



e-Scotia

Newsletter of the Anglo-Scottish FHS

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[Anglo Scottish family history society](https://www.facebook.com/AngloScottishfamilyhistorysociety)

Welcome: to the November edition of the newsletter. Our Branch meeting this month once again focused upon the breakthroughs that members had made in their research and some continued our acknowledgment to the 1st World War. The offerings gave the opportunity for the rest of us to learn from their efforts and they were so interesting that we give an expanded version. As you can see, we are now on Facebook. A bit more about this later. Apologies for the late arrival of the newsletter. I was away in a very wet and cold North Yorkshire for a week. The joys of being retired! Enjoy. Editor.

Ancestral Breakthroughs: Several members of the Branch had come prepared to share with us information that they had found useful in their research.

Ina: brought a photograph of a gravestone she had found during her research into her family. It is at **Borthwick Wa's Cemetery**, off the A7 near to Hawick. It is a curious little cemetery in the parish of Robertson, in the county of Selkirk, but itself apparently in the middle of nowhere. It is surrounded by a wall and when Ina got there the gate was locked and she felt unable to climb either the gate or the wall. Enquiries of Borders FHS however proved really helpful. They informed her that the cemetery is privately owned but they had a full list of the monumental inscriptions. What is interesting about this gravestone is that it lists all the Grieve family members from 1784 and includes family members who emigrated to Canada and died there. If you are able to enlarge this image on your computer it really is well worth a close look. A great example of how useful gravestones can be in our family history research, not to be underestimated, and also the help that is forthcoming from other Family History Societies. Ina tells me that the graveyard is also listed on the SAFHS Burial Grounds site.



Douglas: began his presentation with a summary of his relatives who had been killed in the 1st World War, Archibald Hamilton who was killed in 1916 and whose name is on the Theipval Memorial, and Maximilian MacPherson who was killed at Passchendaele in 1917 and whose name appears on the Tyne Cot military cemetery. Douglas's written tribute to these relatives have been printed by the Society in the Manchester Genealogist (vols 53/2 and 53/4). However the focus of his sharing was a relative who survived the war, Douglas MacPherson, and upon information that had helped in his research.

*"Douglas had been an engineer with the Brocklebank Line of Liverpool (and) in my attempts to trace him I was advised that Merchant Seamen's records might be found in the **Archives of Southampton City Council**. Whilst this could not be guaranteed, I was fortunate, and in February 2015 received a copy of an identity card issued to seamen who were in service between 1918 and 1921. This card also contained a photograph of Douglas. As they told me they could assist no further I stopped there. (Then) in 1917 I decided to look for Douglas again, this time in the **Archives of the Merseyside Maritime Museum**. By chance I met a group, the **Liverpool Nautical Research Society**, who carry out research in the archives. They retrieved original ledgers of the Brocklebank Line listing the voyages of the ships and naming the officers and engineers, including Douglas. Another very dusty ledger listed all the Brocklebank staff who had resigned in 1914, including Douglas, whose reason given for resigning was "to join the Territorial Army."*

Douglas's research into his uncle is ongoing but there was a lot of good tips in his presentation for those with any research into ancestors who were in the merchant navy.

Mark: shared information about his grandfather, James Scott Campbell, who was killed at Ypres on Tuesday 27th July, 1915, aged 27 yrs. and who is buried at the Vlemertinghe Military Cemetery between Ypres and Poperinge. Mark showed the group James' war medals that have survived, the 1914 Star and the British War Medal. James had joined a Territorial Unit in August 1914 and allocated to the Army Service Corps. He was posted to the 18th Field Ambulance attached to the 6th Division. On the 10th September 1914 the 6th Division sailed for France and on to the Western Front. Mark managed to obtain from the National Archives, a copy of the war diary of the 18th Field Ambulance. In the entry for the months of June and July 1915 there is reference to:

"Opened a large advanced dressing station at Vlamertinghe (at the Hop Store) with 6 officers and nearly two sections, the motor cars going up at night to the aid post at Potijze for the sick and wounded, two journeys having to be made."

James was evidently part of this unit. The diary goes on to describe the regular shelling that they were subject to being so close as they were to the front line. By the end of July casualty numbers for the month of July is given as 1249 and for the two months that the Unit was opened, 8,174. The family story handed down to Mark was that his grandfather had died when a shell exploded near the horse he was riding and he was thrown into a tree. Where this story came from was a mystery until recently when, while researching the British Newspaper Archive Mark found an article in the *Dundee Courier* dated 6th August 1915 with the headline "Dundee soldier is accidentally killed". The article read;

"Sad circumstances attended the death in France, as the result of an accident, of Driver James Campbell of the 6th Divisional Train Army Service Corps, who belonged to Dundee. A widow and two young children survive him. Mrs Campbell, who resides at 64 Blackness Road, Dundee has received a letter from the Sergeant-Major of the company, who related how Driver Campbell met his death. He had been driving a pair of horses when they bolted and crashed into at tree. Deceased was thrown from his lorry, and died shortly afterwards. "I have been asked by the n.c.o.'s and men", continued the Sergeant-Major, "to express their deepest sympathy in your bereavement. He was a good fellow, and popular with everyone, and we were all very sorry when we heard of th accident. Twenty-five years of age, Driver Campbell was a Reservist, and was formerly employed in the city as a mason's labourer."

James was in fact 27 years old. This was clearly a great find and not only explained where the family story came from, but also provided a fair bit of further information. Well worth having a look again at the British Newspaper Archive which is always being updated.

Michael: told the group of a project in which he is involved at the invitation (encouragement!) of his local Church community in Cheshire. It appears that the Church wished to redesign the inside of the Church and to do so had to move some plaques indicating donations made by village families many years ago. It was considered that permission to do so should be sought from the descendants of these families - hence the seeking of expert help from the resident family historian - Michael. In doing so Michael encountered the problem we all have of researching people forwards rather than backwards in time. However with the help of **Electoral Rolls** and the web site "**Zoopla**", he was able initially to find some of the descendants and where they had moved to. However as he progressed, the task proved more onerous than at first appeared and necessitated at various times the searching of **Wills and Testaments**, the **1939 Register** and **Crockfords Clerical Directory**. A couple of issues that Michael became aware of during this research that made his task more onerous. One was the number of individuals who indicate that they do not wish to have their names published on the Electoral Register and the other was the apparent anomaly within the 1939 Register where a man had his name changed for NHS purposes. Curious!!

Linda: brought to us her family tree and spoke of the amount of time and energy she wasted in following through an ancestor said by a relative to belong to her family. It was only when she got part way through her research and discovered obvious discrepancies that she worked back again and realised that the information she had been given, and trusted, had been wrong. A salutary lesson there for all of us to continually check the ancestor details, particularly those passed down through family stories.

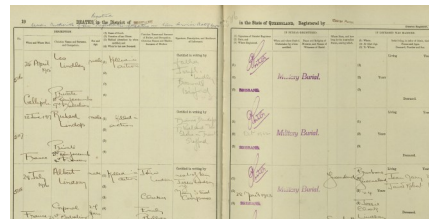


Vlemertinghe cemetery with the Hop Store



Let me share my ignorance with you - the 1915 Register:

most of us are by now familiar with the 1939 Register compiled at the outbreak of WWII. What I was not aware of was that there was a similar register carried out soon after the outbreak of WWI, in 1915, when the “it will all be over by Christmas” refrain had died away - along with many thousands of men who had “answered the call” in August 1914. It may be that many of you already know about this 1915 Register and are wondering how could I be ignorant of it. For those of you, like me, who did not know, this is just a bit of information to enlighten you.



I came across the fact of this Register when up in Dundee recently and had called into their Local History Library to have a look about. They had some old “Dundee Couriers” on display from the 1st WW years, 1914 - 1918 and I had a look in the 1915 series as that is when my grandfather was killed. It was thus that I came across references to the 1915 Register. The “Register” was taken on the 15th August 1915 and recorded information about every man, woman and child between the ages of 15 years and 65 years. The purpose was to find out how many men of military age were still civilian; how many could be spared for war work and, more necessary, how many were available for the armed forces. National Archive information about the Register can be found here ([click](#)) and it can be seen from this that, unfortunately, the information no longer exists having been destroyed after the war in 1919. That said, since the register was never centralised but only a summary of the register sent to central government, local authorities, who retained the original register, were at liberty to do with them as they wished and it may be that some still retain them. I note in Ancestry for example, that they have the registration cards for Bexley, Kent, and Gloucester also have some. The National Records of Scotland site, whilst giving information about the Register, confirms, sadly, that no Scottish records survive.

All of that said, I did find some articles in the Dundee Courier detailing some humorous outcomes of the register exercise as experienced by the enumerators. One such was recorded thus;

“...the problem of nationality was a stumbling block (for some). For example, one of the collectors, passing his eagle eye over the form returned by a man and wife, observed the word “Edinburgh” written in the space allocated for “Nationality if born abroad and not British”, and courteously asked if they were born in this country. The wife, speaking for both, replied, “No, we were born in Edinburgh.” By the expression on his face, the other spouse seemed to think that his better half had rather bowled the collector over by this wonderful explanation, and the official, wisely concluding that no words of his could expiscate matters further, passed on his rounds”

Evidently, for this couple from Edinburgh, Dundee was a foreign land. Anyway, whilst all the indications are that few remnants of the 1915 Register remain, it might be worthwhile asking at your local history library to see if they have anything tucked away in the bowels of building. Wouldn't such a source be marvellous to see.

Accessing National Secrets: a very recent contribution to the Society “Forum” by Martin

Briscoe in Fort William lets us know that whilst MI6 rarely give out information about the people who worked for them, MI5 sometimes release information provided it is more than 50 years old, the person is dead, and you are a proven relative. Details are apparently on their website.

Thanks for that Martin. What occurs to me however is that if a relative were working for MI5 would I know anyway? However if you think you may have had a family member in the secret service have a go.



National Library of Scotland: in their last two newsletters, the National Library have announced a couple of updated resources. One refers to “**Library Search**” this being a new way into the collections of the NLS. We are told that “*Library Search*” presents, for the first time, a single search interface for finding details of printed, manuscript and archival items and for accessing digitised collections. Included in the search are high-quality electronic resources from a range of publishers.” You can explore the “Library Search” site by ([clicking here](#)).

A second update is to “**New maps online — Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 maps of Scotland, 1950s–1960s**” Access to the site can be had here ([click](#)). We have made reference to this brilliant site previously, but this update adds 2,800 new maps covering many parts of Scotland after the 2nd World War.

Frivolity: saw this on the National Library of Scotland's "Timeline Photographs" and just had to share it.



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Yes, we have bitten the bullet and gone a bit more techie (is that the word?) Whilst some of us might shudder at the idea of getting involved in the more modern forms of communication, there is no doubt that the various formats, Twitter, Facebook, et al, are part of the way forward today. Our decision to get involved was primarily motivated by the wish to let more people know of the existence of the Anglo Scottish Branch and what it had to offer. I understand that the MLFHS Anglo Scottish Branch is now the only one in the country with a specifically Scottish interest, the others having folded because of lack of members. We have then to wave the banner a bit higher and make ourselves more interesting by what we offer. On the site you will be able to keep more up to date with what is going on in the Branch and with things "Scottish". You can have a look at our Facebook site by logging on to Facebook then entering a search for "anglo scottish family history society". If you like the idea and what you see please click the "Like" button as this has the effect of promoting the site.

Remember: there is no Anglo Scottish Branch meeting in December. Our usual third Saturday in the month is too close to Christmas, and people tend to want to be involved in other activities!!! However the newsletter will be produced as usual so you can look forward to that. Our next scheduled Branch meeting is on Saturday, 19th January 2019 when we shall celebrate our Branch Christmas get-together, but more about that next month.

