



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 October edition of **e-Scotia**. We were very pleased to welcome Chris Paton to our Branch meeting last Saturday. Chris is a well-known speaker and author and we were fortunate to have him with us. He is pictured here alongside our chairman, Michael Couper. There was a gathering of 25 members at the meeting and beforehand Michael Couper made the meeting aware of a survey that will be coming their way. More about this later in the newsletter. Again we include several sites that have come to our attention and that we think might be of help to you in your research. Enjoy. Editor.



Down and Out in Scotland: Chris reminded us that, outside of the statutory BMD's and Census records, any information about our ancestors is likely to reflect a period of crisis in their lives. He listed some such areas of crisis, including Family and Relationships; Law and Order; Poverty; Debt and Medical issues. Chris dealt with each of these in turn. There was so much information given that I shall just be summarising it here. A fuller report of the meeting will be appearing the Anglo Scottish section of the Manchester Genealogist.

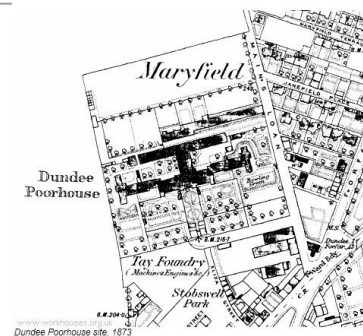
For any references relating to the issues raised Chris recommended making use of the [SCAN](#) (click here) resource, part of the National Records of Scotland. Crisis within family and relationships of course included such things as illegitimacy and paternity as well as abandoned children, orphans and adoption arrangements. Issues also surrounded marriage, divorce and bigamy. We were reminded that in Scotland divorce was always an option from the 16th century, unlike in England where, until relatively recently, an Act of Parliament was required. With regard to illegitimacy, in Scotland, whilst an illegitimate child was never referred to as "bastard" but as "natural born" (as opposed to legitimate) or "born in uncleanness" in the OPR's prior to 1855 it was registered as "illegitimate" in the statutory birth records up until 1918. The Kirk Session Records are a major source of information for all of these matters, but, unfortunately, at the moment, whilst they have been digitised, they are only available to be viewed at the NRS in Edinburgh.

Ancestors who fell foul of the law is another source of information. The Sheriff Court dealt with most cases with the more serious matters appearing before the High Court of Justiciary. Chris went through a number of offences and their possible consequences. Some carried very Scottish names such as "Hamesucken" which referred to the assault of someone within their own home and "Stouthrief" which was theft from a property which was occupied at the time. Scot's law is quite different from English law and if you want to/need to access it to assist your research the following sites are recommended; [NRS Poor Relief Records](#); [Scots Law Online](#); and for a bit of fun "[Ridiculous Scots Laws](#)"

Care of the poor was long seen as an important matter in Scotland and responsibility for this was passed to the Kirk Sessions in 1597. Whilst Poor Houses were established, the main source of care for the poor was by way of outdoor relief. Some cities have better records of poor relief than others and the Glasgow Poor Law Records housed at the Mitchell Library were particularly mentioned. With regard to Poor Houses, recognition was given to the fact that

Down and Out in Scotland (cont)

not everyone in the Poor House was there because of Poverty. The Poor Houses also accommodated the hospitals at this time and anyone who died in this hospital might be listed as in the "Poor House". This has caused some confusion amongst researchers who find reference to an ancestor who died in the "Poor House" but whom they considered to be financially alright. Opposite is a map of one of the Dundee poorhouses in 1873. I put it in because it became Maryfield Hospital and I was born there - at a much later date of course!! A useful web site that I came across with regard to Scottish Poor Houses is this one ([Click here](#)) that lists all of the Poor Houses throughout Scotland and gives maps and details of the regime.



This is a very short summary of what proved to be an exceedingly good talk and hopefully it will give a flavour of what we all enjoyed. An extended version of the talk will appear in the Anglo Scottish section of the Manchester Genealogist later this year. Meantime Chris was good enough to point us in the direction of some handout notes that he made of the talk with references, and if anyone would want a copy of this, please email us at the usual address and I shall send you a copy.

Bits and Pieces: various resources have been brought to my attention to share with you. Again, many of them come via *Find My Past*. I really am not on their books for promotion!! It is just that they are the ones who seem to be uploading interesting and relevant data relating to Scottish research. So, here goes;

Scotland, Forfarshire (Angus) Dundee Poor Lists 1821-1840: ([Click here](#)) having just heard about how our Scottish ancestors coped with crisis this resource is pertinent. These records include orphans, the sick, disabled and the insane. Able-bodied unemployed were classed as vagrants and told to seek work.

Scotland, Forfarshire (Angus), Dundee Militia Lists 1801: ([Click here](#)) search returns by constables and schoolmasters listing men between the ages of 19 and 30 who were liable for service in the militia in accordance with the Militia Acts in Forfarshire.

Scotland Mental Health Institutions Registers & Admissions 1808-1883: ([Click here](#)) over 63,000 additional records have been added to the collection and are now available to search. The new additions consist of transcripts taken from the National Records of Scotland series; General Register of Lunatics in Asylum (MC7).

Scotland, Will and Testament Index 1481-1807: ([Click here](#)) discover the date of your ancestor's last will and testament with an index of over 164,000 commissariat court wills.

Scotland Monumental Inscriptions: ([Click here](#)) over 112,000 additional records covering all of Scotland, including 9 burial sites across Dumfriesshire, are now available to search.

Whilst you can see the indexes to these records if you sign in to Find My Past, you do have to pay to see the records themselves. However, for free, is this information from SFHAS (the Scottish Association of Family History Societies) of which our Anglo Scottish Branch is a founder member.

Statistical Accounts of Scotland: ([Click here](#)) we have referred to this marvellous resource previously and we are informed by the SFHAS rep on the SA Board that the research facility on this resource has been updated thus;

"From 1 August 2019, the Statistical Accounts of Scotland Online website will be hosted by the University of Edinburgh Library for a period of two years. Scans, transcripts, map-based searching and our Related Resources will be available free of charge to all users. As a result of these changes, you no longer need a subscription or a user account to use the website."

SFHAS Bulletin: ([Click here](#)) a great read with reports from many of the Family History Societies in Scotland, and one from our own Branch. Also a good way to keep yourself up to date with what is going on in the Scottish scene and information about the various conferences coming up - in case you are in the area.

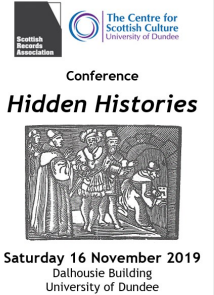
Highland Archive Centre: ([Click here](#)) information received about this Centre that came to us via Facebook.



Highland Archive Centre cares for, and provides access to, archives dating from the 13th century covering Sutherland, Ross & Cromarty, Inverness-shire (part) and Nairnshire. The Centre also houses a dedicated Family History Centre and Conservation Studio.

Clearly of more interest to those with ancestors from that part of the world but it does seem to be a great resource worth exploring. I note on their web site also that they do have a "contact us" feature, so perhaps even those of you some distance off can make contact with them with enquiries.

Scottish Records Association Conference: I was sent this conference leaflet advertising a conference jointly organised by the SRA and *The Centre for Scottish Culture* which is based at the University of Dundee. If you want more information about the conference then ([Click here](#)). It may be that some of you are in the area. Apart from disseminating information, the reason that I am sharing this with you is that it prompted me to investigate *The Centre for Scottish Culture* which I had never heard of although well aware that Scotland was not short on culture!! I do recommend that you have a look at their web site ([Click here](#)) particularly if you go to the section headed "History" or ([Click here](#)). You will find there a couple of webcam lectures on Scottish History. I watched the one exploring Jacobinism and very enlightening it was too. I presume that they change the lectures periodically and I am certainly going to keep a note of the web address.



Orkney Islands Newsletter: we have been notified that the latest Orkney Island newsletter is now available to read. The "Sib Folk News" as they call it can be seen [here](#).



It is an opportune moment to remind you that, if you are a member of the Society, then you can access the newsletters of many and various family history societies not only in Scotland but also some from England, Australia and New Zealand. A great way to find out what fellow researchers are getting up to

They are on at Manchester Central Library.



A couple of events coming up in November that you might find attractive, both at Central Library. The first is organised by the MLFHS and the other by the School of Humanities of the University of London

Saturday 2 November 10.30am: Beginners Talk - Researching Irish and Scottish Ancestors

Whilst we are an Anglo Scottish Branch, some of us do have ancestors who moved over from Ireland. This beginners talk is a great opportunity to learn some of the basics of both Irish and Scottish family history research for those who would like to "get back to basics". This meeting will be held in the Performance Space at Central Library. The talk is free to members. A fee of £3.00 will be charged to non-members but this is refundable if the individual joins the Society on the day of the talk. Booking is required. Please [CLICK HERE](#) to book.

Friday 15th November, 2.00 p.m. - 4.30 p.m. - Being Human Creative Workshop,



How do you create a story about your family? How do you write your past? This participatory and creative workshop will encourage you to think carefully about how you might try to 'tell' your family's story through words, images and performance. Come along and unlock new ways of writing, investigating and retelling your family's story. The day will consist of two linked interactive workshops to encourage creative responses to the past. You are encouraged to bring writing, memories, images and materials relating to

your family history. For the first 60 minutes a creative team will work on two types of responses to this material, encouraging you in 'curating' and 'narrating' life history. This will help you develop strategies for telling the personal past, including that mediated through genetic information. The second half of the workshop will involve two poets speaking about their experiences of using family history in their work. They will read from their work and demonstrate the ways in which their roots were integral to their creative practice.

I am sure that many of us have pondered how best to record our family history research to leave the fruits of our work to our descendants. This workshop might be a useful avenue into this. ([Click here](#)) for tickets.

We need your help: At the last Anglo Scottish Branch Committee meeting we decided that it was time to have a review of the Branch; its membership; its meetings; its speakers.



You will know that currently we meet as a Branch 10 times a year on the 3rd Saturday of the every month, excluding August and December, at Manchester Central Library. The Branch meeting day is composed of a help desk from 10.30 until 1.00 and a meeting, with speakers or mutual sharing, from 2.00 until 3.30. At the moment the help desk is not used a great deal by members. Attendance at the afternoon talks/sharing varies from 10 to 40 dependant upon the content.



A recent survey of membership shows that there are 170 recipients of this newsletter, 130 of which are members of the Society and the Branch. Of that 130, 60 live within the Greater Manchester area and 23 within Lancashire and the North West, with the remaining members living throughout England and Scotland, Australia, New Zealand, the USA and Canada. These numbers are relatively small, but they demonstrate that whilst most of the Branch membership is within striking distance of Manchester, the focus of the Branch, of its nature, has always been wider than the local.

Much of the focus of the committee's work is in providing resources and assistance to members in their Anglo Scottish research, including, by way of this newsletter, the Manchester Genealogist and, for those closer to home, meetings at Central Library.

We would like to have your views on the structure and content of the Branch to help us determine if we are both meeting the needs of the Branch and helping the Branch to grow. Are Saturday's the best day for the Branch to meet or would a week-day be preferred? Are the times of meetings suitable to members? Are we meeting your needs in terms of your research?



"I had a miraculous dream in which our list of questions all had answers."

To help us review our Branch, our chairman, Michael Couper, is soon to email all of you - and others who do not get this newsletter - a questionnaire that we would appreciate you answering and returning to us.

The programme that we have for 2020 is organised and finalised but the responses that you give us would be invaluable in helping us to determine the structure and content of the Branch in future years. I appreciate that those of you who are distant from Manchester might consider that your view is not so important, but please know that you are as important to us as anyone else and your views also important because we do have a national and international dimension.

Just brainstorm and let your imagination run away - but let us know the outcome!!

Anglo Scottish Branch Meeting - Saturday 16th November 2019

Exploring Irish Records - Carol Wells

You will recall that In February this year we welcomed Jill Williams who spoke with us about Irish Family History research. This was extremely informative and a welcome overview of Irish research. However we considered that it would be useful to explore in more detail, and in a practical way, the information we gleaned at that time. Carol Wells is a member of our Society and has spent many years researching Irish dimensions in her own family. She is going to share this with us the focus being very much on how do we actually make use of the many resources available to us. The meeting begins as usual at 2.00 pm with the help desk available from 10.30. We look forward to seeing you all.

