REPORT ON TRACING THE BRITISH FAMILY OF WILLIAM STROTHER THE IMMIGRANT.

Introduction:

The William Strother Society recently discovered that there is a direct relationship between the descendents of William Strother who died in Virginia in 1702 and four present day Struthers families. The DNA strongly suggests that all five families had a common ancestor between 1600 & 1669. I have been given permission to examine the information available to the Society to see if, being resident in Scotland, I could build on the available information and to advise the course of further research.

My thanks to Nolan Hensarling and Ed Strother in allowing me access to the Society's data. With one exception I have not been able to add to Ed's work but have immersed myself in 17th century Scottish history for the last few weeks increasing my limited knowledge and thoroughly enjoying myself.

Approach:

I have attempted to establish the source of the name and explore if there is a recognised link to Strother. Next examine if it is possible to take the four known Struthers families beyond the work already done by Ed Strother. Having established the likely geographical area of origin explore how and why a Mr Strother/Struthers would go from home to America.

The Struthers Surname:

The name is thought to have a common source with Strother which is Middle English for a swamp or marsh. The names are used in both Scotland and England. There is a Struther near Stonehouse, Lanarkshire, and a Struthers in Fife. References point to an origin further south, perhaps from Strother in Northumberland.

The earliest records are of John Strwtheris a witness in Glasgow in 1555 *(protocols,1)* and Thomas Strotheris appears in Kelso, 1567 *(Kelso, p. 526).*[1]

The Struthers place name in Fife is not associated with a family. In 1124 during the reigh of David 1. Struthers Castle in the parish of

[1] The Surnames of Scotland; *their Origin, Meaning, and History;* by George F.Black Ph.D. First Pub 1946 New York Public Library. My copy pub 1999 Birlinn Ltd. (The definitive work on Scottish Surnames)

Ceres is said to have belonged to Radoldhus de Ochter. It is believed that Struthers has evolved from his name.
N.B. During the last few weeks I came across a reference to a member of the Conyers family of Northumberland marrying into one of the landowners from the Avondale Area in the early medieval period. The reference is misplaced! It is interesting to speculate that the original Struthers were part of her entourage.

The Four Struthers Families:

1. JOHN LANGFORD STRUTHERS. The earliest reference for this family is a John Struthers who married a Jean or Jane Miller 22nd February 1783 in Avondale, South Lanarkshire. Both were of that Parish.
2. DEREK STRUTHERS. The earliest mention for this family is James Struthers approximately born in the 1760's in Scotland. It is known that his son Alexander Struthers was born circa 1787 in East Kilbride.
3. STEVEN STRUTHERS. The earliest certain mention of this family is the birth of William Struthers on 11th March 1796 in Gorbals, Glasgow. His father was possibly a William Struthers but as the baptism register for Gorbals begins in 1771 this is not proven.
4. RALPH CHARLES STRUTHERS. This family has been traced back to William Struthers who married Mary Gillies on 12th December 1767 in Barony, Glasgow.

NOTE: There are similarities in Derek, Steven & Ralph's naming pattern that suggest a converging relationship.

The Old Parish Registers:

National registration began in 1855. Parish Registers prior that have been centralised in New Register House, Edinburgh. Some OPR's give a lot of detail unfortunately many parish registers; especially in rural areas are not always accurate. I have come across entries where the parents have had many children all entered at the same time although their baptisms occurred many years prior to the entry. Often years go by without entries being made and some parishes whilst recording the baptism fail to record the parents which makes it impossible to be certain of the lineage. (EG Avondale)!

The dates for relevant Old Parish Registers held in New Register House and available on the net in Scotland's People:

Parish	Baptisms	Marriages	Deaths	County
Avondale	1698-1854	1709-1854	NIL	Lanark

Barony	1672-1854	1672-1854	1805-1835	Lanark
Gorbals	1771-1854	1771-1854	NIL	Lanark
East Kilbride	1688-1854	1688-1749	1821-1838	Lanark
		1754-1854		
Eaglesham	1659-1854	1723-1854	NIL	Renfrew
Glassford	1692-1854	1692-1854	1733-1807	Lanark
Stonehouse	1696-1853	1696-1853	1706-1813	Lanark
			1848-1853	
Hamilton	1645-1854	1645-1854	1647-1714	Lanark

Other Genealogy Approaches.

Consistently I have been advised that any personal information is more likely to be found in America. With few exceptions no record exists for emigration from Great Britain in the 17th century.

Emigration to America in the early 17th Century:

Criminal: If William had been transported for a crime, evidence is likely to be found in the court records of the time. Some Scottish and English records indexes are available on the net. The reasons for transportation would have included being in the wrong army of the civil war or following the wrong Protestant Creed.

Religious: The knowledge that William settled in Virginia and followed the Church of England makes this option less likely. I understand that other colonies would have given sanctuary to a dissenter.

A Presbyterian Congregation was established in Virginia in 1611 but in 1619 the Church of England became the official church of the colony. [2]

It is possible that being an Episcopalian would have encouraged William to leave an area which was a hotbed of dissent.

In 1624 the Virginia Co. was dissolved and Virginia became a Royal Colony.

Trade: It is possible that William may have gone to Virginia as an employee of a land owner. It may be interesting to establish if any Land owner held land in both Lanarkshire and Virginia. If this is so then it may be useful to examine the appropriate Family papers.

Bonded Labour: The indenture system was widely used by those who were unable to pay for there passage. Such emigrants contracted with a Sea Captain or merchant Skipper for five or seven years service in the Colonies with a Colonist to whom the Captain sold his rights under contract.[3]

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[2] Genealogical Encyclopaedia of the Colonial Americas by Christina K. Schaefer.

[3] 8. Directory of Scottish Settlers in North America; 1625-1815; 6 volumes by David Dobson; Pub. 1985 Genealogical publishing Co. Baltimore.

In Middlesex (London) before 1656 any person over 15yrs could bind his servitude for between 2 and 7 years.[4]

Voluntary Immigration to America came mainly from Lowland Scotland in the 17th century. (Lowland includes Lanarkshire).[5] Scotland was forbidden to trade with America until 1707. This was enforced by the Navigation Acts and Naval action. Consequently, Scotsman wishing to go across the Atlantic would probably have travelled first to either Ireland or England.
If William had set out from the South Lanarkshire area the obvious ports were Ayr and Glasgow.
Ayr traded mainly with Belfast and Londonderry in Ireland. The earliest record of a transatlantic ship was a 35 ton bark called the 'Rebecca' of Dublin which set Sail from Ayr on the 18th November 1642 to the English Caribbean islands. Hew Kennedy, the Ayr burgh representative on the Committee of Estates, travelled to London several times between 1640 and 1647 in connection with negotiating the end of the Bishop's wars. It is thought that he established trading contacts with the Hay family interests in Barbados (The Earls of Carlisle). There are records of Ayrshire owned vessels trading with Barbados from 1644.[6]
Glasgow was a University town of about 15,000 people. Its trading days were just beginning with trade to Ireland, France, and Norway. A few traders had ventured as far as Barbados but without much success. No ship of any size could get within fourteen miles of the city due to the shallowness of the Clyde. In 1651 the merchants of Glasgow owned twelve ships, the aggregate burthan was nine hundred and fifty-seven tons.[7]

In 1637 Thomas Mayhew was appointed to keep a record of all persons who left England for America. This record is currently lost?[8]

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[4] The Complete Book of Emigrants in Bondage; 1614 -1775. By P. Coldham. Pub 1988 with a supplement 1992.

[5] Tracing your Scottish Ancestry: by Kathleen B. Cory. Pub 1990 Polygon, Edinburgh.

[6] The Early Transatlantic Trade of Ayr 1640-1730; by Tom Barclay and Eric J. Graham. Pub 2005 Ayrshire Archaeological and Natural History Society.

[7] The Industries of Scotland: by David Bremner. First pub 1869. Reprinted 1969David & Charles Reprints.

[8] The Original Lists of Persons of Quality: Emigrants to America 1600-1700. Ed: John Camden Hotten. Pub 1978 Baltimore Genealogical Pub. Co.

The Virginia Co. claimed the Bermudas or Summer islands in 1609. It sold them to a company of 120 persons who obtained a charter in 1612. They sent out 60 settlers and a Governor.[9]

Geographical Origin of the Struthers Family:

Prior to the Civil War (1642-1660) Scotland was mainly a rural Country. Whilst some population movement occurred as a result of the war it wasn't until after the abolition of the Navigation Acts in 1707 that the rural population started to migrate to the Cities and to America. The earliest reliable data on the rural population is the 1841 & 1851 censuses. A comparison of the spread of families in that ten year period confirmed by a review of baptisms by parish between 1700 and 1750 gives a clear indication that the place of origin of the Struthers family is in the Glassford, East Kilbride and Avondale Area. *(see Appendix's 1,2 & 3).*

East Kilbride, Glassford and Avondale Parishes:

Avondale: Population in 1748=3,192; 1791 = 3,343; 1801=3,623; 1811=4,358; 1821= 5,030 and 1831= 5,761.

In the 17th century this was a rural parish mainly concerned with moor-land farming. There were few roads or other communication links. By the 1791 the Minister noted that there had been a reduction in moor-land farming and that not all births were registered. The Duke of Hamilton was superior of all lands in the parish and also proprietor of between ¼ & ⅜ of the parish.

Avondale had been part of the Douglas Estate and was forfeited in the reign of James 1. It remained with the crown until 1456 then became the Barony of Andrew Stuart, grandson of Murdoch, Duke of Albany. He became Lord Avondale. It was passed to the Earl of Arran and has remained in the Hamilton Family.[10]

Glassford:

'The standing stone slabs at Avonholm are of prehistoric origin. About a ¼ of a mile east from the old churchyard of Glasford there is high ground rising above the Avon whence a splendid view of the surrounding county is obtained. Below is the winding Avon & beyond it is Stonehouse with its old Church yard. Also standing high above the Avon away to the south-east rises Tinto; but almost all round the

[9] The Original Lists of Persons of Quality: Emigrants to America 1600-1700. Ed: John Camden Hotten. Pub 1978 Baltimore Genealogical Pub. Co.

[10] The Statistical Accounts of Scotland. 1791 and 1835

horizon there are extensive views reaching further even than Tinto***. On this height is a small fenced burying place of the Struthers family who owned Avonholm.*** The Standing Stones are also within this enclosure'. [11]

The population in 1755 was 559 and in 1792 it was 788. By 1831 it had reached 1,750. The main industry was farming in small units and was regarded by the Minister as backward.

It was noted by the Minister in 1835 that the Parochial Registers date from 1692. He stated that "They are rather confused from the first & have not been regularly attended to for the last 37 years".

In 1685 a John Struthers of Shawtonhill was arrested with others by Lord Glasford for being in arms against the established Government. (Note: King James 7th and 2nd was deposed in 1688).[12]

East Kilbride:
Pop: 1755 = 2,029. 1791 = 2,357. 1836 = 3,607. Currently it is over 71,000.
The minister noted in 1791 that the upper part of the parish was greatly depopulated by the accumulation of small farms into large ones. [13]

Conclusion:
It has been established that the Struthers families originated in the South Lanarkshire area; probably in the East Kilbride, Glassford and Avondale Parishes. No Birth or Marriage Registers exist from the 17th century. In fact very little genealogical material exists in Scotland prior to the late 18th century. In the absence of written material it is not clear what is gained by engaging a professional genealogist who can only duplicate the work of Ed Strother and myself.
Ed Strother has identified possible William Strother's elsewhere in the Americas. I would suggest that if there was a belief that a linkage could be established that an academic approach is developed. Dr. Elizabeth Ewan in Canada and Glasgow University in Scotland have been suggested as useful places to start. Neither undertake

[11] Contribution to the history of Lanarkshire vol. III by J.A. Wilson pub J. Wyless & Co. Glasgow. 1937 (page24)

[12] The Statistical Accounts of Scotland. 1791 and 1835

[13] The Statistical Accounts of Scotland. 1791 and 1835

Genealogical research but could help identify interesting areas to explore.
If a particular Archive appears to have material which the Society wishes to examine, most have a list of local experts who may be willing to undertake the research.
It seems that more might be achieved by continuing to identify others living Struthers and attempting to identify their linkage. The Parishes of Glassford and Avondale remain rural farming areas. East Kilbride is now on the outskirts of Glasgow and was developed as a new town following the Second World War.
I am willing to continue to help if it is felt I can be useful in any way.

April 2009.
PJAW

Bibilography:

This is a list of most of the books researched. I have also listed those that might be useful but have not been able to discover a copy.

1. The Surnames of Scotland; *their Origin, Meaning, and History;* by George F.Black Ph.D. First Pub 1946 New York Public Library. My copy pub 1999 Birlinn Ltd. (The definitive work on Scottish Surnames)

2. Genealogical Encyclopaedia of the Colonial Americas by Christina K. Schaefer.

3. Directory of Scottish Settlers in North America; 1625-1815; 6 volumes by David Dobson; Pub. 1985 Genealogical publishing Co. Baltimore.

4. The Complete Book of Emigrants in Bondage; 1614 -1775. By P. Coldham. Pub 1988 with a supplement 1992.

5. Tracing your Scottish Ancestry: by Kathleen B. Cory. Pub 1990 Polygon, Edinburgh.

6. The Early Transatlantic Trade of Ayr 1640-1730; by Tom Barclay and Eric J. Graham. Pub 2005 Ayrshire Archaeological and Natural History Society.

7. The Industries of Scotland: by David Bremner. First pub 1869. Reprinted 1969David & Charles Reprints.

8. & 9. The Original Lists of Persons of Quality: Emigrants to America 1600-1700. Ed: John Camden Hotten. Pub 1978 Baltimore Genealogical Pub. Co.

10, 12 & 13. The Statistical Accounts of Scotland. 1791 and 1835. www.stat-acc-scot.edina.ac.uk

11. Contribution to the history of Lanarkshire vol. III by J.A. Wilson pub J. Wyless & Co. Glasgow. 1937 (page24)

14. The Complete Book of Emigrants; 1607-1776; by P. Coldham. Pub 1986 & 1993.

15. More Emigrants in Bondage; 1614-1775. by P. Coldham. Pub 2002.

16. The Buoys still Wink (A history of the Clyde) by Iain M. Clark. Privately published. Mid 20th century.

17. List of ships sailing from Scotland to America 1611-1828 vol. 111 by David Dobson

18. Scots in the mid-Atlantic Colonies 1635-1783; by David Dobson. Pub 2002. Genealogical Publishing Co. Baltimore.

19. A History of Strathaven & Avondale by William Fleming Downie pub 1979. **(Not Found)**

20. The Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland (1882-4). Frances Groome. *Website.*

21. A Narrative of the Rise & Progress of Emigration from the Counties of Lanark & Renfrew to the new settlements in Upper Canada; by Robert Lamont. Pub 1921 Glasgow

22. Colonists in Bondage; White Servitude & Convict Labour in America 1607-1776; by Smith & Abbot E. Pub 1947 Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. **(Not Found)**

23. A Dictionary of Scottish Emigrants to the USA; 2 volumes by Donald Whyte. 1971 & 1986 Magna Carta Book Co. Baltimore.

24. A Dictionary of Scottish Emigrants to Canada before Confederation; By David Whyte. Pub 1986 Ontario Genealogical Society.

25. The Glasgow Tenement; by Frank Worsdall. Pub 1979, reprinted 1989 Richard Drew Publishing Glasgow. (Chapter 1).

26. Directory of Scots Banished to the American Plantations. 1650-1775. Pub 1983 Baltimore Genealogical Pub. Co. (**Not Found)**

27. Papers of the Douglas Hamilton Family. Dukes of Hamilton & Brandon 1563 to 1712 @ GD406 in the National Archives of Scotland. **(Not Searched)**

28. Ayrshire Archives. Ayrshire Archives Centre, Craigie Estate, Ayr. KA8 OSS Tel: 01292287584. Email: www.archives@south-ayrshire.org.uk (This is currently closed)

29. 10,000 Indentured Servants sent between 1654 & 1686. See Ther Bristol Registers of Servants sent to Foreign Plantations 1654-1686. Pub: Baltimore 1988. **(Not Found)**

Possibly other Useful Sources:
Ayr Kirk Session. 1604-1894.-NA20403
Ayr Sheriff Court. 1214 – NA23898
Avendale Old Kirk session 1560-1984 – NA13408
Presbytery of Lanark 1585 - ? NA12865.
I have not followed up the above references nor established whether material of interest exists. The records are held in the National Archives in Scotland.

The Ferrar Papers 1590-1700. Magdalene College, Cambridge. 'The Virginia Company Archives'.

East Kilbride News, 2 Olympia Arcade, Town centre, East Kilbride. G74 1LX.
Tel: 01355 265000. www.eastkilbridenews.co.uk (local newspaper)

Strathaven Echos, Kilwuddie Factory, 6 Chapel Road, Strathaven, ML10 6NA
Phone 01357 522327
Email editor@n10group.co.uk

Possibly Useful Websites:

23. Dr Elizabeth Ewen, Centre of Scottish History. University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada.
e-mail: eewen.unguelph.ca (recommended by an academic genealogist in Scotland)
University of Guelph – www.unguelph.ca

Ayrshire Archaeological and Natural History Society – www.aanhs.org.uk

American Papers in the House of Lords Records Office from 1621 to 1917.
Introduction by Prof. W.W. Minchinton. University of Exeter. –
www.microform.co.uk/guides/R97057.pdf

A guide to the manuscript materials for the history of the United States to 1783 in the British Museum. Minor London Archives & in the Libraries of Oxford & Cambridge by C.M. Andrews & F.G. Davenport. Pub 1908 by Carnegie Institution of Washington D.C.
www.microform.co.uk/guides/R97513.pdf

The British Association for American Studies. www.baas.ac.uk

The National Archives of Scotland. www.nas.gov.uk

The National Archives. www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

Glasgow University. www.gla.ac.uk