



CLAN MOFFAT UK NEWSLETTER

Volume 5 Issue 2

April 2014

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Welcome to the April 2014 Edition of Clan Moffat UK Newsletter

With the arrival of beautiful spring weather here in Kent, I am looking ahead to the Homecoming events in Stirling in June. The front cover is a reminder of the previous Homecoming in Edinburgh in 2009 when we met Bruce Moffat (holding the Moffat placard in the photograph) and his family from Florida. You will find details about the events in June on pages five and six.

In this edition we have news of members experiences of floods in Dumfriesshire and fire in Australia. David Burns Moffat has written the second part of his fascinating article, " How did they Meet? " Rosey Moffatt has provided a follow up article to the Biography of Arthur John Moffatt by Amy Sheila Street which appeared in the October 2013 edition. Colin Moffat brings us up to date with progress at Corehead and has written an article about Moffatts from Sligo.

On page 6 Betty Telford's request for someone to take over the role of administering the Clan web site needs our urgent attention. Betty has done a fantastic job for several years but now feels it is time to hand over to someone else. Betty took on this job on a temporary basis !

I have just been to meet a new Moffat, Arthur, my first grandchild, born 24th March.

Jim Moffat
Editor
moffatclanpiper@me.com



International Gathering 2010

Photo Gordon Crammond

Letter from Clan Chief

Dear Members,

Well we have survived this horrid wet winter, only just. Our village was badly flooded twice but fortunately we escaped. I hope you all have survived too. The daffodils are trying to come out so spring must be on the way.

It is not long now until our Gathering at the end of June and I look forward to seeing lots of you then. As you may know Bannockburn has been reduced down to two days, so we are hoping to arrange something else for you on the Monday. Please do let Bunty Davies know if you intend to come. We have a lot planned but need to finalise numbers. The Moffat Museum has now been extended and we hope to have a whole room dedicated to the Moffats, there will be a banquet at Moffat House on the Thursday and of course Bannockburn on the Saturday and Sunday, with the Pipefest parade on Friday night. I would love to have a good showing of Moffats at these events. My little grandson will be attending his first Gathering! Hopefully he will have many more in his lifetime.

Jean Moffat of that Ilk

New Members of Clan Moffat

A warm welcome from Clan Moffat UK to -

292 Mr B James Moffat

294 Hamish Kennedy Moffat

293 Mrs Lesley Mary White

295 Helen Cook

Chairman's Letter

Following the 2013 AGM I am honoured to take over from George as Chair of Clan Moffat UK. I would like to thank George for all his hard work in steering us through the last few years and hope that I can continue to maintain the high standard he set. In this I know that I will be ably guided by the excellent committee I have inherited who should be commended for all the hard work they put in to make our organisation a success.

2014 should be a very interesting, if challenging year.

As many of you will know the 24th June 2014 brings the 700th anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn. The details of associated events are in Bunty's piece elsewhere along with the information on associated events and our planned activities. As Event Scotland who are organising the 'Homecoming' have cancelled events for the Monday I will be organising a 'car tour' around Glencairn, leaving from Moffat on the Monday morning, I will circulate further details nearer the time.

18 September 2014 is another historic date that will go down in Scotland's history as the day Scottish residents have the chance to vote on whether to once again become a sovereign state. Unfortunately the politicians on both sides are busy muddying the waters, hard facts are impossible to nail down and honesty has long since fled the field. Around 2,400 years ago Plato wrote "Those who seek power are not worthy of that power" (in ancient Greek obviously), no change there then.

Can Scotland take its place in the world as a proud and prosperous independent nation – absolutely. Would that prospect be better than remaining as part of the United Kingdom – I can't honestly say.

I look forward to meeting many of you in June, until then take care and best wishes.

David Kennedy Moffat

DEADLINE

MATERIAL FOR

October 2014 Newsletter

31 August 2014

Secretary's Notes

A reminder that 2014 is the year of the 700th Anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn . There will be a Clan Village and many activities including battle re-enactments. To get tickets for this apply to Bannockburnlive.com however, the itinerary for the weekend has changed somewhat since I last wrote to you.

The itinerary is:

Thursday 26th June 2014 – Clan Chief's Reception at 6pm at Moffat House Hotel, piped in by our piper James Moffat and followed by a three course meal. There will be a set menu, probably with a main course of beef with a vegetarian option. The cost will be in the region of £30 per head. I will contact those who have booked nearer the time for choices and payment.

Friday 27th June 2014

1. Clan Moffat Society AGM at 10am in the Proudfoot Centre.
2. This will be followed at 11am by the presentation of prizes to the winners of a children's writing competition which we are promoting. Prizes will be presented by Madam Jean and we hope that as many of you as possible will be able to attend this. Some of the children's writings will be displayed in the Moffat Museum.
3. Pipefest March in Stirling. A coach will leave Moffat at 3.45pm, from the Town Hall to attend this, as the parade will be starting at 6.30pm from the gates of Stirling Castle. The coach will be returning at about 8.30pm from the Albert Hall after the parade. There is going to be a post-parade reception at the Albert Hall, but this will not end until about midnight. Anyone wishing to attend this should arrange their own transport. The cost of the coach will be around £11 per head, payable in advance, the Pipefest will be free.

Saturday 28th & Sunday 29th June

Bannockburn Live The Monday event has been cancelled.

For information and tickets please visit Bannockburnlive.com

The event on each day will still begin at 10am, but will now end at 7pm.

The coach on each of the days will leave Moffat at 8.15am from outside the Town Hall and will cost around £10 per head, payable in advance.

The coach will still return from Bannockburn at 5pm on each day. Anyone wishing to stay later would need to organize their own transport.

If anyone else wishes to put down their name for any of the above events, please let me know by the end of April at the latest. I will then be able to confirm the costs and contact you for payment and with any further details.

Monday 30th June

David Kennedy Moffat will be organizing local trips. Look at his letter for further details.

For our AGM weekend in August:

Saturday 9th August

1. The Committee meeting, for those involved, will be held at 10.30am at the Proudfoot Centre.
2. The AGM will be held at 2.30pm at the Proudfoot Centre
3. We are again booked in to Moffat House for dinner, 6.30pm for 7pm.

If you wish to attend, please e-mail me at the above address by the end of May. (Or to my address which is on the front of the Newsletter) I will then send menu choices which need to be at the hotel by early July. This dinner is payable on the night.

Hoping to see you in June and/or August

Bunty

From Bunty Davies, Secretary
bunty.davies@btinternet.com

**CLAN WEB SITE -
Administration & Webmaster:**

We are still looking for a Clan Member with some IT experience -

web site currently using easily managed WordPress -

preferably to take over by date of Clan AGM in August -

please contact Betty Telford (betty.telford@nordicski.co.uk)

Events in 2014

We will be attending the following events in the coming year.

26th April – SAFHS Conference in Dunfermline.

28th/29th June – Homecoming at Bannockburn.

23rd August – Lanarkshire Family and Local History Fair in Motherwell.

The Stranraer Lowland Gathering is hoping to include a Clan Village this year on 30th August.

Erica Seggie,
Membership Secretary .

Moffat Museum Official Re-Opening

The official re - opening of the Moffat Museum, by Dr Alison Sheridan, Curator of History at the National Museum of Scotland, took place on August 13th 2013. The museum acknowledges the generosity of Australian benefactor, John Moffitt. The occasion was marked by the shooting of a replica of the Neolithic longbow known as “The Rotten Bottom Bow”. This bow was found in the hills a few miles east of Moffat on the road to Selkirk and is one of a number of archaeological finds from the Moffat area. It is made of yew and is estimated to date from 4040 BC to 3540 BC.

Moffat Sheep Race

Following on from the successful Moffat sheep race in 2012, a second race was held in the town last August. Again sheep raced through the town with knitted jockeys tied to their backs, cheered on by enthusiastic spectators lining the High Street. Six heats were held, followed by a final which was won by “ Wee Archie”. This event is held to celebrate Moffat’s woolen industry heritage and sheep farming traditions.

Bushfire at Warrandyte

Rob and Valena Moffitt (Member 269)

We 'got through' the recent Warrandyte bushfire (thankfully) which was about 4-500 metres away from us. On this very hot day there were 120 bushfires in our state of Victoria.

We had received the 'Watch and Act' warning and gone outside to start the sprinklers around the house and garden. We were outside for about 20 minutes. We saw smoke nearby and went inside to find both 'Evacuate Now' and 'Too late to Evacuate, take shelter inside your house' recorded on the landline phone, (We get bushfire warnings via our landline and mobile phones). So we had to stay. The police had blocked the roads in and out of Warrandyte to allow emergency vehicles full access, so we were stuck there.

Thank goodness our son Sean was at home, so the three of us began to get the house as ready as we could to withstand a bushfire. Sean climbed on the roof to block the downpipes and fill the roof gutters and four rubbish bins with water. These were placed on each corner of the house with mops to put out 'spot fires' which can come ahead of the main fire. Meanwhile, Rob brought out the fire pump and filled it with petrol and oil (to use water from the swimming pool) for the back of the house, and connected another fire hose to the water tanks to use at the front of the house. I had to get the outdoor furniture, door mats and other outdoor combustibles inside the house. We all then changed our clothes from shorts and T-shirts to non-combustible long trousers, long-sleeved tops and strong boots.

We then sat outside, watching the smoke and fire and helicopters dropping water on the fire. We drank a lot of water as it was hot, over 40C, then had coffee and a very late lunch. It was quite stressful as the wind was bringing the fire towards us, then changing away from us, then back to us again.

At about 4.30pm the worst was over as the CFA (volunteer fire brigade) had the fire contained. We all had a big sigh of relief. We thought we wouldn't sleep well that night as the wind was still quite strong and the fire could whip up again, but we slept like logs!

Flooding in Dumfriesshire

Clan members, Sam Kennedy Moffat and family had to be rescued by a Navy helicopter when their farm house was cut off by flooding. After attempts to rescue the family by boat had failed, a Sea King rescue helicopter was called in from Prestwick to airlift the family to safety.

I read with interest the Biography of Arthur John Moffatt, by Amy Sheila Street, as published in the October 2013 edition of our Clan Moffat Newsletter.

Whilst researching my own borderer family history in Hexham, I came across an article some time ago about the father of Arthur John Moffatt, namely John Stevenson Moffatt. As a member of the Hexham Local History Society, I am regularly sent their newsletter, the Hexham Historian, and have worked with the editor, Mark Benjamin on various research. A follow-up from the article about John Stevenson Moffatt came when Mark sent me a copy of a newspaper article from the Hexham Courant dated 7 October 1893, with an obituary, giving a full and descriptive account of this honourable gentleman who had died on 3 October 1893. It not only portrays a humble man of stature, but there is also a picture of him, which I include here.

For a number of reasons, we believe this consequent family branch to potentially be a part of the "Alston Moffat's", and we will undertake further research to try to connect them to the large Alston group descended from John Moffat and Isabella Burkett. This group has been well documented in the Clan Moffatt Genealogy.

As the scan of the article from the Hexham Courant of 7 October 1893 is not too clear, I have reprinted it here so it can be read clearly:

"DEATH OF MR JOHN S. MOFFATT.

Few of our business men were more widely known and more highly esteemed than our townsman, Mr John S. Moffatt, and the sad intelligence of his death, received in Hexham on Tuesday morning, came as a painful surprise to very many of the inhabitants of this town and district. About a month ago Mr Moffatt, who latterly had not been in the enjoyment of his usual good health, went to Edinburgh to undergo an operation. Though the operation proved successful, he had a relapse, gradually grew worse and, as already stated, died on Tuesday morning. He was a native of Hexham, being born there on Nov. 9th, 1829. He was a son of the late Mr and Mrs W. Moffatt, who, it may be mentioned *en passant*, celebrated their "golden wedding" in the early part of the year 1874. Educated at the Free School, in Skinners Burn, he had as one of his classmates Dr Parker, of the City Temple, who was also associated with him in the membership of a Debating Society. At the age of 13 Mr Moffatt was apprenticed to the late Mr Edward Fairlamb, ironmonger, and on that gentleman's decease he purchased the business and commenced on his own account at the early age of 19.

By unflagging energy, business tact and talent, Mr Moffatt succeeded in largely extending the trade. Many of our older townspeople will remember the Phoenix Inn in the Back Row. That hostelry, after its owner had ceased to take out the licence for it, was purchased by Mr Moffatt, and converted into showrooms and warehouses, and to which considerable additions have, from time to time, been made.

The deceased gentleman took an active part in public affairs, especially in matters pertaining to the welfare and best interests of his native town. He rendered important service to his fellow-townsmen in many ways, but it will perhaps be for his efforts in connection with the education of the young that he will be best remembered. There can be no question as to the zeal, diligence, and ability which he exhibited in educational matters for many years. His heart was in the work, and the moral and educational advancement of the young was with him an ever present subject. Indeed, on almost the last occasion we met Mr Moffatt, the subject of education was the principal topic of conversation, and one could not but notice the ring of enthusiasm in his voice when he recalled past successes, or discussed plans for still further developments in the future. On the formation of the School Board in 1874, he was elected Vice-Chairman, a position, which he has ever since held, and the duties of which he has discharged in a most exemplary manner. At the first meeting of the Board in February, 1874, the late Mr W. Robb paid a high compliment to the deceased gentleman. He said – “From his (Mr Moffatt’s) intimate knowledge of the revised code and other matters with which they would be brought intimately into contact, he considered he was above all others the man to take such a responsible post as that of vice-chairman.” But prior to 1874 Mr Moffatt took a strong interest in educational matters. The then Subscription Schools on the Seal were carried on – as they had been for about a score of years – by a committee of managers, including amongst others, Mr Moffatt, Mr W. Robb, Mr James Spencer, and Mr Isaac Baty, all of whom have now passed away. In this work Mr Moffatt took a deep interest and worked hard for the success of the schools, undertaking the duties of honorary secretary, an office entailing no small amount of time and labour, but one which he, nevertheless, continued to hold until the formation of the School Board. Amongst the eleven candidates that came forward in 1874 for the seven seats on the School Board were three of the old managers of these schools, namely, Mr J.S. Moffatt, Mr Wm. Robb, and the Rev. Canon Barker, and it is pleasing to record that the public recognized the labours of these gentlemen and returned them as members of the Board. This was all the more gratifying from the fact that they themselves never asked for a single vote, and yet it was understood at the time that, from the fewness of their plumpers, a larger number voted for them than for any of the other candidates.

His deep interest in educational matters never showed the slightest signs of abatement, and the classes formed in the town in connection with the Technical Education Committee had his hearty sympathy and support. He was also an earnest advocate for the establishment in Hexham of a higher grade school, and latterly devoted much time and attention to this question. It has not been permitted to him to see the fulfilment of this work, but there is every prospect that his labours in this direction will not be in vain, but that the object for which he strove will ere long be accomplished. The Mechanics' Institute, which was founded in August, 1826, but which ceased to be a year or two ago, did a good work in the town during the more than sixty years of its existence, and for many years it had in Mr Moffatt a leading member and a liberal supporter.

Mr Moffatt was also willing to take his share in the general government of the town, and in March, 1877, he was elected to a seat on the Local Board, and that too at a time when there was need for the services of men of sound judgment and of earnest purpose, in furthering the work of sanitary improvement. He was re-elected in March, 1877; in 1878 he was elected chairman of the Board, being succeeded in that office in the following year by the late Mr W. Taylor, and in 1880, at the end of his second term of three years, he retired from the Board. In March, 1883, he was appointed an overseer of the poor, and was annually elected to the same post without a break. He was chairman of the Hexham Corn Market Company, succeeding the late Mr W. Robb in that office. He was also one of the managers of the Tindale Ward Savings' Bank, and in other capacities served his fellow-townsmen ably and well.



The deceased gentleman, was, and had been for many years a leading member of the Congregational Church; for many years he has been an active deacon as well as secretary for the Church, and was one of the principal promoters of the new church in Hencotes. He has been for 35 years in connexion with the Congregational Sunday School, being for many years superintendent of the same. He adopted the most modern systems of teaching; was kind, judicious, and painstaking. He ever evinced sympathy for the young, and attracted to himself the esteem and affection of both teachers and scholars under his charge. A few months ago he was elected President of the then newly-formed Hexham Sunday School Union, and, at their meeting on Tuesday night, the members present expressed sincere regret at his death. His kindly presence will be greatly missed from their meetings. A regular attender at the services of his Church, as well as a liberal supporter to its funds, his death will be a severe loss to a Church which has, in the past two or three years, lost several of its most staunch adherents. We refer to the deaths of Mr John Ridley, Mr James Spencer, Mr William Angus, and others. The deceased gentleman, who was 65 years of age, was twice married, and leaves a widow and family of five sons and one daughter.

THE FUNERAL

Amid signs of the universal esteem and respect in which he was held, all that was mortal of one of the foremost of Hexham's public men was laid to rest in our beautiful cemetery yesterday afternoon. A most impressive memorial service was first held in the Congregational Church, which contained a crowded congregation. The pulpit was draped with black, and on either side a number of the elder scholars of the boys' department of the Board School had taken up their places. The Rev. A. Julian conducted the service, which was opened with the beautiful sentences of the burial service. The hymn "Jesu, lover of my soul" was sung by the congregation, and the Rev. A. Julian then delivered the following address – We are gathered together to share in the last solemn and tender offices of faith and love, and a bond of true sympathy unites us. We are here impelled by the same feeling of sincerest admiration for the noble qualities which adorned the whole life of our dear departed brother, and deeper still we feel more than passing respect for him, for he has endeared himself to us and claims our love. We, therefore, by our presence, render the tribute of the love which can find no other utterance. But another tie binds us in one, a sense of our common loss links us one to another.

The most high-minded worker for the welfare of this town is leaving us; a pattern of true manhood is passing from our sight; we are all losing a friend who was never unfaithful; an adviser whose counsel was ever unselfish and wise; the causes of truth and temperance are losing an able advocate; this church mourns a loss which is almost irreparable; and others among us are losing more than we dare commit to words. And when we are joined in concord by yet another bond, in our united though silent sympathy for those whose loss is the greatest, whose sorrow is an unsounded deep. But mingled with these feelings there is still one other that fringes the cloud with light. We are united in a glorious hope. Death has yielded its power to the might of the Lord Jesus Christ, for He has passed through its gloom, He has banished its terrors, and opened for ever the gates of the eternal city. We mourn, but not as those without hope, and should not this hope be seen most clearly when darkness is close about us. The cloud, looked at from earth, is black indeed, but viewed from Heaven it is dazzling light; and Heaven's light overpowers this world's gloom, for the cloud is edged with silver light – the pledge of immortality. The autumn leaves are falling, the desolation of winter will soon surround us, but our brother has passed from autumn to perennial spring; the shadow of evening will soon close in, but for him the endless morning of eternity has already dawned; for him also may we not say "He is not here, he is risen." We will not say good-bye – except with the thought, God be with thee, be thou with God; we say not Farewell – unless our thought is fare thee well, every blessing attend thee; our last word is not Adieu, only as we commend thee to God, till we join thee above; we say rather till we meet again. And shall we say our brother is leaving us? Will he not still in spirit be the companion of our toils, the guide of our steps, the inspirer of our best life, the comfort of our inmost heart? Will not his spirit be with us till the day break and the shadows flee away? May the Lord give us grace like him to endure to the end, so that we may meet hereafter an unbroken family; so that the sundered love of the present may be renewed never-more to cease throughout eternity. The hymn, "Light after darkness, gain after loss" was sung, and the pronouncing of the Benediction brought the service to an end. Miss Snowball, who presided at the organ, played "I know that my Redeemer liveth," as the congregation left the chapel. From here the *cortege* then passed on to the cemetery, a number of the employees of the firm acting as underbearers. The service at the grave was read by the Rev. A. Julian, and the school boys sang the beautiful hymn, "Peace, perfect peace." The relatives and friends gathered round the grave included – Mr Henry, Mr Edward B, Mr Walton, Mr James, and Mr Arthur Moffatt, sons; Miss Moffatt, daughter; Mrs W. Moffatt; Mrs H. Moffatt, Miss Lisle, Mrs Nairn, Mr James Wilson, Mr Pye, Mr Wm. Pye, Mr T. Davison, Mr and Mrs H. Gillies, Mrs Whittaker, Mr W. Fleming, Mr Matthew Ferguson, Mrs Thompson, Mr and Mrs W. Thompson, Mr John Lisle, Mr Johnson Turner, and Mr J.T. Robb.

There was a very large attendance of other gentlemen, representatives being present from all the boards and public bodies with which the deceased was connected, as well as most of the best known of the inhabitants of our town. The coffin was covered with beautiful wreaths; among them being the following "In loving remembrance, from the boys of the Hexham Board School;" "With deep sympathy, from the employees of Moffatt Bros, ironmongers, Gateshead;" "With deep sympathy from the employees;" "From Mr and Mrs Paxton with deep regret;" "With deep regret and warmest sympathy from the teachers of the Board School." The funeral arrangements were carried out by Messrs W. Robb and Son. The Rev. A. Julian will preach the funeral sermon in the Congregational Church on Sunday evening.

Rosey Moffatt
Member 22

Moffat Town Hall - Official Opening

A large scale event took place in Moffat on Sunday 6th October to mark the occasion of the official re-opening of Moffat Town Hall after years of planning and hard work. Despite wet weather, large crowds turned out for the occasion and the parade, organized by The Royal British Legion was led by the Grade 1 Scottish Power Pipe Band. The parade left from St Andrew's Church and included representatives of various Moffat groups with the Kirckconnel Youth Pipe Band bringing up the rear. Our Secretary, Bunty Davies and Treasurer Erica Seggie attended the event. Trustee Peter Beck - Samuels shared his vision with us at our Symposium of Moffat Lore in 2010 and it is wonderful to see his plans coming to fruition.

The following information has been sent to me by Scotland's People and may be of interest.

The Inhabited House Tax Rolls from 1778 to 1798 have now been added to the Scotland's People website. This resource offers an insight into eighteenth century life. Names of ancestors can be found throughout Scotland with the annual values of the houses they held. The tax rolls include all houses valued over £5 per annum and include people with professions such as bonnetmakers, shoemakers, inkeepers, skimmers and wrights. Other tax records relating to carriages, carts, clocks, watches, dogs, horses, servants, hearths, shops and the window tax can be found on the Scotland's Places website.

**Who Do You Think You Are? Live comes to Glasgow
– the SECC, 29 to 31 August 2014**

Genealogist's Report

The Database of Moffats continues to grow, although at a more modest pace than previously – and the total of individuals is now in excess of 37,000, some 700 extra entries in the recent 6 months. There is however an increase in quality, as I'm finding more accurate dates in the records, rather than 3-month window given in the England & Wales GRO indexes, or the approximate dates that can be inferred from a person's age as given in the censuses. This is because *ancestry.com* has been making Birth and Marriage certificates of Parish Registers available – and so far I've analysed Moffat(t)s from Surrey and Lancashire – and with more to come. I made another visit of three days duration to Edinburgh in December 2013, getting almost 300 certificates in total. I had a pre-determined agenda of certificates to seek, all designed to clear up ambiguities or shed light on anomalies that had mystified me earlier.

I sent a copy of the article in the previous Newsletter about the Birth Brief of Robert Moffat, and included the Swedish text as an Appendix, as a donation to the National Archives of Scotland. I received the following reply:

Dear Mr Moffat, Thank you for donating two articles concerning Captain Robert Moffat (1619-1672) who was in military service in Sweden and your research into the whereabouts of his birth brief together with the English translation of the related document that you identified. They have been added to our Library collection in General Register House. I've added a note to the catalogue description that the original birth brief has not been traced but that a version of it is held in Sweden. I'm sure that the results of your research will be much appreciated by staff and readers alike. Kind regards, Helen Borthwick, Librarian, National Records of Scotland.

In November, I received an e-mail from Patrick Wilson of Argentina: I am a grandson of Herbert Gifford Stower, who was born on March 25th 1879 in Fazackerley, Lancashire and Euphemia (Effy) Moffat, born 1st July 1881 in Newcastle upon Tyne, who married 20th June 1914 in Castle Ward, Northumberland. Soon after marriage, they both travelled to Argentina to work at Ingenio La Esperanza, an engineering company of the



Betty, Effie Kate Stower. Brighton 1929

Leach family. Their first daughter Elizabeth Irene Stower (my mother) was born 15th April 1915 in San Pedro, Province of Jujuy, Argentina. Then came John Gifford Stower born 16th September 1916 and lastly Kathleen Beatrice Stower in 1917. Herbert died in 1938 in Rosario, and Effy died in 1944 in San Miguel de Tucumán, Province of Tucumán, Argentina.

Together with his cousin John Knox Moffat II, John Gifford Stower volunteered to the RAF in 1940, trained in Canada, and commissioned to the Hampden RCAF Squadron 420 Waddington, later to the Wellington RAF Squadron 142 Grimsby, all Bomber Command. He was shot down over Germany in November 1942, and was taken prisoner of war to Stalag Luft III, where he took part in the Great Escape 24-25 March 1944. He was recaptured and assassinated on 31 March 1944. His grave is in the Cytadela Park Cemetery, Poznań, Poland. John Knox Moffat was more fortunate, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, and survived



John Knox Moffat II RAF

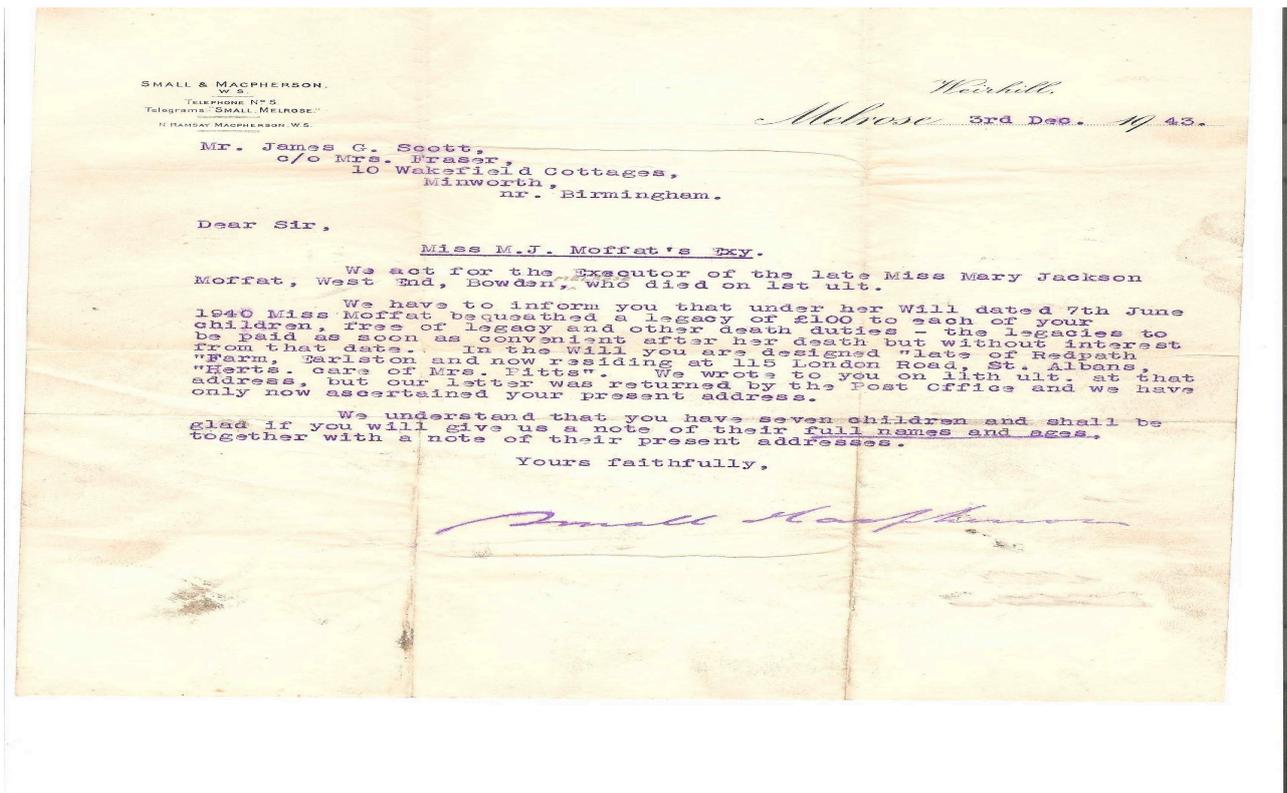


the War to collect his medal at Buckingham Palace. The father of both Euphemia Moffat and John Knox Moffat II was John Knox Moffat (I), Managing Engineer and Surveyor for the Anglo-Mexican Petroleum Company. He put his surveying capabilities to good effect, he moved to Bilbao on the north coast of Spain, and made his fortune in raising wrecks of ships that had foundered in the Bay of Biscay. He died in Paris in 1921.

John Knox Moffat b Sep 10
1953 m July 12 1876 d
unknown

All photographs courtesy of Patrick Wilson and Diana Mc Sweeney.

Another interesting e-mail came from Nora Cormack, who wrote: "Dear Colin, I have a Family Bible for John Moffat born 1840 at Longformacus, Berwickshire. It seems there may have been some connection between this family and my own but I'm not sure what, where or why we have the Bible. Is there any way that I can find out if any of the children, grandchildren, etc are still alive as I'd love to return the Bible to its rightful family? Thank you in anticipation, Nora Cormack (nee Scott)." I checked from the Database, and located the family of John Moffat (1840 - 1910). He and his wife Jane Deans (1842 - 1914) had son Robert (1874 - 1938), and three daughters: Euphemia White Moffat (1873 - 1939), Mary Jackson Moffat (1877 - 1943) and Catherine Deans Moffat (1882 - 1906). The family together worked the farm at Blackburn, Cockburnspath, Berwickshire. John, his wife Jane, and youngest daughter Catherine all died at the farm, but Robert, Euphemia and Mary continued to work it until retirement, when they sold up, and retired to Roxburghshire. Nora Cormack continued: "The link to my family is a letter of date 1943 from Mary Jackson Moffat's solicitor to my Grandfather James Grahamslaw Scott. The solicitor is writing to notify him that Mary left a £100 legacy to each of his children. This seems a lot of money to leave in 1943 terms especially as there were 7 children.



My father has been dead for many years so I have passed the information to his elder sister who is still alive as she may remember why Mary left them money. I also have an aunt, now deceased who married an Ian Deans (John Moffat married Jane Deans). My father's family leased Redpath farm near Earlston, Berwickshire until the 1930's so both families come from a farming background."

A quick check with the Ordnance Survey shows that Blackburn and Redpath are only 11 miles apart in Berwickshire, so the two families could well have been acquainted. Furthermore, it turns out that one of John Moffat's cousins was Margaret Moffat (1816-1898) who married Adam Scott. Thus the Scott and Moffat families were distantly related.

At any rate, it seems that the childless Moffat family were over the years recipients of various kindnesses from Nora's Scott family, and the last Moffat survivor remembered those kindnesses in her will. Without relatives of her own, no doubt Mary also passed the family bible to the Scott family. It seems to me that the family to have rightful possession of the bible is that of Nora herself.

Genealogical research is a magical pursuit. The Moffat Database has provided a stimulus to people with Moffat ancestry to find out more about their heritage, and it has helped families to gain greater insights to the achievements of their forebears.

Colin Moffat,
Genealogist, Clan Moffat UK,



DEADLINE

MATERIAL FOR

October 2014 Newsletter

31 August 2014

Gift Membership

Do you have friends with Moffat connections or family who are not yet members of Clan Moffat UK?

Membership of the Clan makes an ideal birthday or Christmas gift.

24th March was the 70th Anniversary of the Great Escape from Stalag Luft III, when John Gifford Stower, son of Herbert Stower and Effy Moffat and Grandson of John Knox Moffat I was one of those recaptured and executed. See Colin Moffat's Genealogist's Report, above.

How did they meet (Part 2)

James Moffat, the son of William Moffat and Agnes Coupland, married Joan Farish on 1st April, 1881. It was his second marriage, he having previously been married to Helen (née Cook) in 1869 but she died of tuberculosis in 1879. He had previously been a labourer and then a carter but at the time of her death he had taken a job as a pointsman on the Glasgow, Dumfries and Carlisle line. A pointsman switches the points to direct trains onto the correct line and also couples and uncouples the carriages as necessary. It was thus a responsible job and a step up from his previous work as a labourer.

At the time of their wedding, James was living in Carronbridge while Joan was in Thornhill in the same parish. The two villages are a little over a mile apart and both were on the Glasgow, Dumfries and Carlisle railway line. They were originally adjacent stations but the station at Carronbridge was closed to passenger travel in 1853 although there were still some sidings and a goods shed there in 1898. The OS map of 1897 shows Carronbridge to be a small community on the banks of the river Nith but, in spite of its name, there was no bridge over the river although there was a ford. Thornhill, on the other hand, was a much larger village with a bridge, a station and a church with a manse.

The next station to the north of Carronbridge was Sanquhar which was nearly twelve miles away. It thus seems likely that James was responsible for maintaining the points in both Carronbridge and Thornhill so that he must have often been working in Thornhill where Joan lived. It seems probable, then, that they met as a direct result of his job which necessitated his moving between the two villages.

A more complicated problem is presented by William Moffat, a grocer, and Matilda Hay Morrison, a domestic servant, who were married in Byreburnfoot, Canonbie in 1907. At the time of their wedding he gave his address as Caledonian Road, Edinburgh while she lived in Canonbie, Dumfriesshire so that it was necessary to look up the previous history of the couple in some detail. Admittedly William was born in Canonbie in 1879, the son of James Moffat and Janet, née Anderson but by 1881 the family had moved to Sorbie cottage in Ewes when William was only 2. This was 11 miles from Canonbie and the family remained there until 1901, when William was 21 and working as a grocer's assistant. Some time between 1901 and 1907 he moved to Caledonian Road, Edinburgh although his marriage to Matilda took place in Byreburnfoot, about a mile north of Canonbie. The couple then moved to Edinburgh and in 1911 they were living at 4 Moat street and William was a warehouseman for a biscuit manufacturer.

Living with them were Margaret and Jane Telford, aged 19 and 17 respectively, described as nieces. They must have been relatives of Matilda because I was unable to trace them to the Moffat family. The 1911 census shows numerous other families at the same address and the valuation roll for 1915 shows that the building was occupied by 13 other families, mostly paying rent of £12 a year and including an organ builder, a grocer, 2 railwaymen and a dyer.

Matilda, on the other hand, spent most of her life until her marriage in or near Canonbie. She was born there in 1868, the daughter of Donald Morrison and Janet, née Murray. In 1881 they were living in Byreburnfoot near Canonbie and in 1891 Matilda, at the age of 20, was a servant in the house of James Scott, a draper, grocer and spirit merchant in Claygate, Canonbie. By 1901 she had moved to Clinthead, Langholm and was a servant employed by Edward John Bell, a “woollen manufacturer” in High street. Clinthead is only a little more than three miles from Ewes so this may be where they first met, in fact she may actually have done the family shopping in the shop where he was a grocer’s assistant. It is also just possible that he worked in James Scott’s grocer’s shop.

By 1911, James Moffat and his family had moved to Broomholmsfield near Glentarras on the Langholm branch line (See “A Moffat, a Grieve and a railway” in the Newsletter for October, 2012). Unfortunately there is no record of James’s family movements between 1901 and 1911 but it may be that this move occurred before William left home for Edinburgh, in which case he could have met Matilda when she was in Clinthead near Langholm since both Glentarras and Langholm are on the Langholm branch line. His journey to Edinburgh would have been quite simple from here. He could have travelled a short distance on the line through Canonbie to Riddings junction and then proceed to Edinburgh via Hawick on the Waverly line, a distance of about 72 miles. An old ticket shows that the fare from Langholm to Riddings was only sixpence halfpenny and a timetable of the period showed that the journey only took 20 minutes. Strangely, for historical reasons, the fare from Langholm to Edinburgh was less than that from Canonbie to Edinburgh although Canonbie is some 6 miles nearer.

Thus it is not possible to decide exactly how the two met but the two families certainly lived near each other, and always within 11 miles of each other, until William’s departure for Edinburgh.

Another William living in Edinburgh was William Campbell, a farm grieve (manager) at the time of his marriage. He was the son of William Campbell and Grace née Carruthers, in Edinburgh. He married Helen Moffat, daughter of Joseph Moffat and Jessie, née Carruthers, in Edinburgh in July, 1905. In the 1901 census, taken on March 31st, she was living with her parents in Kirkpatrick Juxta, Dumfriesshire, and was not working.

Why did she suddenly leave home to go to Edinburgh? Also living with this family at the same time were two great granddaughters, Jeannie and Jessie. The latter was only 6 weeks old. Grandchildren living with their grandparents immediately arouse suspicion in the mind of the genealogist and, sure enough, a search through the births for this period showed that in February, 1901, Helen was a domestic servant and was delivered of an illegitimate daughter called Jessie Carruthers Moffat. The other great granddaughter, Jeannie, was the illegitimate daughter of Jessie's sister Phyllis.

It seems likely, therefore, that Helen went, or was sent, to Edinburgh to avoid the subsequent disgrace. She took a job as a domestic servant in a large house in Learmonth Gardens. At the time of their marriage, William gave his address as Golf Hall, Corstophine. This is now a part of Edinburgh but at the time of their marriage it was a separate village west of Edinburgh and an OS map of this time shows that Golf Hall was a large house even further to the west. It was at one time the site of the kennels of the Lothian Hunt but this ceased to exist in 1877. The wedding took place at 21 Ravelston Park, Edinburgh so it seems likely that Golf Hall was where William was employed (as a groom) but he was actually living at Ravelston Park as there seems no other reason why the wedding should have taken place here. It is only half a mile from Learmonth Gardens so it would have been easy for them to meet in this neighbourhood.

Jessie died in 1907 in Dumfries of measles and chicken pox and by 1911 the family had moved to Midtown in Kirkmichael, Dumfriesshire (11 miles from Helen's old home in Kirkpatrick Juxta), where William was a groom on the large farm of James Retson.

In conclusion, it must be admitted that one can never find out exactly where or how a couple actually met but tracing their movements and investigating their way of life before and after their marriage makes a fascinating study for the genealogist.

David Burns Moffat

Children's Writing Competition

Clan Moffat UK is organizing a children's writing competition to be held in Moffat as part of the Homecoming. This event is still at the planning stage but it is intended that prizes will be presented to the winners after the American AGM on Friday 27th June. We hope that as many Clan members as possible can attend this event.

Clan Moffat UK has been awarded £1000 through the Scottish Clan Event Fund to cover the cost of the writing competition and to cover some costs at Bannockburn Live.

Domicile and Legitimacy – a Moffett family feud

By Colin Moffat

Based very heavily on information from Jac of Perth, Australia, and Irish Courts, Chancery Division, 1920, Vol 1, Moffett vs Moffett pp 57-74

John Moffett, b ca 1784, came from a Catholic background in County Sligo and managed to secure a good profession at the very beginning of opening opportunities to Catholics. One must assume he either came from a wealthy family, or was well sponsored. He was a solicitor in Dublin, appointed to "John Blennerhasset" in 1811. John purchased Merville Lodge (now Nazareth House) in Sligo around 1826-1830. In 1834 John married Mary Anne Armstrong, daughter of Capt Archibald Armstrong of Sligo. John and Mary Anne were part of the few Irish who educated their children in England during the potato famine, so it can only be assumed they were sufficiently wealthy. John had a reputation as the "Tiger" in Barony Carberry (now Cork). He died 1st Nov 1859.

John Moffett's father-in-law Captain Archibald Armstrong had a distinguished military career. He was recognised for leadership in the battle against French forces that invaded Ireland at Collooney (1798), went with the 71st regiment to secure the Cape Colony for Britain in 1806, on to Argentina and eventually the Battle of Waterloo (his actual medal is housed in the National Army Museum in London).



Elizabeth Mary Moffett (m.s. Schreiber)



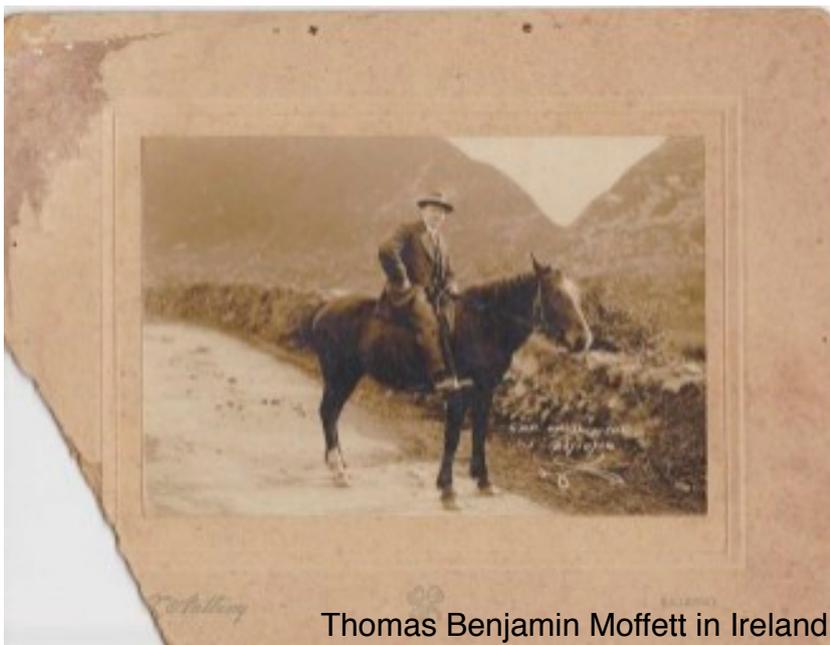
Benjamin received his education in Divinity at Trinity College, Dublin. On 20.6.1883, he received a letter which opened: "Marcus Gervais By Divine Providence, Archbishop of Armagh, Primate of all Ireland, and Metropolitan and Bishop of Clogher, to our Beloved in Christ the Reverend Benjamin Moffett, Master of Arts, Greeting" in which he was appointed as Incumbent for the Cure of Souls in the parish of Carrickmacross. This was a Protestant appointment, although their father was Roman Catholic. On the death of his father, John Moffett, Benjamin inherited Merville Lodge, as well a library of books that was eventually sold for more than the Lodge. He continued to reside there, together with his two unmarried sisters, until his death in 1914, without issue, and intestate.

William Moffett

William Moffett attended Sandhurst Military Academy 1855-1857, and his registration there is extant. He studied Arithmetic, Mathematics, French, Fortification and Military Drawing, and earned three Decorations of Merit. On leaving, he was posted to the 98th regiment, and sent to Grahamstown, Cape Colony, South Africa. He didn't stay with the military long and was discharged from the Army while at Grahamstown in 1861. In 1864 an illegitimate son, William Armstrong Moffett, was born to him, the mother of whom, Elizabeth Anne Hastings Cleary, he married in 1867, and according to the law of Cape Colony, the territory in which he was then residing, his son was thereby legitimised. Had this occurred in Ireland, William Armstrong Moffett would have remained illegitimate. In 1868, William went to Hopetown and stayed there for some years, during which time he was in the employment of a land surveyor. During this period his wife, Elizabeth Anne, died. In 1878 he went to Newings Trading Station. Here William met Elizabeth Mary Windey (m.s. Schreiber), recently widowed, and with a young son, George Henry Windey, to support. They married on 21st October 1879, and William adopted George, who thereafter used the name George Henry Moffett. William and Elizabeth Mary thereafter had several children, all born in wedlock. In 1881 William joined a volunteer force for the defence of Gatsburgh, then besieged by natives, and received a commission as Lieutenant. Later, he opened a store at Clutha, and died 16th July 1893. Probably intestate, as at that time he had very little to bequeath.



Ben Moffett



Thomas Benjamin Moffett in Ireland

Move forward 20 years, William's brother Benjamin died (1914), whilst in the process of selling Merville Lodge to the Nazarene Nuns. Since none of the other children of John Moffett Snr had issue, the inheritance devolved on the children of William Moffett. However, William's first son (William Armstrong Moffett) was born about 3 years before his parents married and so there arose an issue as to his legitimacy, and thereby his right to participate in the inheritance. Matters were further complicated by the fact

that as William Armstrong Moffett had died, the beneficiary of his share in the inheritance would have passed to his son, William Edelstone Moffett.

The real reason behind the animus between William Edelstone Moffett and his half-brothers is at this distance hard to discern. What happened was that Thomas Benjamin Moffett, first born of the second marriage, claimed William Armstrong Moffett was illegitimate and therefore had no heritable rights. Lionel Moffett (one of the younger sons) waded in and put in a claim on behalf of the remaining children. Not to be outdone, Benjamin's two unmarried sisters, Susan and Marianne also put in a claim (they, however, both passed away before the cases were resolved). In the meanwhile, the youngest son, Kenneth Moffett, born a few months after his father's death, died in WW1 (South African Services Corp). The key question of William Armstrong Moffett's legitimacy or otherwise depended on the law of which territory (Cape Colony or Ireland) applied at the time of William Moffett's first marriage. This in turn depended on which country William Moffett Snr had domicile. A lower court decided that William Moffett resided in Cape Colony,



William Moffett

and showed few if any practical steps to return to Ireland. Had at this point Thomas Benjamin Moffett given way gracefully, there was an unexpected inheritance to share. However, Thomas Benjamin Moffett was determined to deny his late half-brother's children any share in the inheritance, maintaining that one's domicile is where one's heart is – and his father repeatedly said he would one day return to Ireland.. The courts found repeatedly that the law of Cape Colony should apply, but Thomas Benjamin Moffett took the case all the way to the Appeal Court in Ireland – and lost. Ultimately resolution was only achieved because the estate bore the brunt of the costs and ... all the money ran out. All that greed and only the lawyers won. The case of Moffett vs Moffett is now a precedent in the legal case history of Ireland.

As a postscript to this, I was recently in contact with a South African correspondent who is a descendant of George Henry Moffett, William Moffett's adopted son, and I showed him an early draft of this article. He wrote "I spoke to my cousin Winston Moffett (George Henry's eldest grandson that bears the Moffett surname) earlier this evening to ask him for contact details of a lady who I suspect is a relative of Lionel James Moffett and who lives in New Zealand (I will pass on the detail to you when I receive it). Winston happened to mention that this morning he read again our grandfather's Last Will and Testament - a copy of which he received from his father Denzil Winston Newton Moffett; it is a 51 page document! Having now read your essay, it is clear why the Will was so elaborate and detailed: George probably wanted to avoid any possibility of a dispute after having witnessed the tussle over William's "wealth"."

Photos courtesy of Jac, Perth, Australia.

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The Devil's Beeftub – Corehead Farm –

Progress 2014

By Colin Moffat

Readers may remember the campaign in 2010 to seek donors in order to raise funds for the Borders Forest Trust (BFT) for the purchase of Corehead Farm, which includes most of the Devil's Beeftub at the head of Annandale Valley just north of Moffat. Peter Dreghorn, a member of the Corehead and Beef Tub Steering Group gave a presentation to the Clan at the Symposium of Moffat Lore in Moffat in 2010. Due to the efforts of many enthusiastic supporters, sufficient funds were raised, the BFT purchased Corehead Farm, and awarded "Stakeholder" status to the Moffat Clans of the UK and USA, as well as several individual Moffats. Since that time, the farm has been developed and managed on an ecological basis by the BFT. In February 2014, the BFT published a report on their achievements to date at Corehead, and this article draws extensively from this report.

The mission at Corehead is to create an estate of woodlands, heathlands and wetlands, that encourage native flora and fauna, in conjunction with a farm operating on organic principles, and providing educational facilities for local schools, Scottish universities and the general public. Corehead was once part of the Etrick Forest, with significant areas of native woodland, moorland and marsh, teeming with a rich diversity of wildlife. After centuries of grazing by farm animals, the area was greatly degraded, and the ambition of the BFT is to restore Corehead to its previous diversity.

Over the most recent three years, the BFT has planted some 230,000 trees in 195 hectares of new native woodland. The focus was primarily in the three valleys of Tweedhope Burn, White Hope Burn and Lochan Burn. The trees are oak, ash, aspen, juniper, rowan, alder, willow, birch and cherry. This will eventually provide a rich habitat for native plants, birds, insects and small mammals. The birds will include black grouse and tawny owl. Fruit trees are known to have flourished years ago at nearby Ericstane, so two orchards have been planted with varieties of apple, plum and crab apple. A hedge was planted around the orchard, to shelter the fruit trees, and attract pollinating insects.

At the time of purchase, there was little heather or whortleberry at Corehead, despite the hills once having been covered with it. On the ungrazed hill tops, heathland habitats are regenerating. Inbye is the part of the farm that contains grassland fields and is not hillground or rough grazing. The BFT is working to increase the range and frequency of species of wild flowers in these meadows. The introduction of yellow rattle is recognised as a means of improving biodiversity in meadows, together with the scattering of seed-filled hay. Additionally, a mixed crop of oats, radish, mustard and linseed is sown to provide food and cover for birds in winter time, when both are scarce. Already there is a noticeable increase in seed-eating birds at Corehead.

Conventionally, wet areas of farmland are drained. However, at Corehead wetlands are being encouraged due to their high biodiversity value. The BFT has dug four shallow scrapes and a pond, creating a habitat for waders such as lapwing and snipe. A moorhen has already taken up residence in the pond, and dragonflies are frequently seen flying across the inbye ground in summer.

There is even archaeology at Corehead. The search is on for the Corehead Tower, which is the location from which William Wallace is said to have launched his first attack against the English. One of the BFT volunteers has been scouring the area with geophysics in an effort to find it.

Corehead Farm is now thriving. Next time you are in Moffat, do take an opportunity to visit the site. Check out the list of up-coming events at www.bordersforesttrust.org



Corehead Farm as viewed from Ericstane (Photo: Colin Moffat).

Back Page - Clan Moffat Outing to Corehead 2010. Top left - Members of Clan Moffat clambering over what I believe to be the site of the Corehead Tower (Photo: Roger Moffat).



Corehead Outing 2010

