



# e-Scotia

## Newsletter of the Anglo-Scottish FHS

Website: [www.angloscots.mlfs.org.uk](http://www.angloscots.mlfs.org.uk)

E-mail: [angloscots@mlfs.org.uk](mailto:angloscots@mlfs.org.uk)

Newsletter: [scotia@mlfs.org.uk](mailto:scotia@mlfs.org.uk)

**Welcome:** to the February edition of the newsletter. Whilst it seems to be getting colder, the lighter mornings are appearing as are the spring bulbs, bobbing their heads above the frosty parapet. Our main topic this month is a talk by Dr Jerome De Groot on the Double Helix Theory—DNA and Family History Research.. Dr De Groot has spoken about DNA previously at the MLFHS, but we asked him on this occasion to see if he could supply us with any insights into Scottish DNA. We also include, as usual, some useful references to various sites that might assist you with your research. Enjoy. Editor

### Double Helix Theory—with an emphasis on DNA and Family History Research.



Jerome De Groot with committee member Dave Hartley.

This talk was given by Dr Jerome De Groot, a senior lecturer in English and American Studies at the University of Manchester. Whilst not apparently related to his subject, his interest in DNA arose out of a broader interest in history and identity. Has the increasing development of DNA studies effected how we think about ourselves? Does it influence how we consider our very humanness? He has tried to link such questions to his thinking about family history.



Members await the beginning of the talk

Jerome began his talk by giving the gathering a run-down about what DNA is and what the research and testing is trying to offer. He raised some interesting questions; how does DNA research inform how we get and understand our histories? Up until now our way of thinking about our humanness has been largely formed by 19th century theories and archaeology. How does DNA research assist us in informing and understanding our past? DNA results are delivered in the form of numbers and to the extent that “humanness” can be expressed in numbers, then something like race becomes less important. More pertinently for our group perhaps was the question, how does DNA research change our understanding of our family history? Not by much if the general response is to be accepted. Reference was made to the recent revelation of “Cheddar Man” being a man of dark skin and blue eyes. It was realised that such a revelation and claim could have repercussions amongst people in general who had their own preconceptions of what Anglo-Saxon man looked like. Consequently geneticists, keen to expound their findings and theories to the public at large, are also becoming much more sensitive to the impact that such research might have on the general public and are being cautious before announcements are made.

Jerome pointed out that the web site *Ancestry* currently has the largest DNA database in the world and is seeking to ever expand it through promotional advertising. However it seems that the numbers on their DNA database far exceed the numbers registered with them for family research purposes. Yet to get best value from any DNA testing the results have to be married up with the family information held in the family history database. It appears that Ancestry are turning from being primarily a Family History Company to being a Research Company.

Jerome expressed a number of concerns that he has developed in his thinking about DNA and family history research. Amongst these was the fact that when anyone submits their DNA then they become part of an experiment and their DNA is the property of the company. (But perhaps anyone submitting DNA is very aware of this and is precisely why they are doing it.) Is DNA research commodifying our dead relatives? Is enough attention being given to the ethics of collecting DNA, with donors being passed information that was unexpected or not wanted? More importantly, issues such as race and ethnicity are about much more than just DNA and there is the risk that DNA companies are defining what “ethnicity” is. That all said, there was, amongst members who had had their DNA tested, a general view that it was worthwhile with a number of examples given of family breakthroughs arising from the DNA results.



The general view was that the topic was well covered and the addition of discussion interludes facilitated by Jerome proved fruitful, allowing members to share their various doubts, fears and positive experiences.

It is hoped that a more fulsome article about the talk will appear in the *Manchester Genealogist* in the near future, but for now, anyone interested in the **Double Helix History Project at Manchester University** can explore it here. [\(Click here\)](#)

## Emigration from Scotland to Canada:

I was sent the following article by a reader. The article was written by Ron Shaw and extracted from his book subtitled “**Lanark Society Settlers 1800-1900: A Journey from Scotland to Upper Canada and Utah**” It details the journeys of some migrants from Scotland to Canada in the early 19th Century.

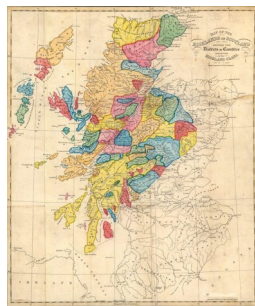
[\(Click here\)](#). The article begins by outlining the background that led many Scots in that period to take the dramatic step of emigrating with the assistance of the emigration societies sponsored by the Government of the day. Whilst it gives no personal names or details, it does give a fascinating insight into the hardships suffered by these early emigrants, initially at sea, and then overland as they travelled from Quebec, where they landed, to the military settlements at Perth and Lanark. The article is full of quotes from diaries written by the settlers and I had some fun following their route on Google Maps—a resource not available to them!! It is a good read, very informative and evokes admiration for the courage shown. I thoroughly recommend it, particularly to our Canadian members who may be unfamiliar with the story.



**Fife Asylum Records:** I refer you to an article in the February edition of the “*Who Do You Think You Are*” magazine indicating that **Ancestry** have made available on-line registers from the Fife and Kinross District Asylum that was in Cupar, Fife. The article tells us that the asylum opened in 1866 and remains open to this day under the name of “Stratheden Hospital”. The Ancestry records apparently go up to 1937 and include personal details of those admitted, the nature of their condition and discharge. I don’t know how that would fit into the normal personal privacy 100 year rule given that, presumably, some people are still alive who were patients there, but you will have to explore this for yourself. Looking at photographs of the hospital it looks like a classic Victorian building with modern modifications. Anyway, if the Kingdom of Fife is your area of interest, then have a look.



**National Library of Scotland—Clan Map:** A couple of weeks ago I was privileged to give a talk to the thriving Bolton Family History Society on Scottish Family History Research. In the course of the talk I made mention of Scottish naming patterns as an aid to research. I began that section by reference to a Scottish Clan Map, the type that can be bought in any tourist shop in Scotland that purports to show all the clan families that inhabited Scotland from north to south. I was careful to express my hesitation in considering such a source as a faithful depiction of where to find family clusters, but as a general indicator, it was not to be altogether dismissed. Sadly my talk was delivered before I received information about the latest offering from the National Library of Scotland of an 1822 map of Scotland illustrating the areas occupied by the various clans.



If you have not already done so you can view the map and the announcement about it here. [\(Click here\)](#) However to explore the map in the context of map making and the collection of maps that the Library has you are better to go to their specific web site where all the maps they have are listed chronologically. [\(Click here\)](#)

It seems that this particular map of the clans was engraved by William Home Lizars, a famous Scottish painter and engraver, born in Edinburgh in 1788 and who died there in 1859. (According to Wikipedia). What is not clear, from my somewhat cursory exploration, is where he got his information from, and that would be really interesting. What makes the map rather more authentic than most for me is that it has the decency to indicate that the “clans” were restricted to the North West and Islands of Scotland. Anyway, have a look. Really interesting.

**The French Connection:** no, not the famous—and wonderful—film starring the equally wonderful Gene Hackman, but the Huguenot connection with Scotland. It all started when I was sent this web link ([click here](#)) that relates to the National Huguenot Society. Whilst always happy to receive references that might be of use to our readers, I must admit to being rather bemused by this offering. I know about the Huguenots and their journey into and acceptance by England following persecution in their native France in the 17th century. What had that to do with Scotland? Well quite a lot as it turns out. A quick search on *Google* (can we live without it now!!!) revealed not only publications about Huguenots living in Scotland, but a rather lively message/discussion board on the topic. Now anyone with an ounce of Scots blood will be familiar with the “auld alliance” between Scotland and France with its political/military basis, but perhaps it went further than this and facilitated an influx of Huguenots? Well, not quite. An article by Robert Nash in the Australian “Journal of the Sydney Society for Scottish History” ([click here](#)) that explored the topic, suggests that most Huguenots who arrived in Scotland moved to live in Edinburgh where they set up a commune with their own Church. Nevertheless there appears to be quite a



notable connection between the Huguenots and Scotland that I had never thought of before. It just goes to show how an apparent disconnected offering of an article can lead to a whole new learning curve. Apart from the Huguenots, how else would I have discovered that in Australia there is a Sydney Society for Scottish History. Wonderful. Have a look at their website. ([here](#))

**Bits'n'Pieces:** a smorgasbord of information has come to me with various links and references and I list them here.

**ScotlandsPeople:** I mentioned last month that ScotlandsPeople had made a few additions to their site, particularly updating to 1917 the BMD's available for downloading. However their newsletter ([click here](#)) highlights some other additions that you might find useful.

**National Library of Scotland:** their newsletter for January is full of news and references. ([click here](#)) It includes reference to the January edition of “**Cairt**”, the NLS map newsletter ([click here](#)) always worth a look. I particularly found interesting a viewer for looking at the administrative parish boundaries, including their history.

**Cruden Parish Records:** if like me you aren't sure where Cruden is, it is a small fishing village about 30 miles north of Aberdeen. “Old Scottish” family history company has digitised the parish records of Cruden, and they can be viewed [here](#). Whilst “Old Scottish” is a private company, and do charge for many of their resources, they are always good to keep an eye on since they occasionally upload useful data.

**Fenwick Weavers Society:** The MLFHS is currently in discussion with the Co-operative Society, with its headquarters in Manchester, about digitising some of their records. In the midst of the discussions, reference was made to the Fenwick Weavers Society, begun in the village of Fenwick, East Ayrshire in 1761. This of course predates the Co-operative movement begun in Rochdale (1844) by a wide margin and has led many to consider Fenwick as the birthplace of the co-operative movement. The National Library of Scotland has an interesting site on the topic. ([click here](#))

**Highland Memorial Inscriptions:** information about this site was passed on to me and I offer it as something for you to explore should your research take you up into the Highlands. ([click here](#)) It lists alphabetically those buried in various graveyard in the Highland region, with the offer to have photographs taken of gravestones should you find anyone of interest. A great and kindly offer.

**Caithness:** and whilst we are up in the Highland region, to remind you that Caithness Family History Society have sent their January digitised newsletter to us and this can be viewed on the MLFHS website.

**Statistical Accounts of Scotland:** We were recently contacted by the SAS - no, not that lot! - promoting their web site and resources. They say; “The [Statistical Accounts of Scotland Online](#) provides access to digitised and fully searchable versions of both the Old Statistical Account (1791-99) and the New Statistical Account (1834-45). These uniquely rich and detailed parish reports, written by Church of Scotland ministers, detail social conditions in Scotland and are an invaluable resource for anyone interested in Scottish history.” If you are interested, have a look and see what you think.

**Edinburgh Marriage Register 1751-1800** the following information from the Scottish Record Society has been brought to our attention and it looks like a good offering if Edinburgh is your stomping ground. Within the parameters of the dates shown it lists all the entries alphabetically over some 866 pages. There is a search facility with a rather unique delivery of “finds” but it works. There is also the option of downloading the Register as a pdf which enables the records to be “scrolled” through rather than the rather tedious task of clicking from page to page. ([Click here](#))

While you are at it why not have a look at the [SRS website](#). Lots of other interesting resources to look at.

**Anglo-Scots Branch Calendar 2018:** I know it is February already but for a number of reasons we were unable to finalise our calendar for the coming year, until now that is. Those of you who are able to attend the Branch meetings will have been given copies of the calendar. For those of you more distant but who just want to know—and might be in the area on the occasion, here is the list, omitting January and February for obvious reasons!!

**Saturday 17th March 2018:** Annual Meeting followed by a sharing of Members Heirlooms

**Saturday 14th April 2018:** Everyday Life for Our Scottish Ancestors. - Jennifer Birch, Quarry Bank, Styal

**Saturday 19th May 2018** Connecting to Life Through Death; What Death Certificates can tell Genealogists, Historians, Demographers. - Dr Eilidh Garrett

**Saturday 16th June 2018** Ancestry Workshop Questions and Answers

**Saturday 21st July 2018** Trip to Elizabeth Gaskell House, Manchester. Details Later

**August 2018** No meeting

**Saturday 15th Sept 2018** Researching WW1 - Kenneth Nisbet

**Saturday 20th October 2018** Scottish Resources at Manchester Central Library - Larysa Bolton, library archivist.

**Saturday 17th November 2018** Ancestral Breakthrough - Members

**December 2018** No Meeting

All meetings at Manchester Central Library commencing at 2.00 p.m.

### Annual Branch Meeting:

To continue the theme of the above notification, our next Branch meeting is on **Saturday, 17th March at 2.00 pm.**

This is the annual Branch meeting when the Branch committee are elected/ re-elected/thrown out depending upon your frame of mind. At the moment there are seven members of the committee; Michael Couper (chairman); David Muil; Yvonne Gill-Martin; Ina Penneyston; David Hartley; Linda McInnes and Mark Campbell. All have indicated their willingness to continue serving on the committee. However if anyone thinks that they have something to offer by way of talents, opinions, expertise or whatever and would like to join the committee, then the chairman would love to hear from you.



Whilst Branch business will take up the first part of the meeting, we shall continue with members able to share the fruits of their own research by way of heirlooms. Bring something along that has informed your research and share it with us. These sharings have always been very fruitful in the past.



**Remember too that the help desk is always available, on the third floor of the library, prior to the Branch meeting from 10.30 a.m.**