

Headless woman in clan chief mystery reinterred

History: Remains were found during search for body of Lord Lovat

BY SCOTT MACLENNAN

The remains of an unidentified, headless young woman, discovered in the search for the body of Jacobite clan chief Lord Lovat, have been laid to rest.

A short religious service was conducted by Father Max Nwosu yesterday at the Wardlaw Mausoleum in Kirkhill to reinter the remains after they were found not to belong to the legendary chieftain known as the "Old Fox".

The current chief, Simon Fraser, 16th Lord Lovat, and Sarah Fraser who married into the clan and wrote *The Last Highlander*, an acclaimed biography of the Old Fox were both present.

So too was the custodian of the Wardlaw Mausoleum, Eric Lundberg, who described the service as a "very fitting reinterment".

He said: "The service went very well with a good representation from the Lovat family with Simon, Lord Lovat, and Sarah Fraser.

"Lord Simon personally took the casket down into the crypt and laid it to rest."

Now, despite the forensic investigation ending, new leads are to be pursued in London by Mr Lundberg and Mrs Fraser.

The pair are to travel to the Tower of London next month to access a crypt that may yet hold the remains of the elusive chieftain.

Experts had hoped they were close to answering the question of where the clan



SERVICE: The casket is laid to rest in the crypt at the Wardlaw Mausoleum in Kirkhill

chief, who was beheaded, was buried after exhuming remains from the Wardlaw Mausoleum.

The mausoleum is located just four miles from the seat of the clan and the discovery of a headless body ignited the forensic investigation with a team travelling there last year to carry out DNA and other tests.

But anthropologist Dame Professor Sue Black revealed in January that the body was not the 80-year-old, 6ft-tall Jacobite clan chief.

Dame Sue, from Inverness, found instead the remains

were those of five different people and the most complete of those belonged to an unknown, headless young woman aged 25 to 35.

Simon Fraser, the 11th Lord Lovat, was the last person to be beheaded in Britain at the Tower of London in 1747 for his support of Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Jacobite Rebellion.

Official accounts state he was buried under a chapel floor in the tower, but the clan always claimed his body was taken by supporters and returned to Scotland in a lead casket.

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