THE KINLOSS PARISH WAR MEMORIAL AT FINDHORN CHURCH

Lest we forget.

INTRODUCTION

These notes were begun in late 2013 to satisfy my curiosity about the War Memorial. I wished to write something which the casual visitor could use without being overwhelmed by detail. My main sources are listed at the end of my notes. CWGC is The Commonwealth War Graves Commission. MRH is The Moray Roll of Honour. Italics are used to indicate speculation or comment.

I have greatly benefited from the help and advice of Tim Negus, Anne Park, John Rennie, Derek Bird, Heather Gregg, Captain Niels Roggenkamp, Stuart Farrell, Marjory Barber, Jo Grant-Peterkin, Mo Hyde, John Low, Joan Miller, Greig Munro, Lambert Munro, Ada Watt and Jil Stewart. I apologise to those whom I should have mentioned.

I take full responsibility for any errors, none of which I trust will cause any upset. There are several possible future areas to investigate. I shall revise these notes in due course. I welcome any corrections and additions.

THE WAR MEMORIAL

The War Memorial was built by Gibb Brothers, Ashgrove Road, Aberdeen. It is a 12 foot high granite column originally with the 28 names from the Great War. It stands opposite Findhorn Church. How the Memorial was designed and paid for and what it cost is unknown except for a note in the Forres, Elgin and Nairn Gazette of 17 March 1920, page 3, stating that a very successful Whist and Bridge Drive and Dance in aid of the Kinloss War Memorial Fund in the Reading Room, Findhorn (The James Milne Institute / Village Hall) was held on Friday 12 March 1920.

The memorial was unveiled by Mrs Grant-Peterkin of Grangehall at 4 p.m. on Wednesday 14 July 1920. Rev R. L. Sneddon, parish minister, presided with support from Rev James Ross of Findhorn United Free Church. Rev Sneddon opened proceedings with a prayer followed by the address by Rev Ross. The memorial was unveiled and Pipe-Major Morrison, Forres played ‘Flowers of the Forest’ and marched around the column twice. ‘God Save the King’ was sung and the piper played the lament, ‘Lochaber no more’. There is a full report in the Forres, Elgin and Nairn Gazette of 21 July 1920. Comment. It is not clear if the Mrs Grant-Peterkin, who unveiled the memorial, was the mother or sister-in-law of Captain Grant-Peterkin, whose name appears on it. There have been no additions to the original 28 names recorded.

The unveiling ceremony for the 1939-45 War was reported in full by the Forres, Elgin and Nairn Gazette dated 16 June 1948. Rev D M Galloway conducted the service. Findhorn had rejoined the Church of Scotland in May 1930. The National Anthem was sung followed by a reading. Colonel J H Souter of Calamura, Findhorn unveiled the new panels and made an address. A prayer was followed by the Last Post by buglers and a lament on the bagpipes. Reveille was sounded.

FIRST WORLD WAR

1. Private Frederick (Fred) ANDERSON 31900 2nd Bn Royal Scots.
   Born at Findhorn on 30 January 1896. Joined at Glasgow in February 1916; served in France. 
   Killed near Arras on 9 April 1917 aged 21.
   Commemorated in Wancourt British Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France. Grave III.E.8.
   Son of John (deceased) and Catherine Anderson, Vogrie Cottage, Findhorn (where is this?). The Forres Gazette dated 26 January 1918 also notes an RQM Sergt JB Fraser, Seaforth Highlanders, who was the son-in-law of Mrs Anderson, Vogrie Cottage who had been awarded an MSM. Occupation, clerk.
   Named on village school memorial.
2. **Private George Duncan Bisset** 466176 (LCpl in MRH) 8\(^{th}\) Bn Canadian Infantry.

Born at Culbin Place, Findhorn on 22 September 1892. Joined at Edmonton, Alta, Canada in September 1915; served in France; wounded Moquet Farm, near Courcelette in Battle of the Somme on 9 September 1916. **Died of wounds in 2\(^{nd}\) Canadian Field Ambulance at Rouen on 10 September 1916 aged 24.**

Son of John (deceased) and Elsie Bisset, Station Buildings, Findhorn. Elder brother of Pte R E Bisset (see No 3).
Occupation, banker.
Named on village school memorial.

3. **Private Richard Edwin (Dick) Bisset** 266033 1/6\(^{th}\) (Cpl and 2/6\(^{th}\) in MRH) Bn Seaforth Highlanders, Territorial Force.

Born at Station Buildings, Findhorn on 24 August 1895. Joined at Elgin on 1 December 1914; served in France with 1/6\(^{th}\) Bn for over two years. **Killed in action near Rheims on 20 July 1918 (between 20-26 July 1918 in MRH) aged 22.**

Commemorated in Marfaux British cemetery. Grave VII.J.3.
Son of John (deceased) and Elsie Bisset, Station Buildings, Findhorn. Younger brother of Pte G D Bisset (see No 2).
Occupation, carpenter at Dallas.
Named on village school memorial.

4. **Lance Corporal George Cameron** 204678 1/6\(^{th}\) Seaforth Highlanders, Territorial Force.

Born at Orbliston, Speymouth on 21 January 1890. Joined at Cromarty on 21 July 1917; served in France. **Killed in action near Marfaux on 23 July 1918 aged 28.**

Commemorated in Marfaux British cemetery. Grave IV.G.3. 'Remembered by all' on headstone.
Son of George and Jane Sellar Cameron, 50 Moycroft, Elgin. (Kinloss Farm in MRH, perhaps moved from there).
Occupation, constable.

5. **Private Norman Fraser** 265951 8\(^{th}\) (1/6\(^{th}\) in MRH) Seaforth Highlanders.

Born at Burnside, Lethen, Nairnshire on 28 November 1898; residing in Morayshire for 15 years. Joined at Forres in October 1915; served in France. **Reported missing 31 July 1917; CWGC date of death 15 December 1917 aged 19.**

Commemorated on Arras Memorial. Panel 8.
Son of Donald and Grace Fraser, Keeper's Lodge, Kinloss.
Occupation, farm servant.

6. **Lance Corporal John Geddie** 266010 9\(^{th}\) Seaforth Highlanders, New Army. (1/6\(^{th}\) in MRH)

Born at Findhorn on 27 November 1894. Joined at Forres on 28 November 1914; served in France. **Died of wounds on 7 April 1918 aged 23.**

Commemorated in Etaples Military Cemetery. Grave XXXIII.D.2. 'At rest until the day breaks and the shadows flee away' on headstone. Commemorated in Kinloss Abbey (No. 214).
Son of James and Jessie (Janet in CWGC) Geddie, Roseneath Cottage (104), Findhorn. Brother of Chief Officer James Geddie (see No 35).
Occupation, carpenter with Mr James Smith, Forres.
Named on village school memorial.

7. **Captain Cosmo Gordon Grant-Peterkin** (under Peterkin in MRH) E Sqdn Scottish Horse attached Gordon Highlanders.
Born at Grangehall, Forres on 16 April 1879. Joined at Dunkeld in December 1914; served in Gallipoli, Egypt and France. **Died of wounds in No 47 Casualty Clearing Station, Flanders, Belgium on 12 September 1917 aged 38.**

Commemorated in Dozinghem Military Cemetery. Grave VII.A.18. 'Out of the stress of doing into the peace of the done' on headstone from Miss K M Grant-Peterkin, Invererne, whom, I think, was his sister, Monica, who nursed in France.

Son of James (deceased) and Katherine (with a C in MRH) Grant-Peterkin. There is a picture of Cosmo Grant-Peterkin in the Forres Elgin and Nairn Gazette dated 26 September 1917. 1st name on Kinloss side of village memorial.

**8. Private Hugh KEMP 265908 1/6 Seaforth Highlanders, Territorial Force.**

Born at Findhorn on 13 March 1897. Joined at Elgin on 3 October 1914; served in France. **Killed at Arras on 9 April 1917 aged 20.**


Son of Hugh (deceased) and Charlotte Kemp, Maida Cottage, Findhorn. Brother of Pte James Kemp (see No 9).

Occupation, farm servant. There is a picture of Hugh Kemp in the Forres Elgin and Nairn Gazette dated 9 May 1917.

Named on village school memorial.

9th name on Kinloss side of village memorial.

**9. Private James KEMP 9263 2nd Bn Seaforth Highlanders, Regular Army.**

Born at Findhorn on 28 December 1886. Joined at Elgin on 5 August 1914; served in France, **Killed at Mons, Belgium on 13 October 1914 aged 27.**

Commemorated on Ploegsteert Memorial, Hainaut, Belgium, Panel 9.

Awarded Indian Medal for previous service with 1st Seaforth Highlanders in India and in the North-West Frontier Campaign in 1908.

Son of Hugh (deceased) and Charlotte Kemp, Maida Cottage, Findhorn. Married and his wife had heard that he was missing after the Battle of the Marne in October 1914 and that he was a prisoner of war in March 1915. She was living at 108 Findhorn (Forres Gazette 17 March 1915). The War Office informed her in 1917 that he was presumed killed on 13 October 1914. Brother of Pte Hugh Kemp (see No 8). Photograph in Forres, Elgin and Nairn Gazette of 14 March 1917.

Occupation, farm servant.

Named on village school memorial.

10th name on Kinloss side of village memorial.

**10. Corporal John Bain KEMP 2867 1/6th Seaforth Highlanders, Territorial Force.**

Born at Forres on 22 December 1884. Joined at Forres on 25 December 1914; served in France. **Killed at Beaumont Hamel, France on 13 November 1916 aged 31.**


Son of John Kemp, Aberdeen and Margaret Bain or Kemp. Husband of Mary Ann Bremner Kemp of Braeside, Findhorn with six children.

Occupation, salmon fisherman.

Named on village school memorial.

5th name on Kinloss side of village memorial.

**11. Private John LOW 2797 B Company 1/6th Bn Seaforth Highlanders, Territorial Force.**

Born at Findhorn on 3 October 1891. Joined at Forres on 28 November 1914; served in France; seriously wounded in the head on 15 June 1915. **Died 19 June 1915 aged 23.**

Commemorated in Etaples Military Cemetery. Grave II.A.9A.

Son of Charles (deceased) and Margaret Low, 105 Findhorn.

Occupation, farm servant.

Named on village school memorial.

1st name on church side of village memorial.

According to his great nephew, John Low, he engraved his initials on the top of the North quay on the 3rd flagstone from the end on the South side, where they still are.
Born at Kinloss on 10 February 1879. Joined in Calgary, Alberta, Canada on 21 December 1915; served in France. Killed at Courcellette between 24 and 30 September 1916 (MRH states 26th) aged 37. 
Commemorated on Vimy Memorial. 
Son of William (deceased) and Catherine McBain, Calgary Cottage, Findhorn (assumed moved from Kinloss). Where is Calgary Cottage? Was it named in his honour?
Occupation, road foreman.
6th name on bay side of village memorial.

Commemorated in New Irish Farm Cemetery, Belgium. Grave VIII.E.9. 'He died for God and right and liberty' on headstone.
Son of John, a native of Alves, and Elizabeth MacKay, 1, Sefton Terrace, Rutherglen, Glasgow is CWGC address. 174 Findhorn is MRH address.
Occupation, farm servant.
2nd name on church side of village memorial.

Born at Findhorn on 28 August 1884; joined at Forres on 28 November 1914. Joined Bn in November 1914; arrived in France in December 1915. Killed at Vimy Ridge on 2 June 1916 aged 31 by a sniper when on sentry duty. 
Son of Alex (deceased) and Jeannie Main, 141 Findhorn.
Occupation, fisherman.
Named on village school memorial.
3rd name on church side of village memorial.

15. 2nd Engineer David MAIN HMS Astrakhan 
Born at 166 Findhorn on 7 March 1888 (church records). 
From The Return of Deaths at Sea as reported in March 1919 to The Registrar General of Shipping and Seamen, David Main is listed as born on 7 February 1888 at 166 Findhorn. British from Sickle Cottage, (153 is new number) Findhorn. Reported as disappeared from HMS Astrakhan on 31 January 1919.
The Northern Scot of 1 March 1919 also reports his death as lost at sea on 31 January 1919. 
Commemorated: No record on CWGC website; perhaps because he was a civilian engineer his death was considered as not attributable to Service. No record in MRH, however the forms for it were to be completed by the end of February 1919 and his death was not reported until March 1919. The church Roll of Honour records him as alive and his unit as Transport G.680. 
The family headstone in Kinloss Abbey notes that he was lost at sea off HMT Astrakhan aged 31 (actually still 30).
Son of David Main and Marjory Kemp of Findhorn.
Named on village school memorial.
8th name on bay side of village memorial.

HMS or HMT (Trawler) Astrakhan cannot be identified but SS Astrakhan, 3438 tons, was built in Jarrow 1892 for Moss of Liverpool, sold in 1929 as the Gustav Schindler and torpedoed as the Torcello by a Russian submarine in The Black Sea in 1941. Is this it?

16. 2nd Lieutenant Alexander MASSON 4th Seaforth Highlanders (2/6th in MRH), Territorial Force. 
Born at Myrtle Cottage Findhorn on 4 October 1889. Joined at Forres in October 1914; served in France and Belgium. Hit in chest and expired on his way to the dressing station on 1 October
1918 aged 28. Buried near Ledegem, Belgium. Commemorated in Dadizeele New British Cemetery, Grave V.D.26. Son of Thomas Masson (deceased according to CWGC) and Ann Main or Masson, Myrtle Cottage (89) Findhorn. Occupation, joiner with Mr James Smith, Forres. Named on village school memorial. 3rd name on Kinloss side of village memorial.

Note for interest another Alexander Masson, born 26 October 1899, who served as an A.B. on HM Drifter Blossom in Home Waters and survived the War. He has the same named parents (Thomas and Annie Masson) at 158 Findhorn, which is not the present Myrtle Cottage.


19. Lieutenant Alfred Saunders MIDDLETON 72nd Canadian Scottish and 56th Sqdn Royal Air Force. Born at Schoolhouse, Dounby, Orkney on 20 February 1892; residing at Findhorn for many years where his father was the schoolmaster. Joined at Vancouver City, B.C. on 10 August 1914; served in France; wounded at Festubert in May 1915; commissioned 1917; squadron based at Lavieville on 15 October 1918. Wounded on 25 October 1918 when he crashed on landing. Died of wounds on 26 October 1918 aged 26. Buried in Military Cemetery, Rocquigney Road, Etricourt, Ypres (MRH). Commemorated in Rocquigney-Equancourt Road British Cemetery, Manancourt. Grave XIV.A.40. Son of Alexander and Williamina Bruce Middleton, Findhorn. Husband of Margaret Roy Gillan Middleton of Urquhart, Elgin. They had a baby girl (Forres Gazette 11 September 1918). Occupation, cashier accountant of The Standard Fisheries Ltd, Vancouver, BC. Named on village school memorial. 2nd name on Kinloss side of village memorial.

There is a picture of the Middleton family in the Families Folder in the Heritage Centre.

20. Private Alexander MURDOCH 266166 (CWGC from previous service) 3117 (MRH) 1/6th Seaforth Highlanders, Territorial Force. Born at Kinloss to Isabella Watson on 14 August 1886. Joined at Forres on 29 May 1915; served in France. Killed in France on 21 March 1918 aged 27. Commemorated on Arras Memorial. Bay 8. Son of James and Isabella Murdoch, who married soon after his birth, 21 Findhorn (address is 2 Findhorn for younger brother William who has a number 3116 in MRH. He survived). Also noted at Culbin Place by Forres, Elgin and Nairn Gazette on 17 April 1918.
Occupation. Farm servant in Canada.
Named on village school memorial.
6th name on church side of village memorial.

21. Private Angus ROYAN DCM 9428 2nd Seaforth Highlanders, Regular Army.
Born at New Forres on 17 July 1890 (Birth certificate states 7 July 1889). Joined at Fort George on 4 August 1914; served in France; reported in the Forres, Elgin and Nairn Gazette of 26 May 1915 as suffering from nervous breakdown and was sent to a hospital at Harve. **Killed while working a Lewis gun on the Somme at Beaumont Hamel on 1 July 1916 aged 25.** Awarded Distinguished Conduct Medal, citation reads, 'For gallantry on 19th October near Frelinghien, in proceeding with two other men to occupy some buildings held by the enemy, under heavy fire.' Commemorated on Thiepval Memorial. Pier and Face 15C.
Son of James and Margaret Royan, Kimberley Square, Findhorn. Brother of Donald and James who died (see Nos 22 and 23) and George, Ian Bruce, Osgood and William, who survived. Married to Miss Maggie Ann Bennett, 3 Cross Lane in Buckie Parish Church Manse not long before when home on a short furlough.
Occupation, reservist. Was working as a salmon fisher at Portnessie.

7th name on church side of village memorial.

22. Private Donald ROYAN 8360 2nd Bn Cameron Highlanders, Regular Army.
Born at Castle Stewart, Inverness on 22 November 1888. Parents resided in Morayshire. Joined in India; served in France. **Killed at Hill 60, Belgium on 11 May 1915 (MRH 9 May) aged 26.** Commemorated on Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial. Panel 38 and 40.
Son of James and Margaret Royan, Kimberley Square, Findhorn. Brother of Angus and James who died (see Nos 21 and 23) and George, Ian Bruce, Osgood and William who survived.
Occupation, regular soldier.

8th name on church side of village memorial.

23. Private James ROYAN 130 4th Regt South African Infantry (MRH 1st South African Scottish)
Born at Hismount, Nairnshire on 24 November 1878; parents residing in Morayshire for several years. Joined in South Africa 1915; served in Egypt and France. **Killed at Delville Wood on 19 July 1916 aged 37.** Commemorated on Thiepval Memorial. Pier and Face 4C.
Son of James and Margaret Royan, Kimberley Square, Findhorn. Brother of Angus and Donald who died (see Nos 21 and 22) and George, Ian Bruce, Osgood and William who survived.
Occupation, manager of gold mine.

9th name on church side of village memorial.

Born at Cassieford, Forres on 21 March 1897. Joined at Forres on 9 October 1915; served in France. **Killed at Beaumont Hamel on 15 November 1916 aged 19 (13 Nov in MRH).** Commemorated in Cayeux Military Cemetery. Grave II.B.3. Apparently he was exhumed from a grave near Beaumont Hamel, identified by his ID disc and 'concentrated' back to Cayeux in July 1926 (CWGC). *Why he was not 'concentrated' to a nearer cemetery is unclear.*
Son of William and Isabella Russell, Milton of Grange, Forres.
Occupation, chauffer with Mr A Whaley, motor agent at Brodie Castle.

1st name on bay side of village memorial.

Born at Findhorn on 7 November 1895. Joined at Forres in March 1914; served in France. **Died of wounds at War Hospital, Maristinkloster, Perueltzsz, Germany when prisoner of war on 15 April 1918 aged 22.** Commemorated in Tourai Communal Cemetery Allied Extension, Hainaut, Belgium. Grave I.L.14.
Son of Alexander (deceased) and Elizabeth Smith of Primrose Cottage. *This is 161 Findhorn and recently known as Greystones. The Forres Elgin and Nairn Gazette dated 5 June 1918 notes he is a POW and the edition dated 28 August 1918, which reported his death, notes two sisters.*
Occupation, bank clerk, North of Scotland Bank, Forres.
Named on village school memorial.
2nd name on bay side of village memorial.

The death notice for Alexander Smith in The Forres, Elgin and Nairn Gazette of 28 August 1918 comments that he was the 'only son of the late Captain Alexander Smith and Mrs Smith, Primrose Cottage'.

It is recorded in the records of Kinloss Free Church, which is the church at Findhorn, that Alexander and Elizabeth Smith had three children – Elizabeth Mary born 22 August 1890, Jessie Masson born 20 March 1893 and Alexander born 7 November 1895.

Pte Alexander Smith's father, Captain Alexander Smith, had died in a collision of the steamship Mount Park of Greenock, of which he was the captain, on 16 February 1911 near the mouth of the Thames aged 52. One of the three survivors of the wreck was Osgood Royan of Findhorn (see No 26).

26. Able Seaman James SMITH Hosp S Warilda. He is the 9th name on bay side of village memorial, AB James Smith Hosp S “Warilda”. Because he is listed at the end of the memorial, I think he was in the Merchant Navy and not the RN. Hospital ships were crewed by the Merchant Navy. There is no record of him on the CWGC website, which might indicate that he did not die because of enemy action. He is not named in the MRH, which is interesting since his family continued to live in Findhorn. His name appears on the village school war memorial and also on the church Roll of Honour, where his unit is 'Transport A.62'. The church Roll of Honour lists those who fought and was written, I think, between November 1918 and March 1919 because it notes those who died but not David Main's death which was not recorded until March 1919. The www.diggerhistory website notes:

A 62. HMAT Wandilla
7,785 tons. 16 knots. Adelaide SS Co Ltd Adelaide.
Manned by Australian officers and (during part of her service) Australian crews. Commonwealth control ended 24 January 1917.

and

A 69. HMAT Warilda
7,713 tons. 16 knots. Adelaide SS Co Ltd Adelaide.
Manned by Australian officers and (during part of her service) Australian crews. Torpedoed and sunk by a submarine in the English Channel 3 August 1918.

A 62 is His Majesty's Australian Troopship Wandilla which is the sister ship to A 69 HMAT Warilda. Both subsequently became hospital ships. Is this an error on the church Roll of Honour or did AB James Smith serve on both?

From the church records in Stuart Farrell's booklet, there were at least five Smith families in Findhorn. One of them was James Smith and Isabella Masson. He was a Salmon Fisher. They had seven children listed there and an eighth eldest child has been traced in official records. Combined details are: Mary born 1877, Isabella born 17 February 1880; James born 3 January 1882; Margaret born December 1882, John born 7 July 1884, Ann or Annie born 7 July 1886, Bessie baptized 24 November 1889 and Alexander born 7 September 1891. He is the only James Smith listed as being born in the village at that time. Also, the 1911 Census shows a James Smith in Kinloss Parish, whose age matches the 1882 birth. He is shown as a salmon fisher, who on census day was at the Findhorn mid station / bothy. The Elgin Libindx website (NM1888S2) notes a Mr James Smith, son of James Smith of Doon Cottage (I think this is a spelling error – see below). Born c.1882. Died on board SS Helmsdale 14 November 1917. Buruta, West Central Africa (Buruta is in SE Nigeria on the Niger delta.). Libindx lists two newspaper articles.

Firstly, a Forres Gazette article from 2 January 1918, page 3, column 5 entitled 'Findhorn Sailor Killed'. The salient facts are that he died on 14 November 1917 from a fall from the top of the hatch to the bottom of the hold owing to a faulty hatch while on board SS Helmsdale which was lying at Buruta, West Central Africa. A quote from the Master is very positive about his good qualities. It notes, 'We buried him the following day'. i.e. on 15 November 1917. It is not clear if this burial was on land or at
The article mentions that his parents had a 'youngest son' who had been drowned at sea a few years earlier. This could be Alexander. Secondly, The Elgin Courant on 11 January 1918, page 1, column 1 has a death notice for him dated 14 November 1917 as 'the eldest son of James and Isabella Smith of Doune Cottage, Findhorn'. (James was the eldest of the three sons.)

I speculate that when Smith's Libindex entry was written the cottage in Findhorn called Doon Cottage, which is No 88, was known as Doon Cottage and it has a name plate on it, whereas Doune Cottage, which is No 145, was known by its number and does not have a name plate on it. Both are old.

In Kinloss Abbey, Grave No 100, there is a memorial stone to Mary Smith who died 25 March 1954. Her sister Isabella who died 21 September 1960 and their brother John who died 22 February 1965, late of Doune Cottage, 145 Findhorn. They are buried in different lairs in the cemetery.

The Warilda was built on Clydebank in 1912 for the Adelaide Steam Ship Company. She was in coastal service off Australia until requisitioned as His Majesty's Australian Troopship Warilda in 1915. She carried Australian Imperial Forces to Europe. She became a hospital ship on 25 July 1916, having been fitted out in Liverpool. As HMHS Warilda she had British medical staff but the crew were Australian until May 1917 when they returned to Australia, except for the officers and engineers. The HS Warilda worked between Southampton and Le Havre. She was torpedoed and sunk in The English Channel in the early hours of 3 August 1918 by the German submarine UC-49. There were 600 sick, 89 nurses and approximately 120 crew on board. There were 123 fatalities, including six from the Mercantile Marine, none of whom were called Smith. One patient who died was a Private John SMITH 350567 9th Bn Royal Scots.

To avoid muddle, the CWGC website notes a Private James SMITH 2786 59th Bn Australian Infantry, Australian Infantry Force as the son of Alexander and Elizabeth Smith, 178 Findhorn, Forres. He was killed in action on Fromelles on 19 July 1916 aged 25. According to the Australian War Memorial records his father did not move to 178 Findhorn until May 1920.

On the balance of probabilities, if not beyond all reasonable doubt, it appears that our James Smith was a Findhorn salmon fisher who was born in 1882 of a large family at Doune Cottage. He may have served on Transport A62 HMAT Wandilla and / or on HMHS Warilda as an able-seaman before his death aged 35 on 14 November 1917 on board the SS Helmsdale in Buruta, Nigeria. Three of his siblings are commemorated at Kinloss Abbey in about 1965.

Is there a relation – great niece or nephew for example – who can shed any light?

27. Private Donald A WEBSTER 8814 8th Bn Seaforth Highlanders.
Commemorated in Dernancourt Communal Cemetery Extension. Grave III.H.23
Son of Jessie Sinclair or Webster, Elderslie, (MRH says Rose Cottage, which is now Craigendarroch 206, Findhorn. Elder brother of Joseph (see No 28).
Occupation, gardener at Altyre and Donibristle, employed at Errol when he joined.
Named on village school memorial.
3rd name on bay side of village memorial.

28. Private Joseph WEBSTER 39023 5/6th Bn Royal Scots (MRH says 11th Bn Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. The Forres, Elgin and Nairn Gazette of 11 September 1918 notes he joined the Seaforths on his return from Canada and was transferred to the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and then posted to the Royal Scots).
Born at Kinloss on 8 July 1893. Joined at Forres in September 1914; served in France; wounded five times. Reported killed on 28 August 1918 aged 25.
Commemorated in Assevillers New British Cemetery. Grave VI.B.6
Son of Joseph Webster (deceased) and Jessie Sinclair or Webster. She is recorded by the local paper as living at Rosebank, which is 201. I wonder if this is a misprint and should be Rose Cottage – see No 27. Younger brother of Donald (see No 27) and a sister (Forres Gazette 18 September 1918).
Occupation, electrician.
Named on village school memorial.
4th name on bay side of village memorial.

SECOND WORLD WAR

Son of Frank and Annie Allan 108 Findhorn.
Occupation, apprentice plumber for 3 years with Messrs Boyne & Martin, Forres.

12th name on church side of memorial.

Son of John (deceased) and Mary Ann Cameron of Findhorn. Husband of Nora Lerita Cameron of Findhorn.

11th name on church side of memorial.

Baptised in Findhorn 2 July 1898 according to the Moray & Nairn Family History Society transcript of the church records. I think this is a typing error and should be 2 July 1899 looking at the adjacent entries. Educated at Findhorn, Forres Academy and Fordyce Academy Banffshire, joined Army in 1917 and served as a Private, 25020, with 3rd Seaforths (MRH), was gassed and wounded in 1918, demobilised and qualified at Aberdeen MB ChB in 1924, career as ship's surgeon, torpedoed in 1941. Died at sea as a result of enemy action on 27 October 1942 aged 43.
Awarded Lloyd's Medal for Bravery at Sea and Albert Medal (AM) posthumously. The citation in the London Gazette of 27 April 1943 reads: “The ship in which Dr Chisholm was serving was torpedoed in darkness and immediately began to sink. A fire broke out, which enveloped the bridge in flames and orders were given to abandon the vessel. She sank within eight minutes. One of the Senior Officers who was on the bridge was badly injured. He was taken to the surgery, where Dr Chisholm immediately attended to him, and as he was helpless, assisted him to the deck in order to get him away from the sinking ship. Dr Chisholm's efforts, however were unsuccessful and neither he nor the officer was seen again. Although the ship was sinking rapidly, Dr Chisholm remained behind and deliberately sacrificed his chance of safety in a gallant attempt to save the life of another.” The AM was presented posthumously to his father by the King on 8 June 1943 because he was named in the MV Stentor's papers as the next of kin. However, his widow, Dr Fanny Chisholm, enquired of the Ministry of War Transport on 20 September 1943 when the AM would be presented. Alexander Chisholm was asked for an explanation and requested to forward the AM to Dr Chisholm's widow, which he did. He stated that he thought that his late son wished him to have the decoration and not his estranged wife.
Son of Alexander and Mary Grant Chisholm, Caledon, (? Erin Cottage ?6) Findhorn. Married Fanny Bissett Mackintosh at King's College Chapel, Aberdeen University on 30 September 1930 and was separated from her in 1933.
Occupation, ship's doctor.

12th name on bay side of memorial.

The MV Stentor was owned by the China Mutual Steam Navigation Co. Ltd (A.Holt & Co.), Liverpool. She was torpedoed by U boat U-509 NW of the Canary Islands in a convoy from Sierra Leone. 44 of the 235 crew and passengers were lost.

The Albert Medal was not awarded after 1947 and previous recipients were able to exchange it for the George Cross which is the highest award for gallantry to a civilian. The rarity of the award is reflected by the £8,880 paid at a Bonhams auction on 27 March 2013 when Chisholm's 2nd World War medals were sold.
I shall write an article about Chisholm based on the file held by Tim Negus. Should Dr William Chisholm's Albert Medal (AM) be added to the War Memorial?

32. 2nd Engineering Officer George Rankine Deans SS Warfield (Glasgow), Merchant Navy. Died at sea as a result of enemy action on 15 August 1943 aged 38.
Son of John and Margaret Deans of Findhorn. Married to Nora Chisholm of Caledon Place, (?) Findhorn whom, I think, is William Chisholm's sister (see No 31).
13th name on bay side of memorial.

The SS Warfield was owned by the British India Steam Navigation Co. Ltd of Glasgow. She was bombed by German aircraft on 15 August 1943, 220 miles NW of Lisbon. Two of the 96 crew lost their lives.

33. Private Donald Alexander Forsyth 2929318 2nd Battalion Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders. Killed in action on 16 June 1941 aged 26 (CWGC) or 27 (Northern Scot 5 July).
Commemorated on Alamein Memorial Column 72.
Eldest son of Donald and Annie Barbara Forsyth of Kinloss Farm Cottages, Forres (Northern Scot 5 July) or Findhorn (CWGC).
Occupation, regular soldier since 1938 and a keen piper and local football goalkeeper.
Photograph in Forres Gazette dated 16 July 1941.
13th name on church side of memorial.

34. Sergeant Air Gunner John Alexander Fraser 1571220, 624 Squadron Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. Lost during air operations on 18 August 1944 aged 19 (CWGC) or 29 (Elgin Courant 25 August 1944).
Son of Donald Hugh and Hilda O'Hara Fraser and nephew of the Misses Fraser Viewbay, Munlochy.
16th name on church side of memorial.

There are several Sgt John Frasers RAF who might be this casualty but the Elgin Courant of 25 August 1944 refers to this one. His relations also live nearest to Findhorn. Munlochy is just across the Moray Firth from Findhorn. It is not obvious why he is included on the Memorial in Findhorn. There is a Sgt John William Fraser Royal Canadian Air Force buried in Kinloss Abbey but he would have been stationed at RAF Kinloss, I suspect, rather than originating locally.

Commemorated on Family Headstone at Kinloss Abbey (No. 171). Not commemorated by CWGC because death was by natural causes (internal haemorrhage and collapse).
Youngest son of James and Mrs (deceased) Geddie, 72 Findhorn. Husband of Isabella Kemp, Findhorn who died on 3 June 1962. Brother of Lance Corporal James Geddie (see No 6)
10th name on bay side of memorial.

36. 2nd Engineer Officer Daniel Horne SS Fort Chilcotin (London), Merchant Navy. Lost at sea on 24 July 1943 aged 29.
Commemorated on Tower Hill Memorial, London. Panel 50.
Son of Daniel and Mary Horne of Kinloss.
15 name on bay side of memorial.

SS Fort Chilcotin was a Ministry of War Transport owned by Hogarth Shipping Co. Ltd. London which was torpedoed by U boat U-172 en route from Rio de Janeiro to UK with the loss of four crew.

37. Sailor Horatio Kemp SS Empire Lakeland (South Shields), Merchant Navy. Born 8 October 1920. Died on 11 March 1943 aged 22.
Commemorated on Tower Hill Memorial, London. Panel 43.
Son of George and Margaret W Kemp, Salmon Fisher, Findhorn.
16th name on bay side of memorial.

The SS Empire Lakeland was a Ministry of War Transport owned by the Blue Star Line Ltd, which was torpedoed on 8 March 1943 (cannot explain date difference) with two torpedoes from U-boat, U-190, NW of Rockall. All 64 crew were lost.

Son of James (deceased 1931) and Elizabeth Riach (deceased 1926) Masson. Brother of James (see No 40).
14th name on bay side of memorial.

The SS Calabria was a Ministry of War Transport owned by the British India Steam Navigation Co. Ltd, London. She was sunk by U-boat U-103 in the Western Approaches. All 360 crew and passengers were lost.

Eldest son of George and Isabella Masson, 24 Findhorn. Occupation, Government work.
14th name on church side of memorial.

Son of James (deceased 1931) and Elizabeth Riach (deceased 1926) Masson. Brother of Alexander (see No 38).
17th name on church side of memorial.

The SS Zealandia was owned by Huddart Parker Ltd, Melbourne. She was attacked in a Japanese air raid on Darwin on 19 February 1942 and set alight. Three of her complement of 145 died.

41. Private David MUNRO 2763639 5th Battalion Black Watch (Royal Highlanders). Died 11 June 1944 aged 32.
Commemorated in Hermanville War Cemetery, Calvados, France. Grave 2.N.1.
Son of James and Joan Munro. Husband of Elizabeth Munro of West Pilmuir, East Lothian.
15th name on church side of memorial.

42. Able Seaman Francis Alexander (Sandy) SANDISON C/SSX 25956, HMML 579, Royal Navy. Joined aged 16. He was an anti-aircraft gunner on a minesweeper. Killed in action on 26 October 1943 aged 22.
Commemorated on the Chatham Naval Memorial. Panel 83.
Youngest son of James and Margaret Sandison of Forres (CWGC), 75 Findhorn in Forres, Elgin and Nairn Gazette dated 3 November 1943.
10th name on church side of memorial.

HMML (His Majesty's Motor Launch) 579 was bombed and sunk at Leros, Greece on 26 October 1943.

43. John STORM Mercantile Marine. Born 3 May 1892. In November 1940 he was torpedoed and shelled by a raider in the Atlantic and spent 12 days in an open boat before being picked up. For
his conduct he received a certificate of commendation from the King. **Died at Rosebank, (201)**

**Findhorn on 2 October 1942 aged 50.**
Commemorated on family headstone at Kinloss Abbey (No. 159). Not commemorated by CWGC because death was by natural causes (angina pectoris).
Son of Alexander (deceased) and Elspeth (deceased) Storm. Survived by Jessie Bernice Webster (widow), a son and a daughter, Connie.

11th name on bay side of memorial.

**SOME SOURCES USED**

- Commonwealth War Graves Commission website (CWGC).
- The Morayshire Roll of Honour. Elgin 1921 (MRH).
- Scottish War Memorial Project website (SWMP).
- The Spirit of the Troops is Excellent. 6th (Morayshire) Battalion, Seaforth Highlanders by Derek Bird. Librario 2014.
- Heather Gregg, Senior Registrar, Moray Council Burial Grounds.
- Findhorn Heritage Centre (FHC), Findhorn Village Centre and Findhorn Church.
- The Highlanders Museum, Fort George.
- 56 (R) Sqn archivist, RAF Waddington.
- Jill Stewart, local historian.
- Several Findhorn residents.
- The village school war memorial inside the Village Centre behind the church.
- The Roll of Honour in the church vestry.
- www.diggerhistory

Dr Timothy P Finnegan
Inchmerle, Findhorn