



e-Scotia

Newsletter of the Anglo-Scottish FHS

Website: www.angloscots.mlfhs.org.uk

E-mail: angloscots@mlfhs.org.uk

Newsletter: scotia@mlfhs.org.uk



Anglo Scottish Family History Society

Welcome: To our September edition of *e-Scotia*. Our main feature is the talk "Bridgescapes" given at our Branch meeting last week. Our speaker was L Bruce Keith. Bruce, seen opposite with committee member Yvonne Gilmartin, now lives in Peterborough but joined us on his way home from Scotland where he had been giving some talks. Once again we include in the newsletter some information on resources that you might find helpful in your Anglo Scottish research. Please enjoy.

Editor.



Bridgescapes - L Bruce Keith

Bruce's talk portrayed the history and geography of Scotland through its history of bridge building and the quote that summarised it was that "the story of bridge building is the story of civilisation". His narrative on Scottish bridges covered 7 centuries with reference to the oldest bridge in Scotland pictured opposite at Carrbridge.



Reference was of course made to Stirling Bridge, but not the same bridge at which William Wallace won his victory. This was a wooden structure that was pulled down soon after the battle. However the current bridge does date from the 15th century.

Bridge and road building in Scotland is of course associated with General Wade who was dispatched with this task following the Jacobite rebellions. However despite his reputation, many more bridges and roads were built by one Major William Caulfield who succeeded Wade and many bridges and roads referred to as "Wade's bridges" were in fact built by Caulfield. It seems that after the '45 Rebellion the money raised from the sale of forfeited Scottish estates was used to finance this road and bridge building programme.

Thomas Telford's bridges were referred to with admiration. Born in Dumfriesshire, a prestigious volume of work was achieved by him creating some of the most iconic bridges like the one at Dunkeld. This led to talking about bridge building that emerged during the industrial period, particularly railway bridges. Reference to the iconic Forth Bridge had an interesting story attached. It appears that the mother of Tam Dalyell, the erstwhile MP, entertained Von Ribbentrop, Hitler's ambassador to Britain, at her home in the 1930's. Whilst there he admired various prints she had of the building of the Forth Bridge similar to the one here. As Ribbentrop left Mrs Dalyell made him a gift of one of the prints. During the early years of the war this print appeared in the German press to illustrate that German bombing was having an impact upon British infrastructure. Another example of fake news.



We had to of course deal with the Tay Bridge disaster that occurred in December 1879. My great grandfather, designated a riveter in the census, moved from Edinburgh to Dundee in 1881 to work on the new Bridge seen opposite. Who knows, I might otherwise have been born in Edinburgh!! Many other iconic bridge structures were dealt with by Bruce including concrete bridges; art-deco bridges and cable stay bridges, all descriptions few of us knew or could identify. The risk that such a topic could have been stultifying was nullified by Bruce's delivery, enthusiasm for his subject, fascinating facts, and great humour. He is a self-confessed pontist (go on, look it up!) who has spent many years pursuing his hobby. He spoke enthusiastically of the many Scottish engineers throughout the centuries who have led the way in bridge building both at home and abroad. Bruce has produced a book - "Bridgescapes"- begun in 2009 and only completed 2017. If you want to share in our experience of the talk, try and get a copy.

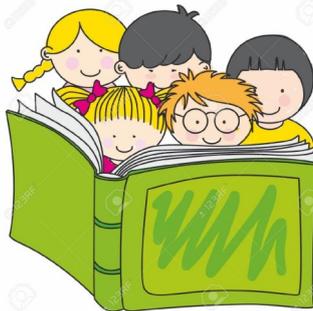
Help Sought: with an African connection. One of our readers, Susan Brookes, contacted us asking if anyone could help with her research into her great grandfather, John Simpson (or Simson) Susan wrote;

After much research I have been trying to trace the death of my great grandfather John Simpson (or Simson) who I believe died in Ghana in 1890. Family lore has it that he was murdered by his partner and that my grandfather visited his grave whilst in the Merchant Navy. There is a family memorial stone at Rathven Church in Banff but apparently although John's name is listed he is not buried there. I'm intrigued to know how at such a distance he was presumed murdered. I cannot find any newspaper articles or shipping information for John. Is there anyone who can come up with some fresh ideas please.



If anyone has any ideas or suggestions would you please email us at the address on this newsletter and we shall pass them on to Susan.

Thought about publishing your research?



I have - often, but have found the prospect daunting. I have tried reading some books with hints and tips but never managed it so far. The following web site address was sent to me ([click here](#)) that illustrates one family's efforts in this area, and mighty impressive it is too. While it might not want to be copied it does give some idea of what can be done - with a little effort. Anyway, have a look. You may also find that you are related to one of the families listed.

Find My Past Scottish Updates:

It has been brought to my notice that **Find My Past** have added a number of new Scottish sources onto their site. Clearly, to access them, you will have to be a member of the **Find My Past** site which is quite expensive, or, do as I do, and make use of it in the local library. (By the way did you know that **Find My Past** is an arm of D C Thompson, the Dundee publishing firm? Just thought I would throw that in!!) Anyway, here are the sources they have digitised. If you have a **Find My Past** account you can just follow the link:

Scotland, Published Family Histories: *Is your family from Scotland? Discover more about your Scottish families' name and history from this collection of publications. There are over 400 publications in this collection of Scottish family histories. They include memoirs, genealogies, and clan histories. ([Click here](#))*

Scotland, Glasgow & Lanarkshire Death & Burial Index: *Over 37,000 records have been added to the Glasgow & Lanarkshire Death & Burial Index. These new additions cover Bent Cemetery in Hamilton and consist of transcripts of original documents that will reveal a combination of your ancestor's birth year, death and burial dates, age at death, burial place and mortcloth price. ([Click here](#))*

Scotland, Court & Criminal Database: *Were your Scottish ancestors in trouble with the law or a victim of a crime? Search for them in this database of more than 28,000 Crown Office Precognitions and High Court Trial Papers between 1801 and 1917. Uncover details of the crime, where the trial was held and the sentence that was handed down. Both transcripts and images are included. ([Click here](#))*

Church of Scotland Ministers 1560-1949: *This fascinating 1949 publication presents a comprehensive account of the Succession of Ministers of the Church of Scotland since the period of the Reformation. The entries found in these PDF images may also include "notices of their lives, writings and families". ([Click here](#))*

Scotland, Newspaper Birth Notices: *Over 121,000 new records have been added to our collection of Scottish newspaper notices of births. These new additions have been transcribed from our existing collection of newspapers and will reveal the date of your ancestor's birth and the names of their parents. ([Click here](#))*



Find My Past Sources (cont.)

Scotland, Newspaper Death Reports & Obituaries: *Over 500,000 additional records are now available to search. This collection of newspaper death reports and obituaries may reveal interesting or undiscovered stories surrounding your ancestor's life and death as well as fascinating details about the world in which they lived.* ([Click here](#))

Scotland, Newspaper Marriage & Anniversary Notices: *Search for your Scottish ancestors among more than 201,000 new additions. These notices, taken from our existing collection of historical newspapers, will include your ancestor's marriage date, marriage place, spouse's name and parents' names.* ([Click here](#))

Scotland Roman Catholic Parish Baptisms: *Over 236,000 additional records covering 146 parishes are now available to search.* ([Click here](#))

Scotland Roman Catholic Parish Marriages: *A further 129,000 Scottish Catholic marriages are also available to search.* ([Click here](#))

Scotland Roman Catholic Parish Burials: *Discover where your Catholic ancestors were laid to rest with over 16,000 additional burial records.* ([Click here](#))

Scotland Roman Catholic Parish Congregational Records: *A further 114,000 congregational records are now available to search.* ([Click here](#)) I managed to find a number of entries for ancestors amongst these new records. Hope you find some too.

Cumberland Baptism, Marriages & Burials: remembering that we are an Anglo Scottish Branch it is worth highlighting this set of records that Find My Past have digitised. ([Click here](#)) Given its location, Cumberland was often the first port of call for many emigrating Scots, particularly those living in the Borders. Someone I know who is tracing her Armstrong ancestors regularly has to search on both sides of the border. Recalling our talk on the Border Reivers these families in southern Scotland did not recognise a border, frequently raiding and plundering on both sides. A great resource then for anyone from that area.

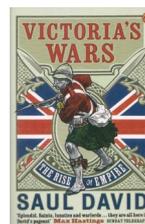
Unfortunately, as with many of these records, there is no indication as to which areas are covered and which periods. Test names that I inserted in the Cumberland records seemed to be focused on Lanercost and pre-1837. Also the Catholic records, whilst listed by diocese, do not indicate which parish the records were from. Despite these small limitations they are a good resource and worth looking at if relevant.



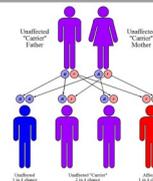
Holiday Reading: I am not given to promoting books but this is a book that I have had for some time but never got around to reading. What prompted me to take it with me on holiday was continually coming up against the number of men who seemed to disappear from the census'. One of the reasons was likely to have been their joining the army, something that I knew little about in this period. The book is "**Victoria's Wars**" by Saul David. For all of Queen Victoria's reign, Britain was at war somewhere in the Empire,

from the 1st Afghan War in 1839 to the Boer Wars of 1881 and 1899. Wars in the Crimea, India, Burma and China came in between. It is a thoroughly readable book with loads of information about a soldier's life and their experience in battle. What is disturbing are the references to 400 killed here, 600 killed there, or in the case of the Crimea, 25,000. Little wonder that men "disappear" from the records. Given these numbers, a search of military records is clearly a primary port of call if you are pondering what could have happened to an ancestor. Both **Find My Past** and **Ancestry** have Boer War records and various records relating to the British in India that can be accessed via their "Search" facility. As a way of filling out the period though, I thoroughly recommend this book.

If **you** have a book that you have found helpful in your research, why not let us know so that we can all benefit. Just email us at the usual address and I shall include it.



Population Genetics of the British Isles: We have made references to genetics in this newsletter previously but a recent article in the magazine “Who Do You think You Are” prompted me to investigate this further. The magazine referred to a study covering the whole of the UK and Ireland but, for whatever reason, focused upon Scotland, including the finding that, genetically, the Isle of Man is predominantly Scottish. Perhaps not surprising when we know that the “Lord of the Isles” and his ships dominated the waters in that area and were frequent visitors to the Isle of Man. However, if you want to pursue this research I refer you to the Oxford University site ([Click here](#)) that covers the research at length and in greater depth under the heading of “People of the British Isles”. A map produced indicates very clearly the areas of interest leading one of the authors to remark;



“We were absolutely astonished to obtain 17 clusters of individuals based solely on similarities in their DNA that matched remarkably well their geographical locations.”

A very interesting research project with, clearly, some quite unexpected results. Have a look.

If you happen to be north of the border!! are holidays over? I expect they are for most people. Still, if you happen to be planning a journey to Scotland in the near future know that the **Lanarkshire Family History Society** are hosting a local and family history show in **Motherwell on Saturday, 5th October**. ([Click here for details](#)) I am aware that it is short notice, but just in case..... **Admission is only £2** and it promises to be a very interesting event with keynote speakers covering issues including Sheriff Court Records; the resources at Mitchell Library, Glasgow and a Find My Past representative sharing their Scottish collection.

Central Scotland Records: last month the “Who Do You think You Are?” magazine offered an article on the archive resources available in Central Scotland in their “Around Britain” feature. I found their definition of “Central Scotland” rather curious because it included Dundee and Angus and Perth and Kinross as well as the obvious candidates of Stirling, Fife and Clackmannanshire but excluded Glasgow and surround. Anyway, let’s not be picky and instead be grateful for some of the resources highlighted. The free online resources include;

Rolls of Honour: www.bit.ly/arch-rolls 1st World War rolls of honour for men in the Arbroath area.

Burial Records: www.clacks.gov.uk/community.burialrecords/ you can investigate burial records in the Clackmannanshire district.

Perth and Kinross Databases: www.local.family.history.searchable.databases fairly self-explanatory. Covers various areas.

Post Office Directories: www.digital.directories the site referred to could not be reached but this is the National Library of Scotland resource and can be accessed through the normal channels. The site suggested covers Post Office directories for the whole country.

Dundee directories: www.bit.ly/arch-dundee not to be left out, a whole series of Dundee directories dating from 1864. A must!!!!



Anglo Scottish Branch Meeting - Saturday 19th October 2019



“Down and Out in Scotland” with Chris Paton.

Chris Paton is a well known genealogist who has written several books and articles as well as being a popular speaker on the Family History circuit. We are delighted to be able to welcome Chris to our Branch meeting. His talk will focus on the poor law in Scotland under the heading of “Down and Out in Scotland” and how people were dealt with, and coped with, poverty. We expect this to be a popular event so please make sure that you book your place the [Eventbrite](#) on the Society web page.



As usual we shall have our **help desk** facility available to anyone who wants to come along and seek assistance in breaking down those walls or simply seeking some advice. We are there from 10.30 until 12.30 on the 3rd floor of the Central Library. Look forward to meeting you.