

# e-Scotia

## Newsletter of the Anglo-Scottish FHS

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**Welcome:** to the May (Spring)

month but the weather here has



been so unspring-like. Anyway good to feel the warmth in this northern hemisphere and to see the flowers appear. By contrast with this burst of new life, it is perhaps ironic that much of the theme of this newsletter, including our main topic, is death. Our topic this month is a speaker helping us discover what we can glean from death certificates!!! Again, and as usual, we include some resources and references that you might find useful in your research, or just find useful -and interesting. Enjoy.

Editor.

### Connecting to Life through Death: (what death records can tell genealogists)

a talk by Dr Eilidh Garrett - University of Essex.

Dr Garrett is an historical demographer and based her talk to us on research that she has carried out on death patterns in Skye, a rural island community, and Kilmarnock, a large town in the west of Scotland. Much of her information was based upon national statistical accounts, but also upon wide-ranging field research that she has carried out.

She reminded us that death records come in all shapes and sizes, not only official registers, but in monuments, gravestones and industrial records. She emphasised however that it is important to treat information in any one of these sources with caution and to be prepared to compare and verify information on one with information on the other sources. The example was given of information on a gravestone in Skye that indicated that the lady had died, aged 128 years old. Reference to the death certificate however indicated the age of 118 years. Further reference to the census taken just prior to her death indicated 100 years. Which was correct? Probably none of them! Whilst information on monuments and gravestones can be very useful the information on them should not be taken as "carved in stone"

Reference was made to the tremendous value of the information contained in the 1855 death register. We are all familiar with the history of Scottish BMD Registration and the enthusiasm indicated in the amount of information collected in the first year of registration—1855. Dr Garrett informed us that in Scotland it was a legal requirement that all registers be completed in English and not in Gaelic. Consequently many of the Gaelic names that people had, and which you may know them by through family information, when translated into English, became quite different. For example Mariah was sometimes translated Sarah. Such things should be kept in mind. *(If this is an issue for you, you can "Google" some quite helpful web sites to help in the translations.—Ed.)*

Some of the research carried out by Dr Garrett was related to the availability and spread of medical resources in particular areas. Comparing and contrasting the resources in Skye and Kilmarnock the information in death registrations provided interesting reading. The definitions of "cause of death" varied according to whether a doctor in the town or a family member on the islands, registered the death. Many examples were given but a defining indicator was the number of "unknown" causes of death: in Skye - 447.5; in Kilmarnock - 2.1.

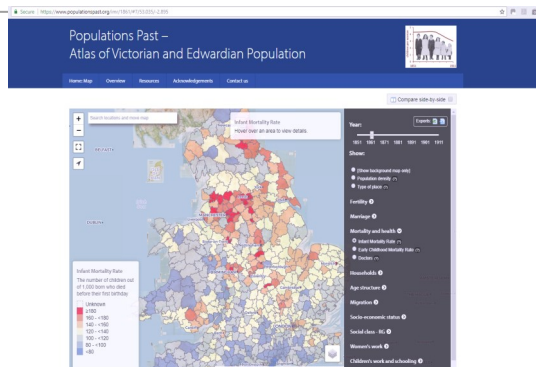
This was a fascinating talk by Dr Garrett and we hope to produce a more detailed report of it in the "*Manchester Genealogist*". A final couple of snippets though. In Skye it was normally the men who reported a death. However research showed that in the summer months it was women who reported indicating that at this time the men were away working the land or at sea. Also on Skye, the soil is so poor that it is common not to find the graveyard anywhere near the Church. Land that could be dug to 6ft had to be found for burial and this was often some distance away. So if you are looking for a Skye graveyard, be prepared to look beyond the Churchyard.



Eilidh Garrett with Committee member Yvonne Gill-Martin

## Interactive Atlas of Victorian and Edwardian Population:

at the end of her talk, Dr Garrett referred us to this web site ([www.PopulationsPast.org](http://www.PopulationsPast.org)) that has been set up by her department in conjunction with the University of Cambridge. It considers the demographic spread in Victorian and Edwardian England and Wales. (They do hope to carry out the same research in Scotland and are currently in discussion with the authorities there for access to data). Please do have a look at the site. It is full of fascinating details and is fully interactive. You can home in on particular counties and towns and discover all kinds of information about the area that your ancestor came from. Issues such as fertility and mortality rates are identified as well as legitimacy and illegitimacy rates in the area. A particularly good touch is the ability to explore all the various categories in the different census years, 1851 –1911.



The site is free to access. The site is also very new and Dr Garrett informed us that they would like feedback from users, not simply as to its value, but its ease of access and ease of use. Feedback is of course being sought from several sources, but family history groups are an obvious, and for the producers of the site, valuable resource. We were given a feedback questionnaire which I reproduce at the end of this newsletter. Once you have had a go at the site, if you could detach the questionnaire, fill it in and send it back to the University, they would be very grateful. Alternatively you could send your observations via the “contact us” button on the web site. Whatever way, the producers of resources such as this deserve our support and encouragement so please consider it.



Courtesy of Google Maps

## Newhaven Forgotten Burial Ground.

**Burials in Newhaven taken from OPR's of North Leith Parish Church and The Society of Free Fishermen Archive.**

this publication, compiled by John Stevenson and Ramsay Tubb, was brought to my attention by a Branch member who was researching the death/burial of a member of her husband's family. They knew that the burial had taken place in the Leith area but could find no clue as to where it had occurred. Persistence and help from local history staff however unearthed (if you excuse the pun) information about this graveyard and its history. The publication gives a succinct history of the graveyard from its installation in the 16th century together with a list of all the burials that occurred between 1807 and 1818. The Google picture above shows what is left of the site of the graveyard and no graves are present. However if you think you may have had ancestors in the area then it might be worth looking into these, until recently, hidden graveyards. The publication is available from **The Scottish Genealogy Society** and can be accessed via their web page.

**If you are on holiday in Scotland this summer...** just a couple of suggestions if you are in the area.

**South Ayrshire History and Family History Fair:** 2nd June at Walker Halls, Troon. For those who are looking to find their family roots in South Ayrshire, this fair offers guest speakers and stall-holders prepared to give advice. Admission £3 per talk or £10 for the whole day. Full details can be found at [southayrshirefair](http://southayrshirefair)

**The Scottish Genealogy Society:** based in Edinburgh, the Society has a whole host of events taking place during the summer months. See their web page for details ([SGS](http://SGS)).

**Caithness FHS:** in case you plan to be that bit further north, the Caithness FHS have a couple of interesting talks listed in their magazine. You can access this, and other Scottish FHS magazines on the Society web site. Have a look at them.

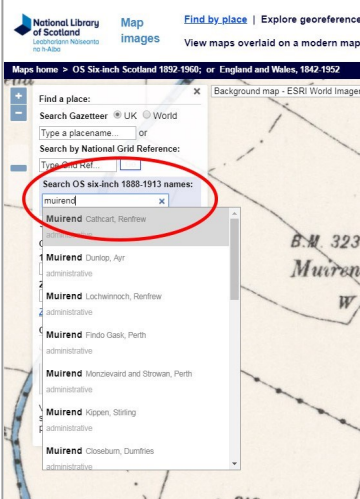
**PastMap:** By now we are all pretty familiar with the National Library of Scotland map section. A fantastic resource for exploring the whole of the British Isles. Well, a colleague from the Bolton Family History Society was good enough to forward me information about this **PastMap** web site. ([PastMap.org.uk](http://PastMap.org.uk)) The introduction says;

*"PastMap lets you view information about the archaeology, architecture and landscapes of Scotland on one single map. It is managed by **Historic Environment Scotland** (HES) along with partners from local government and archaeological curators, and holds data from a growing number of other sources. Dig deep into the history of places in Scotland and beyond to discover fascinating insights into hidden stories and histories of buildings, towns and cities."*



I have to say that I did not find it initially an easy resource to use but that might say more about my abilities than the map site. However, given the amount of information that is available on the site it is understandable that it takes a bit of getting used to. I started with somewhere I am familiar with -Dundee - and searched around this. I learned a lot about the history and development of places I thought I knew. Certainly worth a closer and persistent look.

**National Library of Scotland:** on the subject of maps, the latest Newsletter from the NLS has the following:



*"Locate more than 2 million place names from a century ago"*

*Are you interested in searching for places or other written text on detailed maps of England, Scotland and Wales from 1888-1913? This new gazetteer lets you type your chosen place name into a search box. Suggested place names are instantly presented and when you select a name you are then taken to its place on the map. This is the first time that names from the historic OS six-inch-to-the-mile maps can be searched and it is all thanks to the success of the recent GB1900 transcription project. Parish and county names have been added to make the names easier to tell apart and provide locational context. This is an excellent new resource for family and local history.*

[Search OS six-inch 1888-1913 maps in our Explore Georeferenced Maps viewer](#)

I attach this information for the sake of those of you that do not get the NLS Newsletter. Users will be familiar with the basic premise of the map, but many other features have been added. Well worth a look.



**Diary of a Voyage:** can I refer you to this latest addition to the Scottish Document Collection on the Society web site. Whilst rooting around in the Scottish section of the Society library I came across this article. It seemed too interesting to be languishing there so I retyped it (the original copy was quite poor) and had it put on the site. It is the diary of one John Hart who sailed, with his family and other emigrants, on the ship "Carlton" from Glasgow to Quebec in 1842. The journey lasted 51 days and the diary gives a fascinating insight into the conditions endured. References in the diary of other ships seen and encountered led me to explore other web sites that deal with the topic of emigration. This one particularly useful ([theshipslist.com](http://theshipslist.com)) but there are many others.

**Find My Past:** have announced the installation of new records addressing

**"Scots-Irish in North America Histories"** And Hey! They're free!!!!!! ([Click here](#))

*"Over 800 pages explore these records taken from 12 publications on the Scots-Irish in North America. Covering a variety of date ranges and regions, these publications will enable you to learn more about the history of the Ulster Scots and their descendants in the United States and Canada."*





**Scottish Women's Hospitals:** ([scottishwomenshospitals.co.uk](http://scottishwomenshospitals.co.uk)) founded in 1914, the Scottish Women's Hospitals provided doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers, cooks and orderlies to assist in the war effort. By the end of the war, 14 medical units had been created. This site details the history of the group and features an index of almost 400 personnel complete with date and place of birth, biographies and photographs



### Have you ever wondered how big your ancestors feet were?

In last month's newsletter I left you with this tantalising question. You may recall that it arose out of a workshop at the Scottish Association of Family History Societies Conference attended by one of our committee members, Yvonne Gill-Martin. The theme of the workshop was Scottish criminals and Yvonne has been good enough to satisfy our curiosity with this explanation.

*“Almost everyone has someone in their family who has been convicted of a minor or major crime. It may be that you just have not found them yet” So began the intriguing talk on Court Records by Emma Maxwell, who is a professional genealogist. (visit her web site at [www.scottishindexes.com](http://www.scottishindexes.com)) As for the title of the talk, the speaker produced a paper cut-out outline of a person's foot. It had been used as evidence in a court case! For those avid viewers of forensic science programmes, she showed that our ancestors were using some of these basic techniques centuries ago and guilty parties were brought to justice as a result.”*

A more fulsome report of this, and other talks attended by our representatives, will be appearing in the AngloScots section of *“The Manchester Genealogist”*, but there you have it. Someone's ancestor caught out by the size of his feet. You could say that he put his foot in it!!! Sorry!

**Some useful websites:** for those of you who may be a bit new to Scottish research, and know only of ScotlandsPeople, here are a few web sites that you might find helpful. Just “Google” them for access.



**ScotlandsPlaces:** useful for gathering information on place names, family names, maps, record books and taxes. It is free.

**Canmore:** formerly RCAHMS, this resource has images and information on 300,000 historic places and provides a record of Scotland's built environment, including its industrial and maritime heritage. 40% of the collection has been digitised.

**SCRAN:** (Scottish Cultural Resources Access Network) pre-dating Google, this database comprises 1/2 million items submitted from 300 contributors such as museums, galleries and library archives. It includes photographs, paintings, maps, audio clips, oral histories etc. Find it on [www.historicenvironment.scot](http://www.historicenvironment.scot) and [SCRAN](http://www.scran.ac.uk)

### Anglo Scots Branch Meeting June 16th 2018:

Our topic at this meeting will be an **“Ancestor Workshop”** where you have the opportunity to share research and to ask for advice on any issues you have come up against in your family history. From past experience these workshops are very helpful. Whilst it is always good to have a speaker, learning from one another through the nitty gritty of research is at the heart of the Branch. **This meeting starts at 2.00 p.m.** Remember that if you are visiting the area, come along.



We would love to see you.

Remember also that the **Branch Help Desk** is available from **10.30 a.m. until 12.30 p.m.** on Branch meeting days. We meet on the third floor of the Central Library and have our own allocated batch of computers. Plenty of experience around to help with those brick walls.

## www.PopulationsPast.org - Interactive Atlas of Victorian and Edwardian Population

### Website Feedback

The PopulationsPast website has grown out of the *Atlas of Victorian Fertility Decline 1851-1911* project. We hope it will be of interest as a research and teaching tool in schools and higher education institutions, to independent researchers and the general public.

We would like to know what you think of the website, and would appreciate it if you could take time to answer this survey. We will use the results of the survey to help us improve, expand and update the website, making it as interesting and useful as possible to everyone who visits it. We will use summary statistics and anonymised quotes in our end of project report to our funders, the ESRC; any identifying personal information will be removed.

**Thank you for taking part and giving us your feedback.**

1. How long did you spend using the website (please tick or circle)?

0-2 minutes

3-5 minutes

6-10 minutes

>10 minutes

2. Please indicate which age group you fall into (please tick or circle).

11-17

18-29

30-39

40-49

50-59

60-74

75+

3. What was your main reason for consulting the website (please tick or circle)?

School work

Undergraduate/  
graduate research

Academic research

Personal research

Other

.....

4. Based on your experience using the website, to what extent would you disagree or agree that...?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable/ Don't know
Information on the website is easy to find						
The website is easy to use						
I enjoyed learning about the information on the website						
I would use the website again						

Please expand/explain your responses in the box below if you would like to.

.....

.....

*Please turn over*

5. If you would use the website again, what you would use it for?

.....  
.....

6. What other website features would you like to see?

.....  
.....

7. What additional information would you like to see mapped?

.....  
.....

8. We have produced a user guide pointing out key parts of the user interface. What other resources would you find helpful?

.....  
.....

9. Please use the box below to tell us about anything you particularly liked.

.....  
.....

9. Please use the box below to tell us about anything that could be improved.

.....  
.....

### **Updates/further information**

If you would like to receive information from us in future regarding updates to the website, please provide your email address below:

.....

We will not use your contact details for any other purpose or pass them on to any third parties.

**Thank you for taking time to give us your feedback. We hope you will visit the website again.**

*Once complete, please return this survey by email to [sja60@cam.ac.uk](mailto:sja60@cam.ac.uk) or by post to:*

*Sophy Arulanantham, Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure,  
Department of Geography, University of Cambridge, Downing Place, Cambridge CB2 3EN*