



THE SCOTTISH GENEALOGIST

SEPTEMBER 2021

MacKenzie of Dalmore

A Soldier in Burma

Trial of William Liston

QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE SCOTTISH GENEALOGY SOCIETY

Vol. LXVIII No. 3

The Scottish Genealogy Society

Hon. President:

Dr Joseph J. Morrow, Lord Lyon King of Arms

Hon. Vice-Presidents:

Mrs Joy Dodd

Dr Jean Munro, FSA Scot.

D. Richard Torrance, BSc.

Chairman of Council: Vacant

Hon. Secretary: Ken A. Nisbet, BA (Hons), Dip. MSHR

Hon. Editor: Caroline Gerard

Hon. Treasurer: Vacant

Librarian: Dr Keith Spence

Hon. Examiner: Vacant

Council:

Douglas Beddie; Jean Dickson; Gillian R. Kerr, M.Sc; Joan Kerr;
Pauline McQuade; Alison Moffat; Miss Barbara Revolta, Dip. Arch.;
Dorothy Tweedie; Jill Williams, FIGRS

Membership Secretary: Ken A. Nisbet

Sales Secretary: Vacant

Syllabus Secretary: Miss Barbara Revolta, Dip. Arch.

Council Minutes Secretary: Vacant

Webmaster: Richard Torrance

The Scottish Genealogy Society, 15 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL

E-mail: enquiries@scotsgenealogy.com

Website: www.scotsgenealogy.com

Scottish charity No. SC016718

This edition of *The Scottish Genealogist* was edited by Caroline Gerard,
with the valued assistance of Chic Bower at Printing Services Scotland
and of all our regular and occasional contributors.

Front Cover:

The Society's Coat of Arms

Back Cover:

Kenneth of Battle's tomb in Beaulieu Priory

Photograph by Graeme M. Mackenzie

CONTENTS

The Mackenzies of Dalmore (Part One) - <i>Graeme M. Mackenzie</i>	67
A Soldier's Story, 1942 Burma Retreat - <i>Wayne Shepherd</i>	82
Indictment against William Liston Senior	95
The 1921 Heatwave	98
Dates for your Diary	100

Coronavirus Update

The Library is now open three days a week: Monday, Tuesday & Thursday, 10.30am to 4pm.

Booking is no longer required, although a maximum of 15 persons will be permitted at any one time.

Precautions: Users must sign in or scan the QR code, wear face-masks and observe hand hygiene.

Meetings will resume in October. Please see page 100.

The Annual General Meeting took place "remotely" on 4 September 2021.

Please continue to check our website www.scotsgenealogy.com for updates and changes.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Society is an academic and consultative body whose constitutional objects are to promote research into Scottish family history and to undertake the collection, exchange and publication of information and material relating to Scottish genealogy. Copies of our Constitution are available to members upon request. We assist members with modest enquiries, but do not carry out professional research. Private researchers are available, and we can also provide an ASGRA list upon request.

Meetings

Monthly meetings of the Society are held September to April in the Augustine United Church, 41 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, at 7.30pm around the 15th of the month, unless otherwise stated.

Membership

Single UK membership £20; Family, Overseas and Institutional membership £25.

The Society is recognised by the Inland Revenue as a charity. Members who pay UK income tax are thus encouraged to pay subscriptions under the Gift Aid Scheme so that the Society may recover the tax paid on these sums. Details of arrangements for the scheme can be obtained from the UK Membership Secretary.

Correspondence, Subscriptions, Publications

General correspondence should be sent to the Honorary Secretary and subscriptions to the Membership Secretary.

Email: membership@scotsgenealogy.com

Information about the Society's publications and back numbers of *The Scottish Genealogist* can be obtained from the Sales Secretary.

Email: sales@scotsgenealogy.com

All postal correspondence should be addressed to:

15 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL, Scotland.

Email: enquiries@scotsgenealogy.com

The Scottish Genealogist

Relevant articles are welcomed by the Hon. Editor preferably submitted in MSWord or rtf format via email or on a CD Rom. (Please, no formatting.) Illustrations are preferred in .jpeg format. Members' queries are also welcomed for inclusion in the magazine: a £2 per entry charge is made to non-members.

Email: editor@scotsgenealogy.com

Advertising

To place a relevant advertisement in *The Scottish Genealogist*, please contact:

Email: editor@scotsgenealogy.com

Full page £80; Half page £40; Quarter page £20.

Scottish Genealogy Society Website

Our website can be accessed on www.scotsgenealogy.com

Copyright - All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written consent of the publisher.

Views expressed in articles or correspondence are those of the contributor and may not be those of the publisher.

The MacKenzies of Dalmore - Part One

Graeme M. Mackenzie

The MacKenzies are usually associated with the county of Ross and Cromarty, but a significant branch of Clann Choinnich were established in Aberdeenshire and were the lairds of Dalmore in the Braes of Mar from the 17th to the mid-18th centuries. From Upper Deeside they spread south into neighbouring areas of Perthshire, such as Glenshee, Strathardle, and Glenisla. Though the MacKenzies in Glenshee have been well chronicled, there is no comprehensive account of the clan in the Braes of Mar, and they barely get a mention in the general histories of the MacKenzies. This paper is an attempt to start remedying that deficiency, mainly using the online resources available during the pandemic of 2020-21 which should provide a guide to further research once libraries and archives are open again.¹

A number of other Highland clans in Ross-shire and Inverness-shire also had branches in Aberdeenshire; notably the Frasers and the Macintosh/ Shaw ancestors of the Farquharsons, while the Urquharts and Mackays traditionally claim a common descent with the Forbeses of Strathdon. Such connections might be explained in part by the fact that the Earls of Ross – and latterly their heirs, the Lords of the Isles who were the medieval overlords of most of these highland clans – held important lands in Aberdeenshire in the 14th century; the lands that provoked the great Highland invasion of the northeast in 1411 which led to the battle of Harlaw.² It may also be significant that the tradition telling how the MacKenzie chiefs acquired their coat of arms and their title within the clan – the *Cabarfeidh* – has the mythical Anglo-Norman hero Colin FitzGerald saving the king from death on the antlers of a rampaging stag in Aberdeenshire; indeed, in Mar, the very area in which the MacKenzies of Dalmore had their seat.³



The Cabarfeidh arms

The legend of the Cabarfeidh is associated with events supposed to have taken place a hundred and fifty years before Harlaw – when Colin is said to have come from Ireland to assist King Alexander II against the Norse at the battle of Largs – while the Dalmore MacKenzies claimed descent from a chief who rose to prominence battling the MacDonalds in the 1480s. The clan historians of the 19th century tell us that *Coinneach* (Kenneth), the son of *Alasdair Ionraic* (Alexander the Upright), had been married to MacDonald's daughter, and his humiliating repudiation of her (she was said to have been one-eyed, and was sent home on a one-eyed horse, accompanied by a one-eyed servant and one-eyed dog) provoked a campaign by the followers of the Lord of the Isles that culminated in the great MacKenzie victory at *Blàr na Pàirce* after which the victorious chief was known as *Coinneach à Bhlair* (Kenneth of the Battle).

author of the Ancient MS also appears to endorse this meaning – thus contradicting his own translation of “Slyghk Homash Vic Choinnich” – by earlier telling us that the eponymous Thomas was indeed the son of Kenneth. It’s perfectly possible of course that both interpretations are correct, but it’s probably significant that in most of the other early clan histories, no name is given for the son of Kenneth Og from whom descended the MacKenzies in the Braes of Mar.⁶

Alexander Mackenzie’s text says that the mother of Kenneth Og’s son was “the daughter of a gentleman in Cromar” and that their descendants were “... the Sliochd Thomais in Cromar and Glenshiel [sic], Braemar, the principal families of which were those of Dalmore and Renoway.” Rinavey, as it often appears, is in Glenshee [which no doubt was meant by “Glenshiel”], across the watershed to the south of Braemar and home to many MacKenzies who at one time used the byname McComas in memory of their progenitor Thomas. MacComas or McComie was, however, also the alternative surname of a branch of Clan Chattan in the same area, who claimed to be descendants of *Tomaidh Mòr*, a grandson of William, the 7th Laird of Macintosh. The MacThomases owned the Glenshee estate of Finegand in the 16th and 17th centuries, but following a feud with their Farquharson cousins, they had to sell Finegand, which was acquired by the MacKenzies and later owned by the Mackenzie-Smith family.⁷

Local traditions have two versions of how and when the MacKenzies came to acquire the estate in Upper Deeside with which they are most associated. One has it that it was granted to the progenitor of the Dalmore family in the 15th century by the King, and the other that it was gifted to its first MacKenzie laird in the 16th century by his reluctant father-in-law, Finlay Mor Farquharson of Invercauld.⁸

The Farquharson histories say it was given grudgingly because Kenneth, the man Invercauld’s daughter had fallen in love with, was only a shepherd, albeit he claimed to be a descendant of Kenneth II (assumed in these accounts to be the king of that name, though it may be more likely – given how far back that king reigned – that any such tradition referred to the MacKenzie chief, Kenneth the Younger). Having reluctantly agreed to the marriage, Farquharson is said to have asked his future son-in-law where he would like to live, and Kenneth replied “*air an dail mhor goram*” – “on the big haugh to the west” – i.e. on the lands that became known as Dail-mhor or Dalmore (now part of the Mar Lodge estate).⁹ The Farquharson account is clearly designed to downplay the importance of their main local rivals in the Braes of Mar, both by claiming Dalmore’s ancestor was a mere shepherd and that his family owed their lands to a grant from their famous ancestor.

As we’ve seen, the wider Aberdeenshire and MacKenzie traditions link the family’s acquisition of Dalmore with the reign of King James IV (1488-1513) and point to Coinneach Og as the progenitor of the clan in Aberdeenshire. The historian of the MacKenzies of Finegand reports a tradition from the Braes of Mar that “King James, regretting the untimely fate of the young chief whose father had been

his friend, enquired if he had left no heirs, and bestowed the Dalmore estate upon his son."¹⁰

The last appearance of Coinneach Og's father is in fact in Aberdeenshire when, in September of 1491, *Kenzocht M'Kenzecht of Kintail* witnessed Innes of Abirchirder's bond of manrent to the Master of Huntly at Luncarty in Buchan.¹¹ On the same day, he also witnessed – being recorded this time as *Kainach Mackenzie of Kintail* – the Earl of Huntly's charter of confirmation to the Laird of Innes for lands that included *Rathmakenyie* in the Lordship of Abirchirder (Rothmackenzie is just outside the village of Cornhill).¹² All the other witnesses to this charter were lairds in Buchan and Mar, and Kintail's inclusion amongst them suggests the MacKenzies may then already have had a stake in Aberdeenshire. Indeed, it's been suggested the name Rathmakenyie might even indicate an origin for the MacKenysies (i.e. MacKenzies) in this part of Scotland, rather than in Ross.¹³

The Earl of Huntly was the King's Lieutenant in the north of Scotland, so whether or not the MacKenzies held lands in Buchan, it would have been politic for Coinneach à Bhlair to work with him in support of the Crown's campaign against Clan Donald. However, after his death in February 1492 and the MacKenzies' change of allegiance – which they seem to have signalled by going on the rampage in the Black Isle and Strathglass – it was Huntly who had to deal with the rebellious Coinneach Og. In 1499 he testified that he had commissioned the Captain of Clan Chattan, the chief of Clan Grant, Rose of Kilravock, and various other lairds, with three thousand of their followers, to hunt down "*Canoth Makcanehe and his kyne and freindis duelland in Ros, for thai war the kingis rabellis at his horne in that tyme ...*".¹⁴

Coinneach Og's last appearance on the record was in 1502, when the Exchequer Rolls note payments to the Keeper of Edinburgh Castle for the detention of *Kenyeoth Beg*, alongside *Ferquhardi & Malcolmi Makintoische*, and *Hugonis Alanesone*.¹⁵ The latter was probably the Cameron chief, Ewen mac Allan (Hugh/Hugo were used as alternative English equivalents of the Gaelic name *Eòghan*, which was more usually equated in English with the form Ewen). Coinneach Og's first cousin Allan MacKenzie – ancestor of the MacKenzies of Loggie, Kilchrist, and Suddie – was named for the Cameron chief whose daughter had been the wife of Coinneach à Bhlair's younger brother Duncan.¹⁶

Seven years after Kenneth MacKenzie of Kintail had appeared as a witness for the Gordons of Huntly and the Inneses in Buchan, a *Ewin McKenzie* in Aberdeenshire was granted a remission by the Privy Council for the reset of stolen cattle.¹⁷ This hitherto overlooked individual is just the fourth "MacKenzie" as such to be documented – after the chiefs Alasdair Ionaic, Coinneach à Bhlair, and Coinneach Og – with John of Killin only appearing on the record for the first time five or six years later.¹⁸

It's already been noted that the Gaelic name *Eòghan*, for which the usual English equivalent was Ewen (Ewin, Ewan, Evan, Owen, etc.), could also appear in

English and Latin records as Hugh, Hugo, Hugonis etc. An alternative Latin version was Eugenius, which might be rendered in English as Eugene, and in Aberdeenshire it appears that another Latinised version was *Egoni* or *Ego*.¹⁹ That being the case, it seems we may have another sighting of Ewen MacKenzie when an *Ego Makcanzeoch* appears in the Aberdeen Sheriff Court in 1506. In the light of the traditions about the origins of the Sliochd Thomais, it may be particularly significant that this MacKenzie was then living in Cromar where he was married to a widow called *Elene Coutis* who was being asked to prove “*that she had leave from the Bailzie of Cromar to marry Ego Makcanzeoch and still keep her lease ...*”.²⁰

The MacKenzies do not appear to have been long in Cromar, though a *Thome Mackonny* is on record there in *Eister Mechoa* (Easter Migvie) in 1574.²¹ However, it's soon after these brief appearances by Eòghan MacCoinnich that they are to be found further up the Dee valley, and in Dalmore itself.

In 1527 the Laird of Grant made an agreement with the King's tenants of Strathdee, who included a *Donald Egosone*. There's no way of knowing if this Donald was the son of Ego MacCoinnich, but it must be a possibility. Other tenants listed at the same time were *Donaldus McThome*, *Alexander Thomeson*, and *Rore Thomeson* who, given the old byname of the clan in Aberdeenshire and Perthshire, could also have been MacKenzies, though again we have no way of knowing if any of them were.²² However, the appearance of the name Donald amongst these inhabitants of Strathdee does suggest a possible connection with the king's tenant of Dalmore in 1539 who was *Thomas Donaldson*.²³ Others nearby bearing the same patronymic (or surname, if that it was) were: *Duncan Donaldson & Thomas Donaldson* in Corriemulzie; *Thomas Donaldson* in Craggan; *Thomas Donaldson* in Wester Allanaquoich; *Duncan Donaldson* in Castleton; and *John Donaldson* in Tullochcoy. There was also a *John Makome* in Invergelder, where, in 1635, the laird was a David Donaldson.²⁴ The fact that these Donaldsons were also in Craggan and Allanaquoich in 1539 is probably significant, since some of the earliest recorded “MacKenzies” in this area had holdings in these places as well in Dalmore.

In 1596 a *Donald Kynoch* in the Brae of Mar let the town and lands of Innerey, in the earldom of Mar, to Alexander Robertson of Inchmagranachan, but we can't be certain that Kynoch without a “Mac” or a “son” represents a MacKenzie.²⁵ In 1614, however, the full clan surname finally appears, when the Earl of Mar was commissioned by the Privy Council to bring to justice the murderers of Murdoch, the brother of *Donald McKenzie in Dalmore*.²⁶ In 1616 Alexander Farquharson was granted lands in Allanquoich, and he is reported to have been married to Grizzel MacKenzie, a daughter of Donald MacKenzie of Craggan (who may have been the same man as Donald in Dalmore).²⁷ In 1629 it was *Donald McKeinzie in Dalmore* and his son Thomas who were commissioned by the Privy Council, along with some Farquharsons and other local lairds, to apprehend outlaws.²⁸ Up to this time Donald MacKenzie appears to have been a royal tenant in Dalmore

(and probably in Craggan too), but in 1632 he and his son Thomas are reported to have been infert in Dalmore, presumably by the Earl of Mar.²⁹ *Donald McKenzie of Dalmoir* and *Alexander McKenzie in Blairwachter* (maybe Blackwater, to the south of Glenshee) are included amongst the vassals of John Earl of Mar and his son John Lord Erskine with whom they made contracts in 1632; and in the same year, *Alester McKenzie in Blairwachter* gave a charter for part of Dalmore to Alexander Robertson of Lude.³⁰

Donald MacKenzie of Dalmore was dead by 1634, when his widow Isobel Stewart, her son Duncan MacKenzie, and some other Stewarts petitioned the Privy Council against the activities of the MacDonalds of Glencoe. Other MacKenzies named in the petition were John, the son of Allan of *Allanquoche Beg*; his lawful sons James & John, and his natural son Thomas; and *Alexander M'Kenzie in Braichlouchter*.³¹ Thomas MacKenzie had succeeded his father as the laird of Dalmore, but it's not clear if he was a son of Isobel Stewart or of an earlier wife of Donald. He too was dead by 1636 when *Thomas McKeinyie, son to umquill Thomas McKeinyie of Dalmoir* was commissioned by the Privy Council to pursue raiding MacGregors.³²

In that same year, Alexander Farquharson of Allanaquoich granted the lands of Tomb in Glenshee to Alexander McKenzie alias Wilson. His son, *John Wilson of Crandath* [Crannach in Glen Fernait] and John's wife Janet Robertson were included in the sasine of the following year. Duncan McKenzie alias McComas in Bray of Mar was the attorney for John Wilson, and John McKenzie alias McComas in Dallmoir in Bray of Mar was a witness.³³ If Blairwachter and Braichlouchter do stand for Blackwater, then it seems likely the Alexander MacKenzie who was there in 1632 and 1634 was the same man as the Alexander MacKenzie alias Wilson who became the laird of Tomb in 1636. A year before that, a Thomas McKenzie alias Wilson, who had previously been in Pitcormick and Wester Enoch, was seized in half of the lands of Wester Dalnabreck in Strathardle (the Ardlie Water is joined by the Alt Fernait just above Wester Ennochdow, then flows past Pitcarmick and Dalnabrick before merging with the Black Water to become the River Ericht). The byname "Wilson", which continued to be used as an alternative surname by members of this family into the early 1700s, suggests the father of Alexander and Thomas was called William, but no early members of the clan with that name have so far been found in these areas.³⁴ Fifteen years later Alexander Wilson alias McKenzie granted Tomb to his son Duncan, whose descendants in Tomb and later in Borland can be traced down to a Charles McKenzie of Borland who, along with his brother Simon, were alive in 1889. Duncan's brother Robert was the first MacKenzie laird of Finegand.³⁵

The laird of Dalmore in 1661 was John MacKenzie, who's reported to have been infert there in 1662.³⁶ He was probably the John McComas in Dallmoir who had witnessed the sasine of Tomb in 1637 and may have been the son of one of the Thomas MacKenzies mentioned in 1636 (if, in this case, McComas was a proper patronymic rather than the family byname it perhaps later became). In 1666

John McKenzie in Braemar was appointed one of the King's Commissioners and Justices in that part of the country.³⁷ This does not appear to have been Dalmore himself (who may, in any case, have been dead by then) since a John McKenzie in Castletoun appears filling the same role – as the man appointed by the crown to be informed of “thefts or depredations” in the area – in 1671.³⁸ It might have been one of Dalmore's sons (or indeed his grandson, the next-but-one Dalmore) since, as we'll see, John in Castletown's successor as a local Justice of the Peace – which is what this position amounted to, though it is never so-called – was not a laird of Dalmore.

John mac Thomas of Dalmore was dead by October 1666, since his presumed son Roderick of Dalmore was married in that month to Ann Ogilvie, the widow of Robert Farquharson of Invercauld who had died just two months previously. In 1669 there was drawn up an “*Agreement Betwicht Mr. Rorie McCenzie and Ladie Ane Oglvie Farqrson*” regarding the lands granted to Ann Ogilvie for her first marriage, which were to be returned to the Farquharsons. Rory MacKenzie's title of “Mr” suggests he held a master's degree and may have been either a minister or a lawyer.³⁹

It seems almost certain that Rory MacKenzie had been married previously, since the Land Tax Roll of 1674 includes *John McCrurie of Dalmoir* who, to have inherited by then, must have been born well before 1666 (he's recorded in a separate version of the 1674 roll as *John McKenzie of Dilmoir*).⁴⁰ A John MacKenzie is reported to have been infest in Craggan in 1673, and since Craggan is not listed separately in the 1674 tax roll, it's assumed this was John mac Rorie of Dalmore.⁴¹ In 1676 the man appointed by the crown to receive advertisements of thefts and robberies in the area was Duncan McKenzie at the *Castletoun of Brae of Mar* (in this case along with Jon Farquharson of Innerey), and he appears again in 1678 in the same role (this time by himself) as *Duncan McKenzie, forester at Castletoune of Braemar*.⁴² Given the importance of this crown-appointed position, Duncan must have been a younger son or brother of one of the Dalmores, but there's no indication at the moment as to where he fits in to the family tree.

The last record of John mac Rorie of Dalmore is in a discharge granted in 1680 or '81 by the Earl of Panmure's factor George Erskine to *Kenneth McKingyie of Delmore younger* for part of a debt owed by *John McKingyie of Delmore, his father, and himself*. This may have been part of the settlement of John's estate, since by March of 1680, Kenneth was already the laird.⁴³

In the early 1680s there are records of Kenneth MacKenzie on campaign with the Earl of Mar's regiment; in 1682 reporting to Mar from Dunblane, and in 1685 writing from Inverey to complain about the regimental quartermaster beginning “his old tricks”.⁴⁴ In 1690 he was included in a process of treason against the accomplices of Viscount Dundee, the leader of the Jacobite rising of the previous year, since he and Farquharson of Inverey had been seen with fifty armed followers in the company of Dundee in Strathspey. Dalmore does not appear to

have suffered greatly as a result of these proceedings since, in 1692, Kenneth and his wife Ann Macpherson, daughter of John of Dalraddie, were infeft; he in Dalmore and she in Allanaquoich.⁴⁵

For the Poll Tax of 1695, *Kenneth M'Kenzie of Dellmoir* paid for himself, his wife, and two children living *in familia*, and also listed in Dalmore were *James M'Kenzie, tennent, his wife & son in familia* (possibly a brother of Kenneth), *Donald M'Kenzie, tenant ther & his wife*, and five M'Kenzie sub-tenants (James, Alexander, Donald Roy, John and another Donald). There were four M'Kenzie tenants or sub-tenants elsewhere in the parish of Kindrochit (later known as Braemar), and one in the parish of Crathie. David M'Kenzie was the laird of part of *Torregalter* in the parish of Tullich at the time of the Poll Tax, and five years later, Kenneth McKenzie of Delmor was involved in correspondence about the abduction by Farquharsons of Elizabeth Morgan, the heiress of *Torigalter* (she belonged to a family holding the other half of Torgalter).⁴⁶ In 1699 Kenneth McKenzie of Dalmore was required to give a bond for his and his dependents' peaceable behaviour. The list of his followers included Alexander McKenzie, John McKenzie, Donald McKenzie, Duncan McKenzie, and Archibald McKenzie. Donald McKenzie of Toregalter also had to give a bond, though he "hath given up no men".⁴⁷

The local tradition is that the MacKenzies of Dalmore were Hereditary Foresters to the Earls of Mar, and they may indeed originally have received their lands in Upper Deeside as a reward for performing that role on behalf of the Crown when the Forest of Mar was still a royal hunting preserve. Its popularity with those kings devoted to hunting is shown by the fact that more acts were signed by King Robert II (1371-90) at Kindrochit – i.e. Braemar – than at any other place north of the Clyde, Forth, and Tay Valleys.⁴⁸ Kenneth MacKenzie certainly held the office of Forester to the Earl of Mar, and is documented many times from 1705 onwards in legal actions and correspondence about encroachments on the forest – often by fellow lairds like Farquharson of Invercauld and Grant of Freuchie – some of them involving breaches of the peace and rioting, as well as hunting illegally in Mar's forest.⁴⁹ In 1714 Dalmore complained to Mar's brother – James Erskine, Lord Grange – that tenants of Farquharson of Inverey were keeping sheep in the forest, and that the Dukes of Gordon and Atholl had driven strange horses and cattle out of their forests.⁵⁰ Ironically, the Duke of Atholl had appointed a Thomas MacKenzie as one of his foresters in 1669, and the fact that Dalmore's son John visited Thomas's family at their home in Glen Giraig in 1722 suggests they were cousins.⁵¹

In September of 1715 the second Jacobite Rising started virtually on Dalmore's doorstep. A valet who was present later reported to the government that at Castleton of Braemar, "Mr John Paterson was the person that proclaimed the Pretender King James VIII. And the Persons of Note that were present at upsetting the Standard and Proclamation were the Earl of Mar, General Hamilton, Dalmore, and his son." From there they proceeded south to the rendezvous at Kirkmichael that had been agreed with the many other chiefs and nobles who

not long before had gathered for the infamous *tinchel* in the Braes of Mar at which the plot to restore the Stuarts had been hatched. As Mar's forester, Dalmore must have played a major role in organising the hunt.⁵²

The '15 collapsed after the indecisive Battle of Sheriffmuir at which the MacKenzie bard, who was renowned for his cutting wit at the expense of the Farquharsons, is said to have had his nose sliced off, which resulted in his acquiring the nickname *Sandy Salach* (Filthy Sandy).⁵³ The failure of the rising was largely due to the poor leadership of the Earl of Mar who was forced to flee into exile with the Old Chevalier. Dalmore may have escaped the full wrath of the government in its aftermath because he was seen to be a dependent of the Earl, and after the rising he continued to be involved in disputes about forestry, though now acting for himself and his family rather than on behalf of his feudal superior. Without the Earl to hold the ring, relations with the Farquharsons seem to have deteriorated further, with poetic feuding and occasional physical confrontations being replaced with court battles, like that in 1722 when Dalmore petitioned the Lords of Council and Session against Patrick Farquharson of Inverey.⁵⁴

Kenneth MacKenzie of Dalmore was dead by 1723, when his son James was served heir to him.⁵⁵ His widow Ann was given the liferent of parts of his estate the following year.⁵⁶ He left at least six sons: His successor James; Donald, who succeeded his brother; Lewis of Ardoch; George a writer in Edinburgh who was Factor to the Earl of Aboyne, and later to the Earl of Seaforth on the Isle of Lewis; Colin, a merchant in Aberdeen and later in St George, Jamaica, who bought the estate of Strathcathro when he returned to Scotland; and Dr John who was also in Jamaica, later in London, and bought the estate of Drumtochty in Kincardineshire (which he re-named Woodstock). They are all dealt with in more detail below.

James MacKenzie of Dalmore, who was known as *Seamus Mor na Pluice* (James of the Big Cheeks), is said to have been married on 12 February 1728 to Isobel Douglas, a daughter of John of Tilwhilly. They had a daughter Agnes, who married the Rev. Thomas Forbes and died in 1800.⁵⁷ James must however have had a previous marriage since, when he was killed in a skirmish with caterans sometime before 1730, he had two sons with him who also perished.⁵⁸ James was succeeded by his brother Donald, who appears as Dalmore in the summer of 1730 when he and James Farquharson of Balmoral were offering jointly to buy the fir woods of Derry & Luybeg in Braemar from Lord Grange and Lord Dun (another Erskine who was a distinguished judge). Donald was not however served heir to his late brother until January of 1733.⁵⁹

The Erskine cousins had acquired the estates in Mar taken from Grange's brother, the attainted Earl, with a view to selling them for the support of their exiled chief. Dunmore and Farquharson of Inverey were offered the parts of the Forest of Mar they already had tacks of as the hereditary foresters. Dunmore was represented in the negotiations for the purchase by his brother Lewis MacKenzie, and Farquharson of Invercauld was called in on behalf of Inverey. Lord Grange

appears to have played the MacKenzies and the Farquharsons off against each other – threatening to sell the whole forest to Dalmore or Inverey, or indeed to Invercauld, along with the Castletown of Braemar which had the only good grazing in the neighbourhood – while Grange complained to his correspondents that neither the MacKenzies nor the Farquharsons were negotiating in good faith.⁶⁰

The Erskines, who had to sell, eventually accepted what they had been offered, with Invercauld getting Castletown. That was not the end of the matter however. The Erskines then offered to sell the feudal superiorities of all the lands they held in Upper Deeside – both those previously owned by the MacKenzies and Farquharsons (and others), and those just purchased by them – for a lump sum. The various lairds were invited to agree amongst themselves how they might jointly raise the required sum and then divide up the rights accruing from this further sale. However, old clan rivalries, ongoing legal disputes, and the recent bitter negotiations about the purchase of the forest lands all combined to make agreement impossible; so the Erskines sold instead in 1735 to Lord Duff of Braco.⁶¹ As the feudal superior of these lands, Braco then had the right to exploit many of their resources, including two thirds of the trees growing on them. He moved to make the most of them with scant regard to the feelings and interests of their long-time lairds, whose divisions he encouraged and whose lawsuits against each other he helped fund with apparently generous loans. As a local account has it: “One court of law was tried after another; and as their means got done, Braco’s purse supplied them both. M’Kenzie always lost, but on getting a fresh supply began again. But there is a limit and an end to everything; and the limit came in M’Kenzie’s means, and an end in his complete defeat by Inverey. The lawyers were now to pay. Inverey, in repayment of his supplies, gave over to Braco his costs against Dalmore. As for M’Kenzie ... Duff came in, and the laird stepped out. M’Kenzie got a tack of lands on Gairnside from Aboyne, and set up at Lary.”⁶²

Local traditions have much to say about the activities in the early 1700s of two of Dalmore’s nephews, *Gilleasbuig* (Archibald) and *Domhnall* (Donald) both of whom bore the nickname *Urrasach* (bold or proud). Gilleasbuig is noted in particular for his heroic actions defending his family and neighbours against the raids of caterans from Badenoch and Lochaber. Equally notorious in the next generation of MacKenzies on Deeside were two cousins called Donald: *Domhnall Dubh Ephiteach* (Black Donald the Egyptian – because he had visited Egypt) and *Domhnall MacRobaidh Mhoir* (Donald the son of Big Robert).⁶³

Though the MacKenzies as a whole were split in their loyalties in The ’45 – with the Earl of Cromartie raising a regiment in support of Bonnie Prince Charlie, while the chief Lord Fortrose raised a couple of companies for the government – the Dalmore branch, along with many other Aberdeenshire clans, are said to have come out for the Jacobites. Those in Upper Deeside did so against the wishes of their new laird, Lord Braco, and of Farquharson of Invercauld (though Invercauld’s daughter, who was married to the Macintosh chief – then serving

with the Black Watch – was largely responsible for bringing Clan Chattan out in support of the Bonnie Prince). Farquharson of Monaltrie commanded the men of Mar in one of the three battalions raised for the Young Pretender by Lord Lewis Gordon, though there is no concrete evidence of Dalmore himself taking part in the Rising. After Culloden, local resistance to the government forces on the old MacKenzie estates on Deeside was led by the two other Donalds: MacRobbie and the Egyptian. When they were captured and imprisoned at Invercauld, Farquharson – despite his opposition to the Jacobites and his traditional enmity with his Mackenzie neighbours – allowed them to escape, and in return Donald the Egyptian performed a mock assassination attempt on Invercauld to convince the “Saxons” that he had not let them go.⁶⁴

Donald MacKenzie of Dalmore was married to Ann Farquharson, a daughter of Finlay Farquharson of Cults, and they’re known to have had four children: Colin, his successor; Alexander who succeeded his brother; Mary, who married the Rev. William MacKenzie, the Minister of Glenmuick; and Marjory, who married the Rev. Thomas Mitchell, the Minister of Tarves. Donald died in February 1748, having been born, according to his gravestone in the old kirkyard of Glengairn, in 1697.⁶⁵

Donald was succeeded by his son Colin who was served heir to him on the 16th of August 1748. The following year, Colin had sasine of the lands of Rinnabroich in Glengairn which had previously belonged to his uncle Colin. In 1750 Colin of Dalmore granted lands to another of his uncles, Lewis MacKenzie, who was then in Braichlich – at the foot of Glenmuick, a couple of miles down the Dee from the mouth of Glengairn – with the sasine being presented by Alexander MacKenzie, baker in Aberdeen. He’s presumed also to have been a member of the Dalmore family, though it’s not known how he was related to them.⁶⁶

Colin MacKenzie of Dalmore died unmarried in 1752 when he was succeeded by his younger brother, Alexander. He was later a Captain – being referred to as such in the will of his uncle Colin – and is said to have been in the 77th Foot (Montgomery’s Highlanders).⁶⁷ The Army Lists show there was a Captain Alexander MacKenzie in that regiment from its inception in 1757, along with a number of other officers called MacKenzie. Since captaincies were then awarded for lairds or gentlemen who could raise a sufficient number of recruits from their own or their friends’ estates, it seems likely that one or two of these other MacKenzie officers in Montgomery’s Highlanders may have been related to Alexander of Dalmore, and that there would have been many MacKenzies and others from the Braes of Mar serving as NCOs and Privates in his company [something yet to be investigated].

Montgomery’s Highlanders served in North America where, in 1758, they took part in the capture of Fort du Quesne from the French. It was renamed Fort Pitt (later Pittsburgh) after the leading British politician William Pitt, and Alexander MacKenzie is said to have been its Governor in 1759.⁶⁸ No evidence has been seen to support this claim, and it seems an unlikely appointment for a Captain,

unless his company was left to garrison the fort while the rest of the regiment was campaigning elsewhere.⁶⁹ Some accounts of the regiment say that Captain Alexander MacKenzie was killed in September 1762 whilst attacking St John's in Newfoundland, but the Army Lists shows that following the regiment's reduction in 1763 he remained on its half-pay list until 1772.⁷⁰ His entry is crossed out in that year, and since he's not listed on half-pay or in any other regiment in 1773, he is presumed to have died in 1772. Nothing is known at present about where he may have been residing before his death. He's not said in the family histories to have been married or to have had any children (though previous accounts of him in relation to the Dalmore family admit to no knowledge of his fate after his service in the army). He is usually, therefore, taken to have been the last of the Dalmore line; but his father Donald did have four younger brothers, at least two of whom are known to have survived the Captain.

The eldest of the four was probably Colin the Merchant. He first appears on the record in 1732, soon after the death of his brother James of Dalmore, and at a time when his brother Donald was becoming enmeshed in the financial quagmire that was eventually to result in his having to sell Dalmore. Colin was then infeft in the lands of *Rinnabroich* in the parish of Glengairn, and the following year he witnessed the baptism of Margaret, the daughter of Alexander MacKenzie, baker in Aberdeen.⁷¹ The baptism of Alexander the Baker's second child was witnessed two years later by "John MacKenzie, physician"; i.e. Dalmore's youngest brother, Dr John. Colin died in January 1767, and probate was granted in London on 5 March 1767, with Dr John as his heir and sole executor with instructions to "... help and assist my nephew Captain Alexander MacKenzie and any other of my relations and his who may stand in need ...". He left bequests to his nieces – the daughters of James, Donald, and John – and willed that, in the event of his brother having no male heir, Strathcathro should be left to his nephew, Captain Alexander.⁷²

George MacKenzie, writer in Edinburgh, first appears in 1734 when he draws up a Bond of Provision for his brother Donald of Dalmore and his wife Ann Farquharson, and in 1749, when he's the Earl of Aboyne's factor, he acts as cautioner for his nephew Colin of Dalmore in dealing with the estate of his father Donald.⁷³ George acted for more distant relatives – such as the descendants of the Duke of Atholl's forester, Thomas MacKenzie – as well as for his brothers.⁷⁴ George's testament includes a long list of sums owing to his brother Lewis of Ardoch, who must have died in late 1760 or early 1761 since George was acting as his executor in February 1761. George himself died in June or July of 1761, and in February of the following year his brother Colin MacKenzie in St George, Jamaica, was served as his heir.⁷⁵

Dr John MacKenzie is described in his brother Colin's will as "late Surgeon in the British Hospital" – which probably refers to his time in Jamaica – and as "physician in London" in the testament of his brother George. Dr John acted in 1764 for his nephew Captain Alexander of Dalmore in relation to debts owed by the late Donald of Dalmore.⁷⁶ After Colin had written his will, in which Dr John

was to be his heir, he sold his brother part of his estate of Strathcathro, the rest of which John would inherit following Colin's death in 1767 with the intention that, on the death of Dr John himself, it should pass to their nephew Captain Alexander of Dalmore.⁷⁷ Dr John however outlived his nephew and, if Captain Alexander did not have any sons, then Dr John would for the last few years of his life have been the nominal MacKenzie of Dalmore. John MacKenzie was married to Ann Macpherson, a daughter of George of Dalraddie – and therefore his first cousin – and they had three daughters: Ann Grace (married Dr John Duncan without issue); Penuel (married John Douglas of Tilwhilly and died in 1838 leaving a son and a daughter); and Margaret (died unmarried in 1859). Dr John MacKenzie – possibly “of Dalmore” – is said to have died in 1775, though no record of his death or of any will he may have left has yet been found.⁷⁸

References

- ¹ Early accounts of the traditional history of the MacKenzies of Dalmore can be found in Elizabeth Taylor, *The Braemar Highlands: Their Tales, Traditions and History* (Edinburgh 1869) and John Grant, *Legends of the Braes O' Mar* (Aberdeen, 1876). A decade or so later, some contemporary documentary sources were used to produce a useful summary of what was then known about the family in an appendix to Alexander D. Fordyce, *The Name of Dingwall Fordyce in Aberdeenshire ...* (Ontario, 1888), cxliii-cxlv.
- ² David Kyle Cochran-Yu, *A Keystone of Contention: The Earldom of Ross, 1215-1517* (Glasgow University PhD Thesis, 2015).
- ³ Colin and the Cabarfeidh are discussed in the most recent history of the clan: Andrew McKenzie, *May We Be Britons?* (London, 2012).
- ⁴ Aonghus MacCoinnich, “*Kingis rabillis*” to *Cuidich ‘n’ Righ; the emergence of Clann Choinnich. c. 1475-1508* in S. Boardman & A. Ross (eds), “The Exercise of Power in Medieval Scotland, 1200-1500” (Dublin, 2003), 175-200.
- ⁵ Alexander Mackenzie, *History of the Mackenzies* (Inverness, 1894), 112.
- ⁶ *The Genealogie of The MacKenzies Preceeding Ye Year M.DC.LXI* by “A Persone of Qualitie” (Edinburgh, M.DCCC.XXIX), 9, tells us simply that “Of a naturall Sone of this Kenneth-oige's, are descended The M'Kenzies in the Braes of Marr”, and though the index booklet for James D. Mackenzie of Findon's *Genealogical Tables of the Clan Mackenzie* (Edinburgh, 1897), directs us to Sheet One for “Dalmore”, that name is entirely missing from that sheet, which just shows Kenneth Og as ancestor of “MacKenzies of Braemar”.
- ⁷ Margaret S. Smith, *Some Account of the McKenzies of Finegand in Glenshee* (Blairgowrie, 1889).
- ⁸ John Mackintosh, *History of the Valley of the Dee* (Aberdeen, 1895), 200; Taylor, op. cit., 148 & 219.
- ⁹ The current Mar Lodge is the third building to have born that name. The first, which was originally known as *Dalmore House*, was built by William Duff of Braco following his acquisition of the Dalmore estate from the MacKenzies in the 18th century. It was damaged in the Great Flood of 1829 and subsequently demolished. It was replaced with *New Mar Lodge*, which was destroyed by fire in 1895. The present Mar Lodge was built between 1895 and 1898 for Alexander Duff, 1st Duke of Fife, and was designed – appropriately enough – by the noted Aberdeen architect, Alexander Marshall Mackenzie. 19th century maps show the farm of *Dal a'Mhoraire* further west up the valley of the Dee.
- ¹⁰ Smith, op. cit., 6-7.
- ¹¹ *Miscellany of the Spalding Club*, Vol. 4 (Aberdeen, 1849), 189. The date of Coinneach à Bhlair's death is given on his tomb in Beaully Priory as 7th February 1491.
- ¹² *Account of Familie of Innes*, (Spalding Club, 1864), 20.
- ¹³ The suggestion that the placename Rothmackenzie might indicate a possible origin for the

- clan in Buchan comes from Aonghas MacCoinnich's doctoral thesis, *Tùs gu Iarlachd: Eachdraidh Clann Choinnich c.1466-1638* (University of Aberdeen, 2004).
- ¹⁴ *A Genealogical Deduction of the Family of Rose* (Edinburgh, 1848), 170.
- ¹⁵ ER, xii, 35.
- ¹⁶ Duncan Warrand, *Some MacKenzie Pedigrees* (Inverness, 1965), 118.
- ¹⁷ RPS, i, 23, No. 186
- ¹⁸ ER, xii, 241.
- ¹⁹ In a charter of 1365, *Egoni filio Fergusii* is also referred to as "dictus Ego", and the People of Medieval Scotland [POMS] interpret the full name as "Ewen son of Fergus": RMS, I, page 56, No. 191; www.poms.ac.uk/record/person/23737. POMS also has Eòghan the son of John MacDougall of Lorn as "Eugenius/Ivo (Ewen)": www.poms.ac.uk/record/person/20637. POMS records accessed 03 July 2021.
- ²⁰ *Records of Sheriff Court of Aberdeenshire* (New Spalding Club, 1904), i, 21, 75-6.
- ²¹ *ibid*, 257.
- ²² Chiefs of Grant, iii, 68-70.
- ²³ John G. Michie, *Deeside Tales* (Aberdeen, 1908), 278.
- ²⁴ Valuation Roll for the Parish of Crathie in 1635 given in John G. Michie, *Records of Invercauld* (New Spalding Club, 1901), 463-4. The name of the place appears then as "Inverzaldie". Sixty years later a David MacKenzie was the laird of Torgalter in the neighbouring parish of Tullich, and since David was a rare name amongst MacKenzies this might suggest a connection back to this David Donaldson – possibly via the Donald Donaldson who was the laird of unspecified lands in Crathie in 1674: NRS/E106/2/1/6.
- ²⁵ NRS/GD132/473.
- ²⁶ RPC, x, 265.
- ²⁷ Grant, *Legends* ..., 139. Craggan is east of Dalmore, between it and Allanaquoich, and seems to have been held along with Dalmore.
- ²⁸ RPC, 2nd Ser., iii, 175.
- ²⁹ Fordyce, *op. cit.*, cxliii.
- ³⁰ NRS/GD124/1/333, GD38/1/38. The difficulty of interpreting and the mistakes often made transcribing inconsistently spelt names in 16th century documents are illustrated by the fact that the *Blairwachter/Blairwacher* of 1632 becomes *Braichlouchter* two years later. Combining elements of all three versions of this name produces Blaichwachter, which might well stand for Blackwater – the name borne, on its lower reaches, by the river that flows through Glenshee.
- ³¹ RPC, 2nd Ser., v, 347.
- ³² RPC, 2nd Ser., vi, 321.
- ³³ Michie, *Records* ..., *op. cit.*, 218-9; Smith, *op. cit.*, 7-8.
- ³⁴ Alexander of Tomb's grandson received a letter in 1710 addressed to "Paul Wilsone of Cranderd" – Smith, *op. cit.*, 10.
- ³⁵ Smith, *op. cit.*, 10.
- ³⁶ NRS/GD124/6/95; Fordyce, *op. cit.*, cxliii.
- ³⁷ RPC, 3rd Ser., ii, 126.
- ³⁸ RPC, 3rd Ser., iii, 278.
- ³⁹ Michie, *Records* ..., *op. cit.*, 11, 40, 240-1.
- ⁴⁰ NRS/E106/2/1/6, E106/2/2/5.
- ⁴¹ Fordyce, *op. cit.*, cxliii.
- ⁴² RPC, 3rd Ser., iv, 552; RPC, 3rd Ser., v, 244.
- ⁴³ NRS/GD45/18/733; GD45/17/536.
- ⁴⁴ NRS/GD124/15/173, 181-2.
- ⁴⁵ Fordyce, *op. cit.*, cxliii.
- ⁴⁶ *List of Pollable Persons in the Shire of Aberdeen 1696* (2 Vols, Spalding Club, 1844); NRS/GD124/6/147.
- ⁴⁷ *Historical Papers Relating to the Jacobite Period 1699-1750* (New Spalding Club, 1895), 11.

- ⁴⁸ Stephen Boardman, *The Early Stewart Kings ...* (East Linton, 1996), 93.
- ⁴⁹ NRS/GD124/6/161, GD124/15/464, GD124/15/1086.
- ⁵⁰ NRS/GD124/15/1125/4.
- ⁵¹ An account of this family can be found at: www.borenich.co.uk/Ross_Document/McKenzie_forester.html.
- ⁵² Charles Fergusson, *Sketches of Early History, Legends & Traditions of Strathardle and its Glens, No. VIII* in TGSI, xxiv (1899-1901), 208-9.
- ⁵³ Grant, *Legends ...*, op. cit., 143; Taylor, op. cit., 270
- ⁵⁴ NRS/GD1/473/1.
- ⁵⁵ ISH [Index to Services of Heirs] 1720-29, page 22.
- ⁵⁶ Fordyce, op. cit., cxliii.
- ⁵⁷ Fordyce, op. cit., cxliv.
- ⁵⁸ Grant, *Legends ...*, op. cit., 139. While tradition has it that James was killed in 1725, it must have been later because he's on record in 1727 (NRS/GD124/17/138) and was apparently married in 1728.
- ⁵⁹ NRS/GD124/17/151; ISH, 1730-39, p. 26
- ⁶⁰ Grant, *Legends ...*, op. cit., 129-135.
- ⁶¹ Duff paid £10,000 Sterling: Alistair & Henrietta Tayler, *The Book of the Duffs, Vol. I* (Edinburgh, 1914), 110.
- ⁶² Taylor, op. cit., 257-72.
- ⁶³ *ibid*, 241-256, 271-2.
- ⁶⁴ *ibid*, 291-9.
- ⁶⁵ Fordyce, op. cit., cxliv.
- ⁶⁶ Alexander could not have been another brother of James & Donald of Dalmore because when Colin of Strathcathro made his will on 1st December 1765, he stated that Dr John was his only surviving brother, and Alexander the Baker lived until 1783.
- ⁶⁷ Fordyce, op. cit., cxliv.
- ⁶⁸ *ibid*
- ⁶⁹ Montgomery's Highlanders took part in the campaign to capture Ticonderoga in the summer of 1759, and in the spring of 1760, their Colonel commanded an expedition against the Cherokees in North Carolina on which he took 700 men of his own regiment (which at its inception had numbered over 1,400 men): Major-General David Stewart of Garth, *Sketches of ... the Highlanders of Scotland ...with Details of the Highland Regiments* (2 Volumes, Edinburgh, 1825), 331-2 & 349.
- ⁷⁰ The first and most authoritative history of the regiment, upon which many later accounts are based, is in Stewart's above-cited *Sketches ...*, and the cause of the confusion surrounding Captain Alexander MacKenzie's death can be found in the two separate sections of it that deal with Montgomery's Highlanders. In the list of Captains of the regiment on page 82 of his second volume, it has "Alexander Mackenzie killed at St John's, 1761", but in his narrative account of the campaign in Newfoundland on page 363 of his first volume, Stewart just reports the death of "Captain Mackenzie". The Army lists show there was a Captain Roderick McKenzie serving alongside Captain Alexander MacKenzie in 1762, but no such name appears on the Half-Pay list in 1764 (and nor is there a Roderick MacKenzie serving as a Captain, or with a higher rank, in any other regiment in that year), so it was likely he who was killed at St John's.
- ⁷¹ Fordyce, op. cit., cxliv.
- ⁷² TNA/PROB11/927/13.
- ⁷³ Michie, *Records ...*, 468; NRS/CC1/6/30A.
- ⁷⁴ www.borenich.co.uk/Ross_Document/McKenzie_forester.html.
- ⁷⁵ NRS/CC8/8/118; ISH, 1760-69, p.28.
- ⁷⁶ NRS/GD427/241.
- ⁷⁷ Fordyce, op. cit., cxlv.
- ⁷⁸ *ibid*

A Soldier's Story: Harry Hilsdon Cooper, the Cameronians and the 1942 Burma Retreat

Wayne Shephard

Information on the army service record of Harry Hilsdon Cooper does not go into detail about what specific action he saw during his 15-year career with the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). But reviewing the dates of that service record reveals he was part of one of the major events of the Second World War in the Far East – the Japanese invasion of Burma.

This is part of that story.

Harry's Early Years

Harry Hilsdon Cooper was born on 22 December 1914 at 4 Gayfield Street, Burgh of Glasgow, Scotland. His parents were Alexander Cooper (1867-1927), a mercantile clerk and former soldier in the Cameronians, and Elizabeth Walker (1882-1922).

Harry enlisted with the Cameronians on 13 August 1930 in Glasgow, having just reached the age of 15. The note on his attestation form indicated he would join as a normal recruit in the Regular Army "after attaining the age of 18 yrs." He gave his calling as Musician and was assigned to attend the Mossbank Industrial School at Millerston near Glasgow.



Harry Hilsdon Cooper, 1945

NORMAL
NINE
THREE
REGULAR ARMY
(ALL ARMS).
ATTESTATION OF
THE CAMERONIANS (S.R.)

Army No. 3242438
Name COOPER, Harry Hilsdon
Regiment Selected

Questions to be put to the Recruit before Enlistment.

1. What is your Full Name?.....
2. In or near what Parish or Town were you born?.....
3. (a) Are you a British Subject?.....
(b) Nationality of Parents at their birth?.....
4. (a) What was your age (in years) last birthday?.....
(b) Day, month and year of birth?.....
5. What is your Trade or Calling?.....
6. (a) Are you Married? (b) How many children are dependent?.....

1. Christian Name Harry Hilsdon
2. In the Parish of Glasgow in or near the Town of Glasgow in the County of Glasgow
3. (a) Yes (b) Father Scottish Mother Scottish
4. (a) 15 (b) 22 December 1914
5. Musician
6. (a) No (b) None

YOU ARE HEREBY WARNED THAT IF AFTER ENLISTMENT IT IS FOUND THAT YOU HAVE GIVEN A WILFULLY FALSE ANSWER TO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SEVEN QUESTIONS, YOU WILL BE LIABLE TO A PUNISHMENT OF TWO YEARS' IMPRISONMENT WITH HARD LABOUR.

Part of attestation form for Harry Hilsdon Cooper executed 13 August 1930 at Glasgow City

Why Harry chose to join the Cameronians can only be surmised. His father, Alexander, spent almost 23 years with the regiment. A half brother, also named Alexander, had joined the unit in 1914 but was killed in France in 1916. So, there was a familial connection as well as the fact that the Cameronians were a notable regiment in Glasgow.

Harry lost his parents a very tender age, his mother in 1922 and his father in 1927. His mother had been incapacitated and institutionalized in 1918 and Harry may have been put into a boarding school, possibly Mossbank, shortly afterward. His service record shows he was part of the Army School at Mossbank in September 1930. He did well in his studies, receiving an Army School 2nd class certificate in 1930, 1st class marks in Mathematics, Geography and Map Reading in March 1931 and a 1st Class Certificate of Education, Glasgow, in October 1931.

Harry's children all know about his interest in music from at least the time of his attendance at Mossbank. He had expressed a desire to study music full time, but very likely the funds were not available for him to pursue this route after his parents' deaths. He enlisted in the army instead, possibly with an enticement of eventually being able to play with the 2nd Battalion Cameronians Brass Band. The regiment might well have covered the costs of his schooling, as the son of a former soldier and in return for his agreeing to enlist.



Photo of Cameronians Brass Band performing at Delves Park, Lanark, Scotland, sometime in the 1930s (retrieved 22 November 2020 from The Story of Lanark website)

The Regular Army

It should be pointed out first that, throughout his military service, according to the final notification of his release, Harry was considered an “*exemplary*” soldier, one who was “*a thoroughly reliable, sober, trustworthy sergeant who carries out his duties efficiently.*”

On the day of his 18th birthday, 22 December 1932, Harry was posted to the regular army, 2nd Battalion Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), in Glasgow. At that time, he would have been obligated to serve nine years in the regular army and a further three years in the reserves. He initially spent four years training in Scotland, probably at the Maryhill Barracks. On 7 February 1936 he was transferred to the 1st Battalion Cameronians and sent to India.

As noted in *The History of the Cameronians: 1933-1946* (Barclay *et al.*, 1947): “[t]he Battalion moved to Landi Kotal on the North West Frontier in March 1936. Landi Kotal is situated in the Khyber Pass North of Peshawar and is in tribal territory just on the Afghan border. It is a true out-post of Empire, the home of the Pathan rifle thief and a place where every military precaution is necessary. They remained there until November 1936 and then moved to Barrackpore in Bengal, near Calcutta. This was a very different type of station. Their duties were entirely those of Internal Security troops, in connection with the not infrequent communal disturbances in Calcutta and the surrounding neighbourhood.”

The Cameronians were no doubt part of hard fighting with the Pathan tribes in the North-West Frontier. It would have been a rigorous training ground for Harry in his first action with the battalion.

Back at the Barrackpore army camp (Calcutta, West Bengal, India), Harry achieved a life's goal as a musician on 1 June 1938 when he was appointed as a Bandsman. While serving in India, Harry was promoted to Lance Corporal on 1 August 1939, full Corporal on 31 July 1940 and Sergeant on 12 May 1941.

The Early Burma Campaign

Harry's service record shows that on 13 February 1942 the Cameronians embarked at Madras, India, bound for Burma. They arrived at Rangoon on February 21st.

On 19 March 1942, Harry was appointed as an acting Colour Sergeant to fill an “existing vacancy.” One wonders if that was the result of a man in that position having been killed or wounded. He relinquished that rank on 22 April 1942, presumably as another individual with seniority took over or when depleted units were consolidated.

No.	Rank	Regiment	Company	Platoon	Post	Date	Remarks
1	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
2	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
3	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
4	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
5	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
6	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
7	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
8	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
9	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
10	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
11	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
12	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
13	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
14	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
15	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
16	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
17	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
18	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
19	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
20	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
21	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
22	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
23	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
24	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
25	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
26	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
27	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
28	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
29	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
30	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
31	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
32	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
33	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
34	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
35	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
36	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
37	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
38	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
39	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
40	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
41	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
42	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
43	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
44	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
45	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
46	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
47	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
48	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
49	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
50	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
51	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
52	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
53	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
54	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
55	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
56	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
57	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
58	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
59	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
60	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
61	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
62	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
63	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
64	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
65	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
66	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
67	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
68	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
69	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
70	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
71	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
72	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
73	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
74	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
75	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
76	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
77	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
78	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
79	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
80	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
81	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
82	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
83	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
84	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
85	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
86	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
87	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
88	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
89	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
90	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
91	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
92	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
93	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
94	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
95	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
96	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
97	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
98	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
99	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	
100	Private	1st Bn. Cameronians	A	1	India	1932	

Portion of service record for Harry Hilsdon Cooper in the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)

There is a gap in Harry's service record at this point. The next entry on 7 February 1943 has him back in India, posted to the headquarters of 50th India Tank Brigade. And by March 21st he was back with the Cameronians but ready to leave the country for home.

Reports of the activities of the British Army as it made its way out of Burma, along with several other publications, have been sourced, including the *War diary of the 1st Battalion, The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)*, to fill in the blanks about where and when the Cameronians, and Harry, were engaged. *The Retreat from Burma 1941-42* (Prasad, 1954) is an official and detailed account of the strategy and operations of the British Army in Burma and of the various divisions and battalions that were engaged. See References below for other information.

The **Burma Retreat**, as it has come to be called, was geographically the longest in the history of the British Empire and might have been described as one of the most inglorious. But given the circumstances and conditions in Burma in late 1941, the event has become a testament to the soldiers on the ground there "*who struggled to stem the tide of Japanese advance and who, against all odds, saved themselves from the prospect of extermination which confronted them*" (Prasad, 1954, p. xii).

There can be no doubt as to the courage of the men caught up in the conflict. For the entire period of the retreat, they exhibited resoluteness and determination, in many battles fought all along the route to India and with regard to the deprivations they endured.

Burma had been occupied by British forces since early in the 19th century. In 1941 their troops and citizens were spread across the country, which was detrimental to any defence strategy. They were ill-prepared for the onslaught of the Japanese forces in 1942. In the north and east were posted Chinese troops, assisted and commanded by Americans also in low numbers, which prevented any meaningful counterattack to the Japanese when the invasion began.

The Japanese had initially attacked Burma at Victoria Point, the southernmost location of the country, on 14 December 1941. Over the next few weeks, the invaders made their way up the peninsula. On 22 January 1942, a major offensive was launched against British Army-held areas.

Following are descriptions of events in which it is believed Harry and his Cameronian brothers-in-arms were engaged between February and May of 1942.

Sittang Bridge, Pegu

On arrival in Rangoon, the Cameronians were transported to barracks at Mingladon, just to the north of the city. Their strength was 33 officers and 596 men of other ranks. Within a few days they were in the field near Pegu, about 40 miles to the northeast.

The arrival of the Cameronians was heralded by generals and ordinary soldiers alike. They had always been known widely as a "*tough mob*" (Carew, 1969, p165), ready and able "*wherever the fighting has been fiercest, the climatic*

conditions most vile and the odds most daunting . . . and in the inferno of Pegu no battalion fought more tenaciously."

The 17th Indian Infantry Division had already been engaged with the Japanese as the latter marched up the coast from Victoria Point. By February 18th the British Army troops had retreated to the Sittang River. After furious fighting the only bridge across the river was destroyed by the retreating army on February 23rd. Unfortunately, many soldiers of the 17th were still trapped on the east side and had to make their way across the river by ferry, raft or swimming, leaving their equipment and arms to the enemy. Many did not survive the crossing. Most arrived on the west side without weapons, boots or even proper clothing and still had to walk several miles before they received attention and supplies.

The British army, now reinforced by the Cameronians as a motorized regiment and the 7th Armoured Brigade with their tanks, reengaged the Japanese at Pegu and Waw, 45 miles northeast of Rangoon, between February 25th and March 8th. The Cameronians were to support the Brigade and carry out local counter attacks. Fighting continued along the entire road to Rangoon with the Cameronians largely providing a rearguard action to keep the Japanese at bay.



*Photo of some members of the 1st Battalion Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)
on a motor patrol in Burma, in 1942,
(retrieved 11 November 2020 from The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) website)*

In addition to protecting retreating regiments, the Cameronians were also called on to deal with hostile Burmans who attacked stragglers and Indian refugees. With the collapse of civilian order, the retreating army was to be subjected to unfriendly locals along its whole route through the country.

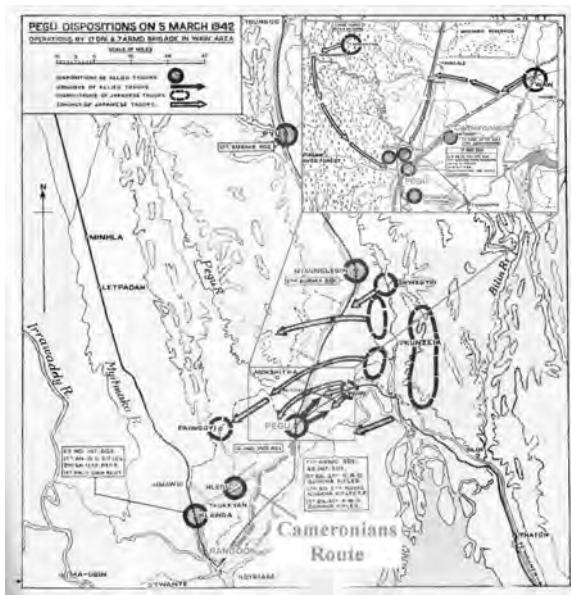
The battalion was bloodied early when one of their platoons was attacked and,

except for two men, captured. Six men taken were found later, stripped naked and tied to trees. They had been subjected to bayonet drills while still alive by the Japanese and their Burman cohorts. Retribution by the Cameronians was swift. The soldiers never forgot or forgave the Japanese for their callous and inhumane treatment.

According to the regimental War Diary record, during the Pegu area battles the Scottish Rifles sustained 115 casualties, with 29 men losing their lives, 35 wounded and 51 others reported missing. Many of the names of the men lost are listed on the Rangoon and Taukkyan Memorials.

Rangoon was evacuated on March 7th with the army destroying facilities in the port and oil terminal to prevent their use by the Japanese. At Taukkyan, on the north side of Rangoon, a roadblock to the evacuation of British troops from Rangoon was cleared at substantial cost in lives on March 8th, allowing the army to begin its withdrawal to the north.

Harry would have been part of this action. With escape cut off in the south, the only way out of Burma was up the major river valleys to India, a distance of over 800 miles through rugged and humid jungle, and desert-like terrains.



Map showing early March action in the Pegu area against the advancing Japanese army; inset indicates the location of the Cameronians between Pegu and Waw (modified from Prasad, 1954)

The Retreat

We can better discover and understand what events transpired through a review of some published accounts of the Burma Corps as it made its way out of the country. Through these records, it is also possible to envision some of the hell to which Harry and his regimental brothers were subjected.

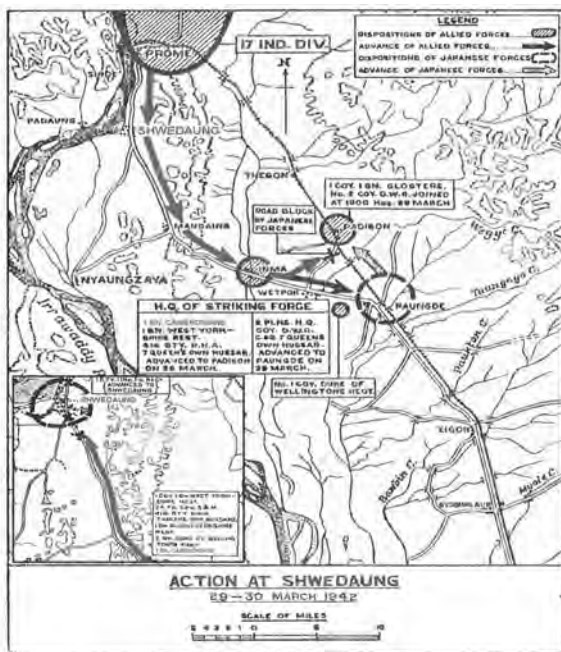
The transfer of the Cameronians commenced on March 8th and the battalion reached Tharawaddy, about 55 miles northwest of Pegu, on March 10th. From there it proceeded along the main road toward Prome, 100 miles away. The convoy of 1,400 vehicles at times stretched 40 miles and many times took fire from field guns on both sides. These nests had to be rooted out for the troops to proceed.

The Cameronians were active in scouring forested areas along the road, taking out enemy snipers and Japanese companies waiting to ambush them. It was during this time that Harry assumed the role and responsibilities of Colour Sergeant.

On March 29th two battalions of the 17th Indian Infantry Division, one of which was the Cameronians, were sent to assist in clearing major barriers at Shwedaung, seven miles south of Prome. It took several days of heavy fighting and the participation of several infantry units to clear the Japanese so that the army could continue its trek north.

The road through Prome was secured by March 31st. During these engagements the regiment lost another 78 men – 31 dead and 47 wounded or missing.

In early April, divisions of the Burma Corps were involved in a major battle around Yenangyaung. The entire oil complex in the area was set ablaze by British troops on April 15th after which the brigades had to fight their way out.



Map showing late March action at Shwedaung; red lines on maps indicate the movement of the Cameronians as they engaged the Japanese and assisted in the removal of major roadblocks (modified from Prasad, 1954)

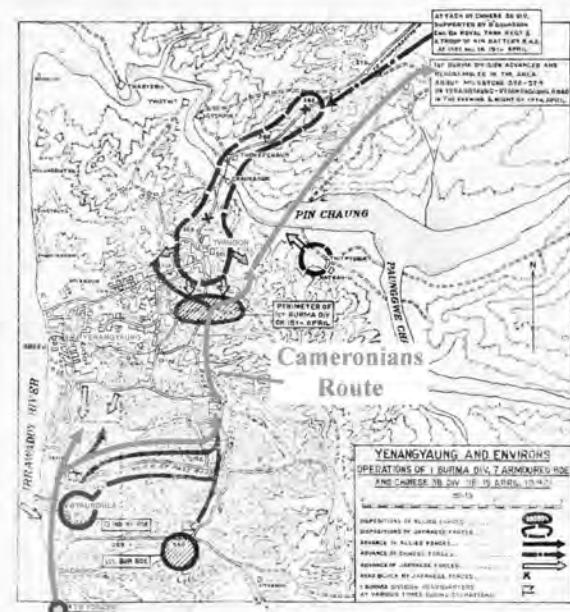


Photo of Electrical equipment at the Yenangyaung oilfields being destroyed as part of the "scorched earth" policy pursued by the British in the face of the Japanese advance (retrieved 23 October 2020 from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:YenangyaungDemolitions.jpg>)

Almost 7,000 soldiers, and 500 prisoners and civilians had been surrounded by Japanese forces at one point. With the assistance of Chinese regiments coming from the east, they fought off the Japanese over several days, under sweltering heat (114!) and choking smoke from burning oil facilities.

By April 19th they were again on the road north, though much depleted again in men and equipment and under almost constant bombardment and machine gun attacks of the Japanese air force. The Cameronians were part of intense fighting around Yenangyaung and Twingon

Crossing the Pin Chaung was a necessary and very difficult chore that involved the attack by several British regiments on multiple locations over several days and the defence from large numbers of Japanese troops who had circled the British and taken control of many areas.



Between April 3rd and April 20th, along the route between Prome and the Pin Chaung, the Cameronians had suffered another 69 casualties – 10 killed, 22 wounded and 37 missing.

Map showing the route of the British Army around Yenangyaung and Twingon and across the Pin Chaung; Cameronians were directly engage with Japanese patrols north of Nyaungghla and around Twingon (modified from Prasad, 1954)

During the next week divisions made their own way east and north resting near Mount Popa where they could replenish their food and water. The Cameronians and some other divisions marched to Myingyan and on April 28th crossed the Irrawaddy River upstream at Sameikkyon. The tank battalions had to move through Meiktila and then north to Mandalay. Also on the 28th crossing of the river began just west of Mandalay. Some units crossed by ferry and boat while the heavy mechanized units used the Ava Bridge. The bridge was blown up on April 30th after all the British units had safely crossed.

Those divisions that crossed at Sameikkyon worked their way to Monywa where they had to quietly sneak around the town as the Japanese had already occupied

the area. An attack was made by two divisions on Monywa on May 2nd but they could not recapture the town. All units then fled north on poorly maintained trails and roads to Ye-U, meeting up with other regiments on May 3rd that had taken different routes.

From there they moved to Pyingaing and then cross-country, on rudely maintained roads to Shweygin on the Chindwin River. Ahead of the troops, the sick and wounded, numbering over 2,300, had also been evacuated from hospitals around Ye-U and transported to Shweygin.

A pitched battle was fought at Shweygin on May 8th with the Japanese who had come directly up the river by boat from Monywa. Knowing this was basically a last-ditch fight, the British troops and tank battalions fired almost every round they had while their compatriots were ferried to Kalewa, about 12 miles by water. All heavy equipment was abandoned at this point, the emphasis being on moving the men to safety.

Other regiments took separate routes to the Chindwin River, traversing thick jungle and rugged mountains. Over several days, all eventually made their way to Tamu and on to India.

The final days were among the toughest of the retreat as tired, sick and wounded men trudged countless miles along hot, dry roads and through wet, thick jungle.

As described in *The Longest Retreat* (Carew, 1969, p5):

"[t]hey were filthy, bearded, ragged and in the uttermost extremes of exhaustion. Their shirts – those that still had shirts – were black with sweat, and tomorrow they would be white from the dried salt of perspiration. Their shorts – ludicrous garments in which to fight a war in the malarial jungles – were tattered and filthy.

Some were lucky enough still to have their boots and in most cases the soles were flapping with a melancholy rhythm against the uppers. Some had acquired gym shoes, some had wrapped their puttees round their feet. Many were barefoot.

There were men with bright and burning eyes which told of malaria and men with yellow faces and eyes which are the forerunners of jaundice. There were men with dysentery who, every few miles, broke off the column to squat beside the road . . . and the more continent comrades watched them with rough compassion, ready to haul them to their feet again. . .

There were men with hideous open sores, on which the flies fastened avidly; men with agonizing trench feet . . . men showing the first signs of becoming mentally deranged."

These men may have been the lucky ones. Hundreds of soldiers were captured during the process of evacuation and spent the remaining years of the war in prisoner-of-war camps, primarily around Rangoon.

On 17 May 1942, 71 days from the abandonment of Rangoon and having travelled

850 miles over rough terrain, harassed by the Japanese during the entire trek, the remnants of all the divisions were finally transported to Pallel, India.

Travelling with the troops along the primitive roads were their own sick and wounded along with thousands of starving refugees. The progress was painfully slow and arduous. At the same time, members of the 5th Army of the USA and regiments of Chinese were also retreating north and east, to China, in advance of the Japanese, also amid heavy losses.

At the end of this campaign, the Cameronians war diary records that they had sustained 70 deaths and 98 wounded. Another 94 were missing, many of them presumed dead. All told, these represented over 40% of the initial strength of the battalion that had arrived at Rangoon in February.

The Cameronians that straggled into Tamu on 10 May 1942, were still apparently “a battalion to be reckoned with . . . frustrated and belligerent” but numbering only about 134 men (Carew, 1969).

Total casualties of all British, Indian and Burma units amounted to 1,439 dead, 2,534 wounded and 9,185 missing (Prasad, 1954).

Other Hardships

In addition to the brutality of the fighting and the barbarism of the enemy, soldiers were subjected to many other hardships during their stay in the country and their retreat from it.

Malnutrition was a constant threat as food was almost always in short supply and of poor quality. The soldiers’ diet was consistently inadequate even for a normal active life, let alone the rigours of the battlefield and an extended march. Dehydration often accompanied the poor rations, especially as the troops moved into the drier central part of the country.



Map showing the final days of the retreat from Ye-U to Tamu and on to India (modified from Prasad, 1954)



Photo of some members of the 1st Battalion Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in Burma, in 1942, in a dugout (retrieved 11 November 2020 from The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) website)

Dietary limitations and ingestion of polluted water resulted in dysentery and diarrhoea affecting almost everyone. Harry was not immune and suffered these maladies along with his friends. Other diseases, like malaria, had to be endured and many soldiers continued their march northward while suffering these illnesses. There was no choice to rest. It was either keep walking or stop and die.

As spring progressed, the heat was almost unbearable.

Regiments kept to the roads for the most part, marching in the daytime heat and away from the major rivers and other water courses. In the jungles, insects attacked mercilessly.

Minor injuries, sustained either from battle or accidents during the marches, frequently ended up infected, debilitating the soldiers further.

Fatigue took its toll all along the march, but individuals persevered, assisted by fellow soldiers not much better off. Sleep was taken when time and opportunity presented themselves, often in dirty, wet and uncomfortable surroundings.

Continued strafing and bombing from the air kept the convoy always on the alert. Snipers were a constant threat which meant that companies were regularly required to patrol the rough terrain alongside roads to protect the convoy.

The constant mental pressure of survival – their own or that of others with whom the soldiers fought – left many with depression and fear of what might be around the next corner. That



Top: Cameronians playing field hockey; bottom: members of the Cameronians soccer team – Harry Cooper in back row, left end (photos possibly taken in Burma in 1942 and used with permission of the Cooper family)

was not alleviated as attrition in manpower took its course. Men would likely have felt even more loneliness as time went on and friends and cohorts were lost.

Tension and stress would have been regular companions to these soldiers. They took whatever opportunity they could find to relax and relieve the daily strain, even playing games when they were able to do so.

After the Battles

Having reached the safety of India, Harry and other surviving members of the Cameronians were transported to barracks in Ranchi, Jharkhand. His service record has another gap at this point although it is believed he spent considerable time convalescing. More than a few soldiers were hospitalized for several months in India after their ordeal in Burma.

Harry had reached the end of his primary enlistment period of nine years in December of 1941. Probably in view of his experience in Burma after that date, he very likely did not see the merit in continuing his service with the regular army.

He remained in India until 7 February 1943 when he was transferred to the 50th Indian Tank Brigade. The assignment must have been only temporary as on March 20th he rejoined his former unit just prior to proceeding to Bombay for embarkation to the UK. The ship, *P-449*, left India on March 27th, bound for Edinburgh, Scotland, arriving there on May 27th. On September 21st, he was reassigned to Dalton-in-Furness, Cumbria, where he would serve out the remainder of his service term in the reserves.



The Burma Star

For Harry the war was over. His reformed 1st Battalion Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) would go on to see more action in Burma in 1944 as part of the Chindit Campaign to retake the country from the Japanese.

While living in Dalton-in-Furness, Harry met and married – on 30 January 1945 – Miss Joan Tittley, daughter of John Henry and Alice Elizabeth (Cowley) Tittley. She was a member of and cook for the Auxiliary Territorial Service of the British Army. Harry had just turned 30 years of age, so young to have experienced so much. Joan was then 24.

Harry was discharged on 22 November 1945 after which he and Joan moved back home to Glasgow. For his service in Burma, Harry was awarded the Burma Star on 8 October 1945.

Harry never talked about his war experiences much, preferring to leave the past in the past. He worked as a tax officer for Inland Revenue until his retirement.

He died just short of 82 years of age, on 18 November 1996, in Liverpool, Lancashire, England, of Carcinoma of the Pancreas which proved to be the last battle for this brave soldier.



*Harry Hilsdon Cooper
and Joan Tittley
on their wedding day,
30 January 1945,
in Dalton-in-Furness*

References

Barclay, Brigadier Cyril Nelson (Ed.), Harry H. Story, Samuel Henry Fergus Johnston & John Christopher Malcolm

Baynes. (1947). *The History of the Cameronians: 1933-1946, Volume 3*. London: Sifton Praed & Co. 280 pp.

Carew, Tim. (1969). *The Longest Retreat: The Burma Campaign 1942*. Hamish Hamilton Ltd. 276 pp.

Prasad, Bisheshwar (Ed.). (1954). *The Retreat from Burma 1941-42*. Ministry of Defence, Government of India. 500 pp.

Tanner, Ralph E. S. & David A. Tanner. (2009). *Burma 1942: Memories of a retreat*. The History Press. 205 pp.

The Covenanter, regimental magazine for the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), snippets from articles published in 1942 and 1944.

War Diary or Intelligence Summary of 1st Battalion, The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), 11 February 1942 to 26 June 1942, British Army form C.2118.



Map of route taken by the 1st Battalion Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) between February and May 1942 (sourced and modified from the November issue of The Covenanter, the regimental magazine of the Cameronians)

Indictment against William Liston Senior (Assault)

1834 High Court

WILLIAM LISTON, senior, fisherman, now or lately residing in Newhaven in the shire of Edinburgh, you are Indicted and Accused at the instance of John Archibald Murray, Esquire, his Majesty's Advocate, for his Majesty's interest: THAT ALBEIT, by the laws of this and of every other well governed realm, ASSAULT, more especially when committed to the serious injury of the person, and the effusion of blood, and by cutting or stabbing, is a crime of an heinous nature, and severely punishable : YET TRUE IT IS AND OF VERITY, that you the said William Liston, senior, are guilty of the said crime, aggravated as foresaid, actor, or art and part : IN SO FAR AS, on the 5th day of May 1834, or on one or other of the days of that month, or of April immediately preceding, or of June immediately following, in front of, or near to, the house in Newhaven, in the shire of Edinburgh, then occupied by you the said William Liston, senior, you the said William Liston, senior, did wickedly and feloniously attack and assault Ann Flucker or Seaton, wife of John Seaton, fisherman, then and now or lately residing in High Street of Newhaven aforesaid, and did strike her violently with your fist, and did, with a knife, or some other sharp and lethal weapon to the Prosecutor unknown, cut or stab her on the head, near to the eye, whereby she was severely wounded, with much effusion of blood : And you the said William Liston, senior, having been apprehended and taken before Duncan Matheson, Esquire, sheriff-substitute of Edinburghshire for the Leith district, you did, in his presence at Leith on the 8th day of May 1834 emit and subscribe a declaration : Which declaration; as also a medical report or certificate, bearing to be dated 'Leith, 7th May 1834', and to be signed 'John Martin, Surgeon'. Being to be used in evidence against you at your trial, will, for that purpose, by in due time lodged in the hands of the Clerk of the High Court of Justiciary, before which you are to be tried, that you may have an opportunity of seeing the same: ALL WHICH, or part thereof, being found proven by the verdict of an Assize, or admitted by the judicial confession of you the said William Liston, senior, OUGHT to be punished with the pains of law, to deter others from committing the like crimes in all time coming.

J SHAW STEWART, A.D.

LIST OF WITNESSES

1. Duncan Matheson, Esquire, sheriff-substitute of Edinburghshire for the Leith district.
2. Mathew Smillie, procurator-fiscal of Edinburghshire for the Leith district.
3. Alexander Mann, now or lately clerk in the sheriff-clerk's office in Leith.
4. John Grady, now or lately sheriff-officer in Leith.
5. Ann Flucker or Seaton, wife of John Seaton, fisherman, now or lately residing in High street, Newhaven, in the shire of Edinburgh.
6. Helen Hume or Groves, now or lately servant to, and residing with, Mrs Christian Naughton or Gray, innkeeper in Newhaven aforesaid.

7. Susan Cameron, now or lately servant to, and residing with, Robert Dryborough, fisherman in Newhaven aforesaid.
8. Jean Hastie, now or lately servant to, and residing with, Philip Flucker, now or lately fisherman in Newhaven aforesaid.
9. Margaret Bisset, now or lately residing in Newhaven aforesaid.
10. Isabella Jervis, daughter of, and now or lately residing with, Margaret Ramsay or Wilson in Newhaven aforesaid.
11. John Martin, surgeon, now or lately residing in India place, in or near Edinburgh.

J SHAW STEWART, A.D.

LIST OF ASSIZE City of Edinburgh

Special Jurors

Thomas Duncan, portrait painter, Darnaway street
 William Dow, tavern-keeper, Rose street
 Patrick Maxwell, residing Archibald place
 William Fletcher, carver and gilder, Abbeyhill
 William Thyne, butcher, Darling's buildings, Stockbridge
 James Peter Mitchell, brewer, Laurieston place
 George Tod Chiene, accountant, Great Stuart street
 Henry Scott, hat manufacturer, Graham street
 John Hogg, clerk in city chamberlain's office, Scotland street
 John Anderson, bookseller, Young street
 James Geddes, commercial agent, Blenheim place
 Thomas Johns, clothier, Princes street.

Common Jurors

John Smith, tailor, High Terrace, Leith street
 William Mill, grocer, West Port
 Alexander McDonald, spirit-dealer, Bishop's close
 Robert Wilson, fishing-tackle manufacturer, Princes street
 John Conway, clothier, St Mary's wynd
 Archibald Fyfe, accountant, Duncan street, Drummond place
 David Somerville, spirit-dealer, High street
 James White, flesher, Elder street
 Adam Goodale, cabinet-maker, Canongate
 Thomas Paterson, grocer, East Register street
 Andrew McCall, grocer and spirit-dealer, Grassmarket
 Walter Douglas, hotel keeper, St Andrew square
 Adam Turnbull, clothier, West Nicolson street
 George Skinner, baker, Melville place
 Robert Simpson, corn merchant, Causewayside
 George Ballantine, baker, Cumberland street
 Peter Lyle, flesher, Bristo street

Duncan Stewart, coach-hirer, Queensferry street
Duncan McGilvray, tailor, Wallace place
William Reid, builder, Greenside street
John Buchanan, merchant, Fountainbridge
George Allan, painter, Hanover street
William Hunter, grocer and spirit-merchant, Salisbury street

Town of Leith

Special Jurors

Thomas McRitchie, merchant, Constitution street
Thomas Hutchison, merchant, Bernard street
John Wood, merchant, James' place

Common Jurors

Robert Watt, spirit-dealer, Commercial place
Robert Douglas, residenter, Portland place
Thomas Bridges, glazier, Bridge street
Thomson Bonar Alexander, cooper, St Andrew street
Adam Forrest, tailor, Kirkgate
William Bruce, wright, Constitution street

County of Edinburgh

Special Jurors

Robert Hope, farmer, Blinkbonny
Andrew Johnston, residing Hillhead of Lasswade
William Henry Roberts, wholesale stationary [sic], New Laverock-bank

Common Jurors

Thomas Lawrie, farmer, Westmains
George Reid, potter, Newbigging
John Young, farmer, Long Dalmahoy
William Martin, spirit-dealer, East Calder
James Fairgrieve, mason, Dewartown
George Dobie, farmer, Polton East Mains

County of Linlithgow

Special Jurors

William Neil, farmer, Knightsrig
John Anderson, merchant, Borrowstownness
James Young, farmer, Bormie
John Aitkin, farmer, Wester Tartraven
James Smith, farmer, Middlemains of Tartraven

County of Haddington

Special Jurors

John Slate, farmer, Sunnyside
Archibald Cuthbertson, farmer, Greendykes

Common Jurors

Henry Forshaw, stabler, Haddington

John Frier, farmer, Newlands

Andrew Forrest, farmer, Hodges

William Arrol, carrier, Stenton

William Foggo, innkeeper, Garvald

JC26/1834/431/11

The proceedings of the Court will follow in a future issue.

Contributed by Elizabeth Watson

The 1921 heatwave

For more than six weeks now we have been experiencing a remarkable spell of drought and heat. The condition of the weather is an unfailing topic of conversation at all times, but at present it has become a matter of really serious import. So much so that in London an attempt has been made to induce rain from the atmosphere by mechanical means, and a representative from the Meteorological Office attended to witness the effects of the experiment. The upper air was fiercely bombarded with rockets and bombs projected from mortars, but nothing resulted except noise. It is a common belief that gunfire produces rain – in which case it might have been expected that the Great War would have been fought out in a continuous deluge. The effect of a detonation is to cause repulsion of the surrounding air, and so loosen any moisture it may contain, but the radius of action of any explosive known to and at the command of man is sharply circumscribed, and there will be no result at all if the rain clouds do not happen to be there. Meteorological conditions generally can be no more influenced by such methods than an elephant can be slain with a pea-shooter. To attempt to forecast the weather for any considerable time ahead is to commit what George Eliot would have called a gratuitous form of error, but if the present anticyclonic conditions continue there is not likely to be any immediate change. The latest report, however, is that a depression is advancing, and that there is “an increasing probability of rain”. In scientific language, an absolute drought is a period of more than fourteen consecutive days on none of which a hundredth of an inch falls, and in many parts of the country this period has now passed. Combined with the protracted nature of the dry spell has been the great heat of the sun’s rays, which penetrate more readily through dry than moist air. The thermometer reached 128.3 degrees (*Fahrenheit*) in the shade at Basra, and in places in our own country from London to Aberdeen record readings have been made. So uncomfortably hot has it been that we hear of justice removing its wig

and sage councillors meeting in chambers which have been ice-cooled. Parisian ladies have appeared in public so lightly clad that the police have had to interfere, and in New York shower baths have been installed in the streets. An inventive American has contrived to get the household food cooked by direct application of the sun's rays.

Among the more serious effects of the drought is the menace it offers to the harvest season. It will come earlier and crops will be lighter. Parched grass makes poor feeding for flocks and herds, and as springs and streams are drying up water is difficult if not impossible to procure. In some districts the domestic water supply has given out, and an institution of olden days, the water-carrier, has again made his appearance on the roads. Edinburgh is particularly fortunate in having a large reserve to draw upon, but London has been reduced to such straits that watering of the streets has been stopped, and householders have been warned to exercise the utmost economy in the use of water. The situation brings to notice the habitual waste of water in which people indulge. Ordinarily despised for its plentifulness and cheapness, it has now become almost a precious commodity in some parts of the country, being sold by the pailful. Rivers have in places become mere trickles, while lesser streams have disappeared altogether. Fish have been left high and dry or have been huddled into pools where they may easily become a prey to disloyal disciples of Isaak. On rivers such as the Tweed where the water in certain stretches is polluted by industrial processes carried on along the banks many trout have been destroyed by the impurities that gather in the stagnant pools. In the woodlands the characteristics of autumn have been prematurely developed. Trees have begun to shed their leaves, and have taken on the tints of the falling year. Moors in many places have caught fire, and blazing gorse has threatened the safety of homesteads and hamlets. The effects of the drought have been even more disastrous across the Border than in Scotland. A railway station in Yorkshire was destroyed by fire through a spark from a passing engine setting light to grass on the embankment, and so intense was the conflagration that apples forty yards away were baked on the trees. In Essex sun rays focussed through a window pane set fire to a farmhouse and its farm buildings in which valuable cattle were burned to death. Another effect of the hot weather has been to imperil the health of the community. There have been deaths from sunstroke, and a number of drowning accidents, some of them probably due to seizures caused by the heat. The Ministry of Health have issued a warning regarding the need for scrupulous cleanliness, more especially in the care of infants. Catarrhal colds have become common in London, and in Leith there is an epidemic of scarlet fever probably resulting from contaminated milk. Happily, owing to the energetic measures taken by the Public Health Authorities, the outbreak appears to have been checked in time. The danger to health is not the least of the troubles that an abnormal period of drought like the present brings in its train.

The Scotsman, 14 July 1921

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY - 2021

In normal times the ordinary meetings take place at 7.30pm in the Augustine United Church, 41 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1EL.

The meetings are open to all and admission is free, although donations of £4 each from non-members are appreciated.

18 October The Show in the Meadows by Graeme Cruickshank

22 November The Edinburgh Men who Founded The World's First Foot-Ball Club
in 1824 by Andy Mitchell

While we may resume meetings in person, certain precautions will remain in place. Attendees must sign in, wear face-masks and sit "distantly". No refreshments will be served. But it will be grand to be back! We're looking into live-streaming.

Please check our website before setting out, in case of any last-minute changes.

The Annual General Meeting was held "remotely" on 4 September 2021

Please keep an eye on our website www.scotsgenealogy.com

Advertisement

The Incorporation of Candlemakers of Edinburgh

a newly published book by D. Richard Torrance

A history of the Incorporation from 1488-1884, list of Deacons and other office bearers, properties in Candlemaker Row, the Crackling House in the Pleasance, disputes with the Incorporation of Fleshers and also the Whitepaper men, heraldry, candle prices, candle making, candle output etc. Including details of over 800 people involved in the business of candle making in Edinburgh.

Hard back A4, 200p, indexed. Colour illustrations throughout.
£35 plus p&p from our shop.

<https://www.scotsgenealogy.com/Shop.aspx>

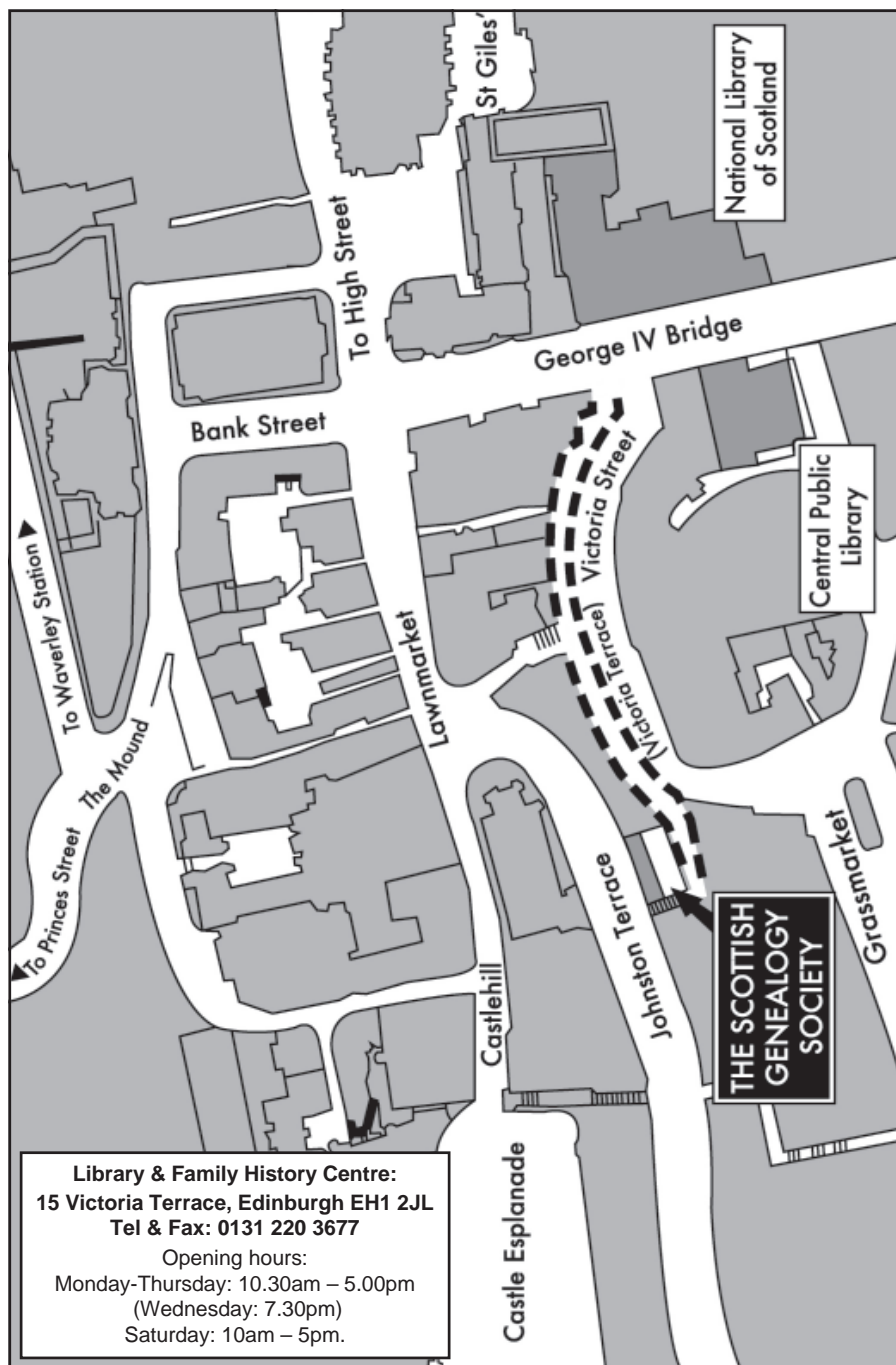
See back cover

Templeton

Anyone interested in a family gathering of Templetons in Ayrshire in 2025?

If so, please contact Richard Templeton in Annapolis, Maryland, USA

templetonrk@gmail.com





Kenneth of Battle's tomb in Beaulieu Priory