



THE SCOTTISH GENEALOGIST

DECEMBER 2022

Hinrich or Henry?

Slight of Haddington

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The Scottish Genealogy Society

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

Front Cover:

The Society's Coat of Arms

Back Cover:

Detail from *The Landing of George IV at Leith* by Alexander Carse (c1770-1843), showing the guard of honour by the Royal Company of Archers.

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Annual Report 1st October 2021 to 30th September 2022

This issue ought to have contained the Annual Report so that the membership might have the chance to read it in advance of the Annual General Meeting in February 2023. At the AGM, of course, the attending membership approves it (or not) prior to its being sent unaltered as a formal, legally-required document to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. Unfortunately, it was not received in a suitable format, nor did it meet some other criteria, in time for publication in the December 2022 Journal. Publication in the March 2023 issue would be too late.

Therefore the procedure of previous years will be followed: the Secretary, or acting Secretary, will read it out in full at the 2023 AGM and those members attending will approve it (or not) then.

Annual General Meeting

This will be held at the Augustine United Church, 41 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1EL at **7pm on Monday 20th February 2023**.

It will be followed by talk by Dr Morrow, Lord Lyon King of Arms (topic to be arranged).

Volunteers required!

To enable the Society's Library to resume its previous opening hours, new volunteers are needed. Full training supplied. Please contact: enquiries@scotsgenealogy.com

Coronavirus Update

Library opening times: Monday, Tuesday & Thursday, 10.30am to 4pm plus Wednesday 2.30pm to 7.30pm. Booking is no longer required.

Precautions: Wearing a face-mask is now optional, but users must still sign in and observe hand hygiene.

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.

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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:

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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

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An Economic Migrant from 1830

Hinrich from Hanover becomes Henry of Leith

Mandy Rathjen

The news is full of the challenges faced by today's economic migrants arriving on our shores. Climate change, war, and global food inequality all contribute to the decisions made by people around the world to leave their homes and seek a way out of poverty.

For Hinrich Ratjen, the central character in this family story, the main reason for his coming to Scotland was a shift in family circumstances which left him without his legal inheritance of the family farmlands.

The genealogical research, on which this article is based, was the work over many years by my father, Ian Rathjen, with a little assistance from myself.

With my father's permission, I am sharing an edited version, with additional commentary, of the original text of the first chapter in his book, "AFTER HENRY - AND OTHER RATHJENS: The Story of the Rathjen Family in Great Britain 1815 – 2007".

Our story starts in the spring of 1812 with a wedding. Anna, the daughter of the Schmidt family of Marssel, and Johann Hinrich Ratjen from Stubben were to be married on the 8th May. The bride and groom were children of two of the most wealthy and respected farmers in the whole of the District of Lesum-Schoenebeck in the Kingdom of Hanover. This was a day on which to forget the recent history of occupation and war in a Europe which was suffering under what must have seemed a never-ending round of political change.

Before we embark on Johann and Anna's story, we can go back a few years to the middle of the 18th century. The church records of the parish of Lesum in Hanover show that Johann's father was Baumann Hinrich Ratjen who was born in Stubben on 28th March 1758. Johann (born 25th November 1783) was his elder son and as such would have inherited the farm. He was no stranger to grief. Tragically, a younger brother, Carsten, born on 22nd September 1785, drowned in the river Thames in London in September 1804, close to his 19th birthday. This is the first recorded connection of this branch of the Rathjen family with Britain.

Johann Hinrich was 29 when he married Anna Schmidt. Their first child was born on 8th October 1814, and on 16th October he too was baptised with the name Johann Hinrich, but was known as Hinrich. He was the future Henry Rathjen who came to Scotland. His brother Martin was born two years later on 7th August 1816, and a sister came along on 21st February 1819. She was named Catharina Margaretha, after her grandfather Johann Hinrich's second wife, Catherine Margarethe Lamken.

Back in 1814 the future of the farm must have seemed secure, with a son to

inherit the family wealth and to follow the family tradition, but when Anna Schmidt died in childbirth on 9th April 1822, the 7-year-old Hinrich lost his mother and, as events transpired, his future was to follow a very different path.

On 16th January 1824, Johann Hinrich senior married again. His new wife, Anna Metta Kattenhorn, was the daughter of an inhabitant of Scharmbeck, near Stubben.

By the time our Hinrich was 10 years old he had a half-sister, Henrietta Elizabeth, born on 15th July 1826. Then crucially on 8th November 1828, Anna Metta produced another son, Carl Friedrich.

Despite the convention that farms were inherited by the first-born son, in the 19th Century these rules were not as strictly adhered to as in preceding centuries.

In January 1829 when Hinrich was 15, his father died at the age of 45. Later that same year, on 5th December, Grandfather Hinrich Ratjen died, having outlived both his sons. Anna Metta really was in sole charge and when she married again on 16th April 1830 to one Friedrich Lurssen, it seems that the writing was on the wall for Hinrich, and it was clear that the farm would pass to his half-brother Carl Friedrich.

In 1830, at the age of 16, Hinrich announced that, instead of continuing to work on the farm which should by rights have been his, he had accepted an invitation to work in a sugar refinery in Scotland.



Photo by Ian Rathjen

He had been born just before the defeat of Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo. The reigning King of Great Britain, George III, was also the Elector of Hanover. The House of Hanover had been founded by George I, one hundred years before, so Hanoverians felt a strong link with our islands.

It is a matter for conjecture to assess how much Hinrich's decision was compelled by economic or social reasons. Perhaps he was attracted by the promise of very good earnings; perhaps he was trying to avoid compulsory military service; perhaps he went just to escape the increasingly difficult atmosphere at home. When his stepbrother Carl Friedrich Ratjen married Anna Sophia Dehn in about 1850 he was described as Baumann - the farm was already his! He and Anna Dehn went on to have nine children between 1854 and 1879. Their descendants still live in the Lesum area today - our distant cousins!

Hinrich Rathjen would have had to obtain permission to travel out of his home state, but as the son of a Baumann it is likely that family connections ensured that he had little difficulty in obtaining the necessary certificate. He would have had few possessions and certainly no more than he could carry comfortably himself. He travelled as a passenger, not as a crew member, but we do not yet know at which port he embarked. It was probably Bremen. He came ashore at Leith on 4th November 1830, just four weeks after his 16th birthday. (Note 1) According to Lloyds List the sailing vessel "Caroline" docked in Leith on 5th November 1830 from the port of Bremen. It is almost certain that this was the ship on which Hinrich had travelled to his new life in Scotland. Bremen was on the river Weser, near his home village and there were direct sailings from the Weser to Leith.

He had a job already lined up, in the Sugar Works in Coburg Street in Leith. If not, he would probably have made for London and persuaded his relatives to find him work in one of the many Sugar Houses near St. George in the East. There were several Rathjens living and working in the London sugar industry at the time and he may well have been in touch with them.

What must the youthful Hinrich have thought as his ship approached the port of Leith on a cold raw November day? The view would not have been encouraging. A thick pall of smoke formed a grey cloud above the town. Rivalling the newly built North Leith Church spire for height, the smokestacks of the sugar refineries would have been visible from far out in the Firth of Forth.

The prospect of a job was all important for Hinrich because there was a new directive for Leith constables from the bench in Leith which stated:

Every constable is authorised and required to seize and apprehend all vagabonds, sturdy beggars, or Egyptians, suspicious persons or other idle and disorderly persons who have no calling to live by, nor take themselves to some labour, trade, or occupation.

The work Hinrich had waiting for him was sugar boiling - a physically gruelling job. The work of the sugar baker had few redeeming features unless you count the provision of two gallons of beer to drink at work every day as a benefit. Most people drank small beer at the time because the water in the towns was usually unfit to drink and the intense heat of the sugar works made it necessary to drink large quantities.

The sugar factories made a point of recruiting young immigrants from Germany and Hanover to carry out this work because they could not recruit enough local workers. There are parallels with today's economic migrants coming to work in health care or as fruit pickers from Eastern Europe or farther afield. Today the scourge of human trafficking is an uncomfortable parallel with the slavery in the sugar trade, but Hinrich seems to have made a positive choice and enjoyed a welcome and freedom on arrival in Leith.

The Aliens Acts of 1793 and 1798 now required 'foreigners' to be issued with a certificate when they entered the country. Furthermore, all immigrants had to register their names with a Justice of the Peace and anyone taking an immigrant into their household had to register that fact with the Parish Overseer. It is not clear how far this was followed in Scotland, but we do know that Hinrich was issued with a certificate of entry, No. 9 for the Port of Leith on 4th November 1830.

In *The Life and Times of Leith* by James Scott Marshall we read, "towards the end of the (18th) Century prospects for sugar refining seemed brighter and other firms made their entry. The Leith Sugar Refining Co. had premises in Coburg St. and in 1804, William McFie & Co. began operations in Elbe St. The McFies were prominent in the port, and in the mid nineteenth century one of the family served for some years as Member of Parliament for the Leith District of Burghs."

Although the names of those who established the Leith Sugar Refining Company have not been discovered, it does appear that the Company was among the first to set up in the sugar industry in Leith. D. Bremner in his book, *The Industries of Scotland*, published in March 1869, has a section on sugar refining and quotes Arnot's *History of Edinburgh* on the sugar houses of the east coast of Scotland which says that the first sugar refinery in Leith was set up in 1757 by a company consisting mainly of Edinburgh bankers. It had a chequered history but, says Bremner, an extensive sugar refining business was being carried on in North Leith by Messrs. Schultze and afterwards by Messrs Ferguson. The sugarhouse would have been established for many years by the time Hinrich joined the workforce. It was clear that there was a strong German connection by 1830.

One of the Elders of the Church of Scotland in North Leith was Alexander Schultze and on 23rd October 1835, when Hinrich Rathjen and Ann Stratton gave in their names for proclamation of Banns of marriage, the attesters being Alexander Schultze, James Knight, Grocer, of Coburg St., and William Gribb, Engineer. It is significant to note that by the time of his marriage, Hinrich had decided to become Henry to integrate further into the community.

Alexander Schultze himself was a sugar refiner and, since he had been born in Scotland, perhaps it was his father who had come to Scotland in the 18th century? We see from the Parish Records that Henry Schultze, son of Alexander Schultze, *sugar refiner*, of Ramsey Place, North Leith, and Margaret Mugerland, his spouse, was born on 22nd November 1842 and baptised on 15th February 1843.

Alexander may well have been one of the owners of the Leith works at that time. We know from the Parish Record of the birth and baptism of his son, Henry (junior), that Henry Rathjen was Manager of the Sugar House in Coburg St. as early as 1837,

The first five years in Leith would have been hard. Henry was learning the trade and that would have meant long working days of backbreaking toil in high temperatures. He would also have had to learn a new language and the local Leith dialect.

The sugar works employed over one hundred men but, within seven years of his arrival in Leith, Henry had become manager of the entire works and was entrusted with the closely-guarded secrets of sugar refinery.

He would have only been about 23 years of age, and perhaps his rapid promotion was due to the German connection with the Schultze family. It may be that Henry's original invitation to travel to Scotland came from them.

A few hundred yards from Coburg Street, where the factory was situated, stood the Custom House in Commercial Street, a road flanked by bonded warehouses and running from the inner harbour along the docksides. One of the Customs Officers was William Stratton who lived nearby with his wife, Janet, and their children Anne and Edward Stewart. When Hinrich [Henry] arrived in Leith, Anne was 11 years old, and her brother was 10.

We do not know when or where Henry met Anne, but they married on 30th October 1835. Anne, as the daughter of a Leith Customs and Excise Officer, was a local girl, born in Edinburgh. She was married very young by today's standards. She was born in 1819 and so would only have been 16 years old when she married Henry.

The Banns were proclaimed on 26th October, and they were married on the following Thursday by Rev. James Harper. Perhaps the Leith Sugar Refining Company supplied the icing sugar for the wedding cake! Although the marriage is recorded in the Parish Registers it cannot be assumed that it took place in North Leith Parish Church. The Minister, Rev James Harper, was in fact the Minister of North Leith United Presbyterian Church which had been established in Coburg Street in 1819.

Their first child, Henry, was born two years after the marriage on 14th December 1837 and the baptism was recorded in North Leith Parish Register as taking place on the 1st February 1838. Henry and Anne's first daughter was born on 5th September 1839. They named their daughter Janet Murdo, which was the maiden name of Anne's mother.

By 1841 we get a "snapshot" of the family in the Scottish census, which was taken on 7th June. The family was living in Sugar House Close, Coburg Street, in what appears to have been a typical 4-storey Scottish tenement. Henry, Anne, and their two children lived there with Anne's father, William. William's wife,

Janet did not appear in the 1841 Census. She was still alive at this time but died 6 months later and was buried at Mertoun in the Borders, so perhaps she was staying with relatives or was in an institution at the time of the Census.

The house was also shared with Henry's brother Martin Rathjen, age 20, described as a sugar baker, four other sugar bakers, Chalmers Vance (30) from Ireland, Robert Wilson (17), Johann Voigts (30), a 'foreigner' and James Stevenson (30), born in Edinburgh, together with his wife Grace (35), also from Edinburgh, and their son James, aged 2.

The rival Sugar House in Leith was owned by the McFie family, and we also find a Roderick McFie, his wife Johann and their children, Donald, and Isabella, living in Sugar House Close.

Coburg Street survives to this day, one side lined with many of the original buildings which would have been familiar to Henry and his family. On the other side, the Water of Leith in its deep channel flows to the docks and harbour just down the road. Most of the sugar house buildings no longer exist. However, the stone building with large warehouse doors, on the quayside, may be the only surviving part. There are two handsome stone pillars in Coburg Street marking the entrance to the Couper Street School, which the later sugar house children would have attended, but the school itself has also gone.

The bustling port of Leith was developing a stronger sense of its own identity and importance in the early 19th century. In 1833 it gained independence from Edinburgh and elected its first provost. Changes were coming which heralded economic progress in Leith.

Henry and his brother Martin may have seen significant events such as the launch of PS *Sirius* in 1837 from Menzies and Co boatyard near the old dock gates. This passenger ship was the first to sail across the Atlantic 'under her own steam'. The next year Scotland's first passenger rail service opened in South Leith operating horse drawn cars. Leith Chamber of Commerce opened in 1840.

Henry and Anne had two more children while they lived in Leith. A second son, William Stratton, was born on 8th April 1842 and baptised on 30th April. Henry was still manager of the Sugar House according to the entry in the Parish records. Another son, John Henry, was born in Leith in 1844, but his birth and baptism are not recorded in the North Leith



Gate post by Mandy Rathjen

parish records. Perhaps Henry and Anne had changed churches or perhaps the Minister just forgot to record the event. We find out about John Henry for the first time in the 1851 Census, and by that time Henry and Anne had taken their four children and travelled to Greenock, embarking on the next stage of their lives.

Henry had travelled to Scotland as an economic migrant from Hanover, emerging from experiencing bereavements and loss of inheritance with uncertain prospects. Henry arrived alone but found the support of a German community in Leith to get him started. He went on to become a skilled worker and a responsible manager in his new trade. He took decisions such as changing his name, to help him integrate socially. He married a local woman and raised his family of children as Scottish. We do not know what he experienced in his early days as a German immigrant, but economic migrants today with much to offer can still facing the challenges of social dislocation, isolation, and discrimination as well as a welcome and support.

Henry was given a second chance and took his opportunity to commit fully into his new community. He contributed to the economic development of Leith and Scotland, and his children went on to build the Rathjen family story in Scotland.

Postscript

This story revolves around not just the political issue of economic migration, but also employment in the sugar industry which, crucially, is now being rewritten though the lens of oppression and black history.

In giving this account of Henry's story from his perspective in the 19th century, it is not my intention to undermine this important work.

Note 1: National Archives, Kew, ref. HO/5/26 Index of Register of Certificates of Arrivals

(April 1829 to Dec 1831) and HO/5/27 (Jan 1832 to Oct 1834).

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Some Slight successes out of Haddington

Gillian R. Kerr

The 1841 Census shows a Slight family resident in Court Street, Haddington, East Lothian – James 40, a mason, his wife Elizabeth 40 and their three children Susan 11, William 9, James 5.

James Slight, the head of the household, was born 5 September 1797 to William Slight and Isabel Young and baptised one week later at Whitekirk, East Lothian. His wife Elizabeth Boyd had been baptised in Haddington 12 August 1796, the daughter of Thomas Boyd and Susan Cleugh.

The banns for James and Elizabeth were proclaimed on 15, 22 and 29 March 1829 but no record of their marriage can be found. Susan's birth was probably in 1830, but she was not baptised until 5 July 1831. William was probably born in 1832 and James in 1837, but no record of either of their baptisms can be found.

There is no trace of the parents James and Elizabeth in the 1851 Census and the children had scattered. The Census for Haddington shows that only Susan was still living in Court Street. She was a grocer by occupation and had 2 lodgers living with her.

In 1851 William was living in Southampton, lodging with a work colleague, Thomas McLeod, and his family, as well as another lodger, David Law. All three men were engravers by profession, said to be working at a map office. This was, in fact, the Ordnance Survey which had moved from London to Southampton in 1841. When sited in London the Ordnance Survey had outsourced the engraving of the maps to Edinburgh, so, given that all the household was Scottish by birth, it seems likely that the men had been involved in engraving OS maps and had moved south with the work. The youngest McLeod child was aged 1, suggesting that the move probably took place in 1849 or 1850.

In 1851 James was living in Lauder, Berwickshire, with James Haldane, grocer and seed merchant, and his 2 children. James was described as a servant and seed merchant's apprentice.

On 4 June 1852 Susan married Robert Bruce Ewart in Edinburgh. Robert was born 31 August and christened 3 October 1830 in Tranent, the son of George Ewart and Jane Whitelaw.

30 May 1852 Robert Ewart, mason, 3 Dalrymple Place and Susan Slight, only daughter of the late James Slight, mason in Haddington, have been three times duly and regularly proclaimed in the Parish Church of St Cuthberts in order to marriage and no objection offered married on the 4th of June 1852 by the Rev. George Ramsay Davidson minister of Lady Glenorchy's Free Church.

Susan

The following year Susan gave birth to their first child, a son, George Alexander. On 30 June 1854 Robert, Susan and the infant George arrived in Australia on the *Lord*

Stanley heading for Geelong, Victoria. Their first daughter Elizabeth Jane was born in Geelong in 1855 but died the same year. A second son, Robert Bruce Ewart, was born 2 July 1857. Twin daughters, Susan and Jane, were born 8 February 1859 in Port Sorell, Tasmania, and a further daughter, Mary Slight, was born in 1862, probably also in Tasmania as Robert is recorded as buying about 39 perches of land there in 1868 (one perch = almost a quarter acre).

Robert Ewart died, aged 40, on 5 February 1871 at Brodie Street, Quarry Hill, Sandhurst, Victoria. He had been a railway employee. Susan died 23 July 1873 in Sandhurst. The executors of her will were her brother William and John Findlay, a grocer. Possibly she had returned to work for a grocer to support her children.

Not much is known about the children of Susan and Robert, although when he died in 1932, their younger son (also Robert Bruce) was said to have been an accountant by profession, a successful businessman and a farmer. Their youngest daughter, Mary Slight, passed the entrance examination for the Civil Service but worked as a schoolteacher.

William

William married Louisa Dorothea Hope Moore on 25 April 1852 in Southampton. Louisa was born in Cupar parish on 30 August 1830, along with her twin brother Alexander. Her father was a groom, said to have been employed by the 5th Earl of Hopetoun whose mother gave permission for Louisa to be named after her. In 1851 Louisa was a kitchen maid in the household of Lord John Fullerton, judge in the Court of Session, at 33 Moray Place, Edinburgh. It seems likely that William and Louisa had met in Edinburgh and that she had followed him to Southampton to get married. Their first child, Elizabeth, was born 21 March 1853.



The following year the three of them also emigrated, departing Plymouth 27 October 1854 and arriving at Portland, Victoria, on 20 January 1855, with a destination of Melbourne. William's occupation was given as mason, possibly due to a misunderstanding or for simplicity. He clearly took little time in finding work as an engraver as he is given as the engraver for "Brown's School Room Map of Victoria", which was offered for sale in February 1857.

After settling in Melbourne William and Louisa had three sons, James, William and Alexander, followed by two more daughters, Susan and Louisa, born between 1855 and 1867. In 1866 the Victoria Department of Mines published "Gold Fields and Mineral Districts", a map of Victoria showing cities, towns, goldfields and mining regions, engraved by William Slight under the direction of R. Brough Smyth. In the late 1860s William was appointed engraver to the Victoria Department of Crown Lands and Survey.

In 1872 he was the engraver of a Map of Victoria, constructed and engraved at the Surveyor General's office, Melbourne. His greatest achievement was "Continental Australia", first published in 1879. Four editions were issued over 10 years, with the fourth being completed by his son James. It was described as "a beautiful work of art" and exhibited around the world, being used to try to promote mining opportunities.

William died 7 February 1887. His obituary stated that he enjoyed the reputation of being the most skilful engraver of maps throughout the colonies.

All three of William's sons were sportsmen. Alexander played cricket, football (Australian rules) and rowed. William played cricket, at which he represented Victoria and South Australia. William worked as a surveyor, initially in the Survey Department in Adelaide and, later, independently.

However, James was the most successful. He played football (Australian rules) for the South Melbourne Football Club but gave up playing to become an umpire, umpiring the first ever interstate Australian rules match in 1879. However, his greatest success came in cricket. He played for the South Melbourne Cricket Club, where he scored a record innings of 279 in the season 1882/83. He also represented Victoria 19 times between 1874 and 1888. In 1880 he was a member of the first Australian cricket team to tour England. At the time his reputation was as one of the steadiest batsmen in the colony. He played in the first-ever England v Australia match, at The Oval, 6-8 September 1880, with little success. He scored just 11 runs in the first innings and in the second innings was caught first ball, with the great W.G. Grace being the bowler. He had been plagued by ill health throughout the tour and a newspaper report 10 days after the match reported that he had become worse and "will be compelled to have a painful operation performed upon him in Edinburgh next week". James was trained as an engraver in the Lands Department by his father. He had joined the office in 1871 and retired in 1922, after more than 50 years' service. In 1883 he is credited as the engraver on the Annual Rainfall Map of Victoria issued by the Lands Office. The following year he worked with his father on the engraving of a rainfall map of Australia.

James

At some point, possibly before William emigrated, James moved from Lauder to Southampton. In the 1861 Census he was lodging in Southampton and working as an engraver at the Ordnance Survey office. On 3 April 1864 he married Ellen Elizabeth Evans. They had 12 children over the next 25 years, 5 sons and 7 daughters. According to the 1891 Census their second and third sons, James Ewart and Alfred, were employed as draughtsmen in the Ordnance Survey Office. Unfortunately, Alfred died in 1893 but James was described as a geographical copper-plate engraver at the Ordnance Survey in 1911. In 1902 the Ordnance Survey first employed women. James's youngest daughter, Emma, was employed there as a map tracer at the time of the 1911 census.



We do not know what work James Slight, the mason, produced. Maybe it was mundane, but possibly he worked in some of the more artistic areas and was the source of the talent running through his descendants.

Refs:

www.trove.nla.gov.au

www.britishnewspaperarchives.co.uk

www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk

1917 RFC casualty now Honoured: 2nd LIEUTENANT David Victor FOOT, a Bo'ness Born Aviator of 18th Reserve Sqn Royal Flying Corps.

Patrick W. Anderson. FSA Scot.

I was just looking through a book called Royal Flying Corps (military wing) Casualties & honours during the War of 1914-1917 compiled by Capt G L Campbell, RFA and spotted a Lieut Foote RFC – 4 May 1917 and it recorded this Lieutenant Foote , RFC was burned to death at Montrose on May 4th, 1917. His aeroplane dived to earth from a height of 50 feet, and burst into flames, which were so fierce that no one could approach to help the aviator. Lieutenant Foote, who was 24, belonged to Bo'ness. **I found that 2nd Lieutenant David Victor FOOT, was listed on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission index and that he is listed as being aged 20 years old age the son of Mr & Mrs J F Foot of Graemesdyke, Bo'ness and buried in Bo'ness Cemetery (1**) grave info Bo'ness Cemetery grave no D1232.** I found that 2nd Lieutenant Foot was not listed on the Scottish National War Memorial at the Edinburgh Castle so I commenced my research to prove his death was related to War and his name added to the Royal Flying Corps Roll at the Castle.

I found that David Victor FOOT was born at Graemesdyke, Bo'ness on 8th May 1897, the son of James Frederick Foot (Inland Revenue Supervisor) and Margaret Ballantine or Foot. I found on the 1901 Census that he was resident with his parents and older sister and brother as he is listed as a child of three but in the 1911 he is with his sister and parents in the dwelling house with their staff. It would appear that he attended Linlithgow Academy and then Edinburgh Academy where he was a member of their Junior Division of the OTC before joining the ranks of the Artists' Rifles on 1 March 1916 and afterwards he joined a Cadet Unit at Oxford and then on 17th March 1917 with other Cadets he was commissioned Temporarily 2nd Lieutenant on probation – General List (Royal Flying Corps). The Army List for May 1917 shows: Special Lists: **FOOT, D.V., 2nd Lieutenant: Employed ROYAL FLYING CORPS since 17th March 1917.**

At 8.50am on 4th May 1917, 2nd Lieutenant David Victor Foot aged 19 years of age was flying at RFC Montrose when he was KILLED at The Aerodrome as reported by his father, James Frederic Foot , Surveyor of Customs and Excise when he reported his son's death to the Dorothy Y. Adam, the assistant Montrose Registrar on 5th May 1917. The Death Certificate reported further that the cause of death was "fracture of spine – Seen after Death" by A. Ronald Mitchell, MD, MBCM.

The RFC Casualty Card survived and reported that 2nd Lieutenant D.V. Foot , Artist Rifles & RFC attached to 18 Reserve Squadron Royal Flying Corps had been flying at RFC Montrose on 4th May 1917 when flying BE2 c No 9974 and the report records "Flying Accident – At height of 100 feet , pilot banked the machine and got into spinning nose dive . Machine burst into flames on striking ground.

Court of Inquiry Accident owing to an error of judgement on part of pilot and not attributed to machine. The Result of Accident records only "KILLED."

The Dundee Evening Telegraph of 4th May 1917 records this in its newspaper for that same day: Aeroplane Takes Fire - Lieutenant Foote, belonging to Edinburgh met with fatal injuries this morning at Montrose. His machine struck the ground in the vicinity of the aerodrome, and the impact caused the petrol to ignite, setting the machine on fire. The Pilot was terribly burned, but it is believed he was dead before the aeroplane ignited. The machine was destroyed.

The Daily Record of 5th May 1917, reported this in its edition : "Burned to Death - Awful fate of an airman at Montrose - Lieutenant Foote, RFC, met a terrible death while flying at Montrose yesterday. When 50 feet up the aeroplane dived to the earth and burst into flames, which were so fierce that no one could get near to help the aviator. He was burned to death and the aeroplane was completely consumed. Lieutenant Foote was 24 years of age and belonged to Bo'ness.

The Dundee Courier dated 5th May 1917, recorded this "Aviator Burned to Death at Montrose.- Lieutenant Foote (24) Royal Flying Corps while flying at Montrose yesterday, was burned to death. His machine dived to earth from a height of 50 feet and burst into flames. So fierce was the fire that no assistance could be rendered the unfortunate aviator, whose body was terribly burned, while the aeroplane was completely consumed. Lieutenant Foote, who belonged to Bo'ness, made his first flight alone that previous day."

Flight Magazine dated 10th May 1917 recorded a list of Fatal Accidents in England as well as Lieutenant Foot's report of death at RFC Montrose. Two of the reports of death in England were also flying at low level flying and one touching the top of a tree resulting in a nose dive.

The Linlithgowshire Gazette for Friday, 11th May 1917 had a long Obituary including a photograph of Lieut David Victor Foot and the heading of "Bo'ness Airman's Tragic Death - Falls 150 feet" and the report covers that the Rev D G Young, of Craigmillar U.F. Church conveyed the news of their son's death to Mr J F Foot, surveyor of Customs & Excise at their home at Graemesdyke, Bo'ness. He conveyed the distressing news and said "The Distressing affair occurred about 8.30 last Friday morning. The weather was warm and clear, and for the purpose of taking photographs, which was part of the airman's training, Lieut Foot, unaccompanied, made an ascent. What happened is largely conjecture, but on reaching a height of 150 feet he was seen to make a turning movement. It may be that something had gone wrong with the engine. Whatever the cause, to the consternation of the onlookers the aeroplane dived to the earth, landing with terrific force".

"Members of the Royal Army Medical Corps who were on the spot at once made a valiant attempt and almost succeeded in unstrapping the unfortunate occupant of the car, when the aeroplane burst into flames, nullifying all their efforts at rescue. However, it is comforting so think that death preceded the fire, for it is believed that in the fall, for which the aviator's neck was fractured".

The obituary covered Lieutenant Foot's education at Linlithgow Academy and at Edinburgh Academy where he was attached for two years to the Officer Training

Corps and then he served in the ranks of the Artist's Rifles in London and the Cadet Unit at Oxford prior to his commission in the Royal Flying Corps. He started his flying at Turnhouse and even flew over to his native place in a biplane showing just how much skill he had handling his machine on that occasion. On the day before the fatal flight Lieutenant Foot had been in a successful trial spin, having been up for an hour, and the experience gained inspired confidence and caution making the accident even more difficult to explain they said. When Mr Foot heard of the news he and his brother in law, Mr Archibald Ballantine, Eernaght went to Montrose and arranged the internment at Bo'ness. The body was enclosed in an oak coffin was taken by rail to Edinburgh on the Saturday (5th May 1917) and a motor conveyance from RFC Turnhouse was waiting at the railway station and the remains conveyed to Graemesdyke.

The funeral took place during the afternoon at Bo'ness Cemetery on Monday 7th May 1917 and Officers and Non Commissioned Officers from the Royal Flying Corps and soldiers from Carriden Hospital who had been wounded in action in France in the recent months and representatives from Public Bodies. The coffin covered with the Union Jack with a number of wreaths and carried by Six Sergeants and the similar number of Officers in solemn procession moved off and the wounded soldiers too being conveyed in cabs too. Large numbers of the public assembled in respect for the Officer. As a mark of respect blinds were drawn in the houses on the route to the (Bo'ness) Cemetery through the town. Officers and men and the wounded from Carriden Hospital gathered at the grave. After the coffin was lowered into the grave prayers were said by the Rev Young, and the deceased brother officers and NCOs advanced in turn, saluted and retired and followed by the convalescent soldiers. The pall bearers were Mr J F Foot, his son James, Lieutenants Patrick, Arkle, Toy, Hyslop, Ogden and Thomson of the Royal Flying Corps with Lieutenant s Hunter, Smart, and Walker from the RFC attending and Lieutenant Temple, D.O. Royal Engineers and Captain The Rev Lindsay from Bathgate. The newspaper lists many mourners including The Rev Wm Dundas ,BD., and his son, Lieutenant Dundas of the Black Watch, Lieutenant Arthur Harold Stevens MC(London) Royal Field Artillery, Sgt John Simpson, of the Royal Scots, and Captain W G Thomson, of the Linlithgowshire Volunteers Regiment. Wreaths were sent by Officers of the Royal Flying Corps, air mechanics RFC, and commissioned officers RFC, Lieutenant Smith, RFC at Montrose and from the soldiers at Carriden Convalescent Hospital.

The Graves Registration of the Imperial War Graves Commission (now CWGC) for Bo'ness Cemetery records RFC: Foot, 2nd Lieut D.N. Death on 4May1917 and grave Plot D grave 1232 and type of memorial records Family Perm with inscrips and Private: Type of Grave. The original form is signed by Lieut HH McCombie, Royal Field Artillery and that has been cancelled and another form completed by and Area Inspector from the Commission.

2nd Lieutenant Foot has a medal card but his only shows T/2nd Lieut D V Foot, General List RFC with the entry "No rank service overseas – Home service only - Killed 4-5-17."

The RFC must have notified the War Office that compiled the Officers Died in the Great War publication as he is listed in that Roll: Foot, David Victor: 2nd Lieut Temp,

killed 4 – 5-1917 (General List) .

2nd Lieutenant Foot is listed on the Bo'ness War Memorial, the Linlithgow Academy War Memorial, the Edinburgh Academy War Memorial and the War Memorial in Carriden Parish Church.

I submitted a comprehensive file with the required documents to the Trustees of the Scottish National War Memorial at the Castle in Edinburgh and a short time later had a communication from Lt Col Roger J. Binks, Keeper of the Rolls informing me that 2nd Lieutenant D V Foot, had been accepted as a casualty of the 1914-1918 war. The confirmation came in the form of this Viz: Foot, David Victor, T/ 2nd Lieut Royal Flying Corps, Birth place - Bo'ness, West Lothian, Killed in flying accident 4th May 1917 – United Kingdom and 18 Trg Sqn Montrose, formerly Artists' Rifles .

I was so pleased to receive this communication from Lt Col Binks and to hear that 2nd Lieut D.V. Foot, RFC has been accepted and he is remembered for Ever.

NOTE: Airmen died in the Great War compiled by Chris Hobson records Training Squadrons (known as Reserve Aeroplane Sqns) from August 1914 to 13th January 1916 and Reserve Squadrons from 13th January 1916 to 31st May 1917 when redesignated as Training Squadrons. 18 Reserve/Training Squadron had eight other casualties in training and one Sergeant in 1918 based at Montrose said "There is an accident every day and a funeral every week!"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Gordon Leith, Curator, RAF Museum, Hendon.

Lt Col Roger J. Binks, Keeper of the Rolls, Scottish National War Memorial, the Castle, Edinburgh

Derek Robertson, Arbroath

Dan Paton, Curator, Montrose Air Museum

SOURCES:

Royal Flying Corps (military wing) Casualties & Honours during the War of 1914-1917- compiled by Capt G L Campbell, RFA.

Scotland's People: birth, death, census

The OTC & Great War by Capt Alan R. Haig-Brown

London Gazette 1917

Army List May 1917

RFC Casualty Card

Flight Magazine 10 May 1917

Commonwealth War Graves Commission (website) & graves register form

Dundee Evening Telegraph & Dundee Courier, Linlithgowshire Gazette May 1917.

Army Medal Roll.

Officers died in the Great War - CD Rom

De Ruigny's Roll of Honour

Airmen died in the Great War compiled by Chris Hobson.

Scottish War Memorials project (website): Bo'ness (town), Linlithgow Academy, Edinburgh Academy and Carriden Parish Church War Memorials.

Edinburgh Academy at War 1914-1918 (2015)

Great War Forum (website).

Donations to the Library

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All by David Dobson, 2022

published by Clearfield Company, Baltimore, Maryland

www.genealogical.com

Another batch of invaluable volumes from David Dobson! He has researched within a wide range of sources such as court records, contemporary newspapers and journals, monumental inscriptions, and documents found in archives.

Included is information such as:

Gilbert McKINNEE, born 1752 in Galloway, a Loyalist in 1783, son of William McKinnee who was lost from the *Countess of Dalhousie*, died at Carlton Village, near Shelburne, Nova Scotia, on 6 February 1821;

Reverend Dr James FORSYTH, and his wife Elizabeth BROWN who died 28 January 1854, parents of James Forsyth a Lieutenant of the Indian Army, and of James Smith Forsyth born 1 January 1840 in Aberdeen, who died in Melbourne, Australia, on 8 December 1875;

John McVICAR, a weaver in Inveraray, subscribed to a bond of caution for Donald McVicar, baron officer of North Knapdale, as a constable for Argyll, on 5 May 1795;

Robert ROBERTSON, born 1721, a musician, died 1808, husband of [1] Chirsten DRUMMOND, born 1736, died 1776, and [2] Agnes COUPAR, born 1745, died 1815;

Archibald CHISHOLM was found guilty of housebreaking and theft in Inverness in 1813, was sentenced to transportation to the colonies for 2 years;

George T. YULL, from Little Ardo, Aberdeenshire, married Hermin, eldest daughter

of George KOSMA of Neutra, Hungary, there on 19 January 1862;
William HOGSTON, a cooper in Wick, Caithness, had his hand shattered and
dismembered at the grain riot of Wick in 1847;
William LINDSAY, a carrier in Perth, was accused of forgery in 1832.

To discover whether these volumes are available via our Sales Desk,
please contact sales@scotsgenealogy.com

The Dunbars of Ackergill and Hempriggs

James Miller

Whittles Publishing, Dunbeath, Caithness; 2022; www.whittlespublishing.com

ISBN: 978-184995-489-1

Even for those with no Caithness connections, this is a fascinating read, brought to life by many direct quotations from personal correspondence and legal documents.

It is centred on the Dunbar family, of course, but by no means are they the only characters represented. The Sinclair family is not overlooked. Alexander Miller, a local merchant and entrepreneur, with John Sutherland of Wester and John Anderson of Wick, sought to effect improvements from 1767 onwards, helping to transform much of the county. Throughout the tale, many regular residents make their short entrances and exits.

The economic life and development of the area over 300 years is recounted, which may sound “dry” – but it’s not. It discusses farming life and the conditions and pay of farm servants, the slump in the grain market after the ‘45, litigation involving the Ackergill family; improvements in herring fishing, the harbour, roads and bridges, plus the development of the leisure industry in the later 19thC. There is a discussion about pasturage, for example, and the recruitment of Fencibles (together with their adventures in Ireland).

Local politics is described. Surprisingly (to some readers) from 1707 to 1832, Caithness was coupled with the Isle of Bute when represented at Westminster, with these two areas taking turns to send “their man” to the House of Commons.

Some readers may find the Appendices the most interesting. There are Regulations concerning servants’ fees and conditions. There is a table detailing the population between 1801 and 1831. For the delight of the family historian, there are some lists of names (references to lists of tenants are also provided): the Voters’ Roll of 1754; Freeholders of 1766; various Fencibles in 1795, 1798 and 1806; Pensioners in 1887; not overlooking a list of Ackergill cows in 1825, together with their names (and whether in calf or not).

Ackergill Tower was upgraded in the 1850s by David Bryce and eventually was sold out of the family’s possession in 1986, bringing to an end a long chapter of Caithness history.

To discover whether this book is available via our Sales Desk,
please contact sales@scotsgenealogy.com

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Compiled by Moira Stevenson, Hon. Librarian

- Monumental Inscriptions: Kirkhill Churchyard & Kirkton
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Fodderty Burial Ground & Cemetery
& Kinneffas (Strathpeffer) Burial Ground,
Parish of Fodderty, Rossshire Jonathan McColl
- Newlands: Exploring the Shadows:
Newlands of Banffshire 5 Elizabeth & George Newlands
- Newlands: Some Surprising Cousins:
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and the United States of America. 1790 – c.2019 George Sayers Bain
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Ladys On The Whig Or Jacobite Partie, Edinburgh 1745-6 Anita Gillespie
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- Penicuik Parish Memorial Inscriptions and Other Associated Records.
Part 2: Kirkhill Cemetery. Complete Indices for this & Part 1.
- Dalkeith Parish Part 3: New Cemetery. Memorial Inscriptions
and Other Associated Records
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Lost Villages of Doon Valley (Ayrshire) Donald Reid
- Scottish Archives:
Journal of the Scottish Records Association, Vol.27, 2021-
- Heraldry in St Bride's Church,
Bothwell Parish Church, Lanarkshire:
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Herkes, Marcus, Harkes, Harkess and Arcus

John and Ann Hercus

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY - 2023

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

The AGM will commence at the earlier time of 7pm.

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

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 16 January | Illustrating your Family History with Postcards <i>by Richard Torrance.</i> |
| 20 February | Annual General Meeting, followed by talk <i>by Dr Morrow, Lord Lyon King of Arms at 7.00pm</i> (topic to be arranged). |
| 20 March | People of Cammo <i>by Ann Kerrigan; Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society.</i> |
| 17 April | The History of the Union Canal <i>by Graeme Cruickshank, Historian.</i> |
| May/June visit | Archers' Hall - Date to be announced. Booking will be required. |
| 18 September | Bridgescapes - a Journey through Scotland's Bridge Building Heritage <i>by L Bruce Keith.</i> |
| 16 October | The Highland People's Historian; John Dewar from Arrochar and his informants, <i>by Ronald Black; Author and former Lecturer in Celtic in the University of Edinburgh.</i> |
| 20 November | John Orr and the history of the Scottish Naval and Military Academy <i>by Rosslyn Macphail, Researcher and Author.</i> |

Some talks will be presented in hybrid format. Please contact
enquiries@scotsgenealogy.com

Attendees must sign in and are requested to observe hand hygiene.

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

Festive Closure

The Library will close at 4pm on Tuesday 20th December 2022
and re-open at 10.30am on Tuesday 5th January 2023.

We wish all an enjoyable holiday and successful searching in 2023.



