



SIB FOLK NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ORKNEY FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

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**ORKNEY
FAMILY HISTORY
NEWSLETTER**

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From the Chair

Exciting News! We'll soon be signing up member No 3000. Seems no time since we welcomed No 2000 to the society. It makes all our efforts worthwhile to have so many

members proud of their Orcadian heritage and desperate to glean every bit of information available about their Orkney ancestors.

That's where our website proves to be so useful. I'm delighted to find that more and more members are joining online and making use of the information there. A much used link is to the message board which you can use if you get stuck. Quite often a query posted there will bring a reply that will soon have you up and running again.

All this is possible through the efforts of our Webmaster Dave Higgins who has packed the site with easily accessible information yet still finds time to keep the society's computers up to scratch.

I don't know how we will cope next year for Dave is off on his next walking adventure. Some years ago he walked from Land's End to John o' Groats. In 2013 he intends spending a year walking round the coastline of Britain.

Once again I must thank all the speakers who have given freely of their time and knowledge at our evening meetings over the past twelve months.

When you live in a county the size of Orkney it is always a challenge to get new speakers. Any suggestions would be most welcome. Even better you might wish to give a talk on your particular subject. You will find us to be a most attentive and appreciative audience.

My thanks also to the many volunteers in the office who cope admirably with all the queries that come either by email or in person.

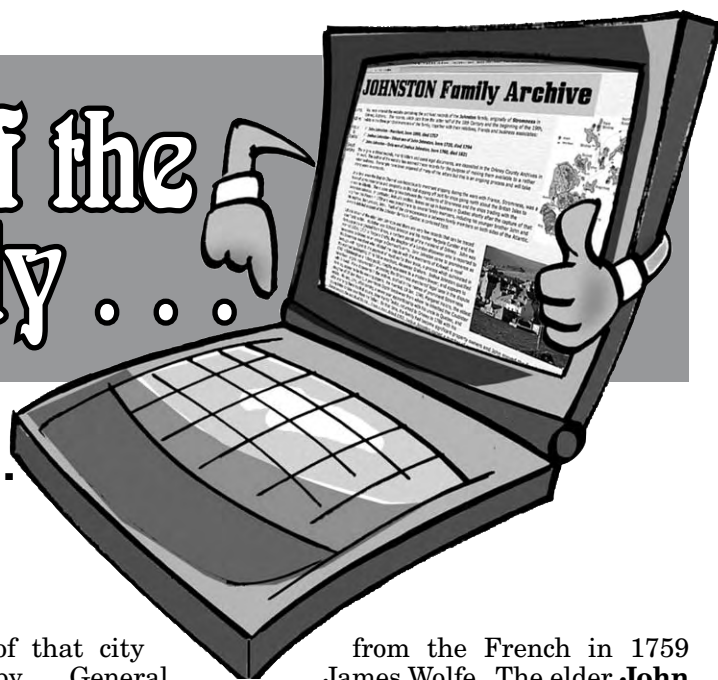
Our Editor, as usual, has done a sterling job producing our magazine. He is always looking for material from our members so if you have any family history stories you would like to share please email them to John Sinclair at johnsin@gotadsl.co.uk

Articles should be on a Word doc and photographs are welcome as good quality jpgs. January 25th is the latest date if you want to see your article in our next issue.

Finally may I take this opportunity of wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy NewYear.

Anne Rendall

The archives of the Johnston Family . . .



Stromness merchants and Property Dealers, now online.

By James Halcro-Johnston, Member No 1271

Readers with ancestors originating from Stromness may be interested to know of a new resource of 18th century family records. The recently launched website HYPERLINK "<http://www.johnstonfamilyarchive.com>" www.johnstonfamilyarchive.com contains the archives of the Johnston family who were Stromness merchants, property owners and, in the case of **Joshua Johnston**, a notary public and writer to the signet. The records, mainly from the latter half of the 18th Century and the beginning of the 19th but extending back to before 1700, relate to the three principal members of the family, together with their relatives, friends and business associates:

John Johnston - merchant, born 1690, died 1757

Joshua Johnston - eldest son of John Johnston, born 1720, died 1794

John Johnston - only son of **Joshua Johnston**, born 1760, died 1821

The original archived records, mainly letters and quasi legal documents, are deposited in the Orkney County Archives in Kirkwall. These have been scanned and photo images, together with transcripts of the more interesting letters, have been put on the internet to make them available to a wider audience. The search facility on the site enables visitors to identify documents relevant by family name, name of property or other unique reference.

The elder **John Johnston** was responsible for initiating with others the legal action by which the merchants of Stromness sought to exempt themselves from paying taxes imposed on and by the burgesses of Kirkwall, and which was carried to an ultimately successful conclusion in the House of Lords by his fellow merchant and neighbour, **Alexander Graham**. The archive contains copies of legal documents dating from Dec. 1743 & Feb. 1744 which set out both the argument in favour of the Stromness merchants' case, and the argument against. **Joshua Johnston** is believed to have acted as legal agent for the Stromness merchants in the litigation though his working papers have not as yet been identified in the archive.

The feature of the archive that may be generally of most interest is the record of the family's presence in the city of Quebec in the years immediately following the capture

of that city by General **James Wolfe**. The elder **John Johnston's** second son, **James Johnston** (1724-1800) established himself in business in Quebec with a partner very soon after the conquest. There is extensive correspondence in the archive between him and various family members and acquaintances on both business and family matters. He was an active member of the English speaking merchant class in the city and as such was a thorn in the side of the first Governor, General **James Murray**, who the merchants managed to have recalled to London over serious disagreements on issues such as the introduction of English law, trial by jury and representative government. Murray's replacement, **Guy Carleton** was more amenable to the merchants' case and Johnston eventually became a successful and much respected member of the Quebec business community. The archive records originate mainly from this later period so that unfortunately there is little that would throw further light on this most intriguing period in Canada's early history after the conquest.

The main source of information on **James Johnston's** business and family affairs in Quebec is a letter book which is in the archive and which is believed to have been compiled by Joshua's son, John, who, at the age of 21, was sent out to Quebec as an apprentice to work for his uncle between the years 1781-1788. The early part of the letter book contains treatises on geometry, trigonometry, navigation and other matters that were probably the subject of lessons taught to him while he was boarding at a school in Enfield, outside London, while waiting to sail to Canada. Among other matters, the letters in the archive emphasise the perilous nature of sea travel in the Atlantic at a time of almost constant warfare with France and Spain. Young **John Johnston** had an eventful stay in Canada ending with his marriage, licensed by Governor Carleton, to his first cousin, **Jane Taylor**, aged barely 15, who he brought back to Orkney as his wife.

Apart from Jane's mother, Ann, who is reported to have met her husband, **Henry Taylor**, on board ship while traveling to Quebec, possibly to keep house for her

◀ brother, several other members of the Johnston family spent time in Quebec, notably:

Joshua's (and James') youngest brother, another **John Johnston** (1735-1781). In 1763 in a letter home to his mother from Charlestown, South Carolina, having arrived from Cuba, John reports that his journey started in Quebec and that "James & I are so often crossing the seas". By 1769 he had relocated to London where he was practicing as a watchmaker but by the end of the decade he was back with his brother in Quebec, where he died in 1781. He married in 1768 **Janet Laing**, the sister of **Robert Laing**, a business associate of **Joshua Johnston**, but there is no evidence that Janet ever joined her husband on his travels. John and Janet had no children.

Joshua's (and James') youngest sister, Elizabeth, married in 1763 to **Adam Irvine**, appears to have been a constant presence in Quebec and is frequently mentioned in correspondence. However, it is unclear whether her husband was with her there, or even when she arrived. What is known is that her son, **James**, was a contemporary of Joshua's son John and the two of them spent time in Enfield and traveled out to Quebec together in 1781, along with a spinster aunt, Jean, another of Joshua's sisters.

David Geddes and his brother George, the sons of Joshua's eldest sister, Kath, both spent time in Quebec. **David** traveled there around 1768 to work for his uncle but on the outbreak of war with the American colonists in 1775, he joined General Burgoyne's army as paymaster before being captured at the surrender at Saratoga. He returned to Stromness around 1781 where he set up in business and was eventually appointed as resident agent for the Hudson's Bay Company. George, a noted Jacobite, was by 1784 in New York, apparently with the title of Captain, although this was most probably by virtue of his rank in the American revolutionary army.

William Halcro, a cousin of **Joshua Johnston**'s wife, married Joshua's eldest daughter Margaret and was active in business in several parts of the world. Having returned from a marginally successful business trip to India in 1773, by the end of the decade he appears to have been operating from Quebec where his wife joined him in 1783.

John Urquhart, a native of Tain, married **Joshua**'s second daughter, Marjory, and traveled to Canada in 1782. Writing to his father-in-law from Niagara in October 1783 he makes some perceptive and amusing comments on his first meetings with native American traders. "Upon the interpreter's acquainting I was a Scotchman, they begged to let me know that they found one more of their lost tribe and gave their hollou, which if heard by the Gremsay men wou'd make them jump over Hoy Head. In trading they are the most justest of mankind never doubting but the Sowaanas (as they call us) will do them justice. On their arrival with their product, they deliver the whole to the merchant and will remain two days in the place befor they trade, never has the least idea that their property will be hurt. (This is what a Hyllandman would not do to his parson, and I believe he should not)." Marjory followed him at least as far as Quebec in 1788

with their children.

The archive also contains letters and other documents concerning a number of other notable Orcadians.

Joseph Isbister (1710-1771)

Joseph was the son of the elder **John Johnston**'s sister, Bess, who married a fellow Stromness merchant, **Adam Isbister**. Joseph joined the Hudson Bay Company at the age of 16 as a deck hand and achieved the notable distinction of rising to become the first Orkneyman to attain a governorship in the company. Isbister made his mark in 1743 when, as Governor of the Albany post on James Bay, and against company policy, he established the company's first inland trading post, Henley House, to counteract a Canadian attempt to intercept Indian fur traders on their route to the coast. Henley House itself had a checkered history but it established the precedent whereby the company eventually penetrated to the furthestmost limits of the Canadian interior. Isbister retired from the company in 1756 and in 1760 settled in Quebec with his wife and six children, where he died in 1771.

Robert Laing (1722-1803)

Robert Laing of Papdale was the father of **Malcolm Laing**, the historian, and **Samuel Laing**, the author and traveler. As noted previously, he was also related to **Joshua Johnston** through his sister Janet's marriage to Joshua's youngest brother, John. In his recently published autobiography, **Samuel Laing** describes his father as an active, prudent merchant involved in the export and import of grain, and in the export of kelp. Smuggling of brandy, tea, spices and tobacco also appears to have formed a lucrative part of his trade. In his business dealings with **Joshua** he appears to have acted in effect as Joshua's banker in the days before banks. In an exchange of letters in 1769 it is clear that Robert had an ambition, possibly on behalf of one of his brothers, to purchase the Coubister Estate in Orphir, then owned by **Joshua**'s brother in law, Dr **Hugh Halcro**, residing in Jamaica.

William Halcro (1760-1786)

William was the only son of Dr **Hugh Halcro** and heir to the Coubister Estate but at the age of 26 was amongst those tragically lost at sea on an expedition to Suleskerry in Nov. 1786. **David Geddes**, writing from Stromness to his uncle in Quebec, describes the tragedy thus. "My cousin **John Johnston** can inform you of a loss that happen'd to this small place this winter from a sloop that went out to kill seals on an island ten leagues to the westward of this. A gale of wind drove them to the Isles of North Ferro where they all perished but three young lads. They were about twenty drowned who have left a number of helpless widows & young children almost destitute, & the greatest part of them within call of my door." William was probably born in Jamaica where his father is believed to have owned a sugar estate but returned to Orkney at the tender age of ten following his father's premature death in 1770. His tutelage and upbringing were put in the hands of his father's eldest sister, **Margaret Halcro** and her husband, **Joshua Johnston**. By the same deed of settlement drawn up by **Hugh Halcro**, Margaret and Joshua were appointed as joint administrators of the ▶

Coubister Estate, a circumstance which was the cause of a major rift with the next personality.

Rev. Robert Sands

The Minister for Hoy and Graemsay, the Rev. **Robert Sands** was a larger than life character who crossed swords with **Joshua Johnston** over the administration of the Coubister Estate. Following young **William Halcro's** death, the estate became the property in three equal shares of his two surviving aunts, **Margaret** and **Cecilia**, and the infant son of the deceased third aunt, **Mary**, who had married the son of the Rev. **Robert Sands**. **Robert Sands** in 1790, acting for his grandson and convinced that the estate was being mismanaged and that **Joshua** no longer had any right to its administration, managed to convince the Court of Session in Edinburgh that the estate should be sequestered and a judicial factor appointed, furthermore that the factor should be **William Young**, his own son in law. The Court was particularly swayed by the fact that Cecilia had sided with **Robert Sands** in the action, against the interests of her own sister and her husband. Thus the situation remained for several years, with **William Young** proving to be no more adept at producing timely statements of account than had **Joshua**. However, by 1794 Cecilia had become disillusioned with the performance of **William Young** and, in need of money, sold her one third share of the estate to her sister, Margaret. Margaret, with her two thirds share of the estate, was then able to bring a petition before the court for **William Young** to be removed from office. The dispute was subsequently amicably settled, possibly after young **Thomas Sands** had acquired sufficient years to

make his own decisions. The estate of Swanbister was separated out from the original Coubister Estate as **Thomas Sand's** one third share, and this was eventually sold by him in 1844.

Andrew Cruikshank

Andrew Cruikshank's name appears in various letters and documents contained in the archive, and was probably the same **Andrew Cruikshank** who married **Margaret Geddes, David & George Geddes'** aunt, and was as such a member of a prominent Jacobite family. He is believed to have been an active Stromness businessman and was responsible for rescuing the Coubister Estate when, in 1781, he loaned the estate the sum of £350, a not inconsiderable sum in those days, to pay off debts that the estate was burdened with at **Hugh Halcro's** death. A deed of 1790 records that **Andrew Cruikshank**, 'from his friendship to' Joshua and Margaret, 'suffered (the interest on the debt) to run on for some years unpaid'. Elsewhere in the archives, Andrew's name is portrayed in a rather less favourable light.

The documents available on the website are those contained in two of the four boxes in the Kirkwall archive. A third box contains mainly rent rolls and maps and the contents of the fourth box have still to be processed and will be made available on the website in course of time. The author is particularly indebted to Dave Higgins, the OFHS webmaster, for his invaluable assistance in constructing and launching the website.

James Halcro-Johnston, Member No 1271.

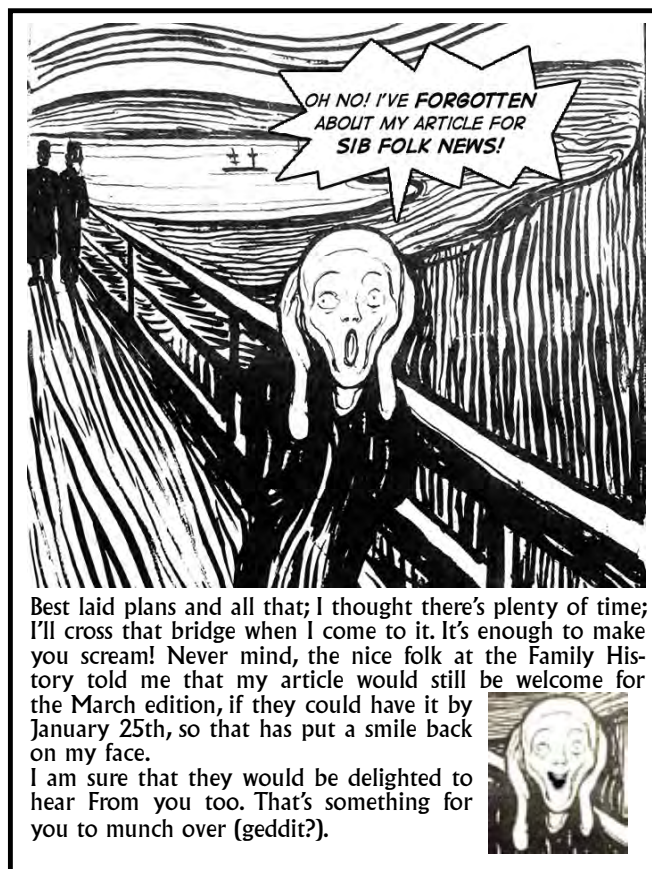
Not to be confused with the William Halcro mentioned on the preceding page.



The above photograph, from **Bruce Gorie**, shows the boxes and trunks of the herring gutters on route, probably to Stromness. Does anyone recognise the ship?

Stromness was once a base for the herring fleet and had, at one time, 38 fishing stations spread along the shoreline with up to 2000 gutters and packers hard at work.

The inset photo is by **W.Hourston** and shows what a tough life these women had.





September cover . . . all is revealed

First off the mark was **Ker Sinclair**, member 679, who could tell me that the boat is the Winsome. Ker tells me that the Winsome operated between South Ronaldsay (where she was based) and Burray and that she also carried passengers and mail to the old St Ola which, at one time stopped at South Ronaldsay

and Flotta to make transfers.

The occasion of the photograph, he believes, was the celebrations of the Coronation of King George VI in 1937.

The persons in the photograph are:- Centre in Officer's uniform - **John Robert McBeath**, boat owner and skipper, of St. Margarets Hope. Left - **Walter Sinclair**, Deck Hand of Brandyquoy, South Ronaldsay, who was killed by machine gun fire from a German plane during the last war in the Faroese Islands when serving in the Merchant Navy. Right - **James Hourston**, Engineer of Smiddy Cottage, School Road, St. Margaret Hope.

Ker finishes up by telling me that Walter was his paternal uncle and James his maternal uncle.

When I read Ker's email I realised that I too had a tenuous

connection with the photograph as my first cousin **Beattie Hourston** from Stromness was married to **John Hourston**, a nephew of **James Hourston**, mentioned above.

Hot on the heels of Ker's email was one from Herbert Mackie. He confirmed everything Ker told me but added that while the boat and crew were the genuine article but the 'commander', as we suspected, was not.

Finally a note from **Davina Brown**, member 327, tells the same story. Her husband, Winston, remembers it all first hand and she reminded me that the deck hand **Walter Sinclair**, who was killed by German machine gun fire, was Winston's second cousin.

In SIB News No 46 published in June 2008, Davina gives a fairly detailed account of the attack and of the visit that she and Winston, made to the Faroese Islands to visit Walter's grave. Any member interested in reading this can find the relevant issue at www.orkneyfhs.co.uk and opening the the SIB FOLK NEWS link to find issue no 46.

Davina's article appears on page 17.

This was one of three photographs that **Bruce Gorie**, member 961 emailed to me hoping to find out a bit more about them. I'm sure that he will be delighted with the response to this one. I know that I was.

John Sinclair. Editor.



MELANCHOLY EVENT —We find the following in John o' Groats's Journal; - "Longhope March 5th, 1849" - A young couple were lately contracted for marriage, the one party residing in Walls, the other in a place situated over the hills of Walls called Rackwick. On the wedding eve, the relatives and friends were invited to attend, and three of the bridegroom's sisters, another girl and the bridegroom's brother-in-law, set out for Rackwick on the wedding eve (the 28th ult), which happened to be a day so stormy that travelling was considered dangerous. Notwithstanding the party proceeded, but they had not gone far before the females became so much exhausted that the bundles they had with them, viz, a change of clothes, were lost on the road, and, finally, when they had come in sight of the place of their destination, the two sisters were unable to go further. There was no alternative but for the man to

Does any member have anything to add to this sad tale which must have had a terrible effect on the tiny communities of Walls and Rackwick

go for assistance, leaving his helpless companions on the hill adjacent to the village. In his progress he met the bridegroom and two men, looking for his guests, and they were soon informed of the deplorable state of the party.

Two of the females least exhausted had left the other two in dying state. They were immediately taken and assisted to the village, and the bridegroom went to render assistance to his sisters. After reaching them he found they were unable to make any endeavour to save their lives, He attempted to carry one, but, melancholy to relate she died in his arms. He then laid her down, and tried the other, but she too, died on the spot. Some of the near relatives of the deceased are so much affected that lives of several have been despaired of. The two females who reached the place are still very weak."

From Maitland Mercury & Hunter River Advertiser: Aug 1849



By Ray Craigie Member No 2452

It doesn't matter how long you have been digging away at your family roots, fellow members will be well aware of the kick you get when everything clicks into place and another gap in the family tree can be inked in with confidence.

That's how I felt when the details of my great, great grandfather, **William Craigie**, came to light in an 1851 English census in South Shields. His occupation was described as 'mariner'. His future wife was also listed at the same address but whether this was by accident or design I will probably never know.

William was born in Kirkwall in 1832. His father was also named **William Craigie**, a labourer, and his mother was a **Margaret Bews**.

William's wife to be, Margaret Simpson, was also a Kirkwall lass and the daughter of a master mariner.

They were wed in 1851 and had three children; Elizabeth born in 1854, William born in 1857 and James born in 1861.

William must have had a good head on his shoulders for by the time he was 26 he was a master mariner. His reward

was the command of a newly-launched, steel-hulled merchantman, the T.D.Marshall in 1858, built to ply the Pacific trade.

Sadly his good fortune was short lived.

In 1861, on January 18th, his son James, only nine days old, died at Kirkwall while William was at sea.

Worse was to follow for in August of that same year, while on a return voyage from Java, William and several of the crew were taken ill. The ship put into Porto Praya on Santiago in the Cape Verde Islands but by August 11th **William Craigie** was dead. He was just 29 years old.

Quite what he and his crew had contracted and where he is buried I have so far been unable to discover.

And what of Margaret? Did she survive these terrible tragedies and return to Orkney?

Now I know that there are many Bews and Craigie families in Orkney and I am hoping that among them might be kin of William and Margaret and, of course, me.

If so I would be delighted to learn more about this episode or any other information about my family. You can reach me at <craigieray@gmail.com>



The Iron Merchantman running up Dover. Painted by T.D.Marshall in 1858

Does 'Quoythaclett' mean anything to you?

Alison Hollis, Member 2124 from New Zealand, was interested in the reference that Howard Herd made to Quoy-the-Clett, Birsay in the June issue of Sib Folk News.

Could this be the property known to her as Quoythaclett.

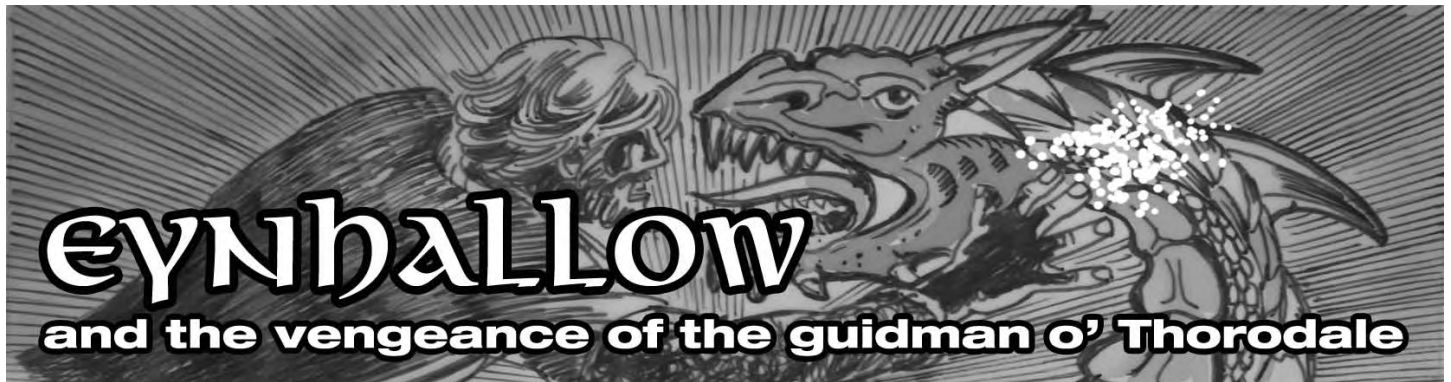
She has evidence of **Thomas Harvey** (bc1775) who was of Quoythaclett in 1815, married to **Margaret Velzian** in 1817, also bought Banks in Greeny in 1817. He apparently was married previously to Janet Mowat and she may be the "good wife of Quoythaclets, who paid mortcloth money and given in charity to a Marion Allan in 1799".

Allison's problem is that she cannot find any information on Quoythaclett and its location.

If any member can help, Alison would be delighted to hear from them. You can contact her at

<alison.hollis@xtra.co.nz>

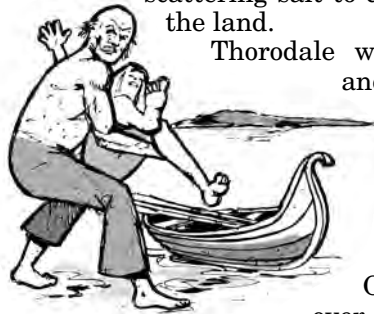




Story and Graphics, John Sinclair, Member 588

The doors of the houses crashed open and byre doors were wrenched from their hinges as the demented beings and animals raced for the sea.

The guidman o' Thorodale, farmer from the mainland parish of Evie, and his three sons were wreaking vengeance on Hildaland as they circled the island three times, scattering salt to clear all enchantment from the land.



Thorodale was terrible in his anger and showed the islanders no mercy for they were the Fin Folk who had stolen his beautiful young wife some years before.

The Fin Folk were a race of sorcerers much feared in Orkney, for they had power over storm and sea and were

noted shapeshifters who could wander at will on land or under sea.

Over the long Orkney winters they spent their time in the luxurious city of Finfolkhaem at the bottom of the sea but now it was summer and they had returned again to their magical vanishing island of Hildaland. This time, however, Thorodale had the knowledge and means to destroy them forever.

Not long before, Thorodale had been fishing in Eynhallow Sound when he heard singing and he recognised his wife's voice. She told him that they would never meet again but if he wanted vengeance he must consult the spae-wife of Hoy.



Thorodale gathered every piece

of silver he had and took it to the wise woman and he grudged her not a penny for she told him exactly what to do when Hildaland became visible to mortals.

Thorodale had watched the sea as instructed and one summer's morning he spotted an island in Eynhallow Sound that he had never seen before.

He knew that this was Hildaland so he told his sons to load the boat with three great baskets of salt



and make for the island.

As he steered the boat he remembered the words of the wise one, "Grasp a steel in your hand; never take your eyes off the island and when you set your foot ashore the island will be visible for ever more to mortals".

Beautiful mermaids and hideous monsters rose to confront them but vanished as the salt was thrown over them. The Fin Folk knew that their power was gone as Thorodale and his sons cleared all before them. And now the job was done. The island was cleansed and named Eynhallow from the Norse Eyn Helgg or Holy Isle.



The Fin Folk were gone forever...or were they?

What a load of codswallop you might be thinking...or is it? On the 14th July 1990 a group of people from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Orkney Her-



itage Society boarded a ferry for their annual trip to the island of Eynhallow

Now it is not everyone who would want to spend a day on Eynhallow. The island is about a mile long and a mile and a half wide; 200 acres of treeless grass, rocky cliffs and fearsome tides. No one has lived there since 1851 when an epidemic, probably typhoid fever, struck the island. The few inhabitants were

evacuated and the roofs were taken off the buildings to make them uninhabitable.

And uninhabitable the island has remained, to become a haven for the many seabirds that have colonised Eynhallow. fulmars, terns, cormorants, puffins and many other species ▶



The 12th century church on Eynhallow

attract birdwatchers like a magnet. It is attractive also to Heritage buffs for there is the history of the island to be studied and the remains of a 12th century monastic church and post medieval buildings to be examined and speculated upon. So the scene was set for a grand day out. Eighty eight passengers, their numbers carefully recorded to comply with regulations introduced following the Thames pleasure boat disaster, disembarked to pursue their own particular activity.



Come evening, the ferry boat returned and the passengers were counted back onboard. But something was wrong; only 86 persons were recorded and despite a search of the island 86 it remained.

On return to the mainland, the Captain informed the authorities that two passengers

were missing and a massive air and sea search was instigated. Nothing was found.

A helicopter from Shetland swept the whole area with heat seeking equipment to no avail.

Pentland coastguards said that visibility was excellent and they were satisfied that there was no one on the island.

Chief Inspector John Ratter, head of the Orkney Police, said that all the information had been widely circulated without result. When asked if he thought that one explanation could be a miscalculation of figures he said that the crew had corroborated each other regarding passenger numbers.

Some Orcadians would have you believe that the missing two were Fin Folk returning to their ancestral home. Others say that they were kidnapped by Fin women who grow old and repellent unless they acquire a human husband.

To this day the mystery has never been solved.



50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE ORKNEY BRANCH of the PONY CLUB

Kate Hardie, Member No 1978, looks back on happy days in Orkney

I was married in 1962 and moved to Orkney with my husband, James, who was a Lands Officer with the Department of Agriculture. I was lucky enough to be introduced to Mrs Eve Clouston from Smoogro shortly after my arrival. We both had a great interest in horses and riding. With great encouragement from Eve's daughter, Ingrid, we decided to start a Branch of the Pony Club.

On reflection it was a combination of enthusiasm and naivety. I was appointed District Commissioner and Eve was Secretary/Treasurer.

We held our first rally in 1963 in one of the Market's fields at Hatston. We had a rally every Saturday from then on, come hail, rain, snow, wind and occasional shine. If the weather was too bad to ride outside we had a stable management lesson inside the shed at Hatston by kind permission of Jackie Flett. My memory is that we had about 10 regular local children every week - the Clouston

children riding all the way from Orphir!!

The support was amazing and extended as far afield as South Ronaldsay thanks to the Cromarty and Wood families. When we gained confidence we had summer camps with a visiting instructor at the Bu in Burray by kind permission of Mr Dass, and Hunda island off Burray by kind permission of Col Rouse.

When James was moved from Orkney, Eve took over as District Commissioner. I was sorry to leave - the children were great and the parents marvellous. I went on to be Chief Instructor at the Inverness Branch of the Pony Club and District Commissioner of the East Lothian Pony Club.

The experience in Orkney was sometimes a steep learning curve but it was fun. I can scarcely believe that time has passed so quickly and that next year the club celebrates its half century.

I wish them continued success.

Kate Hardie



On the right, standing, is Mrs Eve Clouston of Smoogro, Orphir. Standing in the middle is Mrs Lily Dawson, an instructor from Edinburgh.



By Jane Bremner Member No 1126

I've known for a long time that Spence was the surname of my great grandmother, and that her home was Doverhouse, Birsay. However, in my research of this family, I got bogged down in the numerous Spence families, so I hadn't gone far. Recently, though, my interest was piqued when I was contacted by Australian OFHS members who were researching the Spences of Doverhouse. Thomas Blythe Spence, who is the subject of an article by **Lynda and Harold Herd** "The Standing Stones of Port Fairy" in Issue 61 of Sib Folk News, was the youngest brother of my great great grandfather, **John Spence** of Doverhouse (b 1822).

At that point I decided to look further into 'our' Spences. I received family trees compiled by other OFHS members which were invaluable in sorting through the family connections. As I digested these family trees, I found myself wanting to learn more about **John Spence** (1883) of Doverhouse who had moved to Canada. Since I live in Canada, I thought that I might be able to do some research here and try to fill in more information about him.

John Spence was born 3 September 1883, the second son of **Alexander** and **Andrina Spence** of Doverhouse, Birsay. Alexander was the third son of **John Spence** (1822 of Doverhouse, Birsay) and **Margaret Stensgair** (1823 of Mossakelda, Birsay) and the youngest brother of my great grandmother, Isabella (b1850).

From the OFHS census listings, I found John living at Doverhouse in 1891 and 1901 with his family. In 1891, he was 7 years old, and going to school. At age 17 in 1901, he was listed as a farmer's son, assisting on the farm, living with his parents and 6 of his 8 siblings.

Various online sites were helpful in getting to know **John Spence**. From the *New York Passenger Lists 1820 – 1957* (available on Ancestry.ca), I learned that John arrived 10 May 1909 in New York, having sailed from Glasgow on the ship Columbia. He was single, 25 years old, and a labourer. His next of kin was listed as "Father, Mr Spence of Dobber House, Birsay". John may have travelled with Thomas Robertson (also age 25) of Quackway Marwick, Birsay; his name followed John's on the ship's list. John's final destination was said to be Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

The journey from his landing in New York to Canada remains a mystery, but on 19 January 1916, John signed up in Calgary, Alberta as a recruit with the Canadian forces. From his Attestation Papers (available online for free viewing), I learned that John had blue eyes, brown hair and a fair complexion. He was 31 years old and unmarried when he enlisted with the Canadian Infantry. At 5 ft 5-1/2 inches and 140 pounds, he was a small man by today's standards. His occupation was listed as "teamster" and his religion "Presbyterian". He listed his mother, Andrina, as his next-of-kin. At the time of medical examination at attestation, a distinguishing mark noted was "cut on tip on left index finger". An interesting detail is that when signing up, John provided his

DUPLICATE
ATTESTATION PAPER. No. 867235
 CANADIAN OVER-SEAS EXPEDITIONARY FORCE. Folio.
 QUESTIONS TO BE PUT BEFORE ATTESTATION. Canada 11/1916
 (ANSWERS)
 1. What is your surname? *Spence*
 1a. What are your Christian names? *John*
 1b. What is your present address? *128 - 12 Ave E. Calgary, Alberta*
 2. In what Town, Township or Parish, and in what Country were you born? *Birsay, Orkney Islands, Scotland*
 3. What is the name of your next-of-kin? *Andrina Spence*
 4. What is the address of your next-of-kin? *Dobber House, Birsay, Orkney Islands, Scotland*
 5. What is the relationship of your next-of-kin? *Mother*
 6. What is the date of your birth? *Sept 3rd 1883*
 7. What is your Trade or Calling? *Teamster*
 8. Are you married? *No*
 9. Are you willing to be vaccinated or re-vaccinated and inoculated? *Yes*
 10. Do you now belong to the Active Militia? *No*
 11. Have you ever served in any Military Force? *Yes, 3 yrs Royal Garrison Artillery, Army Canada*
 12. Do you understand the nature and terms of your engagement? *Yes*
 13. Are you willing to be attested to serve in the Canadian Over-Seas Expeditionary Force? *Yes*
 DECLARATION TO BE MADE BY MAN ON ATTESTATION.
 I, *John Spence*, do solemnly declare that the above are answers made by me to the above questions and that they are true, and that I am willing to fulfil the engagements by me now made, and I hereby undertake to serve in the Canadian Over-Seas Expeditionary Force.

birth year as 1884, a date in conflict with the Statutory Register of Birth which gives his birth year as 1883. Perhaps this was simply an error in transcription or calculation in the urgency of signing up recruits. Or perhaps it seemed more acceptable to be a bit younger to join the troops.

With the information from attestation, I requested a copy of John's military records from Library and Archives of Canada. Copies of the original military records in hand, I learned that Private John Spence (Regimental #808235) was initially assigned to the 137th Battalion. He was a patient in the Calgary Military Hospital for 77 days prior to embarkation to Britain (3 May 1916 – 18 July 1916) for treatment of erysipelas (a skin infection); perhaps that cut on his finger hadn't healed. In any case, he was discharged 18 July, 1916, fully recovered.

By 21 August 1916 John boarded the HMS Olympic, sailing from Halifax, Canada and arriving in Liverpool, England 30 August 1916. From there, he was transferred to 21st Reserve Battalion at Seaford 10 January 1917, and subsequently transferred to the 50th Battalion (Alberta) on 19 January 1917. His troop arrived in Havre, France 20 January 1917; from there, he left to join a field unit on 13 February 1917.

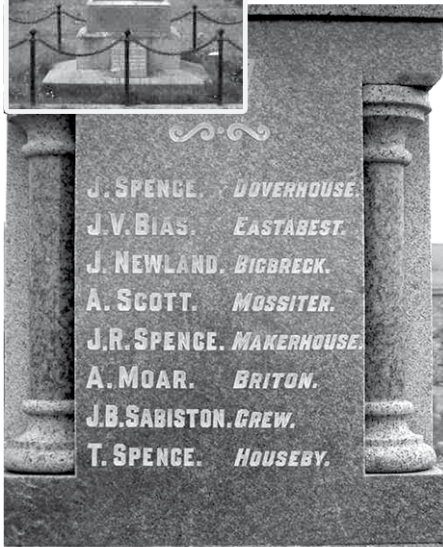
Sadly, Private **John Spence**'s time in the field was short-lived as a report from base indicates that he was killed in action 10 May 1917. His will, completed in January 1916 at the time of attestation, bequeathed all of his estate to his mother, Andrina. His medals and decorations were sent to his mother, and a memorial



plaque and scroll were sent to his father, along with the Memorial Cross.

John's sacrifice in the Great War has been memorialized in Orkney, Canada and France. The Birsay War Memorial shows the names of local men who died in the war. The names of these men along with their rank, full first names, units or ships, date of death and age are listed on the website of the Scottish Military Research Group (Scottish War Memorials Project).

John remained staunchly connected to his Orkney roots, but because he fought under the Canadian flag, his name is listed in perpetuity in the First World War Book of Remembrance on display in the Memorial Chamber of the Canadian Parliament Buildings in Ottawa, Ontario. This book commemorates over 66,600 men and women from Canada who gave their lives in the Great War. Once each year, the book is open for public viewing at the page



BIRSAY WAR MEMORIAL and CLOSEUP of NAMES

viewing at the page



WW1 BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

inscribed with the name of **John Spence**. The Canadian Virtual War Memorial, viewed on the website of the War Veterans of Canada, further memorializes this Birsay native.

The Vimy Memorial [picture], unveiled in 1936 by King Edward VIII, was built on land which was a "free gift in perpetuity of the French nation to the people of Canada". The inscription on the base reads "To the valour of their countrymen in the Great War and in memory of their 60,000 dead, this monument is raised by the people of Canada". Inscribed on the ramparts of the Vimy Memorial are the names of over 11,000 Canadian soldiers who were posted as

'missing, presumed dead' in France including the name of **John Spence**, a Birsay man who fought with and died with Canadians.



THE VIMY MEMORIAL

LEST WE FORGET

REFERENCES:

Commonwealth War Graves Commission – [HYPERLINK "http://www.cwgc.org"](http://www.cwgc.org)

Canada Library and Archives [HYPERLINK "http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca"](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca)

Attestation papers online [9RG 150, ACCESSION 1992-93/166, Box 9184-49] [HYPERLINK "http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/cefi001042-100.01-e.php"](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/cefi001042-100.01-e.php)

Canadian Great War Project – [HYPERLINK "http://www.canadiangreatwarproject.com"](http://www.canadiangreatwarproject.com)

Veterans' Affairs Canada website - A range of materials about Canada's sacrifices in war, our military history and our Veterans' unique experiences [HYPERLINK "http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/collections/virtualmem/Detail/1576040"](http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/collections/virtualmem/Detail/1576040)

PHOTOS:

1. **Attestation paper for John Spence** – [HYPERLINK "http://www.collectionscanadag.ca/databases/cefi/"](http://www.collectionscanadag.ca/databases/cefi/)

2. **Birsay War Memorial** – [HYPERLINK "http://www.scottishmilitaryresearch.co.uk"](http://www.scottishmilitaryresearch.co.uk)

3. **Closeup of Birsay War Memorial** – [HYPERLINK "http://www.scottishmilitaryresearch.co.uk"](http://www.scottishmilitaryresearch.co.uk)

4. **Vimy Memorial** – [Commonwealth War Graves Commission - HYPERLINK "http://www.cwgc.org"](http://www.cwgc.org)

5. **WWI Book of Remembrance, Ottawa (p330)** – [HYPERLINK "http://www.veterans.gc.ca/images/collections/"](http://www.veterans.gc.ca/images/collections/)

Some Odds and Ends

The PEEDIE KIRK SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTING



Rags to Riches follow up

I know that **Lynda Hodgkinson**, member No 2201, will be delighted to read this follow-up to her article 'From Rags to Riches' about the Johnston family which appeared in our September newsletter.

It comes from **Peter Leith**, member No 65 from Stenness who sent me the following extract from

his book 'The Kirk and Parish of Stenness' which records the generosity of **Thomas Slater Johnston** who featured in Lynda's article.

'It was proposed to put the old seats into the new building, but a Stenness man, Mr Thomas Johnston, who was home on a visit to his birthplace after a lifetime in the United States, offered to meet the cost of new seats and this offer was accepted. He also presented a new set of Communion vessels to the congregation as well as a Baptismal Basin'.

Peter tells me that the edge of the Baptismal Basin bears the inscription '1 set of Sacramental vessels gifted by T.S. Johnston Esq., USA to Stenness Free Church. Jan 1896...

He goes on to say that the vessels are now in Orphir Church and that Thomas Slater Johnston's birthplace 'Cringloo' stood a bit south of the Stenness manse.

The last interesting piece of information supplied by Peter is that the Pipe Band founded by Peter's son was the first pipe band in America.



Bob 1913

Bob's your uncle

Well maybe not but he would probably have been someone's uncle— but whose?

Nancy Gemmel, member no 2672 has tried, without success, to find out who Bob might be and she hopes that one of her fellow members might be able to help.

The only clue is that the photograph is signed 'Best Wishes Bob 1913' with the rather distinctive signature shown above.

She thinks that he may be from the Lamb family; perhaps an ancestor of Gregor Lamb, as her great aunt, Mary Jane Matches, was married to Alex Lamb and the photograph was unearthed by their grandson.

If you can help Nancy you can email her at <arum@btinternet.com>



Here is a nice sharp picture sent in by Jean Kemp, Member No 2068 of the Peedie Kirk Sunday School outing, from, she thinks, about 1937. I am sure that Jean's picture will take many of us back to the carefree days of our youth and some members might even spy a well-remembered face in this happy group.



The four men from Shapinsay

I had all but given up being able to put a name to the four stalwarts who graced the pages of our March 2012 edition but thanks to Duncan Work I now have all of them. Reading left to right they are:

Jim Stuart Sinclair, Astley Cottage.

Andrew Galbraith (Paddy) Gorn.

Duncan Work, Whitecleat.

Billy Work, Whitecleat.

Duncan, member No 1469 who supplied the names, mentioned to George Gray that he 'never expected to see a photo of me in a magazine at my time of life'.

Here it is again Duncan but a bit smaller this time. Ed.



Here's a real oldie from Alison Waddington No 2267

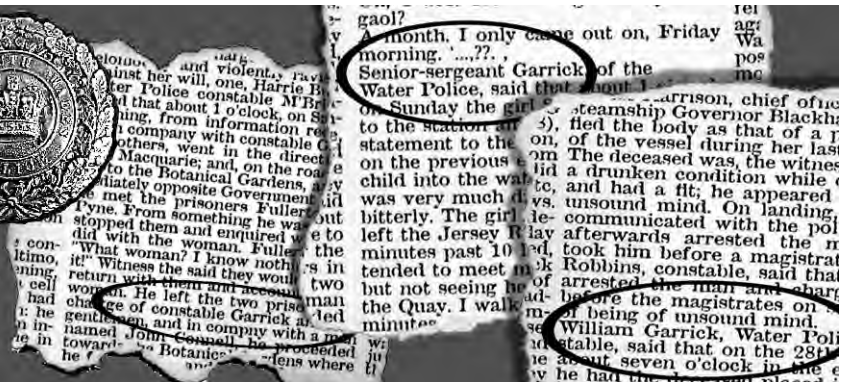
When this lady was a young girl, Marie Antoinette had not yet married Louis XVI, Captain Cook had still to find Botany Bay and Nelson did not know that one day he would be the hero of Trafalgar.

Alison found the picture in a box of old photographs which the family inherited. She thinks that the picture may be circa 1830. This, however, looks like an exterior rather than a studio shot so that would put it nearer 1850 when camera equipment became more portable.

The only other information Alison has is that she might be from Rousay or Firth. If anyone comes up with an answer to this one it would be the oldest photograph that we have ever had identified.

If you can help you can email Alison at <alisonwaddington@netscape.net> or the editor at <johnsin@gotadsl.co.uk>

William Garrick: Seaman from Orkney and Water Policeman in Sydney



By Stephanie Ryan, State Library of Queensland, and Lynda Hodgkinson, Member No 2201

On Level 3 of the State Library of Queensland is a keen community of interest: researchers exploring the lives of people and the events, places and times in which they lived. Amongst them is an enthusiast of all things Orcadian, **Lynda Hodgkinson**. She encourages a strong interest in others to connect with Orkney – a long way and very different from the steamy, sub-tropical life in Brisbane.

The origins of **William Garrick**, an Orkney seaman who spent most of his working life on one of the world's loveliest harbours, Sydney's, and lived in the inner city which fans out behind it, became a focus of interest. The common element in his work from Orkney to Sydney was that he lived with "the deep marvellous rhythms of sea and land" **George Mackay Brown** (Orkney poet 1921-1996).

Lynda checked his marriage and death certificates which, along the east coast of Australia, are based on the Scottish system and very informative. His death certificate tells us that he died at his residence, 27 Smith Street, Surry Hills Sydney, on 11 December 1905, aged 64. He was the son of **Charles Garrick**, a farmer, and **Jessie Craigie**. His birthplace was listed as Kirkwall but he had been in Australia 39 years. He had married **Mary McDonagh** [sic] in Sydney, when he was aged 29, and had had 6 children who were named except for one who had died. The marriage certificate states **William and Mary (McDonough)** married in Sydney, on 1 December 1869. He is listed as a seaman aged 28, on this certificate, and she as a dressmaker from Galway aged 22.

What can be found about William and his Orkney background?

Lynda quickly discovered, using *Scotland's People*, that **William Garrick**, "the lawful son" of **Charles Garrick** and **Janet Craigie**, was born 3 April 1841 and his birth recorded at St Andrew's, Orkney.

His parents, **Charles Garrick** of St Andrews and **Janet** (synonymous with **Jessie**) **Craigie** of Deerness married on 5 February 1837. The June 1841 census showed **Charles Garrick** 35, a fisherman, and his wife **Jessie** 30, living with their son **Charles** 3, and an unnamed child 2 months at St Andrews. In the 1851 census **Charles** was listed as a farmer born in St Andrews; his wife's birthplace was shown as Deerness. **William** was 10, his sister **Elizabeth** 7 and **George** his brother 4.

When did he come to Australia and what did he do?

Prompted by Lynda's groundwork, I checked *State Records Authority of New South Wales: Shipping Master's Office; Passengers Arriving 1855–1922* which contains *Unassisted passengers and crew arrivals*; it was accessed using a name search in HYPERLINK "<http://www.ancestrylibrary.com>" Ancestrylibrary.com. It revealed **William Garrick**, aged 24 from Kirkwall, arrived as crew on the *Northam* into Sydney on 1 August 1864.

State Records NSW has a very useful KeyName search HYPERLINK "<http://srwww.records.nsw.gov.au/indexsearch/keyname.aspx>" <http://srwww.records.nsw.gov.au/indexsearch/keyname.aspx> which brought up three results for **William Garrick**, tracking his career in the Sydney Water Police, outlined in records on a microfilm reel. The first entry states he was 5 ft 9 ½ ins with brown eyes, dark brown hair, sallow skin, a native of Scotland, single and of smart appearance. He joined the Water Police on 30 August 1866 and was based in Sydney. There were many recruits from Scotland and Ireland listed on the same page; only one on the page was born in Australia.

The next entry shows his progress through the ranks: 1st class constable in 1875; senior constable 1883; sergeant 1886 and senior sergeant 1892. The final entry indicates that he retired 31 January 1899 and was discharged on a pension

What was life in the Water Police like?

The Sydney Water Police hold the distinction of being the first civilian form of policing established in New South Wales in 1830. As the colony expanded and the population grew so did the need for a number of more specialised forces and the Water Police was one of the first of these units. It looked as if its existence might be short lived when it was abolished in 1843 but it was re-established with the appointment of a Water Police Magistrate in 1847. In 1862 it merged with the New South Wales Police Department and **William Garrick's** life in the police force was to be spent as a constable and senior sergeant in this branch of the service.



Sydney Water Police Court 1870 where William Garrick would have frequently given evidence. The photograph is part of the State Library of New South Wales Collection.

Policing the harbours, foreshores and docks of Sydney in the 1870s would have been a dangerous job in an area where drunkenness, gambling, smuggling, prostitution and even murder were common occurrences.

Sydney Water Police Court, pictured on the previous page, has now been restored to its original character and transformed into the Justice and Police Museum.

Visitors can gain a fascinating insight into crime and punishment and law and order in the late nineteenth century and discover what life would have been like for William Garrick and his colleagues.

The museum is located at the corner of Albert and Phillips Streets, Circular Quay. HYPERLINK "<http://trove.nla.gov.au/picture?q=>

Australian newspapers and Police Gazettes of the period also tell the story of the Sydney Water Police operations and readers who wish to access newspapers to 1954 will find them increasingly available online at *Trove*: HYPERLINK "<http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>"

Items reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in which **William Garrick** was involved include giving evidence at the inquest into the death of a man who had arrived from Brisbane on a boat drunk and violent ('Inquests' 7 March 1878 p6). Constable Garrick arrested him and placed him in a cell where he hit his head. Later, removed to Darlinghurst Gaol, the prisoner died. In 'Murder of an Infant' 31 May 1894 p4, it is reported a young, unemployed woman threw her 3 month old illegitimate child into Circular Quay. Desperate to see it again, she reported her action to senior-sergeant **Garrick** the following day on a Sunday afternoon at the Water Police Station. The body, gnawed by rats, was eventually found on Monday by another policeman under the Manly Wharf. The newspaper slant of nasty death and murder reports gives an unappealing image of the life of a water policeman. One cannot help but think that these experiences must have been leavened by the rhythm of some satisfactory routines and even humour in the mercantile and rough and tumble activities of the harbour hub around Circular Quay where the water police were based. Sydney Harbour is the most desirable address in the city: the beauty of it could provide sustenance to a seafaring man who had become a water policeman.

Living in Surry Hills



Smith Street, Surry Hills at the time the Garricks lived there.

William Garrick and his family resided at 27 Smith Street, Surry Hills, for many years until his death in 1905. The side of the road on which he lived has been rebuilt with contemporary apartment buildings being added to the streetscape of historic terraced houses which have been retained.

Today the whole Surry Hills area is a colourful diverse place and a magnet for the prosperous middle classes and a far cry from the time when it was notorious for the inner city slums which Ruth Park depicted in her stories of the immigrant Darcy

family during the 1930s Depression in *A Poor Man's Orange and Harp in the South*.

But what was it like 30–50 years earlier?

In the 1850s the social mix of the district was still fairly evenly spread, but the 1860s and 1870s saw subtle changes, as a growing number of mechanics, skilled artisans and shopkeepers came to dominate local life, displacing the declining gentry..... By 1891 the area's population was almost 30,000, and by the end of the century the suburb was largely built out, and a testament to the dangers of rapid and uncontrolled urban development." HYPERLINK "http://www.dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/surry_hills"

The Garrick Family

The Garricks had 6 children in the period 1870-1881 while living at Smith Street. In 1876 their second child, **Mary**, died. It is not difficult to feel the heartbreak in the statement of her age in the death notice in the *Sydney Morning Herald* 15 July 1876 p1. "GARRICK. —July 7, at her parents' residence, 27, Smith-street Surry Hills, of congestion of the brain, **Mary Teresa**, second daughter of **William** and **Mary Garrick**, aged 4 years 2 months and 22 days."

On 27 April 1883, William's wife, Mary, aged 34 died, from heart disease; her youngest child was 2. How did William cope with caring for five children, especially in the kind of work which meant he did not work standard hours? He does not appear to have had family in NSW but Mary had arrived with her sister Catherine. Another sister, Margaret, arrived in 1880 and married **Peter Dignam**, a coachbuilder. The Dignams lived nearby, at one time in Smith Street and at another around the corner in Reservoir Street. Margaret did not have children of her own and there was clearly a close relationship with the Garricks. When **Mary Garrick** died in 1883 **Peter Dignam** put an additional funeral notice in the paper for his sister-in-law. In 1896 **Margaret Dignam** died, like her sister, at the age of 34.

In 1895, William's eldest daughter, **Jessie**, married **John Martin** from Galway. Eventually the Martins moved to Dubbo where Jessie ran a hotel and had 3 children. In 1903 another of William's daughters, **Grace** married **Patrick Dunne**, a policeman; they had 5 children and moved around NSW. One of Grace's daughters, **Marjorie Garrick Dunne**, married and moved to Brisbane. The other three of William's children: **William**, **Gertrude** and **Lily**, do not seem to have married. They lived in Sydney and Lily, the youngest survived to the grand old age of 80, unlike the rest of the family. The bare facts of William's life indicate it was a challenging one. We do not have the personal dimension of it. There are no letters or photographs which shed life on the happiness or otherwise he and his family experienced. He is remembered as steadfast and admirable but the intimate knowledge of him captured in mementoes and memories has gone. Many immigrants wrote of their strong wish for a much better life to make the move to the other side of the world worthwhile. We do not know what he reported to his family in Orkney. His father died in 1884, his mother in 1885, both in Orkney – a quick succession of deaths 1883-1886 in his family.

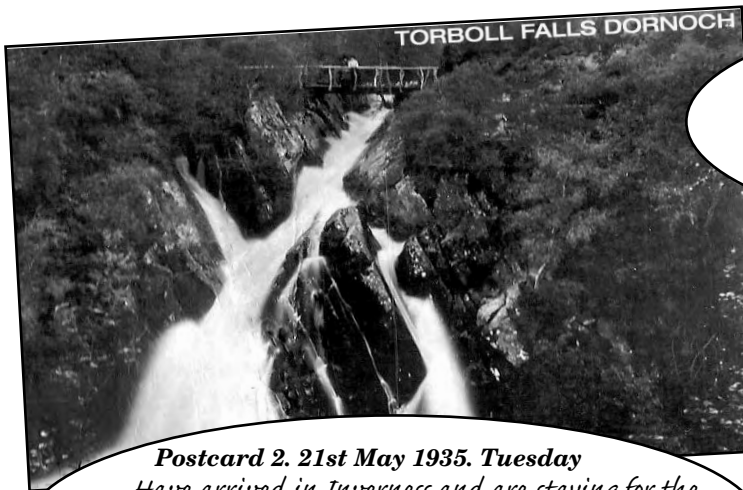
His story is typical of an immigrant's experience at the time: the challenge of living in a strange country, in different employment, a large family, early deaths, few relatives to provide support during difficult periods. Despite this, his genes and family names made their way to NSW and Brisbane, a long way from his home - in an intricate and interesting thread, not yet fully explored. ■

Postcard diary of a 1935 cycle trip

By Don Holloway, Member No 844

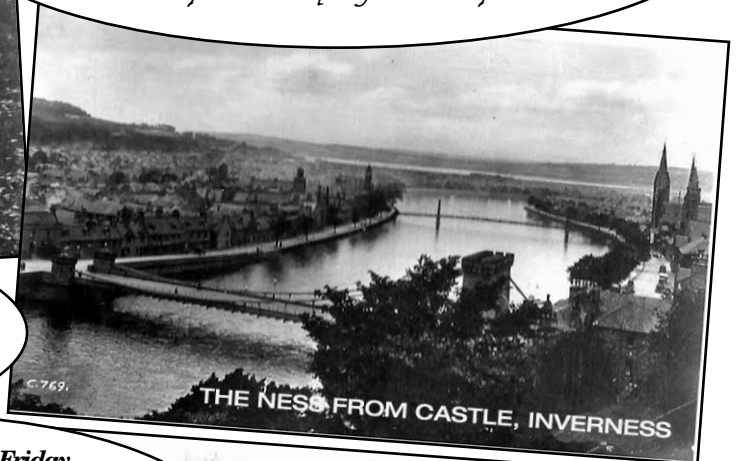
My mother **Norna Wilson**, was born and brought up in Orphir, and as a child used to collect stamps. Among the photographs that I found in her belongings was a set of 4 postcards (minus the stamps) which had been sent by someone called Bryan to Mrs. **J. C. Hay** in Orphir and must have been given to my mother by Mrs. Hay. Having worked out the order in which they were sent, I found it in-

teresting that it detailed a cycle and camping trip, which must have started with the ferry from Stromness to Scrabster and ended in Edinburgh, where they would probably catch the boat back to Kirkwall. Below I have detailed the date and picture which appears on the postcard and have transcribed the wording of the postcards which I hope that you will find interesting.



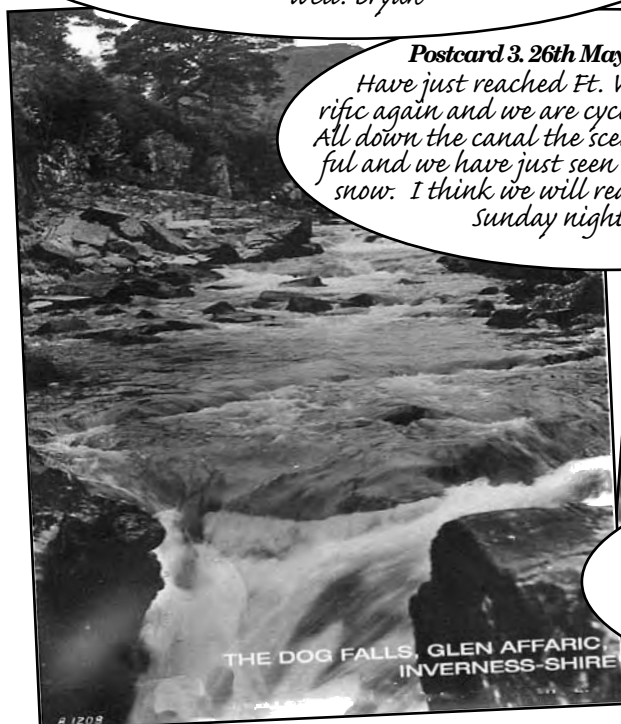
Postcard 1. 20th May 1935. Monday

Have just left Dornoch and am waiting for the ferry boat at Meickle. Having good weather - terrific heat, cycling with a nice S.E. wind. Getting on fine in tent. Will be in Inverness tonight Monday. Hope you are keeping better. Bryan.



Postcard 2. 21st May 1935. Tuesday

Have arrived in Inverness and are staying for the day. What a heat. We are suffering terribly from sunburn. Will be moving on to Ft. William tomorrow. Saw Elsie today from 11. I am enjoying our stay here very well. Bryan



Postcard 3. 26th May 1935. Friday

Have just reached Ft. William. Heat is terrific again and we are cycling in short trousers. All down the canal the scenery was very beautiful and we have just seen Ben Nevis covered in snow. I think we will reach Kirkintilloch by Sunday night. Bryan



Postcard 4. 31st May 1935. Thursday

We arrived in Edinburgh on Wednesday afternoon. Stayed all day at Polmont and left on Wednesday morning. The weather is nice and we are having a great time. Today we visited the Castle and Shrine and also went to see Mr Beaton. We are leaving here on Saturday so will not be in Kirkwall till Sunday. Please send in some food. Bryan.

Can you help Ian Robertson break through

I have hit a brick wall with **Thomas Robertson** and his family. The information I have that can be proved is as follows:

- He worked the fishing boats from Leith to Yarmouth.
- He was pressed into the Royal Navy for service on board HMS Rover in 1808.
- His place of birth was given on the Rover's manifest as Orkney and his age as 22.
- This would make his DOB 1786.
- He was discharged from HMS Gladiator on 14 Nov 1814.
- Married **Catherine Folster** by special licence on 6 July 1813 in the Parish of Maker in the county of Cornwall
- He died on 21 Feb 1823 whilst living in Great Suffolk St, Southwick, Middx.
- He had one son, **Thomas James Robertson**, born 1821
- Catherine died on 11 Feb 1858 in Havering Street, Ratcliffe, Middlesex and was buried in Tower Hamlets Cemetery.

- Family records give her date of birth as 1783 in Birsey, Orkney (Family Records held by my G Grandfather).

Three possibilities exist as to his parentage as follows:

1. **Thomas Robertson and Margaret Gerrack**, Stromness, 18 May 1786.
2. **Thomas Robertson and Barbara Dishan**, Holm & Paplay, 12 Sep 1786.
3. **Thomas Robertson and Margaret Wishart**, Orphir, 24 Nov 1786.

I believe the most likely to be the 2nd ones but have not a shred of proof to substantiate that assumption.

I hope this scenario may ring bells with someone Please reply by e-mail to HYPERLINK "mailto:ian@iarobertson.eclipse.co.uk" ian@iarobertson.eclipse.co.uk

I would like to take this opportunity to thank George Gray and Adrienne Leask for the help and advice they have given me over the years.

Many thanks.

Ian Robertson (Membership 976)



THE OLD MAN of HOY

Thanks to Elizabeth Goar, Member 821, who discovered this version

Upon Orcadian rock he stands
He stands a man alone
One foot among the seaweed
The other one is gone
Old people still remember
Tho' it is many a year
Since he lost his foot by frost and snow
And the old man drops a tear.

When this man was created
We have no dates in hand
But it must have been long before
Old Adam tilled the land
There are some others of his clan
Of that same date and day
They live somewhere near John o' Groats
And are called the Men of Mey

Some say he was a drover
From the far off land of Wick
And was banished out of Caithness
For stealing people's sheep
I think there must be truth in this
For I've heard the old folk say
That he came across the Pentland Firth
On the Horse of Copinsay

When he came by Flotta's Isle
He began to laugh
For never in his life had he
Seen such a monstrous calf
But when he tried to lift it up
It kicked up such a row
He dropped the Barrel of Butter
And the Calf in Scapa Flow

Some say the Old Man never drinks
But it must be confessed
He's often half-seas over
When the wind blows from the west
Some say he gives no charity
To those who are oppressed
But he's often known to shelter
The wild eagle on his breast

If you want to see the old man
Who never had a birth
Just steer your barque from Stromness
Down through the Pentland Firth
If you ask to see the man
Who never was a boy
Anyone will tell you where to find
The grand old Man of Hoy



The Orkney Tait and Leslie Family Tree

for all to see!

By Colin Isbister Tait, Member No 1231

One of my targets when I retired 8 years ago was to research my family tree. Living in Edinburgh, I had easy access to New Register House, where I could do a day's research for about £15 - much cheaper than using their website! I got quite engrossed in the project and found other sources of information when I joined the OFHS. Anyway, 8 years later I have a family tree with over 600 names on it. A number of members of my family, particularly the younger ones, kept asking to see the tree but printing it out did not seem to be particularly feasible or satisfactory. To me the solution appeared to be to put the tree on a website. Eventually I found a computer program called GED4WEB which takes GEDCOM files (which can be produced by all family history computer programs), reads the information in, and creates webpages based on that information. It was then a fairly straightforward matter to buy some web space and to upload my webpages to it.

My website has the rather cumbersome title **HYPERLINK** "<http://www.orkneytaitlestiefamilytree.gb.net>" - my father was **Andrew Tait**, the plasterer in Kirkwall, and my mother was **Milly Juliet Leslie**, a former primary teacher. However there are many other surnames involved. The most commonly occurring surnames are Isbister (35) mainly from Stenness, Leslie (30) mainly from Kirkwall & St Ola,



*My Father
Andrew Tait*



*My Mother
Milly Juliet Leslie*

Liddle (25) mainly from Orphir,
Tait (93) mainly from Orphir,
Taylor (22) mainly from Orphir
and
Wilson (36) mainly from Firth.

It is easy to check if your surname occurs by clicking on the 'List of Surnames' on the first page of the website.

While I was not surprised that all my forebears came from Orkney, given how little travelling was done pre-20th century, I was really astonished to find that most of my father's side of the family lived in a 5 km by 5 km square area of Orphir. The farm names found in that square were Buxa, Langie, Lower Sower, Bruntland, Mosshall, Langwell, Corstonquoy, Lingoe, Cott & Workwell. Probably many of these will have been absorbed within bigger farms nowadays.

Anyone who wishes to can look at the website. I have a set of notes which give guidance on using the website. They may not be necessary for those familiar with family trees. If you want a copy, send me an e-mail - **HYPERLINK** "<mailto:colinitait@hotmail.com>" <colinitait@hotmail.com> (note the i for Isbister in the middle of my name).

The family tree is not complete - what family tree is? I don't want to take it much further, but there is still the occasional X or Y where a name is missing.

I hope that my fellow members who browse this website will find it of interest and I welcome any comments which can be emailed to me at the hotmail address indicated above. Don't forget the middle i for Isbister. ■



***It's waiting for you
to produce an article
for SIB Folk News***

If you can manage it by January 25th that would be great. Word or doc x would be fine and you can email jpgs to me too. Send to johnsin@gotadsl.co.uk



Could you help Yvonne with Scotland's Diaspora Tapestry?

By John Sinclair, Member No 588

Here's an article that could have some of you in stitches; well that is what Yvonne Murphy hopes.

Yvonne is the co-ordinator of the Scotland's Diaspora Tapestry project which will involve some 25 countries and documents Scotland's diaspora. The diaspora refers to the movement of Scots abroad as well as the reverse diaspora of people into Scotland.

Yvonne hopes that some members of the Orkney Family History Society may be interested in this project that will be part of The Homecoming celebrations in 2014.

The first successful tapestry, completed in 2010, is the Battle of Prestonpans Tapestry (more about that on <http://www.prestonpanstapestry.org/>). This 104 metre artwork, which shows the early part of the Jacobite campaign, was embroidered by 200 volunteers from around Scotland on outline designs produced by the artist Andrew Crummy. It was inspired by the Bayeux Tapestry but is 34 metres longer.

The next challenge will be to tell the stories of the Scottish Diaspora in 5 to 10 embroidered panels per community measuring 50cm by 50cm. The project team is keen to hear from Scots descendants and those with a knowledge of local Scottish heritage as well as willing embroiderers. Groups involved in arts and crafts can come together to create panels, or they can be undertaken by individuals. Experienced embroiderers and beginners are equally welcome, with lots of advice and help available online.



Based on the Diaspora communities' stories and with their design input, Andrew Crummy will create the outline designs for the linen panels. This approach ensures an artistic consistency to the overall project although individual interpretation will be encouraged in the use of stitches and colours, to reflect local traditions.



Andrew Crummy shows Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop around the Battle Tapestry

The tapestry will be launched as part of the Year of the Homecoming Celebrations in 2014 and will also travel around Scotland and to the countries taking part.

In 2014, communities in Scotland linked to those abroad, will host the diaspora communities for a combined celebration of Scottish connections and heritage. The exhibited tapestry will serve as a backdrop for other creative means of telling the stories of the Diaspora such as music, dance and drama.

Volunteers are needed: to help share and document their stories. Keen stitchers are required together with communities willing to display the tapestry during 2014.

Project teams will be visiting the diaspora and homeland communities to hold stitching workshops, collect stories and encourage participation in the design process.

Please get in touch if you are interested in this project and would like to become involved in any way.

If you are interested or would like to know more about the project, you can email Yvonne Murphy at yvonnemurphy@scottishdiasporatapestry.org

You can also find out more about the project at www.scottishdiasporatapestry.org



**a project to involve communities around the world
in the celebration of Scottish heritage and culture**



By The late Fred Craigie

It has been a long-standing ambition of mine to thoroughly explore the coast of the Orkney mainland. Certain isolated sections of it had been familiar to me for some time but, of the coast as a whole, I had only a very sketchy picture. This year, I determined to do something about it. I had fourteen days at my disposal but, as I had relations in my native isle to visit and the inescapable odd jobs around the house to do, I decided I couldn't allow myself more than nine or ten days for my venture.

After much careful perusal of my route and measuring it out on the Ordnance Survey map, I decided I could do it. Many of my acquaintances thought that, as Burray and South Ronaldsay were now united to the mainland by the Churchill Barriers, I should include them in my journey. I had this in mind but wisely (I think) postponed a decision until I was in a position where I could give a more definite verdict. I was well aware that the success of my hike hinged on two factors - time and weather. It would be very unwise to say I would tour these two islands and their satellites before knowing the conditions when I reached the turning-off point.

I finally had a formidable collection of items arrayed before me, ready for packing. After many additions and the rejection of some goods, I had what I considered a fairly well-balanced packful of necessities which, when packed and the tent added, still turned the scales at over 40 pounds. I couldn't, reasonably, cut out any more so it had to do.

I give my diary, deciphered from a jumble of hastily scribbled notes. As a friend has since suggested, a pocket tape recorder would have been the answer to the problem of note keeping.

6th August. Got up at 5.30am, breakfasted, and was on the shore below Spithersquoy, Evie at 6.45 and, with some trepidation, marched off. No visible signs of life in Evie except for two small, animated faces peering from a caravan window on Aikerness sand. A tent, a little further on, showed no movement. Across the tide rippled Eynhallow Sound, Rousay lay darkly under an overcast sky. A halo of cloud rimmed the Ward Hill and, away to the east, a

faint lightening of the sky indicated the sun's position. There was a light southerly breeze and the grass was heavily laden with the previous night's rain. I made good time on this stretch as walking conditions were excellent.

Reached Ha'gock at 7.30. Took a ten-minute break and had a smoke while sitting under the west dyke of Aikerness. Near Ha'gock, the rock strata dips steeply seawards but, a very short distance along, it still tilts steeply but in almost the opposite direction.

On again, past the Loch of Vastray, round Scarataing and into Woodwick Bay. Woodwick House, in its plantation of trees, was soon in sight at the innermost extremity of the bay. Had a few tricky moments fording the burn and almost got soaked. I halted, briefly, at Wasswick at 9.45 and had a snack. The sky was now brighter and promised a good day.

Mansie's boat ploughed its way from Wyre towards Tingwall jetty as I passed the old coastal battery. I was glad to see Gairsay, across the narrow sound, once more coming under the plough. Balfour Castle reared up over Strombery, clearly silhouetted against the blue sky.

Seeking a drink of water at the Ha', I found it deserted but came across a water tap from which I took a long drink of cool, clear water. A barge lay up on the beach below the house.

At noon, I reached the beach below Puldrite and decided to have a half-hour break. Got some boiling water from Mrs. Flett and made tea. I drank it while sitting on the beach, basking in the sun.

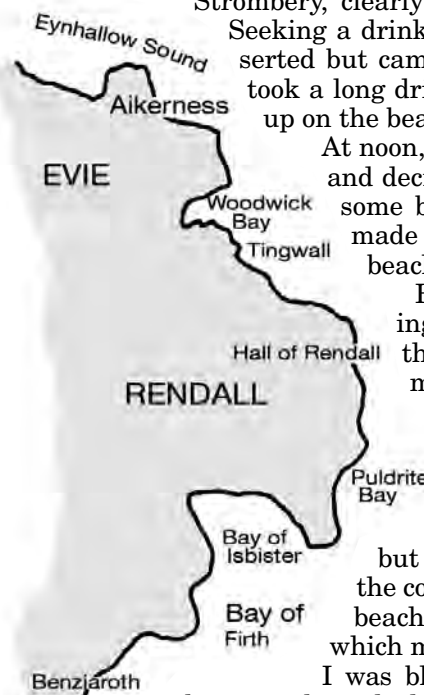
Between Broad Taing and West Taing, a great many seals disported themselves in the sea while several more lay on the rocks, reluctantly joining the others on my closer approach. Kirkwall glittered and sparkled like diamonds in the brilliant afternoon sun. Passing Luan, I found my watch stopped but met a boy at Skaill who gave me the correct time - 1.45. Beyond Skaill, the beach is a depth of very fine gravel into which my feet sank deeply.

I was blissfully unaware of the deep burn that cuts through the Oyce of Isbister until I came up ▶

Shortly after WW2, Fred Craigie realised his ambition to explore the coast of Mainland Orkney and on a fine August morning he set off on his adventure from Spithersquoy in Evie.

One week, two hours and 15 minutes he was back in that exact spot having walked around 165 miles.

While not strictly family history, I am sure that many of the places and people that you will encounter over the next three issues will stir many a memory in our older members



◀to it. Rather than backtrack and skirt the Oyce, I removed socks and shoes and waded it. Below Light-house, I had a rest and a smoke and arrived under the broch below Burness at 3pm. I discarded my pack and, for an hour, explored the beach. I found one or two badly weathered oyster shells, relics of the oyster beds that were, at one time, an industry in the Bay of Firth.

I left this pleasant spot about 4.00pm, arriving at Benziaroth at 5 o'clock. This was where I had planned to pitch my tent as I didn't want to pass through Finstown before Monday morning as I urgently needed some messages. Had a wash in a well overflow and procured fresh water from the well for tea. Later, I walked round the beach but found little of interest. Went to bed at 9.30. Much of my walking on this first day had been done on the beach, avoiding fences and long grass. Total mileage for the day - approximately 18 miles.

7th August. Awoke at 6.30. Was glad to get up at once, having had a most uncomfortable night. The ground was hard and my blanket totally inadequate for the night chill. Some new arrangements required. Reached Finstown at 9 o'clock and made my purchases. Left my blanket to be returned home by J. Manson's van and was on the road again at 9.20.

Apart from one or two deviations, I followed the main road as far as Ingashowe. Just before this point, **Henry of Crismo** stopped and spoke for a few minutes. He had a bottle of beer that I was only too glad to share. I had very heavy going on my way round the bay below Rennibister Farm. For various reasons, walking above the beach was out as I had to pick my way over loose tussocks of grass with rivers of water between them. Alternating with these were stretches of putrid mud through which I walked or, rather, squelched. This part of the bay will always lie in my memory as 'Smelly Bay', owing to the vile stench generated by decayed seaweed and who knows what discharged from the farmyard itself.

Reached the Point of Quanternes at 10.40, past acres of lush grassland and well-fed, contented cattle. I almost felt as if I had been suddenly transported to a Canadian prairie. The beach from Finstown had been very uninteresting - flat and dirty, as are all virtually tideless beaches. I had encountered quite a lot of black-headed gulls in the area around the Point of Quanternes but now oystercatchers took over. A bevy of them tried hard to usher me off their territory as quickly as possible.

Halted at the dyke-end of Saverock for a rest. Kirkwall now looked very close and a couple of lobster boats headed out towards Gairsay. The day had brightened and the sun beat down but a light, southerly breeze kept the heat at a reasonable level. I once more shouldered my pack and headed along the once busy Hatson Aerodrome, past the disused and silent emplacements. At the

head of the old 'Walrus' slipway, three or four elderly fishing boats lay at rest, their sea-going days at an end to all outward appearances.

Just as I passed the egg-packing station at the Ayre Mill, the laundry hooter announced the time as 12.30. Deposited my pack in Leitch's and had a lovely lunch in Flett's Tearooms. Later, I made a few more purchases, including a sleeping bag, had an 'Export' in the St. Ola Hotel and left the fine old town of Kirkwall at 2.10. I kept to the road out past the Coastguard Station and soon left civilisation behind me once more. I suddenly discovered I had a postcard which I had forgotten to post so called along Carness Farm where **Mr. Mainland** kindly took the card to give to the postman. As I returned to the shore, the Orcadia passed at a fair pace, returning from her North Isles run. I was surprised by the large number of giant mussel shells lying around the Point of Carness. There must be quite a sizeable mussel bed somewhere in the area.

Thieves' Holm stood in the tideway on my left and, over it, Rousay was blue-tinted with distance and Shapinsay was brightly sunlit, the gaily-painted house of Elwick Bank glowing like a beacon on the hillside. In Elwick Bay lay the last remains of that doughty old ship 'The Iona'.

At the inner end of Carness Bay is a small loch, separated from the sea by a high gravel causeway. Below this is a pleasant strip of sand where three young people were trying to bathe. With considerable laughter, two of them finally submerged, the other dancing around, ankle-deep. As I passed, he yelled to me, "its freezing!" Lucky chap, I thought. I could have used some of his freezing myself right then. As I passed from view round the

Head of Work, I met my first real cliffs. Though neither high nor very impressive, they were mildly interesting.

At 4.30, I had reached the road below Work Farm. I obtained fresh water from **Mrs. Meil** who appeared to think I had dropped from the skies.

I made tea and was off again by 5.20. The Bay of Work looked like an excellent bathing spot. Walking along the strandline, I found many very delicate and beautiful shells of the bivalve type. I collected a few specimens of the species known locally as 'angel's wings'.

The day was now at its best. The sun was lightly blanketed by cirrus clouds while a light south-easterly breeze rippled The String, up which cruised a fairly large motor boat which was probably one of the 'North boats' or 'Sooth boats', whichever you fancy.

The south side of the Head of Holland along to below Seatter is fairly high, composed mainly of red clay and sandstone. The clay is very rich in pigment. In many places the beach is fairly accessible from the cliff-top, on account of the slope. A dinghy lay just off the beach below me and the two occupants appeared to be having trouble with their outboard motor but they finally crossed the bay, arriving on the beach just below Berstane Farm at the same time as I did. As I picked my way over the stones past them, we waved a mutual greeting and went our ways.

Berstane pier at 6.45pm. This must have been an excellent pier at one time but it is now in evident disrepair. There are davits attached to one side that have probably▶



◀been used for hoisting the boats on to the pier.

In this inner section of the East Mainland, red sandstone appears to dominate the cliffs but, below Berstane, it changes abruptly to a form of grey or yellow sandstone for a short distance and again reverts to the red. I climbed to the cliff-top again, just past an empty boat-noust not far east of the pier, climbed to a peak below Heatherquoy and dropped rapidly back to beach level at the road end below Inganess. The time was now 7.15 and this was my hoped-for campsite. By 7.25pm, the tent was erected and, while unpacking my utensils, I discovered my first calamity. My butter - mercifully in a polythene bag could have been drunk but certainly not spread! Resolved - no more butter on the trip. The heat had been too much for it. Went up to Inganess Farm for water. Also purchased a box of matches as mine had slipped into the sea while bathing my feet. The feet bathing was a ritual I performed two or three times a day. Not only did I feel refreshed afterwards but I am also convinced it helped to keep my feet in tip-top condition.

During my absence, **Mrs. Ross** from Heatherquoy had come down to the tent to warn me of possible danger from the wind - she told me that the last people to pitch their tent there had it completely blown away. I was grateful for her warning and, though I didn't expect wind that night, I took the precaution of leaning a moderate-sized stone on each guy-rope to give it some 'spring', should it come a blow. **Mrs. Ross** first came to Orkney in 1933 and loves it. So do I. It has a rare beauty that no camera can truly reproduce. I often wonder why so many Orcadians leave these lovely isles in search of what lies all around them if only they had the eyes to see it, namely change - variety, if you like - and its own special beauty. In that respect, **Mrs. Ross**, we are kin. However, as they say, 'One man's meat etc.' Roughly 21 miles covered today. Goodnight.

8th August. Awoke at 5.30 after a lovely restful sleep. My sleeping bag had proved itself - in mild weather, at least. Made a cup of tea that I drank in bed. This was my idea of a campsite. It was so utterly peaceful and far away from roaring engines, nauseous exhaust fumes and the 'last chance' hustle and bustle of that rat race they call modern civilisation. A bare thirty feet from my head, the little waves slapped gently on the sandy beach, sighing gently as they retreated to meet the main body of water from whence they came. The bird population came slowly to life, the shrill call of the oyster catcher, the sleepy mournful cry of a whaup, the staccato chatter of some ducks out in the bay and, loudest of them all, the sinister 'ke'oww' of the black-backed gulls. Somewhere up the road, blackbirds sang. Later, when I opened up the fly of the tent, everything was shrouded in mist. The rusty old hulk, less than 200 yards away, was invisible. The spear thistles and long grass were heavily loaded with dew and utterly immobile in the still air.

After 6.30 breakfast, I walked up to the farm of Inganess to return a plastic carrier for water which I had got a loan of from **Mr. Logie**. Packed up and on my way past the silent aerodrome by 7.45. At Weethick Point, I found my way barred by another burn that cut through the ayre. This loch, which the ayre had made, appeared to be divided by another ayre with what, I thought, was a concrete brig at its far end. This, I thought, was the way I would go. No wading. When I finally crossed this inner ayre, I found my 'brig' was merely a short concrete wall with a burn past the end of it. Ah, well - shoes off! By 10.30, I was at Redbanks, where I was met, first of all, by a number of very friendly corgis. I found that they bred these dogs. Got a cup of tea and was then persuaded to stay for dinner, a meal that I thoroughly enjoyed. Took myself off at 10'clock, feeling a new man. Reached Rerwick Head at 1.40. Scrounged around the old coastal battery for about 15 minutes.

Rerwick Head and the next mile of coast produced some of the most fascinating rock formations I have yet seen. At a point just beyond the battery perimeter, there has obviously been a tremendous upheaval during the formation period of its rock strata. It contains one of the most distinct geological faults I have ever seen. It, like the next mile, would be beyond me to describe. My advice, therefore, is 'see it for yourself. It is well worth a day's investigation. I hadn't time to explore too long as I planned to reach Dingieshowe that night. There are many stacks, some of them quite impressive; one standing, as I was told later, on five legs, although I saw only four. Then there is the 'kim', a large cavity in which the sea creates an unbelievable turmoil in rough weather.

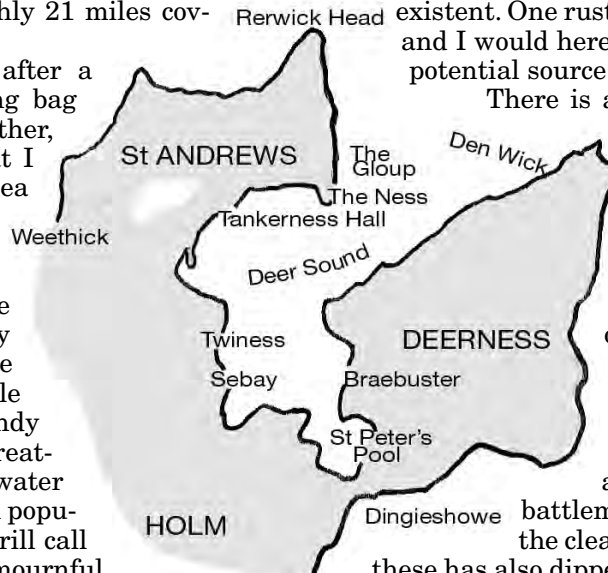
There is a miniature 'gloop' near Murton, I think. This was once guarded by wire fence that is now almost non-existent. One rusty wire still adheres to a post or two and I would here emphasise that this wire is now a potential source of dang.

There is an ancient cannon on the point of Ness. It was about a 3 inch calibre and had been mounted on a small cairn of stones but now reposes with its muzzle in the grass... I haven't yet been able to discover from whence it came.

A deep haze had, by now, formed over the land but I could dimly see the dark, blue-grey shape of a fishery cruiser lying in Denwick. In front of me now lay the Hall of Tankerness. A very impressive mansion as seen from the shore. It has large

battlements and a pair of cannons adorns the clearing in front of the house but one of these has also dipped its muzzle. I broke my journey to get supplies from the little shop at the Tankerness Post Office and also to send some postcards.

From here, for some distance past the Mill, I had a repeat performance of Rennibister Bay and had a long spit of land to traverse which brought me back almost to the same track to where I started along it. At 5.20, I stopped for tea at Twiness Point. Off again at 5.45 and soon passed Sebay. *Continues on facing page*



You can reply to these queries directly or via the website message board

Message 417 of 422

Subject: Thomas Kirkness and Anna Garson Family tree (msg id: 877)

By: Sharon Kirkness Date: 14/10/12 20:30:01

I have been able to research back to Thomas Kirkness born abt 1758 in Tronston, Sandwick Orkney, he married Anna (or Ann) Garson who was born abt 1762 also from Sandwick - do not have record of their marriage date , they had 4 children

Margaret (Margrat) Born 1784

Thomas Born: 1786

Robert (my ancestor) Born: 1788

Anna Born 1790

I could not locate either Thomas or Ann in the 1821 Census - would like to take the tree back further on either side and fill in details on them

Also my ancestor Peter Kirkness born 1825 (son of Robert Kirkness and Marion Moar) first immigrated to Canada around the age of 20 - he then returned to Sandwick and Married Mary Scott around 1854 - oral history has Mary Scott as a servant in Peter's father's house but we have no evidence of this - they then returned to Canada shortly after and settled in Ontario - would like any history on their story if it is out there

You can email Sharon at <skirk@hotmail.ca>

Message 415 of 422

Subject: Cooper family tree (msg id: 874)

By: Nina Date: 04/10/12 22:36:10

Hi I have just joined OFHS again after a few years away. So glad to see it's still going strong.

I am trying to find a death record for Alexander Cooper; born Egilsay 20/02/1785 He married Barbara Davie on 02/01/1817. He is my great,great,great, great grandfather. I know lots about the family but can't find anything about his death. I have even tried Scotlands People but with no luck.

I would be very grateful to anyone who could point me in the right direction to solve this issue.

Thanks in advance

Nina

You can email Nina at <rosiered61@gmail.com>

Message 413 of 422

Subject: Returning emigrants (msg id: 872)

By: William Firth Date: 01/10/12 21:00:30

Several of my ancestors/relatives seem to have gone to N America, but then returned. Are there any online sources detailing arrivals? Mainly interested in 19th Century passengers

You can email William at <willie@phyc.strath.ac.uk>

Message 410 of 422

Subject: tomima jane schollay[rendall] (msg id: 868)

By: maureen flack Date: 29/09/12 16:29:34

MAYBE two possibilities for my missing grandmother.....

1. 1891 Census.....T.J.S.R was 5years old.Lived with her grandparents ...Stewart and Jane Schollay.Their daughter Jean was missing from this census but was 15 in 1881 therefore she may have been TJS's mother.

2. 1891Census.....Another Tomima Jane this time surname Rendall.....aged 14.Grandparents....William and Ann Rendall. T.J.S's mother was Mary a widow[Schollay]

Is there any information on either of these possibilities to confirm or reject that one of these T.J.S.R went to England around 1910 please.

Email Maureen at <ianandmaureen.flack@btinternet.com>

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*As you can also download them it may be that you will no longer require a hard copy mailed to you. If not, you can opt-out on our website by going to **My Details on the Members' Page**. If enough of our members find this acceptable it will help us reduce our postal and printing costs which have recently risen alarmingly.*

If, however, you still wish your copy delivered you need do nothing.



Fred's walk continued from the opposite page

I once more had a long, hard detour up to Sebay Mill, walking conditions again being poor. Just past here, I met **Mr. Paterson** of Rysick, on his way to collect some cockles. We yarned as we walked along but soon, our ways parted. He wished me luck and set off across the estuary towards Sebay. I called at Cromarty's shop for coffee, which I had omitted to buy in Tankerness. At 7.30, I was below Ness in Toab and with my destination in sight.

Ever since approaching Sebay, I had heard staccato bursts of rapid gunfire and almost wondered if I would run into a gunfight. As I came along the point towards

Ness, the reason was disclosed. A man stood, thigh-deep in the sea, firing intermittently with an automatic rifle or a sub-machine gun, I couldn't see which. What his target was, I have no idea but I rather suspect it may have been the poor, harried seals.

I reached Dingieshowe at 8.1 Opm. Pitched my tent among the dunes and went up to **Mr. Tait's** house for water and arranged to leave my kit in his care the next day as I intended to circle Deerness without hindrance, pick up my equipment on my return and continue through to about Cornquoy in Holm by nightfall. In bed by 10.15. Very tired. Total mileage today - about 19 miles.

In our March newsletter, Fred makes his way round Deerness.

Orkney Family History Society was formed in 1997 and is run by a committee of volunteers.

It is similar to societies operating worldwide where members share a mutual interest in family history and help each other with research and, from time to time, assist in special projects concerning the countless records and subjects available to us all in finding our roots.

The main objectives are:

1 To establish a local organisation for the study, collection, analysis and sharing of information about individuals and families in Orkney.

2 To establish and maintain links with other family history groups and genealogical societies throughout the UK and overseas

3. To establish and maintain a library and other reference facilities as an information resource for members and approved subscribers.

4. To promote study projects and special interest groups to pursue approved assignments.

We are located on the upper floor of the Kirkwall Library next to the archives department and are open Mon–Fri 2pm–4.30pm and Sat 11am–4.30pm.

Our own library, though small at the moment, holds a variety of information including:

The IGI for Orkney on microfiche.

The Old Parish Records on microfilm.

The Census Returns on microfilm transcribed on to a computer database.

Family Trees.

Emigration and Debtors lists.

Letters, Articles and stories concerning Orkney and its people.

Hudson's Bay Company information.

Graveyard Surveys (long term project).

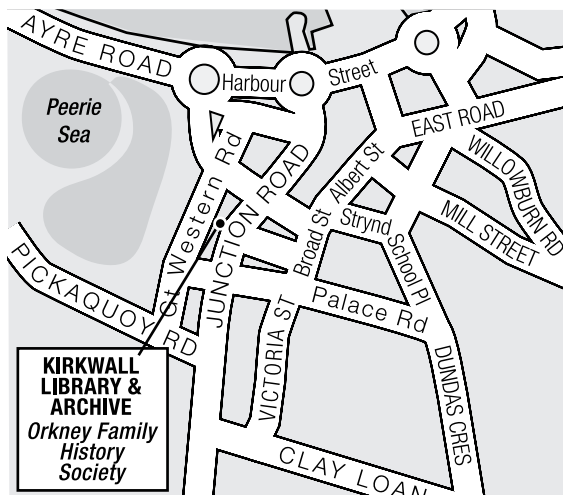
This material is available to members for 'in house' research by arrangement.

Locally we have a Members' Evening, most months, with a guest speaker.

We produce a booklet of members and interests to allow members with similar interests to correspond with each other if they wish.

We also produce a newsletter 4 times a year and are always looking for articles and photographs of interest. A stamped addressed envelope should be included if these are to be returned. Back copies of the magazine can be purchased at £1 per copy.

We can usually undertake research for members who live outwith Orkney but this is dependent on the willingness of our island members giving up their spare time to help. Any costs incurred, such as fees for certificates, will require to be reimbursed by the member.



NEW MEMBERS

Membership of the Society is through subscription and runs for a period of twelve months from date of application. Members will receive our magazine 'Sib Folk News' which is published every 3 months and the 'Members' Directory' which is renewed annually in September. This Directory lists members' contact details and their research interests.

Members will receive a password to access the members' pages on the website, details of which are shown on the Home Page.

A great deal of research can be achieved through these resources

THE PRESENT MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES AND RATES ARE

1. UK only ORDINARY

Family membership £10.00

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Spouse, Partner and Children under 18 £15.00

3. UK only SENIOR CITIZENS

Single or couple £7.00

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5. OVERSEAS - Air Mail

£15.00

DOWNLOAD THESE and SEND WITH YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

Visit www.orkneyfhs.co.uk/docs/mempack.pdf where you will find a New Membership Application form and a blank Family Tree. Please complete these, print and send with the appropriate subscription to The Treasurer at the address below.

EXISTING MEMBERS CAN RENEW ONLINE

Existing members wanting to renew their subscription can now do so online. Just Log In and use the link from My Details on the Member's Page. You can, of course, still send your subscription to the Treasurer at OFHS.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE

Overseas members, paying in their own currency, should check the exchange rate to ensure the correct amount is forwarded. Our bank will accept overseas cheques without charging commission. We regret that foreign Postal Orders are not acceptable in the UK.

Members residing in the UK may pay their subscriptions by Bankers Order and if they wish can have their subscriptions treated as Gift Aid donations. Forms are available on request.

Cheques should be made payable to:-
ORKNEY FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

and forwarded to The Treasurer

ORKNEY FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Orkney Library & Archive

44 Junction Rd. Kirkwall, Orkney, KW15 1AG

Scotland.

Telephone 01856 879207

General enquires should be addressed to the office in writing or to Treasurer George Gray (e-mail: george.gray147@btinternet.com)

General Secretary, Jackie Harrison (e-mail: jackie1963@tiscali.co.uk)

Research Secy. Enquiries should be sent to George Gray until a new research secretary is appointed

Editor, John Sinclair (e-mail: johnsin@gotadsl.co.uk)

Orkney Family History Society website— www.orkneyfhs.co.uk

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