

THE BREBNER/BRENNER GENEALOGY NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 2

October 2006

Welcome...

Welcome to the fall issue of the newsletter. No, you weren't dreaming... there was no spring/summer issue this year, because of job constraints, time simply wasn't available to put together that issue. For those of you who are reading this mailed subscription, don't worry... you will receive the full complement of issues mailed throughout 2007!

I have returned to the original format, which produces a much more polished version of the publication than the HTML-only version tried earlier in the year, and I think you will agree that the image quality and overall layout is improved.

In this issue...

A Cook window?	page 4
It may be in his list on information, Brenner Stays in Ontario	page 4
Island, North County, Newcastle...	
David Brenner Handman	page 16
LT-Corpsman	page 3
Editorial Comment:	
Making the Most of Your Research Data	page 13
Find Brenner, then Biography	
Photographer in India	
Genealogy photography	page 2
An excerpt from my upcoming book, available January 2007. Printed copy subscribers only.	
Groves and Gripen	page 1
Some comments on genealogy services that are in need of improvement	
John Brenner, Railway Connector	page 6
A Case Study in Research	
Recent discoveries	page 2
More links/genealogy	

Sending Images

With the cost of good consumer-level digital cameras falling, more genealogists are copying old photographs on their cameras. If you are sending me images, please don't make them too small... certificates should be at least 2000 pixels to maintain legibility. Black and white photographs should be converted to grayscale that makes them 1/3 the size of colour RGB images, and at least 1280 pixels to retain maximum detail.

What's New

After returning from my annual pilgrimage to Scotland, once again I found myself knee-deep in digital photographs and text transcriptions, whose cataloguing is only now nearing completion. This year I spent a week in the Elgin area, and was able to visit a number of graveyards in that part of the country.



Elgin Free Hall



Elgin Cathedral

One of the great advantages to travelling in Scotland in late April and early May is that the summer tourism season has yet to begin. Consequently, the country roads were often deserted, making for leisurely driving in weather that was surprisingly pleasant. On the other hand, traffic in Aberdeen has a world class reputation... and I don't mean that as a compliment! Driving into downtown from the airport at rush-hour is a nightmare!

Please check out my [genealogy pages](#) for updates on previously visited graveyards as well as new photographs of graveyards in Morpeth.

<http://www.brenner.com/morpeth.html>

During my stay in Elgin, I visited the Murray Local Heritage Service (Great Lodge) in its new home, and while many of the books had yet to be unpacked from the recent move, I uncovered quite a bit of new material. They have a very good web-site that allows searching their newspaper collection of BMDs from Elgin and Banffshire from the comfort of your own home... I wish I had seen this before my visit.

<http://www.murray.gov.uk/LocalHeritage/index.html>

Brenner/Brenner Related Reading

Rita Cook has written an interesting book on her ship-building Cook ancestors from Liverpool. They had the unfortunate fate to fall under the spell of one man **James Brenner**, who married **Ann Cook** in 1852. Proving to be a lawyer, James was at best a tailor in Painsborough, and at worst a career criminal.

While **Hitt's** book deals in more detail with the Cook branch of her family, the chapter of their unfortunate involvement with one-legged **James Brenner** is a story of a crime that is as current today as it was 150 years ago.

"If Ye Dream Spies Ye'll Never Find One"

The story of **John Cook** is available from Amazon and other internet book sites for £7.99



ISBN 1-844-26-358-8

Travel Tips

Be sure to check out the **First Scottish** promotions. I was able to travel return to any part of Scotland for only £14 in the Club 50 promotion. Good during May and June this year, and in effect from October 23 to December 8, again, it's worth a look for travelers of that age visiting Scotland. I was more than a little disappointed that no-one asked for proof of my age... it seems like yesterday that I was asked if I was old enough to be drinking! Temper, fight.

Based on gasoline and parking in Edinburgh, the trip by rental car from Aberdeen would have taken longer, been far more expensive, and certainly more stressful.

Some time arrival and departure restrictions apply; you can't arrive or be leaving before 1000, or if you plan to visit the NHS book about for a visit. Leaving after 1800 is not a problem, there are a number of great pubs near Waverley station!

Thanks to **Martin Alexander** for helping fix my broken camera!

brenner.com

Brenner/Brenner Genealogy Newsletter Page 4

Recent Discoveries

During the past six months, progress has been made on a number of the completed genealogies. Using the 1851 census (available at [www.familysearch.org.uk](http://www.familysearch.org)) I have been able to connect Banchoory miller James Brebner to one of the Davis group.

Genealogy - <http://www.brebner.com/uploads/breb1893.pdf>

A branch of the Glenmaack Brebner family was found in Edinburgh, and again linked using relationships of visiting children with their uncle in 1851.

Genealogy - <http://www.brebner.com/uploads/breb1223.pdf>

Thomas Bremner, goldsmith in London, was connected to the Portray Brebner/Bremner families whose descendants live throughout North America, and that entire family genealogy has been updated by contributions by Lee Brebner in Oakville, ON and Anne Davies in London, England.

Anne kindly supplied a copy of a sampler made by Mary (Stimpson) Bremner (below), as well as copies of a family bible fly-leaf and letters back to the family in Portray.



Lee loaned me a wonderful photo album from the early 1900s that I have fully digitised. Some images appear at the right.



Above left is one of the photographs from the album, and probably the Brebner house on Chapel Street, Portray. At right is an image taken during my trip this spring. Aside from the addition of the gable-end windows and staves, I think it's the same building.



Above, Brebner family in Sarkis (Pezdola's), 1900-20. Three youngest boys are (probably) George Alexander Brebner (seated, left front), Walter Bruce Brebner (seated, front right) and John Atkinson Brebner (on top, left middle). Recent additions to the photo database are at <http://www.brebner.com/photos/da.html>

The Brebner family group in the Alva, ST1 area has now been updated. Graham Bremner pointed out that the two family genealogies that I had for a Duncan Bremner, were in fact a single large family group with Duncan (1797-1870) having children first by Jean Morrison, then by Christina Duns. During my visit to Edinburgh in May, I updated some of the more recent BMD data for this family.

Genealogy - <http://www.brebner.com/uploads/breb1802.pdf>

One of the Tarkent/Coxall Brebner families features in an article in this issue beginning on page 6. Other branches of that family have been uncovered through the ongoing accumulation of marriage, death certificates and census records. These are especially valuable in the period 1855-1880 when marriage information shows parents of persons not shown in the 1851 censusing indexes.

Genealogy - <http://www.brebner.com/uploads/breb0626.pdf>



Editorial Comment

Make the Most of Your Research Dollar!



Every time I travel for genealogy research, I can't help but tally up the cost of that trip versus the value for money in the amount of new information.

While each trip, especially in Scotland, is always a welcome break from desk-related research, the costs of such a trip are not always considered as a part of that research. More about those costs later.

During my essential visits to the Aberdeen and North East Family History Society (ANEFHS) I am always amazed at the numbers of expatriate Scots spending time looking at the most basic of information that is readily available on-line. Maximize your research time by doing as much of this basic research before travelling. For example, all the Scottish census data from 1841 through 1991 is available on scotlandpeople.org.uk. The same applies to much of the birth, marriage and death (BMD) data where certificates can be downloaded in the convenience of your own home.

When in Scotland, or in any genealogical archive worldwide, spend your time looking at information you can't get at home. Get index information before you travel, then in the case of the ANEFHS, verify that data by looking at the actual parish registers. These have a wealth of information on locations and occupations that are not available online either at scotlandpeople.org.uk or the HRI.

When in Edinburgh, look at certificates and information that isn't available on their web-site. Get information on births after 1908, marriages after 1930 and deaths after 1958. These are all available to the present day in the computer rooms. (Reserve a place in advance if you plan to visit in the busy summer season).

Visit archives and libraries whose printed collections have not yet been digitized. Aside from the thrill of looking at details of an ancestor's life in an original document, and perhaps seeing an actual signature, the internet still has a long way to go before many of the more obscure holdings will be freely available.



National Archives of Scotland



Aberdeen Central Library

Do search on the internet regularly for updates on sites that may hold information of interest. New groups, such as www.genealogy.beatnik.com, www.genealogy.computing.com and www.genealogy.methods.com are among those that I read at least weekly. It's likely that someone will quickly post information of any new resource that benefits the genealogy community.

brebner.com

Use your limited travel time to research areas that you can't do at home. With the advent of high-quality digital cameras, there's no excuse for not going wild and taking photographs of all the locations where your ancestors lived, their graveyards (see the *emerged article on some tips and techniques for taking better genealogy photos elsewhere in this issue*), but most of all, any photographs, paintings or artifacts that relatives may have. These things have a way of disappearing after an aged relative dies. Old photographs are a great trigger for stories and anecdotes relating to your family that you might never otherwise hear about.

Returning to the fixed costs of travelling, the example of 15 days in Scotland from Canada, including airfare, car rental, modest accommodations, fuel costs and meals is about \$4800 CAD. That works out to about \$320 CAD per day, exclusive of any salary you might consider paying yourself for your time.

While I doubt that most people would pay in excess of \$500-CAD per-day for research (please feel free to prove me wrong), that figure does give you an idea of what the real costs of research on location might be.

But I doubt that anyone on such a working holiday would be on the job for the full 15 day period! After all, it is a holiday! But you can combine business and pleasure very easily. When you visit some of those out-of-the-way locations that your farming ancestors called home, make a point of having lunch or a couple of pints in the local pub. If you are there before the tourist season, or on a week-day, chances are the owner/bar tender will be happy to talk about the pub, the area and any notable events or persons that lived there.



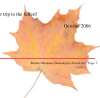
Stonewarrior Aberdeen

Snaking up this first-hand information, and meeting new people is one of the greatest joys of doing research on location. The time you take on such a working holiday can't be measured in dollars, for it is often these chance encounters that produce unexpected benefits in your research, in addition to providing the greatest personal satisfaction.

Above all, enjoy your trip to the island!

John A. Brebner

October 2006



Bremner Strays in Eastern Ontario

During my research into the many Bremner families that emigrated to Upper Canada and settled in Eastern Ontario, I have come across several "unlinked" individuals, whose ancestry has yet to be definitively traced.

Isabella Bremner (21 FEB 1833, Scotland - 13 JUL 1902, Marysville, ON) married **Joseph Knapp**. Their first (of just four) nine children, Mary, was born in North Gower in 1854, although the family settled in Merrickville a few years later.

A visit to the Merrickville Union Cemetery reveals a number of **Knapp** descendants, with family still living in that area today.

Genealogy... <http://www.bremner.com/uploads/bec54593.pdf>

Margaret Bremner (1831-1877, Palmerston Township) married **Henry Dunham** and had at least four children. Interestingly, their first child, **James**, was born in North Gower in 1847, although the family subsequently lived in near Orpugh in Palmerston Township (Frontenac County).

Genealogy... <http://www.bremner.com/uploads/bm28852.pdf>

And as it happens, another **Bremner** family was also in Manitowick about the same time. **John Bremner** (c. 1834 - 1815) married **Christina Findlay** in Hull, Quebec (just across the river from Ottawa, and about 20 miles north of Manitowick). They had a number of children, including **Mary Jane**, born 1865, and **Helen**, born 1864, both in Manitowick.

Genealogy... <http://www.bremner.com/uploads/bm97333.pdf>

And there's another **John Bremner**, a stray buried in Ottawa's Beechwood Cemetery (c. 1842 - 1899). I have no details of this man's life.

Finally, a further group of **Bremners** in the area, who may well be related to **Margaret** and **Isabella** above. **Alexander Bremner** (c. 1835 in Scotland - 1820), son of **James Bremner** and **Jessie Muir**, married **Margaret Mann** and had eight children. The family lived in Merrickville for at least four years from 1859 to 1863. James had a brother, **Robert**, born about 1841 in Scotland. After spending some time in Lynn and Brockville along the St. Lawrence River, the family moved west to Muskoka by 1881.

Genealogy... <http://www.bremner.com/uploads/bm28833.pdf>

See map at right for locations of these groups. Note that by 1832 the Rideau Canal connected Ottawa, Manitowick, Merrickville and Kingston; the St. Lawrence River connected Kingston with Brockville and Montreal and the Atlantic Ocean.

Are any of these separate groups related? If you have any further information or speculation, please drop me a line at:

john.bremner@bremner.com

A Cash Windfall Waiting for You?

Many countries have national banks and repositories that hold unclaimed estate monies.

The Bank of Canada, for example, has over 20 **Bremner/Bremers** accounts on file, including over **\$1,100 CAD from Agnes Berhmer**, left in her Kingston, Ontario account almost 30 years ago.

Agnes was the daughter of **John Berhmer** and **Mervy Ann McFarr** (and from Agawville, Ontario).



Bank of Canada, Ottawa

Genealogy... <http://www.bremner.com/uploads/bec9694.pdf>

If you are related to **Walker N. Bremner** (1916-1979), son of **John Bremner** and **Mary Hacker** from Brockville, Ontario, there is **\$1,880 CAD** waiting for you.

Genealogy... <http://www.bremner.com/uploads/bm9432.pdf>

Note that these dormant account balances do not accrue interest (except to the government!) so there is no advantage in waiting!

Bank of Canada Unclaimed Accounts search page:

http://schreww.bank-banque-canada.ca/scripts/search_english.cfm

A useful page linking to many other resources:

<http://www.randash.net/OtherResources.aspx>



Grouses and Grips

No newsletter would be complete without my list of complaints about genealogy services.

This issue is no exception. While I am generally a big fan of the material provided on ancestry.com, the 1841 Scottish Census leaves a lot to be desired. Aside from the transcriptions being at a mere 10% of accuracy, the fact that each page is not provided in census order, but rather in surname, forename alphabetical order makes deciphering family relationships impossible. If there were an actual jpg image to verify the transcriptions against, that would help. A suggestion that the transcribed pages be presented in the order that they appear in the actual census was eventually met with a comment that the idea would be passed on to the programming department. In the meantime, I recommend the ProCan transcription of that 1841 census as a better alternative. At this writing, Aberdeenshire and Rincardineshire are complete. A recent search comparing both indexes proved ProCan the winner both in accuracy and availability.

On a positive note, the ancestry.com Ontario BMD transcriptions and verification images are great for anyone researching Canadian relatives. While the quality of the original records is somewhat variable, the ability to look at the actual pages goes a long way in circumventing problems incurred with poor indexing.

Last year I subscribed to [geneanet.com](http://www.geneanet.com). I have submitted only my own family tree, and have had mixed results. While no one has contacted me with any of my own Debrecen ancestry, I have had a number of queries about other connections in the family. I have two comments about this service. The first is the so-called "Hot Matches" mailings that send periodic e-mails with "possible" links to family members in an individual's tree. That is based solely on name and approximate birth date. Unfortunately, that includes everyone, worldwide, that fits those criteria, with the result that at least 98% of the e-mail responses are for people to whom I'm not even remotely related.

I should however count my blessings that I don't have an assortment of Smiths and Browns in my family!

My second gripe about [geneanet.com](http://www.geneanet.com) is the ridiculously small e-mail reply box provided on their pages. It's barely 20 characters in width, about half the width of this newsletter column. That doesn't make for easy correspondence, especially if you need to enter a lengthy URL. When will their web-designers add user-friendliness to that interface? I notice that their annoying commercial messages seem to have plenty of space!

And finally, a comment about the National Library and Archives (LAC) here in Ottawa. For some months, they had pioneered free wireless access from within the building for users with laptops. A great idea...but the hand of government control has now intruded, and that access, while still free, requires that a password be entered, and sent back to a cellphone for confirmation before activating the service. While I think that discouraging the use of cellphones in libraries is in itself a very poorly thought-out idea, the idea that a service provided using my tax dollars requires me to have a cellphone so that I can use it is more than galling!



Library and Archives of Canada Ottawa

An e-mail to the Library brought the response that if I came by during regular business hours, Monday to Friday, I would be provided with a password good for the week. Unfortunately, I work during the week, and that's not an option. All public users in the LAC need to complete an annual form for a pass, that in addition to requiring address and personal information, also gives a user number. Why not use this as a Wi-Fi access password?

Accessibility is one of the most important issues facing any taxpayer-funded organization today, and while the Library and Archives of Canada has one of the most extensive opening hours of any national repository worldwide, and for that we should be thankful, their current policy on wireless access gets a thumbs down from this genealogist.

Sending Information

Recently I was asked in an e-mail to provide a genealogy in *gedcom* format so that it could be included more readily into that person's genealogy.

For those of you who have been involved in genealogy for any time, that's the equivalent of giving (not even selling!) your first-born into an unpredictable and probably unpleasant life!

All the information that I research is freely available both in the searchable BMD and census databases, as well as the compiled genealogies in *ged* format.

Unless you are a regular contributor, I won't send you a *gedcom* file. Here's why.

First of all, the information in my compilations is an on-going process. It may not change the month, or it may change overnight as new information becomes available.

I continue to see incorrect genealogies on the internet, based on *gedcoms* that may have been submitted once a decade ago. That's something that I refuse to do on my web-site.

When I receive contributions, the first stage is to index that information, and verify it against what I already have. I would never take an already-compiled *gedcom* and simply append that information into an existing file...there are just too many inconsistencies that must be cross-checked and verified before it becomes part of my existing collection. For those of you who send information, yes, I really do appreciate all of the data, but before I include that information, I want to verify each entry. As you might imagine, that takes time.

Data is not subject to copyright, but the presentation is. I'm happy to provide all my information to any interested researcher, but in the format you see on the web-site. And I'd be more than happy to resolve credit for any of the "finds" you come across within these pages!



John Brebner, Railway Contractor

One of the more interesting challenges in family history is tracking down illegitimate children of fathers whose liaisons extended outside the confines of their marriage(s). Prior to Scottish statutory records in 1855, these births are often difficult to ascertain. One method is to verify father's occupations from the children's subsequent marriage or death certificates post-1855, and it is the finding of these fathers (and subsequent lines) through a combination of name, occupation and location that is the focus of this short article.

Obviously, either the father's name or occupation must be relatively uncommon, and the area in which these births occurred must fit the timeline of the father's life.

Such is the case with **John Brebner**, Railway Contractor from Turland and Cull. One of the great joys in researching family history is mounding down the frequent facts along the information trail, and I regret only that it is impossible to follow up all of those new avenues at this time. That is probably the reason that my study of one's genealogy is never complete... and perhaps the most addictive reason to continue pursuing information whenever it might lead.

Born in 1817 in Turland to farmer **Charles Brebner** and **Isabella Simpson**, **John** was the second of at least 12 children.

On October 10th, 1838, he married **Christian Esdemonst** in Fergus, 35 year old daughter of **John Esdemonst** and **Helen Irvine**. They had three children. **John** born 1839 in Abeyon, **Alexander**, born 1840 and **Christian**, born about 1842. In October of 1842, his wife **Christian** died. By 1851 **John** had moved to Aberdeen to a fashionable house at 22 Bon Accord Terrace.



*(The first "fork in the trail" comes in the form of one done neighbour at 24/26 Bon Accord Terrace in 1950s Aberdeen. **David Bruce Allan Bremner**, son of **William Bremner** and **Jane Mary Laing** and born in Dominica, West Indies, he and his family may have no other connection to this story but their proximity connection to the **John Brebner** in this narrative...but one never knows!)*

Genealogy... <http://www.brebner.com/gp/each/bre18070.pdf>

brebner.com

John married again, to **Margaret Nelson** on 22nd July 1852, and by this union, another three children were born: **David Nelson Brebner**, 1852; **Robert Charles Brebner**, 1854 and **Charles Simpson Brebner**, 1856. **John** died at Bakersworth House, Auchincloss in January of 1857.

His son **David's** premature death in 1860 reveals that **John** had left the bulk of his estate to be divided six ways, among his lawful children.

During my researches into the **Brebner/Bremner** families, I have come across three other possible illegitimate children to **John Brebner**. The most likely is **James Brebner**, born October 1st, 1838 in Fergus. His father is shown as **John Brebner**, mother **Agnes Hay**. That **James** is found at the home of **Charles Brebner** and **Isabella Simpson** in Turland, a couple who is coincidentally the father of **John**, the railway contractor.

Checking the marriage records, indexed on father's occupation, turned up other children based on a father being **John Brebner/Bremner** and also a railway contractor... not a common combination.

Three additional possibilities were:

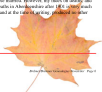
Mary Bremner was born about 1849 in Auchincloss to **John Bremner**, Railway Contractor and female servant **Sarah Henderson**. She married **Alexander Lipp**, a farm servant from Rhyie, in 1867 in Auchincloss.

Isabella Bremner was born in Old Aberdeen about 1848, to railway contractor **John Bremner** and provision dealer **Jane Thomson**. She married **Alexander Edmund** in Aberdeen in 1867.

These only note incidences where the father's name and occupation were given on a marriage's certificate in Scotland, and I have not, by any means indexed all Aberdeenshire marriages for that time. There may well be more.

What becomes obvious from the chart following is that during the ten year period from **John's** first wife's death, and his second marriage, there appear to be only two illegitimate children. Could there be more? One might expect other liaisons between 1842 and 1848 as well as between 1849 and 1852.

How could these be found? One could look at deaths with the same criteria ("John" and "Railway Contractor"). This would produce all persons, not just those married. However, my index on deaths and especially female deaths in Aberdeenshire after 1850 is only much a work in progress, and at the time of writing, produced no other matches.



A search of 30 of the central Aberdeenshire parishes (from Forgue in the north-west, to Dyce in the south for marriages to 1990) turned up no additional possibilities, but it is very possible that some of those potential illegitimate children did not marry, died young, moved out of the area, or emigrated from the country entirely. And bear in mind that as many as 40% of births went unrecorded prior to 1855, a percentage that was probably much higher for illegitimate births. Many of the children whose births or christenings might have been recorded may have done so under their mother's name only. The Kirk Session records might provide more information, but that will have to wait until my next visit to Edinburgh.

Let's look at the timeline of all these births/marriage/deaths, assuming that the **John Brebner/Bremner** involved is the same man:

James Brebner	06 OCT 1838	Forgue (John Brebner/Agnes Ray)
	20 OCT 1838	John marries Christiana Endemont in Forgue
John Brebner	c 1838-1839	(John Brebner/Christiana Endemont)
Alexander Brebner	c OCT 1840	(John Brebner/Christiana Endemont)
	c 1842	John with brother Alexander in Cringlany, Forgue
Christiana Brebner	c 1842	(John Brebner/Christiana Endemont)
	08 OCT 1842	Christiana Endemont dies in Aberdeen
Isabella Bremner	abt 1848	Old Aberdeen (John Bremner/Jane Thomson)
Mary Bremner	abt 1849	Auchincloir (John Bremner/Sarah Henderson)
	22 JUL 1852	John marries Margaret Dickson in Aberdeen
David D. Brebner	23 DEC 1852	Aberdeen (John Brebner/Margaret Dickson)
Robert C. Brebner	28 JUL 1854	Aberdeen (John Brebner/Margaret Dickson)
Charles S. Brebner	28 FEB 1856	Aberdeen (John Brebner/Margaret Dickson)
	02 JAN 1857	John Brebner dies at Badereworth House, Auchincloir, leaves residual estate to be divided 6 ways among lawful children...
	23 DEC 1860	David Dickson Brebner dies, eldest son of second marriage
	16 APR 1869	Elizabeth Melister, wife of David Dickson dies in Luncheon Kirk
	25 MAY 1869	Margaret Dickson , John's second wife applies for Poor Relief, supported by David Dickson , her reputed father, recently widowed.

John died of spotted typhus at Badereworth House (now a nursing home) in Auchincloir. **John** maintained an Aberdeen home at 23 Broomfield Terrace, but I suspect that his presence at Badereworth, 2 miles SSE of Kirkcaldy of Auchincloir, and 3 miles NNE of Bathferry Station, would have been due to his involvement with railway building. That makes sense as Bathferryman was on the *Bang, MacDuff and Turriff Junction Railway (Aberdeen & Turriff Railway)*, in which John had shares and was under construction at that time.

It would be interesting to find out who owned that property in 1857, and if **John** was staying there as a friend or a lodger at that time.

His brother **Alexander**, who seems to have been the closest of his siblings, and also known in his railway projects, was informant at his death... he also lived in Aberdeen at the time, and he too seems to have had a cavalier attitude to morality. He ran off of church months after his first wife **Agnes Ross** died in 1854, he subsequently married her sister **Mary** in 1860, an act for which the church made him "analogous discipline" for twelve months.

John Brebner's will and inventory makes for interesting reading.



According to that inventory, some £13,894 was in an account at the British Linen Bank in Aberdeen.

John had lost his father 1315, this was written down to £50 an account of his (father's) circumstances. Another £54 was owed by brother **Robert**, a minister in Garscadden, Dorby. One can only imagine what he thought of older brothers **John** and **Alexander's** philanthropy! Brother **Alexander Brebner** (1823-1883) also owed some £200; and he worked for **John** as Overseer of Railway Works in the business. The two brothers were close, they were together in the 1841 census at Cringlany, Forgue. And that places **John** in the right neighbourhood in father (possibly) the first of his illegitimate children, **James Brebner**.

But monies owed to him by his railway partnerships made the above sums pale in comparison, although financial trouble seems to have been on the way at the time of his death. Nonetheless, he left an estate of over £40,000 on paper, a huge sum by the standards of the day.

The inventory of his son **David** in 1860 reveals more about the value of those shares. **David's** railway work was under £4,000; that was one sixth part of **John's** estate specified in his will as being "retained for the use of his children". That would suggest that only his legitimate children by his two marriages were to be looked after.

But that total of £24,000 was less than half of the value stated on John's inventory of 1857, only three years earlier. What happened to the other £24,000?

Perhaps the answer can be found in the Poor Relief Register for his widow Margaret Dickson.

(These and other Poor Relief registers for Aberdeen are available for viewing at the Aberdeen City Archives, Dunbar Street location. The Aberdeen and North East Scotland Family History Society maintains an index of these registers at their King Street location.)

28			
GENERAL REGISTER OF POOR BELONGING TO			
Name <i>Margaret Dickson or Dickson</i>			
1. Residence	<i>14th Belshamph</i>	2. Name of Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
3. Age	<i>23 years</i>	4. Name of Institution	<i>Belshamph Poor</i>
5. Date of Birth of Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>2 February 1849</i>	6. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph Poorhouse, Belshamph, Aberdeen</i>
7. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	8. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
9. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	10. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
11. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	12. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
13. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	14. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
15. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	16. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
17. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	18. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
19. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	20. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
21. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	22. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
23. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	24. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
25. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	26. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
27. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	28. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
29. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	30. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
31. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	32. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
33. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	34. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
35. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	36. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
37. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	38. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
39. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	40. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
41. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	42. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
43. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	44. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
45. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	46. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
47. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	48. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
49. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	50. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
51. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	52. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
53. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	54. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
55. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	56. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
57. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	58. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
59. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	60. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
61. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	62. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
63. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	64. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
65. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	66. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
67. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	68. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
69. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	70. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
71. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	72. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
73. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	74. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
75. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	76. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
77. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	78. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
79. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	80. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
81. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	82. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
83. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	84. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
85. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	86. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
87. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	88. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
89. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	90. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
91. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	92. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
93. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	94. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
95. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	96. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
97. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	98. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>
99. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>	100. Name and Address of the Poorhouse or Workhouse	<i>Belshamph</i>

It is curious that **Margaret Dickson**, his second wife did not fare well – amid all of this wealth. She applied the Poor Relief in Caith (based on the parish of her husband's birth) while living in Edinburgh in 1869, claiming she had nothing. According to their marriage contract **Margaret** was to receive 126 pounds annually, payable in two installments. That would, of-course, be void if **Margaret** entered into a second marriage, but according to her death certificate in 1898, only **John** is mentioned. There were other problems with the estate that may have precluded her receiving this stipend, as revealed in the Poor Relief file shown on the previous page.

And it's worth noting that **David Dickson** may have been in a susceptible state as to be easily persuaded to help **Margaret**...his wife **Elizabeth Webster** had just died in April, 1859. **David** died in 1878...and it would be interesting to look at his will to see if the left any of his estate to the illegitimate **Margaret**.

(Details of Dickson gravestone in Laurenschirk Cemetery at right)

New **Margaret's** reputed father **David Dickson** was in his own right a wealthy man. In the 1861 census he farmed 850 acres at Frogfold House in Laurenschirk. He married **Elizabeth Webster** in 1827, and had (at least) four children, including another **Margaret Dickson** in 1824. Inasmuch as his own parents were **Patrick Dickson** and **Isabel Steele**, one has to wonder what made him come another along her **Margaret** (I believe **Elizabeth Webster's** parents were **Peter Webster** and **Elizabeth Martin**).

(An interesting coincidence occurs here, is that next to the large red granite gravestone for the **Dickson** family is a smaller stone for **Alexander Brebner** and **Isabel Barclay**, who married at Kilmorye, Laurencekirk. (See circled image below.) **Alexander** was the son of **John Brebner** and **Jane Hunter**, born about 1760, possibly in Durrus...but I wonder if they may have come from Tarduland and were related to **John Brebner's** family. That will have to wait for another time!)



What of **Margaret's** remaining few sons? According to the Poor Relief file, they were both at school, and being supported by their brother of **John's** first marriage. The record does not specify if this was **John** or **Alexander**, but I suspect the latter...the reason being that **John's** surviving son **Robert** (1824-1830) named his first son **Alexander**, and that **Alexander** had no children of his own.



In 1864 they boarded with **Christina Lees** at 18 Cameron Street in Broomhaney; in 1871 they were still together boarding with **Margaret Brown** at 6 Strawberry Bank, Aberdeen. **Charles** died in Liverpool in 1879, and brother **Robert** was living with his new wife at her mother-in-law's **Elizabeth Walker (Rock)** in Edinburgh in 1881. **Robert** was the only child remaining from **John Brebner's** union with **Margaret Dickson**.

And what about the children of the first marriage to **Christina Endonmont**? I have yet to locate eldest son **John** after the 1841 census. Did he emigrate to North America as did so many of the Tarduland Brebner family? Second son **Alexander** (1840-1913) was a surgeon-Lieutenant, Calcutta in the army, and remained unmarried, living in Fife. He was the recipient of the bulk of his grandfather **Charles Brebner's** small estate in 1876. His younger sister **Christina** (1842-1912) married shipowner **James Miller** in Peterhead in 1866, and had at least ten children in Newport, Fife.

But what interests me here are the possibilities of yet other illegitimate children. Certainly **John's** money and involvement with the main railway and branch lines throughout central Aberdeenshire would have given him ample opportunity for meeting potential partners. He and his brother would have been actively looking for men to build the railway amidst the late labours of the time.





Margaret Dickson died at childbirth of the first in 1888, and is buried with her husband and children in Peelfield Cemetery, Aberdeen. The informant at her death was her sister, Sarah Middleton, daughter of William Middleton and Mary Strachan, Margaret's mother.

Looking at the monument (photo above) one can only speculate as to the purpose of the 19 circular granite faces that remain uncarved. Were they to have borne the names of other children?

At the time of his death, John was involved with the *King's, Marchoff and Turriff Junction Railway*, as well as a section of the *Great North of Scotland Railway (GNSR)*. John also had shares in the *Aberdeen Valley Railway* and the *Freemans and Aberdeen Junction Railway*.

The history of railway building in Scotland is a story of many small companies, many small investors and many dreams of fabulous wealth that this new mode of transportation would bring. In 1850 the railway reached north from London to Aberdeen's Ferryhill Station. Then began a gold-rush like investment into rail lines throughout the north-east.

The GNSR was formed in 1845, and a number of details of early operations and branch lines throughout the north-east of Scotland can be found on their website <<http://www.gnsr.org.uk/>>. Of these branch lines, those built from 1845 to 1857 (the year of John's death) are of most interest.

The *Freemans and Aberdeen Junction Railway* opened in August 1858, and that line is still in operation, with stations at Keith, Elgin, Forres and Nairn. In 1862 the company merged with the Perth Junction Railway to become the *Highland Railway*, with passenger trains now operated by *First ScotRail*.

John Brebner was amongst the first to see the potential for making money in these new ventures, but as with many other bubbles, this too was short-lived. While his shares in his railway stocks were worth £40,000 at his death in 1857, trouble was on that investment horizon.



Above: Edinburgh's Waverley Station, first opened in 1846.

But the story on John Brebner is far from complete. Has it been conclusively proven that all three children cited in this article and conserved outside of wedlock in Forgan, Auchindole and Aberdeen are in fact the children of John Brebner, Railway Constructor?

Perhaps not... but I believe that the information collected to date is a convincing start in making those connections. How are their parentage and subsequent connections to the Turriff Brebner families to be ascertained without any doubt? That's the million dollar question, and unless a descendant from one of these lines comes forward with perhaps an heirloom watch, an inherited bible, letters from the family, or other concrete proof that can link them to that family, then we will probably never know with certainty that their genealogies are indeed connected.

During my researches into this and other branches of the *Brebner/Bremer* families, I have been very fortunate to make contact through the internet with many descendants researching the many families, and I am fully confident that the coming years will provide yet more information, and answer some of the difficult questions that have been posed.

Finally, since looking at this method of ascertaining, stay tuned, through name/occupation and finding incidents of failure in the north-east of Scotland, I have found other instances of illegitimate births in other *Brebner/Bremer* families that allows connection to the established groups. As they used to say, stay tuned!



The new 8 pages of this quarter's newsletter, occupying the upcoming publication *"The Complete Guide to Genealogical Photography"*, are available only to hard-copy subscribers of *The Brebner/Bremner Genealogy Newsletter*.

The 16 page full-colour printed version of the newsletter gives the reader high resolution images and graphics, and would be a welcome addition to any genealogist's coffee table!

For those family members without computer access, the printed newsletter provides an ideal way for them to stay abreast of the latest developments in the Brebner/Bremner research.

Order now... the next issue is currently under development and will be mailed in January 2009.



THE BREBNER/BRENNER GENEALOGY NEWSLETTER

Subscription Form:

Subscribe to the newsletter by email. Now published quarterly, each annual subscription includes four copies of the newsletter mailed to the subscriber.

Annual subscription (including postage): Within Canada: \$25.00 CAD
 United States: \$25.00 USD
 International: £15.00 GBP, \$34.00 AUD, \$55.00 NZD

Please e-mail newsletter@bnebner.com for rates in other currencies or additional details.

Name/Title: _____
 (please print)
 Surname: _____
 Address 1: _____
 Address 2: _____
 Town/City: _____
 Province/State: _____
 Postal Code: _____
 Country: _____
 Payment method: _____

Please complete the details at left and send the completed form to:

John A. Brebner
 PO-46-000 Riverside Drive
 Ottawa, ON K2G 4A7
 CANADA

Cheques and money orders in any currency are acceptable.

Please make payable to John A. Brebner

Disclaimer: The use of electronic verification online membership services would result in more frequent meetings. Any additional contributions that are able to make will be entered into our research records from the Brebner/Bremner genealogy.

Thank you for helping continue the research into the genealogy of the Brebner/Bremner families worldwide.

bnebner.com

Fred Bremner, Photographer

1863-1940

Fred Bremner, born 1863 in Aberdeen, married to photographer **George Bremner** and first wife **Jane Johnson**, was one of eight children. In 1881 Fred worked in his father's photographic business at 9 Bridge Street in Banff, but in 1883 he decided to seek his fortune in India, where he went to work for his brother-in-law **Garth Wallace Laurie** (husband of Fred's eldest sister **Emily**, she died in London in 1888).



The Square, Aberdeen, Scotland, 2001

In 1890, Fred opened his own studio in Ranchi, followed by other studios in Quetta, Baluchistan, Lahore and Rawalpindi. One aspect of Fred's business was selling postcards, a popular source of revenue for photographers of the time.

After travelling back to Scotland briefly in 1902, he married again (he was supposedly first married to **Sollie Booth**, but I have yet to find details of this union) to **Emily Anton**, daughter of **James Anton** (a coffee planter in Ceylon) and **Ellen Jane Gray**. The couple returned to India, where Emily assisted Fred in his work, often being of valuable assistance in the photography of purdah-observing women (ladies whose faces men are not allowed to look upon). **Bremner** also noted that 'on several other occasions Mrs. **Bremner** had the pleasure of photographing Indian ladies of the highest'.



The King of Malabar, His Lord Camara's Durbar, Delhi, 1902.

During their time in India, the **Bremners** had at least one child, **James Anton Bremner**, born in 1903. James married **Felicie Matheson Macintosh**, and the couple lived in the townhouse area until their deaths in 1972 and 1955 respectively.

Before returning to Great Britain in 1923, Fred opened a summer studio in Simla, the summer capital of the Raj.

Seventeen years later in 1940, Fred published his memoir, *My Forty Years in India*. Intended only for private circulation, the ninety page volume is illustrated with 21 photographs. **Bremner** commented:

'It is no doubt that you will appreciate the 21 photos illustrations, but the 'scribbling' - well that is quite another matter - just a bit of 'literate reverie' which occupies me at the time'.



Left: The Nightmares the Mahatma of Hind Right: Mahatma Pigeon Praying in the Jama Masjid Mosque, Delhi



Old Bengal Infantry from Types of The Indian Army, 1903

Fred Bremner died in 1941 in Aberdeen. A former assistant of **Bremner's**, later working for the Anglo-Indian photographer **Sandy Rolfe**, mentioned that his former boss liked to do all his own work, and that he was partial to a good drink.

Goatingy... <http://www.facebook.com/uploads/host/2873.pdf>

With information from:

<http://www.scribd.com/>

<http://www.hanappa.com/photographers/bremner/fred.html>

Dij Bhushan Sharma's Bremner's website

<http://www.scribd.com/document/46746174/fred-articles.html>

Goatingy... <http://www.facebook.com/uploads/host/2873.pdf>



David Brewster Henderson
1848-1906

David Brewster Henderson (March 14, 1848-February 25, 1906) was a prominent US politician of the 1890s and 1900s. He served as Speaker of the United States House of Representatives from 1899 to 1903, the only Iowan and first person representing a district west of the Mississippi River to so serve) and served as a Republican from Iowa in the House from 1883 to 1893. **Henderson** lived in Dubuque, Iowa, and was an attorney of note, until he was a Republican from a solidly Democratic county in Iowa.

Henderson was born in Scotland on March 14, 1848, youngest of nine children to **Thomas Henderson** and **Barbara Legg**. October **Barbara** was one of 10 children to **George Legg** and **Barbara Brewer** from Mississippi, *Aberdeenshire*.

His family settled into a farm near Clermont, Iowa, in Fayette County in 1846. He served in the Union Army during the Civil War and was wounded severely twice, once in the neck and later in the leg, which resulted in progressive amputations of that leg. He was a successful lawyer prior to pursuing his political career.

In 1868 he married **Augusta Fox** and they raised a family of three children.

During his tenure as Speaker of the House, many of his peers lobbied him to run for the presidency, even though the United States Constitution forbade it because he was foreign born. His leaving the House was related to his leg injuries. He died in Dubuque, Dubuque County, Iowa, February 25, 1906. **Henderson** is buried at Linwood Cemetery in Dubuque.

(<http://en.wikipedia.com>, thanks to Martin Legg for suggesting this biography)

If you have any suggestions either for these "mini-biographies", or a more extensive article, please let me know at:

john.brehner@brehner.com

There are an infinite number of **Brewster-Henderson** stories to be told

brehner.com

Hugh Brebner, Artist 1823-1928

Son of *Aberdeenshire* ironmaster and businessman **William Brebner** and his wife **Jane Ridgley McSwain**, **Hugh** was the eldest of five children born in *Aberdeen*.

He married **Margaret Nisbet**, daughter of **George Nisbet** and **Helen Ross** in Edinburgh in 1877, and it is there that they made their home. While he was probably best known for his landscapes, (right)

Hugh was also an avid member of the Edinburgh Photographic Society, where in 1886 he made a technical presentation on the "eclectic subject" "Light and Shade, and the action of certain *Perrier* Salts used in conjunction with *Perrier* Hyposulphite in rendering these *Devon*".



Hugh Brebner died in 1928 in Ireland, England.

Creating a...
<http://www.brehner.com/uploads/18080576.pdf>

Address Changed!

If you haven't heard from me recently, it may be that your e-mail address has changed!

Please let me know if you change your address; your e-mail also allows you to verify family details on the compiled genealogies pages, and use who also is researching your ancestors.

Redesign of Pages at brehner.com

Starting in early spring of 2007, I will be redesigning the "look" of brehner.com. That interface has served well for the past six years, but it's time to upgrade!

In addition to bringing in changes that will allow linking all documents and images to a particular family, the current "Site Search" Page will be removed and more links to the searchable databases of names, census data and locations added.

Please let me know if you have any ideas that might make the site more useful or easier to navigate.

Useful Software

As digital cameras become more prevalent in genealogy, here's a useful program that has saved me from my own stupidity on more than one occasion. Deleting files from a CF card inserted into your computer does not save them to the Windows trash folder... they are gone! Have you ever deleted images from your compact flash card thinking that you had already downloaded them? Even worse, have you formatted the card in camera and thought that your files had been lost forever? I know I have!

Handy Recovery
<http://www.handyrecovery.com>

is an inexpensive piece of software that even recovers files from compact flash cards formatted a number of times in camera. (something to keep in mind if you are in the habit of sharing CF cards with friends and family!). Unlike other software that I tried, the trial version is not restricted to smaller files, only to scan files per-day during the 30 day trial period.

I was a relieved and happy convert after one unrepeatable photo session was saved!

Backup Your Data!

Do you have current backups of all your genealogy data? I can't emphasize how important this is. You should maintain at least two current copies of your data, preferably in separate locations. The ultimate archival backup, a paper copy, should be compiled and again held in a safe place. Consider sending "finished" copies of your work to local and national libraries, as well as to regional family history societies. In addition to giving you peace of mind that all will not be lost when (not if!) your computer hard drive fails, there are still many genealogists out there without computer access, and who may be able to contribute information if they come across that printed version of your genealogy.

Disclaim:

The copyright and opinions expressed within this web site are those solely of its author, John A. Brehner.

© John A. Brehner 2008

[Brehner-Brewster Genealogy Research](http://brehner.com) Page 16