



Scots in India



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Welcome to Journal 130

There is plenty to digest in this edition of the Journal which focuses on Scots in India. From mining to tea planting; from working on the railways to working as a missionary; or from setting up a school for abandoned children to working for the Burmah Oil Company each article illustrates the ways in which the Scots have travelled and settled into a country a long way from Scottish soil.

The one thing that struck me about a number of these articles is that a number of those who travelled over to India tended to go by virtue of being employed by companies with close links to the UK, and returned to the UK in later life. Certainly that is the experience in our family, with my husband's grandfather working as a Mechanical Engineer for the Burmah Oil Company in Burma from around 1916 to 1935, and his father being born out there in 1922, but then the family returning to Scotland.

This month's front cover features one of the panels from the Great Tapestry of Scotland, with thanks to them for allowing me to use the image. Although not all the references within the panel are reflected in our articles it still illustrates the close links between the two countries. To see the panel in all its glory you will need to visit Galashiels where the tapestry has its home and it is a trip I would highly recommend.

Karen Hunter, Editor

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Chair's Blog

As I write this the clocks have just changed here in the UK, and it will be into summer when you read this, unless we find you in the Southern hemisphere where you will be preparing for winter!

At the Research Centre James and the assistants have been helping many visitors from all over the world. Outside activities have picked up with Society attendance at the SECC Craft Fair, Summerlee Museum and a Local History Fair at the David Livingston Centre in Blantyre. We are indebted to Brian and Maureen, Liz, Murray, Lina, Jean and many others for their time taking turns to be present to promote the Society, and help visitors. If there is a show in your area, why not come along to meet the gang. In June Strathclyde University is holding an international gathering of DNA Geneticists, a Symposium on Investigative Genetic Genealogy, and also a two-day Conference on Advanced Genetic Genealogy, both online and in-person. This will bring many top speakers to our area. These will be exciting events in our region.

The AGM will be past when you read this: at the time of writing this Blog we have not received any nominations to fill the vacant slots on the Council. However, you have not missed your chance to contribute to running your Society. All our meetings are held on Zoom so if you are interested and feel you have some time, please drop a note to the Secretary and you can still be co-opted to fill a vacant place.

The talks syllabus for the coming year has been ably compiled by Christine

Woodcock and it looks like there will be an interesting range of Zoom presentations on the third Monday of each month.

On the website you can now see a tab under Services announcing the DNA Group which Robert Carson is running every two weeks on a Thursday morning, to share experiences and questions. If you want some basic teaching after getting your test results you can book a slot at dna@gwsfhs.org.uk, before joining the more advanced session. At the moment this is only open to people who can get to the Research Centre.



Our new volunteers in training to assist visitors are gaining experience of the resources of the library, datasets on the PCs and the depths of FamilySearch resources. We can always do with more help, particularly on Thursdays and Saturdays. If we build up the teams we may be able to consider extending the opening times on one of the days.

Murray is continuing to expand the online datasets with the recent addition of Tollcross Burying Ground transcripts and images.

Wishing all our members successful researching.

Scott Fairie, Chair, 30

William Stewart Mark, Mining Engineer

William Mark, my grandfather, was born in Glasgow in 1882, the son of a steelworker. His parents had both been born in Co. Antrim, coming to Scotland as children. The family moved to Airdrie, where William attended Airdrie Academy, one of only two boys from his primary school to do so. He had always wanted to go down mines, but his parents opposed this, so he trained as a mechanical engineer, then took a course in mining engineering at Heriot Watt College (now University).

After marrying Letitia Barbour in 1908, William, who was keen to work abroad, went to New Zealand, where he stayed with relatives near Dunedin. He obtained his Mine Manager's Certificate of Competency before returning to Scotland and being reunited with his wife and first child, Helen.



William then took a series of temporary jobs at Plean and Bathgate before applying successfully to go to India in 1913. At first, his wife and children did not accompany him, as it was feared that

Helen (Ella) was "delicate" - in fact she lived a healthy life to 94.



William and his office staff at Barabani Colliery

The mine where William worked was Barabani Colliery, Asansole, West Bengal, about 130 miles from Kolkata (Calcutta). His bungalow was fairly remote and the only social life was at a club some miles away. There was no refrigeration, so food had to be freshly prepared. Some friends died of food poisoning, because their cook, when unsupervised, reheated some canned food. Ella's younger brother, Jack, later caught Enteric Fever (typhoid) but fortunately he recovered.



Ella and Jack - the note with the image says 'Ella did not like her pony - it bit her'

Helen was at first educated at home, but later attended a boarding school in Darjeeling, which was run by Anglican Nuns. She returned to Scotland for secondary education at Airdrie Academy.



William and Letitia, 1933

Letitia returned to live in Scotland at various times during the 30 years when William was in India. She enjoyed telling her grandchildren about life with the servants and the words of Hindu which she had picked up. She had a fine collection of brass ornaments and linen tablecovers which she bought, some of which I still possess. William was able to return to Scotland on leave every two or so years, having first class travel on board ship. He used to leave the ship at Marseilles and travel by train to the cross-Channel ferry to gain a few extra days at home.

Most of the photographs included here were taken by my grandmother, who was a keen photographer. Some show her Indian servants at the bungalow and miners at the Colliery. Others show British, mainly Scottish, friends. Looking at these photos with 21st Century eyes, I can't help contrasting the appearance of the well fed Scots with the local Indians. My grandfather liked Indians, however,

and he told me that he had spent a lot of time providing water supplies to neighbouring villages.



Miners coming up from the pit on a Sunday morning, 1933

During their last year in India, there was the threat of a Japanese invasion. William and Letitia finally returned to Scotland early in 1943 when he retired. Several of their Scottish friends were also planning to return, but realised that military operations meant that they had to wait until a ship was able to take them. They had a rather perilous voyage home by sea - the ship's radio was sabotaged, so the Captain had to change their route at one point.

After returning to Scotland, William bought a coal merchant's business in Edinburgh, where he died in 1958. He always enjoyed taking his grandchildren to the National Museum of Scotland in Chambers St, Edinburgh, where he was endlessly fascinated by working models of mines.

Helen Swann, 2025

Charles Rennie Cowie 1851-1922

East India Merchant and Book Collector



Figure 1. John Cowie. By kind permission of John D. Napier

In 1964 the widow of East India merchant John Cowie, Mrs. Elizabeth Janet Cowie, donated to the National Library of Scotland (NLS) in Edinburgh and the Mitchell library in Glasgow a collection of rare books, historical manuscripts and letters, included in which are rare editions of Robert Burns poems, first editions of Milton, Galt, and Scott, and a large number of letters of Burns and others. It consists of several hundred items and is an astonishingly eclectic accumulation of material covering over six hundred years. The NLS was to get that material which was of national importance, the Mitchell the rest, the decision making process being undertaken by personnel from both libraries, Mrs. Cowie and her lawyer. Eventually the NLS collection consisted of manuscripts of Robert Burns, Sir Walter Scott and the poet Allan Ramsay.

The individual who had collected all this material was not John Cowie however, it was his father Charles Rennie Cowie,

also an East India merchant, who had bequeathed it to his wife Grizel on his death in 1922.^[1] In his will the collection was identified as of National and Historic Interest, thereby excluding it from his estate for tax purposes, and valued at £4083.^[2] Today, at that valuation, the joint collections would be worth around £2 million however I suspect its true value currently would be a multiple of that.^[3] Grizel died seven years later with the collection eventually going to John.^[4]

Who was Charles Rennie Cowie, what was his and his wife's family background? By what means did he fund his purchases? One other question which seems unlikely to be answered by this research is from whom did he make his purchases?

The Cowie family originated in Stirlingshire, most likely in the parish of Larbert. John Cowie's great grandfather was forester James Cowie who was married to Margaret McAlpine.^[5] It's not clear when they married however John's grandfather, also John, was born in 1817,^[6] the fifth of eight children all born in Larbert. They lived in Carronhall village to the east of Larbert, James dying there in 1848.^[7] Margaret remained in Carronhall until circa 1863 when she moved to Grahamston to live in a house owned by her son John.^{[8] [9]} She died there at the age of eighty seven in 1870^[10]

John married Margaret Rennie in 1839,^[11] she also being born in Larbert the daughter of iron founder John Rennie and his wife Mary Alexander.^[12] It's not clear what his occupation was at the time of his marriage however by 1841 he was a grocer in Grahamston in the parish of Falkirk,^[13] an occupation he followed for most of his working life. He and Margaret

had twelve children between 1840 and 1862, seven sons and five daughters, the relevant offspring to this research being Charles Rennie Cowie and three of his brothers, James, Archibald and Thomas, and his sister Jessie.

John and Margaret lived in Grahamston until at least 1872^[14] however by 1881 they had moved to Mavis Villa, Riddrie,^[15] which is where he died in 1882.^[16] Margaret lived a further twelve years, dying in Hyde Park, Blantyre in 1895.^[17] Interestingly in the 1891 census she was resident in Rutherglen, living on a private income, with her son James, another East India merchant, and two grandchildren John and Mary, both born in Rangoon,^[18] the children, as I'll show, of her son Charles Rennie Cowie.

Charles was born on the 24th October 1851 and baptized in July the following year^[19]. His initial education was at a local school. He then attended Anderson's College in George Street in Glasgow studying chemistry under Frederick Penny.^[20] Penny was a Londoner who had studied chemistry under Michael Faraday at the Royal Institution and in 1839 had been appointed Chair of Chemistry at the College, a position he held until his death in 1869. He also was involved in testing the water quality from Loch Katrine to establish if it was suitable for Glasgow's water supply and gave expert testimony in a number of criminal trials involving poisons including that of the infamous Dr. Pritchard who had murdered his wife and mother in law.^[21]

When Charles left College is not certain, nor is it clear what his qualification was, but he must have left around 1870 as by 1871 he was employed as chemist at the

Uphall Oil Works in Linlithgow, living in lodgings at Crossgreen Farm in Uphall^[22] In due course he became manager of the facility^[23] which was just a few miles from James 'Paraffin' Young's refinery in Bathgate. In 1873, being described as 'gent' he was appointed ensign in the 5th Linlithgowshire Rifle Volunteers.^[24]

He did not remain in Uphall very much longer as around 1874^[25] he travelled to Rangoon eventually becoming manager of the Rangoon Oil Company the precursor of Burmah Oil, this being his occupation when he married Grizel or Grace Purdie in 1878,^[26] more of whom shortly.

Between 1876 and 1878 he registered two patents in Rangoon, one dealing with the use of rice husks as furnace fuel in rice mills,^[27] the other about improving the efficiency of steam furnace combustion^[28] The first patent at least halved the cost of milling rice with the added benefit of the burnt rice husks proving to be an effective deodorizer used to cover all kinds of refuse dumps. His invention not only found use in Burma but also in Thailand and French Indo-China.^[29] He also registered a third patent with a colleague in 1881, again dealing with furnace efficiency.^[30]

*Figure 2. Grace Purdie Christening Cup.
Courtesy of Bo'ness Pottery*



He remained manager of the oil works until circa 1878/79 at which time he founded in Rangoon the trading company Charles R Cowie & Co.,^[31] trading in almost any commodity that was required by customers in British India and elsewhere. That was the beginning of Charles, his brothers James, Archibald and Thomas, and his eventual sons, becoming East India merchants.

His wife Grizel was the daughter of Thomas Purdie, farmer, and Margaret Storrie,^[32] her birth being commemorated by her parents having a christening mug made by Bo'ness Potteries.^[33]

The family originated in West Calder where Grizel's grandfather Andrew Purdie farmed at West Mains which is where he died in 1863 age ninety five^[34] In 1837 whilst Andrew was the tenant of the farm a servant girl Elizabeth Brown was charged with child murder or concealment of a pregnancy. She confessed and was sentenced to ten months imprisonment. The court records make no mention of the male involvement only that Elizabeth's address was c/o Andrew Purdie, West Mains Farm.^[35]

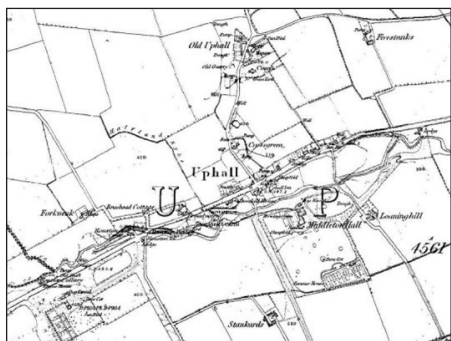


Figure 3. Uphall, Crossgreen and Fortneuk Farms. Courtesy of Bo'ness Pottery

Thomas Purdie farmed at Forkneuk, Uphall from around 1855^[36] which makes it likely that Charles and Grizel met before he went to Rangoon, the farms being in close proximity to each other. They married at Forkneuk on the 17th December 1878, the beginning of a married life that for the first twelve or so years saw them travelling frequently between Rangoon and Glasgow.

Their first born child was John, the ostensible donor of the Cowie Collection. He was born in Rangoon in October 1880 and baptized there in July 1881.^[37] They had a further nine children between 1882 and 1903 as follows:

- Mary Storrie, born 1882 at Rangoon and baptized there.^[38]
- Margaret Rennie, born 1884 at Portobello, baptized in Rangoon later that year.^[39]
- Gracie Purdie, born and baptized at Rangoon in 1886.^[40]
- 1. Isabella Miller, born at Rosneath in 1888.^[41]
- Elizabeth, born and probably baptized in Rangoon in 1890.^[42]
- Jessie, born at Kirn, Argyllshire in 1891.^[43]
- Thomas Purdie, born at Woodend House, Partick in 1893.^[44]
- Charles Rennie, born at Woodend House, Partick in 1895.^[45]
- Gladys Dorothy, born at Woodend House, Partick in 1903.^[46]

Whilst Charles ran his company in Rangoon his brother James in 1880 was working for Jas. L. McClure & Co., merchants and agents for a number of companies dealing in iron and steel products.^[47] Two years later he established his own agency company, James Cowie & Co., representing a

number of similar companies from England and Scotland.^[48]

In the following year Cowie Brothers & Co. were formed located at the same address, 59 St. Vincent Street, as James' company. No other brother seemed to be involved at that point^[49] however it does appear that simply was a matter of timing as within the next twelve months brother Archibald joined the company.^[50] Charles was home in Glasgow that year (1884), not associated with either of the family businesses but with merchants Russell, Macfarlane & Co., a situation that occurred every time he came home from Rangoon until circa 1891 when he came home to Glasgow for good. He had lived at various addresses on each return home finally settling at Woodend House, Partick sometime after 1891, his wife Grizel being recorded as the owner^[51] His Rangoon company however still operated in his name as before directed by Rangoon partners and his sons.

The two Glasgow Companies continued to operate for another ten years, latterly from 196 St Vincent Street, with Charles continuing to be associated with Russell, Macfarlane and Co. until 1893 when he formally joined Cowie Brothers & Co.^[52] It's clear brother James was seriously ill at that time as he died the following year of cirrhosis of the kidneys which he had suffered from for at least six months^[53] James' company ceased trading in 1897/98, the last year it appeared in the Glasgow directory.^[54] Cowie Brothers & Co continued for several years afterwards with brother Thomas joining the company in 1905, remaining involved until 1911. Subsequent to that date the Cowies involved in the company were the three sons of Charles, namely John, Thomas

and his namesake Charles. The company was still listed in the Glasgow Directory in 1975.^[55]

Charles senior's company in Rangoon also continued to operate at least until the late 1930s, with his three sons all involved to varying degrees, travelling back and forth to Rangoon as required. The last journey from Rangoon I have established is that of son Charles Rennie Cowie and his wife Norah on the M.V. Oxfordshire during April/May 1939.^[56]

However a third Charles Rennie Cowie was to remain in Burma. John, the eldest son of Charles and Grizel married in 1908 Elizabeth Janet Ramsay. They had four children the eldest of whom was another Charles Rennie Cowie, born in Rangoon in 1911. He joined the Rangoon Battalion of the Burmese Auxiliary Force in 1938 and in 1940 is listed as a lieutenant in the Battalion. He continued to be listed through 1941 as such although it seems he was promoted captain in April 1941.^[57] Exactly where he was located during this time has not been established although I have come across a photograph of him and fellow officers, along with their honorary colonel, Sir Alexander Cochrane, in Burma (Rangoon?) in 1940^[58] Lieutenant C. R. Cowie is seated at the extreme right hand side. [See image on following page]

He stayed in Burma throughout the war, attaining the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel by its end.

John's brother Thomas Purdie Cowie married in Rangoon in 1921^[59]. In the Thacker's Commercial Directory of 1925, the company was located at 6 Merchants Street and described as machinery importers, mill furnishers and mill stores, engineers and contractors, electrical

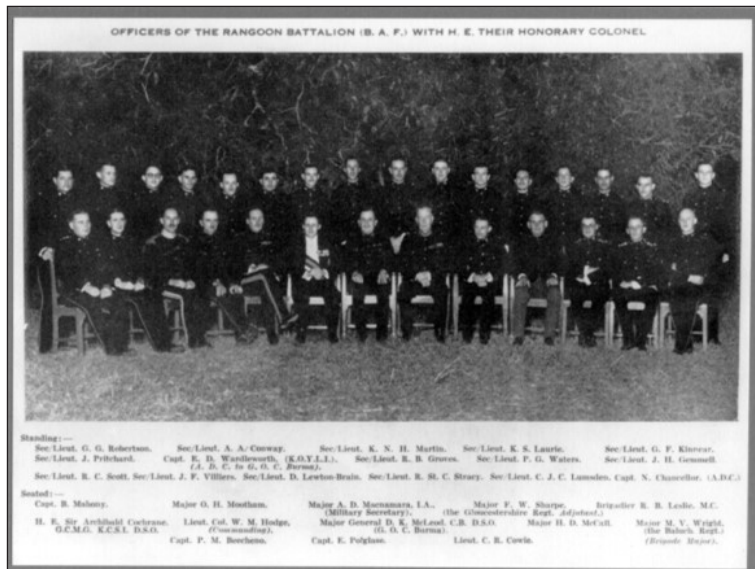


Figure 4. Officers of the Burmese Auxiliary Force, Rangoon Battalion 1940.
<http://www.rothwell.force9.co.uk/burmaweb/RangoonBattalionBAF.htm>

stores, insurance agents, importers and exporters, and as agents for the Dollar Steamship Line. There were no Cowies listed as Rangoon partners although Thomas was listed as an assistant in the company.^[60] He returned to British India in 1945, this time to Bombay, as the Director of Stores for the Indian Red Cross.^[61]

As stated previously, the Cowie companies traded any commodity that had a buyer. Their sales included cutlery, steam engines, pottery, biscuits and bricks. Where they could they labelled or marked the items with their company name.

Their involvement with bricks came about when Charles senior's sister Jessie married coalmaster Mark Hurl in 1888^[62] At the time of his marriage his brother Peter was a fireclay brick manufacturer in Glenboig.



Figure 5. Cowie Brothers and Co. trademark applied to transfer printed bowls by Bridgeness Pottery. Courtesy of Bo'ness Pottery
 Figure 6. As figure 5.

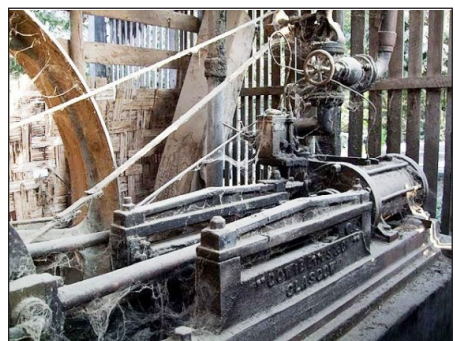


Figure 7. Steam Engine with Cowie Brothers and Co. nameplate. Courtesy of Bo'ness Pottery.

About three years later Mark set up with his brother as a brick manufacturer, amongst other similar products, forming P & M Hurlll, with works in Maryhill, Garscsadden as well as Glenboig. This led to the Cowie brothers trading the bricks and applying their name to each individual product.^[63]



Figure 8. Hurlll Brick with Cowie Marking.
<https://www.scottishbrickhistory.co.uk/cowie-bros-2/>

Their involvement with biscuits in terms of their trademark however was not as successful. In 1896 at the Court of Session they applied for an interdict against biscuit manufacturers George Herbert, a supplier of Cowies, to stop them using what they claimed to be the Cowie trademark, an image of the Glasgow Municipal Building, on biscuits sold by Herberts on their own behalf in Rangoon.

Charles Rennie Cowie and brother Archibald gave evidence essentially saying that Cowies had traded biscuits to Rangoon since 1889, with that trademark. The defendant had also been trading in Rangoon but had begun to use a similar image of the Municipal Building on biscuits he sold directly there thereby confusing potential native purchasers. After a very longwinded obtuse argument involving images of temples and mosques, the judgement went against Cowies and the interdict was refused, the judges

essentially declining to accept Rangoon natives would be confused.^[64]

It will be pretty obvious by now that the money Charles senior earned through his business ventures as an East India Merchant was the means by which he created his collection. When he died in 1922 his estate was valued at £144,507^[65], current worth somewhere between £7million and £70million.^[66]

The NLS collection is listed on the library website as contained within MSS 15951-15975 and consists of manuscripts relating to Robert Burns, Sir Walter Scott and the poet Allan Ramsay. The manuscripts include an autobiographical letter written by Burns to Dr. John Moore in 1787 in which the poet writes retrospectively of his life to date (MS 15952), and a series of thirteen manuscripts relating to the seven volume collection *'The Works of Robert Burns'* edited by W Scott Douglas, 1877-1879 (MSS 15955-67). Also included are proofs of *'The History of Scotland'*, 1829-1830, by Sir Walter Scott (MS15969), the final version of *'The Gentle Shepherd'* by Allan Ramsay, 1724-1725 (MS15972), and letters of Sir Walter Scott to Robert Southey and others (MS15971).^{[67],[68]}

The Cowie collection at the Mitchell is somewhat different. Although it also contains a lot of Burns material, it has an exceptional range of other manuscripts, books, including first editions, and letters from an extremely wide range of individuals including royalty. As far as I'm aware there are no digitalised records of the collection however there are two catalogues which contain a full list of the items donated. They are *'The John Cowie Collection-Catalogue'* and *'The John*

*Cowie Collection-Autograph Albums.
Index 1 to 4'.*

The following will give some idea of the range of topics and material that the Mitchell holds.

- Statutes of Edward I and II. MSS dated 1274.
- Rerum Scoticarum Historia. Edinburgh: A. Arbuthnot 1582. Author George Buchanan.
- Quintus Curtius. Venice 1494. De Rebus Gestis Alexandri Magni.
- John Milton - Paradise Regained. 1st Edition 1671.
- Carolus Gustavus, King of Sweden. Last will and Testament - 1660.
- Aesop Fables by Sir Roger L'Estrange. 1692/1699.
- The Rosebery Burns Club, Glasgow. Its origins and Growth 1906.
- Charles Edward Stuart - Order signed by him to raise the Mackintoshes - 1746
- Letter of Leopold I, King of the Belgians 1850.
- Paul, Emperor of Russia letter to Baron Dimsdale 1778.
- Bassendyne Bible 1576
- C.F. Brochie. History of Govan 1905
- Eikon Basilike. The Pourtraicture of his sacred Majestie in his solitudes and sufferings. 1648. (Charles I).
- Acts of Parliament - 1711.
- Royal Navy Accounts of Cruisers and Home- Convoys - 1704.
- George I Document headed 15/4/1724
- M.W. Turner R.A. lecture ticket dated 1818.
- William Wilberforce various letters 1819 - 1825
- Louis XVI. Order for lieutenant to command the corvette 'La Poulette' - 1781.
- Last will and testament of Carolus Gustavus King of Sweden - 1660.
- Allan Ramsay The Ever Green, a collection of poems - 1724.
- Sir Walter Scott. Guy Mannering, Edinburgh 1815
- An account of the taking of the late Duke of Monmouth. Samuel Keble 1685.
- Giuseppe Garibaldi - letter to Rear Admiral Mundy. 1860.
- James III letter to Cardinal Gotti, Bologna. 1729.
- James Boswell. The journal of a tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson. London:1785.
- The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer 4th John Kyngston 1561.
- Glasgow Tontine Society. Regulations, 1817.^[69]



Figure 9. Charles Rennie Cowie. Courtesy of Bo'ness Pottery

His enthusiasm for Robert Burns went beyond collecting books and manuscripts. He contributed significantly to the purchase and restoration of buildings associated with the poet.

Burns' house in Castle Street (previously Back Causeway), Mauchline, where he and Jean Armour lived was put up for sale at the beginning of 1915 by its then owner, a Miss Miller. The Glasgow and District Burns Clubs Association were interested in purchasing it and sent a delegation to examine the premises, which included Cowie as president of the Partick Burns Club.

It was decided to buy the property despite it being in the need of repair. It's not clear what the total costs involved were however Cowie donated the required funds to purchase and repair the house. The building once restored was formally opened to the public on the 28th August 1915. In addition to the museum created, provision was made in the other rooms of the property to accommodate deserving elderly people.^[70] At the end of the ceremony Mrs Cowie was presented with a silver key to mark the occasion and her husband's generous gift.^[71]



Figure 10. Opening of Burns House, Mauchline. Mrs Cowie and Charles fifth and sixth from left. Courtesy of Bo'ness Pottery

Following on from that in 1916 Charles funded the purchase of the property adjoining the Burns house which had been once owned by Dr. John MacKenzie who had apparently attended Burns' father at the end of his life. Little work was done during the war but by 1919 the premises were fully restored allowing the museum to expand and to provide

accommodation for additional elderly people. His final act of generosity in this respect was for the purchase of Nanse Tinnocok's Tavern across the road from the other two properties. It was formally opened after repair on the 24th May 1924 by Mrs. Cowie, Charles having died in 1922.^[72]



Figure 11. Mrs Grizel Cowie being presented with ceremonial key after performing the opening ceremony of the restored Nanse Tinnocks Tavern. Courtesy of Bo'ness Pottery.

Charles Rennie Cowie died at Woodend House, Partick on the 18th November 1922, cause of death given as chronic nephritis (inflammation of the kidneys).^[73] In his lifetime he had been a very successful chemist, inventor and merchant, amassing a fortune from his trading activities which allowed him to indulge his interests in Burns, and collecting.

His obituary in the Glasgow Herald makes reference to his professional life and to his collecting, describing him as an 'ardent admirer of the national poet' and 'keenly interested in the history of Scotland'. It also adds that he was prominent in temperance circles, an elder in Dowanhill U.F. Church and a member of several General Assembly committees.

He was President of the Abstainers Union and had been a director of the Scottish Temperance League, also supporting these organisations and others financially, and had purchased the old Partick Academy gifting it to the Western branch of the Y.M.C.A. He had also endowed one of the beds in the Arran War Memorial Hospital, an island he visited annually on holiday. He was a J.P., vice president of the Hillhead Liberal Association, had been a member of the Govan School Board, and was a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. (F.S.A.).^[74]

In his obituary in The Straits Times of 16 December it was stated that every rice eater owed the cheapness of his meal to the 'unobtrusive chemist from Scotland'. He was also described as a 'public spirited and charitable citizen'.^[75]

John and his mother Grizel were named as executors and trustees of Charles' estate. Grizel inherited all the household items including his collection and other artefacts and there were also a number of bequests to his church and the temperance organisations he had been involved with. The residue was then to

be split half to Grizel, and the other half equally divided between his ten children.^[76]

Grizel died in 1929 leaving the collection to John. He died on the 10th March 1963 of a heart attack.^[77]

George Manzor

Acknowledgement: My thanks to John D. Napper, grandson of John Cowie, for additional information on the Cowie family

Editor: There are a significant number of references in this article but limited space does not give me the chance to include them. If anyone would like to check them please either see the link below or contact me (editor@gwsfhs.org.uk) and I will forward a PDF of the article with the references included.

This article has previously been published at <https://glasgowbenefactors.com/2020/03/18/cowie/> and in Edition 110 of the Scottish Local History Journal <https://www.slhf.org/publication/issue-110> - and permission has been granted for this to be reproduced here.

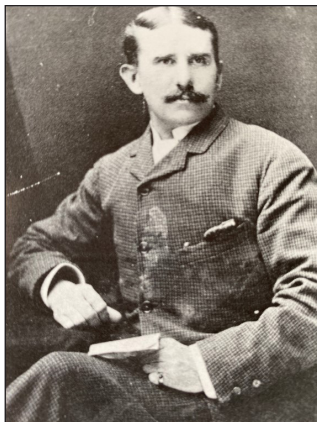


For more information on this three day conference see the Family in British India Society [FIBIS] website at <https://www.fibis.org/25-years-conference/>

Links with the Burmah Oil Company

My wife, Mary Bollam, is the grand-daughter of Alice Camilla Kathleen Finlay who was born 14 June 1902 in Rangoon Burma, as it was then known. Her father was Sir Campbell Kirkman Finlay who was born in 1875 in Burma, as were two of Camilla's siblings and an aunt, Vary Cargill Finlay.

The connection to Burma is to Kirkman Finlay, Camilla's grandfather, who was born in 1847 and found his fortune with the Rangoon Oil Company, which became known as Burmah Oil.



Kirkman Finlay (1847-1903)

Building the family tree and obtaining an understanding of Kirkman Finlay has really only been possible after we located, (found via internet search in Japan) one of the few surviving copies of *A History of the Burmah Oil Company 1886 - 1924* written by T.A.B Corley.

The development and growth of the Rangoon Oil Company is down to David Cargill (1826-1904) and his right-hand

man, Kirkman Finlay. Kirkman owes his name to the fact that his father, John Finlay a Glasgow jeweller knew a Kirkman Finlay (1772-1842), who was Lord Provost of Glasgow as well as its MP, and was a leading 19th century industrialist. John named his son after him.

Young Kirkman Finlay lost his father, John, prematurely and was raised at Brodick Castle on the Isle of Arran where his grandfather, George Crollsen, had been head gamekeeper to the Duke of Hamilton.

Kirkman sought his fortune overseas and obtained a position with the agency acting for the Rangoon Oil Company via his brother-in-law James Galbraith (1834-1919) who happened to be married to one of his sisters, Janet Finlay. David Cargill acquired the Rangoon Oil Company and Kirkman, drove the local development of the Rangoon Oil Company. Kirkman was the first European to meet with the Burmese King, Thibaw.



Thatched Oil Derrick

A History of the Burmah Oil Company 1886 - 1924 provides a detailed picture of how the then British Government sought to exploit commercial interests to protect its strategic interests and objectives. Securing access to oil deposits for the British Navy to fuel the next generation

of oil powered fighting ships was a big imperative. Kirkman was the ultimate right-hand man, and had the character to cope with the political machinations and skull-duggery in the quest for oil.

Kirkman's story does not end well, the cut and thrust of developing the oil industry and the struggle to retain access to oil in Burma wrecked his health; he was found floating in the sea off Harlyn Bay, Cornwall having fallen from a cliff.



Sir Campbell Kirkman Finlay (1875-1937)

His son, Campbell Kirkman Finlay (1875-1937), Camilla's father, was General Manager of the Rangoon office. He was a director of the Anglo-Persia Oil Company which developed alongside Burmah Oil (Persia had a lot more oil than Burma and the politics to exploit it were even fiercer). Campbell Kirkman Finlay was a lieutenant colonel in the Rangoon Volunteer Rifles and was knighted in 1912 for his public services with the legislative council and volunteers in Rangoon and as a Director of Anglo-Persian.

Christopher Bryce, 11164

My Scots in India; A School in Kalimpong

Within the space of a single week in January 1889, a young, recently graduated, trainee minister achieved three personal milestones: ordination into the Church of Scotland, marriage to his fiancée, and, together of course, embarkation upon a two-month journey first across Europe, then onwards by steamship to Calcutta. His ultimate destination was the village of Kalimpong located high in the Eastern foothills of the Himalayas. Although he did not realise it then, that young minister was starting a lifelong journey that would see his name forever associated with Kalimpong: Reverend John Anderson GRAHAM [*Graham of Kalimpong* by James R Minto; The Guernsey Press]

Graham tackled his missionary role with enthusiasm - but soon found himself agonising over the plight of so many abandoned children, and their mothers, fending for themselves often in the most squalid of street conditions. Clearly all for whom his heart was breaking yet his hands were caring, were the product of liaisons with the European incomers - tea planters, Civil Service officers, the military, ex-pat businessmen. Inevitably however, each mother and child had been cast aside as overseas tours ended. The prospect of social rejection on one's return to Britain most certainly could not to be contemplated! Although Reverend Graham quickly ran into trouble with his immediate superiors for diverting his missionary attention towards helping these people, if the truth be known the Church authorities back

home were happy to turn a blind eye to the situation. At least someone could be seen to be trying to do something about this unresolved embarrassment to the Church!



Having visited Quarriers Village in Bridge of Weir back in Scotland, and indeed being a friend and contemporary of William Quarrier himself, gradually the idea of a similar “Childrens’ City in The Hills” took shape in Graham’s mind. Thanks to his drive and persuasive fundraising skills, by 1900 what at first had seemed but a dream had become a reality. There on a hilltop above Kalimpong village stood the first of many cottages housing a couple of dozen ‘Eurasian’ children, living as if at home under the loving care of an ex-pat housemother. ‘*St Andrew’s Colonial Homes*’ was born! But then, the unforeseen: within a very short space of time *St Andrew’s Colonial Homes* was overwhelmed with children! What to do – a boarding school was needed, of course!

Back in Old Monklands, Coatbridge, a 28-year-old teacher at Gartsherrie Academy, the son of a furnaceman in a local steelworks, responded to a notice in the local paper seeking applicants for the

position of ‘Educational Superintendent’ at a school in India – *St Andrew’s Colonial Homes*. That young teacher was my grandfather, James SIMPSON, who, with the backing of the Christian organisation The Young Men’s Guild [Young Men’s Guild founded by Very Reverend Professor Dr Archibald Charteris, founder also of the Women’s Guild] – which was already a strong supporter of Reverend Graham – navigated his way successfully through the interview process. Doubtless there must have been a certain degree of trepidation as he was now faced with the task of creating and leading a school that in due course would need to meet the standards required to equal university entrance requirements back home in Britain. All that in a strange country; a culture so different to that of Lanarkshire!



So it was that, in late December 1902, James found himself aboard the India-bound *City of Benares* heading for Calcutta. [Shipping Lists on Family Search – familysearch.co.uk and, Find My Past <https://search.findmypast.co.uk>] After well-over a month’s travel which, after initial liner-luxury, was now taken up with over-crowded trains, boats on the Ganges, miniature mountain railway [The “*Toy Train*” – a narrow-gauge railway that climbs some 4,500ft from the Ganges Plain into the Himalaya Foothills

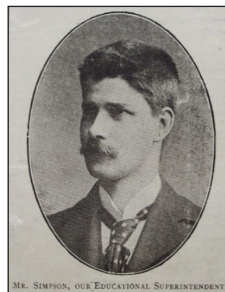
to Darjeeling] from Siliguri to Darjeeling and finally donkey back downwards to cross the Teesta River before the final ascent to Kalimpong at 4,500ft. These were still the very early days of The Homes thus I doubt that he was surprised to find no permanent accommodation, the minimum of classroom and school facilities - but all that offset with no end of enthusiasm for the venture and for the children. Soon he was familiar with the ambitious plans for a residential school offering nurture, love, and education for needy children - of which by the time grandfather arrived 'on campus' the numbers being looked after were already in the hundreds!

During my own family history research, I was fortunate enough to track down the School Logbooks for Gartsherrie Academy which, amongst the very detailed records of attendance, school inspections, weather, holidays, celebrations and so on - included staff lists. Lo and behold, schoolteacher Mary Bain SCOTLAND of New Monklands, Airdrie featured year on year. I was thus not surprised to come across her own *City of Benares* voyage out to India in early 1904 - nor to find their wedding.



Photo taken on 24 March that same year outside the Macfarlane Church in Kalimpong. Officiating minister, Reverend John Graham; attendants, some of Graham's own children.

Discovering that every quarter from the very day that St Andrew's Colonial Homes was officially launched, 24 September 1900, a magazine - often up to a hundred pages



long - was published, was a godsend for me, covering as it did the entire thirty years of grandfather's headmastership. Thus, I have had access to a very valuable source of information: photographs, staff records - like furloughs back to Britain, health absences, births of family etc. Indeed, I see my grandfather "maturing" and his family developing through the many photographs of his time in Kalimpong!



Some five or so years had elapsed since their arrivals before the Simpsons had their own cottage *home* on campus, Strachan Cottage, as shown in the photograph above, and so named in memory of the wife of the main funders of the cottage, a notable family of the time from Bearsden, Glasgow. The cottage was designed to house the senior-most boys in the school so that the headmaster could personally supervise their studies and provide career guidance as they

neared the end of their time at the school. From the windows of the cottage, one can look out over the school buildings and beyond to the snow-covered slopes of Kanchenjunga the third highest mountain in the world.

Grandfather, known as 'Sam' to the pupils - why I'm not sure - had a reputation as a strict but fair disciplinarian. Indications are that behaviour was generally good - respectful; rarely did the tawse come into play. When it did, however, it was a public punishment meted out at school assembly. In the side pocket of his linen jacket the children could always make out the coiled-up outline of the "saap" (Hindi for snake) as they knew it! He was a great promoter of the school football team taking much time to train the boys and teach them tactics. He would let nothing upset his players! On one occasion when fights broke out on the pitch - the away-team spectators joining in - grandfather joined the melee lashing out in all directions with his Malacca cane! (An eye-witness account, by the way, from an elderly former pupil whom I met on one visit to Kalimpong). A win for the team always meant a trip downtown to Gompus, the social hub of the town, for refreshments.



1920s St Andrews' Colonial Homes

Various mind-blowing world events passed through Kalimpong around

this time, such as the early Everest expeditions of 1922 and 1923. In those days the approach to Everest had to be through Sikkim - Tibet to the North was a closed country - and the campus was an obvious staging point for such expeditions. Below, Dr Graham reads a 'God-Speed' message from the Chief Scout, Lord BADEN-POWELL to the 1922 team - including George MALLORY, lost the following year. On Dr Graham's left sits the Headmaster.



Some ten years later, in 1933, The Duke of Hamilton piloted the first flight over Everest. On that occasion the school playing fields, Ronaldshay Park, the only piece of flat land anywhere in the vicinity of the Darjeeling Hills, came into its own as an aircraft landing strip. Imagine the excitement amongst the children - and teachers: aeroplanes!

James and Mary had three children - Martin, James, and John. The custom of the time was to head-off "Indianisation" of one's "Empire Children" by sending them back "home" at an early age. Soon the two elder brothers were in Scotland staying with relatives if lucky; but often in digs when relatives were not available. So, James, my father, had a label tied to his coat and packed off "home" at the tender age of eight - never to return; or so I was led to believe when I was growing up. Almost my only knowledge of India then was that my grandfather

had been a “missionary at a school in Kalimpong in India”. Indeed, Kalimpong was rarely mentioned in my parents’ house as I think there was a general wish for a secure family home to make up for the itinerant life my father had led as a boy and young man. Indeed, it was not until the mid-Forties that I even met my grandfather, by now a widower and retired to Craigellachie on Speyside. However, my own Family History research has since told me otherwise of family travels. From shipping passenger lists, I learned that the two elder brothers had travelled between India and Britain on a number of occasions over their school and university lives. Not only that, once or twice whilst still young they had been escorted on their voyages by one of my grandfather’s many sisters who, on arrival at The Homes, stayed on as a houseparent for many years. (That Family History lesson – don’t rely on family tales; check the facts, then, check again!).

Eldest brother Martin did return to India eventually, after being ordained as a Church of Scotland Minister. He spent his India days in Calcutta where he was a Professor of History at Duff College, a Church of Scotland establishment dating back to the mid-19th Century. However, in the early Fifties he contracted severe typhoid fever and had to be invalided back to Scotland. My father, James, joined the Civil Service and was the only one of the brothers to have a family: which was good for me! The youngest brother, John, clearly his mother’s favourite, stayed on in India until around 1922 when grandmother’s health started to decline so the two of them returned to Scotland, never to return to India.

John had an interesting career. After gaining a law degree and a spell as a teacher of languages, World War II saw him posted to the Intelligence Corps spending much of his time “denazifying” hard-line German officers. After providing legal support at the Nuremburg Trials, John’s career went on to the Foreign Office where he worked extensively on international boundary commissions – The Arab Emirates, Iceland and the “Cod Wars”. Indeed, during the early post-war period, he was heavily involved in the division of Berlin into its four postwar international sectors. I even found a “Secret” map amongst his papers! The Nineteen-Sixties saw a tour as legal adviser to the British Ambassador to the United Nations, before taking silk as a QC in Chambers in London.

So, although only a couple of generation’s worth of Simpson family spent time in India, those thirty or so years at the beginning of the Twentieth century have provided a wealth of information about my recent ancestors. Now, on top of that, read on of a further fifteen or so years’ worth of Simpson family involvement at the start of the Twenty-First century!



1934. The Simpson family. India now but a distant memory!

Fast forward some seventy years, to November 2003, when on a ferry crossing from Arran – ferries sailed back then – a

chance meeting occurred which put me in touch with another Church of Scotland minister, now resident on the island, who had spent many years in Kalimpong in the Sixties/Seventies as Chaplain as well as Farm Manager at The Homes. Not only that, but he also ran an annual tour to India taking in Kolkata and Kalimpong, even Bhutan and Nepal! It was a “had-to-do” moment – although it still took until 2008 before my wife and I could stand in front of the gates to Dr Graham’s Homes!

Long before our visit, however, The Homes had progressively grown into a residential school with a roll of some 1,400 pupils, the cottage principle still to the fore for boarding pupils. Post-war economics, however, had long since turned the emphasis towards private education rather than as a sanctuary dedicated entirely to destitute children. Notwithstanding, that ethos is still very relevant today and at “Dr Graham’s Homes” – the title by which this private school is now known – there were at the time around 250 sponsored children and the same number of private boarders attending The Homes. What a moving experience we had throughout our first visit to Kalimpong! We had to return!

That opportunity arrived sooner than we’d anticipated as the post of Sponsorship Secretary – the link in UK between child

and sponsor – unexpectedly became vacant. Recently retired, I grabbed the opportunity to apply – successfully. Over the next ten years we made many visits to The Homes, getting to know and understand the children whom the Charity supports through funding of individual children provided by their UK sponsors. The joy of seeing a child whom one has been fortunate enough to be able to afford to support through their school career is immeasurable. Then onwards for the pupils in a great number of cases into college courses and from there into jobs which, occasionally, even enable yesterday’s waif to take over as the family breadwinner today, thereby lifting the family out of poverty and into a new life.

But, like every other charity today, the competition for funding is intense! Our supporter base, which for the best part of a century had involved many whose families served in India back in the day, is naturally falling away. Our Charity is having to look inwards today, perhaps even rethinking our operational strategy; basically, addressing the question “If he were with us today, what would Dr John Anderson Graham be doing right now?!” So, all help is sought from everyone who cares! Should you be interested in finding out more, or even helping to support a child, then do look up our website [Dr Graham’s Homes, UK. drgrahamshomes.co.uk] for further information!

James T F Simpson, 8385

Editor: If you are interested the Gartsherrie Academy Logbooks are held at North Lanarkshire Archives <https://culturenl.co.uk/libraries/archives-and-local-history/north-lanarkshire-archives/>



Mona in India

Until I retired, and had time to consider these things, all I knew about my maternal grandmother was that she had died in India, while my mother was a child and living with her grandparents in England. The author Alasdair Alpin MacGregor, in his autobiography *'Auld Reekie'* (published 1943), writes: *'Poor Mona's dust lies mouldering in India these twenty years. She died out there while I was still an undergraduate'*. An old black and white photograph in my mother's childhood album showed her grave. But where was it and why was Mona in India?



Mona's grave as photographed shortly after her burial

The answer to 'where' was provided by BACSA (British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia): *'The grave (No. 1623) is in the Scottish Cemetery, Calcutta; the date of death was 26th. February, 1931. The actual grave could not be found.'*

The census of 1911 tells us that Mona was the younger daughter of Adam McGregor (then 71) and Betty, nee Ker. The family were living at 6 Grosvenor Street, Haymarket, Edinburgh. Mona (25) had an older sister and two older brothers: John (30) Hugh (29) and Mary (27). No.6 had 18 rooms and Adam McGregor is described as a Boarding

House Keeper. Also in the house were Josephine, Adam's niece (47), a kitchen maid and four lodgers. One of the latter having her own lady's maid. The only McGregor I came to know well was my great-aunt Mary.



Mona McGregor Kurseong, Bengal, India, 1920

Of Mona's earlier life I know nothing. But I am fortunate that the author Alasdair Alpin MacGregor (no relation) left a description of Adam McGregor (no relation) and his daughters in his autobiography *'Auld Reekie'*. He became friends with the two McGregor girls and admits to having had a crush on Mary. Of Mona he writes: *'Mona was full of laughter and nonsense.... with a lilting singing voice; but being inclined to tease him overmuch'*. This is all I know of the young lady who came to marry grandfather.

I am extremely fortunate that I do know more about my maternal grandfather.

Harold Samuel Eaton Stevens [HSE] - known to his family as 'Jack' was born on 29 November 1892. His parents were Harry George Raikes Stevens [HGR], Army Schoolmaster, Hampshire Regiment, and Sarah Eaton; the couple then living at the army's main base at Bareilly, India. The army moved them

about: Mauritius and Canada being mentioned; as well as Rawalpindi, India, where HGR was as an Inspector of Army Schools. By 1915 HGR was Headmaster at Queen Victoria School, Dunblane.

In 1910 Harold entered George Heriot's School in Edinburgh. Going on to Edinburgh University. On 17 August 1914, Harold answered Lord Kitchener's call and applied for 'Any Highland Regiment'. Having been a Lieutenant in his school's OTC, and able to ride a horse, he was an obvious candidate for a commission. He was granted his with 12th. Battalion, The Royal Scots, 1st Foot, Scotland's premier lowland regiment



Captain H.S.E. Stevens M.C. (1916) 12th/13th
Bn. The Royal Scots

On 23 September 1915, the Battalion went into action at the Battle of Loos. While 2nd-in-command 'C' Company, a bullet went through Captain Steven's left hand and wrist. On 18 October, a Medical Board [MB] in London judged that the wound required six weeks to heal and granted him leave. This allowed Harold time to return to Dunblane. The wound did not heal as expected and he was not passed fit for 'General Service' until 18 February 1916. He rejoined with the 13th Battalion Royal Scots. Then part of 45th Brigade, still operating in that same

sector, on the Western Front, which he had left. This part of the line was known as 'The Kink': a particularly dangerous bulge in the Allied line and opposite the notoriously well defended German position known as the Hohenzollern Redoubt.

The danger there was well illustrated by subsequent events. As the battalion War Diary describes it: 11 May 1916, 4:15pm

'Enemy opened an intense bombardment on the front support trenches along the whole battalion front with artillery of all calibres, trench mortars and Minnen wyfer (?). About 5pm. A shell entered HQ dugout and exploded inside it and killed or wounded the whole of the HQ staff.'

Those listed as killed included the CO, 2nd I/C and 4 officers; a further six officers were wounded and one reported missing. By 9am the following day 300 men were killed, wounded or missing. Harold, as the senior officer still standing, took command and restored the situation. An action which earned him a Military Cross. He was 24 years old.

This part of the front remained extremely dangerous and, on 28 June, Harold was wounded again; this time a bullet wound to his head and shoulder. Once again he was evacuated back to England. On 26 July, a MB at 4th London General Hospital gave him 10 weeks for recovery. On 28 August he gives his address as c/o Buchanan, 47 Colinton Road, Edinburgh. On 23 September he sends a telegram from Earlsferry, Elie, requesting a MB in Edinburgh. This is held on 2 October and confirms: 'He is still troubled by noises in head -not sleeping well and

is somewhat shaky...'. On 28 November: 'he is neurasthenic'. Finally, at Dundee, on 25 February 1917, he is passed fit for General Service and sent on a course for senior officers; leading to a promotion to T/Major.

By 8 February 1918, the 13th was part of 45th Brigade in 15th (Scottish) Division sent to assist the French Third Army in its counter offensive against the Germans in what became known as Second Battle of the Marne. It was the first major battle to feature the Americans. On 26 July, as far as Harold is concerned, history repeats itself: a shell landing in the HQ dugout and killing the CO and most of his staff. Harold again takes command. This time an action recognised by the French with a Croix-de-Guerre with Palme and Legion d'Honneur. But the effort involved takes its toll. On 18 September, while staying at 7 Alvanley Terrace, Edinburgh he writes to the War Office and the medical authorities, in Edinburgh, who recognise that he is 'GWO' (generally worn out). On 2 December 1918, now at Mullingar, Ireland, his MB states '*Debility following influenza*'. Harold has survived Spanish flu!



Military Cross, Croix-de-Guerre, Legion d'Honneur

We can only speculate about the circumstances which led Harold to Mona. It is obvious that Harold, as a decorated officer, would have been an attractive proposition. It may be that Mona had got

to know him well before 1919. The photo frame (below) is a clue to that: made of gunmetal, Harold may have carried it in his pocket while on active service in France.



From the inscription on the McGregor grave in Comely Bank Cemetery, we know that Adam McGregor had died in 1913 and his wife Betty in 1918, at the age of 73. So it is reasonable to suppose that, during WWI, Mona was helping to run the boarding house. A photograph has confirmed that, at some point, her sister Mary was a VAD at Craiglockhart War Hospital; but, although Harold suffered a bout of shell-shock, there is no evidence that he was treated there.

However it happened, on 16 September 1920, at St. George's West, United Free Church of Scotland, Edinburgh, Harold marries Mona. The marriage certificate gives the following:

- Harold Samuel Eaton, gentleman, ICS age 28: 'The Rectory', Chingford, Essex.
- Father: Harry George Raikes Stevens, Inspector of Army Schools, retired;
- Mother: Amy Sarah nee Eaton.
- Mona, spinster age 31: 30 West Maitland Street, Edinburgh.
- Father: Adam McGregor, Land Steward, deceased;
- Mother: Betsy nee Ker, deceased.
- Witnesses: Stewart Kaye (married to Mary McGregor) & Mary Jane Weir.

HGRS had a direct relationship to Robert Raikes, the founder of the Sunday School movement. As his army rank indicates, education was important to him and he wanted the very best for his only son. Having served in India he, like many others, would have been aware of the reputation of the Indian Civil Service [ICS]. Alpin McGregor recalls his father also imagining a good career for his two sons: *'He was anxious that both of us should qualify one day for luxurious positions in the higher grades of that august fraternity - preferably in the Indian (sic) Civil.'* Such were the prospects for anyone gaining a post in the ICS, that they came to be known as *'The Heaven Born'*. On 23 August 1920, Harold had signed his covenant and became an officer in the ICS. Sailing shortly after their marriage Harold and Mona arrived in Bengal on 7 December. Four days later Harold took up his first appointment as Assistant Magistrate and Collector, Chittagong.

It is hard to imagine the impact that arriving in India would have had on Mona: the heat, the teeming crowds and the smells of the sub-continent would all have been very alien to her. But the colours, the sounds and the friendliness of the people would have provided some consolation. Mona rapidly had to become used to life as the wife of an important person; in control of a large house and servants and, at times, playing her part by meeting local women and attending local events. Not easy when lacking the local language.

On 10 March 1922, while still in Chittagong, Mona gave birth to a daughter. The baby was baptised in the Scots Kirk there, with the Christian names, Betty Ker; after her mother.

Three months later, Harold is posted to Kurseong as Assistant Magistrate, Collector and Sub-Divisional Officer. Here, above the plains and halfway between Calcutta and Darjeeling, the climate is markedly better. One wonders whether this posting was partly due to the fact that they now had a young child to look after. A year later Harold's career begins its climb to the top and he is promoted to Joint Magistrate, Deputy Collector. The family is obviously settled and on 2 May 1923 they have a second daughter: Pamela Mary is born.



Bungalow in Kurseong



Harold with Betty and Pamela

But their happiness was short lived. On 9 August 1924, Pamela dies. The record of Harold's postings suggests that Pamela's illness had been notified to the authorities in Calcutta. At the time of her death, Harold was on leave; this being granted from 18 July. At the time, his posting was at Serampore in Hoogly and, just nine days after burying his daughter, he returned to duty there. Pamela's grave is in the small cemetery in Kurseong. So,

perhaps, Harold and Mona had gone back to Kurseong in the hope that, there, the better climate would enable Pamela to recover. Pamela Mary had only lived for 18 months; not even the ‘two monsoons’, which was quoted as the normal lifespan for Europeans arriving in Bengal. One can only imagine the effect that Pamela’s death had on Mona.

In March 1925, Harold was due his first spell of proper leave: seven months and 30 days; enabling the remaining family to return to the UK.



Harold, Mona and Betty leave in the UK

After that leave, which included a visit to relatives in Ireland, they returned to India and, by 14 January 1926, were back in Dacca. For the next three years, Harold had a succession of postings across Bengal. All the while, Betty was growing.



My mother remembers her childhood in India as a happy time; children were well looked after. (See images above)

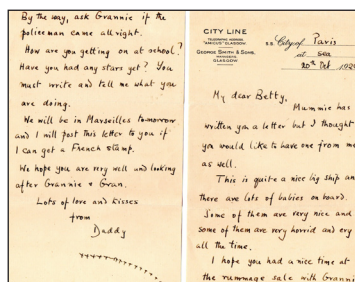
As was the custom for children of the British in India, the time would come

when Betty would have to go to school in England. A period of leave of seven months and 16 days, starting on 22 March 1929, just 12 days after her seventh birthday, gave her parents sufficient time to take her back to England and to leave her in the care of Harold’s parents.



Betty Ker, Mona, Betty and friends

In October, her parents embarked on the S.S. *City of Paris* and returned to India.



Betty would never see her mother again.

Mona Stevens died in Calcutta on 26 February 1931, of ‘acute heart failure’. As was customary, her burial took place the same day.



The grave, with the original cross lying nearby, was discovered when the jungle in that part of the cemetery was cleared during the Trust's conservation project which started in 2008.

My brother and I had the grave restored and in July 2022, Prof. Bashabi Fraser, CBE (Trustee-KSHT) alongside the project's architect Dr Neeta Das, laid a wreath on the restored grave.



If Mona had survived, to tell this story to her grandchildren, then she would have been able to do so from the standpoint of a Lady: as the wife of the most senior British Civil Servant in Bengal: Sir Harold Stevens, KCIE, CSI, MC. The last of the British Chief Secretaries in Bengal. But how his career developed is another story...

Image credits to author

Ian Stein – Hon. Treasurer, Kolkata Scottish Heritage Trust [KSHT]

Did you know?

There are a number of links to help in researching soldiers who served in the Indian Army on the *Researching First World War Soldiers* website.
<http://www.researchingww1.co.uk/indianarmyww1>

An Assam Tea Planter

My grandfather, David Stewart, was born in Lochwinnoch on 2 November 1896 to John Stewart and Anges Bowes Scoular. After serving in the First World War, he went into banking and spent a lifetime in Asia, with my mother being born in Colombo. Mother and Father met in 1950 on the English south coast. My maternal grandparents did not approve of my father and my grandfather used his influence to get my father a job as a tea planter in Assam, India, far away from my mother. My mother had different thoughts and she packed up her job in London and took a boat to Calcutta and they married in 1953.

My grandfather relented and was there at the wedding, but my grandmother never did approve of this arrangement hence



her absence from the wedding photos.

David Meadows

This short article was provided by one of our FaceBook followers with whom Jean had been in 'conversation'.

Oriental Connections

These two items: a Chinese camphorwood chest and an Indian (or possible Persian) table mat unexpectedly found their home in the 3-room tenement of my great-grandmother.



Chinese chest © Jean Mackenzie 2024



Indian Mat © Jean Mackenzie 2024

Two of her sons travelled around the world in the merchant navy bringing souvenirs back for their mother Janet WALLACE in Clydebank.

Her husband had died in 1901 leaving her with six children under 12, but she was a resourceful woman; within a fortnight she applied successfully for assistance from the Poor Law and by the 1901 Census she had acquired three male lodgers

(who allegedly slept in shifts) and soon was cooking dinners for another four engineers from John Brown's Shipyard.



Janet Robertson Wallace, 1900 [photograph property of Jean Mackenzie]

This must have paid off because by the 1911 Census she had managed to get sought-after engineering apprenticeships for all three sons in the shipyards, and respectable jobs for her three daughters in Singers sewing machine factory. Although the youngest (my grandmother) was noted as a Scholar, she told me that she started work in Singers at the age of 12 – presumably part-time.

Jean Mackenzie 6966

Missionaries in India

The people described below grew up in the Glasgow Evangelical Union (EU) Church which moved from Blackfriars St into the Montrose St building in 1875.

The EU had begun as a breakaway from the United Secession Church and by the end of the 19th century it prided itself on its liberal values (appointing the first female minister in 1928), abstentionism, active social life and progressive debates. One of these had been over vegetarianism which both the Dobsons and Herberts adopted for life. An image of the church in 1875 can be seen at <https://www.theglasgowstory.com/image/?inum=TGSD00523>

The church formed the social as well as religious hub of its congregation and the members knew each other well; many of the Deacons married into the Herbert family. The Congregational Union to which the EU Church affiliated itself was one of the well-springs of Christian Socialism and strongly believed in deeds over words which is how so many became missionaries.

One of the founders of the Labour Party James Keir Hardie was a lay preacher for the EU; he converted to Christianity in 1897 and considered himself to be a Christian Socialist.

Tom Dobson 1878-1922 'Champion of the Outcast'

Tom's family had moved from Dumfriesshire to the Gorbals when he was a child, his mother a strong member of the EU Church. Apprenticed as printer/compositor at the Celtic Press. Tom was

active in his Trade Union and Labour politics. He founded a boys' club in Rotten Row to help organise the street children.

In 1903 he was appointed manager of the printing press in Poona (now Pune) for the Scottish Mission Industries Company (SMIC) founded by the United Free (UF) Church of Scotland. Its purpose was to print material for the missions and to provide training and employment for local converts and orphans.

Poona was the centre of Indian debate over independence, women's rights and caste reform so Tom would have fitted in well.

He became aware of the evils of the local money lenders who preyed on the poor farmers and workers and kept them in debt bondage. He helped to set up a Society for the Protection of Children to prevent young girls being given up to temple prostitution and set up a YMCA as an alcohol-free social venue for the British soldiers stationed nearby.

When Hindu leading citizens found out he was a vegetarian, they invited him in 1905 to give a talk on Christian vegetarianism.

In 1907, Keir Hardie paid a visit to India and Tom made an effort to open his eyes to the fact that an Indian caste was not a Trade Union and that a deep gulf separated the Brahmin mind from the Independent Labour Party.

At the end of 1908 he was summoned home by the Company to discuss plans for expansion. Five months later he was back in Poona.

Tom became one of the Secretaries of the Poona Temperance Association

under its President, the social reformer and Sanscrit scholar Sir Ramkrishna Bhandarkar, and Vice-President Gopal Krishna Gokhale, a leading member of the Indian National Congress.



Image of Gopal on stamp - By India Post, Government of India - [1] [2], GODL-India, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=75155664>

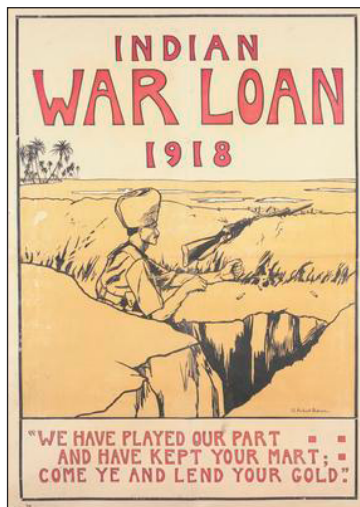
In 1911, Joanna Lethem HERBERT sailed out to marry Tom Dobson. She had long known him from the EU Church and it is thought that they became engaged on his visit home in 1908.



Wedding of Tom Dobson and Joanna Herbert 1911 Poona

She was a talented artist and created this poster in 1918 for the UK Government's campaign to persuade Indians to invest in paying off the debt from World War I.

On returning from home leave in 1920, Tom was made manager of the SMIC United Free Church Co-operative Bank in Jalna and also an officially recognised missionary of the UF Church in the Jalna area. Joanna and their school-age daughters stayed behind in Glasgow.



Poster for War Loan Campaign 1918
© Imperial War Museum, Ref IWMPC-12525



Two daughters of Tom Dobson and Joanna Herbert, drawn by Joanna

Jalna was in the grip of a 10-year drought and the farmers were forced to borrow from the local loan sharks from whose clutches they rarely escaped. Co-operative credit was a method of raising small loans on the joint liability of large numbers of farmers which they had to police themselves - mutual aid in action. Unfortunately the banks were out of capital so Tom organised the farmers to pool their resources and work jointly on each farm in preparation for the next rains. He brought in iron ploughs and even a tractor to help.

Mr. Wilkie Brown, pictures him issuing forth to each day's work:

'Up with the first dawn, it was seldom later than 6.30 that Tom Dobson in his khaki riding-kit, with his water-bottle slung across one shoulder, and his canvas satchel with notebooks, money, and a snack, slung across the other, was in the saddle. What a splendid figure he made! Trained to the last ounce, as hard as nails (a tribute to the vegetarianism practised), he made a most commanding figure'

When the cotton harvest came Tom organised its sale in Bombay to get a better price for the farmers but aroused the wrath of the middlemen he had cut out. There were also problems with bank society members and when he went to remonstrate with one, the man stabbed him. His colleagues took him back to Jalna by cart but he died five days later.

On 4 August 1922 the Dundee Courier carried the following report:

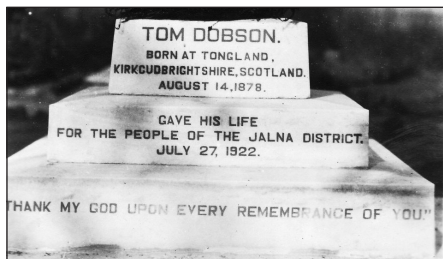
SCOTTISH MISSIONARY MURDERED IN INDIA

STABBED BY INFURIATED ARAB.

Mr Tom Dobson, a missionary of the U.F. Church of Scotland, has been killed at Jalna, Hyderabad, by an Arab.

The Arab consulted him about a debt due to a bank. Mr Dobson advised him to pay the debt or work it off. This infuriated the Arab, who stabbed him and inflicted a terrible wound over the eye. Mr Dobson lingered on four days, but died last Thursday.

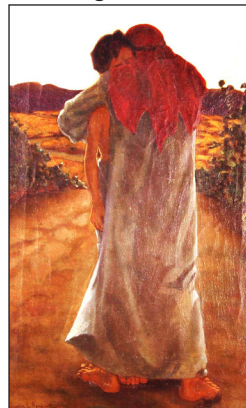
Deceased leaves a wife and child, who live in Glasgow.



Tom Dobson's grave

Most of the detail comes from a book written shortly after – Tom Dobson A Champion of the Outcastes by Nicol MacNicol published by Hodder and Stoughton 1924.

His widow Joanna was also a remarkable person: at the age of 14 she won a scholarship to study Fine Art at the Glasgow School of Art and was in classes with future stars Charles R MacIntosh and Jessie M King.



The Prodigals Return 1919 by Joanna L Herbert ©Jean MacKenzie

Her father Thomas Herbert was a master tailor to trade and the Carillon Ringer to the Burgh of Glasgow. He was the Choir Master of the EU Church and an amateur painter. He and his wife Jessie CAMPBELL had 13 of a family and sent three of them to the Glasgow School of Art.

Agnes Bayne Herbert 1910-1943 Doctor in Kashmir

In contrast, the second missionary is a bit of a mystery – there is very little known about her and very few records available online.

Agnes Bayne HERBERT, known as Nanzy, was Joanna Herbert's niece born in Glasgow in 1910. Her parents (Thomas Herbert and Maggie Herbert) ran an ironmonger's shop in Alexandra Parade, Dennistoun.

Her sister Jessie Campbell Herbert grew up to be a social worker and Hospital Almoner. Neither of them married or had children.

Father Thomas was the older brother of Joanna Herbert mentioned above and started out as an apprentice in the family's Tailor and Clothier firm. He was sent to the GSA to study design, but by the time he was 17 he had joined the merchant navy and eventually became a Mate. He is next seen in 1909 as an Ironmonger in Alexandra Parade when he married his cousin Maggie D Herbert. Thomas joined the 18th HLI in 1914 and was killed in action in France in 1916. He appears in the GSA Roll of Honour.

His widow Maggie continued to run the Ironmongers shop in Dennistoun and hired a housekeeper to look after the home and children. By 1925 she was the proprietor of a house in Stepps and 10 years after that, she owned one in Newton Mearns. In 1934 she was granted a patent for an improved fire grate design.

Nanzy started Medical School in 1929 at the University of Glasgow graduating MB ChB in 1934. Between then and

her departure in 1937 from London for Bombay, I can find no trace.



Nanzy Herbert – graduation, 1934

It's likely that she was working either in the Church Missionary Society hospital or in the Church of England Zenana hospital for women in Srinagar.

The provision of services for women and children was an important opportunity for female Scots to work as doctors, nurses and health educators.

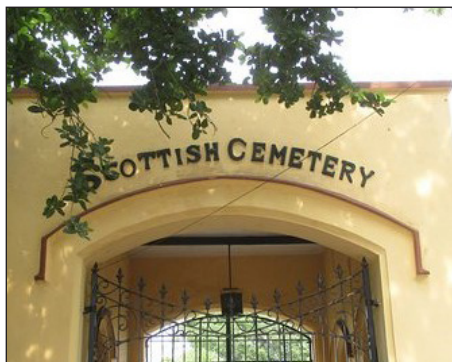
The British India Office registration of her death shows she died of heart failure on 25 May 1943 in Sonamarg, Kashmir and was buried next day in the European cemetery in Srinagar.

Even today Sonamarg is unoccupied in winter and it must only just have opened up again in May 1943. Sonamarg is 50km upcountry in the Himalayas from Srinagar and the altitude (2,750m) alone would be a problem for a Glaswegian. Death was from Acute Cardiac Failure which could have been caused by a sudden change in altitude.

[All images credit of Herbert family unless otherwise specified]

Jean Mackenzie, 6966

The Scottish Cemetery in Kolkata



The gate to the Scottish Cemetery

The Scottish Cemetery was laid out in Calcutta (Kolkata) in 1820. It contains 1,600 headstones and monuments and around 4,000 burials, principally of Scottish Presbyterians. Although its use continued after Indian Independence (1947) it fell into disrepair in the 1970s. In 2008 the Kolkata Scottish Heritage Trust (KSHT) was established to restore the site.

The conservation and maintenance of the cemetery has created a landscape designed to encourage amenity planting and biodiversity. The site has been transformed into a 'clean, green, safe, urban' space for the benefit of the city and local residents.

The project encourages the use of the nineteenth century burial ground as a space for researchers, overseas visitors, and local citizens alike. It has also enabled a small community programme to engage with the people of the neighbourhood. KSHT hopes that the cemetery becomes a much needed back yard to improve the quality of life for all.



Views of the Cemetery

Scots in Calcutta (Kolkata)

The earliest Scot recorded in Calcutta was William Hamilton in 1714, a surgeon who played a role in curing the Mughal Emperor of general disease. By 1750 it was estimated that 30% of people in the Government service were Scots.

Many mercantile houses were set up by Scots with interests in shipping, marine, insurance, plantations, and mining which were to endure until Independence. For example, in 1813 James Finlay came from Bombay and set up his family business. Other managing agencies were Palmers, Mackintoshes, Alexanders, Fergussons, Colvins.

In 1833 The East India Company was relieved of its trading privileges and a core group of managing agencies, all

founded by Scots, controlled cash crops such as tea, Indigo, jute and coffee, and industries such as ship building, steel manufacture, mining, banking, insurance, and shipping.

Jute fibres were shipped to Dundee to be woven in Jute mills and this was undoubtedly the biggest link between Calcutta and Scotland. By 1855 George Auckland had opened its first jute mill in Rishra, followed by many others leading to a decline in the jute industry in Dundee.

The Scottish Cemetery contains around 1809 graves and monuments which have been recorded, photographed, and graded for condition, heritage, and architectural value. They are constructed from both brick and stone, but the typology and ornamentation vary widely.



About 10% graves are of vertical constructions and located in the central part of the cemetery, or along a designated heritage trail. These monuments are considered to have a high architectural value and are in good condition. To preserve this, over 50% have been restored, while it is intended that the remaining 50% will be restored in future phases.

Alongside its restoration activities, the conservation team will continue to

maintain the cemetery premises and infrastructure, but the maintenance of individual graves is the responsibility of surviving families. They may approach KSHT (ian.stein777@btinternet.com) or St Andrew's Church if they wish for any further assistance for the upkeep of their ancestral graves.

People buried or commemorated in the Cemetery include:

- John Mackean, merchant & Margaret Boyd his spouse (1826 - oldest graves)
- Rev Thomas Jones, inventor of Khasi script (1849)
- John Gray, architect (1860)
- Thomas Nelson Annadale, director of the Calcutta Zoological Gardens (1924)
- George Turnbull, civil engineer, designed the Howrah Station terminus building
- James Wilson, developed the first chartered bank



Memorial to Thomas Jones

All images courtesy of KSHT

Jean Mackenzie, 6966

Editor: Jean also provided images of an extract from the Interment Register but it has not been possible to include them here as unfortunately they will not reproduce well enough for them to be legible.

Scottish Railway Staff in British India

During the industrial expansion of Glasgow in the nineteenth century, the Caledonian, North British and Glasgow & South Western railway companies built extensive networks in Glasgow and the surrounding counties for transportation of raw materials, unfinished and finished goods, and passengers. They built works for the construction and maintenance of railway locomotives, wagons, and carriages: St Rollox Works (Caledonian Railway), Cowlaers Works (North British Railway) and Corkerhill (G&SWR).

Independent builders of railway locomotives built works in the city: Atlas Works (the Clyde Locomotive Company, later Sharp Stewart and Company), Hyde Park Works (Neilson and Company) and Queens Park Works (Dübs and Company). In 1903 these three companies amalgamated forming the North British Locomotive Company. The merger created the largest locomotive builder in Europe and the British Empire, the second largest in the world.

Several of the railway companies in India recruited in Great Britain for experienced railway staff, of all grades. Most of these men were employed by the Great India Peninsular Railway (GIPR), the East Indian Railway (EIR) or the Eastern Bengal Railway (EBR). Their contracts of employment records from 1849 until the late 1920s survive in India Office Records (IOR) Series L/AG/46.

Peter Bailey indexed these employment contracts for the Families in British India Society (FIBIS). The index has

the surname, forenames, UK residence (sometimes), function, railway, date of contract, date of birth and IOR reference. Employment contracts were generally for three years.

The original documents referenced are essentially of standard format and only the names and functions of the employees are changed. Accordingly, no extra details will be learned of these employees by viewing the original contracts, apart, possibly, from further precision on the UK address of the employee. Also, where the data are marked 'Index Entry Only', the original contract is not available.

The table on the facing page is an example selection of contracts issued to men with a UK address in Scotland:

Example

The following example comes from our transcription of the monumental inscriptions in Tollcross Cemetery, Shettleston.

TLC0823 James DEANS 1885-1936

In loving memory of my dear son Cpl JOHN A DEANS R.E. died 24th March 1945 aged 25 years. Also my dear husband JAMES DEANS died in India 30th January 1936 aged 51 years. JANE TRAILL beloved wife of above died 12th February 1964 aged 76 years. Also my dear son JAMES B. DEANS beloved husband of ANNE CAMERON died 28th October 1969 aged 53 years. DEANS.

There is no entry for the death of James DEANS in the Consular Returns of the Minor Records at ScotlandsPeople.

Surname	Forenames	Date of Birth	UK Address
AITKEN	William	28 Dec 1873	Carnwarth
ALLAN	Alexander	15 Jul 1882	Springburn
ANDERSON	William	27 Oct 1974	Glasgow
BAILEY	Arthur Stowey	6 Jul 1867	Lenzie
BAIRD	Louis William	7 Aug 1873	Wishaw, Lanarkshire
BALES	Samuel George	29 Oct 1875	Dunfermline
BALHARRIE	James	23 Oct 1874	Springburn
BARTHOLOMEW	John	31 Dec 1875	Linlithgow
BARTON	James Calvert	Not stated	Glasgow
BEATON	John	25 May 1871	Glasgow
BELL	Alexander	22 Jun 1886	Glasgow
BELL	David	14 Feb 1877	Parkhead, Glasgow
BELL	John Malcolm	7 Aug 1879	Glasgow
BENTLEY	Edward George Hersing	4 Jun 1864	Glasgow
BEVAN	John Alexander	15 Dec 1875	Greenock
BEWGLASS	James	2 Jun 1872	Greenock
BISSET	Matthew Webster	5 Jun 1876	Springburn
BLACK	William	21 Dec 1878	Airdrie
BLYTH	John Baillie	15 Sep 1885	Edinburgh
BOLAND	John	22 Jan 1874	Glasgow
BOSE	Fanindra Nath	10 May 1887	Hillhead, Glasgow
BOURKE	Ulick Joseph	10 Jun 1885	Hamilton, Lanarkshire
BROCKIE	John	12 May 1898	Edinburgh

However, it was possible to find a copy of the British India Office Ecclesiastical Returns - Deaths & Burials, on Findmypast which shows James died on 30 January 1936 of heart failure and was buried in the Cantonment Cemetery, Cawnpore on 31 January 1936.

Also on Findmypast are the British India Office Deaths in uncovenanted service, which recorded that James died in Ghaziabad, Cawnpore, Bengal, India. He was a Mail Driver of the East Indian Railway Company. The image is shown on the following page

Their son, James Brown DEANS was born in Dhanbad, Bengal, India.

68

COPIE.

R
499
1936

DEPT.
11 MAR 1936
G 95901 R. 5104

East Indian Railway

Return of deaths of European Officers, not members of the Civil Service of India, in the Public Works Department.

1. Name of deceased James Deane
2. Date of death 30th January 1936
3. Place of death Chastiebad Running Room
4. Occupation at the time of death Mail Driver of Cawnpore.
5. Probable age at the time of death 31 years 1 month and 25 days
6. Native village or country of deceased, if known. No. 572 Toll-cross Road, Glasgow.
7. Particulars of family as far as known; if any relatives in the country Mrs. Deane, wife of the deceased at Glasgow. Particulars of other members are not known.
8. If any property left, in whose custody? Collector Cawnpore.
9. Remarks (a) Cause of death Not known. Copy of death certificate attached.
(b) Whether the deceased has left a will or not and who intends to administer the estate. No will left by the deceased.

British India Office Deaths in uncovenanted service, Findmypast. Copyright THE BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

East Indian Railway.
No. A.B.1456/2 dated 20th February 1936.

Forwarded to the Secretary to the High Commissioner for Public Health Commissioner to the India, India House, Aldwych, London, for information. Government of India, Delhi.

(SD) M. ROBERTSON.
for Agent.

British India Office Deaths in uncovenanted service, Findmypast. Copyright THE BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Sources

British India Office Deaths & Burials, held by The British Library. See <https://search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/british-armed-forces-and-overseas-deaths-and-burials>

Indian Railways UK Contracted Staff. An Index and Description of Employment Contracts issued to experienced UK Railwaymen who were selected to work for various Indian Railways. See <https://www.fbis.org/>

ANDERSON, Paul and SMITH, W A C

Illustrated history of Glasgow's railways
Caernarfon, Irwell Press, 1993
Shelf Loc: S/GLA/SMI

HARDY, Frank

My ancestor was a railway worker
London, Society of Genealogists Enterprises Ltd, 2009
Shelf Loc: G/-/HAR

From Wikipedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_British_Locomotive_Company

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glasgow_Works

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Indian_Peninsula_Railway

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Indian_Railway_Company

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_Bengal_Railway

Murray Archer, 4316

Theme for the next Journal

J131: October 2024

The impact of war on our families

All of us will have family members whose lives were impacted by war - be it as members of the armed services across the ages, or as the families at home living through the privations of war. Again, we are looking for those family stories and/or resources which can help in developing our understanding of what happened.

Closing date for submitting articles: 12 August 2024

And, as ever, any other articles linked to all aspects of family history are welcome at any time.

Researching Scots ancestors in British India

A large number of men from all walks of life – and also some women – travelled from Scotland to India during the British India period (1600 to 1947). Many remained there. One might think, considering time and distance, that it would be difficult finding out about these ancestors and their descendants – but this is not the case.

Where to find records

In the first instance, the records of British India (known as the India Office Records) are housed in the British Library, London. Here there are copies of church registers of baptisms, marriages and burials, as well as wills, letters, occupational records, directories and various other documentation. These are all freely available for examination by the family historian after obtaining a Reader's card. In addition, a large proportion of these British Library records have been digitised and can be found on the subscription website findmypast.org. Moreover, the free website familysearch.org offers enhanced indexes of the India Office baptism, marriage and burial registers.

The website of the Families in British India Society (FIBIS) (fibis.org) also offers transcriptions of many India Office records. However, FIBIS goes further as the British Library records are thought to be only 75% complete – some records have not survived and others remain in India. FIBIS has a team of worldwide volunteers who are continually

transcribing supplementary resources to try and bridge the gap and to also give more background information about the lives ancestors lead in India – e.g. newspaper articles, grave inscriptions, personal histories and records found in various other archives. New data is added each month. Examples of FIBIS data with specific Scottish links are a named index of a book called *The Scots Overseas* by David Dobson, the Scots Brigade muster roll of 1804 with over 1,000 names and lists of Scottish Church Ministers.

Also of interest on the FIBIS website is the fibiwiki – which runs in a similar way to Wikipedia – but relates only to matters relating to British India. This covers articles on everything one needs to know about life in British India with useful links to online information.

A number of Highland regiments are recorded as having been in India before 1800 and records relating to these men can be found at the National Archives in Kew, Surrey. In addition, there is an excellent set of records held at British Library which cover the Hon. East India Company (HEIC) armies. The East India company was created in 1600 for purposes of trade and not conquest and, initially, the HEIC armies served to protect the trading forts in the three presidencies of Bengal, Madras and Bombay. The HEIC armies existed in these presidencies until shortly after the Mutiny of 1857. In addition to records of officers, the run of records include recruitment registers, embarkation lists, service and pension records of ordinary ranks as well as many wills. They give place of origin and it is, therefore, not difficult to notice which soldiers in these armies came over from Scotland. My

(Ship Duke of York, built -)

Names	Former Occupation	Where Born	Date of Departure	Age	Remarks
John Clarke	Labourer	Drom, Laven	7 th Oct ^r 1819	19	
Ralph Clarke	Carrier	Frodingham, Lheshire	20 th Dec ^r 1819	18	
Thomas Carroll	Labourer	St George, Lanes S ^r	5 th Sept ^r 1819	18	
Robert Corrie	Wideler	Edinburgh, Middleham	25 th Jan ^r 1820	23	
Wm ^r Cameron	Thawer	Glasgow, Lanark.	6 th Dec ^r 1819	18	
John Ruckworth	Woodman	Manchester Lancaster	20 th Oct ^r 1819	19	
Wm ^r Donlaney	Quaker	St Bridget, Dublin	13 th Jan ^r 1820	18	
Wm ^r Downes	Labourer	Annandale, Lanark	25 th Dec ^r 1819	24	

1820 Section from Duke of York embarkation list From the British Library Collection (Reference IOR/L/Mil/99)

own ancestor, William Lakin, who was born in Yorkshire, went out to India in 1820 on the East Indiaman ship, *Duke of York*. This left from the Downs (between Dover and Thames estuary) and carried over 300 EIC soldiers. The embarkation list, held in British Library, has been transcribed with details on the FIBIS website and it is interesting to note that were at least 40 men from Scotland – of which 15 were from Glasgow/Lanark.

Of course, Scotland was represented to some extent in all aspects of life in British India – from ruling classes to railways – and various records within the India Office records can be found for most. The jute trade, for example, was one industry with close connection to Scotland as by the 1830s Jute was being harvested in India and sent out to the Jute mills in Dundee. However, from 1860s mills were appearing in India – initially based mainly around Calcutta. These mills had Scottish managers.

Prior to October 2023, a search of British Library's online Archives and Manuscripts catalogue had been useful for identifying

much of their India Office holdings and, in particular highlighting sundry personal correspondence. However, following a cyber-attack this catalogue has been offline – hopefully it will be restored in due course. (Some of these record references can still be identified by searching the National Archives Discovery platform).

Other evidence of the Scots presence in India can be found in cemeteries. In particular, there is the Scottish cemetery in Calcutta which dates from 1820. A recent restoration project has been undertaken on this cemetery and inscriptions of over 2,000 grave inscriptions are held on website <https://www.findagrave.com>. This project was undertaken by the Calcutta Scottish Heritage Trust and Chairman, Lord Charles Bruce, will be one of the speakers at the FIBIS Conference which is open to all and being held in a hotel in the Oxford area this September. (See FIBIS website for details – <https://www.fibis.org/25-years-conference>) FIBIS also has a cemetery project encouraging the photography of graves in India and results are in FIBIS database.

In addition, the British Association for Cemeteries in Southern Asia (BACSA) are a voluntary organisation who assist with restoration and maintenance of cemeteries in India and are willing to give advice and assistance in locating an ancestor's grave (www.bacsa.org)

Websites such as googlebooks, archive.org and those hosting online newspapers and gazettes are also searchable by name and place and should not be overlooked.

Case Study – David McKinlay Charteris (1819-1850)

I have only one ancestral link to Scotland and that is through my ancestor David McKinlay Charteris. He was born in Glasgow, Lanark on 27 January 1819 and was the third and youngest surviving son of William Charteris, a Merchant, and his wife Elisabeth (nee Struthers). William was a tape manufacturer operating from Hutcheson Street but his business failed and by 1826 he had run into debt and in 1829 the Edinburgh Gazette indicates that he was declared bankrupt.

The next relating record is the 1841 census where Elisabeth, a woman of independent means, is shown living with sons John (a writer) and James (a clerk). Indications are that her husband William had died. (In 1833 a burial is recorded

in Glasgow of William Charteris aged 50 years.) Maybe it was the downturn of the family fortune and the loss of their father that encouraged two of her sons to seek a better life in India.

Unfortunately, a transcription on the FIBIS website records that James B Charteris died on 10 March 1844 on board the barque Lady Bute on her voyage to Calcutta. Online newspapers show that he was "late of Glasgow". It is also recorded that the commander of this ship was Captain D M Mckinlay – could he be related? The ship was preparing for the voyage from the Clyde in January 1844 and adverts appeared throughout January for freight or passage. By early February newspaper reports – including that in the Glasgow Courier dated 13 February 1844 – stated that it "*carried one of the most valuable cargoes which ever left the Clyde, being estimated at more than £40,000*". It arrived in Liverpool in March and, so, James did not see much of the voyage. It finally arrived in Calcutta in June 1844 – a length of time which gives an indication of how serious was the decision to make such a journey.

It is not known if David sailed with his brother, or maybe he had left earlier as I have not found him on the 1841 Scottish

Marriages solemnized at Barrackpore.

Year	Christian Name	Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Place of Birth	Time of Marriage	Ministry	Signature	Remarks
1846 July 23	David McKinlay	Charteris	Full	Bachelor	Assistant in the Hutcheson & Co.	Scotland	Initially	William Charteris	Leslie	Age 44, initially 47, subsequently 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100
	Anne	Leslie	Full	Spinster		Scotland	Initially	Robert Leslie	Leslie	Age 44, initially 47, subsequently 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100

Therby certify that the foregoing returns are true and faithful copies of the entries in the Register of Marriages, belonging to and kept at the Church of Barrackpore within the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Bishop of Calcutta as the same entered and made between the 1st day of July and the 1st day of October in the year of our Lord 1846.

At Hand

Marriage of David McKinlay Charteris and Anne Leslie
From the British Library Collection: (reference IOR -N1/70/54)

census, but he was certainly in Calcutta two years later in 1846 as an India office record of marriage shows that he married Anne Leslie on 25 July 1846. Anne was an Anglo Indian lady of Irish ancestry on her paternal line. At the time of the marriage David M Charteris was noted as being an assistant at the Union Bank and residing in Entally near Calcutta. As both his brothers were shown in the 1841 census as clerks it is possible he had received a preparatory clerical training whilst in Scotland.

Two children were born to this marriage – in 1847 William Livingstone Charteris (my ancestor) and, in 1848, Eliza Rebecca Charteris. However, David had not escaped his family’s ill fortune as the London Gazette notes that on 15 November 1848 a petition was filed in Court for his relief as an insolvent debtor. (The East India company directors had forwarded this petition which appeared originally in the Calcutta Gazette – so it is worth noting that events in India relating to British subjects were often relayed back to Britain and to be found in the British press.)

Both children were baptised in 1849 and their father was noted as “Out of Employ”. My guess is that soon after this David started trading to China on his own account. This thinking is compounded by

the fact that his brother, John Struthers Charteris, died suddenly in Glasgow in November 1849 and, his mother having predeceased him, David was appointed as Executor of the estate. He was described at this point as residing in Hong Kong, China and was represented in Glasgow by an Attorney at law.

Sadly, on the FIBIS website there is finally a death record transcribed from the Bombay Times and Journal of Commerce

At Victoria on 10 April 1850 David McKinlay Charteris aged 30 years, lately an assistant at the Union Bank of Calcutta.

Looking further, the same details are recorded in the Bombay News (online in findmypast) in a section for domestic occurrences in China.

The story of David McKinlay Charteris is typical of the earlier pioneers who were lured to India hoping to enjoy a better life but who often did not last more than two or three monsoons. Many died of tropical diseases or succumbed to the rigours of life in a foreign climate. They knew that the chance of returning home was negligible as travel was so difficult. However, there was good communication between the countries as evidenced by the recording of events in local British newspapers.

Baptisms solemnized at Saint John's Church Calcutta Fort William in Bengal at 1849									
When Baptized	Child's Name	Parents	Parents' Names		Place	Quality Rank or Profession	By whom the ceremony was performed		
			Christian	Lattername					
January 11 1849	Charles Lawrence	Charles Lawrence & Charlotte daughter of	Charles Thomas	Smith	Calcutta	Gentleman.	W. D. Roushew Esq. Past Chaplain		
February 11 1849	Eliza Frances	William James Charteris & Charlotte daughter of	Charles Thomas	Smith	Calcutta	Gentleman.	W. D. Roushew Esq. Past Chaplain		
February 18 1849	William James Charteris	William James Charteris & Charlotte daughter of	Charles Thomas	Smith	Calcutta	Out of Employ.	Arthur Tomlinson Esq. Chaplain St. John's Church		
February 18 1849	Eliza Rebecca	William James Charteris & Charlotte daughter of	Charles Thomas	Smith	Calcutta	Out of Employ.	Arthur Tomlinson Esq. Chaplain St. John's Church		
February 18 1849	William James Charteris	William James Charteris & Charlotte daughter of	Charles Thomas	Smith	Calcutta	Out of Employ.	Arthur Tomlinson Esq. Chaplain St. John's Church		
February 18 1849	Eliza Rebecca	William James Charteris & Charlotte daughter of	Charles Thomas	Smith	Calcutta	Out of Employ.	Arthur Tomlinson Esq. Chaplain St. John's Church		

1849 Baptisms of William and Eliza Charteris
From the British Library Collection: (Reference IOR - N1/75/46)

Conclusion

I hope this article encourages readers to research ancestors who went from Scotland to India. There are many resources available and, as demonstrated, one can even find clues to piece together a story for those of modest standing like David McKinlay Charteris. In addition, guidance and suggestions for assisting family history research is freely offered by FIBIS – so do not hesitate to email me at research@fibis.org. Queries can also be placed on the lively Facebook site “British India Family History” which is managed by FIBIS and where information is offered by knowledgeable participants.

Finally, I hope I may meet some family historians with Scots ancestors at the FIBIS conference where a warm welcome awaits!

Beverly Hallam - FIBIS Research Co-ordinator (research@fibis.org)

Please note permission has been granted by the British Library for the images to be reproduced as part of this article in the Journal.

Did you know?

On the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website it is possible to research someone from Undivided India who died in the First World War. Information on how to do this can be found on their research guide: *Researching someone from Undivided India who died in the First World War - Guidance Sheet* accessible at <https://www.cwgc.org/media/43viwrvr/cwgc-how-to-research-undivided-india-ww1-v2.pdf>

Did you know?

Strathclyde Institute for Genealogical Studies are developing an online database of papal dispensations for marriage, intended for use in genealogical investigation.

At present, the Papal dispensations granted for marriages in Britain and Ireland between those related within the prohibited degrees and covering the period 1198 to 1534 are not available in a single place online.

The ‘Papal Dispensations for Marriage Project’ funded by the Foundation for Medieval Genealogy, will focus on the creation of a database that will initially cover volumes 1 to 20 and volume 23 part 1, (all volumes published to date) by extracting entries relating to marriage – specifically papal dispensations for marriage – from the published calendars of papal registers/ letters in a consistent format, to develop a searchable online database.

The aim of the project is the creation of an easily accessible online relational database that would be useful for academic and genealogical research by medieval historians and in particular by medieval genealogical researchers.

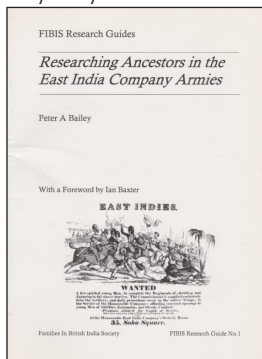
Contact: cll-sigs@strath.ac.uk

Strathclyde Institute for Genealogical Studies <https://www.strath.ac.uk/studywithus/centreforlifelonglearning/genealogy/>

Foundation for Medieval Genealogy <https://fmg.ac/>

Scots in India - Resources in the Library

BAILEY, Peter A *Researching ancestors in the East India Company armies*
Families in British India Society, 2006
ISBN: 0954711610
Shelf loc: G/IND/BAI



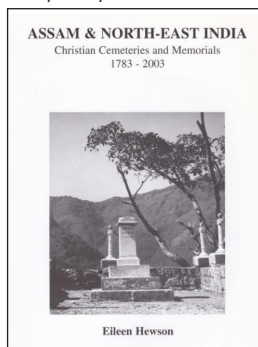
COTTON, J.J *List of European tombs in the Bellary District with inscriptions thereon*
Kabristan Archives, 2008
ISBN: 9781906276188
Shelf Loc: O/IND/HEW

CRAWFORD, D.G *Roll of the Indian medical service 1615-1930 vol 1: 1615-1799, vol 2: 1800-1930*
Naval Military Press, n.d. Originally published 1930
No ISBN
Shelf loc: O/IND/CRA

EAST India register and directory 1830. (CD)
Gloucestershire, Archive CD Books Ltd, 2003
No ISBN
Shelf loc: CD175

FARRINGTON, Susan Maria and RADFORD, John A. *Chittagong Christian cemeteries Bangladesh*
British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia, 1999.
ISBN: 0907799639
Shelf Loc: O/IND/FAR

HEWSON, Eileen *Assam & north-east India: Christian cemeteries and memorials 1783-2003*
British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia, 2005
ISBN: 0907799825
Shelf Loc: O/IND/HEW



HEWSON, Eileen *Darjeeling & the Dooars: Christian cemeteries and memorials 1842-1995*
British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia, 2006
ISBN: 0907799841
Shelf Loc: O/IND/HEW

HEWSON, Eileen *Digboi war cemetery, Assam India*
Kabristan Archives, 2007
ISBN: 9781906276072
Shelf Loc: O/IND/HEW

HEWSON, Eileen *Guwahati war cemetery, Assam India*
Kabristan Archives, 2007
ISBN: 9781906276041
Shelf Loc: O/IND/HEW

HEWSON, Eileen *Graveyards in Kashmir, India*

Kabristan Archives, 2008

ISBN: 9781906276072

Shelf Loc: O/IND/HEW

HODSON, V.C.P *Officers of the Bengal Army 1758-1834. 6 vols*

Naval & Military Press, n.d.

No ISBN

Shelf loc: O/IND/HOD

INDIAN ARMY LIST JANUARY 1919:

Army headquarters, India. 4 vols

Naval & Military Press, n.d.

ISBN: 1843420430

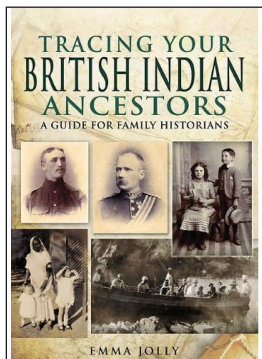
Shelf Loc: O/IND/IND

JOLLY, Emma *Tracing your British Indian ancestors: a guide for family historians*

Pen & Sword, 2012 (reprinted 2017)

ISBN: 9781848845832

Shelf Loc: O/IND/JOL



LOW, C.R *The history of the Indian Navy 1613-1863. 2 vols*

Royal Naval Museum, 1990. First published 1877

ISBN: 0948130482

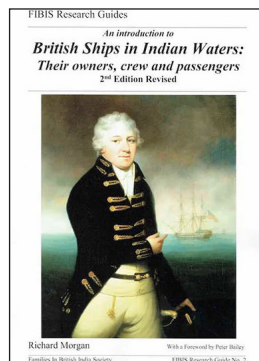
Shelf Loc: O/IND/LOW

MORGAN, Richard *An introduction to British ships in Indian waters: their owners, crew and passengers*

Families in British India Society, 2012

ISBN: 978095471169

Shelf Loc: O/IND/MOR



REEVE, Walter *The old cemetery Pachmarhi, Madhya Pradesh, India*

British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia, 2010

ISBN: 9780907799894

Shelf Loc: O/IND/REE

VOLKERS, Robin

AGRA cantonment cemetery, Uttar Pradesh, India

British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia, 2001

ISBN: 0907799760

Shelf Loc: O/IND/VOL

Journal

FIBIS: the Journal of the Families in British India Society. Number 35, Spring 2016 to date

Editor: If members have any suggestions for other books, journals, or websites that could help in researching ancestors in India please let me know and I will include them in a future Journal.

From the Editor



As I am not local to Glasgow I don't get many opportunities to visit the Research Centre but we were staying up in Ayrshire just before Easter so I was able to drop in. I was lucky enough to visit when the DNA group was meeting and was able to sit in - there was lots of discussion, ideas shared and help offered among those around the table.

Unfortunately I have had little opportunity to pursue any of my own family history research this year so didn't go prepared with a list of things to check out while I was there. I am sure there is plenty to find through the FamilySearch Affiliate Library and some as yet unexplored resources on the library shelves but they will have to wait for when I next visit. On a previous visit while browsing the shelves, I came across two books containing detailed monumental inscriptions for Mearns Parish Kirk which included details of my husband's 3x great grandparents and other relatives who are buried there so who knows what else I might come across if I can find the time to look.

Many thanks to all those who submitted articles for this edition of the Journal. I admit that it was initially looking like

there would be very little linked to the theme but as you will have seen, this was not the case by the time I pulled it all together.

If you have any suggestions for future themes please let me know. However, don't feel you have to write anything connected with the suggested theme - they really are only suggestions. Items on any subjects related to family history are welcome so why not get out that pen and pad of paper and get writing.

I am pleased to welcome Christine Ferguson as a new member of the Editorial Team. Christine responded to the call in the last edition and has volunteered to help with writing articles, and proof-reading and is going to find out how everything gets put together with the possibility of helping with that task in due course.

Karen Hunter, Editor 10206

Corrections

Apologies for the following errors in the March edition of the Journal:

Indexing of Glasgow Parish Minutes [p39-40] was written by Moira Sim 10564, not Moira Aherne.

Income and Expenditure Account [p46]: Closing bank balance for 2022: Bank Accounts - should read £34,794, not £43,794.

Letters and Queries

The Editor welcomes letters and queries from members for inclusion in the Journal. They can be emailed to editor@gwsfhs.org.uk or sent by post to the address on the back page.

Programme of Meetings

17 June	<i>How to research the history of your house</i> In this talk, professional genealogist Lorna Kinnaird will share with us techniques for researching the history of your house.	Lorna Kinnaird
15 July	<i>Using FamilySearch for Scottish Research</i> In this webinar, professional genealogist Alison Spring will help us learn about the free resources available on FamilySearch for researching our Scottish Ancestors. This talk is quite timely given that the Society now has official Affiliate Library status with FamilySearch.	Alison Spring
19 August	<i>Boys Reformatory Schools</i> In this talk, genealogist Morag Peers will share with us her research into the Kibble Reformatory School and the Wellington Farm Reformatory School.	Morag Peers
16 September	<i>The Coats Family</i> In this talk, historian Stephen Clancy will tell us about his research into one of Paisley's most prominent families, the Coats. James Coats built his first small mill in 1826. In 1830, after perfecting his thread, he retired. His sons, James and Peter, founded the firm of J & P Coats which became one of the major manufacturers in Paisley's textile sector.	Stephen Clancy
21 October	<i>Glasgow Witch Trials</i> Inverclyde archivist Lorraine Murray will talk about the history of the Glasgow Witch Trials, a time when people became victims of an hysteria which was fuelled by fear of the occult and the devil. She will also talk about the people who were denounced during these witch-hunts.	Lorraine Murray

These meetings will be held in the evening, (7.30pm) via Zoom. To register for any of these sessions please see the links on the GWSFHS website.

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Please note that the phone will only be answered when the Research Centre is open. If you want to contact us otherwise we suggest using the Contact Form on the Website: <https://www.gwsfhs.org.uk/contact/>

Research Centre

The Research Centre is open on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 1-4pm. There is no need to book unless you want to ensure access to one of the computers.

e-News – monthly newsletter

The Society sends out an email newsletter open to both members and non-members. To receive it, you have to sign up because the software operates with extra security and permits people to unsubscribe. The sign-up is in the footer of each page on the website.

Previous issues can be seen at: gwsfhs.org.uk/services/e-news-archive/

The e-News editor welcomes contributions which can be sent via the email above.

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