

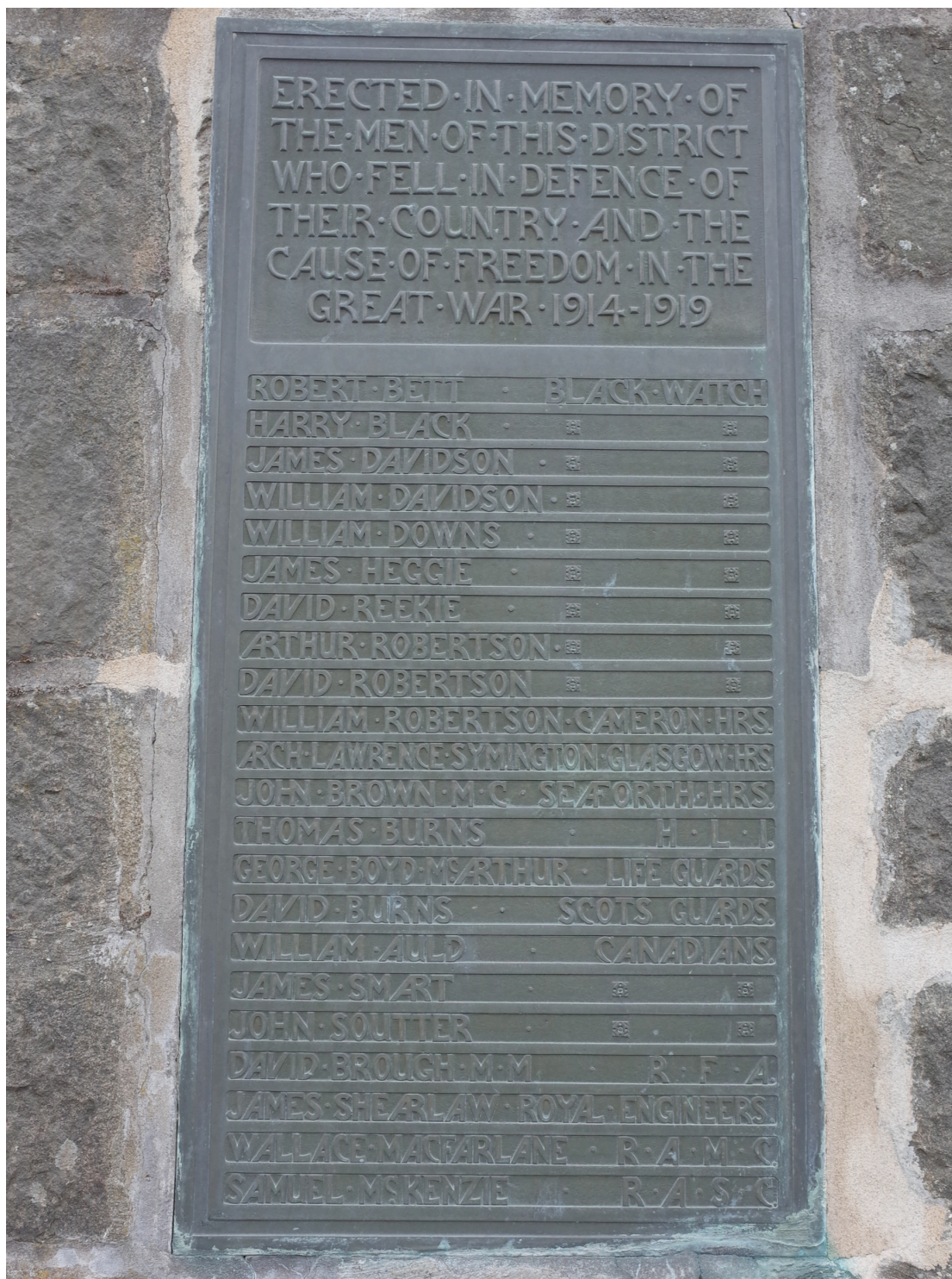


**ARNGASK WAR MEMORIAL  
GLENFARG, PERTSHIRE**

**The life stories of the men killed in the war  
of 1914-1918**

How shall we mourn you who are spilled and wasted,  
Sure that you would not die with your work unended  
As if the iron scythe in the grass stops for a flower.

Charles Reznikoff  
*Rhythms* (1918, 1920, 1927)



**The Names**

## CONTENTS

Introduction	5
Soldiers listed by SURNAME	8
Soldiers listed by REGIMENT	9
Soldiers listed by ADDRESSES	10
Soldiers listed by DATE OF DEATH	11
Soldiers' LIFESTORIES	12
Sources of information	51
Author's note	51

### Images

Arngask War Memorial, Glenfarg	1
Plaque on War Memorial listing names of those killed in 1914-18 war	3
Image from Perthshire Advertiser of 9 <sup>th</sup> April 1921	6
Image from Perthshire Advertiser of 9 <sup>th</sup> April 1921	7
Lieutenant John Brown MC	23
Grave of Pte William Down in Arngask Parish Churchyard	30
Headstone of Pte William Down in Arngask Parish Churchyard	31
Headstone of Lance Cpl Frederick Laing MM and Bar in Arngask New Cemetery	36
Memorial cross and plaque for Trooper George McArthur in Arngask Parish Churchyard	38
Pte Arthur Forbes Robertson	44

## INTRODUCTION

*'The Parish of Arngask nestles in a lovely hollow at the foot of the Ochils, in the south-east corner of Perthshire...before 1891, when a Royal Commission made drastic changes in county boundaries, the parish was in three counties – Perthshire, Fife and Kinrossshire. In 1890 the Parish Church was in Fife, the Free Church in Kinrossshire and the school in Perthshire...It is bounded by six parishes – Strathmiglo in Fife to the east, Abernethy and Dron in Perthshire to the north, Forgandenny and Forteviot, also in Perthshire, to the west, and Orwell in Kinrossshire to the south...'*

*There are three centres of population...There is the village of Glenfarg...it received that name only in 1890 in place of the less attractive name of Damhead...in addition there are two hamlets – Duncruevie, about three quarters of a mile south of the village and Newton, about a mile and a quarter to the east.'*

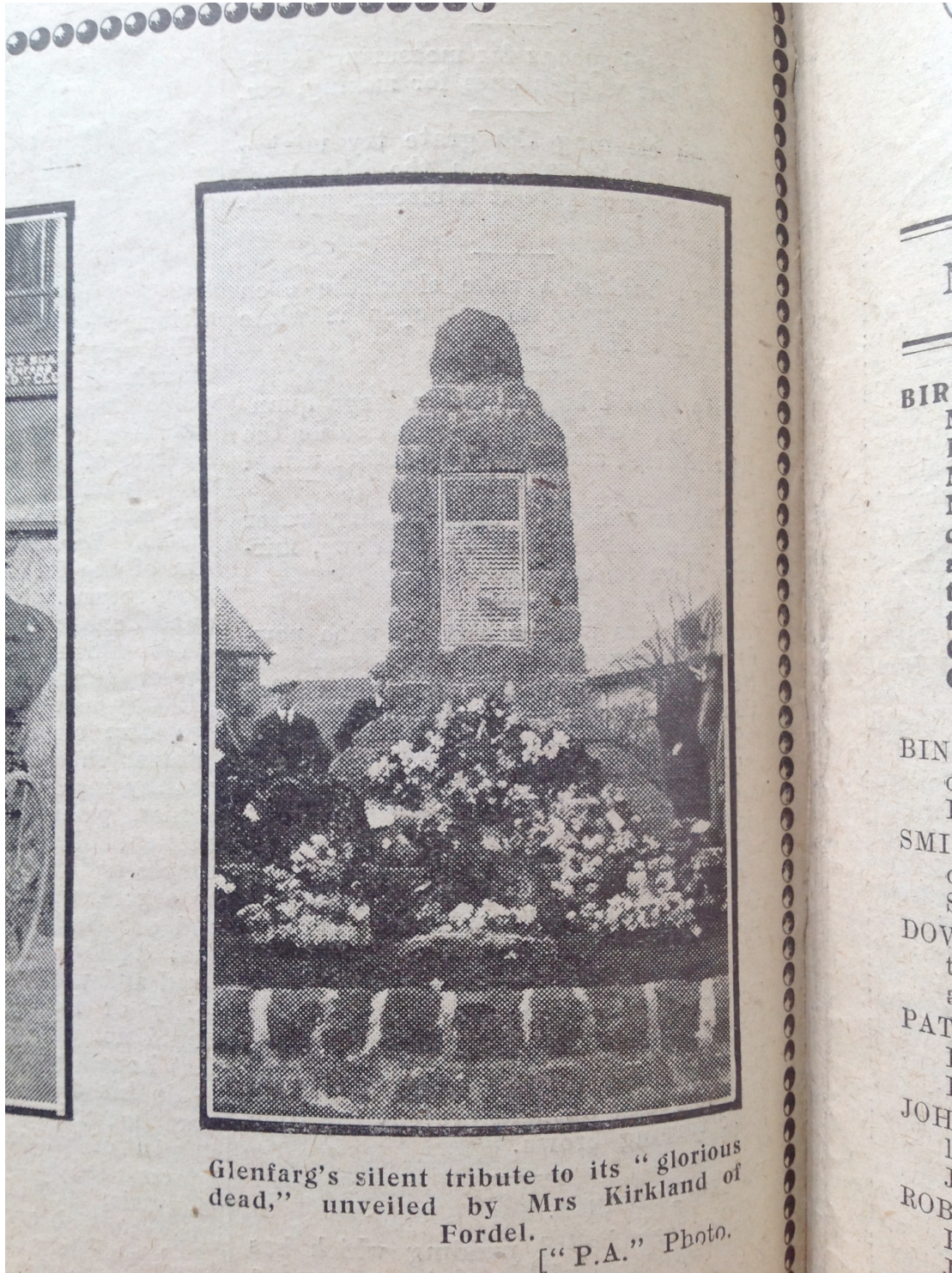
[From: *The Annals of Arngask* Rev. James D.Mackie, M.C., M.A.. 1958]

The Arngask War Memorial in Glenfarg, Perthshire, was unveiled on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1921. It was designed by W. Erskine Thomson, Architect, Perth and built by J. Deas, Glenfarg. This account of the unveiling appeared in the *Perthshire Advertiser*, Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April 1921:

### UNVEILING OF WAR MEMORIAL –

*The Memorial Cairn erected by the parishioners in memory of the 22 young men who left the parish of Arngask never to return, was unveiled by Mrs Kirkland of Fordel before a large crowd on Saturday afternoon. Proceedings were opened by the Rev. J.W. Jack, M.A., J.P., giving out the Second Paraphrase. The singing was led by the school children, conducted by Major Bonar, O.B.E., Headmaster. The Dedicatory prayer was fervently offered by the Rev. Dr. Moncrieff, D.D., followed by remarks by Mr J.B. Stephenson, chairman of the War Memorial Committee. On behalf of Mrs Kirkland, Mr N.J. Nasmyth, Glenfarg House, gave a stirring speech on the sacrifice and splendid example of those young men who had sacrificed their lives, so that those dear to them at home might be safe from the brutal barbarity of the Germans. Mrs Kirkland then drew the cord releasing the Union Jack, revealing the bronze plate, on which are inscribed the names of the fallen heroes. Mrs Kirkland Vesey, secretary of the War Memorial Committee, read the roll call as follows: – Robert Bett, Black Watch; Harry Black, do. ; James Davidson, do. ; William Davidson, do.; William Downs, do. ; James Heggie, do. ; David Reekie, do. ; Arthur Robertson, do. ; William Robertson, Cameron Highlanders ; Archibald Laurence [sic] Symington, Glasgow Highlanders ; John Brown, M.C., Seaforth Highlanders ; Thos. Burns, H.L.I. ; George Boyd M<sup>c</sup>Arthur, Life Guards ; David Burns, Scots Guards ; William Auld, Canadians ; James Smart, do. ; John Soutter, do. ; David Brough, M.M., R.F.A. ; James Shearlaw, R.E. ; Wallace Macfarlane, R.A.M.C. ; Samuel Mackenzie, R.A.S.C. The bugler thereupon sounded the Last Post. The 66<sup>th</sup> Paraphrase was sung by the company, followed by the laying of a large number of beautiful wreaths on the memorial by relatives and friends. "Lochaber No More" on the pipes, followed by the benediction invoked by Rev. Mr Jack, concluded a most impressive and emotional ceremony. A considerable number of local ex-servicemen, under the command of Major Bonar, took part in the proceedings. Mrs Kirkland Vesey, representing the Committee, handed over the memorial to the custody of the Parish Council, represented by Mr Stephenson. The proceedings concluded with the singing of "God Save the King."*

Only 21 names, instead of 22, are listed in this account: it would appear that, although his name is on the memorial plaque, the name of David Drummond Robertson was omitted: either from the recitation of the list or from the newspaperman's notes of the event – probably the latter.





Drum-Major P. Rutherford and  
Piper Melrose at the unveiling of  
Arngask War Memorial.

["P.A." Photo.]

## Soldiers listed by SURNAME

	page
<b>Auld</b> , William	13
<b>Bett</b> , Robert William	15
<b>Black</b> , Henry Hunter (Harry)	17
<b>Brough</b> , David	20
<b>Brown</b> , John	22
<b>Burns</b> , David McGillivray	24
<b>Burns</b> , Thomas Alexander	25
<b>Davidson</b> , James	26
<b>Davidson</b> , William Turnbull	27
<b>Down</b> , William	28
<b>Heggie</b> , James	32
<b>Laing</b> , Frederick	33
<b>McArthur</b> , George Boyd	37
<b>McFarlane</b> , Wallace Williamson	39
<b>McKenzie</b> , Samuel	40
<b>Reekie</b> , David Duncan	42
<b>Robertson</b> , Arthur Forbes	43
<b>Robertson</b> , David Drummond	45
<b>Robertson</b> , William	46
<b>Shearlaw</b> , James Thomson	47
<b>Smart</b> , James	48
<b>Soutter</b> , John	49
<b>Symington</b> , Archibald Lawrie Findlay	50

There are twenty-two names listed on the Arngask War Memorial, but this tribute also includes Frederick Laing, M.M. and Bar, originally a man of Kent, but who is buried in Arngask New Cemetery. He is equally worthy of commemoration.

For the purposes of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission the First World War period is now classified as **4 August 1914 to 31 August 1921**. Servicemen and women who died whilst in service during the war period, regardless of the cause of death, are accorded war grave status.

Those who had been discharged from service but who died within the war period from injury or illness *proven* to be caused or exacerbated by their war service, were also accorded formal war grave status.

Both William Down (who is on the memorial) and Frederick Laing (who is not) died after discharge but within the war period (in 1915 and 1920 respectively); however, their deaths were not at that time considered to be attributable to their war service, and their graves are essentially private graves. Whilst their headstones are of war-grave pattern, they are of grey granite, not the customary Portland stone of the formal war graves in Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemeteries.



## Soldiers listed by REGIMENT

(alphabetically: not by regimental precedence)

### Black Watch (Royal Highlanders)

BETT, Robert William	Pte 266063	6/Black Watch
BLACK, Harry	Pte 202433	4/5 (Angus & Dundee)
DAVIDSON, James	Pte S/17470	2/Black Watch
DAVIDSON, William Turnbull	Pte S/6725	1/Black Watch
DOWN, William	Pte 1442	1/Black Watch
REEKIE, David Duncan	Pte 3583	1/6 (Perthshire)
ROBERTSON, Arthur Forbes	Pte S/12635	1/6 (Perthshire)
ROBERTSON, David Drummond	Pte S/13349	8/Black Watch

### Cameron Highlanders

ROBERTSON, William	L/Cpl 16453	1/Cameron Highlanders
--------------------	-------------	-----------------------

### Canadian Infantry

AULD, William	Pte 428089	7/British Columbia Regt
SMART, James	Pte 147506	28/Canadian Infantry
SOUTTER, John	Pte 22923	2/Eastern Ontario

### Gordon Highlanders

HEGGIE, James	Pte S/22632 (&3073?)	1/7 Gordon Highlanders
---------------	----------------------	------------------------

### Highland Light Infantry

BURNS, Thomas	Sgt 13438	15/Service 1/(Glasgow)HLI
SYMINGTON, Archibald L.F.	Cpl 330324	9/(Glasgow Highland)

### Life Guards

McARTHUR, George Boyd	Tpr 3545	1/B Squadron
-----------------------	----------	--------------

### Queen's Own (Royal West Kent)

LAING, Frederick M.M. and Bar	Lce Cpl 6942	10/Royal West Kent
-------------------------------	--------------	--------------------

### Royal Army Medical Corps

McFARLANE, Wallace Williamson	A/C Q.M.S.	1/3 (Lowland) Field Ambulance
-------------------------------	------------	-------------------------------

### Royal Army Service Corps

McKENZIE, Samuel	Pte DM <sup>2</sup> 166114	765 Motor Transport Coy
------------------	----------------------------	-------------------------

### Royal Engineers

SHEARLAW, James Thomson	Sgt 18196	21/Corps 3/Sappers & Miners
-------------------------	-----------	-----------------------------

### Royal Garrison Artillery

BROUGH, David M.M.	Ftr/Gnr 192723	354 Siege battery
--------------------	----------------	-------------------

### Scots Guards

BURNS, David McGillivray	Pte 9413	1/Scots Guards
--------------------------	----------	----------------

### Seaforth Highlanders

BROWN, John M.C.	Lieut	6/ (Territorial)
------------------	-------	------------------

## Soldiers listed by **ADDRESSES** (where known)

BETT, Robert William	Easterton, Glenfarg.
BLACK, Harry	(Kinross: sister)
BROUGH, David	Churchill Cottages, Glenfarg.
BROWN, John	Newton of Balcanqual, Gateside, Fife.
BURNS, David	Fife part of Glenfarg; and Balerno, Edinburgh.
BURNS, Thomas	(Brother of David Burns; lived Invergordon, Ross-shire)
DAVIDSON, James	Hilton Cottage, Duncrievie and Plum Cottage, Drunzie Feus.
DAVIDSON, William	Old Causeway, Kinross and Heart Rigg, Strathmiglo, Fife.
DOWN, William	Duncrievie/Smiddyhill, Church Brae, Glenfarg.
HEGGIE, James	Deuglie Cottage, Glenfarg, Strathmiglo and Forrester Seat, Arngask.
LAINING, Frederick	Duncrievie House and Glenfarg Hotel.
McARTHUR, George B.	Forrester Seat, Arngask and Old Fargie, Glenfarg.
McFARLANE, Wallace W.	The Bakery, Great North Road, Glenfarg.
REEKIE, David Duncan	Hattonburn Farm, Orwell, Kinross-shire.
ROBERTSON, Arthur Forbes	Rowan Cottage, Arngask.
ROBERTSON, David Drummond	Great North Road, Glenfarg; Struie Cottage, Glenfarg and Ashburn Cottage, Glenfarg.
ROBERTSON, William	as for David D. (brothers).
SHEARLAW, James	Fordel, Glenfarg.
SMART, James	Glenhead, Great North Road, Glenfarg.
SOUTTER, John	Belmont Cottage, Glenfarg.
SYMINGTON, Arch. L. F.	Arngask Farm, Arngask.

## Soldiers listed by DATE OF DEATH

### 1915

BURNS, David	1/Scots Guards	27 January
DOWN, William	1/Black Watch	23 May
DAVIDSON, Wm Turnbull	1/Black Watch	29 Sept

### 1916

SOUTTER, John	2/(East Ontario) Canadian	1 May
SMART, James	28/Canadian	6 June
BURNS, Thos. Alexander	1/Glasgow HLI	3 July
REEKIE, David Duncan	1/6 Black Watch	30 July
ROBERTSON, William	1/Cameron Highlanders	3 Sept
AULD, William	7/(Brit Columbia) Canadians	9 Sept

### 1917

McARTHUR, George Boyd	1/Life Guards	23 Decr
-----------------------	---------------	---------

### 1918

McFARLANE, Wallace Williamson	R.A.M.C.	9 January
ROBERTSON, David Drummond	8/Black Watch	24 March
SYMINGTON, Archibald Lawrie F.	9/ Glasgow HLI	24 March
HEGGIE, James	1/7 Gordon Highlanders	9-14 April
BROWN, John (Lieut)	6/Seaforth Highlanders	11 April
ROBERTSON, Arthur Forbes	1/6 Black Watch	20 July
BETT, Robert William	6/Black Watch	30 July
SHEARLAW, James	Royal Engineers	28 August
BLACK, Harry	4/5 Black Watch	14 Sept
BROUGH, David	354 RGA	8 October
DAVIDSON, James	2/Black Watch	11 Novr
McKENZIE, Samuel	Royal Army Service Corps	2 Decr

### 1920

LAING, Frederick	10/Queen's Own (Royal West Kent)	20 Novr
------------------	----------------------------------	---------

# **THE LIFE STORIES**

## **William Auld**

**Private 428089 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion (British Columbia Regiment) Canadian Infantry**

**Born 19 April 1885, Edinburgh, Scotland.**

**Died 9 September 1916, Somme, France.**

*I have been unable to prove a connection with William Auld to Glenfarg, but he is the only William Auld who served with the Canadian Infantry who is listed on the CWGC list of war dead, so I assume that at some point either he or a member of his family lived or worked in or near Glenfarg.*

The records of both the CWGC and the Canadian War Graves and Circumstances of Death Registers record William Auld's full name as William Robert Livingstone Auld, and that is the name he himself gave on his Canadian attestation papers; however his birth certificate gives his name simply as William Auld, born 19 April 1885 at 5 Buccleuch Street in the district of St Giles in Edinburgh.

His father was William Robert Livingstone Auld and his mother Mary Ann (née Wishart) Auld, who married 6 June 1878 in Portobello, Edinburgh.

The occupation of his father on the marriage certificate is illegible, but he could not have enjoyed good health because on the 1881 census he is recorded, aged 39, as a 'Retired Shoemaker'; they are living at 2 West Newington Place in the district of St Cuthberts, Edinburgh. At this point (3 April 1881) the couple have a daughter Sarah Harriet Auld, aged 2 months.

By the 1891 census the family is living at 51 Buccleuch Street, Edinburgh, William R. L. Auld aged 48, a 'retired tradesman', his wife Mary Ann aged 38, daughter Sarah Harriet aged 10, and son William aged 5. Also living in the house is a boarder, Alexander Morrison.

On 16 July 1892 William's father, William R. L. Auld, died of heart disease at 26 Angle Park Terrace, Edinburgh, the death being registered by Alexander Morrison who described his relationship as 'cousin'.

On 14 June 1894 William's mother Mary Ann Auld, aged 42, married Alexander Morrison, a bachelor aged 33, his occupation Commission Agent. The marriage was short-lived however, as she died (of cirrhosis of the liver) at 26 Angle Park Terrace on 5 December of the same year. She left two children: Sarah aged 13, and William aged 9.

By the 1901 census (31 March) the family seems to have dispersed: a Sarah H. Auld aged 20 and described as 'living on own means' is shown visiting the home of James Thomson and his son James N. and daughter Christina N. at 4 Argyle Park Terrace, Edinburgh. A William Auld, aged 15, is shown living as a boarder, still at school, in the household of William and Elizabeth Lamb and their daughter Margaret at 27 C. B. Avenue [sic – possibly an abbreviation carried over from the full entry on the previous page], in the St Bernards district of Edinburgh.

Thereafter there is a gap until William's enlistment in the Canadian Infantry in 1915.

He enlisted on 12 March 1915 and on his attestation papers gave his next of kin as Mrs Sally Harriet Crowe, 920 Rogers Buildings, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada: obviously his sister Sarah who had emigrated to Canada and had since married. William was not married, but in his answer to the question as to whether he has ever served in a military force he says 'Yes, 8 years Queen's Royal Scots, Edinburgh'.

Assuming he enlisted at Edinburgh when he reached the age of 18 (19 April 1903) and served 8 years, he might be the William Auld who, aged 26, destination Montreal, Canada, sailed on the 'Grampian' steamship (Allan Line) which departed Glasgow on 29 April 1911 bound for Quebec and Montreal via Liverpool. It seems likely that his sister had emigrated to Canada some time before.

William Auld was killed in action in the Courcelette sector of the battles of the Somme on 9 September 1916.

After the Armistice when the battlefield graves and burials were being concentrated into formal war cemeteries, he and the remains of five Canadian comrades (four unidentified) buried together in a communal grave were exhumed from the communal cemetery at Pozieres and re-buried in the Serre Road Cemetery No.2.

William Auld's remains were intermingled with those of a 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion comrade, Pte 466105 J.S. Wood, and they were reburied in one coffin, two grave spaces being allowed and, as is the CWGC the practice for inseparable remains, their headstones butted together side-by-side.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Robert William Bett**

**Private 266063 (also 3279) 6<sup>th</sup> (Perthshire) Battalion (Territorial) Black Watch (Royal Highlanders)**

**Born 1897, Rutland, Vermont, USA.**

**Died 30 July 1918 as a prisoner of war at German Field Hospital, Santes, France.**

Robert William Bett was born on 26 April 1897 in Rutland, Vermont, USA, as was his elder brother, George Washington Bett, born 26 June 1892, who later joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force Infantry (628556) and survived WWI. A younger brother, James Alexander Bett was born on 16 February 1900 at Easterton, Glenfarg.

Their parents were James Eason Bett and Isabella Bett (née Horn(e)) who married on 25 December 1890 in New York City, USA – James having been born in Abernethy, (then in) Fifeshire and Isabella in Glasgow.

At some point they returned to Scotland where they lived and farmed Easterton Farm, Glenfarg – the 1901 census shows the family living there, Robert William aged 3. The 1911 census shows the family still at Easterton – Robert aged 13, and his younger brother James A. aged 11 still at school, and his elder brother George W. aged 18, is a bank clerk. George at some point emigrated to Canada where, on 11 June 1915 at Vernon, British Columbia, he enlisted in the 47<sup>th</sup> Battalion (B Coy) of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. He survived the war.

Robert Bett enlisted in the 6th (Perthshire) Battalion (Territorial) Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) at Glenfarg on an unknown date, but his Soldiers's Will is dated 14 February 1916. His sole legatee was his mother Isabella Bett of Easterton, Glenfarg, and she is listed as such in the register of Soldier's Effects (1919). The Commonwealth War Graves Commission grave registration documents simply note that Robert was 'The son of James E. Bett, of Leadketty, Dunning, Perthshire.' James E. Bett is named on the Valuation Rolls of 1920 as the occupier and tenant of Easterton, although his address is given as Leadketty, Dunning; however the Valuation Rolls of 1925 no longer show him at Easterton.

It is for this reason that Robert Bett is commemorated on the Dunning village war memorial as well as that in Glenfarg.

Robert William Bett died of tuberculosis on 30 July 1918 whilst a Prisoner of War of the Germans, in their Field Hospital at Santes in France and was probably buried in a common hospital grave. He is commemorated on the Soisson Memorial, Aisne, France.

*The original British Expeditionary Force crossed the River Aisne in August 1914 a few kilometres west of Soissons, and re-crossed it in September a few kilometres east. For the next three and a half years, this part of the front was held by French forces and the city remained within the range of German artillery.*

*At the end of April 1918, five divisions of Commonwealth forces (IX Corps) were posted to the French 6th Army in this sector to rest and refit following the German offensives on the Somme and Lys. Here, at the end of May, they found themselves facing the overwhelming*

*German attack which, despite fierce opposition, pushed the Allies back across the Aisne to the Marne. Having suffered 15,000 fatal casualties, IX Corps was withdrawn from this front in early July, but was replaced by XXII Corps, who took part in the Allied counter attack that had driven back the Germans by early August and recovered the lost ground. The Soissons Memorial commemorates almost 4,000 officers and men of the United Kingdom forces who died during the Battles of the Aisne and the Marne in 1918 and who have no known grave. [CWGC cemetery description]*

Robert's mother Isabella died of coronary thrombosis 23 July 1935, aged 66, at 7 Hope Street, St Andrews, Fife, her death being registered by her youngest son, James Alexander Bett. Her husband, James Easson Bett died of arteriosclerosis and cerebral haemorrhage 17 June 1944, aged 82, at 7 Hope Street, St Andrews, Fife. He had remarried in 1942 Isabella Mary Dryburgh, who died in 1973, aged 80, in Cupar, Fife. His death was registered by his grand-daughter, Sybil J. Bett.

\*\*\*\*\*



## **Henry Hunter (Harry) Black**

**Private 202433 (also S/40152, 6544) 4/5<sup>th</sup> Battalion (Angus & Dundee) Black Watch (Royal Highlanders)**

**Born 11 April 1897, Dunfermline, Fifeshire, Scotland.**

**Died 14 September 1918, France.**

Harry Black was killed in action, aged 21, in France on 14 September 1918 and is buried in Philosophe British Cemetery, Mazingarbe, Pas de Calais, France, alongside three comrades from the 4/5 Black Watch.

Harry Black enlisted in a Territorial battalion of the Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) at Bridge of Earn, Perthshire. His medals record index card shows three different service numbers – S/40152, 6544 and 202433 – which would seem to indicate changes/transfers of his type/length of enlistment. When he died he was part of the 4/5<sup>th</sup> (Angus and Dundee) Battalion (Territorial). The service return of men of the 4/5 Black Watch who were killed or died gives his age as 21, suggesting he was born in 1897/98.

It proved difficult to trace Harry Black's life story and to connect him to Glenfarg: the only initial information was the record of UK Soldiers who died in the Great war 1914-1919 (ancestry.co.uk), which give his place of birth as Dunfermline, Fife, and his place of enlistment as Bridge of Earn, Perthshire.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission grave registration documents give his next of kin as his sister, Jeanie Black c/o Mrs Low, of High Street, Kinross. There is no trace of a Soldier's Will, but the UK Army Register of Soldiers' Effects 1901-1929 – which records payments made to next-of-kin – also shows his next of kin as a sister, Jeanie.

This record is also noted 'I [one] share retained for Bro. Andrew K.I.A. No regd. Parties – widow's address unknown': a brother, also killed in action, who was married.

Census searches for a Harry Black produced two results: 1901 and 1911.

The 1901 census shows a Jane Black, aged 30, living with her two sons Andrew aged 7 and Harry aged 3 at 200 Baldridgeburn, Dunfermline – all were born in Dunfermline. Although her status is shown as 'Married', Jane is described as 'Head' of the household which suggests that her husband was no longer part of the household.

The 1911 census shows a Harry Black, aged 13, and Jeanie Black, aged 7, both at school, as 'boarders' in a house at Round Mound, Balgedie, Portmoak, Clackmanan & Kinross. This is one of two houses listed, one for adults and one for children: all seven of the 'boarders' in the adult house are described as 'Lunatic' or 'Imbecile'. In the house for the twelve younger boarders, two are described as 'Feebleminded', and with one exception all their birth places are 'not known'.

Is this our Harry and his sister Jeanie Black – living in a home for the poor and displaced? What happened?

Bearing in mind that Harry is a diminutive of Henry, and now with a mother's name and a probable birth year, I found the birth record of Henry Hunter Black, born 11 April 1897 at 55 St James's Place, Dunfermline, to Jane Black, aged 22 (née Hutton) and Henry Black, an ironmongers porter.

They had married on 2 June 1893 in Dunfermline: Henry aged 23, a foundry labourer, and Jane Hutton aged 22, a winder in a damask factory. Hunter was the maiden name of Henry's mother (who later remarried an Andrew Carnegie, in whose household Henry Snr and his siblings were brought up in Govan, Lanarkshire.)

As indicated on the 1901 census, Henry H. (Harry) had an elder brother, Andrew: he was born 9 July 1893 to Jane and Henry Black at 129 New Row, Dunfermline, On 14 June 1904 a younger sister, Jane Hutton Black, was born to Jane and Henry Black at Coal Road, Dunfermline.

Jane, and the diminutive of Jane – Janie – is often transcribed as Jean or Jeanie. The ages of Henry Hunter (Harry) and Jane Hutton Black match the dates of birth of our Harry and Jeanie on the 1911 census for the poorhouse/workhouse. The balance of probability suggests they are ours.

What happened to their parents?

And what happened to elder brother Andrew, who would have been 17 at the 1911 census?

Andrew is shown on this census living as a boarder in the household of Eliza M. Allan in Beath (Cowdenbeath), Fife. His occupation is 'Coal Miner Brusher' and his place of birth Dunfermline.

Andrew Black can be found on the CWGC list of war dead: Sapper 121628 of the 253<sup>rd</sup> Tunnelling Company of the Royal Engineers, who was killed in action on 20 February 1916, aged 23, and is commemorated on the Loos Memorial.

He is recorded as being the son of Harry Black of Glasgow, and the husband of Margaret Black of 62 James Street, Cellardyke, Anstruther, Fife.

Andrew married on 18 December 1915 in Dunfermline. His parents are shown as Harry Black, an iron dresser, and Jeanie Black née Hutton, both deceased.

He is described as a 'Coal Miner (Sapper R.E.)' aged 22, his usual address Nasmyth Place, Kelty, and his wife Margaret a sewing machinist, aged 19, her usual address 62 James Street, Cellardyke. It was a 'wartime' marriage, no Banns having been posted, but Declarations having been made in the presence of a Stephen Moneghan, miner, of 99 Nasmyth Place, Kelty, and Mary Wilson of 62 James Street, Cellardyke. They were married by 'Warrant of Sheriff Substitute of Fife and Kinross.'

Andrew left a soldier's will, his wife his sole legatee, and the Register of Soldiers Effects also names her as sole legatee. No mention is made of his brother and sister – brother and sisters are often shown in these records as being due gratuities – despite Andrews's (posthumous) share being recorded on his brother Harry's list of gratuities after he was killed in 1918.

That both parents were possibly dead (both were dead by 1915 according to Andrews's marriage certificate) and brother Andrew elsewhere, may explain the 1911 census, with Harry and his sister Jeanie living in a workhouse.

An entry on a family tree at [ancestry.co.uk](http://ancestry.co.uk) gives the date of death of a Jane Hutton (b. 29 October 1870), spouse Henry Black, as 16 December 1910. Unfortunately the family tree has been 'taken down' and no further information is available and despite extensive searching, I have been unable to find a death certificate for either Jane or Henry Black.

At the time of Harry's death in 1918, his sister Jeanie was 14 and was living c/o a Mrs Low, High Street, Kinross. There are many Low(e)s shown on the 1915 and 1920 Valuation Rolls for High Street Kinross, but could a Mrs Catherine Lowe, a widow, or Mrs Margaret Low (next door), a widow, butcher and fruit dealer, be our lady – was Jeanie a ward, or a domestic servant?

What happened to Jeanie?

Working backwards I found a death entry for a Jane Hutton Black, married name McInnes (married 28 December 1928 to James McInnes in Elgin), who died aged 65 in 1969 in Elgin, Morayshire.

\*\*\*\*

## **David Brough MM**

**Fitter/Gunner 192723 354th Siege Battery Royal Garrison Artillery  
(firstly, Cpl 93204 Royal Field Artillery)**

**Born 12 October 1891, Abernethy, Perthshire, Scotland.**

**Died 8 October 1918, 6<sup>th</sup> General Hospital, Rouen, France.**

David Brough, the son of Colin (a stonemason) and Catherine (née Miller) Brough, was born on 1 October 1891 in Abernethy, Perthshire, Scotland.

The 1901 census shows the family living on Smiddyhill Road (Church Hill, now Church Brae), Glenfarg, Perthshire. Apart from his father and mother, aged 44 and 43 respectively, his siblings Elizabeth (18) a domestic servant, Alexander (15) a mason's apprentice, Annie (13), Colin (10) and John (5) are also shown with David, aged 8. However, on 3 October 1907 his mother died, aged 49, of a cerebral tumour.

The 1911 census shows the family still together, but with the addition of a daughter Catherine, age 9 (i.e. born in 1902, after the last census). They are living at 'Cottage (Deas)', next to the United Free Church, the first of two cottages now called Churchill cottages (originally Church Hill, now Church Brae.) This is probably the same house as the 1901 census, the next house on that census being shown as *Bountree*, where William Deas, the local builder, and his family were then living; this is simply listed as a 'Private House' on the 1911 census.

His elder sister Annie (23), is now the housekeeper for the household, his elder brothers Alexander (26) and Colin (20) are masons, his younger brother John (15) an apprentice joiner, whilst David himself is an apprentice blacksmith. His eldest sibling, Elizabeth (27) is not on this census, but it seems that she remained in or returned to the village to live with their father Colin at The (Corbett) Institute, Glenfarg (outside which the war memorial is now situated.)

Colin Brough senior died at that address on 18 December 1934, aged 78, and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission grave registration documents of 1919/1920 for David's gravestone give 'Mrs E. Brough', presumably Elizabeth, as the correspondent, at that address. Elizabeth (Lizzie) never married, being described as 'Housekeeper' and 'single' on her death certificate – presumably housekeeper for her father. She died suddenly of a coronary embolism on 23 April 1948 at *Bountree*, possibly whilst visiting, and her brother-in-law William Davidson (he had married Elizabeth's sister Catherine Brough on 31 August 1922) of the Smithy House, Glenfarg, registered her death.

David Brough enlisted at Kirkcaldy and went into the Royal Field Artillery. His medals index card shows him as Corporal 93204 and that he entered the theatre of war in France on 19 July 1915. On 18 September 1917 his rank was reduced to Gunner. He transferred to the Royal Garrison Artillery at some point and his rank and service number were Fitter/Gunner 192723.

He qualified for the three WWI service medals and at some point won the Military Medal, but without knowing which brigade(s) in which he served it is difficult to establish where and when he won this. The CWGC records have him as being with 354<sup>th</sup> Siege Battery, which were part of the 21<sup>st</sup> brigade Royal Garrison Artillery in 1918. For their movements, the War Diary (WO 95/469) for June 1915 – July 1919 at The National Archive, Kew, London, would have to be consulted.

David Brough died of wounds on 8 October 1918 in the 6<sup>th</sup> General Hospital, Rouen, France, and is buried in St Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **John Brown MC**

**Lieutenant 6th (Territorial) Battalion Seaforth Highlanders  
(firstly, Private 2369 9<sup>th</sup> The Royal Scots (Lothian Regiment))**

**Born 30 August 1891, Morningside, Edinburgh.  
Died 11 April 1918 near Wytschaete, Belgium.  
Buried Voormezele Enclosure 3, Belgium.**

John Brown was the son of John and Isabella (née McKay) Brown of 7 Greenhill Place, Edinburgh and Newton of Balcanqual, Gateside, Fifeshire. His grandfather was the physician and essayist Dr John Brown (1810-1882), famous for 'Horae Subsecivae' ('Leisure Hours'), his three volume collection of essays on art, dogs, medical history and biography, who was a friend of contemporaries such as Thackeray and Mark Twain.

John Brown was educated at Merchiston Castle School, Edinburgh, and Balliol College, Oxford. He enlisted as Private 2369 in the 9th Battalion Royal Scots (Lothian Regiment) in September 1914, and served with the British Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders from 24 February 1915, being wounded in May 1915.

On 5 August 1915 he was commissioned 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant, and then in November 1917 Lieutenant, in the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion (Territorial) Seaforth Highlanders.

He was killed in action, aged 27, on 11 April 1918. An officer wrote of him:

*He was killed whilst leading his men, and passed out of this life smiling...  
He was one of the most popular officers this battalion ever had, and his men frequently asked if there is any chance of Mr Brown coming back to us.*  
[De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour 1914-1919 Vol 4 p.20]

He was awarded the Military Cross *'for conspicuous gallantry and resource, when defending, with two platoons, an isolated post. Although wounded, he successfully held his trench for a day and a night with the enemy on both flanks in the same trench, and repelled several counter-attacks. His fearlessness and resource were most marked.'* (op.cit)

John Brown was buried where he fell near Wytschaete, Belgium. On cessation of hostilities, when those buried in these isolated or battlefield graves were being exhumed for re-burial in war cemeteries, the bodies of two unidentified officers of the Seaforth Highlanders were found, buried in the same location. These were believed to be Lieut. John Brown and Lieut. J.K. Simpson. They are buried side by side, plots 26 and 27, row 13 B, in Voormezele Enclosure No. 3.

\*\*\*\*\*

se." His  
at loss to  
rstudying  
d been a  
ne during  
nce after-  
scomferts  
punctual  
an Adju-  
o recom-  
n. at St.  
d Mary)

(Artists'  
Hilary,  
of Henry  
College,  
Clerk in  
20 July,  
from 16  
wounds  
emetery,  
edlands,  
and had  
19 July,

) Battn.  
d s. of  
b. Ply-  
e; was  
ks, Car-  
with the  
Flanders  
to the  
and was  
month

in the King's Royal Rifle Corps 14 April, 1915; served with the Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders from the following July; was invalided home suffering from trench fever in July, 1916; rejoined his regiment in France in July, 1917, and was killed in action at Langemarcke 20 Sept. following. Buried where he fell. Letters from his Commanding Officer and a comrade speak very highly of his character and unselfish disposition, as did also one received from his former employer; *unm.*

**BROWN, JOHN, M.C.,** Lieut., 6th (Territorial) Battn. The Seaforth High-



**John Brown.**

landers (Ross-shire Buffs, The Duke of Albany's), s. of John Brown, of 7, Greenhill Place, Edinburgh, by his wife, Isabella, dau. of Andrew McKay; and gdson. of Dr. John Brown, author of "Horæ Subsecivæ": b. Edinburgh, 30 Aug. 1891; educ. Merchiston Castle School, and at Balliol College, Oxford; enlisted in the 9th Battn. The Royal Scots in Sept. 1914; gazetted 2nd Lieut. 4 Aug. 1915; promoted Lieut. Nov. 1917; served with the Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders from Feb. 1915; was wounded in May, 1915, and in April, 1917, and was killed in action near Wytschaete 11 April. 1918. Buried there. An officer wrote: "He was killed whilst leading his men, and passed out of this life smiling," and another: "He was one of the most popular officers this battalion ever had, and his men frequently asked if there is any chance of Mr. Brown coming back to us." He was awarded the Military Cross "for conspicuous gallantry and resource, when defending, with two platoons, an isolated post. Although wounded, he successfully held his trench for a day and night with the enemy on both flanks in the same trench, and repelled several counter-attacks. His fearlessness and resource were most marked." *Unm.*

**BROWN, T.,** Private, No. 13044, 3rd Battn. The Worcestershire Regt.; served with the Expeditionary Force in France; killed in action 3 Oct. 1914.

Entry from De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour (ancestry.co.uk)

## **David McGillivray Burns**

**Guardsman (Private) 9413 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Scots Guards**

**Born 13 May 1893, Keith, Banffshire.**

**Died 27 January 1915 as a prisoner of war at German Field Hospital, Pont-a-Vendin, France.**

David McGillivray Burns was born on 13 May 1893 at 2 Fife Street, Fife Keith, Keith, Banffshire. His mother Jane Ann Burns (née McGillivray) died, aged 28, on 17 May, four days after his birth, of albuminaria and puerperal eclampsia, leaving her husband David Burns with this newborn son and two other young sons: Thomas Alexander (b. 27 July 1889) and Angus McDonald Burns (b. 12 May 1891).

What then happened to the family is unclear: David Burns (senior) remarried on 6 August 1896 Margaret (Maggie) MacPherson in Kingussie, Inverness-shire, but none of them appears in 1901 censuses nor, indeed, the 1911 census – with the exception of David McGillivray Burns, now aged 17, who is working as a grocer's assistant and living as a lodger with the family of George and Janet Steele at Ladycroft, Currie, Balerno, near Edinburgh. Probably for this reason David M. Burns is also commemorated on the Currie war memorial; however, the record of soldiers killed in 1914-1919 gives his place of residence at some point as being Glenfarg, in the part then in Fifeshire.

Balerno is also given as his father David Burns's address on the attestation papers of the middle son, Angus McDonald Burns. Having emigrated to Australia in 1913, he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force in October 1917, from which he went absent without leave on 2 December 1917. In March 1928 he returned to his birthplace Keith, Banffshire, Scotland (the passenger list describes him as a Farm Labourer, destination 175a Mid Street Keith, Banffshire; age 36; unaccompanied); he died aged 78 in 1969 in Aberdeen.

David Burns senior died in Inverurie, Aberdeenshire on 13 April 1941, his second wife Maggie having predeceased him.

The eldest brother, Thomas Alexander Burns Sergeant 13438 15<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion 1<sup>st</sup> Glasgow Highland Light Infantry, joined the theatre of war in France on 23 November 1915 and was killed in action on 3 July 1916. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial to the missing of the Somme.

David McGillivray Burns joined the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Scots Guards and entered the theatre of war in France on 28 December 1914. On 27 January 1915 he died as a prisoner of war in the German Field Hospital at Pont-a-Vendin, France and was buried in the communal cemetery.

\*\*\*\*\*



## **Thomas Alexander Burns**

### **Sergeant 13438 15<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion 1<sup>st</sup> Glasgow Highland Light Infantry**

**Born 27 July 1889, Keith, Banffshire.**

**Died 3 July 1916, Somme, France.**

Thomas Alexander Burns was born on 27 July 1889 at 9 Fife Street, Fife Keith, Keith, Banffshire, son of David and Jane Ann Burns (née McGillivray). The 1891 census shows the three of them living at 120 Moss Street, Keith, his father working as a quarryman. Another son, Angus McDonald Burns, was born on 12 May 1891 at this address.

On 13 May 1893 another son, David McGillivray Burns, was born (at 2 Fife Street, Fife Keith, Banffshire) and on 17 May, four days after this birth, his mother died, aged 28, of albuminaria and puerperal eclampsia, leaving her husband David Burns with this newborn son and his two other young sons, Thomas and Angus.

What then happened to the family is unclear: David Burns (senior) remarried on 6 August 1896 Margaret (Maggie) MacPherson in Kingussie, Inverness-shire, but none of them appears in the 1901 or the 1911 census (except youngest brother David M. – see his life story). However, the record of UK soldiers killed in 1914-1919 shows Thomas's place of residence as Invergordon, Ross-shire.

It seems that only one of the three brothers escaped the 1914-1918 war: the middle son, Angus McDonald Burns who, having emigrated to Australia in 1913, enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force in October 1917, from which he went absent without leave on 2 December 1917. In March 1928 he returned to his birthplace Keith, Banffshire, Scotland (the passenger list describes him as a Farm Labourer, destination 175a Mid Street Keith, Banffshire; age 36; unaccompanied); he died aged 78 in 1969 in Aberdeen.

David Burns senior died in Inverurie, Aberdeenshire on 13 April 1941, his second wife Maggie having predeceased him.

The youngest, David M. Burns, joined the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Scots Guards and entered the theatre of war in France on 28 December 1914. On 27 January 1915 he died as a prisoner of war in the German Field Hospital at Pont-a-Vendin, France and was buried in the communal cemetery.

Thomas Alexander Burns, Sergeant 13438 15<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion 1<sup>st</sup> Glasgow Highland Light Infantry joined the theatre of war in France on 23 November 1915 and was killed in action on 3 July 1916. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial to the missing of the Somme.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **James Davidson**

### **Private S/17470 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Black Watch Royal Highlanders**

**Born 31 July 1892, Aberdour, Fife.**

**Died 11 November 1918, Alexandria, Egypt.**

James Davidson was the son of William and Mary (née Colliar) Davidson, born 31 July 1892 at The Banks, Aberdour, Fife. His parents married on 18 December 1890 at Blackdub, Cleish, Kinrossshire, his father a ploughman, his mother a domestic servant.

The 1901 census shows the family – William, a coal pit labourer aged 31, Mary aged 33 and their children Christina aged 10, James aged 8, David aged 7, Maggie aged 5 and William aged 11 months – living at Rybog Cottage, east Cleish.

William, his wife and Christina are shown as having been born in Cleish; James and David in Aberdour, Fife; Maggie in Kinghorn and William in Cleish.

By the 1911 census the family has moved to Gairneybridge, west Cleish. William, now 10, is the only child of those on the 1901 census still at home, the others – Christina, James, David and Maggie are not listed, but four more children have been born since that last census: Charles aged 8, Lizzie, aged 5, George aged 4 and Isabella aged 2; all born in Cleish.

James would have been 19 that year. At some point he enlisted at Perth in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) but there is no indication as to when he entered the theatre of war. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Black Watch was in India when war broke out in August 1914, but was called back and landed at Le Havre, France on 12 October 1914. In December 1915 it moved to Mesopotamia and in January 1918 to Palestine, arriving Suez 13 January 1918 as part of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force.

James Davidson is one of many listed on the regimental return as having 'Died of Disease', and it is ironic that he should have succumbed on the very day that the Armistice was declared.

His Soldier's Will, which was dated 20 July but with no year, left all his effects to his mother, Mrs W. Davidson of Hilton Cottage, Duncrievie, Glenfarg, Perthshire, Scotland. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission grave registration documents give his parents' address as Plum Cottage, Drunzie Feus, Glenfarg, Perthshire.

He is buried in the cemetery at Alexandria (Hadra), Egypt.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **William Turnbull Davidson**

**Private 6725 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Black Watch (Royal Highlanders)**

**Born 17 July 1895, Glasgow.**

**Died 29 September 1915, France or Belgium.**

William Davidson was aged 20 when he died of wounds at the Highland Casualty Clearing Station no. 22 at Aire, in France, where he is buried in Aire Communal Cemetery.

He was born on 17 July 1895 at Crookston Street, Glasgow, his parents David ( a grain storeman) and Jane (née Ferguson) Davidson, who had married on 31 December 1890 in Glasgow. His father David Davidson came from Cleish, Kinrossshire and Jane from Alnwick, Northumberland.

Coincidentally, David's mother Margaret Davidson (née Duncan) later married a George Reekie. Their son David Duncan Reekie (William T's half-uncle) was killed in action on 30 July 1916, and is also commemorated on the Glenfarg war memorial. Again co-incidentally and confusingly, David Duncan Reekie had a half-brother called William Davidson, born 27 Dec 1885 to his mother Margaret Davidson before her marriage to George Reekie. This William Davidson served in the Gordon Highlanders and died in the field, presumed dead 13 April 1918, and is commemorated on the Loos, Memorial, France.

The 1901 census shows David and Jane Davidson aged 38 and 40 respectively, living at Old Causeway, Kinross, with their children Margaret and Elizabeth aged 9 (twins: Elspeth Black and Margaret Duncan Davidson born 8 November 1891, Elspeth the elder by five minutes); James age 7; William age 5; David age 3 and Jane age 6 months.

The 1911 census shows the family at Heart Rigg, Strathmiglo, Fifeshire. David age 49 a saw miller; Jane age 51; James age 18, a bobbin turner; William T. age 16, a shuttle maker; Jennie [Janie?] 11; Adam age 8 and Aggie age 6. The twins, Margaret and Elspeth, who would be 19 now, are missing presumably working elsewhere.

William entered the theatre of war in France on 29 April 1915 and died of his wounds on 29 September 1915.

\*\*\*\*

## **William Down (birth name Jervis Gibben Down)**

### **Private 1442 1st Battalion Black Watch (Royal Highlanders)**

**Born 1891, Edinburgh.**

**Died 23 May 1915, Perth.**

The old Arngask Parish Churchyard lies atop a small hill east of the village of Glenfarg in Perthshire. The churchyard, adjoining the ruins of the old church, is secluded and peaceful: in warm weather it is a very pleasant place to lie in the grass, idling away the good part of a day. Close up against the drystone back boundary wall is the grave of William Down, shaded by an overhanging tree.

His headstone is the war grave pattern such as those used in Commonwealth War Graves Commission war cemeteries, but instead of their customary cream-coloured Portland stone his is grey granite. The legend on the stone tells us that this is the grave of William Downs [sic], Private 1442 of the Black Watch regiment and that he died on 23 May 1915. The grave is on the register of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, under the name W. Downs, in Arngask Parish Churchyard.

He first enlisted on 14 May 1908 at Kinghorn in Fife for six years service in the Special Reserve (3<sup>rd</sup> Btn) of the Black Watch, service no. 817. His attestation papers show his name as William Downs [sic], born in the town and Parish of Glenfarg in Kinross-shire. [Until 1891, the county boundaries had their confluence at Glenfarg: part was in Perthshire, part in Fife and part in Kinross-shire. It is now in Perthshire.]

He said he was 17 years and 6 months old and his next-of-kin was his elder sister, Janet Down, of 13 Manor Place, Edinburgh.

He had been working as an apprentice gardener for 13 months for Col. Trotter at Colinton House, Edinburgh, which apprenticeship was due to expire in March 1910.

Originally built for the Edinburgh banker Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo, Colinton House was then the residence of 'The Abercrombys of Colinton': the Barons of Dunfermline. [Colinton House is now Merchiston School, approximately 6 km south of Edinburgh.] On the death of the second Baron Dunfermline in 1868, the house passed to his daughter Mary Catherine Elizabeth Abercromby (d. 1908), wife of Lt. Col John Moubray Trotter, and it was he to whom William Down was apprenticed.

On 16 October 1908 William enlisted in the regular army: the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Black Watch, Service no. 1442, giving his age as 18 years and 5 months, and already serving with the 3<sup>rd</sup> (Service) Battalion Black Watch. His service record shows him in Ireland until 4 January 1911, when the regiment went to India. It was recalled for service in France and entered that theatre of war in September 1914.

However, on 12 January 1915, William was back in UK and was admitted to the Royal Herbert Hospital in Woolwich, London on 26 February 1915. He was diagnosed with tuberculosis, discharged from hospital on 12 March and, on 26 March 1915 he was discharged from the army as no longer being physically fit for service. He was awarded a (disability) pension, conditional for 12 months, of 12/6d a week.

He returned to Perthshire where, on 23 May 1915, aged 24, he died of tuberculosis at Hillside Home, Kinnoull, Perth. His death was registered by his sister, Janet Williamina Robertson Down, who gave her address as The Manse, Crieff, Perthshire.

William Down said on his military attestation form that he was born in Glenfarg — which may well have been all he knew or remembered — but he was born on 17 January 1891 at 37 Pleasance, in the Canongate area of Edinburgh. His birth certificate gives his name as Jervis Gibben Robertson or Down, the illegitimate son of Euphemia Down. Robertson was his mother's maiden name, and Down her married name.

Jervis and his sister Janet appear on the 1891 census living in their maternal grandfather's house at Duncricieve, a hamlet about three quarters of a mile south of Glenfarg, Perthshire, with their mother Euphemia Down and their grandfather, Alexander Robertson.

Their mother is described as a widow, aged 36 with a daughter Janet R. aged 3, and a son Jervie [sic] Down, 3 months old. Possibly Jervis Gibben was the name of his natural father, but it seems that Jervie later took the name William — which was the name of his mother's late husband.

Euphemia (née Robertson), aged 29, married William Down, aged 36, a master baker, on 3 January 1887 at Duncricieve (presumably at her father's house). They gave 12 Balfour Street, Leith Walk, Edinburgh as their usual residence.

However, her husband William died of enteritis six months later, on 23 July 1887. Euphemia's daughter Janet Williamina Robertson Down was a child of that union, (born at Duncricieve 28 September 1887) — but Jervis/William Down was not, being born in 1891.

Jervis/William's grandfather, Alexander Robertson, died of heart disease, aged 74, on 14 October 1893 at Smiddyhill (Farm), Glenfarg; his daughter Euphemia Down was present and registered his death.

William's mother Euphemia died of consumption (tuberculosis) in Glenfarg on 13 December 1897 aged 42. Her death certificate says she was a dairy-woman, and her neighbour Isabella Nicol of Fernhall, Glenfarg registered her death.

William was aged 6 and his sister Janet aged 10. What then happened to them is not known.

But eleven years later, in May 1908 William was an apprentice gardener in Edinburgh, and his sister was living at 13 Manor Place, Edinburgh. In 1911 his sister Janet Williamina Robertson Down was working as a general servant to a Jane Anderson (age 70) at 50 Bemerston Place, Edinburgh. The rest of William's story we know. His sister Janet Down died in Perth on 1 January 1976, aged 80.

\*\*\*\*\*

William DOWN

Page 28.  
 1891. BIRTHS in the Parish of Barnton in the Parish of Edinburgh

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
No.	Name and Surname	When and Where Born.	Name, Surname, & Rank or Profession of Father, Name, and Maiden Surname of Mother, Date and Place of Marriage.	Signature and Qualification of Informant, and Month, year, if out of the House in which the Birth occurred.	When and Where Registered, and Signature of Registrar.
82	Jervis Gibson Robertson (Nepotism)	1891. January 27 9 1/2 m. 75th 199 Leamuel Edinburgh	William Robertson widow of William Robert Robert, Infanterist of British Forces, 24 <sup>th</sup> July 1877.	Jervina Burre Mother	1891. January 25 John Robertson As Registrar. All
83	Francis Stannagers	1891. January 11 <sup>th</sup> birth 01.5 m. A.M. 23 Leamuel Street Edinburgh	Joseph Stannager Father Isabella Stannager M.A. born 13 October 13 Edinburgh	J Stannager Mother	1891. January 24 As Registrar Alex White Registrar.
84	Khaud Alexander Stenderum	1891. January 14 <sup>th</sup> 0 m. A.M. 18 <sup>th</sup> of Hill Edinburgh	John Stenderum Foreman barrow Mary Stenderum M. J. Ballantyne 1879 Maiden, W. I. O.	John Stenderum Father	1891. January 26 John Stenderum As Registrar. All

11  
 N.L. 11.17



The grave of William Down in Arngask Parish Churchyard.



The headstone of William Down in Arngask Parish Churchyard.



## **James Heggie**

**Private S/22632 1/7th Battalion Gordon Highlanders**

**Born 14 July 1899, Strathmiglo, Fifeshire, Scotland.**

**Died 9-14 April 1918, France or Belgium.**

*James Heggie is named on the Glenfarg War Memorial plaque as having belonged to the Black Watch, however I have been unable to find any evidence of this. It may be a mistake or, equally likely, that he transferred to or from the Black Watch at some point.*

James Heggie, born on 14 July 1899 at High Street, Strathmiglo, Fife, was the son of James and Annie Duff (née Pearson) Heggie, his parents having married on 24 February 1899 at Deuglie Cottage, Arngask (Glenfarg). His father, aged 28 is described as a (grocers) van man, his mother aged 22 a domestic servant. The 1901 census shows the family living at High Street, Strathmiglo, his father a grocer's shop assistant.

By the 1911 census, the family is still at High Street, Strathmiglo, and there are three more sons: Charles aged 9, William aged 6 and Peter aged 2. James is shown twice on the 1911 census: once at the family home at Strathmiglo and also at his grandmother Annie Pearson's house, Forrester Seat, Arngask. Having been recorded at the Strathmiglo house, he may have been visiting his grandmother at another time of day, at which time he was recorded there.

By 1917, aged 18, James was old enough to enlist (although soldiers could not be sent abroad until they were 19) and he enlisted at Stirling in the Gordon Highlanders. First assigned to the 51<sup>st</sup> Graduated Battalion, a training unit, in Cromer, Norfolk, he then seems to have been assigned to the 1/7<sup>th</sup> (Deeside Highland) Battalion, which had been in France since May 1915 and was part of the 153<sup>rd</sup> Brigade in the 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Division.

James's soldier's will is dated 27 March 1918, made at the training camp at Cromer. He gives his father James Heggie of 34 Swarland, Kinross as his legatee.

James Heggie 'died in the field' his death presumed 'on or since 9-14 April 1918', his place of death 'France or Belgium'.

He is commemorated on Panel 9 of the Ploegsteert Memorial (Berks Cemetery Extension), Hainant, Belgium.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Frederick Laing MM and Bar**

### **Lance Corporal 6942 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion Queens Own (Royal West Kent) Regiment**

**Born 1897, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.**

**Died 20 November 1920, Perth.**

Frederick Laing is buried in Arngask New Cemetery, Glenfarg , Perthshire, Scotland, with a grey granite war grave pattern headstone, and I have always been intrigued as to how a man of Kent came to his grave in a small village in Scotland. Although he died after the conflict had ended, it seemed to me that he was as much a casualty of the war as those others who, like him, are buried far from their homes.

His Commonwealth War Graves Commission graves registration documents note that it is a private grave (i.e. rights of exclusive burial acquired by private individual) and:

*Next of kin reside in Tunbridge Wells.*

*Grave was purchased with deceased's own money, and deeds should be with Messrs Macgregor Mitchell & Co, solicitors Perth.*

*Plan at the Inspector of Poor's office, Milnathort, Perthshire.*

*(Sgd) H.G. McCoy Area Inspector Edinburgh Area*

Frederick Laing was born in Tunbridge Wells, Kent, the son of Fanny Saunders Laing who was the daughter of John and Ellen (née Hill) Laing, who was born 26 October 1869 in Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

Her son Fred Laing's birth was registered between July and September 1897.

The 31 March 1901 census shows him living, aged 3, with his maternal grandparents John (aged 73, a retired gardener) and Ellen (aged 66, a launderer/washerwoman) Laing and with his mother, Fanny S. Laing (aged 31, also a launderer) at 9 Rochdale Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

The next census, 2 April 1911, shows him, now aged 13, in the household of George Hillman (aged 49, a builder's labourer), whom Fanny Laing married in 1902. Fanny Hillman (aged 42) now has two other children, May and Dorothy Hillman aged 6 and 1 respectively, but Frederick is listed as Frederick Laing, not Hillman. Also living in the household is John Edward Laing (aged 34, town postman) described as 'Brother': presumably Fanny's brother. They are living at 9 Rochdale Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent: the same address as his grandparents' in 1901.

No enlistment records survive for Fred Laing, but at the outbreak of WWI he would have been 17, possibly just 18, and therefore eligible to enlist. The 10<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion (Kent County) Royal West Kent Regiment to which Frederick belonged, was formed in Maidstone on 3 May 1915 by Lord Harris, Vice Lieutenant of Kent, at the request of the Army Council. It consisted of men primarily from the south of England.

Firstly, in July 1915, attached to 118th Brigade in the 39<sup>th</sup> Division, it was transferred in October to 123<sup>rd</sup> Brigade in the 41<sup>st</sup> Division and moved to Aldershot in January 1916. The units of the Division moved to France between 1 and 6 May 1916 and by 8 May they were concentrated between Hazebrouck and Bailleul. It remained on the Western Front until, in November 1917, it moved to Italy and took over a sector of the front line behind the River Piave, north west of Treviso between 30 November and 2 December 1917. [[www.1914-1918.net](http://www.1914-1918.net)]

In March 1918 Frederick Laing's Division was back in France and on 23 March 1918 at Vaulx Vraucourt, near Bapaume (the battles of St Quentin, Bapaume and Arras – the first phases of the battles of the Somme 1918) during heavy fighting to hold back a German attack (the 'Spring Offensive'), L/Cpl Laing won his (first) M.M..  
[See *The History of the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment* by Capt. C.T. Atkinson, Naval & Military Press 2003 Vol 2, 371-375.]

His medal record card "Awarding The Military Medal", shows that he was awarded a bar to that on 13 November 1918. When the Armistice brought fighting to an end, Frederick Laing's division was selected to join the army of occupation (British Army of the Rhine: BAOR) and on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1919 was re-titled the London Division. These units were gradually dissolved leaving, by February 1920, only regular army units in place.

It seems that, on demobilization, Frederick Laing went to Glenfarg, Perthshire, at the invitation of a Captain James Aubrey Lilburne Hopkinson to work for him as a groom at Duncrive House, Duncrive, Glenfarg. Capt. Hopkinson had himself served in WWI with the Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment and it is possible that the two men came across each other whilst on active service – both their regiments served as front line troops in the 123<sup>rd</sup> Brigade 41<sup>st</sup> Division.

Whilst Capt. Hopkinson had been born in Kensington, London (Feb/March 1895), both his grandmother and mother (Charlotte and Mary Lilburne respectively) were born at Pittenweem in Fife and lived at Duncrive House, Duncrive, Glenfarg. In 1893 his mother married Samuel Day Hopkinson and he and his sister (Marian Charlotte Lilburne Hopkinson b. 3 May 1896) lived with their parents at 41 Campden Hill Road, Kensington, London W8.

His father died in 1903 aged 44, and the 1911 census shows his mother and grandmother (both widows) at that address, but there is no sign of James. The London Gazette of 7 August 1914 notes the confirmation of James A. L. Hopkinson's rank to Second Lieutenant, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment. Capt. Hopkinson's medal index card shows that he entered the theatre of war in France in May 1915 and in 1921 it records that he had changed address from 78a Lexham Gardens, London W8 to Duncrive House, Glenfarg, and requesting that his medals be sent there.

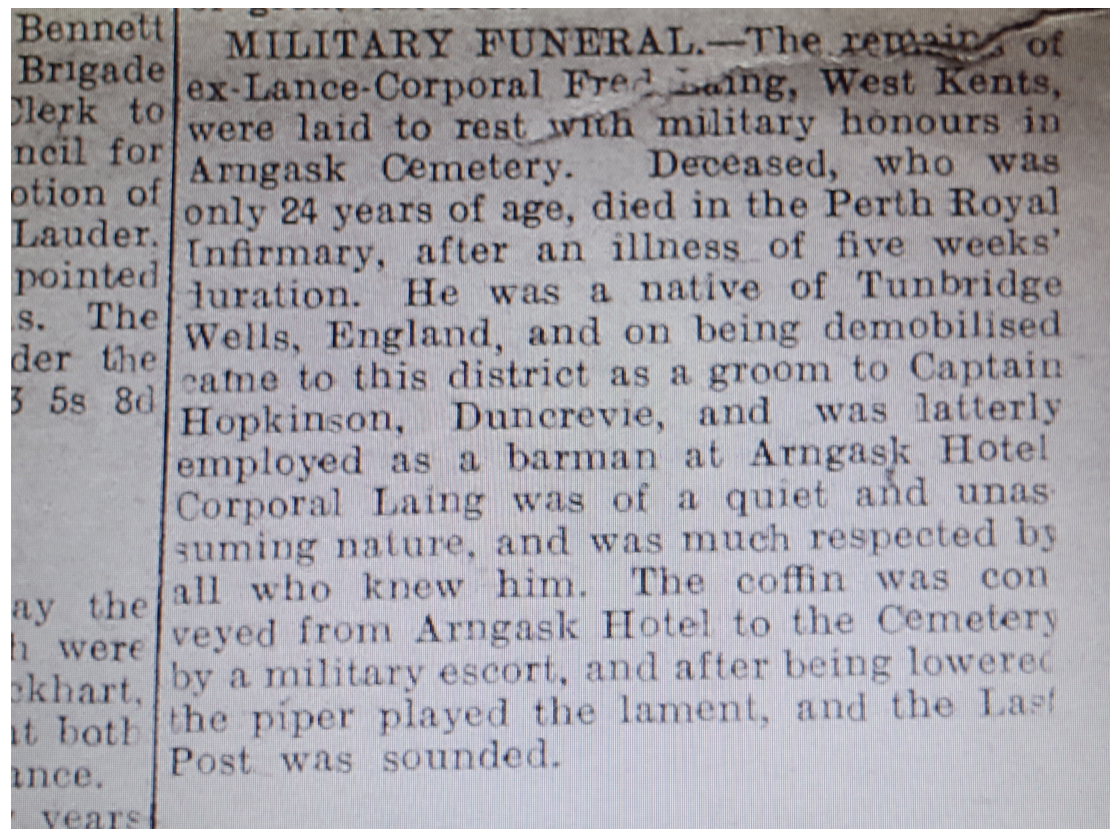
By that time however, Frederick Laing was dead. He died on 20<sup>th</sup> November 1920 in Perth Royal Infirmary of 'Sub-acute Nephritis and Uraemia'. His occupation was described as 'Barman' and his usual residence as The Glenfarg Hotel, Glenfarg.

From the Perthshire Advertiser 1 December 1920, page 3:

**MILITARY FUNERAL**

The remains of ex-Lance Corporal Fred Laing, West Kents, were laid to rest with military honours in Arngask Cemetery. Deceased, who was only 24 years of age, died in the Perth Royal Infirmary, after an illness of five weeks' duration. He was a native of Tunbridge Wells, England, and on being demobilized came to this district as a groom to Captain Hopkinson, Duncrevie [sic], and was latterly employed as a barman at Arngask Hotel. Corporal Laing was of a quiet and unassuming nature, and was much respected by all who knew him. The coffin was conveyed from Arngask Hotel to the Cemetery by a military escort, and after being lowered the piper played the lament, and the Last Post was sounded

\*\*\*\*\*





The headstone of Frederick Laing, MM. in Arngask New Cemetery

## **George Boyd McArthur**

### **Trooper 3545 B Squadron 1st Life Guards**

**Born 19 May 1895, Old Fargie, Gatehouse, Fife, Scotland.  
Died 23 December 1917, France.**

George Boyd Mc Arthur was the son of James and Mary (née Boyd) McArthur and was born at Old Fargie (Farm), Arngask (Glenfarg), Perthshire, on 19 May 1895. His father was a farmer, and his parents had married on 22 December 1891 in Dollar.

The 1901 census shows the family living at Forresters Seat, Old Fargie, his father aged 35 and his mother 36, with siblings Peter aged 8, Mary aged 3 and James aged 1.

The 1911 census shows the family at Old Fargie Farmhouse, Peter working on the farm whilst George and his siblings are still at school.

George enlisted at Perth and on 19 October 1915 entered the theatre of war in France with a cavalry regiment, the 1st Life Guards.

The regiment had been heavily involved at the First Battle of Ypres (October – November 1914) and Second Ypres (April-May 1915), but George McArthur's first experience may have been the battles of Loos (September-October 1915) and Arras (April 1917). At other times, the regiment took its turn in holding various sections of the front line trenches. The exact place and circumstances of George McArthur's death are unknown, but records show that he died of wounds on 23 December 1917.

In the old Arngask Parish Churchyard in Glenfarg for many years stood a metal cross, formed over a wooden core, with beneath it a stone bearing a metal plaque:

*'Original cross erected in memory of George Boyd McArthur, killed in action 21 December 1917 [sic], buried at Vadencourt British Cemetery, Maiseemy, France.'*

Over the years the cross has disintegrated, but the plaque remains.

\*\*\*\*\*



The memorial cross and plaque for George McArthur in Arngask Parish Churchyard (image taken in 2005)

## **Wallace Williamson McFarlane**

**1664 (later 320055) Acting Company Quarter Master Sergeant 1/3<sup>rd</sup> (Lowland) Field Ambulance Royal Army Medical Corps**

**Born 5 April 1896, Glenfarg, Perthshire.**

**Died 9 January 1918, Abassia, Egypt.**

Wallace Williamson McFarlane is buried in Kantara War Cemetery, Egypt, where he died in the 24<sup>th</sup> Stationary Hospital on 9 January 1918.

At the time of his enlistment on 26 March 1913, he was living at 36 Roseneath Terrace, Edinburgh (his parents' address), working as an apprentice engineer fitter for Bertrams Ltd, but he was born in Glenfarg, Perthshire. His father was John Bruce McFarlane, a master baker, and his mother Helen (née Thomson) McFarlane who had married on 3 June 1891 in Edinburgh.

The 1901 census shows the family living at The Bakery, Great North Road, Glenfarg; his father aged 44, his mother aged 41, Wallace aged 5, and his siblings, brother John Bruce aged 9 and sister Davida Bryce [sic] McFarlane aged 4. Later in 1901, on 27 September, another son was born: Charles William McFarlane.

The family was still at this address at the 1911 census. Wallace aged 14 is described as an apprentice architect, and his elder brother John, who would have been 19, is not listed.

Wallace's attestation papers show he enlisted for four years' service in the Territorial Force, on 26 March 1913 at Edinburgh with service no. 1664. Assigned to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Lowland Field Ambulance, Royal Army Medical Corps, he was 17 years and 11 months of age and 5' 10" tall. On 5 August 1914 (i.e. the day after WWI was declared) he was promoted to Acting Corporal and fully embodied into the army (service no. 320055).

He was on Home Service in Edinburgh from 5 August 1914 until 5 June 1915 and from 6 June was assigned to the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force. He was promoted Corporal on 7 June. In September 1914 he had the necessary inoculations for foreign service and, like many in those times, he did not enjoy good oral health – before being passed for foreign service he had twelve teeth filled and five extracted on 25 March 1915. This seems to have been a recurring problem for him, for his service record shows his admission on 8 February 1916 to No.5 Canadian Stationary Hospital at Abassia, near Cairo, for 'Dental Caries'. One wonders if this was a contributory factor to his eventual death, on 9 January 1918, 'from abcess of the tonsil'.

Having served in the army since 1913, making his way up the ranks to become Acting Company Quarter Master Sergeant and now in the last year of the war, it is ironic that he died of an ailment now readily treated by antibiotics.

His Soldier's Will, made on 5 July 1915, left all his effects to 'my youngest brother Charles William McFarlane at present living at 41 Scotland St. Edinburgh'.

\*\*\*\*\*



## **Samuel McKenzie**

*Despite extensive research I have been unable to find a connection with a Samuel McKenzie to Glenfarg. There are ten S. McKenzies listed on the CWGC list of WWI dead, only two of which were in the (Royal) Army Service Corps and only one being a Samuel (the other is Sidney T4/043469.) The Army Service Corps only gained the prefix Royal in 1918.*

*This is the story of that Samuel McKenzie if, indeed, he is 'ours': I can only assume that at some point either he or a member of his family lived or worked in or near Glenfarg.*

## **Samuel McKenzie**

**DM2/166114 Army Service Corps 765th Motor Transport Company  
(attached to Royal Garrison Artillery Siege Park for 132 Siege  
Battalion)**

**Born 5 September 1882, Govan, Lanarkshire.**

**Died 2 December 1918, Salonika (Thessaloniki), Greece.**

Samuel McKenzie was born at 8 Alma Street, Govan, Lanarkshire on 5 September 1882. His father Richard, described as a 'Ship Rigger (Journeyman)', and his mother Jane Brown (née Landels) McKenzie married on 29 November 1878 in Dumbarton. Samuel was the second child, his sister Annie having been born on 18 October 1879, his father described as 'Seaman (Second Officer)' on her birth certificate.

The 1881 census shows Richard and Jane, aged 27 and 33 respectively, and Annie age 1, living at 8 Alma Street, Govan, with Richard again described as a 'Ship Rigger'. At the 1891 census they are living at 6 Octavia Street, Port Glasgow, and as well as children Annie aged 11, and Samuel aged 8, another son, Robert, aged 6 is now in the household.

By the 1901 census however, Richard is a widower, living at 10 Rutland Crescent, Govan with his three children: Annie aged 21 on 'Home Duties', Samuel aged 18 a 'Contractor's Clerk' and Robert aged 15 a 'House Factor's Clerk'.

By the 1911 census, Richard aged 57 (still a ship rigger) has remarried and is living at 6 Brighton Place, Govan, with his wife Grace, aged 38; the duration of their marriage is shown as nine years. There have been four children born of this marriage (Grace, Martha, Janet and Richard) and two of the three children of the first marriage are still living in this household: Annie aged 31, no occupation shown, and Robert aged 25, now a 'Ship Rigger'. Annie married on 22 September 1911 Thomas Hunter, a 'Mechanical Engineer'.

Samuel, aged 28, still single, appears on the 1911 census as a boarder in the household of James (a 'Police Pensioner and Newsagent') and Rosanne Clarke and their four children at 1 Dale End, Kendal, Westmoreland. Samuel's occupation is 'Cashier' for a 'Public Works Contractor' and his place of birth and usual residence is shown as Govan, Lanarkshire.

If Samuel worked for a company which undertook public works, e.g. road/rail building, in various parts of the country then there is the possibility that he at some point lived in the Arngask area. Between 1890 and 1920 a considerable amount of work was involved in building the railway which went through Glen Farg (two cuttings and nine bridges), and it may be that Samuel worked for contractors involved with this project? Or the building of the reservoir at Deuglie (c.1912)?

Sam McKenzie died of bronchial pneumonia at Salonika (or Salonica, now Thessaloniki), Greece, on 2 December 1918. He was part of 765 Motor Transport Company which was attached to the Siege Park for the 132 Siege Battery of the Royal Garrison Artillery. The heavy guns, howitzers, equipment and ammunition needed by the Royal Garrison Artillery needed motor transport to haul them: Sam's company would have been employed for that and for supplying the ammunition 'parks'. His rank was Private 'DM2', a denomination usually given to learner drivers, but he was probably quite experienced by 1918. Although we do not know when he joined the Army Service Corps, 765 MT Company was formed in 1916.

Sam McKenzie is buried in Dedeagatch (now Alexandroupolis) British Cemetery, Greece, grave 12.

\*\*\*\*

## **David Duncan Reekie**

### **Private 3583 6<sup>th</sup> (Perthshire) Battalion (Territorial) Black Watch (Royal Highlanders)**

**Born 6 April 1892, Mains of Huntingtower, Tibbermore, Perthshire.  
Died 30 July 1916, Somme, France.**

David Duncan Reekie was born on 6 April 1892 at Mains of Huntingtower, Tibbermore, Perthshire, the son of George Reekie, a ploughman, and Margaret (previous surname Davidson, née Duncan) Reekie. (See also the life story of William T. Davidson for his relationship to David Reekie.)

The 1901 census shows the Reekie family living at East Damside, Kinross, Kinross-shire; his father George aged 36 a labourer at a coal mine, his mother Margaret also aged 36, and David's siblings: Isabella aged 12, George aged 10, Euphemia aged 8 and Marion aged 6.

By the 1911 census only Euphemia and another sibling John aged 7, are shown living with their parents, now at Middleton, Orwell, Kinross-shire.

David Reekie appears on the 1911 census, aged 18, living as a boarder and working as a ploughman at Hattonburn Farm, Orwell.

At some point he enlisted in the 6<sup>th</sup> (Perthshire) Battalion (Territorial) Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) which landed in Boulogne, France on 2 May 1915 and became part of the 153<sup>rd</sup> Brigade of the 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Division.

David Duncan Reekie was killed in action on 30 July 1916 and is commemorated on Pier and Face 10a of the Thiepval Memorial to the missing of the Somme.

*On 1 July 1916, supported by a French attack to the south, thirteen divisions of Commonwealth forces launched an offensive on a line from north of Gommecourt to Maricourt. Despite a preliminary bombardment lasting seven days, the German defences were barely touched and the attack met unexpectedly fierce resistance. Losses were catastrophic and with only minimal advances on the southern flank, the initial attack was a failure. In the following weeks, huge resources of manpower and equipment were deployed in an attempt to exploit the modest successes of the first day. However, the German Army resisted tenaciously and repeated attacks and counter attacks meant a major battle for every village, copse and farmhouse gained. At the end of September, Thiepval was finally captured. The village had been an original objective of 1 July. Attacks north and east continued throughout October and into November in increasingly difficult weather conditions. The Battle of the Somme finally ended on 18 November with the onset of winter.*

[CWGC website on Thiepval Memorial]

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Arthur Forbes Robertson**

**Private S/12635 1/6<sup>th</sup> (Perthshire) Battalion (Territorial) Black Watch (Royal Highlanders), attached to 153 Trench Mortar Battery**

**Born 4 May 1892, Scone, Perthshire.**

**Died 20 July 1918, France.**

Arthur Robertson was one of the numerous children of John and Mary Ann (née Morrison) Robertson who married on 15 November 1878 in Scone, Perthshire – the 1911 census records that, having been married for 32 years, they had 13 children, 12 of whom were still living at that point: the latest child, Grace, born when her mother was aged 49.

Arthur was born at Scone on 4 May 1892: the 1891 census shows the family living at 1 Butterhole Cottage, Scone, father John Robertson an estate labourer. At that point there were eight children in the household.

By the 1901 census the family, including Arthur aged 8, was living at Back Road, Arngask (Glenfarg), Perthshire; there are still eight children in the house, as another four have been born and the eldest four (who appeared on the 1901 census) are not recorded now.

The 1911 census shows the family at Rowan Cottage, Arngask (Glenfarg), Perthshire: father John aged 61 a wire fencer, and Mary aged 58, with eight of their children and one grandson. Arthur, aged 18, is working as a baker's van man.

It is not known when he might have enlisted, neither does his medals index card record when he entered the theatre of war, but he joined the 1/6<sup>th</sup> (Perthshire) Battalion (Territorial) of the Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) which was raised in August 1914 and landed at Boulogne, France on 2 May 1915. On 12 May it became part of the 153<sup>rd</sup> Brigade of the 51<sup>st</sup> (Highland) Division.

At the time of his death on 20 July 1918, Arthur Forbes Robertson was attached to the 153<sup>rd</sup> Trench Mortar Battery. He was killed in action near Epernay, Marne, France and buried in a battlefield grave, alongside a comrade from the same unit, Pte 202429 T. Todd, killed on the same day (same time?). When these graves were concentrated in 1920, the two comrades were exhumed and reburied in Marfaux British Cemetery, Marne, France.

*Marfaux was captured by the Germans in May 1918, and retaken, after severe fighting, on the 23rd July, by the 51st (Highland) and 62nd (West Riding) Divisions and the New Zealand Cyclist Battalion.*

[CWGC cemetery description]

\*\*\*\*\*



Arthur Forbes Robertson (photograph supplied by his granddaughter, Florrie Russell, to the Imperial War Museum website [livesofthefirstworldwar.org](http://livesofthefirstworldwar.org))

## **David Drummond Robertson**

**Private S/13349 8<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion Black Watch (Royal Highlanders)**

**Born 5 June 1897, Arngask (Glenfarg), Perthshire.  
Died 24 March 1918, France.**

Both David Robertson and his elder brother William died in WWI: William on 3 September 1916 and David on 24 March 1918.

David was born on 5 June 1897 in Glenfarg, his parents James, a railway signalman, and Mary Ann (née Halley) Robertson, who married on 22 October 1879 in Milnathort.

The 1901 census shows the family living at Great North Road, Arngask; father James aged 41 still a railway signalman, a native of Arngask, and wife Mary aged 41, a native of Auchterarder. Daughter Christine aged 19 is a letter deliverer, brother James aged 14 a telegraph messenger; William aged 10 and Jane aged 7 are scholars and David D. is aged 3.

Their father died of apoplexy (generally now referred to as stroke) on 10 December 1908 however, and the 1911 census shows David aged 13 and his mother Mary aged 51 living at Struie Cottage in the household of David Roger aged 24, a railway signalman, who had married David's sister Christina Robertson. His mother, Mary, is working as the caretaker of the local school. His elder brother William meanwhile, aged 20, is working as a ploughman for, and living on the farm of, James Ellis at Abbot's Deuglie, Glenfarg.

At some point David enlisted at Perth and joined the 8<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion Black Watch (Royal Highlanders). His soldier's will is dated 1 August 1916, but his Medals Index card does not show the date he entered the theatre of war. Although the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion was in France from 10 March 1915, as he was not 19 until 5 June 1916 he should not, in theory, have been allowed to be sent abroad until that age.

(He did not qualify for the 1914 or 1914-15 Star, which suggests he did not go to France before 31 December 1915, the cut-off date for qualification for the 1914-15 Star.)

He was killed in action on 24 March 1918 and, his body not found, is commemorated on panels 24-26 of the Pozieres Memorial, Somme, France.

*The POZIERES MEMORIAL relates to the period of crisis in March and April 1918 when the Allied Fifth Army was driven back by overwhelming numbers across the former Somme battlefields, and the months that followed before the Advance to Victory, which began on 8 August 1918. The Memorial commemorates over 14,000 casualties of the United Kingdom and 300 of the South African Forces who have no known grave and who died on the Somme from 21 March to 7 August 1918. [CWGC memorial description]*

\*\*\*\*\*

## **William Robertson**

**Lance Corporal S/16453 (also 9469) 1st Battalion Cameron Highlanders**

**Born 26 January 1891, Arngask (Glenfarg), Perthshire.  
Died 3 September 1916, France.**

Both William Robertson and his younger brother David Drummond Robertson died in WWI: William on 3 September 1916 and David on 24 March 1918.

William was born on 26 January 1891 in Glenfarg, his parents James, a railway signalman, and Mary Ann (née Halley) Robertson, who married on 22 October 1879 in Milnathort.

The 1901 census show the family living at Great North Road, Arngask; father James aged 41 still a railway signalman, a native of Arngask, and wife Mary aged 41, a native of Auchterarder. Daughter Christine aged 19 is a letter deliverer, brother James aged 14 a telegraph messenger; William aged 10 and Jane aged 7 are scholars and David D. is aged 3.

Their father died of apoplexy (generally now referred to as stroke) on 10 December 1908 however, and the 1911 census shows William, aged 20, working as a ploughman for, and living on the farm of, James Ellis at Abbot's Deuglie, Glenfarg.

The rest of the family, David aged 13 and his mother Mary aged 51 are living at Struie Cottage in the household of David Roger aged 24, a railway signalman, who had married William's elder sister Christina. His mother, Mary, is working as the caretaker of the local school.

William's attestation papers show that he enlisted in the Queen's own Cameron Highlanders (service no. 9469) at Edinburgh on 24 February 1913: a short service enlistment, for 7 years with the Colours and 5 years in the Reserve. He was aged 22, working as a ploughman, and joined the regiment at Inverness on 27 February. He is described as 5' 7" tall, weight 150lbs.. He served in the home theatre at Inverness from 27 February 1913 until 4 June 1913 when he was stationed at Edinburgh.

However, on 5 August 1914 (one day after WWI was declared) he was 'Discharged at his own request on payment of £18 under Art. 1130 (1) Pay Warrant ' with the rank of Lance Corporal. It is not clear how or why this came about, or how and why he re-enlisted (?) with service no. S/16453 (S nos. indicate enlistment for the duration of the war only), but he entered the theatre of war in France on 1 February 1915 (aged 24) and was killed in action on 3 September 1916. His body was not found and he is commemorated on Pier and Face 15B on the Thiepval Memorial to the missing of the Somme, France.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **James Thomson Shearlaw**

**Sergeant 18196 H Company 21<sup>st</sup> Corps 3<sup>rd</sup> Sappers and Miners Royal Engineers**

**Born 4 March 1888, Forgandenny, Perthshire, Scotland  
Died 28 August 1918, Ludd (Lod or Lydda), then Palestine, now Israel/Gaza.**

James Shearlaw was the son of John and Marion (née Thomson) Shearlaw, who married 18 April 1884 in Edinburgh – his father a gamekeeper aged 35, his mother a domestic servant aged 29. James was their second son, born 4 March 1888 at Rossie Cottages, Forgandenny, Perthshire.

The 1891 census shows the family, father John aged 42 and mother Marion aged 36, son Joseph aged 6, James aged 3 and Mary aged 7 months, living at Rossie Gamekeeper's House in Forgandenny.

At the 1901 census they are still in Forgandenny, at Newbigging Cottage, with Joseph aged 16, James aged 13, Mary aged 10 and William aged 8.

By 1911 however, only John, his wife Marion and son William are still in the family household, now at Fordel, Arngask (Glenfarg), Perthshire. The occupation of both John aged 63 and his son William aged 19 is shown as rabbit trappers.

The eldest brother Joseph had emigrated to Canada, arriving in Montreal on 8 November 1906, where he worked as a carpenter. (On 31 March 1915 he enlisted in the 48<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Canadian Infantry; he survived WWI, returning to Canada where on 9 June 1922 he married Alexandrina McLauchlan. He died in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada on 29 November 1950.)

James, however, is shown on the 1911 census at Woolwich Barracks, London, where he is listed as a Sapper (i.e. Private), aged 23, single, serving with the 38<sup>th</sup> Company Royal Engineers as a blacksmith.

On 2 June 1915 he entered the theatre of war in France: it has been difficult to trace the movements of his company/division but at some point (possibly 1917) he entered the Mediterranean theatre of war where, on 28 August 1918, aged 30, he died of malaria at Alexandria, Egypt. He is buried in the Ramleh (Ramla or Ramallah) war cemetery in what is now designated 'Israel and Palestine (including Gaza)'.

It is not clear (although it seems likely as he would have been conscripted) whether his younger brother William (born 14 August 1892) also served in the war, but he died on 4 June 1932, aged 39, of emphysema, and is buried in Arngask Parish Churchyard. Perhaps because of this, the oldest brother Joseph and his wife Alexandrina made a visit to Glenfarg from Canada to visit their father at Wester Fordel, Glenfarg (their mother died in 1925) from September 1932 until departing on 29 April 1933. Their father died at Wester Fordel in 1937.

\*\*\*\*\*



## **James Smart**

**Private 147506 28<sup>th</sup> Battalion Canadian Infantry**

**Born 10 April 1881, Glenfarg, Perthshire.**

**Died 6 June 1916, Ypres Salient, Belgium.**

James Smart was born at Glenhead (Cottage), Glenfarg on 10 April 1881, although he erroneously gave his date of birth on his Canadian attestation papers as 1883. His parents were John and Sarah (née Low) Smart, and although he gave his name as James Low Smart (and that is how he is recorded on his Commonwealth War Graves Commission record) his birth certificate shows James Smart.

John and Sarah Smart, he a native of Kingskettle, Fife, and she of Arngask (Glenfarg), married at Arngask on 1 April 1862. They had several children: William born 1862, Isabella born 1863, Hugh born 1864, David born 1869, Eliza Jane born 1871, Mary Ann born 1877, Sarah born 1879, James born 1881, Janett (Jeannie) born 1884.

The 1901 census shows James aged 19, a joiner's apprentice, living with his mother Sarah aged 63 (and her granddaughter Sarah Ann Wylie), still living at Glenhead Cottage, Great North Road, Glenfarg. His father, however, is at Pottiehill Farm, Dron, Perthshire, along with his son David aged 32 and daughters Sarah aged 22 and Janett aged 17.

James's mother Sarah died in 1902, and the 1911 census shows his father John aged 70, a widower and retired farmer, living again at Glenhead Cottage, Great North Road, with son David aged 40, a carting contractor, and daughter Sarah aged 32, a dressmaker.

It is possible that James emigrated to Canada after the death of his mother, where on 3 July 1915 at Winnipeg, Manitoba, he enlisted in the Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force.

He died, aged 35, somewhere in the Ypres salient, Belgium, on 6 June 1916, his body never being recovered. He is commemorated on panel 18-26-28 of the Menin Gate Memorial, Ieper (Ypres), Belgium.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **John Soutter**

**Private 22923 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Canadian Infantry**

**Born 6 October 1875, Leith, Edinburgh, Scotland.  
Died 1 May 1916, Etaples, France.**

John Soutter was the son of Colin Spens Soutter, a native of Leuchars, Fife, and his wife Ann (née Davidson), a native of Orwell, Kinross-shire, who married at Milnathort, Kinross-shire on 27 November 1874.

John was the eldest of their six children, born 6 October 1875 in south Leith, Edinburgh. His siblings were Agnes born 1878, Jane and Margaret born 1881, Hannah born 1884 and Allan born 1888. The 1891 census shows the age of his father Colin as 42 and his mother Ann 41; they are living at New Street, Prestonpans, East Lothian. John is working as a railway clerk.

By the 1901 census, only John's siblings Margaret aged 20 and Allan aged 13 are still living with their parents Colin aged 52, a publican, and Ann aged 51 at 1 New Street, Prestonpans. Colin and his wife Ann later came to live (aged 62 and 61 respectively at the 1911 census) at Belmont Cottage, Arngask (Glenfarg), Perthshire.

John aged 25 is now living at 85 Hozier Street, Govan, Lanarkshire with his wife Annie (née Keag), having married on 5 October 1900 in Partick, Glasgow. He is still working as a railway clerk.

On 22 July 1901 their first son Colin Spence Soutter was born at 85 Hozier Street, and on 14 September 1903 their second son Robert Keag Soutter was born at Kilmarnock Road, Shawlands, Pollokshaws, Renfrewshire.

On 21 March 1908, aged 32, John Soutter took passage from Glasgow to St Johns, Canada on steamship *Cassandra* of the Donaldson Line, temporarily leaving behind in Glasgow his wife and sons. Having apparently established a home and occupation, on 29 May 1909 his wife, aged 32, and sons aged 8 and 6, set sail to join him, sailing from Glasgow on the *Grampian* of the Allan Line.

On 29 September 1914 he enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force at Quebec City, Quebec, giving his age as 35 rather than, as it was, 39.

He died of wounds in No. 24 General Hospital, Etaples, France on 1 May 1916. He is buried in Etaples Military Cemetery, on his headstone is the legend that his wife requested:

*Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn*

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Archibald Lawrie Findlay Symington**

**Corporal 330324 9<sup>th</sup> (Glasgow Highland) Battalion (Territorial)  
Highland Light Infantry**

**Born 18 October 1894, Kilmarnock, Ayrshire.**

**Died 24 March 1918, Ypres salient, Belgium.**

Archibald L.F. Symington was the son of the farm grieve (manager) at Arngask Farm, Glenfarg, also named Archibald. The 1901 and 1911 censuses show the family living at Arngask Farmhouse – in 1901 his father was then 'Farm servant in charge of horses' – but subsequent to Archibald L. F.'s death in 1918, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission records show his parents as living at Bothwell Bank, Haddington, East Lothian. Archie is therefore also commemorated on the Haddington war memorial.

Archibald was born at Wardneuk Farm, Kilmarnock, Ayrshire on 18 October 1894, where his father was the farm grieve. His parents Archibald and Mary (née Findlay) Symington having married on 9 January 1890 at Tarbolton, Ayrshire. Judging from the various places of birth of their children, the family obviously moved around, following the father's work.

Archibald had several siblings: James born 1890, Janet (Jessie) McGavin born 1892, Elizabeth (Bessie) M. born 1893, Mary F. born 1899 and Jeannie F. born 1906. The 1911 census shows James aged 21 working as a joiner, Janet aged 18 a student teacher, and Archibald aged 16 an auxiliary postman.

In 1909 Archie Symington was School Dux Medallist at Arngask School. [*Annals of Arngask* J.D. Mackie 1958]

By 5 November 1914 Archibald was serving with the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion Highland Light Infantry, having enlisted at Glasgow. The movements of the regiment were (from [www.1914-1918.net](http://www.1914-1918.net) website):

August 1914 : at Greendyke Street, Glasgow. Part of HLI Brigade in Lowland Division. Moved on mobilisation to Dunfermline.

5 November 1914 : left the Division and landed in France.

23 November 1914: joined 5th Brigade in 2nd Division.

30 January 1916: left the Division and became GHQ Troops.

29 May 1916: joined 100th Brigade in 33rd Division.

Archibald Symington was killed in action on 24 March 1918 and is buried in Ypres Reservoir Cemetery, Ieper (Ypres), Belgium.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

Ancestry.co.uk  
Commonwealth War Graves Commission ([www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org))  
Canadian War Graves Register ([www.bac-lac.gc.ca](http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca))  
Canadian Circumstances of Death Registers ([www.bac-lac.gc.ca](http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca))  
CanadianWarProject.com  
Imperial War Museum ([livesofthefirstworldwar.org](http://livesofthefirstworldwar.org))  
The Long, Long Trail ([www.1914-1918.net](http://www.1914-1918.net))  
The National Archives ([www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk))  
Perth & Kinross Local Studies Centre (AK Bell Library)  
Red Cross POW records ([grandeguerre.icrc.org](http://grandeguerre.icrc.org))  
Scotlandspeople.gov.uk

## **AUTHOR'S NOTE**

These life stories were researched and written by Jen Lindsay during 2013 and 2015. Unless stated in the caption, the images were taken during this time as well. There has been no attempt to research the military aspects of each story, such as movements of battalions and regiments, as that presented too huge a task.

The Long Long Trail website mentioned above, is recommended for such further research, perhaps followed by reading the War Diary (held by the The National Archives) for the relevant regiment or battalion, and such regimental histories as have been written.

A file for each soldier, containing copies of various, relevant certificates and documents is held in the Glenfarg Village Archive.