! He died in Aberdeen in 1906, just before Gladys was born.

On his return home from military service, William Manson Brock worked as a stonemason while his wife Janet Thomson Brock looked after their growing family. Sons William, Simon, James, Andrew, Thomas and Robert, as well as a daughter Margaret, were born in Thurso before the family moved to Aberdeen sometime between 1875 and 1879. William snr (and most of his sons) found work in the booming granite industry. A further four children were born in Aberdeen – John (Gladys's father), Janet, Malcolm and George.

At the turn of the 20th century, Andrew and Thomas joined the exodus of stonemasons from Aberdeen to the granite yards in Barre, Vermont. They were later followed by brothers Robert, Malcolm and George, as well as their sister Janet. John (Gladys's father) also travelled there with the idea of settling, but his wife Mary would have none of it!

Even with so many siblings living in the USA, it came as a huge surprise to us to discover that they were also joined by their mother Janet (whom we later called "Little Grandma"), emigrating in her sixties, living well into her nineties. She, her children and their families later settled in Buffalo, NY. William snr remained in Causewayend, Aberdeen, and died in 1906. He is buried in Aberdeen's Trinity Cemetery.

Armed with this knowledge and some firm names and dates, we made a chance connection over the Internet with someone who appeared to be researching the same branch of the family. Although it was a bit sketchy at first, we soon realised we were on to something.

Our new contact's aunt (who remembered well her "Little Grandma") gave him access to a large box of photographs and other family items, many of them at that time unidentified. During this period, I happened to mention the "silent movie star" story – and it seemed that none of the surviving family in Buffalo were aware of it.

However, also among the photographs was a magazine, *Beautiful Womanhood*, from May 1924. Handwritten on the front cover was "Write up on page 19". This referred to an article, "She's a Prize Baby!", about a child actress – Little Dorothy Marion Brock – who could "swim, sing and dance as well as any child of her age" and who had a remarkable memory, never forgetting her lines. We had, it seemed, discovered the Hollywood connection – confirming the family tale that Gladys had told us many years before.

Over the years that followed, many e-mails were exchanged between Buffalo and us in Aberdeen, leading to lasting friendships. During a holiday to New York in October 2008, we flew up to Buffalo, met our friend Doug and stayed with his Aunt Janet for a couple of days, visiting the house where the family had lived, and meeting other family members.

The youngest sibling who had emigrated to the USA was George Thomson Brock, born on 8th January 1890 in Aberdeen. We'd heard a rumour that he was a "professional roller skater or something" in the USA. There may have been some truth to this, as we have a newspaper clipping from the *Barre Daily Times* in 1907 in which a George Brock came second in a roller-skating race. Our George would have been 17 years old at that time. George followed the family tradition, working as a stonecutter, and in 1913 at age 23 he married for the first time, the marriage certificate placing him in Watts, Los Angeles. Sadly, his bride died just a few months later, aged only 20.

By 1917 he was living and working in Kingman, Arizona, a mining town situated between Phoenix and Las Vegas. Newspaper cuttings show that a George T. Brock was a Scout Drillmaster there, perhaps explaining photos of George posing in what appears to be a Scout hat. His WW1 Draft Registration Card describes him as self-employed stonecutter, of medium height and build, with grey eyes and dark hair. His mother (by now living with other members of the family back in Buffalo) was listed as a dependant.

In 1919, he married Thelma Remy (from Ohio, of French/German descent), and he appears to be proprietor of the Phoenix Memorial Company. He declared this marriage to be his first, and he also "changed" his birthplace to Vermont! "Baby" Dorothy Marion Brock – the main focus of this story – was born in Phoenix, Arizona on 14th May 1920.

It seems Dorothy's parents were keen to enter her into Beautiful Baby contests. In the *Beautiful Womanhood* article referred to above, it says she "was awarded first prize in a baby show at Phoenix, Arizona, at the age of one" and "shortly afterward took the prize for the best baby at Santa Monica, California".

In a *Los Angeles Times* article in May 1923, Dorothy Brock won first prize in the "Cupid" category in the Third Annual Kiddies' Parade at Ocean Park. The parade itself, consisting of 148 floats, attracted 30,000 spectators. Perhaps these competitions opened the door to a career in the early movie industry – for not just Dorothy, but her parents too!

By the time of the 1930 US census, the family of three is living at Norwich Drive, Beverly Hills Township, West Hollywood, with Dorothy now aged nine. George now works as an "actor", and his wife as an "actress" – both working in "motion pictures".



From the movie poster for
The Lullaby



Lloyd Hughes, Dorothy Brock and Doris Kenyon

From the movie If I Marry Again

Dorothy acted in several films for First National Pictures in the 1920s. With a head of dark curly hair, she often played a small boy too! Her movies included *Christine of the Hungry Heart*, *So Big*, *Lilies of the Field*, *The Lullaby* and *Just a Woman* alongside well-known stars of the day such as Doris Kenyon, Jane Novak, Pola Negri, Marjorie Daw ... and, in *Gambling Wives*, "Buddy the Wonder Dog"! In one newspaper clipping, she was compared with Jackie Coogan, a major star of the day.

Most of these movies haven't survived, but we were delighted recently to unearth a copy of *Risky Business* (1926) on DVD. Dorothy had a prominent part in this silent movie, and it was great to see her in action.

The 1940 US census shows the family still in Beverly Hills, and all three are recorded as being actors/actresses in a Motion Picture Studio. George Thomson Brock died aged 52, and his obituary appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* in May 1942. "A character actor, he had been employed as a free-lance actor at many of the major picture studios."

Little evidence has been found so far of George's or his wife Thelma's movie career. A listing of the cast and crew for *The Bargain Hunt* (1928) on the IMDB contains a Thelma Brock among the extras – and a George Brock is listed, playing an uncredited "man in a dance hall", in none other than *The Gold Rush* (1925), directed by and starring Mr Charles Chaplin. Could this be one of the earliest "appearances" in a movie by an Aberdonian?



George in various poses – perhaps he used these to audition for movie parts?

Dorothy married in the early 1940s, then went on to marry twice more. She led a long, healthy and active life. An article in the *Lake Arrowhead Mountain News* in 2007, when she was aged 86, revealed that "she leads an interesting life and shows no sign of slowing down ... she is among other things a skydiver ... and has been a Hollywood actress, hang glider and professional dancer". It said that she had done her first skydive at the age of 82! She walked every day around her neighbourhood and was well known to residents.

The article stated that she had been in more than 30 films, had a small part in *Gone With the Wind* and had met movie stars including Clark Gable, Ginger Rogers, Buddy Ebsen and Warner Baxter, a big star in the 1920s. When she was aged about 18, a movie director informed her that if she wanted to continue acting she would have to join him on the "casting couch". She told him to take a hike, thus ending her career on the big screen.

She died after a fall near her house, followed by a short illness, in August 2013, aged 93.

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From Foveran to Two Continents: Travels of the Sharp Brothers

My interest in my Sharp ancestors was recently reawakened when I was casually gazing at old photographs on the wall of my study. One of these depicts four generations of the Sharp family of Foveran and Belhelvie parishes, which lie a few miles north of Aberdeen.

This photo shows the matriarch, Catherine (née Leith), her son David, his son and a baby. My mother was of the opinion that the handsome young man was Henry Sharp, but she knew no more about him. Catherine was my 2g-grandmother, and David was my great-grandmother's elder brother. A matching photograph showing my mother at about two years old dates these pictures to 1913.



David was a farm servant on the Sharp family farm of Tillery in Foveran when he married Jane Harris in 1884. They eventually had eight children. About 1892, the family moved to nearby Auchloon farm, remaining there until at least 1905, and then by 1911 they had moved into Aberdeen, where David found work with the City Corporation as a water pipe layer. Three of the six sons – James, John Harris and Henry – emigrated to Canada, having apparently trained as bakers. The first to leave was John in 1909, when aged about 20. He was soon joined in Winnipeg, Manitoba, by James in 1910 and by Henry (known as Harry) in 1912. It is believed that they all found work in the bakery trade. In 1912 John decided to go back to Britain, but he returned to Canada the following year.

The brothers' lives in Winnipeg were soon disrupted by the outbreak of war in August 1914. John and Harry decided to volunteer in the British Army, and in November they returned home. Back in Aberdeen, they both joined the Territorial Force for service in the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) at the 1st Scottish General Hospital in the city. After only a few weeks, John enlisted in the (later Royal) Army Service Corps. He was clearly a capable and very fit man, as in February 1916 he was transferred with the rank of Sergeant to the Army Gymnastic Staff at Aldershot in Surrey. His records state that his character was very good and that his height was 6 ft 1 in. It is presumed that he became a physical training instructor. He was demobilised in February 1919, when he held the rank of Acting Company Sergeant Major, having been awarded the Victory, British War and Meritorious Service medals. The first two indicate that he served in a theatre of war. The last could be awarded for an act of gallantry, or for some other kind of valuable service.

Harry remained in the RAMC, and in April 1916 he was sent to Egypt, being stationed at various army depots. Perhaps because of his civilian occupation as a baker, he was sent in August 1917 on a month's course of cookery instruction, qualifying as a military hospital cook. He remained in Egypt until September 1918, when he was compulsorily transferred to the Black Watch (or Royal Highlanders) regiment. Returning to Britain, he was finally demobilised in May 1919 and was awarded the Victory, British War and 1914–15 Star medals. The 1914–15 Star was only awarded to those who had served in a theatre of war during those years, so he may have been abroad before being sent to Egypt.

James meanwhile remained in Winnipeg, working in a cake bakery, and in May 1915 his fiancée Isabella Jeffrey joined him from back home. A few days later they were married, and the next year their first child, Isabel, was born. James had already been a member of a local militia regiment, the 79th Cameron Highlanders of Canada, when in February 1917 he decided to volunteer for the Canadian Over-Seas Expeditionary Force. His attestation form gives his height as 5 ft 11 in. He was sent to England in July 1917, then served in France in the 16th Battalion. He was promoted in 1918 to Lance-Corporal, then in March 1919 to Corporal, and he returned to Canada in April 1919.

John and Harry returned to Winnipeg later in 1919, and the three brothers were reunited, having all apparently survived unscathed. In trying to trace their later lives, I was initially misled by an Electoral Roll entry for a John Sharp, baker, who was living with his wife in Winnipeg in 1940. This was a false trail which led me in entirely the wrong direction. My researches also turned up John Harris Sharp marrying Lily May Cryer on 5th February 1930 at Milford, Auckland, New Zealand. A newspaper report on their wedding stated he was the third son of Mr and Mrs David Sharp, Aberdeen, Scotland. This description fitted John exactly – and yet I was reluctant to accept that this was my John.

Turning back to James, I came across a passenger list for James Sharp, his wife Bella and their two children arriving in Vancouver, British Columbia, from Sydney, Australia, in April 1927. He was a baker, aged 40, born in Aberdeen, Scotland, and had previously lived in Canada from 1910 to 1925. An additional detail was that James's nearest relative in the country he had travelled from was his father in Milford, Takapuna, Auckland, New Zealand. This was a surprise, as I was sure that his father, David Sharp, had never left Scotland. I soon worked out, however, that "father" was an error, and the nearest relative was actually his *brother* John. This confirmed that the Auckland John was the right man.

In researching Harry, I discovered a notice in the *Winnipeg Tribune* for the wedding of Margaret to Mr Harry Sharp (formerly of Winnipeg), son of Mr and Mrs Sharp, Aberdeen, Scotland, which took place at Takapuna, Auckland, New Zealand on 27th June 1923. It seems likely that John and Harry had decided in the early 1920s to leave Winnipeg for New Zealand. The reason can only be guessed at, but they may have found the climate in Manitoba too harsh. Harry's wife, Margaret Forbes Taylor, was born in Aberdeen in 1896. Harry may have got to know her when he was in Aberdeen in 1919. They had one child, David, in 1923, but tragically he died at four years old in 1928.

My researches into John and his wife gave problems apart from the confusion with the other John Sharp. In all records in Scotland and Canada he is named John Harris Sharp, but on arrival in New Zealand he seems to have adopted the form Jack. His wife's birth was registered in Adelaide, Australia, as Lilly May Cryer, but she seems to have been known as May. Adding to the confusion, she had a sister called Lily Maud. John died in 1936 at the early age of 47. A gravestone in O'Neill's Point Cemetery, Auckland, reads:

In loving memory of Jack Harris, beloved husband of May Sharp, died 19th July 1936.

As a John Harris Sharp is listed in the Notices of Deceased Estates with the same date of death, this is obviously his grave. May lived on for another 50 years as a widow, dying in 1986 at the age of 84. John and May do not seem to have had any children.

John and Harry worked together in their bakery business in Auckland, continuing the close relationship they had throughout their lives. This is confirmed by the 1928 newspaper

death notice for Harry's son David, which describes him as the "only son of Harry Sharp of Sharp Bro^s, bakers, Milford, Takapuna". Harry died in 1955 aged 64, and Margaret in 1979 aged 82. They were both cremated at Waikumete Cemetery, Auckland.

I have not found whether James and family returned to Winnipeg after their New Zealand sojourn – but by 1940 they were living in Vancouver. Bella died there in 1968 aged 72, and James in 1978 aged 91. Of the three brothers who emigrated from Scotland, James may be the only one who may have living descendants.

So, who was the young man in the 1913 four-generations photograph? He could not have been Henry, who did not get married until later. For the same reason, he could not be James or John. In fact, it is now obvious that the photo shows their elder brother David. He married Margaret Meston in December 1911, and they had their first child, Margaret Jane, in December 1912. This would tie in well with my dating of the photo to mid-1913.

Additional genealogical information

David Sharp (son of David Cruden Sharp and Catherine Leith) was b. 24 Feb 1858 at Chance Inn, Belhelvie, Aberdeenshire. Jane Harris (daughter of John Harris and Isabella Milne) was b. 12 Mar 1858 at Aberdeen. They married on 4 Jun 1884 at Foveran, Aberdeenshire and had eight children, including:

- David, b. 26 Mar 1885 at Belhelvie, Aberdeenshire. He married Margaret Jane McRobbie Meston on 14 Dec 1911 in Aberdeen and died 24 Sep 1980 at Aberdeen.
- James, b. 9 May 1886 at Belhelvie; d. 24 Jan 1978 at Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.
- John Harris, b. 12 Nov 1888 at Tillery, Foveran, d. at Devonport, Takapuna, Auckland, NZ.
- Henry (Harry), b. 6 Oct 1890 at Tillery, d. 15 Feb 1955 at Auckland.

Isabella Noble Jeffrey (d/o James Jeffrey and Elizabeth Hatt) was b. 18 Sep 1895 at Fraserburgh, ABD. She m. James Sharp on 4 Jun 1915 at Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada and d. 5 May 1968 at Vancouver.

Lilly May Cryer (d/o James Cryer and Violet Whitmore) was b. 23 Feb 1902 at Hindmarsh, Adelaide, South Australia. She m. John Harris Sharp on 5 Feb 1930 at Milford Baptist Church, Auckland, and d. 7 Jun 1986 at Auckland.

Margaret Forbes Taylor (d/o John Burness Simpson Taylor and Helen Black Wilson) was b. 24 Nov 1896 at Aberdeen. She m. Henry Sharp 27 Jun 1923 at Takapuna, Auckland and d. 3 Oct 1979 at Auckland.

Main sources consulted

Civil Registration indexes and certificates, Scotland, Canada and New Zealand	
Censuses of Scotland and Canada	Army service records, UK and Canada
Electoral rolls, Canada and New Zealand	Ships' passenger lists
Cemetery records	Newspaper family intimations etc.

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No. 4293

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