

# **Ancestors**

## **A Family History**

**Lawrie, MacLeod and MacGregor**  
(and many more names besides)

**Edited by Peter John Lawrie**

**With contributions, in alphabetical order, from my scattered kin**

**Carol Ann Butler, Canada**  
**Christina Mairi Lawrie**  
**David Lawrie, Lancashire**  
**Duncan James Lawrie, Erie, PA. USA**  
**Gordon David Lawrie, Nairn**  
**James Andrew Lawrie, Edinburgh**  
**Mairi Balbirnie Lawrie**  
**Neville John Lawrie, Western Australia**  
**Iona MacCuish, Edinburgh**  
**Monica McGee, Banchory**  
**Christine McGregor, Canada**  
**Neil Malcolm McGregor, ACT, Australia**  
**Duncan MacLeod, Kiltarlity**  
**Graham McLeod, New Zealand**  
**Ronnie Milne, Carnoustie**  
**Iain McGregor Stockwell, New Zealand**  
**Jean Sutherland, Elgin**  
**Peter John Whyte, Barnard Castle**  
**Julia Williams, York**  
**Jean Margaret Wilson, Western Australia**

**2023**

The background of the front cover is the River Tay looking across to Tentsmuir forest from Broughty Ferry Esplanade.

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With thanks to Hugh Green whose book “Interconnections” inspired me, after a visit to Timespan in Helmsdale in September 2022, to begin writing this book.

# **Ancestors**

## **Cuimhnichibh air na daoine bho'n d'thainig sibh**

(Remember the people from whom you came.)

### **Introduction**

This account has been partly written in the first person, as it is the culmination of my personal research over many years. However, it is not just about me. I have two full brothers descending from John and Morag Lawrie, and two half-brothers from John Lawrie's later partner in Manchester. The children and later descendants of my brothers and I will obviously share my interest in the ancestry of both John and Morag. I have been pleased to receive contributions from cousins, second cousins and more distant relatives with whom our connection goes back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The children of John and their children in turn all share the surname Lawrie, so my discussion of the Lawrie name and our ancestry in Clackmannan, Aberdeenshire and Banff will be featured in my first section.

Morag was a MacLeod. I understand that, from what my mother heard from her father, our family tradition is that we came from the MacLeods of Assynt – a fifteenth century offshoot of the Clan Leod of Lewis. I have traced our MacLeod ancestors with certainty to the Sutherland parish of Kildonan in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century; considered the notorious Highland Clearances; and have speculated about the Assynt connection.

John Lawrie's mother was a MacGregor. I have been since the mid-1990s an active member and office-bearer of the Clan Gregor Society. I have considered the origins of the clan with its eponym, Gregor, in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century; the 16<sup>th</sup> century conflict with Clan Campbell leading to proscription of the very name MacGregor; and the movement of our own ancestors from Roro, Glen Lyon, to Braemar in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

So how did it start? I have always had an interest in history, but history as taught in school is impersonal – it is usually about great men and conflicts between and within

states. Our own histories are personal. What was happening during the lives of our parents, grandparents and, indeed, remote many-great-grandparents? How did it affect them and what part did they play? The last Jacobite rising ended in 1746, but I have found reference to some of our ancestors being involved in them. Our MacGregor ancestors were forced to flee Glen Lyon and settle in Braemar in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century as a result of the persecution of the entire name of MacGregor by the Scottish state. Eighteen of the kindred from Braemar died at Culloden in 1746. We also have an ancestor who was executed at Tyburn in York in 1770 for forging golden guineas – was he a criminal or a local hero? One of my wife’s ancestors lost an estate in Angus during the 17<sup>th</sup> century. As my account unfolds I intend to include some of this wider context.

It almost goes without saying (but, I will say it!) that the wider events taking place around individuals were often responsible for couples, who might otherwise never have met, coming together and producing children and descendants. Without World War II, John Lawrie would not have met Morag MacLeod. Without World War I, Alasdair MacLeod would not have met Norah Chew. Without a thunderstorm over the Ochils in 1876, John Lawrie would not have met Eliza Anne Cheetham - and Edmund Hillary would not have had the Lawrie boots he wore when he conquered Everest in 1953!

In the early 1980s, while struggling with the costs of a young family and a mortgage, a solicitor’s letter informed me that I was in line for a share of the estate of Charlotte Collier, whom I had never heard of. Eventually I received a cheque for about £90! I wrote to the solicitor afterwards and received from them a handwritten genealogy spread over several sheets of foolscap sellotaped together along with some certificates of birth and marriage. It was this which began my active interest in genealogy.

I started with questions: who were my ancestors? Where did they live? What did they do? What events did they witness or participate in? It became an addictive hobby, looking for records which would give me the next “fix”. I have met other people for whom this was just as interesting. Indeed there are societies whose business it is to assist us addicts. I have been a member of the Scottish Genealogy Society and the Clan

Gregor Society for many years. However, for some people, ancestor hunting may be a great bore and their eyes glaze over as one explains the latest findings.

It is often the case that people begin their ancestor hunt in their later years when their children have grown up and left home and the demands of earning a living have become less onerous. All too often, by then, parents, uncles and aunts are passing on, or perhaps are in the grip of Alzheimer's. Only then does it occur to them - why didn't Grandfather or Great Aunt write down what they knew or annotate those precious photographs left behind in a dusty tin?

Anyway, having accumulated folders packed with notes over the past forty years, I am realizing that I could be that person who didn't write things down! Since the mid-1990s, I have created many web-pages setting out genealogies and much related information. Physical distance is no barrier on the internet, so my pages have received hits from all over the world. As a result, I have had emails from distant kin in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the USA. However, although my website - <http://glendiscovery.com> - does contain much of the story I want to tell, it only remains of value while I continue to pay the monthly subscription to the hosting provider and renew my domain names. So, clearly, when I quit this mortal coil and stop paying the bills, it will all evaporate, unless a diligent researcher can find my pages on the Wayback archive.

Some time ago, my granddaughter approached me for help with a primary school project. The class had been asked to write about their ancestors. I think a mention of grand-parents may have been the school's expectation. Anyway, Mairi-Anna was very pleased to be commended by her class teacher for the lists of her ancestors going back to the eighteenth century which I provided her with, so she could write up her project.

It is difficult to think what my great grandchildren, whom I will never meet, might want to know about me or, indeed, my great grandparents. Of necessity, therefore, I have to create a comprehensive account. I didn't particularly feel that I wanted to write an autobiography. This work isn't intended to be just about me. However, my great-grandfather Joseph MacLeod – whom we will meet at considerable length later – wrote

a book entitled “Highland Heroes of the Land Reform Movement”, published by the Highland News in Inverness in 1917. Joseph had been an activist for Highland Land Law Reform since the early 1880s and knew many heroes of the movement. The book had a page or more for each of the most prominent heroes across the Highlands and Islands with an account of their life and activities. Unfortunately, out of modesty, he completely omitted to provide an account of his own eventful life. With that lesson in mind, the end Section VI will be brief autobiographies of my brothers and myself.

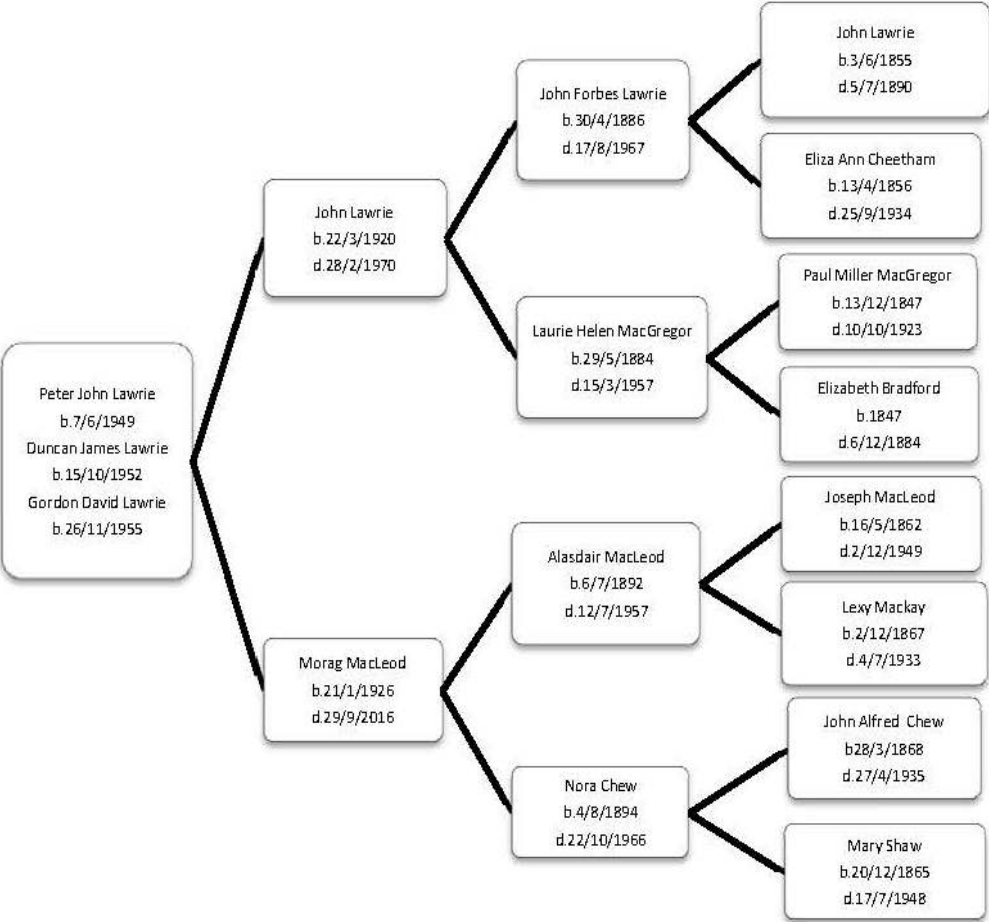
As well as extensive genealogies, I intend to examine social changes, such as the Highland Clearances, which affected our ancestors. The most obvious and best documented was the Sutherland Clearance in the MacLeod Section II. But the clearance of small farmers from the lands of their ancestors in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was not confined to Sutherland. I have traced how our Lawrie ancestors in West Aberdeenshire moved from their small farms, or possibly from service with other farmers, firstly into larger rural settlements such as Turriff, from there to the growing industrial towns in the Central Belt of Scotland and finally to the North of England. Weavers, such as our Cheetham ancestors around Rochdale, were compelled by technological change to move from their rural settlements into insalubrious overcrowded slums and work in dark, satanic mills.

After many years of searching, a DNA test by Iain McGregor Stockwell’s relative, Evan Forbes McGregor in New Zealand, enabled me to trace Duncan, our 18<sup>th</sup> century MacGregor ancestor, to the Braemar area in upland Aberdeenshire. Economic changes must have forced Duncan to migrate in the 1770s. When I first started looking into Laurie Helen McGregor’s family, I had traced the line back from Cheshire to Monkwearmouth in the North East of England but only recently has it been possible to make the connection to ancestors, shared with Iain Stockwell, in Braemar and in earlier generations, in Glen Lyon, Perthshire.

This is not an academic tome, so there are no footnotes, although I do reference my sources in the text. There is a brief bibliography and index of names at the end.



The chart shows the descent of my brothers and I from our great-grandparents. While it includes some useful dates, it is not in itself justification for a book. It omits our own children and grandchildren, nephews & nieces and cousins to various degrees.



The chart on the next page shows the eight great-grandchildren of John and Morag Lawrie, at the time of writing in 2023.

## The descendants at time of writing, in 2022, of John Lawrie and Morag MacLeod

John Lawrie  
b.22/3/1920  
d.28/2/1970

Morag Mackay MacLeod  
b.21/1/1926  
d.29/9/2016

m.26/3/1946  
Glasgow

48 Dalkeith Street, Blackley, Manchester

Peter John  
b.7/6/1949  
m.Mairi Balmirne Davidson (b.31/5/1947)  
31/3/1974, Broughty Ferry

Duncan James  
b.15/10/1952  
m.Isobel Mary Lewien ( )  
26/9/1977 Clovenfords, Galashiels

Gordon David  
b.26/11/1955  
m.Rhona Christine Campbell (b.22/1/956, d.23/8/16)  
m.3/12/1977, Marlow, Bucks

Broughty Ferry, Dundee

Cleveland, USA

Naim

Christina Mairi  
2/10/1974, Dundee  
m.Marcus Barchan Stevens  
(b.12/1974)  
31/8/2008

James Andrew  
20/9/1981, Dundee  
m.Xin Luo (Katty)  
(b.21/2/1986)  
26/5/2019

Maissa Jane  
b.5/3/1982, Ston  
m.Matthias Wilke  
(b.?)  
20/3/2021

Benjamin John  
22/5/1984, Bedford  
m.Jennifer Lynn Angelotti  
(b.?)  
1/4/2006

Craig Ian  
23/2/1987, Cleveland  
m.Britta Anne Koepf  
(b.?)  
2/6/2021

David James  
b.28/4/1981  
m.Ashley Sinclair  
(b.24/7/1986)  
29/6/2014

Kirsteen Louise  
b.24/7/1984  
m.Mark Williamson  
(b.6/10/1980)  
6/10/2007

London

Edinburgh

Seattle

Tennessee

Falkirk

Inverness

Mairi-Anna  
b.12/5/2011  
Dundee

Max  
b.21/8/2019  
Livingstone

Elisabeth Nora  
b.27/11/2021  
Seattle

Isaac Alexander  
b.11/9/2008

Evelyn Annabel  
b.17/9/2011

Rayf James  
b.21/10/2016

Zander Sinclair  
b.8/5/2019

Emily Grace  
b.12/10/2011

In Section I, I will trace my father's line. John Lawrie was born in Manchester on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1920 to John Forbes Lawrie and Laurie Helen McGregor. John Forbes Lawrie's father, also named John Lawrie, came down in the late 1870s from Tillicoultry, Clackmannanshire to Rochdale, Lancashire, due to flooding in Tillicoultry. He set up a boot and shoe business in Rochdale where he met and married Eliza Anne Cheetham. Eventually I traced the probable Lawrie line back to Banff in the mid 17th century. John Forbes's mother, Eliza Anne was descended from David Hartley on Erringden Moor, by Hebden Bridge in Yorkshire. David was the "King of the Yorkshire Coiners" - for which he was hanged in 1770.

Section II – MacLeod. John Lawrie's final RAF posting towards the end of the Second World War in 1945 was to Dalcross airfield - now Inverness airport. There he met my mother Morag Mackay MacLeod, a 19-year old serving in the Observer Corps. It appears that Morag's father, Alasdair, wasn't too keen on John, so the couple eloped in 1946 and married in Glasgow before going to stay with John's parents in Manchester.

Alasdair was the only son of Joseph MacLeod, a councillor and magistrate in Inverness. I was able to trace their family origins back to Eldrable in the Strath of Kildonan, Sutherland, from where they were evicted in 1819 during the notorious Sutherland Clearances. Alasdair MacLeod, a 2nd Lieutenant in the Cameron Highlanders was captured by the Germans at the Battle of Passchendaele on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1917. He spent the rest of the war in a German PoW camp for officers at Karlsruhe. He finally returned home in February 1919 and resumed his clinical training to be a dentist at Edinburgh University. There he met Norah Chew from Samlesbury near Blackburn, Lancs. They married in 1920. Alasdair abandoned dentistry and joined the civil service as a tax inspector. Their first son, Torcul, was born in West Lothian in January 1921. Alasdair's first civil service posting was to Marlowe in Buckinghamshire where four of their children - Angus, Sheila, Iain and Morag were born, between 1922 and 1926, although Iona says that Sheila, her mother, was born in London. The family returned to Inverness where their last two children were born, Maeve in 1929 and Duncan in 1936.

Section III. My father's mother was Laurie Helen McGregor, the daughter of a farmer of Crowton Hall, Weaverham, Cheshire. I traced this line with certainty back to Alexander McGregor, the son of Duncan McGregor and his wife Grissel Gardiner, whose baptism was recorded in Monkwearmouth, Sunderland, in 1776. Alexander would become the bailiff to the Duke of Westminster's Eaton estate in Cheshire until he died in 1857. Alexander's great granddaughter, Laurie Helen married John Forbes Lawrie in 1908.

The origin of Duncan, Alexander's father, was a mystery to me for many years. He had almost certainly come down from Scotland but there were a number of possible Duncan MacGregors recorded - and probably others who were not recorded in the OPRs.

This line was complicated by the proscription of Clan Gregor from 1603 until 1774. King James VI enacted that it would be illegal to bear the name MacGregor in Scotland following the Battle of Glen Fruin in February 1603. Henceforward all MacGregors had to adopt aliases – almost a hundred different aliases are known, some unique to the MacGregors but many used other family names, such as Campbell, Drummond, Graham or Murray. However, although James became King James I of England in 1603, the name MacGregor was never made illegal in England. When I began searching for Duncan, I looked for possibilities in the IGI (the Mormon International Genealogical Index) for England and Wales. I found to my surprise that there were MacGregor baptisms and/or marriages in every county in England during the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, except for Rutland and the Isle of Wight. I became so interested in the MacGregors that I constructed a genealogy of the clan from the founder Gregor in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century.

For many years I believed on the balance of probabilities that Duncan was the son of Robert MacGregor (alias Graham) in Stronchlachar, Loch Katrine, and the grandson of Gregor *Ghlun Dubh*, alias James Graham, of Glengyle. *Ghlun dubh* was a nephew of Rob Roy and commanded the MacGregor regiment in the last Jacobite Rising of 1745-1746. Along with my cousins Christine McGregor in Canada and Penny Duce in Edinburgh, we identified various events in the life of Duncan, including a substantial

legacy left to him by his uncle; the trading ship that he bought with it; his time serving in the Royal Navy during the Napoleonic War; letters which he wrote; his eventual admission to Greenwich hospital in 1820 as a Naval Pensioner and his death in 1826. We could not actually find any record of his marriage, children, or that he may have ever lived in Monkwearmouth, Northumberland where Alexander was born.

Ultimately DNA came to the rescue. Although Paul Miller McGregor in Weaverham had fourteen children, after three generations, they had all “daughters-out”, except for one line. I attempted to contact Neil Malcolm McGregor, my second cousin in Australia, the grandson of a half-brother of Laurie Helen. My first thought was to consult the online Australian phone directory, but I was surprised to find more than one hundred listings for Neil McGregor! Anyway, I eventually located him at Yarrh Wines, in the Australian Capital Territory. I am very grateful to Neil for kindly agreeing to take the Y700 DNA test at FTDNA.com. (Also familyreedna.com) The value of DNA testing is that closely matched individuals must share a common ancestor.

We did not, to begin with, find a sufficiently close match with any others in the Clan Gregor group at FTDNA until the test results of Evan Forbes McGregor in New Zealand became available. These indicated that we shared a common ancestor who had lived around 1700. Fortunately the family of Evan’s grandfather’s brother, John Forbes McGregor, had a good paper trail back to their ancestor in Braemar, Aberdeenshire. The Roman Catholic record of the Braemar chapel included the 1731 birth of a Duncan who would be about the right age to have married in Newcastle in 1772 and then fathered Alexander in 1776. This link provided Neil, Christine, Penny and I with our connection to the MacGregors of Roro in Glen Lyon, Perthshire.

Section IV looks at Norah Chew’s ancestry around Blackburn, Lancashire. Norah became the wife of Alasdair MacLeod in 1920. She was studying in Edinburgh when they met. Among Norah’s more interesting remote ancestors was Roger Nowell, the sheriff who conducted the Pendle witch trials in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Section V is for my wife's family. Baptised as Mary Balbirnie Davidson in Dundee, since her nursing days in Glasgow she has been known to me and her friends as Mairi, the Gaelic form of Mary. I found some interesting characters in Mairi's ancestry. Mairi descends from the Balbirnie Maers of Inverechty. "Maer" was a hereditary office, a stewardship, subordinate to a Mormaer, (or Earl). Inverechty lies south of Forfar, Angus. The family appeared in the register of the Great Seal of Scotland from the 14<sup>th</sup> century as their possession of the lands of Inverechty was confirmed by the crown as each generation succeeded their parents. The family disappeared from the record at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The last entry in 1614 indicated that they sold the estate, well before the signing of the National Covenant in 1634. Balbirnie is not a particularly common name, so despite missing generations, I have assumed that they were the ancestors of an 18<sup>th</sup> century Balbirnie family in the village of Invergowrie and subsequently into industrialising Dundee in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The earliest record of a probable Balbirnie in Scotland was a knight who was granted lands near Dunfermline by King Alexander III in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

James Myles (1818-1851) was Mairi's great-great-great-uncle. James ran a bookshop and lending library in Dundee's Overgate until his early death in 1851. His publications included "Rambles in Forfarshire"; "Foo Fozzle and Friends" – a collection of poetry and other stories by James and his associates; and "Chapters in the Life of a Dundee Factory Boy". Chris Whatley, a Dundee University professor, has written and lectured about the "Factory Boy", claiming that it was the anonymous autobiography of an autodidact from among the working poor, but James was, in fact, the author.

David Grant (1816-1894) was Mairi's great-great-grandfather. David was the engineer on the SS Forfarshire which went aground off the Farne Islands, Northumberland in 1838. Grace Darling, the daughter of the keeper of the Longstone Lighthouse with her father, rescued nine of the passengers from the wreck. Grace Darling's heroism would be immortalised by the poem of William Wordsworth and, perhaps, less so by William McGonagall's poem of the same name.

Section VI begins with my own biography and contributions from my brothers.

## The Records

Clearly the most valuable sources for a family historian are personal accounts by earlier generations of one's family while they are still alive or, at least, the records and photographs which they left behind. It is only then that one thinks "if only I had thought to ask while so-and-so was alive". Once such family questioning has been exhausted it will be time to access the official records.

The UK 1841 census was the first which listed everyone in every household. The 1841 census can be problematic as ages were often estimated to within five years by the census-taker. Later decennial censuses provided more information about occupations and more accurate ages. Unfortunately, the census-taker was only required to list the people actually resident on the day of the census. Anyone away from home for whatever reason would be listed elsewhere. Many better-off households would include servants, but if a particular servant was the object of one's search, it might be difficult to link them to their own family.

One useful feature of the nineteenth century censuses from 1851 onwards is that, for each person, the parish and county of birth is given. This has been of great value in identifying the origin of people who have moved away from their place of birth. However, frustratingly, for a Scot in England the census usually just lists "Scotland" and vice-versa for the English-born in Scotland. Also, as recent censuses have shown, not everyone living in the area might be included. The 2022 census in Scotland, (deferred from 2021 by the Covid pandemic) appears to have included not much more than 90% of the expected total population. It is impossible to know how many people might have been omitted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century censuses. For example, in some of the censuses, I could not find all of the Lawries I had expected in Tillicoultry and Alva.

Census details are only published in full after a century so that, in 2023, only the 1921 and earlier censuses are available for research. When I started my quest during the 1980s, only censuses up until 1881 were publicly available. Family searchers can be greatly helped by the various online indices which have been created. The first of these to be published was the International Genealogical Index (IGI) by the Mormons – "The

Church of Latter Day Saints". Today, the Mormon website [familysearch.org](http://familysearch.org) is free to use and covers world-wide records but can be frustrating to use. Government departments now provide online access to their own records. In Scotland, [scotlandspeople.gov.uk](http://scotlandspeople.gov.uk) is an excellent free source for finding people in the index, but sight of the actual pages is chargeable. When I began my search in the 1980s, the Mormon indices to the censuses were only available in the form of a microfiche – the IGI – available at Mormon family history centres. Sight of the actual records required a visit to either the local county record office or, in Scotland, Register House in Edinburgh unless a microfilm copy could be found. Today, many libraries have local history sections where relevant microfilms from their own areas can be consulted as well as other records on microfilm such as local newspapers.

Statutory recording of births, marriages and deaths began in Scotland in 1855. In England and Wales registration by the state had begun in 1837. The established Church of Scotland had resisted ceding responsibility to the State, but the Disruption of the Church in 1843 meant that large numbers of people disappeared from the church records. This was especially the case in the Highlands where around half the population had joined the Free Church. With statutory registration, births rather than baptisms were to be recorded and, for the first time, deaths had to be registered. There were some differences in the information recorded and the formats between Scotland and England. Finding an 1855 Scottish registration (such as John Lawrie's birth in Tillicoultry) can be brilliant for a family searcher, but local registrars reported after the first years of operation that the information required was proving too difficult for them to collect, so later records are somewhat less informative. Despite registration being "compulsory", I have found that some of the Lawrie births and marriages in Alva and Tillicoultry are missing from the statutory registers. The Scottish records on the [scotlandspeople.gov.uk](http://scotlandspeople.gov.uk) website are easier to access and provide more information in the index than does the English website [gro.gov.uk](http://gro.gov.uk), but again sight of an image of the actual document is chargeable. This can be frustratingly expensive when several entries with the same name and approximate date can be found in a parish or county.



The earliest surviving old parish records (OPRs) created by the Church of Scotland began as early as 1560, for example the burgh of Perth, but such survivals can be rare. In some parishes, such as Loth in Sutherland, the parish record only began as late as 1800. The records of the sacraments of baptism and marriage were compiled for the benefit of the church, not the family searcher. The frequently assumed “birth” entries are in fact baptisms within the Church of Scotland. The collection and care by the state of surviving OPRs was legislated for and began in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, but this did not apply to Catholic and Nonconformist church records. “Non-conformist churches” includes the Scottish Episcopal Church which is the equivalent of the state church in England. Some Catholic and Nonconformist records are on the [scotlandspeople.gov.uk](http://scotlandspeople.gov.uk) website, but there was never a legal requirement to provide these to the Office of the Registrar General when it began collecting the OPRs in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The OPRs only rarely include deaths. When deaths are found, they usually relate to the hire of the parish mort-cloth for the funeral, rather than the actual death. So, in Scotland, one can find reliable death records only from 1855 onwards. Although it became a legal requirement to register births, deaths and marriages from 1855 onwards, the penalty for not doing so was light, so absence from the record is not proof that an individual did not exist.

Prior to 1855, there was no penalty and therefore there are many gaps. The creation of the record relied on the local parish clerk, who might be the clerk to the kirk session or the local schoolmaster. Gaps in record keeping are not infrequent. Some OPRs can be brilliant sources, for example for a period in the late 17<sup>th</sup>/early 18<sup>th</sup> century, the beautifully kept Banff burgh record of baptisms often mentioned the grandparents and a sponsor or godparent who might have been honoured by giving the child their name. All too commonly though, in many OPRs, the handwriting can be difficult to read and the document damaged by damp and abuse.

A significant disincentive to register was the tax on registration under the Stamp Duties Act of 1783 (23 Geo.III c.67), which was passed in order to raise money to pay for the American War of Independence. Under this Act, all baptisms, marriage and burial

entries, were subject to a tax of 3d (three old pennies or slightly more than a penny today). Church ministers were empowered to collect the duty, and were allowed to keep 10% of the fee as compensation for their trouble. Refusal to pay the tax carried a fine of five pounds. This was deeply unpopular, and many clergymen were sympathetic to the plight of their parishioners. As paupers were exempt from this tax, it is not uncommon for genealogists to find that the number of supposed poor people within a parish has increased many times above normal during these years until the Act was finally repealed in 1794. Such entries in a parish register are annotated with either the letter "P." or "Pauper". If a family could not claim exemption then it was not unusual for them simply not to bother and, in some parishes, this resulted in a number of adult "late" baptisms during the following decades.

The demand for soldiers and sailors during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars meant that, in some parishes, the authorities used the parish record to compile lists of men who were of an age eligible for enlistment. In some parishes, such as Muthil and Blackford in Perthshire, groups of young men who were concerned about being forced to enlist actually seized and destroyed the records. In some of these parishes, the minister recreated the register after the war by visiting those families still resident in the parish and listing their children. That did not happen everywhere.

There are many other possible sources of nominal data. Estate records may include rentals, but they will often only list the head of a household paying rent, not the family. There was a Hearth Tax levied in Scotland between 1691 and 1695. It has become known as a "Poll Tax", but it was levied on every hearth, not every adult. For larger households more than one "hearth" might be listed. Businesses such as smithies or grain kilns were also included, naming the responsible person. This can lead to duplications as, for example, John Gordon, a smith, might be included for the hearth in his house and also for the hearth in his smithy if he did not reside on the premises. The Hearth Tax record has not survived for every county, but where the "List of Pollable persons within the shire" does exist, it normally includes all heads of households.

During the Jacobite risings, in 1745, the Earl of Sutherland had a list of 2174 fencible men able to bear arms aged between sixteen and sixty on his estate created from which he raised six companies of militia for the Government. There are many other examples of nominal lists across Scotland. In some cases quite comprehensive lists of such documents, held in local archives, can be consulted online.

Not every family could afford to pay for headstones in the burial grounds but where they exist, there are publications available listing the text on the stones that were readable at the time of recording.

Newspapers can also be a useful source and local record offices often have microfilms of these. The Scotlandspeople.gov.uk website has valuation rolls, wills and testaments, poor relief, kirk session and migration records.

My searches began, as mentioned above, at a Mormon family history centre near where I lived in Dundee. Without considering the theological reasons why the Mormons spent so much money and effort in creating this wonderful resource, they are to be commended for making it freely available to everyone.

To begin with, in the 1980s, having gleaned the names of a few family members who lived in areas such as Helmsdale or Tillicoultry, I consulted the 1881 census in order to find and record their names, ages, occupations and places of origin. Then progressively I examined the 1871, 1861, 1851 and 1841 censuses. Next I would view the post 1855 statutory registrations to glean more information about the parents of children, marriages and deaths of older people. Armed with ever-growing lists to search, I then ordered up microfilms of the Parish records and started at the end of the films, so I could work backwards to the earliest dates at the beginning, looking in particular for marriages so that another name could be added to my search. Thus, as an example, when I found that Hugh Lawrie in Tillicoultry had married Jane McFarlane on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June 1854, I added Jane MacFarlane to the search list. Now I looked in the index to the OPRs for her birth somewhere in Scotland earlier than 1834. In fact Jane McFarlane was born on 26<sup>th</sup> June 1830 to Robert McFarlane and Christian McEwan in Port of

Menteith parish. I noted that Robert MacFarlane was listed as a Poldar Moss settler. That led me to investigating the moss settlers on the upper reaches of the River Forth who, in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, were leased portions of the Flanders Moss on an initially rent-free tenure for a fixed number of years to clear areas of the bog.

The infant river Forth flows from the hills and lochs of the Trossachs and slows as it reaches the flat carselands which today are fertile arable farms. Over 10,000 years, since the end of the last Ice Age, a wet marshy plain known as Flanders Moss formed. The river spread so that in some places it could be miles in width as it ran between the volcanic intrusions of the Campsie Fells and the Gargunnock Hills. Today, only part of the original extent of Flanders Moss remains in its near-natural state and is recognised as one of the largest raised bogs in Europe. As well as being an important habitat for wildlife, Flanders Moss plays a role in carbon sequestration.

The width of the Forth was greatly reduced due to the agricultural improvements that took place across Scotland in the 1700s. Lord Kames, an improving landowner, undertook to drain his land with the assistance of Dutch engineers. A three-mile-long channel was dug from his Blair Drummond Estate to the river course. Temporary dams were built to provide periodic rushes of water to wash the excavated peat downstream.

People displaced by the Highland Clearances were encouraged to move here to dig the channels and drain the land. In return they could build their own homes and live rent-free for seven years. They were known as the Moss Lairds as they prospered for a while on the rich agricultural land they were responsible for creating. Most of the work was complete by 1840 when the small farms of the Moss Lairds were consolidated into larger units for greater capitalisation and increased rents for the landlord.

## DNA

The human genome is made of more than 6 billion base-pairs. Everyone has a unique configuration of the molecular building blocks that make up their DNA. The four nucleotide bases in DNA are guanine (G) adenine (A), cytosine (C) and thymine (T). Within a double-stranded DNA molecule, a guanine base on one strand always pairs with a cytosine base on the opposite strand, while adenine always pairs with thymine. The sequence of the four nucleotide bases encodes DNA's information. In order to synthesise protein, base pairs are grouped in threes termed codons. Codon triplets, such as AAA, AAC etc, allow for 64 different combinations of base-pairs (4 X 4 X 4) and therefore provide scope in the DNA molecule to specify the placement of all twenty amino acids, which are the building blocks of proteins, along with control codes such as start-reading and stop-reading.

The Human Genome Project required thousands of researchers over thirteen years. Its final cost by 1990 has been estimated to be around \$2.7 billion. That project has helped scientists unravel the genetic drivers of cancer and many inherited diseases while spurring the development of at home DNA testing. In 2010, it could still cost around \$10,000 to sequence an entire human genome. As new sequencing technology developed, the cost fell. In 2022, it's about \$600 and expected to drop to \$200 as the latest multi-million dollar machines are introduced by the testing laboratories.

I began looking into DNA almost from its beginning as a family search tool. Indeed my userid with FTDNA.com in Houston, Texas, is 12189. Now their userids are well into the millions. I did not bother with the autosomal DNA tests which become increasingly useless as one travels back up one's genetic tree. Research has demonstrated that one does not receive exactly 25% of one's DNA from each grandparent, so it is quite possible that one or more of one's thirty two great-great-great-grandparents have contributed virtually nothing at all to one's genome. Autosomal DNA results typically (not mine) might suggest that one may be 50% Scottish, 25% German, 12.5% English and 12.5% French and so on. Big deal! These guesstimates are culled from the testing laboratories' database of previous tests and rely heavily on the evidence of origin presented to the laboratories by their clients. The data is heavily skewed towards men in

the USA of European descent and much of the evidence of origin in the databases can be pure guesswork or wishful thinking.

The two tests of much greater interest for genealogists are of the male Y-chromosome or Y-DNA and of the non-nuclear mitochondria known as mtDNA. Mitochondria are the energy centres of the cell. Every cell may contain 1000 or more mitochondria. All of one's mitochondria derive from those in the original egg cell provided by one's mother, none from one's father. Mature human ova may contain up to half a million mitochondria. Mitochondria have their own genetic code, in their case much shorter strings of DNA with around 16,500 base pairs, compared to six billion in the nuclear DNA.

Mitochondrial DNA has a much slower rate of mutation than nuclear DNA. At birth, a female's ovaries may contain several million eggs, but many of these will die off. After puberty just one ovum (usually) ripens each month during ovulation until the menopause at around 50 years of age. In contrast, it has been estimated that a man might produce 525 BILLION sperm during his life at a rate of around a billion each month. Production of sperm, therefore involves thousands of times more cell divisions – and chances of mutation - than the production of ova. It is thought that all of the cell divisions required to create immature ova in the female ovaries actually take place before birth, but male cell-division in the testes is continual throughout life. Therefore the probability of mutations in the nuclear DNA from sperm from one's father is greatly higher and the probability of mitochondrial mutations is much lower. The haemophilia which Queen Victoria passed on to her descendants could have been due to the age of her father when she was conceived. Prince Edward, Duke of Kent was 52 years old in 1819. He died the following year.

Researchers have identified the purpose of specific parts of the genome (not just in humans, as all living organisms have genetic code in their cell nuclei). Specific sequences of DNA delineated by start and stop codons is responsible for specific proteins. All proteins, in the living organism, can therefore be linked to unique sections of DNA. However, much of the genome does not code for protein, so researchers used

to label it as “junk”. Some of it may indeed be redundant, left behind by our deep evolutionary past. Although the mechanism of cell replication incorporates sophisticated error-checking, it is not perfect. Paradoxically, without these mistakes in genetic replication, the evolution of species would not be possible.

As well as possible changes of single base pairs, in some case, whole sections of DNA may be either deleted (indel) or duplicated (inser). Should such a replication error happen in the creation of a sperm or ova which later happen to successfully join to become a gamete, then the resulting organism will perpetuate that mutation. Many illnesses with a basis in the genome have been linked to such errors. Some mutations might be fatal, but often, though debilitating, they might not prevent the individual from passing the mutation on to their offspring. Huntingdon’s chorea is an example of a mutation which can cause severe illness later in life and often after the individual has had children. My cousin Helen Ward inherited Huntingdon’s chorea from her father Jim Ward and may have passed the faulty gene on to her children.

Some random mutations may be beneficial to the individual and these drive the evolution of species. If a mutation occurs in “junk” DNA, then it is unlikely to have a deleterious effect on the individual that carries it and will be passed on to future generations. Researchers have identified many such sites in the human genome where harmless mutations have occurred. Some of them may have come about thousands of years in the past and may define groups of up to millions of people with common origins. FTDNA, one of the leading testing labs involved in family history research, currently offer the Y-700 which tests seven hundred sites on the male Y chromosome.

Here is an interesting example of an autosomal mutation within an African tribe in the North of Zimbabwe, which causes a very visible effect. According to an article in Wikipedia, a substantial minority of vaDoma has a condition known as ectrodactyly in which the middle three toes are absent and the two outer ones are turned in, resulting in the tribe being known as the "two-toed" or "ostrich-footed" tribe. This is an autosomal dominant condition resulting from a single mutation on chromosome 7. It is reported that those with the condition are not handicapped and are well integrated into the tribe.

While possibly an aid in tree climbing, the condition prevails because of a small genetic pool among the vaDoma and is propagated by the tribal law that forbids members to marry outside the group. Due to the vaDoma tribe's isolation, they have developed and maintained ectrodactyly, and their comparatively small gene pool has resulted in the condition being much more frequent than elsewhere. The Talaunda/Talaote Kalanga of the Kalahari Desert also have a number of members with ectrodactyly and may share common ancestry with the VaDoma

Mitochondrial DNA also can be tested by the labs. My own mtDNA is classified as I2. My full-brothers and I have inherited this from our mother, Morag MacLeod, and she, in turn, inherited it from hers, Norah Chew, and so on. I2 is relatively rare in Europe and is reckoned to be highest in Scandinavia. I managed to trace Morag's maternal ancestry back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century in NW Lancashire. As this area and the Cumbrian coast was one of the most significant areas of Viking settlement in England, it might not be too much of a stretch to claim that we descend from a Viking woman around a thousand years ago.

Only males possess a Y-chromosome, so Y-DNA is inherited from one's father and from his and so on. As most people take the surname of their father, the value of Y-DNA testing to family searching is apparent. There are many groupings which have been classified. It soon became apparent, as the datasets derived from Y-DNA testing grew, that humanity had originated in Africa as by far the greatest diversity existed in that continent. The current theory is that all modern humans, outside of Africa, descend from small groups which left Africa around eighty to one hundred thousand years ago. Earlier hominids such as Homo Erectus, the Neanderthals and Denisovans had left Africa much earlier but their Y-DNA lines have become extinct. However, it is now believed that most modern humans, outside of Africa, do possess some autosomal DNA from H. Sapiens interbreeding with these earlier hominids.

For our personal family search, the two major Y-DNA lines of interest are R-U106 and R-P312. The parent of both groups, R-M269, may have originated on the Pontic steppe to the North of the Caspian and Black Seas around eight thousand years ago (estimates



vary). It has been claimed that the expansion of Bronze Age technology across Europe including the use of wheeled vehicles was led by R-M269 peoples. The R-U106 and R-P312 markers are now carried by more than 110 million European men and thus are by far the most common. It used to be said that R-U106 is Germanic and R-P312 is Celtic, however, that classification has been shown to be too simplistic. My own Y-DNA is R-U106 and more specifically R-BY66825. My full- and half-brothers and I will have inherited this from our father, John Lawrie, then from his, and so on.

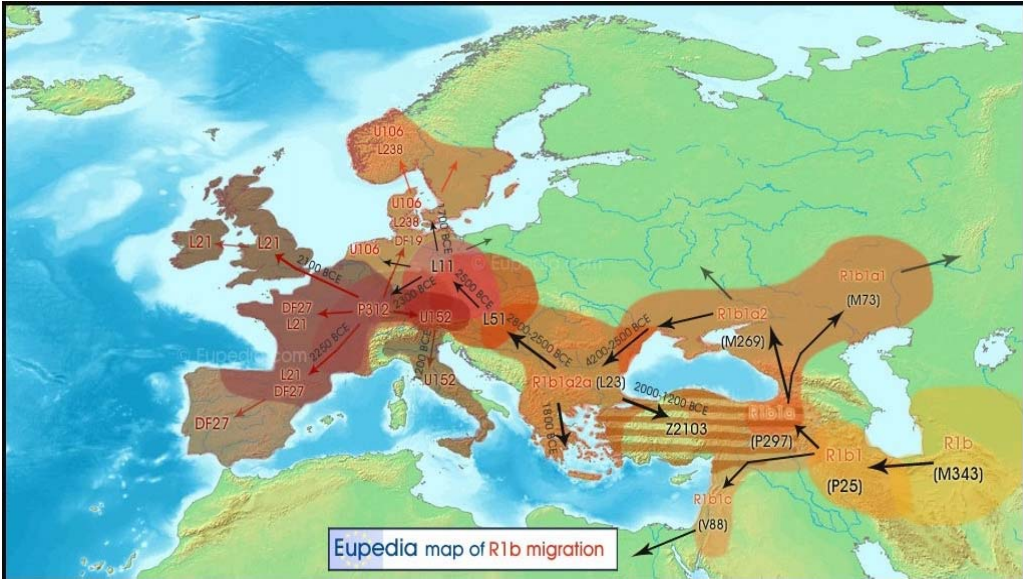
Apart from Neville John Lawrie, my cousin in Australia, FTDNA do not, in early 2023, have any close matches to my result. This simply means no closer relatives have submitted their Y-DNA for testing so far. It is not therefore possible to determine when our line diverged from others and where we originated. However, it may be of significance that the closest to date are in the Netherlands and Germany. That divergence could be up to eight hundred years ago. In the absence of other more closely related testers it is not possible to be more precise.

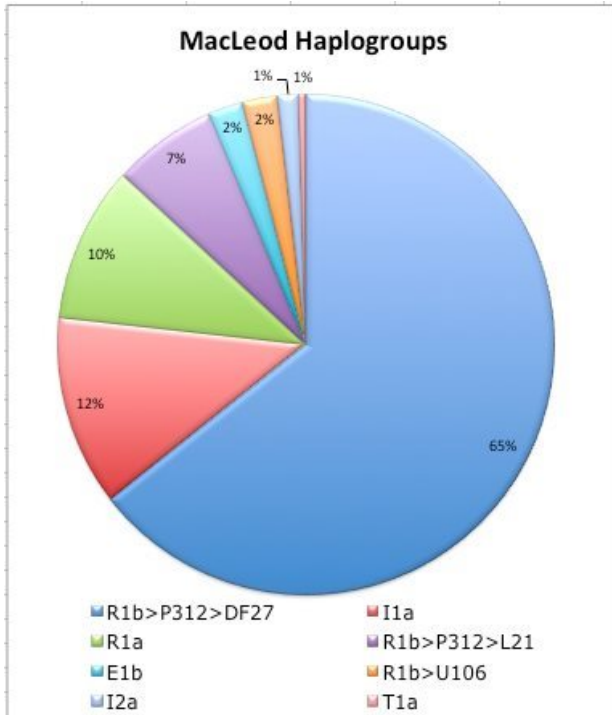
As I will show later, the furthest back I can trace through the records is to the NE coast of Scotland (Banffshire and Eastern Aberdeenshire) in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The eastern coastal strip from Moray through Aberdeenshire, Angus and Fife experienced settlement from the near-continent from the 12<sup>th</sup> century onwards as traders and craftsmen were encouraged to populate newly established coastal burghs. As far as the surname Lawrie is concerned, it is possible that the name may have been given to foundlings baptised at one of a number of church dedications to St Lawrence.

So, R-U106 is my father's line, but John's mother was Laurie Helen McGregor. The MacGregors are R-P312. All descendants of Gregor, the founder, have the S690 and S697 markers of the R-P312 group. Paul Miller McGregor, my great-grandfather, had fourteen children in total, but some of them had no children while others only produced daughters. So, in order to prove that we were descendants of Gregor, I had to find a living male-line descendant. I was assisted in this search by Frank McGregor, a cousin of my father, who tested Y67 quite a few years ago when DNA testing first became available. This early test confirmed our MacGregor descent, but Frank died before more

detailed tests became available. Frank only left a daughter, Christine in Canada, who has been of considerable assistance in our shared family search but obviously she could not progress the Y-DNA line further. Eventually, I managed to trace Neil Malcolm McGregor who lives near Canberra, Australia. Neil provided a Y-700 result but we could not find a close match to it among the MacGregors in the group at that time. [The MacGregor group at FTDNA, in 2023, numbers more than two thousand, but many are descendants of “part-takers” who do not descend from the eponym or founder of the clan.]

From my paper search over the years, I had speculated that Duncan MacGregor, who fathered Alexander in 1776, was of the Glengyle line but, for quite a few years, we have been unable to find a proven, documented male-line descendant of the Glengyle kindred which included Rob Roy. Finally, in late 2021, Evan Forbes MacGregor in New Zealand provided his test result to the group. He had good documented descent from a family in Aberdeenshire before they migrated in the mid nineteenth century. The result was close enough to Neil’s to indicate that our shared ancestors had been resident in Braemar in around 1700. They descended from Duncan MacGregor of Ardoch. He, in turn, was of the Roro lineage which had settled in Glen Lyon in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. This will be explored much further in the MacGregor section.





Genetic mix of a population. This is of the MacLeod group at FTDNA. R1B>P312 is Gaelic (65% DF27 and 7% L21). DF27 is the line of the founder. Most of the others are probably of Scandinavian ancestry.

Our MacLeod DNA signature is I1a which is Scandinavian. At 12% of the total it is the second most common in the 500+ MacLeod group at FTDNA. This reflects the considerable Viking settlement in the NW Highlands and Islands.



Peter at a Clan Gregor dinner in 2018

## **My brief history of Scotland**

This may seem unnecessary to those of us who live in Scotland or are familiar with it, but that doesn't necessarily include everyone who may read this. Many of our relatives are in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the USA and elsewhere in the world. So here goes. It will become apparent that I have a bias towards the Gaelic Highlands.

Scotland is a nation with a population of 5.4 million that, at the time of writing in 2023, is a part of the United Kingdom. With approximately 30,000 square miles, covering the northern third of the island of Great Britain, it has a 96 mile border with England to the south and is surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean to the north and west, the North Sea to the east and the Irish Sea to the southwest.

Scotland has more than 790 islands, mostly within the Western Isles or Hebrides, and the Northern Isles of Orkney and Shetland.

The first written reference to any part of the land which became Scotland was in 320 BCE by Greek sailors who called the northern tip of the archipelago "Orcas", - the Orkney islands. One has to presume that they recorded a version of the name heard from the indigenous people they met.

The Romans invaded the land which would eventually become Scotland in 79 CE, when Agricola established forts along the high ground, south of the Highland boundary fault, beginning at the Gask ridge to the west of Perth. Within a few years a legion had to be withdrawn from Britannia to deal with an uprising in Dalmatia. (Trouble in the Balkans is nothing new!) With three remaining legions, the Romans withdrew to a defensible line of forts between the mouths of the rivers Tyne and Solway in the North of what is now England. Under the emperor Hadrian, a masonry wall was constructed there over a period of years beginning in 122 CE. Under the emperor Antoninus Pius from 142 CE another wall, mainly built of turf, was garrisoned between the estuaries of the Forth and Clyde. In 150 CE the Roman legions again withdrew to Hadrian's Wall which remained the northern border of the Roman Empire until the final withdrawal from Britannia. In the early third century, a major Roman incursion under the emperor

Septimus Severus established a temporary legionary fortress at Carpow near the confluence of the River Earn with the River Tay. This base appears to have been used as a naval supply depot in support of punitive operations against the Pictish tribes which had been raiding over the frontier.

The name "Scotland" comes from Scotti, the name the Romans gave to raiders from Ireland. The Gaels named the land north of the Forth as *Alba* [pronounced A-la-pa] which is to this day, the Gaelic name for the country. The use of the words Scots and Scotland to encompass all of the land became more common in the Late Middle Ages.

After the Romans left Britannia in 410 CE, a number of warring kingdoms occupied the territory that would eventually become Scotland. The peoples known to the Romans as Picti occupied the lands in the east and north. They were divided geographically into *Alba*, south of the Mounth and *Cat* to the North.

*Innse Gall*, (the Hebrides) and *Innse Orc* (Orkney and Shetland) became dominated from the 9<sup>th</sup> century by Viking settlers. In the early 11th century the islands became part of King Cnut's Danish empire.

Strathclut, or Strathclyde, was a Brythonic (Welsh speaking) zone from the Lennox in the north stretching between the estuaries of the Clyde and the Solway. Its principal centre was at *Dùn Breatainn* (Dumbarton) on the Clyde.

Anglo-Saxon Northumbria overran the Brythonic Kingdom of *Manau Gododdin* and occupied its capital *Eidyn* (now Edinburgh) by 638 CE. Further Northumbrian expansion into Pictland was halted and reversed with the death of King Ecgrith and destruction of his army at the Battle of *Dùn Nechtain* in 685 CE. The Danes conquered the Kingdom of Northumbria in the late 9th century, but by 954 CE. Danish weakness allowed the Scots King Indulf to retake Edinburgh and the Lothians.

Airer-Gaidil (*Earra-Ghaidheal* in modern Gaelic) – Argyll included *Dàl Riata* founded by settlers from Ireland, who brought the Gaelic language and culture with them.

There is a school of academic opinion that says that the settlement of Gaelic speaking peoples from Ireland in *Dàl Riata* (Dalriada) had been hundreds of years earlier and may have predated the Roman invasion. The mountainous spine of the Highlands made east-west travel difficult, whereas seaborne travel over the short distance to Ulster in the North of Ireland was much easier. However, a movement into *Dàl Riata* of a small elite group of Gaels led by *Feargus mòr mac Erc* in the 5th century CE was recorded in Irish annals and is usually taken to be the beginnings of Gaelic Scotland.

There has been much debate over the origin and language of the Picts. They have left a series of spectacular carved monuments but, since no written records in the Pictish language have survived, academics have assumed that they did not possess a literate culture. Until recently the academic consensus has been that the Picts were P-Celts, and spoke a Brythonic language related to Welsh. Recently it has been suggested that the Picts or Cruithne were related to the Èrainn in Ireland who preceded the coming of the Goidelic Celts by several thousand years.

Gaelic influence over Pictland and Northumbria was facilitated by Gaelic speaking Christian missionaries. *Colm Cille*, Saint Columba, who arrived in Iona around 563 CE, was one of the best-known. Celtic monks trained in Iona Christianised Pictland and the Northumbrian Angles.

In 664 CE the Synod of Whitby determined that Northumbria would henceforth adopt Roman practice in place of the Ionian tradition. But the Celtic form of Christianity only ended in Scotland itself when Margaret the Saxon, who became the second wife of King Malcolm Canmore in 1070, introduced Roman priests to the court. Margaret was later canonized by the Pope in Rome.

Viking raids from Scandinavia began in the late eighth century. After a series of brutal raids, well-documented by the monks, the Norse and Danes began to settle. They came to dominate many areas in the Hebrides, along the west and north coasts of the Mainland and especially in the Northern Isles where Old Norse entirely displaced the

earlier culture. By the early 11th century, King Cnut's Danish empire encompassed large areas of England, all of the Scottish islands and the north mainland as well as much of Ireland.

By the mid ninth century, the Gaelic and Pictish kingdoms were both ruled by *Cinàed mac Ailpìn* (Kenneth I). Monastic annals report that the two peoples merged, perhaps as a result of Scandinavian pressure from the east and west. A number of Highland clans, including Clan Gregor, claim to descend from *Cinàed mac Ailpìn*. Indeed, the subsequent line of monarchs of the United Kingdom all trace their lineage back to the royal dynasty which *Cinàed* established.

By the end of the tenth century, the language of the consolidated kingdom had become Gaelic. From its base in eastern Scotland north of the River Forth, the Kingdom expanded southwards, into the former Northumbrian lands and the Kingdom of Strathclyde. Around the turn of the millennium the first urban settlements began to be established.

By the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, with much of Scotland under the control of a single ruler, a nation state in the modern sense first emerged, as did a national consciousness. The dominance of Gaelic began to diminish during the reign of David I (1124–53), when many Norman knights were introduced from England and granted lands under feudal tenure. David I and his successors centralized royal power, united mainland Scotland, and increased their control of peripheral regions such as Moray, Galloway and Caithness. The Norse kingdom of the Hebrides became part of Scotland following the Battle of Largs in 1263. Feudalism consolidated, with both Anglo-Norman incomers and native Gaelic chieftains being granted land in exchange for pledges of fealty to the king. Repeated attempts were made by the kings of England to subjugate Scotland, but they all failed.

The death of Alexander III in March 1286 broke the line of succession of Scotland's monarchy. Edward I of England was invited to arbitrate between competitors for the Scottish crown, in particular the claimants of the Bruce and Comyn families, both of

whom descended in the female line from David I. Edward first demanded feudal oaths of fealty to him from Scotland's nobles. Edward awarded the throne to John Balliol in 1292, but when Edward ordered him in 1295 to send a Scots force to join his army against the French, Balliol rebelled. Instead Scotland and France sealed a treaty on 23 October 1295, which would later become known as the Auld Alliance and last until the 16th century. Edward brought his army north, deposed Balliol, removed records and symbols of nationhood such as the Stone of Destiny, and declared that Scotland was now a part of his realm of England. Andrew Moray and William Wallace rebelled and were appointed Guardians of Scotland. They raised an army against the English occupation. After success in the Battle of Stirling Bridge (where Moray was killed), Edward himself brought his army north once more and defeated Wallace at the Battle of Falkirk. Wallace was subsequently betrayed to the English, taken to London and brutally executed following a trial in Westminster Hall.

In 1307, Robert Bruce, the grandson of Bruce the competitor, rebelled against Edward and was crowned King Robert I at Scone, near Perth. Years of vicious conflict against Bruce's Comyn rivals as well as the English garrisons culminated in a spectacular victory over a numerically superior English army at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314.

Edward II of England refused to concede Scottish Independence and launched a diplomatic campaign with the Papacy for the approval of his claims of superiority over Scotland.

King Robert and his nobles sent a letter to the Pope, in 1320. The letter, which has become known as the Declaration of Arbroath, is regarded as the modern world's first documented declaration of independence. It won the approval of Pope John XXII and led to the Treaty of Northampton in 1328 by which Edward II of England reluctantly recognized the independence of Scotland.

Robert Bruce's son, David, succeeded him as king in 1329 but, as he had no sons, the son of his sister Marjory and Walter the High Steward, came to the throne as Robert II in 1371. This established the house of Stewart which would rule Scotland for the



remainder of the Middle Ages. The country experienced greater prosperity from the end of the 14th century through the Scottish Renaissance to the Reformation in 1560.

In 1468, King Christian I of Denmark pawned the islands of Orkney and Shetland to Scotland in lieu of a dowry for the marriage of his daughter to King James III. The islands were later annexed to Scotland as the dowry was never paid.

By about the year 1450, the northern dialect of Anglo-Saxon, originally only spoken in the Lothians, had become widely used across the Lowlands and became known as 'Scots'. It began to be used in place of Latin for official documents after 1462. Highlanders continued to speak Gaelic, which the Lowlanders, henceforward, would refer to as Erse or Irish. In earlier times, 'Scots' had meant Gaelic.

The Highland zone was dominated culturally and militarily by the Clan Donald Lordship of the Isles until 1493 when James IV, the last monarch able to speak Gaelic, formally abolished the Lordship. However, the Stewarts failed to establish adequate order in the Highlands to take the place of the Lordship, thus leading to a culture of raiding and violence. The vehemently anti-Gaelic King James VI described certain Highland clans, particularly the MacGregors and the MacLeods of Lewis, as "maist barbarous" and ordered that they "be exterminat and ruttit out".

Many Highland chiefs maintained their personal militia of trained fighting men known as gallowlasses – *gall òglaich*. During times of relative local peace at home, these men often became involved on one side or other in the conflicts in Ireland.

In 1609 James VI promulgated the Statutes of Iona by which Highland chiefs were ordered to adopt the Reformed Religion, use Scots instead of Gaelic and have their heirs educated in the Lowlands. The chiefs were also ordered not to host sorners and beggars - which meant their armed retainers and traditional itinerant Gaelic bards and musicians.

In spite of the statutes, a distinctive Highland society and culture only finally ended

following the defeat of the last Jacobite Rising in 1746. Thereafter, Highland chiefs tended to live in the Lowlands or in England and exploited the lands of their erstwhile clansmen for their personal enrichment, while their impoverished people were encouraged to leave the Highlands to fight on behalf of, and populate, the growing British Empire.

The Catholic Church in Scotland was abolished by Acts of Parliament in the Scottish Reformation of 1560. A Presbyterian (Calvinist) form of church government took root despite the opposition of the Catholic Queen Mary. During the next 130 years, the Presbyterians struggled against the hierarchical Episcopal system imposed by successive monarchs in London. The National Covenant of 1638 marked an organised rejection of the liturgical practices and Episcopal Church government demanded by King Charles I. Debate turned to violent opposition by the armies of the Covenant in alliance with English Puritans.

The sovereign and independent Kingdom of Scotland lasted until 1707. James VI of Scotland inherited the kingdoms of England and Ireland in 1603 and formed a personal royal union of the three kingdoms, but he failed in his ambition to incorporate them into a single state.

James was succeeded by his son, Charles I, whose stupidity and intransigence led to civil war and ultimately the king's execution in 1649 by the English Parliamentarians led by Oliver Cromwell. Scotland opposed Cromwell's republic and crowned Charles II as king at Scone but the Scots army of the Covenant was defeated at the Battle of Worcester in 1651 and Charles fled to Holland.

The Presbyterian Church was strongest in the Lowlands and especially the South-West. In the Highland zone, many chiefs, with some notable exceptions such as the Campbells, tended to prefer the Episcopal Church and pockets of Catholicism also survived. In 1644/45 James Graham Marquis of Montrose, led a Highland army bolstered by Irish Catholics led by Alasdair MacColla MacDonald, which won successive battles for the King against Covenanting armies. Montrose attempted to join

up with the Royal army in England but was defeated at Philiphaugh in the Borders, after Alasdair MacColla had left him to continue plundering the Campbell lands.

Between 1651 and 1660 Scotland was forcibly incorporated into Cromwell's Commonwealth with English garrisons in strategic locations. The Restoration of Charles II in 1660 ended the English occupation. The government of Scotland was vested in noble committees with the occasional presence of the King's brother James, who would succeed as James VII and II in 1685. The openly Catholic King James was deposed in 1688 and replaced by his sister Mary and her husband William of Orange.

With an absentee monarch, the devastating religious Wars of the Three Kingdoms in the mid 17th century, the disaster of “King Billy’s ill years” (1695-1699) and the failure of the Darien colony in 1700, some of the Scottish elite saw benefits to themselves from closer union. Thus, despite great opposition from the people, on 1st May 1707, Scotland entered into a political incorporating union with England to create the new United Kingdom of Great Britain. [The name ‘Great Britain’ alludes to the Roman province of Britannia which did not include the northern lands. Hence ‘Greater Britain’]

In the Revolution Settlement of 1690, following the coronation of William and Mary, the Presbyterians became the Established Church of Scotland. Many 'non-juring' Episcopal ministers were ejected from their parishes. In 1707 the Presbyterian establishment obtained a series of safeguards of their position in exchange for supporting the Union. Some of these safeguards, such as the right of congregations to appoint their own ministers, would be overturned by Westminster soon after the Union.

In successive Jacobite Risings, in 1689, 1715, 1719 and 1745-46, the exiled Stewarts drew much of their support from the Highlands as well as the Episcopal-leaning lairds and lords along the east coast. The Jacobites were opposed by the Lowland Presbyterians who, largely, supported the Hanoverian regime.

The Scottish branch of the SPCK (Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge) was founded in Edinburgh in 1709. For much of the 18th century its mission was to establish and manage schools teaching English in the Highlands, in order to secure both

the 1690 Presbyterian settlement of the Church of Scotland, and the Hanoverian succession. The English language and 'Reformed Protestantism' were to be the cornerstones of a new 'North British' identity. The SSPCK made use of Lowland anti-Gaelic feeling to support its activities.

By the 19th century a strongly evangelical Presbyterianism had taken hold across the Highlands. But the Patronage Act of 1712 had given the heritors (landowners) the right to appoint parish ministers who were thus dependent on the heritors for their positions. During the Clearances, many Highland tenants would be convinced by the church ministers that ejection from their farms and expulsion from Scotland had been God's punishment of their sins rather than due to the economic interests of the landlords.

In 1801 Westminster abolished the Dublin-based Irish Parliament which had been asserting an increased independence from London. Thereafter the Kingdom of Great Britain united with the Anglo-Irish Kingdom of Ireland created the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. In 1922, the Southern counties of Ireland finally succeeded in seceding as the Irish Free State from the United Kingdom, leading to the latter being renamed the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

From the mid 18th century until the late 19th century, Scotland experienced unprecedented change, with industrialisation and urbanisation driven by the profits of empire in which Scotland benefitted to a degree greater than its population share of the United Kingdom. Scots migrated to and prospered in almost every corner of the world. The consequence of this exodus can be seen in the change in the relative populations of Scotland and England, from approximately one fifth in 1707 to one twelfth by 2022.

Sir Walter Scott in 1822 almost single-handedly created an ersatz Highland culture with the visit of George IV to Edinburgh. A new tartan industry was born and "clan tartans" were designed for gentlemen of any and every Scottish name - many of whom in previous generations would not have been seen dead in a kilt. Highland Societies were founded in London and Edinburgh for gentlemen chiefs, fresh from evicting their folk, to meet and invent new traditions of Highlandism.

Dating from the economic "long depression" from 1873 to 1896, a renewed interest in an independent Scotland emerged, as the perceived benefits to Scotland from the Union declined. The increasing centralisation of administration from London during the 20th century led to the foundation of the Scottish National Party in 1934, but it wasn't until the late 1960s that the party began to achieve electoral success. A devolved Scottish Parliament was re-established in 1999, following a referendum. Today, the SNP are the ruling party in the Scottish Parliament and have the majority of Scottish seats in the Westminster Parliament. At the time of writing, a series of opinion polls have shown an increasing majority favouring complete independence.

And what of Gaelic? The 2011 census indicated that there were 57,000 fluent speakers and a further 87,000 with some knowledge of Gaelic. It is hoped that the latest census (in 2022) will show an increase. The Duolingo course in Scottish Gaelic has been one of the company's most popular. I have finished the Duolingo course and currently participate in a regular online conversation class.

So why include this general history of Scotland? It gives me the opportunity to mention that our three ancestral male lines in Scotland have very different origins. (This discussion ignores many generations of mothers!) As far as I can be sure from the only distant YDNA matches so far, our U106 Lawrie ancestor might have come from the North-West of Europe and could have been one of the traders and craftsmen settled along the East coast from the 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Our MacLeod ancestor was a Scandinavian dating back to the Viking settlers from the 9<sup>th</sup> century onwards; whereas our P312 MacGregor ancestor originated in Dalriada. The kindred of Fergus Mac Erc were documented as coming over from Ireland in the 5<sup>th</sup> century CE. A number of West Highland clans, including the MacGregors, claim descent from *Cinead Mac Ailpin* King of Dalriada who united the Picts and Scots in the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

In *The Future of Wild Europe*, University of Leeds, 2016, Jason Harrison wrote that:-  
‘The Highlands’ originated in the fourteenth century as a cultural creation, an identity imposed on a large part of north and west mainland Scotland and the Hebrides, to differentiate the still predominantly Gaelic-speaking zone after the linguistic retreat of the language from ‘the Lowlands’. To begin with the Highlands were defined as a ‘wild’ periphery in contrast to the ‘civilized’ core of Scotland. The Wild Highlands has had two phases: the first focused on the wild *people* of the Highlands (the Gaels); in its second phase, which began after the 1745 Jacobite rebellion and continues today, it focused on the wild *landscape* of the Highlands. In the first phase the Highlands was a ‘heart of darkness’, and ‘lair’ of the Gaels. After the Gaels were ‘tamed’ the now unpeopled ‘wild’ landscape came to be valued for ‘use’ and ‘delight’.

The ‘wild Highlander’ of the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries was a warrior, feared as an adversary and valued as an ally. The Highland clans had a ‘martial’ culture: Gaelic bards exulted over bloody battles and heroic deeds; outsiders perceived clan society as ‘a social system wholly geared to war’. Most of the advances of central government authority over northern Scotland from the eleventh through to the nineteenth centuries were met with violent resistance, although clan armies also fought each other, sometimes alongside or as a proxy for government forces.

Even before the ‘45, many clan ‘gentry’ were moving between two worlds of Gaelic and elite British culture: afterwards they entered fully ‘into the fold’ as a matter of political necessity. Clan territories became commercial assets and the chiefs became estate landlords. At the beginning of the 19th century British politicians and industry and Highland landlords had a united interest in transforming these estates into sheep ranches. Demand for wool from burgeoning British manufacturing was high and large profits were to be made by turning estates ‘over to sheep’. This initiated a long period of enforced depopulation known as the Highland Clearances. The eviction of the people and the transformation of the landscape were rationalized and justified under the Enlightenment ideology of ‘Improvement’, which saw the necessity of maximising the per capita productivity of the land and bringing the Gaels into the modern economy.

### Hostility and lack of understanding between Highlanders and Lowlanders.

**Robert Bontine Cunninghame Graham** (24 May 1852 – 20 March 1936) was a truly remarkable character. He came from a family of landed gentry in Stirlingshire and was first elected to the UK Parliament in 1886 as a Liberal MP for the North West Lanarkshire constituency. But he left the Liberals and “crossed the floor” to become, for a short time, the first ever Socialist member of the Parliament of the United Kingdom. He was also the first MP ever to be suspended from the House of Commons for swearing in the chamber.

Graham's main concerns in the House of Commons were the plight of the unemployed and the preservation of civil liberties. In 1886, he helped establish the Scottish Home Rule Association (SHRA) and, while in the House of Commons, he made several attempts to persuade fellow MPs of the desirability of a Scottish parliament. On one occasion, Graham joked that he wanted a "national parliament with the pleasure of knowing that the taxes would be wasted in Edinburgh instead of London."

Graham became increasingly more radical and went on to found the Scottish Labour Party with Keir Hardie. At the 1892 general election Graham stood as the Independent Labour Party candidate for Glasgow Camlachie, but he was defeated, bringing his parliamentary career to an end. Many years later he became a founder of the National Party of Scotland in 1928, and the first president of the Scottish National Party in 1934.

After being educated in England, Robert finished his education in Brussels, Belgium, before moving to Argentina to make his fortune cattle ranching. He became known as a great adventurer and gaucho there, and was affectionately known as **Don Roberto**. He also travelled in Morocco disguised as a Turkish sheikh, prospected for gold in Spain, befriended Buffalo Bill in Texas, and taught fencing in Mexico City, having travelled there by wagon train from San Antonio de Bexar with his young bride *sic* "Gabrielle Marie de la Balmondriere" a supposed half-French, half-Chilean poet.

Cunninghame-Graham is not related in any way to us, but I have included the following article by him to illustrate the hostility and lack of understanding between Highlanders

and Lowlanders in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Some of the Highlanders he mentioned were MacGregors, so the attitudes described are of particular interest.

I have quoted from an original article by R B Cunningham-Graham which was published in the Scottish Historical Review Vol. X, No. 38, January 1913.

*A most interesting article by Cunningham-Graham, commenting on a raid on a farm on the estate of Gartmore at the edge of the Highlands near the end of the 17th century. The raiders appeared to include at least five Glencoe people (M'Ians, perhaps made homeless by the massacre of Glencoe only six years earlier). They were led by Ewan Cameron who had a local lodging near Aberfoyle. There was one MacGregor involved, plus another, Paul Clerich, with a known MacGregor alias. However, another MacGregor - Alexander Campbell, alias M'Grigor - informed the landlord of the identity of raiders whom, as it turned out, included one of the Gartmore estate's own tenants, Walter M'Watt.*

*Cunningham-Graham's criticises Alexander Campbell, alias M'Grigor for his betrayal "Whatever could have come into his head ..... the recreant M'Gregor" In point of fact, the Glengyle MacGregors ran a Highland Watch for the protection of livestock on the farms below the Highland line. Donald Glas of Glengyle had successfully prosecuted before the sheriff court at Stirling a farmer who had refused to pay the agreed money for the protection offered. Today 'blackmail' [mail being the Scots word for rent] has entirely criminal connotations, but the success of Donald Glas in this instance demonstrated that in the 17th century, it was a valued service for which payment was due. Alexander Campbell, alias M'Grigor appears to have been carrying out the service for which the estate of Gartmore had probably paid, that of recovery of stolen livestock and identification of the thieves.*

Cunningham-Graham wrote "I found the other day an old bundle of papers docketed as above in my own hand."

"Many years ago I must have come on them at Gartmore, and as in those days it was



what the people called a 'sort o' back-lying place,' traditions of the doings of loose and broken men still survived, though vaguely and as in a mist. The loose and broken men, whose fame still echoed faintly in my youth, were those who after the 'Forty-Five' either were not included in the general amnesty, or had become accustomed to a life of violence.

Once walking down the avenue at Gartmore with my old relation, Captain Speirs, we passed three moss-grown lumps of puddingstone that marked the ancient gallows-tree. Turning to it he said:

*'Many's the broken man your ancestor, old Laird Nicol, hangit up there, after the Forty-five.'*

He also told me, just as if he had been speaking about savages,

*'When I was young, one day up on Loch Ard-side, I met a Hielandman, and when I spoke to him, he answered "Cha neil Sassenach"; [meaning - I cannot speak English] I felt inclined to lay my whip about his back.'*

Even then I wondered why, but prudently refrained from saying anything, for the old Captain had served through the Peninsular Campaign, had been at Waterloo, and, as the country people used to say, he had 'an eye intil him like a hawk.'

*[Note by PJJ: R B Cunningham-Graham was born in 1852, so let's assume this 'walk at Gartmore' took place when he was 18 in 1870. If Captain Speirs had served in the Peninsula campaign - 1808 to 1814 - he was probably born in the early 1790s at the latest, therefore he would be about eighty in 1870, so this is just credible]*

"This antipathy to Highlandmen which I have seen exhibited in my youth, even by educated men who lived near to the Highland Line, was the result of the exploits of the aforesaid loose and broken men, who had descended (unapostolically) from the old marauding clans. The enemy came from 'above the pass,' to such as my old uncle, and all the glamour Scott had thrown upon the clans never removed the prejudice from their dour Lowland minds. Perhaps if we had lived in those times we might have shared it too.

One of the documents in the bundle to which I have referred is docketed ' Information for Mr. Thomas Buchanan, Minister of Tullyallan, heritor of Gouston in Cashlie.' Gouston is a farm on the Gartmore estate, on which I, in years gone by, have passed many long and wet hours measuring drains and listening to complaints.

The document itself, one of a bundle dealing with the case, written I should judge by a country writer (I have several documents drawn up by one who styles himself ' Writer in Garrachel,' a farm in Gartmore barony), is on that thick and woolly but well made paper used by our ancestors, and unprocurable today. The writing is elegant, with something of a look of Arabic about its curving lines.

It states that : 'Ewan Cameron, Donald M'Tavish in Glenco, Allen Mackay, in thair (in thair, seems what the French would call "une terre vague," but has a fine noncommittal flavour in a legal document), John and Arch. M'Ian, his brethren, Donald M'Ian, alias Donachar, also Paul Clerich, Dugald and Duncan M'Ferson in Craighuchty, Robert Dou M'Gregor and his brethren, John and Walter M'Watt, alias Forrester, in Offerance of Garrochyle belonging to the Laird of Gartmore ... came violentlie under cloud of night to the dwelling house of Isabell M'Cluckey, relict of John Carrick, tenant in the town of Gouston with this party above mentioned and more, on December sixteen hundred (the date is blank, but it occurred in 1698 ), and then on that same night, it being the Lord's Day, broke open her house, stript (another document on the case says "struck," which seems more consonant to the character of the Highlanders) and bound herself and children contrarie to the authoritie of the nation, and took with them her whole insicht and plenishing, utensils and domicil, with the number of six horses and mares, sixteen great cows and their followers, item thirty six great sheep and lambs and hogs equivalent, and carried them all away violentlie, till they came to the said Craighuchty, where the said Ewan Cameron cohabited.'

Cunningham-Graham's article continued for a dozen or so pages but I have had to curtail it to save space in this book.

## **Geology and Gaelic Scotland**

I have included the above extract by RB Cunningham-Graham to illustrate the divisions in Scotland between the Lowland Scots-speakers and Highland Gaelic-speakers. Today, that division no longer exists, except perhaps in jokes, but from at least the 15<sup>th</sup> century up until the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was of great significance. Our family in Scotland are almost exclusively of Highland origin. The MacLeods and MacGregors would have been Gaelic speakers. It is more difficult to be confident whether or not the Lawries in upland Aberdeenshire in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century spoke or understood Gaelic which would still have been in common use in the area.

The Highland line, strictly speaking, is a geological division from Helensburgh on the Clyde to Stonehaven on the North Sea. To the North lies much older geology, from five hundred million years to more than a billion years old. Forgive me for introducing some geological technicalities here.

The geology of Scotland is unusually varied for a country of its size, with a large number of differing geological features. There are three main geographical subdivisions: the Highlands and Islands are a geologically diverse area which lies to the north and west of the Highland Boundary Fault; the Central Lowlands is a Palaeozoic rift valley; and the Southern Uplands, which lie south of the Southern Uplands Fault, are largely composed of Silurian deposits.

The bedrock includes billion year old Archaean gneiss; metamorphic beds interspersed with granite intrusions created during the Caledonian mountain building period; important coal, oil and iron bearing carboniferous deposits; and the remains of substantial volcanoes. During their formation, tectonic movements created climatic conditions ranging from polar to desert to tropical and a resultant diversity of fossil remains.

Scotland has also had a role to play in many significant discoveries such as plate tectonics and the development of theories about the formation of rocks and was the home of important figures in the development of the science including James Hutton -

the "father of modern geology", Hugh Miller and Archibald Geikie. Various locations in Scotland such as 'Hutton's Unconformity' at Siccar Point in Berwickshire and the "Moine Thrust" in the North-West Highlands were also important in the understanding which led to the development of modern geological science.

The closure of the Iapetus Ocean brought about a series of continental collisions known as the Caledonian mountain-building event or "Caledonian Orogeny". As the Iapetus Ocean closed, volcanic islands formed. The remnants of this volcanic activity include the Edinburgh Castle rock, Arthur's Seat, Stirling Castle rock and the Dundee Law.

Three landmasses collided as the Iapetus Ocean closed. Eastern Avalonia, the continent that contained the land which became England, lay on the southern shore of the ocean. Baltica, the continent containing Scandinavian Europe which lay further east, collided with the Northern Highlands. The collisions that followed during the Caledonian Orogeny formed the Caledonian Mountains, a massive mountain range similar, at the time, in scale to the Alps or even the Himalayas. The worn-down stumps of that mountain range stretch from Norway to the Appalachian Mountains of North America.

The Caledonian Orogeny occurred in three stages. Firstly, about 480–460 million years ago, in the "Grampian Event", a chain of volcanic islands impacted Caledonia from the south. In the "Scandian Event", about 440 million years ago, Baltica collided with Northern Caledonia, pushing together the Northern Highlands and North-west Seaboard. Finally, about 425 million years ago, Eastern Avalonia, south of the Iapetus Ocean, collided with Caledonia creating what is now the central belt of Scotland.

During the Cretaceous, about 175 million years ago, the Atlantic Ocean began to open, splitting apart the land of Scotland from Eastern Canada. The Atlantic Ocean continues to widen today, by around 13 mm per year - almost a metre in my lifetime!

So why should I include this ancient geology in the story of our ancestors? It is because this Geology lies beneath the social and political history of the land which has become Scotland. The bed of the Iapetus Ocean was rich in Carboniferous deposits, so Scotland

inherited easily worked beds of coal, limestone, and shales rich in paraffin oils. These accessible minerals meant that Lowland Scotland was among the first areas in the world to industrialise from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Ancient volcanic deposits, abundant limestone and relatively flat fertile land meant that the agricultural revolution also took hold here. By contrast the ancient rocks of the Highland zone were less fertile and mineral deposits scarcer and harder to work. The Highlands, broadly speaking, are much more suited to pastoral than arable farming.

From the time of David I, Normans and other incomers preferred lands in the more productive Lowlands, from which greater rents could be extracted from the peasantry. With these incomers at the elite level of Society came a greater penetration of the Scots/Inglis language and European feudalism. The Highlands remained largely in a tribal state of Society where wealth would be counted in cattle for much longer.

At its widest extent, in the 11th and 12th centuries, native Gaelic-speaking communities could be found everywhere in mainland Scotland except the extreme south east of the modern Borders region. There were large and important Gaelic-speaking communities in West Lothian and Midlothian as well as Galloway.

However, from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Highland Boundary fault became a linguistic fault line as well as a geological fault line. By 1700 Scots, or Inglis, would be spoken to the South of it and Gaelic to the North - with the exception of the Eastern Lowlands along the coast up by Aberdeen and around the Moray Coast. Travellers in the 18<sup>th</sup> century remarked how the language of the people changed quite markedly north of Dunkeld and between Nairn and Inverness. Gaelic had been absent from the Northern Isles of Orkney and Shetland since the Viking invasions.

But, let's return this narrative to our ancestors. Our MacLeod family tradition is that we derived from the MacLeods of Assynt in the North-West Highlands. The Assynt MacLeod chiefs derived from a younger son of the chief of the MacLeods of Lewis in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century. However, our own Y-line MacLeod ancestor was probably a Viking a thousand years ago. The people of Lewis and Harris were completely Gaelic

speaking until modern times and, indeed, the Outer Hebrides are today almost the last place in Scotland where Gaelic is in regular daily use in the community. In Eastern Sutherland, Gaelic remained the common language until the Clearances of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and the introduction of English-speaking shepherds from the Borders and fisherfolk from the Moray coast. In the 1891 census, 90% of the people of Rogart reported they had Gaelic, now there are almost none. The last native speakers of East Sutherland Gaelic died towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Joseph MacLeod was a fluent Gaelic speaker, his son Alasdair almost certainly could speak, or at least, understand it, but he married an Englishwoman. Although they settled in Inverness, none of their children had the language.

Our MacGregor ancestors derived from the Gaels of Argyll. From the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards, MacGregor lineages spread through Perthshire, to sites around Loch Earn, Loch Tay and Loch Rannoch. Following vicious conflicts with the Campbells, in 1603 all MacGregors were proscribed by the state and would become a broken kindred. Many were scattered around Scotland, including our ancestors who settled in Upland Aberdeenshire. As a pastoral people, they became involved in the droving trade when the English market for Scottish beef opened up after 1707. The need for the drovers to communicate in English spread the language into many Highland communities. Cattle could not be driven too far on any one day hence the development of inns with suitable grazing for the trade. One such inn opened by a MacGregor family at the North end of Loch Lomond is still in operation today as the popular Drover's Inn. Our MacGregor ancestors who settled in the Braemar area after 1603 would have been Gaelic speakers. Gaelic only retreated from upland Aberdeenshire in the late nineteenth century.

As far as I can determine, the earliest Lawrie ancestor I could discover lived at Banff on the Moray Coast. At that time, the burgh of Banff would be a largely English-speaking community. However, by the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, John Lawrie had moved into an upland farming community where he would certainly have mixed with Gaelic speakers. A descendant, also John Lawrie, moved to the small town of Turriff in Aberdeenshire.

Early Scottish farms were usually held in joint-tenure with three or more families working the land. The arable ground would be farmed in “runrig” for barley and oats, with the strips being regularly exchanged. Hill pasture for livestock would normally be held in common. In the Lowlands, agricultural improvements beginning in the 17<sup>th</sup> century removed these smaller farmers in order to create larger farms with single tenants who could take advantage of improved farming techniques, so that the landlord could extract increased rents. During the eighteenth century similar changes began to penetrate the Highlands.

Some landlords established villages such as Grantown, Gardenstown and Cuminestown, to name but three. They moved their “excess tenantry” into these settlements so that larger, more commercially oriented single-tenant farms could be created on the better land. In the new villages, the peasantry were expected to become providers of specialised trade services to the capitalist farmers, such as masons, carpenters, dykers. These settlements also accommodated handloom weavers. Turriff is an older settlement with a history as far back as the 13<sup>th</sup> century, but it grew in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

I have identified three of our ancestral lineages - MacLeod, MacGregor and Lawrie. What happened to them? Joseph MacLeod left Sutherland for Ellon and then Inverness around 1900. Duncan MacGregor left Braemar and married in Newcastle in the North of England in 1772. His wife Grissel Gairdiner was almost certainly Scottish, possibly from the Nairn area, but possibly a speaker of Scots rather than Gaelic. I don't know what happened to Duncan, but his son Alexander, settled in Cheshire in North West England and married there.

John Lawrie moved from Turriff and married in Dunblane in 1820. His wife Catherine Ferguson came from the hills North of the River Allan, but South of the Highland line. Almost certainly, by 1820, it would have become predominantly English speaking. His son, Hugh Lawrie, married a girl with a Highland name, Jane MacFarlane, but her parents had been “moss-settlers” on the river Forth and would probably have lost their Gaelic. John Lawrie's grandson, another John Lawrie, moved to Rochdale in the North of England in the late 1870s and married there.

## The Dispersal of the Gael – Fichead Bliadhna

As discussed above, the descendants of our ancestors - Lawrie, MacLeod, Mackay and MacGregor - now live far from their ancestral origins and indeed most of us have lost all knowledge of whom and where we came from and why we left. Runrig, the Gaelic rock group, expressed this sense of loss in one of their earlier songs – *Fichead Bliadhna* (Twenty Years) in their album 'Highland Connection'. The context of the song is their mid-20<sup>th</sup> century experience in the Western Isles. The singer tells us that it was twenty years after he started school before he discovered the history of his own people.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1M\\_8r1CX0Vo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1M_8r1CX0Vo)

Ruith 's a mhonadh,  
Ruith nam beann,  
'S mar sin dhan sgoil aig deireadh samhraidh.  
'Nar clann,  
Aig còig bliadhna dh'aois,  
'S gun facal Beurla 'nar ceann.

Running in the moors,  
Running in the hills,  
And then to school at the end of summer.  
Children,  
Five years of age,  
Without a word of English in our heads.

Seo do leabhar,  
Seo do pheann,  
"Dèan do leasan", thuir iad riumsa,  
"S gun èirich sibh suas anns an t-saoghal,  
'S gheibh sibh an adhart ann".

Here is your book,  
Here is your pen.  
"Study hard", that's what they told me,  
"And you will rise up in the world,  
You will get ahead."

Fichead bliadhna airson fìrinn.  
B' fheudar dhomh feitheamh.  
'S b' fheudar dhomh lorg.  
Fichead bliadhna' de bhreugan.  
Thug iad eachdraidh air falbh bhuiainn.

Twenty years for the truth.  
I had to wait.  
I had to search.  
Twenty years of lies.  
They denied me knowledge of myself.

Dh'ionnsaich sinn a leithid ann -  
Cànan 's bàrdachd, bàrdachd Bheurla,  
Ceòl na Gearmailt,  
Eachdraidh na Spàinnt,  
'S b'e sin an eachdraidh mheallt.

We learned many things -  
Language and poetry, the poetry of England,  
The music of Germany,  
The history of Spain,  
And even that was a false history.

Bhon sgoil do'n oilthigh chaidh sinn ann,  
A' leantail foghlam, tuilleadh foghlam,  
Mar amadan air deireadh streang.  
Seòrsa de dh'fhoghlam 'nam cheann.

Then on to further education.  
Following education, more education.  
Like puppets on the end of a string.  
Our heads filled with a sort of learning

Fichead bliadhna airson fìrinn.  
B' fheudar dhomh feitheamh.  
'S b' fheudar dhomh lorg.  
Fichead bliadhna' de bhreugan.  
Thug iad eachdraidh air falbh bhuiainn.

Twenty years for the truth.  
I had to wait.  
I had to search.  
Twenty years of lies.  
They denied me knowledge of myself.



Ach dh'èirich mi suas anns an t-saoghal.  
Fhuair mi deise, 's fhuair mi lèine.  
Fhuair mi àite ann an sùilean dhaoin,  
Fada bhon mhonadh mi 'n dràsda'.

And I did rise in the world.  
I found my suit, I found my shirt.  
I found a place in the eyes of men,  
Well away from the freedom of the moor.

Carson a chum iad eachdraidh bhuainn?  
Innsidh mi dhut, tha iad gealtach,  
Mas èirich clann nan Gàidheal suas,  
Le ceistean sireach is cruaidh.

But why did they keep our history from us?  
I'll tell you they are frightened,  
In case the Gaels rise,  
With searching and penetrating questions.

Fichead bliadhna airson firinn.  
B' fheudar dhomh feitheamh.  
'S b' fheudar dhomh lorg.  
Fichead bliadhna' de bhreugan.  
Thug iad eachdraidh air falbh bhuainn.

Twenty years for the truth.  
I had to wait.  
I had to search.  
Twenty years of lies.  
They denied me knowledge of myself.

Nuair a thòisich mi air lorg,  
Cha do chreid mi mo shùilean,  
Obair olc.

When I started searching,  
I could not believe my eyes,  
evil works.

That song ended with a passage in Gaelic from Carmichael's *Carmina Gadelica*, quoting the 19<sup>th</sup> century eye-witness account of Catriona Nic-a-Phì, crofter of Ardmore, Uist. – Here is the translation:

"Many a thing I have seen in my own day and generation. I have seen the townships swept, and the holdings being made of them. The people being driven out of the countryside to the streets of Glasgow and to the wilds of Canada, such as them that did not die of hunger and plague and smallpox while going across the ocean. I have seen the women putting the children in the carts which were being sent from Benbecula and the Iochdar to Loch Boisdale, while their husbands lay bound in the pen and were weeping beside them, without power to give them a helping hand, though the women themselves were crying aloud and their little children wailing like to break their hearts. I have seen the big strong men, the champions of the countryside, the stalwarts of the world, being bound on Loch Boisdale quay and cast into the ships as would be done to a batch of horses or cattle in the boat. The bailiffs and the constable and the policemen gathered behind them in pursuit of them. The God of life and He only knows all the loathsome work of men on that day."

### **Section I – My father - John Lawrie (22/3/1920-28/2/1970)**

When I began my genealogical quest, the first question I asked was “who were the Lawries?” My brothers and I spent our early years in Manchester before Morag took us to Inverness, where her mother and several of her siblings lived. Was the Lawrie name of Scottish or English origin? Where could I find the earliest trace of them?

I started with published works on names in Scotland and England. How did the name come about? There may be various possibilities, perhaps a relationship name from the Scottish personal name Laurie, or a diminutive of Laurence or Lawrence. Also Laurison and the English surname Lawry.

The Oxford Dictionary of names: lists variants: Lawrie, Lowrie, Laurie, Lowry, Lourie  
Current frequencies: in GB 3979, and in Ireland 24. In 1881, the dictionary gave the GB frequency as: 2812 occurrences with the greatest GB locations in Midlothian and Lanarkshire:

Early bearers of variants of the name in Scotland included:

Gilbert Lowrie of Coldingham, 1497 in Black; David Lowry, a kings officer, of Edinburgh in 1529 in Irvine Muniments (Irvine, Lanarks); James Lowrey, appointed a burges and freeman of the City of Glasgow in 1600,

Early entries in the IGI (Mormon International Genealogical Index):

In Dunfermline, Fife: Margaret Lourie, 1564.

In Aberdeen: Robert Lawrie, 1604; Lowrie, 1648; Issobill Lourie, 1649.

In Glasgow Lanarkshire: Robert Lowrie, 1613; James Laurie, 1628.

In Leith, Midlothian: Johne Lourie, 1619.

In Dalkeith, Midlothian: Agnis Laurie, 1654.

In Corstorphine, Midlothian: Robert Lourie, 1689.

In England: Laury is described as a pet form of Laurence or Lawrence.

Early bearers included:

England: Simon filius Lari, 1197 in Feet of Fines (Lincs); William Larie, 1279 in Hundred Rolls (Bucks); Robert Lowri, dated 1332, in the "Subsidy Rolls of Land Tenure of Cumberland"; John Laury, 1459 in Cornish Lands (Saint Ervan, Cornwall); Richard Loury, 1499 in Cornish Lands (Saint Breock, Cornwall); Grace Lawrye, 1572, Margaretta Lawrie , 1586 in IGI (Saint Mellion, Cornwall); Mary Laury, 1600 in IGI (Saint Germans, Cornwall); John Lowry, 1619 in IGI ... Joseph Lourie , 1789 in IGI (Newburn, Northumb). Gavin Laurie was an early governor of the colony of New Jersey, in 1757.

The apparently earlier origin of the name in England is probably due to the earlier use of surnames in England and better survival of records rather than any migration of Lawrie ancestors from England over the Scottish border! The common factor seems to be church dedications to St Laurence.

There are many documented variations of the name: Lari, Lauri, Laurie, Laurri, Laury, Lawrie, Lawry, Larrie, Larry, Lowry, Lourie, Lowrie, Loury, and Lowry. (variants with "y" are often Scots-Irish) Prior to the 19th century spelling variants are not important, the keeper of the register would write whatever he heard, so Lowrie, Lawrie, Laurie can quite often be recorded over a period for births to the same parents.

Despite the preponderance of the name in the Lothians and Lanarkshire, and with other Lawrie families in the Borders and South-West from the fifteenth century, including the barony of Maxweltoun (the family of Annie Laurie of the ballad); there could also be an origin in North-East Scotland from Angus to the adjoining county of Aberdeenshire. For example Lour is a place in Inverarity near Forfar, Angus. (Lord Lour became the Earl of Northesk). A group with this name may derive from James de Lour (ad1250) and Jacobus de Lur, juror 1257. William Lowar, was recorded as a burghess of Arbroath in 1458. John de Lowre was a councillor to the Earls of Crawford in 1458.

In Scotland there were at least 11 medieval churches, 6 chapels and 2 hospices dedicated to St Laurence. Foundlings were often named after the local saint.

[From Ancient church dedications in Scotland, McKinlay, James Murray; Edinburgh, D. Douglas, 1910-14. <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001407155> ]

**Churches:** Lundie; Edzell; Rossieclerah; Portmoak; Forres; Fordyce (Banffshire); Burray (Orkney); Rayne (Aberdeenshire); Slamannan (Stirling); Morebattle (Roxburgh); Bondington (Berwickshire).

**Chapels:** Bankhead, (Cunningham, Ayrshire); Overkelwood (Dumfries); Fairgirth (Kirkcudbright); Perth; Stonehouse (Lanarkshire); Beaufort Castle (Inverness-shire).

**Hospices:** Peebles; Haddington.

The name has also been suggested as deriving from the Gaelic *Labhruidh* meaning "spokesman". Griogair Labhruidh (pronounced Low-ri) is a Gaelic poet, musician, and Hip Hop producer/MC with strong roots in the Gaelic tradition from Ballachulish in Lochaber. In 2014, he became the main vocalist for the Gaelic supergroup *Dàimh*.

The more usual derivation is from the Latin *Laurentius*, which meant "victory". (Hence the laurel crown awarded in Rome to a victorious legate). The early church at Edzell, Forfarshire, was dedicated to St Laurence the Martyr who was martyred in Rome in 258 CE. A well in the churchyard of Edzell appears to have been named the 'lourie'; Also the bell donated in 1351 to St Nicholas church in Aberdeen was also known as 'the lourie'.

“Placenames of W. Aberdeen”, Spalding Club, 1899, mentions Lowrie as the name of a field in Nether Dumeath, Glass parish (Banff) on the Deveron, 7 miles West of Huntly.

Some time ago I tested my Y-DNA with FTDNA.COM. I have found no close matches on the FTDNA site so far. (apart from cousin Neville John in Australia). Our nearest, though distant, matches are in the Netherlands and Poland. FTDNA indicates the probability of common ancestry with them at between 20 and 24 generations, or 600-800 years. The new FTDNA tool suggests that our common ancestor lived around 1250 CE. It is quite possible that our Lawrie ancestor had migrated to Scotland from the Continent at some time before 1650. It appears that from the 12th to 17th century such

migration of sailors, traders and craftsmen to the East coast burghs was quite common. However, it is always possible that this connection was due to migration out of Scotland. Many Scots took service in Europe during the Thirty Years War, for example. Interestingly, FTDNA suggested that Neville John and I have a common ancestor, who lived around 400 BCE, with Ernest Hemingway.

Lowrie is a Scots word referring to a fox or a crafty person. Perhaps this has been a character definition of one possible ancestor?

I have come to the conclusion that 'Lawrie' and its variants are likely to be of multiple origin with no one single founding eponym or place of origin. It could be that some descend from foundlings named for the local church dedication to St Laurence. These multiple origins may explain why I have not, so far, found a match with any of the Lawries who have tested their DNA (Lawry group on FTDNA, for instance, and two independent testers whom I have contacted).

The Clan MacLaren claim "Lawrie" as a recognized sept of their clan. The Clan MacLaren probably derived from Bishop Laurence de Ergidia, appointed Bishop of Argyll in 1264 until his death in 1299. His descendents took the Gaelic name *mhic Labhruinn* (pronounced VicLaurin). They were minor tenants of the Stewarts of Appin. A few of them appear to have been transplanted to the area around Loch Earn, including Balquhidder, as part of the expansion of the Campbells in the early 16th century. However, Donald, the current MacLaren chief claims that the founder of the clan was a 13<sup>th</sup> century Laurence, Abbot of Auchtow in Balquhidder. The evidence for this is highly suspect and probably imagined by James Logan and Daniel MacLaurin in their romantic fiction of 1845 "Costumes of the Clans". However, Donald MacLaren claims that all Lawries and Lawrences, however spelt, are automatically MacLarens, which is obviously nonsense. In the 18th century, Highlanders trying to obtain work on the estates bordering the Highlands encountered considerable prejudice and frequently had to change their name, thus, for example, MacTaggart became "Priest", Macaree became "King" and similarly MacLaren might become "Lawrie". Donald MacLaren's claim is, in fact, an erroneous syllogism. If all Lawries descend from ancestral

Laurences and all MacLarens descend from one particular ancestral Laurence, therefore, Donald claims, all Lawries are MacLarens. A moment's consideration can dispense with that. It is more accurate to say that (probably) all Lawries and MacLarens descend from a Laurence at some time in the past, just not necessarily the same one. (This of course, ignores adoptions, unfaithful wives, part-takers and so forth!)

Returning to my research into our own antecedents, Aunt Jean Lawrie (who died aged 97 in 2016) informed me that the family had come to Lancashire from Tillicoultry in Clackmannan. Jean's grandfather (my great-grandfather) John Lawrie had moved to Rochdale in 1876 or 1877 when unusually heavy rain over the Ochil Hills caused extensive flooding and damage to the Tillicoultry mills which depended on the usually manageable streams which flowed down the hillsides. John started a business in Rochdale making and distributing boots and shoes. When John died in 1890, his younger brother Robert took over the business. Therefore, my next step, assuming that the Clackmannan area had been the family origin, was to consult the memorial records for the burial grounds around Tillicoultry but I found very few Lawries there.

Eventually, in the 1871 census, I found John Lawrie (1789-1873) living with his grandson, Hugh Lawrie (my gt-gt-grandfather), in Union Street, Tillicoultry. John's place of birth was recorded in the census as Turriff in Aberdeenshire. I subsequently discovered that John had a sister Janet, born in 1786, who had married James Fife in Turriff. Their son, John Fife, was listed in the 1851 census of Tillicoultry where he was lodging with his cousin, Hugh Lawrie.

So the trail now took me to Turriff and my next step was to call up the old parish records (OPRs) on microfilm for Turriff and the adjoining parishes in Western Aberdeenshire: Gamrie, King Edward and Montquhitter. In a painstaking study from the latest dates at the end of the films back to the earliest at the beginning of the rolls, I noted down every occurrence of a Lawrie birth or marriage (including spelling variants). Once I had reconstructed the families of these farm workers, I was able to go to the coastal burgh of Banff for the most likely birth of John Lawrie in 1712 (yet another one - there was at least one John Lawrie in every generation of this family). The

Banff OPR is a rare but brilliant and meticulously kept source. I wish there were more like it! The OPRs for the Aberdeenshire parishes are not as good as that for Banff, with gaps in the sequences.

I have to stress that assuming that the John Lawrie in Gamrie, King Edward & Montquhitter with children born to Margaret Bannerman between 1751 and 1769, is the same as the John Lawrie born in Banff to William Lowrie and Jean Anton in 1712 has been my best guess based on the sources available.

This took me back to William Lowrie, John Lawrie of Turriff's possible great-grandfather who had family in Banff in the 1650s and a family who appeared in a number of censures by the Kirk session for misdemeanours, such as being "drunk in kirk", ploughing up the common land of the burgh, and fighting to the effusion of blood. ("Bluiding ilk anotheris").

Then I found the Presbyterian minister of Banff and Boyndie in 1562 - immediately after the Reformation – had been William Lawrie, MA Glasgow. Following up on the reference in 'Scottish Schools and Schoolmasters', 1560-1633 I ordered Durkan's University of Glasgow 1451-1577 and found this on page 200 - "**William Lawtie (not Lawrie)**, the future minister of Banff and Inverboyndie, graduated Master in Glasgow in July 1543, aged about seventeen and was later found with the archdeacon in Peebles, the archdeacon's prebendial kirk. From there he went to Cullen, where the collegiate church was of the archdeacon's foundation. He became chaplain of St Anne's and song schoolmaster. It is only because he was registered as a notary in February 1564 that we learn that before moving to Cullen he was a clerk of the Glasgow diocese and born near Glasgow at Lochwinnoch".

Banff session and parish records start in the mid 17th century, so I speculated from the Lawtie Minister in 1562 to fill gap to 1650. A William Lawtie (Lawrie?), who was born in 1526, graduated MA Glasgow 1543, and was appointed the Minister of Banff, Cullen, Fordyce, Inverboyndie from 1562. He died in Banff 1589 leaving a widow and family (according to the Fasti). If, perhaps, he married in the 1560s, it is possible that a

grandson, or great grandson, might be the William Lowrie I refer to. However, I have come to the conclusion that **Lawrie** (and its spelling variants) are not the same as **Lawtie**. I noted that in the 1841 census there were 4 Lawtie families living in Banffshire, which represented 100% of all the recorded Lawties in Scotland. This makes one wonder what happened to the Lawties of Lochwinnoch from whence he came.

It is clear from the documentation on the location of early Lawries around Scotland that the majority lay in two main groups, some around Edinburgh, the Lothians and Fife, while the others were in the Western counties of Ayrshire and Lanarkshire. Very few can be found in the North-East. There was one well-to-do Lowrie in the hearth tax list who was a merchant in Aberdeen.

The 1696 hearth tax list for the parishes of Aberdeenshire (List of Pollable persons within the shire of Aberdeen) included just these individual Lawries:

In **the Toune and Freedom of Aberdeen**: "Charles Lowrie, merchant, stock above 10,000 merks, for himselfe and wife, no child ; servants, William Lowrie".

Listed elsewhere in Aberdeen was "Lawrie Marnoch, for himselfe and wife, no child nor servant" - I'm not sure if this was a firstname or surname?

In **King Edward parish**, at Milnseatt, "Walter Lowrie, grassman there and Margaret Smart his spouse" were sub-tenants of Alexander Baxter;

In the **parish of Turriff**, "George Laurie, a servant" under Alexander Pantoun in Slap;

In the **parish of Auchterless**, "John Lourie, a servant" under John Neper at Miln of Towie;

In **Ruthen & Botarie**, (now the parish of Cairnie in Strathbogie) "Walter Lowrie with Walter, Jane & Issobel his children;"

An equivalent list of polled persons in Banff does not survive, only the summary return.

As shown in my page on William Lowrie (circa 1650) in Banff, he appears to have been a solitary who gave rise to a number of descendent families with occupations of weaver, workman or gardener in Banff who had a less than respectful relationship with the burgh authorities. My contention is that several of these moved in the early 18th century



into the adjoining parishes of Western Aberdeenshire, perhaps adding to the very few already there in the 1696 hearth tax list.

There was a good reason for assuming a movement of labourers from a coastal burgh into the inland farming zone at the start of the 18th century. "King Billie's ill years" was a period of national famine in Scotland during the 1690s, caused by an economic slump and four years of failed harvests (1695, 1696 and 1698–99). The famines of the 1690s were remembered as particularly severe and the last of their kind. It has been estimated that starvation probably killed, or caused to emigrate, 5–10 per cent of the Scottish population, but in Aberdeenshire the population loss in some parishes may have reached 25 per cent. The Old Scottish Poor Law was overwhelmed by the scale of the crisis, although provision in the urban centres of the burghs was probably better than in the countryside. The famine led to migration between parishes and emigration to England, Europe, the Americas and particularly Ireland. In terms of my investigation into the Lawries, a shortage of farm labour after the famine may well have tempted John Lawrie, or perhaps his father William to take a fee along the coast in the parish of Gamrie, with John later moving inland to the King Edward and Montquhitter parishes. It could be argued that the economic shock of King Billie's ill years, along with the Darien disaster contributed to the longer-term disaster of Union with England in 1707.

North-East farm workers at the time worked on a fee basis, being hired for 6 months or a year at a time. Unmarried workers might lodge with the farmer, but married workers could expect a basic cot house. Thus the observed movements of John Lawrie and Margaret Bannerman as identified by the baptism of their nine children in three adjoining parishes of Gamrie (on the coast next to Banff), King Edward and Montquhitter might be typical of this class of farm labourers in the 18th century. I believe the births of John & Catherine's children - Janet & John Lawrie - in Montquhitter (close to Turriff, a growing local population centre) in 1786 and 1789 does tie in to the last three baptisms of John & Margaret's children in Tillymauld, Montquhitter.

I have noted in the Mormon records available online a different analysis of the 18th century Lawrie families found in these parishes, but I consider that to be wrong.

The charts which follow were originally created as text files with Courier font using Wordstar – a defunct word processing package on Superbrain microcomputers in the 1990s. I've modified them somewhat over the years since, but I have found that this approach is compact and allows me to include siblings and cousins, rather than use the more restrictive formats from ancestry products, or text boxes in MSWord.

The charts start with William Lawrie in Banff down to the family of John Forbes Lawrie in Manchester but also including the Cheethams, Hartleys, MacEwans, MacFarlanes and Fergusons. All of these family names were used as middle names by the family in Manchester. The exception was the “Forbes” in John Forbes Lawrie who was born in 1886.

I struggled for years to find the Forbes connection, until I discovered that Christian MacEwan in Blackford had been first married to John Forbes and then, after being widowed, she married Robert MacFarlane. The Forbes children, John and Mary, moved to Tillicoultry with Christian's daughter Jane who married Hugh Lawrie. John Forbes was the informant at the registration of Hugh's death in 1879.



John LAWRIE = Margaret BANNERMAN  
 b. 20/9/1712 b. ???  
 d. 7/2/1781 ?Clachforbie - King Edward par.?  
 at Tillymald  
 parish record for period of marriage not in existence

At Draught of Forrie - par. GAMRIE

AT Tillyhoia - par. KING EDWARD

At Tillymald - par. MONTQUHITTER

Alexander	John	James	Margaret	Elspet	John	Agnes	Isobel	Peter
5/11/1751	3/11/1753	23/4/1756	28/8/1758	1/6/1760	30/5/1762	7/9/1764	10/11/1766	4/4/1769
marr:26/11/1775				m. Catharine		DUCHART		
Jane HANPER								
both Montquhitter								

at Tillymald par. MONTQUHITTER

at Gellymill par. GAMRIE

Isobel	Margaret	Helen	??	Janet	John
26/12/1776	27/1/1784	25/3/1785	14/1/1789	25/8/1786	28/2/1789
m. George		m. James		m. James FIFE	
ROBERTSON		VALLS		1818 Turriff	
15/12/1804		11/7/1812		at Tillycoultry	
				m. 6/8/1820	
				Dunblane	

both alive '51 Turriff

William John Fife (see next sheet)

b 1832 b 1825

widr. 1851 living in Tillycoultry  
 with Hugh Lawrie 1851

Barbara 1847

NOTE: I am confident of the life of John Lawrie who was born in Montquhitter parish, Aberdeenshire in 1789 and eventually died Tillycoultry, Clackmannan in 1873. The parish records for the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and the statutory registration from 1855 are good. Therefore, along with reminiscences from Jean Lawrie the pages headed with John Lawrie and Catharine Ferguson and then John Lawrie (1855-1890) and Eliza Ann Cheestam can be viewed with a degree of confidence. I stopped with the generation of children born in the 1970s and 1980s, including my own two.

The previous pages, including this one - John Lawrie & Margaret Bannerman - were compiled on the balance of probabilities not certainties. Parish records in the 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> century are patchy with many omissions. Also because they are parish-based records and the families moved between parishes it can be difficult to piece them together. After a lot of searching through microfims I produced the above page and the page headed by William Lawrie in Banff. The Banff parish record was unusually detailed and full of unexpected additional information as shown.

See also the notes on the pages below about the MacDwan/MacFarlane descent and the Fergusons.





Ferguson, Dunblane  
 This register only gives the name of the father and the place. Births run 1658-1711 and 1711-1783 (very sparse 1755-65) and 1783-1819. Latterly it is very jumbled with many omissions partly rectified years later. Marriages run 1653-91 and 1787-1854.  
 As far as Katherine Ferguson is concerned, I ruled out the original Kilmadock choice as she died in 1863, unmarried. There are two possibilities in the Dunblane record, (1) 1789 to Peter, and (2) 1793 to John. In the '41 census John Lawrie gave his age as 50, actually 52, and Katharine as 45. '41 was notoriously inaccurate, but I would place her between 1791 and 1796. However (2) was illegitimate, so for want of any other proof I have picked (1). For want of marriages and mother's names, this tree is purely speculative on my part, linking the families as sensibly as I could. There is no Duncan in the record (1725), so I have given him to Duncan in Bows of Kilbryde, a brother to Donald.

John FERGUSONE = Isobel WHITTIR (Whyte - a sept of Clan Gregor)  
 m.19/9/1667

John FERGUSON

Bows of Kilbryde

John Janet Margaret Isobel Duncan William  
 13/2/1687 25/11/1694 1/3/1696 21/8/1698 20/4/1700 25/6/1701 4/6/1705

Bows of Kilbryde

Donald Duncan  
 10/4/1720 1725???

Kippenross

Mary John James Warbie? Peter  
 11/8/1751 6/1/1754 11/4/1756 6/7/1758 24/1/1761

Weaver, Bridgend

James John  
 20/3/86 12/12/92

Shoemaker, mln of Prothens

Katherine John  
 13/4/1789 6/9/1792  
 d.1843

m.6/8/1820 m.  
 John LAWRIE Janet Sharp

**Summary - Lawrie in Banff and Aberdeenshire**

**William Lowrie** probably born before 1630 and married about 1650  
Fined 10 pounds Scots 12/3/1653 with James Ardes for “blooding ilk ane wtheris”  
(fighting to the effusion of blood)  
(his daughter Margret was baptised 31/3/1655 – earliest recorded Lawrie in Banff)

||  
||

-----  
Walter LOWRIE  
admonished before pulpit 14/3/1697  
for carrying burdens on sabbath  
weaver in Banff; died 18/1/1733  
m. 14/6/1674 Isobell GAWLL in  
Banff (Gald or Gauld):  
she died 28/3/1728

||  
||  
||  
||  
||

William LOWRIE younger  
allegit drunk in kirk 24/8/1670  
witness to baptism of William (son of  
Walter 6/6/75)  
Marr. Isobell Craig 16/2/1680  
Isobell, relict of Wm Laurie weaver,  
died 22/11/1732

||  
||

Robert (bap 7/8/1687)

Family of Walter Lowrie in Banff

-----  
William  
b.6/6/1675  
d.5/12/1758  
weaver in Banff  
marr: Jean ANTON  
she died.10/4/1758

||  
||  
||

John  
20/9/1712  
d.7/2/1781 at Tilliemald  
marr. Margaret Bannerman at  
Clachforbie, King Edward par.

||  
||  
||  
||

Walter  
b.27/3/1680

John  
b.25/4/1688  
workman in Banff  
d.22/5/1742  
marr. Jannet?

||  
||  
||

James  
24/7/1718  
d.13/7/1758  
marr. Isobell (Elspet) PIRIE 16/11/1748  
(her father, John Pirie, fought at Culloden)  
gravestone erected to parents & son John.  
James was in arms with the rebels 1745/46

James  
b.6/1/1691  
d.11/8/1722  
gardener in Banff  
marr:  
??WALKER??



The family of John Lawrie and Margaret Bannerman – seven other births recorded

At Draught of Fortrie, par. Gamrie

**Alexander Lawrie**

b. 5/11/1751

Marr. Jane Harper 26/11/1775

both Montquhitter

||

Four daughters

At Tillyboa, par. King Edward

**John Lawrie**

b.30/5/1762

m. Catherine Duchart

at Gellymill, par. Montquhitter

||

in Montquhitter and Turriff

||

The family of John Lawrie and Catherine Duchart in Turriff

Janet  
25/8/1786  
m. James Fife, 1818  
Turriff

||

William Fife  
1832  
widr. 1851

John Fife  
1825  
in Tillicoultry 1851

John  
b. 28/2/1789  
d.14/2/1873  
marr. Catherine Ferguson,  
6/8/1820  
Dunblane

||

||

||

||

||

The sons of John Lawrie and Catherine Ferguson in Tillicoultry

**At Kilmadock,**

John

b. 19/3/1821

m. Eliz. Walker

18/1/1845

(2nd wife Janet

Turnbull

30/4/53)

||

2 daughters

**At Kilmadock,**

Robert

31/3/1823

m. Ann Hoggan

MacDougall

18/11/1843

at 38 Cairnton Street

Tillicoultry

||

6 children

**At Menstrie,**

Hugh

1830 d.13/4/1879

m. Jane

MacFarlane,

24/6/1854

Tillicoultry

||

||

||

||

**At Bairlogie, Clacks**

William

1837

m. Jane Shepherd

10/8/1858

13 Cobden Street,

Alva, Clacks

||

5 children

The sons of Hugh Lawrie and Jane MacFarlane in Tillicoultry

John  
b. 3/6/1855 d.5/7/1890  
m. Eliza Ann Cheetham 1/9/1878

||

Family in Rochdale

Robert (bapt. as Hugh)  
b.23/4/1864 d.1/9/1926  
m.. Annie Broughton 18/11/1883

||

Family in Burnley, Lancs

Hubert Robert  
1899 1903-1982

I am confident of the life of John Lawrie who was born in Turriff, Aberdeenshire to John Lawrie and Catherine Duchart in 1789 and who eventually died at Tillicoultry, Clackmannan in 1873. The parish records for the early 19th century and the statutory registration from 1855 are good. Therefore, along with reminiscences from Jean Lawrie the subsequent pages headed with John Lawrie in Perthshire and Clackmannan and then John Lawrie (1855-1890) and Eliza Ann Cheetham in Rochdale can be viewed with a high degree of confidence.

The previous generations, including that of John Lawrie & Margaret Bannerman were compiled on the balance of probabilities not certainties. Parish records in the 17th & 18th century are patchy with many omissions. Also because they are parish-based records and the families moved between parishes it can be difficult to piece them together. After a lot of searching through microfilms I produced the above page and the page headed by William Lowrie in Banff. The Banff parish record was unusually detailed and full of unexpected additional information as shown. The town of Turriff is in Montquhitter parish. Gamrie and King Edward (Kinneadar) are adjacent parishes.

There were no Lawries in the Banff Parish or Burgh records before William Lowrie was censured in 1653 for fighting. It seems likely that William may have come to Banff from elsewhere at some time before 1653, perhaps with his sons Walter and William. The Banff OPR began in 1620, although there are some gaps in the early years. The first Lawrie in the OPR was the baptism of Margaret by William in 1655. Later we find the marriage of Walter to Isobell Gawll in 1674 and the baptism of their son, William, in 1675. If the Lawries had been present in Banff earlier than 1655, one would have expected to find the baptisms of Walter and William around 1650 or earlier.

My cousin, Neville John in Australia, has recently tested Y-DNA37 with FTDNA and we share R-BY102794. Compared with my Y-DNA500 in 2018, John and I have one difference. FTDNA state that our common ancestor with the nearest current testee in their database lived in about 1250CE. Our ancestral R-BY66825 lived in 600CE.

### **MacEwan / MacFarlane and Ferguson**

When I compiled my original Lawrie genealogy on Wordstar, I wrote the following note about the MacEwans and MacFarlanes.

“There are several problems with the page containing the ancestry of Christina MacEwan. Firstly, there is no record of the birth of Christian MacEwan and, as she died before 1855, there is no death registration either. During the period when entries in the parish register were subject to taxation, it is quite clear that many births are not entered. The records are very patchy, some entries have been made up to twenty years later. Entire families have been entered together on the same page.

In this case, on the balance of probabilities, I chose the family of John MacEwen and Margaret Gow at East gate of Tullibardine, Blackford. The first child was born in Muthil, the four Blackford children are all entered together in the register. The 1851 census gave her place of birth as Blackford and her age as 54. As the birth of John Forbes, her first child was in March 1815, she was probably born 1796 or 1797.”

Christian’s first husband, John Forbes was baptised 20/10/1789, one of ten children of Donald Forbes and Ann Macaree who married in Muthil on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1769. Their children were born in different adjoining parishes, Muthil, Dunblane, Ardoch and Blackford. I have only been able to put these children together in the same family due to the destruction of the parish record. The record was subsequently reconstructed by the parish authorities who visited the families still in the parish and listed their children with their approximate dates of baptism.

John Forbes and Christian MacEwan had two children, John, 28/3/1815 and Mary 20/1/1817. John Forbes must have died around the time of the birth of Mary, because on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1818, Christian married Robert MacFarlane in Blackford. Their first three children were recorded in Blackford and, thereafter, four more at Port of Menteith parish when the couple became Poldar Moss settlers. Jane MacFarlane was their fifth child born 26<sup>th</sup> June 1830. She would marry Hugh Lawrie in Tillicoultry on 24<sup>th</sup> June 1854.

The children of John Lawrie and Eliza Anne Cheetham were all given middle names thus: Hugh Hartley (1879); Samuel MacFarlane (1881); Robert Cheetham (1882 and 1884 as the first child died); John Forbes (1886) and Clarence Ferguson (1888). Clearly the middle names, MacFarlane, Cheetham, and Ferguson, are ancestral names, but what about Forbes? I spent a considerable time attempting to find a record of a marriage between an earlier Lawrie and a wife surnamed Forbes, but without success. It was only when I discovered that Christian MacEwan had been first married to John Forbes that I understood the reason for the Forbes middle name. John Forbes, Christian's son by her marriage to John Forbes resided in Moss Road, Tillicoultry near Hugh Lawrie's family on Union Street, and he was the informant, titled "Uncle" on the registration of death due to measles for Margaret Jane Lawrie, aged 10 months on 20<sup>th</sup> November 1870.

John Forbes, himself, a labourer of Moss Road, Tillicoultry, died on 9<sup>th</sup> March 1885 at the recorded age of 66. (That age is incorrect. He had been born on 21<sup>st</sup> March 1815 and thus was just short of his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday). His parents were noted as John Forbes, land steward and Kirsty MacEwan. His son, also John Forbes was the informant. As my grandfather, John Forbes Lawrie was born quite soon after on 20<sup>th</sup> April 1886, it seems apparent that he had been named in honour of his late uncle John Forbes.

**Ferguson, Dunblane**

The Dunblane register only gives the name of the father and the place. Births run 1658-1711 and 1711-1783 (very sparse 1755-65) and 1783-1819. Latterly it is very jumbled with many omissions partly rectified years later. Marriages run 1653-91 and 1787-1854.

As far as Katherine Ferguson is concerned, I found two possibles in the Dunblane record, (1) 1789 to Peter, and (2) 1793 to John. In the '41 census John Lawrie gave his age as 50, actually 52, and Katharine as 45. The '41 census was notoriously inaccurate, but I would place her between 1791 and 1796. However (2) was illegitimate, so for want of any other proof I have picked (1). For want of marriages and mother's names, this tree is purely speculative on my part, linking the families as sensibly as I could. There is no Duncan in the record (1725), so I have given him to Duncan in Bows of Kilbryde, a brother to Donald.

**John Ferguson in Bows of Kilbryde**

Duncan b.25/6/1701

||

-----  
Donald      Duncan  
10/4/1720    1725???

||

Kippenross

-----  
Mary      John      James      Warbie?      Peter  
11/8/1751 6/1/1754 11/4/1756 6/7/1758 24/1/1761

||

Weaver, Bridgend

||

Shoemaker, miln of Prothens

-----  
James John  
20/3/86 12/12/92

-----  
Katherine      John  
13/4/1789      6/9/1792

d.1843

m.6/8/1820      m.

John Lawrie      Janet Sharp

## Tillicoultry

Tillicoultry is one of the Hillfoot settlements on the south side of the Ochil Hills, a range of high ground between Kinross and Stirling separating the valleys of the river Allan to the North and the river Devon to the South. On the southern side of the hills, the A91 from St Andrews passes through the villages of Dollar, Tillicoultry, Alva, Menstrie and Blairlogie on the way to Stirling, while the A9 from Perth to Stirling runs to the north of the Ochils. All of the Hillfoot villages which line up along the base of the southern edge of the Ochil Hills owe at least part of their development to the textile industry. This is especially true of Tillicoultry which grew where the burn emerging from Mill Glen could be harnessed to power woollen mills.

The town owes its name to the Scottish Gaelic for "*hill in the back land*" and in 1195 it was recorded as *Tulycultri*. One could assume that the name simply refers to the presence of the Ochils, looming high above the settlement. More specifically, it might refer to the topography of Mill Glen, which leads up into the Ochils before dividing to pass either side of the distinctive hill known locally as The Law.

From the early 1700s the settlement became known for Tillicoultry serge, a cloth manufactured by hand loom weavers mixing worsted wool with linen thread. It remained a fairly small village until 1790, when a water-powered woollen weaving mill was built to harness power from the burn cascading down from the Ochils. This and later mills began to specialise in the production of tartan cloth. The demand for tartan greatly increased after the visit of George IV to Edinburgh in 1822 when Walter Scott, almost single-handedly, created the craze of Highlandism. Occasionally, heavy storms over the Ochils caused spates when the burns burst their banks. One such exceptional event caused serious damage to the Tillicoultry mills in 1877 when many of the employees were thrown out of work while the damage was being repaired.

More water-powered mills followed the first, and by the 1830s steam powered mills were introduced along the Tillicoultry Burn, using its water for cooling the engines. Over the years the factories in Tillicoultry would produce a variety of fabrics including plaids, tweeds, tartans, blankets & shawls. This led to a dramatic rise in population. By

1870 there were 12 mills employing over 2000 people on 230 power looms and a further 340 hand looms. In addition there were some 200 hand loom weavers making shawls and napkins in the town. Many of the workers lived close to one another on the streets that housed the millworkers cottages, many of which still remain to this day. It is said that a weaver's wage could be three times that of a miner. Weavers had to have a higher standard of education to understand the often-complicated patterns.

The firm of J. & P. Patons was established in 1815 in Tillicoultry. An entry in the nineteenth century pattern books of Paton's shows a scrap of largely blue and red tartan with the thread count falling in sevens, entitled 'The 7th Cavalry Tartan'. No British military formation had such a name, although there was an American 7th Cavalry, which achieved dubious fame under General Custer at the Battle of the Little Big Horn, when it was massacred by the Sioux Indians. Apparently, General Custer had a liking for military bands and formed ad hoc brass and bagpipe bands. It is probable that the 7th Cavalry had commissioned a tartan from Scotland for their pipers and drummers, since the regiment contained many Americans of Scottish descent.

Some of the town's mill buildings still exist. Some, like the Paton's Mill in Lower Mill Street, have been converted into housing, while others have become offices. The huge Devondale Mill had gone out of production by the First World War, when it was repurposed to serve as an army barracks with some 800 horses stabled on the ground floor. It later became a paper mill. It is now the home of Sterling Mills furniture warehouse and retail centre.

Hugh Lawrie became a mill-manager and, before his early death, was recorded as a merchant in Tillicoultry. His sons John and Robert worked in the mills. Hugh and Jane had eight children in all. John was the oldest. Two of the sisters, Catherine and Christina Mary, were still living in Tillicoultry in 1881. Four of the children died tragically young. Their first child, baptised Christina Mary, died at the age of 6 of Scarlet Fever. Shortly afterwards, Hugh, aged 4, also died of scarlet fever. Margaret Jane died in 1870, aged 10 months of measles, while Margaret's twin, Williamina MacFarlane, died earlier in 1870 aged only 4 months. Due to his unemployment

following the floods, John moved to Lancashire in 1877 to start a business selling boots and shoes. Hugh died of a stroke in 1879. His widow, Jane MacFarlane later moved to Burnley to live with her son Robert who had taken over John's business after his death in 1890.

Mairi and I were unaware of this family when we decided to name our daughter Christina Mairi in 1974 after one of Mairi's nursing friends from the Isle of Lewis. (Mairi is the Gaelic spelling of Mary). So, it was quite a surprise to find Christina Mary in the family of my great-great-grandparents. Not only that, but when the first Christina Mary died in 1864, their next daughter, one of twins born in 1866, was given the same name. Jane MacFarlane's mother's name was Christian MacEwan so Christina was probably named for her, although, as far as I could discover, there had been no Marys in the family prior to this.



### **The family of John Lawrie and Catherine Ferguson.**

Only when I found 82-year old John Lawrie in the 1871 census of Tillicoultry and his death certificate in 1873 could I identify his baptism in Turriff, Aberdeenshire on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 1789, and was then able to look for earlier Lawrie families in Aberdeenshire.

#### **1841 census**

John married Catherine Ferguson in Dunblane on the 6<sup>th</sup> August 1820. In the 1841 census he was living at Langfield, Tillicoultry and was described as an engine keeper. The following ages given in the '41 census are approximations by the census taker to within five years. John was listed as aged 50 (actually 52). The census included his wife Catherine, aged 50, (although if I am correct she would also be 51 or 52). Their children were John (20), a woollen hand loom weaver; Robert (18), also a woollen hand loom weaver; Catharine (15); James (13); Hugh (11); William (6); and Mary Ferguson (7). Only Catharine, James, Hugh, William and Mary were born in the county – which was Clackmannan.

#### **1851 census**

I could not find John Lawrie and his wife in the 1851 census for Clackmannan. I searched for them in the whole of Scotland on [scotlandspeople.gov.uk](http://scotlandspeople.gov.uk) without success. I did find some of John and Catharine's children in Tillicoultry. John senior was recorded in Alva in the 1861 census and in Tillicoultry in 1871.

At Cairnton Street, Tillicoultry, I found John Lawrie (30) who was described as a woollen spinner, born in Dunblane, Perthshire, with his wife Elizabeth (25), born in Tillicoultry, and their children Elizabeth (5) and Catharine (2).

At Toll Road, Alva, was Robert Lawrie (28), a woollen handloom weaver, born at Kilmadock, Perthshire with his wife Anne (also 28), from Falkirk, Stirlingshire and their children Margaret (6), John (4) and Catharine (1). All three children were recorded as born in Tillicoultry, not Alva.

In Green Square, Alva, James Lawrie (23) was also described as a woollen handloom weaver and born at Logie, Stirlingshire with his wife Margaret (27) and no children. The hillfoot villages running westward from Tillicoultry are Alva, Menstrie, Blairlogie and Logie. The last two are in the county of Stirling instead of Clackmannan.

In Union Street, Tillicoultry, the entry for Andrew Reid, a labourer and his wife included three lodgers: Hugh Lawrie (20), a woollen spinner born in Menstrie, Clacks; William Lawrie (16), a hand loom weaver, also born in Menstrie and John Fife, (26), a mason born in Turriff, Aberdeenshire.

In summary, John Lawrie and Catherine Ferguson had been moving around during their marriage. Their eldest child John had been born in Dunblane, Perthshire; Robert in Kilmadock, Perthshire; James had been born in Logie, Stirlingshire; Hugh and William in Menstrie, Clackmannan. Although the 1841 census has James “born in the county”, Logie is in Stirlingshire, but Blairlogie is actually in Clackmannan, the westernmost of the hillfoots.

### **1861 census**

In 1861 John Lawrie, widower of Catherine Ferguson, aged 72, was listed with the family of William and his wife Jane Shepherd in Alva.

In the 1861 census for Tillicoultry, James (33) was now in Union Street, (2/153) and still described as a woollen weaver from Logie, Clacks [Note above, in 1851 it was reported as Logie, Stirlingshire!] He was still married with his wife Margaret (37) but no children.

Also in Union Street, 2 doors down (2/155) is Hugh Lawrie, a wool spinner from Menstrie with his wife Jane (26) from Port of Menteith, Perthshire. Their children were all born in Tillicoultry: John (5); Christina Mary (2) and Catharine (1).

At 11 Hamilton Street (3/151), John Lawrie (40), a woollen spinner from Dunblane, married to Janet (40) from Saline in Fife. There were three children listed, George P

(15) born Cairneyhill, Fife; Elizabeth (15), a power loom weaver, born in Tillicoultry and Catharine (12), a piecer, also born in Tillicoultry. John, Elizabeth and Catharine match the 1851 census, but he appeared to have lost Elizabeth, his wife in the 1851 census and has remarried to Janet Turnbull from Fife with her son George.

At 39 Cairnton Street (5/39) was Robert Lawrie (38), a woollen weaver and his wife Ann (38). Their children were John (14), a woollen piecer, Catharine (11) a woollen piecer; William (9); Ann H (7) and Robert (4)

### **1871 census**

In the 1871 census for Union Street, Tillicoultry (2/203) was John Lawrie (82), a widower and gardener from Turriff, Aberdeenshire. At last, this was the confirmation that the John Lawrie, who had married Catharine Ferguson in 1820 and had been listed with his children in Tillcoultry in 1841, had come from Turriff. The Turriff OPR recorded that he had been baptised on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1789, so his age here was correct. John died in Union Street, Tillicoultry aged 83, on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1873. He was described as the widower of Catherine Ferguson, the son of John Lawrie (labourer) and Catharine Duchart. John Lawrie, his son, was present when his father died.

Also in Union Street (2/177) was James Lawrie (43), a tenterer from Logie, with his wife Margaret Turnbull (46) but no children and a boarder Janet Lawrie Herbert (8) born in Stirling.

At 26 Ochil Street (3/57) was John Lawrie (50) a weaver, from Dunblane and Janet from Saline, Fife. Their grand-daughter Janet Philp (4) was also with them.

At 40 Ochil Street (3/64), was William Broadhead (20) a warehouseman from Tillicoultry. He was married to Catharine (22). His sister-in-law, and therefore Catharine's sister, Elizabeth Lawrie (25), a weaver, was also living here. These two were the children of John Lawrie who lived in Cairnton Street in 1851. John died on 8<sup>th</sup> January 1895, but I could not find him in the 1871 census. Catharine Lawrie married William Broadhead 12/8/1870 and Elizabeth married David Watson 6/6/1873.

At 34 Commercial Buildings in the High Street (5/33) was Jane Lawrie (38). Her husband Hugh was not present on the day of the census. Their four surviving children (out of 8 births) were John (15), a wool piecer; Catharine (11), Robert (6) and Christina Mary (4)

### **1881 census**

Jane Lawrie (49) at 32 Union Street (2/184) was now a widow and annuitant. Her husband, Hugh, had died on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1879 of hemiplegia (a stroke), aged 48. Robert Lawrie, their son, was the informant. Also at 32 Union Street, was Jane's daughter Catharine (21), a power loom weaver; Robert, (16), an apprentice draper; and Christina (14), a darner.

By the time of the 1881 census, John had moved to Rochdale and married Eliza Anne Cheetham there. Some time before the next census in 1891 Robert also moved to Lancashire. Robert would marry Annie Broughton in Burnley in 1897. Jane MacFarlane moved to be with her son Robert in Burnley. She died on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September 1910, aged 79 at 1 Folds Street, Burnley. The note I had from Jean indicates that she was interred in Tillicoultry cemetery on 4<sup>th</sup> October 1910.

### **1891-1911 censuses, Burnley**

The 1891 census of 80 Brougham Street, Burnley had Jane Lawrie, a widow aged 59, as head of household, together with her daughters Catherine (31), Christina M. (24) and son Robert (26). Catherine was described as a boot & shoe saleswoman, while Robert was a boot & shoe merchant. No occupation was given for Christina.

In the 1901 census of 50 Rectory Road, Burnley, Robert Lawrie (36) was a boot & shoe dealer. His wife Annie (31) was from Burnley. Their children were Hubert (2) and Jeannie (4 months). In the 1911 census for Burnley, Robert Lawrie was a boot dealer, aged 46. His wife Annie was aged 41. They had children Hubert (12) and Robert (8). It appears that Jeannie had died. The family had a servant, Rosa Holland (22).

### **Other Lawrie families descended from John Lawrie and Catherine Ferguson**

As mentioned above, Hugh's son, John, went to Rochdale in the 1870s and was followed by his brother Robert who settled in Burnley, accompanied by his mother, Hugh's widow, Jane MacFarlane and the surviving sisters, Catherine and Christina Mary. The other children of John Lawrie and Catherine Ferguson were John (1821-1895), Robert(1823-?), Catherine (1827-?); James(1828-?) and William (1837-1901).

Hugh's siblings remained in Tillicoultry: John (19/3/1821-8/1/1895), a wool spinner, married Elizabeth Walker on 18/1/1845 and had three children by her – twins Elizabeth and George (b.1846) and Catharine (b.1849). Elizabeth died and so John remarried Janet Turnbull (3/4/1853). Daughter Elizabeth married David Watson (6/6/1873) and Catherine married William Broadhead (12/8/1870). I could find no record of George so he must have died in infancy before 1855.

Robert (14/4/1823), a woollen weaver, married Anne Hoggan MacDougall on 18/11/1843. They lived at 38 Cairnton Street, Tillicoultry and had seven children. Mary Marshal (1845-28/5/1858); John (1847); Catharine (1850); William (1852); Ann Hoggan (1854); Robert (31/8/56); and Martha Marshall (10/8/61). In the census, dated 22 August 1870, of Essex, Massachusetts I found the whole family: Robert (40), Annie (40), John (22), Catherine (20), William (18), Ann (16), Robert (14) and Martha (9). Martha was a scholar while all the others were workers in a woollen mill. The ages of Robert and Annie were too young but all of the children were correct. John (b1847) possibly died of TB in 1903, aged 55 in Massachusetts.

James (b.1828), a railway surfaceman, married Margaret Turnbull in 1850. James was still alive when Margaret died on 6/12/1898. This couple do not appear to have had children.

William (b.1837) married Jane Shepherd on 10/8/1858. They lived at 13 Cobden Street, Alva, Stirlingshire. Their children were Isabella (6/12/57); John (16/2/60); William (19/4/63); James (1/4/66); and Catharine (13/10/68). In the 1861 census, William and Jane were both aged 26. Their children were Isabella (3) and John (1). Also resident

was William's father John Lawrie aged 72. In the 1871 census, William and Jane were not present. The children were Isabella (13), John (11), James (5) and Catherine (2). William had died aged one year in 1863. In the 1881 census of Alva only Jane could be found. William died in Alva, aged 66 in 1901. Their son John (b 1860) died aged 29 in Alva in 1889.



Aunt Jean labelled this photo:  
Aunt Kate's family, Alva, 1900.

But I think that is wrong, because Kate's husband Robert Lothian died in 1891. Unless Jean was referring to William's daughter Catherine (b.1869).

So, this must be William Lawrie (1837-1901), his wife, Jane Shepherd and two of their daughters. The one on the left could be Isabella (b.1858) and Catherine on the right (b.1869).

James, (b.1866) the son of William, probably married Jessie in Dunfermline. In the 1891 census, he and Jessie were both aged 25 with a 1-year old son William. In 1901, William was aged 10 and they have Lizzie, aged 2 and David aged 1.

Catherine (b.1827) married Robert Lothian in Clackmannan parish on 4/2/1848 and had a son Robert on 14/5/1848 and a daughter Catherine on 28/7/1850. In the 1861 census the family were in Alva, Robert (40), Catherine (35), Catherine (10), Elizabeth (7) and John (1). In the 1871 census of Alva, Robert (48), Catherine (44), Elizabeth (17), John (11), Jane (7), Catherine F (4). By the 1881 census of Alva, Robert (55), Catherine (52), Jane (17), Catherine F (14). John who would be 21 and Elizabeth who would be 27 are not present. I could not find John despite a search throughout Scotland. In the 1891 census, Robert (70), Catherine (66), Catherine F (24). Robert Lothian was registered as

having died in Alva in 1891 and his daughter Jane died in 1890. In the 1901 census: Catherine (74), Catherine F (34). Christina K.M. (6).



According to Aunt Jean's note, this photo was of Catherine Lawrie (b.1827) and her husband, Robert Lothian in Alva.

They married in 1848.

Robert died in 1891, so this photograph must date from the late 1880s.

Chris Kreuger in Calgary, Canada, contacted me about John Lothian from whom he thought he might descend. I looked for the birth of a John Lothian between 1858 and 1861 but he does not appear to be recorded on [Scotlandspeople.gov.uk](http://Scotlandspeople.gov.uk). However, [Familysearch.org](http://Familysearch.org) states that he was born on 20<sup>th</sup> June 1859. A child named John did appear in the 1861 and 1871 censuses for Alva with Robert and Catherine.

Chris said that John Lothian had a child with Janet Porteous. I could not find a marriage but did find the birth of Alexander Porteous Lothian registered, with the mother's maiden surname Porteous, in Tillicoultry in 1885. Robert Porteous Lothian was born to John and Janet Lothian in Alva (Stirling) in 1882. I noted the death of John Lothian, a tweed weaver, aged 58, married to Janet Porteous, in the Asylum at Larbert, Stirling on 12<sup>th</sup> November 1917. His usual address was given as Scotland Place, Tillicoultry. His parents were Robert Lothian, ploughman, deceased and Catherine Lothian, m.s. Lawrie, deceased. He died of heart valve disease and epilepsy. The epilepsy may have been the reason for his confinement in the asylum. His son, Robert Lothian of 30 Hill Street, Tillicoultry, was the informant.

Chris Kreuger, however, claimed that John Lothian had married Janet Armstrong and they had 3 children in Scotland. I couldn't find this marriage, nor could I find the family he mentioned in the 1891 and 1901 censuses. He later reported that he had found a Robert John Lothian who had gone to Northumberland, England and met his English wife Janet Armstrong (b.~1870), where he had 3 children in Northumberland - Thomas, Robert & Jane. They resided there for about 20 years until they migrated to Manitoba in 1903. Their children names and birth dates all match up with the Canadian census. The 1916 Census listed John Lothian, Janet Armstrong, their three Scotland-born children and Chris's great grandmother, Emma, who was born in Manitoba.

It is apparent to me that Catherine Lawrie's son, John Lothian who died in 1917, had been usually resident in Tillicoultry and was therefore not the same person as Chris's ancestor, Robert John Lothian in Northumberland.

### **Lulu?**

It has been suggested to me that we may be related to the singer Lulu. Her birth name on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1948 was Marie McDonald McLaughlin Lawrie. Some time ago she featured on the TV show "Who do you think you are". I looked into her family tree at <https://en.geneastar.org/genealogy/lawriemarie/marie-mcdonald-mclaughlin-lawrie>

Lulu's father was Edward Lawrie (1924-1998). His father was also Edward, born 1903 to John Lawrie (b.1866) and married to Jane Bisset. John's father was James Lawrie (1829-1892) married to Elizabeth Dunbar. It is quite clear that these names do not fit into our family tree.



## Rochdale

In Rochdale, John Lawrie married Eliza Anne Cheetham (b.13/4/1856) on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1878. They had six boys (one of whom died in infancy) before John died in July 1890. My Aunt Jean told me that John's brother Robert took over his business, leaving Eliza Ann with nothing. However, the family may have been supported by her sister's pawn broking business in Rochdale. In the 1911 census Eliza Ann had a newsagent shop in Rochdale. She lived until 1934.

I remember Jean once telling me that Eliza Anne was one of the first users of the Co-op. However, as she was not born until 1856, I suspect that Jean's information may have referred to Eliza-Anne's father Samuel Cheetham whose parents, grand-parents and earlier ancestors had lived in the Rochdale area from, at least, the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Samuel married Anne Hartley of Heptonstall, West Yorkshire in Rochdale on 11/12/1850. They both died of typhus on the same day in 1862, when Eliza Anne was just six years old.



## **The Rochdale Co-op**

The Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers was a group formed in 1844. The records indicate that 28 men were listed as founding members. As the mechanisation of the Industrial Revolution was forcing more and more skilled workers into poverty, these tradesmen decided to band together to open their own store selling food items they could not otherwise afford. They designed the now famous Rochdale Principles, and over a period of four months raised £10 to rent premises based on a total of 28 pounds of starting capital. On 21 December 1844, they opened their store with a very meagre selection of butter, sugar, flour, oatmeal and a few candles as stock. Within three months, they had expanded their selection to include tea and tobacco, and they were soon known for providing high quality, unadulterated goods. By the end of their first year trading, the Pioneers had 80 members and £182 of capital.

By 1900, the British co-operative movement had grown to 1,439 co-operatives covering virtually every area of the UK.



The Pioneers rented their first store at 31 Toad Lane and moved out in 1867 but the co-operative movement later purchased it, and opened it as a museum in 1931. The museum is still in operation and is known as The Rochdale Pioneers Museum.

**John Lawrie and Eliza Ann Cheetham in Rochdale**

John Lawrie  
 b. 3/6/1855 d. 5/7/1890  
 m. Eliza Ann Cheetham 1/9/1878  
 b.1/9/1878 d.25/9/1934



The five surviving sons of John Lawrie and Eliza Ann Cheetham in Rochdale

Hugh Hartley 1879 d.1945 m. Amy Jones 1907 Union rep	Samuel McFarlane 1880 d.21/4/1961 m. Lizzie Burton 1907 Blacksmith	Robert Cheetham b.1884 d.1937 m. Albertina Corne b.18/4/98 m.1916	John Forbes b. 30/4/1886 d.17/8/1967 m. Laurie Helen McGregor 28/10/1908	Clarence Ferguson 1888 d.1915 Gallipoli	
		Stoke on Trent			
Hugh Hartley 1910	John 1908	William Burton 1910	Ethel Angele 16/6/18 m.Austin MacDonald	Harold Auguste 7/1/20 m.Penry Williams	Enid Marguerite 1921

The family of John Forbes Lawrie and Laurie Helen McGregor  
 from 1928, at Glen Villa, Moston Lane, Harpurhey, Manchester

Helen Ida 26/5/1910 d.4/7/1957 m.James Ward 1941	Edith Annie 22/12/1911 d.17/4/1930	Clarence Forbes 7/10/1915 d.11/8/1977 m.Doris Webster (6/2/1919-12/3/2011)	Jean Laurie 19/10/1918 d.15/3/2016 unm.	John 22/3/1920 d.28/2/1970 m.Morag MacLeod 26/3/46	Laurie Helen 10/11/1922 d.23/10/1986 m.Norman Clayton 24/8/74
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**Four generations of John Lawrie**

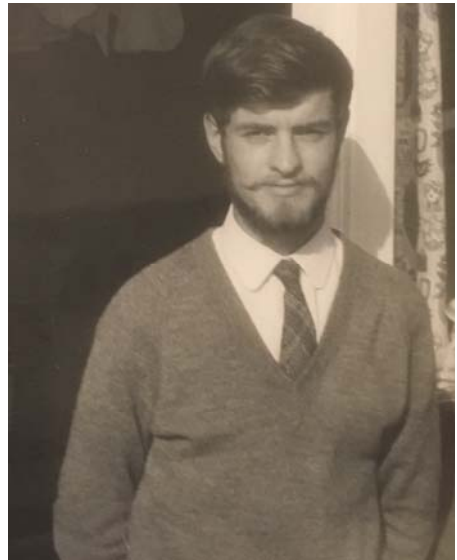


Top left: John Lawrie (1855-1890);

John Forbes Lawrie (1884-1967) probably at the time of his wedding in 1908;

Below left: John Lawrie (1920-1970) in RAF uniform around 1940;

Peter John Lawrie (1949- ) in 1971.





Earlier Cheetham in Rochdale

Edmund CHEETHAM ??

These may be brothers

9 marriages with

families 1594-1613

Michael Arthur Thomas = ???  
b.~1581 14/2/1585 b.~1580  
m.30/4/1606 m. 7/12/1605

Thomas = ??? Henry Priscilla

26/4/1607 WHITWORTH=JACKSON

m.~1629 m.8/6/1633

Michael HURST

(Wardle)

Robert

19/12/15

(Waterhouse)

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

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26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

Elzabeth James Jane Thomas Samuel Jane

31/6/1630 11/7/31 31/3/33 9/3/34 17/2/39 15/10/43 2/8/48 2/4/1637

Jane John = Alice John

m.6/6/1663 WOLENDEN 24/12/37

Robert

(Wardle)

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

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Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

Grace Mary Samuel = Mary Robert = Dorothy Charles

8/3/1664 9/7/1665 18/10/68 4/2/1677 20/1/78 STOTT NOTTALL

m.~1629 m.16/5/1699

Robert = Dorothy

20/1/78 STOTT

Charles

NOTTALL

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

John Anna Jane James William = Martha Henry Jane

1/11/02 9/1/07 24/7/09 17/6/16 28/4/1700 m.10/8/1725

Martha = William

3/4/1703

Henry

NOTTALL =

???

Jane

James = Elizabeth

12/6/99 ???

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

Todelane - husbandman

John William Robert James Thomas Samuel = Martha James Betty Henry Jane Mary & James = Sarah

23/4/28 31/1/31 28/6/34 26/6/37 28/7/45 19/12/25 1728 1724 1726 1729 1731

m.3/8/1746

Martha = Samuel

1728 1724 1726 1729 1731

James Betty Henry Jane

Mary & James = Sarah

b.1/1/28 MILLS

m.30/10/50

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

26/4/68

Edmund

2/6/39

Edmund

Weaver | Healey

Martha Ann Betty John = Betty Ann

9/12/48 21/2/57 10/6/59 25/2/53

m.7/11/1774

John = Betty

3/3/54

Ann

29/4/59

Weaver Ashrockley

Weaver | Healey

Martha Ann Betty John = Betty Ann

9/12/48 21/2/57 10/6/59 25/2/53

m.7/11/1774

John = Betty

3/3/54

Ann

29/4/59

Weaver Ashrockley

Weaver | Healey

Martha Ann Betty John = Betty Ann

9/12/48 21/2/57 10/6/59 25/2/53

m.7/11/1774

John = Betty

3/3/54

Ann

29/4/59

Weaver Ashrockley

Weaver | Healey

Martha Ann Betty John = Betty Ann

9/12/48 21/2/57 10/6/59 25/2/53

m.7/11/1774

John James Mary Martha Samuel

26/2/75 22/9/76 15/8/79 14/10/81 12/4/84

Samuel

11/3/87

Samuel

1826-1862

Samuel

1826-1862

Samuel

1826-1862

Samuel

1826-1862

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1826-1862

Samuel

1826-1862

Samuel

1826-1862

Samuel



### Cheetham / Hartley

John Lawrie from Tillicoultry married Eliza Anne Cheetham on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1878 in Rochdale. Our Cheetham ancestors had been long term residents in the Rochdale area. Eliza Ann's father, Samuel Cheetham, was born in Wardleworth, Rochdale in 1826. Samuel was the son of James Cheetham, a hand loom weaver from the settlement of Healey Stones about three miles north of Rochdale, and his wife Mary Jackson. James, in turn, was born in 1776 in Healey. He was the second son of John Cheetham, also a weaver, and Betty Healey. I traced the line back to an Edmund Cheetham who had a family in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century. The parish record for Rochdale goes back almost as far as the Reformation.

It may be worthwhile recapitulating the development of the textile industry in Lancashire in order to understand the fortunes of the Cheethams. In 1764 James Hargreaves of Blackburn had invented the "Spinning Jenny". This machine had the effect of increasing the spinning production of yarn which had fallen behind the rate of weaving since the invention of Kay's "Flying-shuttle". Hargreave's house, "The Hall-in-the-Wood", was set on fire by weavers concerned about their livelihoods and he had to flee to Nottingham. Shortly after the invention of the Spinning Jenny, Richard Arkwright of Preston in 1769 invented the "Water Frame".

These inventions set the scene for Samuel Crompton [b. 1783 near Bolton, d. 1827] who invented the "Mule" about 1789-80 after about five years of experimentation. The mule was a mechanised combination of the Spinning Jenny and the Water Frame. The Mule produced fine and strong yarn which allowed fine cottons and muslins to be manufactured. Crompton was not in a position to patent his mule but after many requests from inquisitive weavers he exhibited the machine in Manchester. His 'lack of pence' and entrepreneurial acumen allowed others to prosper from his machine. The Mule was driven by water power in 1790 and by steam soon after. By 1825 the Mule had been made self actuating by Richard Roberts.

Note the account below of William Midgeley, a major Rochdale mill owner employing



600 out-working hand loom weavers. In 1812, he petitioned Parliament on behalf of his workers and urged Parliament to send relief to ease their hardship.

So a wealthy man's fit of conscience about the plight of his employees stimulated him to petition parliament to request subsidies from taxpayers rather than having to pay them a living wage himself. It makes one realise that the relative good times since 1945 which my generation experienced has been an anomaly and that Tory Britain is now reverting to type.

Here is the full extract:

"Quaker Diaries record that William Midgeley had a mill by Buersill Fold, Rochdale. In 1811, when Samuel Crompton prepared a petition to Parliament for a grant in recognition of his invention of the spinning mule, he listed the mill owners who were using his mules. William Midgeley was one of only seven in Rochdale and he had 1,932 of Crompton's mules. Midgeley's cotton spinning mill was on Sudden Brook. Rakewood Cotton Mill was built in 1814 by William and John Midgeley. Their 43 employees worked six 12-hour days per week. The Midgeleys also bought Tenterhouse Mills at Norden for fulling and bleaching.

William was a well known figure in Rochdale, having been the largest subscriber to the building of the new Rochdale Friends Meeting House in 1808. He was a close friend of fellow Quakers, Jacob and John Bright and James King of Moss Mill. As a woollen merchant, William employed 600 hands who made a total of around 350 woollen pieces a week. His weaving was given out mainly to 'little farmers' and he also farmed his Buersill Estate. Being one of the major merchants he exported the finished pieces direct from the port of Liverpool.

In 1812, William petitioned Parliament on behalf of his workers, Wages had fallen by 30% and the cost of food had risen. Workers were surviving on oatcake, oatmeal porridge (oats being a popular crop in Rochdale, not needing much sun!) and potatoes and they hardly ever saw meat. He urged Parliament to send relief to ease their hardship. He had 7,000 pieces of flannel, valued at £20,000, stockpiled in his

warehouse at Turn Hill because business had declined due to the Napoleonic War trade embargoes and other factors. He referred to Buersill as the 'village' and would give out sixpences as a gesture of kindness rather than buy drinks, which was against his Quaker principles. He was known as a generous man but his wife, formerly Alice Butterworth of Moorbank Farm, was very thrifty".

By the early 19th century, more than 90% of the local population of the Rochdale area was employed in trade or manufacture, mainly in the woollen and cotton industries. Cotton spinning took place in mechanised factories, while weaving was still done at home using hand-powered looms. But change was coming to the hand-loom weavers. One of Rochdale's earliest steam-powered textile mills was Water Street Mill of the late 1820s. Hand-loom weavers could no longer compete with the efficient new machines. To drive down costs, the mills would often employ women and children at lower wages. Poverty spread.

Samuel Cheetham of Wardleworth, Rochdale, married Anne Hartley on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December 1850. They both died of typhus on the same day 11<sup>th</sup> of October 1862. In their not quite twelve years of marriage, they had nine children. In addition to Eliza Ann who was born 13<sup>th</sup> of April 1856, four more of their children would grow to marry and produce a family. David Cheetham had five, Sarah Ann (married name Crabtree) had six, Eleanor Ann (married name Browne) had four and Arthur Bright Cheetham had five. One of Arthur Bright's children was Charlotte whose married name was Collier. It was Charlotte Collier's death intestate in the 1980s and my eventual £90 share of her estate which began my genealogical quest.

The lower part of the Cheetham Genealogy has been taken from the sellotaped foolscap pages from the heir-hunting solicitor which I referred to at the beginning of this account.

Anne Hartley came from Heptonstall in West Yorkshire. She was born on 24<sup>th</sup> April 1822. She was the second oldest of a family of three boys and four girls. Her father was David Hartley (1766-1847) married to Prudence Hollingrake. David's father, also

David had been hanged for treason on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April 1770. The family lived in an isolated house, known as Bell House Farm, high on Erringdon Moor above Heptonstall. Several books, such as “Clip a Bright Guinea”, 1971, by John Marsh, have been written about “King” David and the Coiners. An earlier study was published in 1906 by Ling Roth. The tale of “The Yorkshire Coiners” is prominent in the local history museum.

It appears that David and his gang, including his brothers and cousins, had an arrangement with some of the local traders and innkeepers whereby they would “lend” him guineas from which he would carefully clip slivers of gold. When he had sufficient, David would melt down the gold, adulterating it with cheaper metals and then strike new counterfeit guinea coins. These would then be put back into circulation by members of his gang and “commission” given to the traders who had supplied the original coins. The authorities became greatly concerned about these activities which were then considered a capital offence and a form of treason as an image of King George’s head featured on the coins.

In 1769, an exciseman named William Deighton was tasked with finding the culprits. Deighton was murdered in Halifax by members of “King” David’s gang in November 1769. The gang were then methodically hunted down by the authorities. David was arrested and executed at Tyburn in York. Grace, David’s widow, was given permission to take her husband’s body fifty miles back to Heptonstall for burial. John Marsh wrote that people lined the route of the coffin along the Calder valley. He said that, to the people of Cragg Vale and the Calder Valley, the coiners were not regarded as felons but as worthy folk who had set themselves up against a corrupt government. He went on to write that many local people, to this day, have feelings of admiration because of the coiners independence and stance against authority.

In the mid 1980s, I visited Bell House Farm which is situated high up on the moor above Hebden Bridge and Mytholmroyd and only attainable over rough, unpaved tracks. The house has massive walls and low ceilings. It appeared to be 17<sup>th</sup> century or earlier. It is still inhabited and I spoke briefly with the present occupiers, introducing myself as a descendant of David Hartley. There are spectacular views from the house

over the moors in all directions and it would have been an ideal spot from which to watch out for unwelcome visitors.

Some years ago, I came across a direct male descendant, Steven Richard Hartley, who is still resident in the area and who had carried out extensive research on his family. He has written a most interesting account of the family. I have included part of it here up until the April 1851 census in which Anne Hartley was mentioned. She had married Samuel Cheetham on 11<sup>th</sup> December 1850. Yet, she was living at Lodge Farm with her mother, Prudence. Anne was described as a Dress Maker aged 29, with her own daughters, Sarah Jane Hartley aged 3 and Mary Anne Cheetham, aged 1 month. Sarah Jane was born in 1847. It's not recorded who her father was.

#### **The family of Samuel Cheetham and Anne Hartley**

Mary Anne Cheetham born 5.15 am on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1851 at Lodge in Erringden, Todmorden, Yorks. The rest of family were all born in Rochdale.

James Samuel Cheetham, born 7.20 pm on 19<sup>th</sup> May 1852 at Wardleworth Place.

David Hartley Cheetham, born 9.57 pm on 4<sup>th</sup> May 1853 at Wardleworth Place.

William Edward Cheetham, born 1.40 am on 29<sup>th</sup> June 1854 at Freehold Street.

Eliza Anne Cheetham born 11.45 pm on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1856 at 70 Cheetham Street.

Sarah Anne Cheetham born at 4.55 am on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1857 at 70 Cheetham Street.

Samuel Henry Cheetham, born 2.05 am on 6<sup>th</sup> December 1858 at 70 Cheetham Street.

Arthur Bright Cheetham, born 1.00 pm on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1860 at 70 Cheetham Street.

Eleanor Anne Cheetham, born 4.10 am on 27<sup>th</sup> December 1861 at 70 Cheetham Street.

### **Hartley Family History by Steven Richard Hartley.**

“The name Hartley is common in the area surrounding Cragg Vale and even at the time of the Coiners there was a prevalence of families with the surname. But the branch that is descended from the leaders of the Yorkshire Coiners does not necessarily spread far, and from what I have been able to establish, the only direct line of male descendants remaining is to me and my sons. The family tree below was traced by my Grandfather, who proved the direct link between him and David Hartley. I have since re-drawn the tree and developed it through further research and verification which has added some further details that were not on Grandfather’s original.

<http://www.yorkshirecoiners.com/Family%20Tree.pdf>

“The link through the generations is actually not difficult to trace as the history can be plainly seen through the inscriptions on a total of three gravestones in two churchyards. The old churchyard at Eastwood Congregation Chapel (now demolished) contains two gravestones, under which are the remains of three generations of Hartley's. In one lies my great, great grandparents, Edwin and Eliza Hartley, with Edwin's parents John and Hannah Hartley; my great, great, great grandparents. Directly alongside is another gravestone, containing the remains of Isaac and Mary Hartley, the parents of John Hartley and my great, great, great, great grandparents. Isaac Hartley was also the youngest son of 'King' David Hartley and was born in 1769, shortly before his father was arrested. The remains of 'King' David Hartley himself and his wife Grace lie in one of the graves at Heptonstall, together with their eldest son David, and their grandson, also David. Alongside this grave is another gravestone containing 'King' David Hartley's brother Isaac and his wife Bessy.

“The links through the inscriptions for the earlier generations are supported through the probate record of Grace Hartley, David Hartley's widow, which is held in the Borthwick Institute at the University of York. This details the last will and testament of Grace Hartley, including her bequests to her sons, David and Isaac Hartley. Following the execution of David Hartley, Grace Hartley and her children remained at Bell House until David Hartley’s father William died in 1774, bringing his tenure at Bell House to an end. Records exist that show that Grace Hartley bought Lodge Farm a short distance

away in Erringden for £260 from John Walker. It was Lodge Farm that Grace Hartley then left to her eldest son David in her will when she died in 1802 together with a substantial sum of money. She also left a substantial sum of money to her younger son Isaac, from whom I am descended, and some small sums of money to the sons of her daughter Mary, who had died a few years earlier.

“Records have been found in all census returns from 1841 to the recently released 1911 census, from which I have been able to establish the residence, age and occupation of many of my family members. It is apparent that very little movement took place during the period and the family remained within a very small area for almost two hundred and fifty years after Grace Hartley moved the family to Lodge Farm.

“**The 1841 census** show that many of my family were still at Lodge Farm in Erringden. The head of the household was David and Grace Hartley's son, David Hartley, a Farmer, (75). He lived with his wife, Prudence, (44) and their seven children, David (21), **Anne (19)**, Mary (16), William (14), Grace (12), Betty (10) and Isaac (9). Also recorded as residing at Lodge farm at the time of the census is David's Brother, Isaac, a Wood Turner, (70), with his wife Mally (60) and their son, John, (20). Isaac was my great, great, great, great Grandfather and John my great, great, great Grandfather.

“By the time of **the 1851 census**, David Hartley had been killed in an accident and the head of the household at Lodge Farm was now his brother Isaac, a Gentleman, (82), living with his wife Mary (recorded as Mally in 1841), and their son John, also a Gentleman (32). “Also recorded in the census as head of the household was David's widow Prudence, now a Farmer aged 53, together with her three daughters, Mary (Schoolmistress, 26), Grace (Weaver, 22), and Betsy (Housework, 20); and her son Isaac (Scholar - 17). **Also recorded at the time was another daughter Anne Cheetham, a Dress Maker (29), with her own Daughters, Sarah Jane Hartley (3) and Mary Ann Cheetham, (1) month.**

*[The bold highlighting of Anne Cheetham is by me, Peter Lawrie]*

“As the newspaper report extracted from the Leeds Intelligencer indicates, David Hartley had been tragically killed by a train on the 27th of March 1847. As he crossed

the line at the station, with his 14 year old daughter (presumably Betty), the approaching train struck him and he was dragged under it and killed instantly. The report indicates that the driver sounded the train's whistle but that David Hartley didn't hear this as he was profoundly deaf. Whilst the report indicates that the accident happened at Todmorden station it was actually at Eastwood station, not far from the family home at Lodge Farm. "The Manchester and Leeds Railway had only been open a very short time by this date, having been completed in 1841. The steam engine concerned was the "Irwell", an early George Stephenson locomotive, named presumably after the River Irwell in Manchester where Stephenson had constructed a viaduct across the river. "

***[End of text from Steven Richard Hartley***

Steven Hartley's website includes a number of photographs retained by his family, including this one, which he says is of a daguerreotype image which he thought may be of David Hartley, son of "King" David and, therefore, father of Anne Hartley,

Steven wrote: "This image is a Daguerreotype, produced on a silvered copper plate. The exposure would have taken up to 20 minutes before the picture was developed by holding the plate over a heated bowl of mercury and fixing in warm salt water. Because of the delicacy of the final image, these photographs were housed under glass. The picture is distorted around the edges where air has entered and the surface has oxidised. The technique was developed in 1839 and was popular until the middle of the 1850's. On this basis and given the age of the man in the photograph, I believe it is one of "King" David Hartley's sons; either David (1766-1847) or Isaac (1769-1853)."



### **The marriage of John Lawrie and Eliza Anne Cheetham in 1878**

According to their wedding certificate at St Stephen's Church Rochdale, John Lawrie, aged 23, boot salesman of 59 Spotland Road, Rochdale married Eliza Anne Cheetham, aged 22, boot saleswoman, of Heftmiln (?) Street, Rochdale on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1878. Eliza Anne's deceased father, Samuel, was described as a pawnbroker.

John Lawrie, husband of Eliza Anne Lawrie, of 22 Wellfield Street, Rochdale, died on 5<sup>th</sup> July 1890 at the age of 35 of nervous debility and phthisis. He was interred in Rochdale cemetery in 9<sup>th</sup> July.

Jean told me that when John died in 1890, his brother Robert took over the boot and shoe business, leaving Eliza Anne and her children with nothing. The Rochdale archivists confirmed that there was no record of Eliza Anne receiving poor relief, so it has to be assumed that her sister Betsy who operated their late parent's pawnbroking business must have helped them.

In 1881, John Lawrie (25) was recorded at 117 Fish Bridges, Rochdale. He was described as a "shop man in boot & shoe shop". Also listed were his wife, Eliza Anne (25) along with their two children Hugh Hartley (2) and Samuel McFarlane (3 mo.) all born in Rochdale.

In 1891, widow Eliza Anne Lawrie (35) was at 6 Buckley Street: described as a "boot & shoe saleswoman". Her eldest son Hugh Hartley (12) was an errand boy; Samuel McFarlane (10); Robert Cheetham (7); John Forbes (4); and Clarence Ferguson (3).

In 1901, Eliza Anne (45) was at 28 Longford Street, and described as a newsagent. Her eldest son Hugh Hartley (22) was a manager; Robert Cheetham (17) an apprentice; John Forbes (14) a newsboy; and Clarence Ferguson (13) also a newsboy. In the 1911 census for 40 Durham Street, Rochdale, (a four-roomed house) Eliza Anne, a newsagent, (55) had a servant, Annie Burney, aged 30, but no family members present.





John Lawrie (3/6/1855-5/7/1890), sitting on the left. His brother, Robert Lawrie (23/4/1864-./9/1926) is standing. Seated on the right is John's wife Eliza Anne Cheetham (13/4/1856-25/9/1934) with her eldest son Hugh Lawrie (1879-1945) Hugh was the Labour MP for Stalybridge and Hyde from 1929 until 1931.

In the front, from left to right is John Forbes Lawrie (30/4/1886 – 17/8/1967), Robert Cheetham Lawrie (1884-1937, Clarence Ferguson Lawrie (1888-1915) and Samuel MacFarlane Lawrie (Seated), (1881-21/4/1961)



By 1911, Eliza Ann was a newsagent in Durham Street, Rochdale, shown here outside her shop. The photograph is undated. I discovered that the first edition of "The Family Journal" was published on the 8th of May 1909, so that would date this photograph. The boy is too young to be any of Eliza Ann's children.

In the 1891 census, Eliza Ann was recorded at Buckley Street, Rochdale with her five children. In 1901 she was at Longford Street with Hugh, Robert, John and Clarence. By 1911, Eliza Ann was a newsagent in Durham Street, Rochdale.

Her eldest son, Hugh, married Amy Elizabeth in 1904. **Hugh** and his wife appeared in the census of 1911 in Manchester Gorton. Hugh and Amy had sons John, aged three and Hugh, aged one in 1911, so it could not have been either of them. The remaining possibility is that he was one of her Cheetham nephews, perhaps Arthur Bright's son Ernest, or one of Eleanor Anne Browne's four sons.

What of the other children, as none of them appeared with Eliza Ann in the 1911 census? **Samuel** married Lizzie Burton in 1907 and resided at Eccles, Patricroft. His profession was blacksmith. **Clarence** had joined the navy and I found him at Devonport dockyard. **John Forbes** was by now a newsagent in his own right, in Moston Lane, Blackley, with his first child born in 1910. I could not find **Robert** in the 1911 census.



This family portrait celebrates the baptism of Hugh and Amy's second son in 1910. Front row seated left to right: Hugh Hartley Lawrie with son John; proud grandmother Eliza Ann; Amy with her newly baptised son Hugh; Robert Cheetham Lawrie. Back row standing left to right: Lizzy with Samuel Lawrie; Laurie Helen and John Forbes Lawrie; Clarence Ferguson Lawrie in his naval uniform.

**Eliza Anne Cheetham** died on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1934 at the age of 78 of cardiac failure. She was then living at 12 Bagslate Road, Wardle, Rochdale. Her son, John Forbes Lawrie of 108 Church Lane, Harpurhey was the informant on the death registration.

### **The children of John Lawrie and Eliza Anne Cheetham**

**Hugh Hartley Lawrie**, the eldest, was born in 1879 and died in London in April 1945. He married Amy Jones and had two sons, John and Hugh. See below.

**Samuel MacFarlane Lawrie** was the second son, born in 1880. He died on 21/4/1961. According to the census he was a blacksmith. Jean said he married Lizzie Burton in 1907 and had a son William Burton Lawrie in 1912. We have lost track of this family but I found a William Burton Lawrie who was successful in selection for the Ministry of Labour in 1938 and this may have been the same William Burton Lawrie, factory inspector class 1B, who was awarded an MBE in the 1954 birthday honours list.

**Robert Cheetham Lawrie** was their third child in 1882, but he died on 14/3/1883. Their fourth child in 1884 was given the same name. He lived until 1937.

Robert married a French woman, Albertina J.A.Corne in 1916. Their children were:

1. Ethel Angele born in 1918. Ethel married Austin MacDonald in 1940. They lived in Stoke on Trent and had children Michael (1943), Pauline (1946), Alan (1948) and Jeffrey (1950).
2. Harold Auguste was born in 1920 and married Gladys Critchely in 1941. They lived in Leek, in Staffordshire and had two sons: David Robert in 1950 and Philip Edwin in 1953.
3. Enid Marguerite was born in 1922 and married Penry Williams in 1946. They had five children in Manchester. Julia Mair in 1946; Diana Jean in 1951; Richard Lawrie in 1955; Alan Martin in 1957; and Ivor Peter in 1964.

**John Forbes Lawrie** was Eliza Anne's fifth pregnancy and the couple's fourth surviving child. He married Laurie Helen McGregor in 1908 and had six children – four girls and two boys, discussed at greater length below.

**Clarence Ferguson Lawrie** was the sixth and youngest child, born in 1888. He died in the 1915 Gallipoli campaign of World War 1.

### **Hugh Hartley Lawrie (1879–1945)**

According to Wikipedia: Hugh Hartley Lawrie was the son of John Lawrie of Rochdale, where he was born. He was a trade unionist, elected as Labour MP for Stalybridge and Hyde from 1929 to 1931. He worked at a local cotton mill from age 11. Later he found work on the staff of a newspaper in Manchester. Hugh became active in the Workers' Union and was appointed as a union official in 1910, when the Union was campaigning for £1 per week. He was a protégé of John Beard, who was a founder member of the Workers' Union in 1898. Hugh was involved in attempts to organise farm workers, around the time of World War I. As a national organiser for the Workers' Union, Hugh remained with it when it became part of the Transport and General Workers' Union. He was a long-term member of the Independent Labour Party, and became active in the Labour Party. Hugh was elected as Member of Parliament for Stalybridge and Hyde at the 1929 general election. Hugh was a supporter of the Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, and followed Macdonald in leaving the Labour Party to join the new National Labour Organisation. However, he did not contest the 1931 general election. He was vice-president of the TGWU Woolwich branch, sitting on the committee from 1941 until his death. He was cremated in Honor Oak on 11 April 1945. Hugh Lawrie married in 1907 Amy Elizabeth Jones, daughter of Llewellyn Jones of Manchester.



In the 1911 census for 29 Chestnut Street, Gorton, Manchester, Hugh Hartley Lawrie from Rochdale (32) was a medical botanist. His wife Amy Elizabeth (34) was from Manchester. Their children were John Lawrie (3), born in Blackpool, and Hugh Lawrie (1), born in Rochdale.

### Clarence Ferguson Lawrie (1888-1915)

This portrait has Clarence Ferguson Lawrie in his military uniform, with his brother, John Forbes Lawrie, and sister-in-law, Laurie Helen McGregor. Clarence was born in 1888. In the 1911 census he was at Devonport, ranked as a stoker, RN.



Although he was a naval rating, in the photo he was wearing an army style khaki uniform. Clarence was in the Howe battalion of the Naval Brigade, which was a formation raised to serve on land.

In Jean's papers I found a cutting from a local Rochdale Newspaper which Jean had kept. Clarence had been sent to Turkey to participate in the Gallipoli landings where he was reported to have died on June 3, 1915. This photograph was therefore dated after August 1914 and before May 1915 when he arrived at the Dardanelles. In a letter from Clarence dated May 1915 and also published in the newspaper, he wrote:

*"Sometimes one sees pictures of a battlefield. They are all wrong. In fact one could not reconcile pictures with the real thing. In battle we are like a lot of human rabbits burrowed in against shellfire and shrapnel."*

Name <b>CLARENCE FERGUSON LAWRIE.</b>		RFR/B/5327.	
Number <b>DEVONPORT. SS 107703.</b>		Branch of Service <b>R.F.R.</b>	
Rank or Rating	<b>Sto.1.</b>	<b>B. X.</b>	
Dates <b>7.9.14</b>			
Private Address	<b>15.9.14.</b> Where Serving <del>9.8.15</del> <b>Howe Battalion. B/180.</b> <b>3.6.15.</b> Report recd. Killed in action D'nelles. (RND list <b>21.6.15.</b> A.F.B 103 received. <b>18.5.15.</b> Killed in action, Dardanelles. <b>31.7.15.</b> Above information sent to ... <i>On List for 1914 Star</i>		
G.C. Badges	<b>1.</b>		
Class for Conduct	<b>1.</b>	Religion	<b>Congr:</b>
Next of Kin	<b>Mother.</b>		
Name	<b>Eliza A. Lawrie,</b>		
Address	<b>1, Fleet Street, BLACKPOOL. LANCS.</b>		
Notes			

This is the notification that Clarence Ferguson Lawrie had been killed in action in the Dardanelles campaign on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 1915. It appears that it took until 31<sup>st</sup> July for this information to be received. By that time, his mother, Eliza Anne Lawrie was living at 1 Fleet Street, Blackpool.

When I examined these dates, some idea of the fog of war becomes apparent: Clarence was killed on the 16<sup>th</sup> May, the information was only reported on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June but it took until the 31<sup>st</sup> of July before Eliza Anne was informed.

**Robert Cheetham Lawrie (1884-1937)**

Julia Williams supplied me with the genealogy of the family of August Corne and Julia Moreel. Albertine Corne (1898-1966) married Robert Cheetham Lawrie (1884-1937).

Robert Cheetham Lawrie = Albertine J. A. Corne

-----			
Ethel Angele 1918- m.Austin McDonald 1946 	Harold Auguste 1920-1966 m.Gladys Critchley 1941 	Enid Marguerite 1922-d.31/12/2014 m.Penry Williams 1946 	
-----			
Michael Pauline Allan Jeffrey 1943 1946 1948 1950	David R. Philip E 1950 1953	Julia Diana Richard Allan Ivor 1946 1951 1955 1957 1964	

Ethel Angele Lawrie = Austin McDonald

-----							
Michael 1943- m. Hilary 19?? 	Pauline 1946- m.Errol Triner 19?? 	Alan 1948- m.Cindy 19?? 	Jeffrey 1950- m.(1)Wendy m(2) Beverly 19?? 19?? 				
-----							
Michel Daniel 19?? 1973 m. Chris	Stephen Annabel 1965 1973 m.Carole 	Bianca Letitia 1989 1995	Leanda Andrew 1965 1973	Joanne Emma Ruth			
-----							
	Jacob Abigail 1993 1996						

I can remember visiting Ethel's family when we lived in Manchester. Ethel visited us (Morag and family) in Inverness for a few days in the early 1960s.

Harold Auguste Lawrie = Gladys Critchley

-----  
David Robert  
1950-  
m. Liz  
19??  
||

Phillip Edwin  
1953-

-----  
Meandra    Anneka    Anthony

Enid Marguerite Lawrie = William Penry Williams

-----  
Julia  
b.1946

Diana  
b.1951  
d.16/2/2015  
m.Ali  
1981  
||

Richard  
b.1955  
m.Sharon  
1986  
Hannah Laurence  
b.1989    b. 1992  
m. Harry  
2021

Alan  
b.1957  
m.Carolyn  
1985  
||

Ivor  
b.1964  
d.16/3/2009

-----  
Adam  
b.1986  
m.Alex 2014  
Thomas    Max  
b.2018    b.2021

Penry was a history teacher at Chethams School of Music in Manchester. He had retired from his post by the time my daughter Christina attended the school from 1991 to 1994.

I made contact with Julia Williams for the first time in over sixty years while writing this in 2022. I can recall meeting her with Pen and Enid, before my mother took us to Inverness in 1960. Julia told me that Enid had passed away in 2014 and Diana 6 weeks later. Sadly Ivor, the youngest, committed suicide in 2009. He was just 44. Richard lives in the Isle of Man and is severely disabled. Alan lives in Arnside.





Left: Robert Cheetham Lawrie with his mother Eliza Ann.

Below Left: Robert Cheetham Lawrie and Right: with Ethel, Robert's first child





Four generations of Corne descendants Albertine's mother in chair, with 4 French ancestors on the left side with Albertine, Ethel, Pauline and Harold on the right.

Below: Ethel, Albertine and Enid.



Ethel and Harold



Julia sent me this photograph. She said that Albertine was on the right, but was not sure who the others were. It is possible that it is Robert and Albertine's son, Harold Auguste, and his wife, Gladys Critchley. It might therefore be dated to after 1941.

## Enid Lawrie (1922-2014) and Julia Williams

### *WATERCOLOURS*

by

*ENID WILLIAMS*

*31 Lambton Road  
Worsley M28 4SU*

1. Pink Pelargoniums	£ 70	16. Winding Road	£ 95
2. Pink Roses	£ 75	17. From Assissi	£195
3. Lock near Galway	£ 57	18. Bearded Iris	£195
4. Low Water	£ 95	19. Open Hydrangea	£180
5. Amaryllis	£195	20. Blythborough	£110
6. Early Sun on Water	£ 75	21. Poinsettia in Winter	£140
7. Port Logan	£ 95	22. Sweet Pea Composition	£180
8. Cyclamen in Winter	£140	23. Pink Rhododendron Study	£195
9. Evening Sunlight	£ 90	24. Nerja View	£ 65
10. Cumberland Landscape	£ 95	25. Terrace in Spain	£ 75
11. Pink-Mauve Hydrangea	£110	26. From the Parador	£ 80
12. Purple Hydrangea	£150	27. Andalucia	£105
13. Windswept Boat	£ 90	28. View from Frigiliana	£ 90
14. From the Studio	£ 85	29. Spanish Beach Cafe	£ 95
15. Umbrian Plain	£ 95		

*Full-time art student at Didsbury College, Manchester 1949-50*  
*Part-time student at Manchester Regional College of Art 1958-61*  
*Teacher in Manchester area 1953-82*

#### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

1978 Salford Players Theatre  
1981 Walkden Library  
1982 Alston Hall College, Longridge  
1983 Eccles Library  
1984 Manchester Business School  
1987 Manchester Business School  
1988 Salford Players Theatre  
1990 Salford University Chapman Gallery

#### MIXED EXHIBITIONS

Salford Art Gallery  
Stockport Art Gallery  
Bury Art Gallery  
Mall Galleries, London  
Garstang Arts Centre  
Colin Jellicoe Gallery  
BBC Club, Manchester  
UMIST, Manchester  
Rawtenstall Art Gallery

#### FUTURE

September 1991      Lancastrian Hall, Swinton

#### AWARDS

First John Clare Award      Salford Art Gallery      1984  
Campus Prize "Contemporary Salford"      Salford University      1987

#### PUBLICATIONS

Cover design for First Open University Student Magazine      1972  
Book illustrations for "Chethams" by Penry Williams, M.U.P.      1986

*Enid Williams is currently exhibiting in the Colin Jellicoe Gallery, Manchester. Her main interest is in colour and shape relationships rather than subject matter.*

I was not aware that Enid had been such a talented artist. Her daughter, Julia, sent Enid's CV to me along with a selection of her sketches and paintings.

Sketches by Enid Williams



A self-portrait.



Julia Williams



Diana Williams



Alan Williams



Watercolours, Above: Children in the snow. Below: Still life with lemons and jug

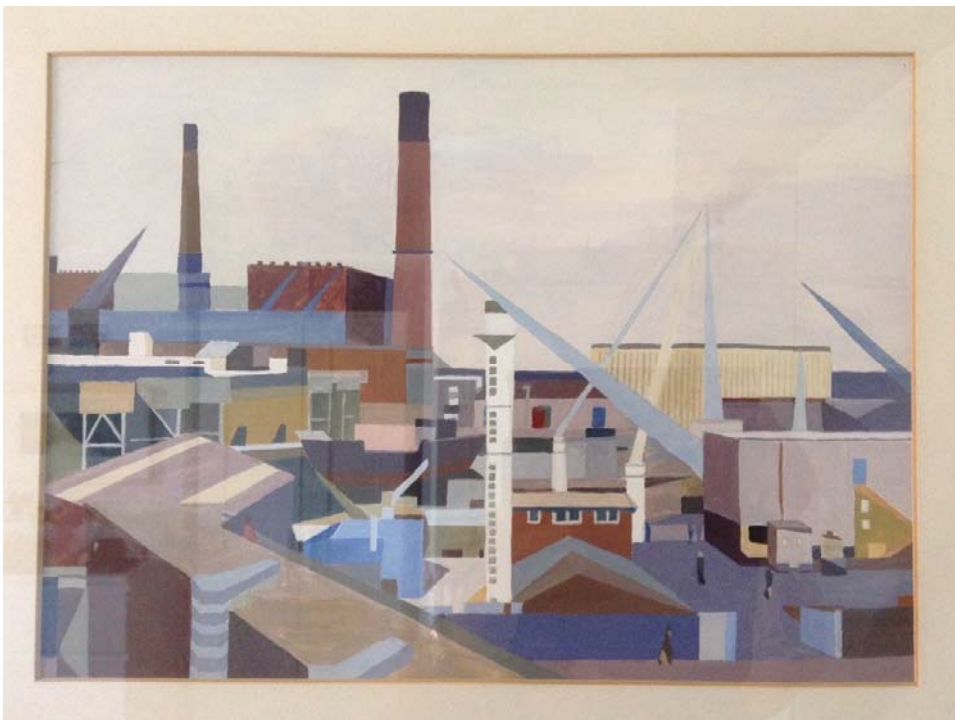




Penry Williams in Acrylic.



Julia's B&B in France, by Enid Williams

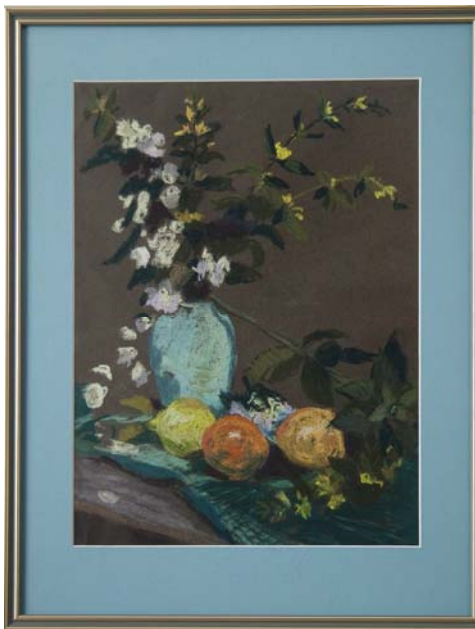


Portsmouth Docks, by Enid Williams - exhibited at the Mall Galleries in London





Sketch of a Royal Ballet dancer rehearsing before a performance in Manchester.  
Amaryllis in oil.



Fruit and blossom pastel.



Diana Williams in Acrylic

## Julia Williams

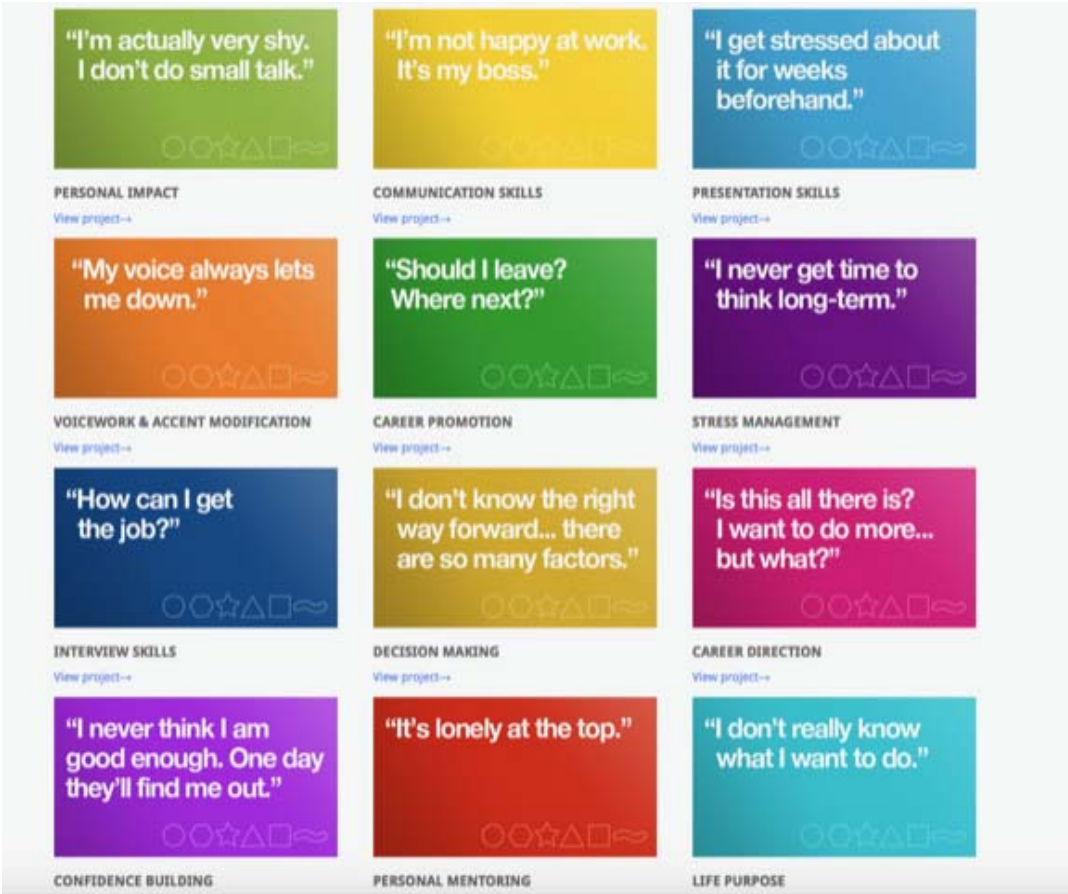


Julia wrote to me: - “Being the daughter of Enid Lawrie and Penry Williams has given me a highly creative life. Being the first born of five, I was taught to be independent, getting on with my life whilst they both were occupied with full time jobs and bringing up the other four.

“Having steered me away from a creative career in terms of becoming an artist or a concert pianist, they advised me to take a more acceptable degree at university, which I chose to be French - not surprising as my grandmother Albertine was French. That started my career, but soon I did the TEFL qualification (teaching English as a Foreign Language) because I found other languages, culture and people even more interesting.

“This led into being asked to have private lessons with many adult students I taught in language schools. As my experience developed and my ability to work efficiently with them, I was advised to work with English nationals too, on their confidence to speak publicly, improve their accent if necessary and anything else which I felt would benefit them.

“To summarise I became a Life Coach long before that title existed. All clients came to my little flat in London, as I couldn't afford an office without a regular income, and the world and his wife arrived individually on my doorstep. This began in the late 1980s and I retired in 2014. In the end I was seeing very senior managers with total confidentiality, in many of the top 100 PLCs either for sessions lasting an hour, two hours or a day, depending on their initial requirements. I just loved the job and the creative challenge of supporting whoever came in through the door with whatever they wanted or unconsciously needed. I traded under the name Personal Impact. To give you an idea of what was on offer, here is a photo taken from one of the introductory pages of my website before I deleted it.



“Currently happily in retirement in York I am an artist, thanks to Enid's gifts and inherited DNA going to many chamber music concerts, thanks to my father's lifetime encouragement to listen to and play music. My inner life could not be more rich.

“I am as versatile as Enid was, painting in every two dimensional media with landscapes, portraits still life, collages and semi-abstracts. Here are four examples.

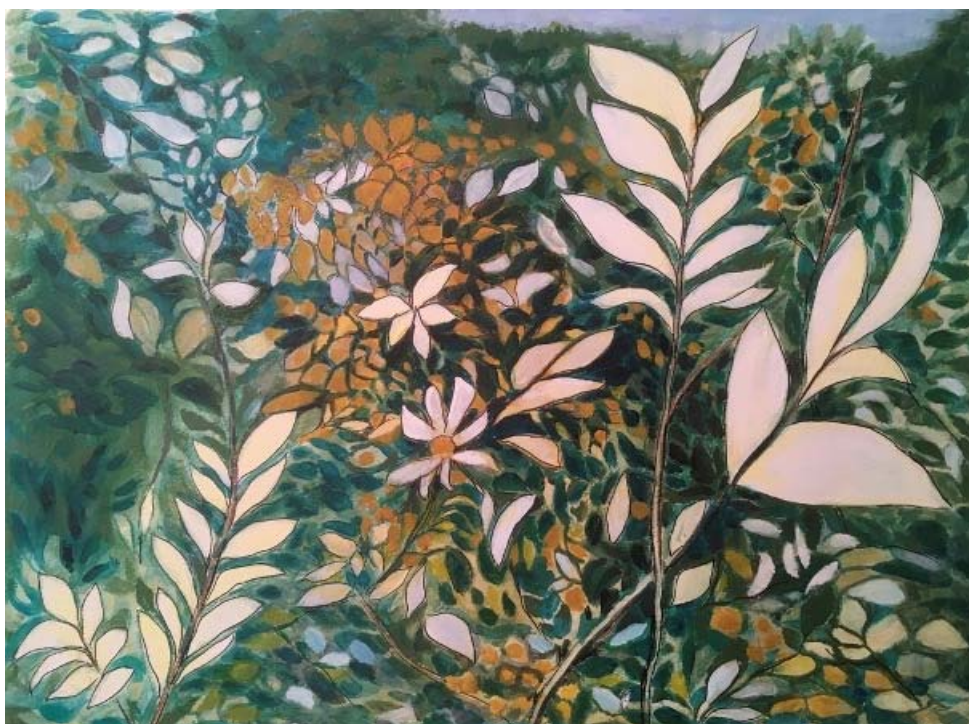


Arching through Time - paper collage

<https://www.juliartiste.co.uk/>

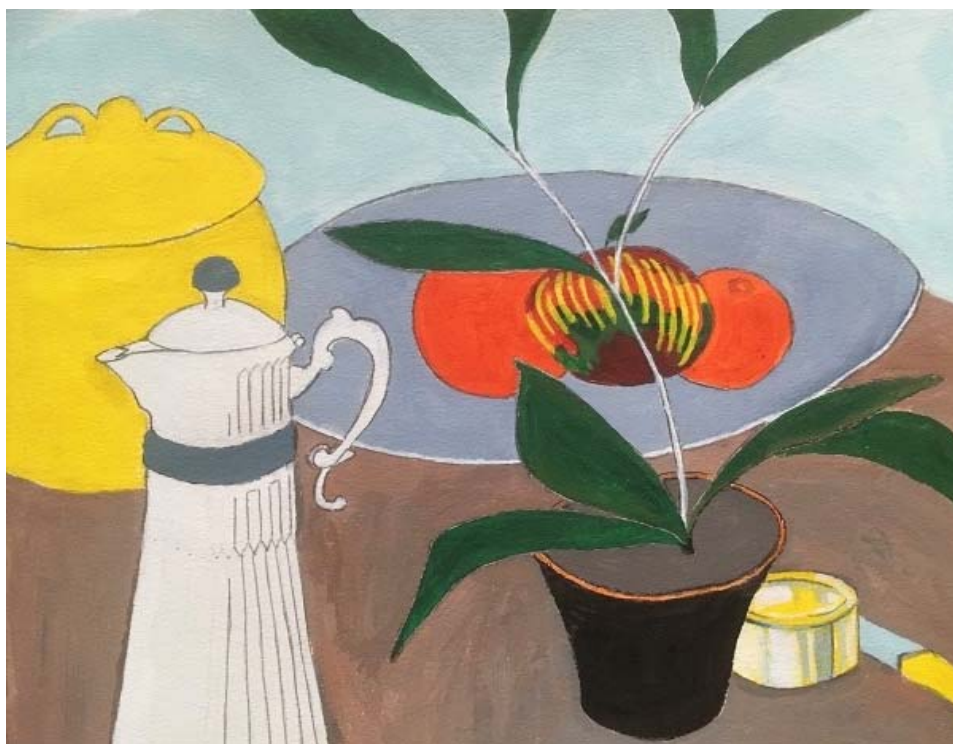


The Dragon Tree - pastel



Above: Leaf pattern – acrylic

Below: Still Life with Decanter - gouache watercolour

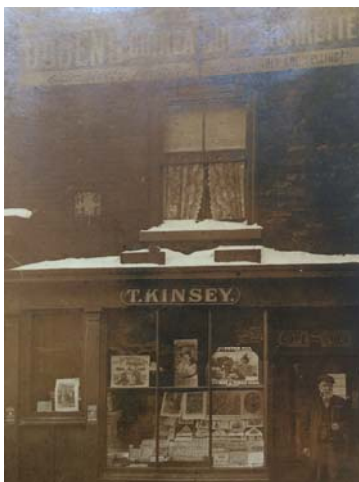


### **John Forbes Lawrie (1886-1967)**

John Forbes Lawrie was born on 30<sup>th</sup> April 1886 at 44 Yorkshire Street, Rochdale. His father's occupation was recorded as cordwainer. According to Wikipedia, a cordwainer is a shoemaker who makes new shoes from leather. The cordwainers' trade can be contrasted with the cobblers' trade which, traditionally in Britain, was restricted to repairing shoes. This usage distinction is not universally observed, as *cobbler* is widely used for tradespersons who both make and repair shoes. The Oxford English Dictionary states that the word *cordwainer* is archaic, but "still used in the names of guilds, for example, *the Cordwainers' Company*"; but *cobbler* is only defined in the OED as a repairer of footwear, reflecting the older distinction.

John Forbes Lawrie married Laurie Helen McGregor on the 28<sup>th</sup> October 1908 when he was 22 and residing at 153 Rochdale Road, Manchester. That address was a tobacconist illustrated below under the name "T Kinsey". According the back of the photograph he "left it in 1909". Laurie Helen was 24, residing at 3 Manchester New Road, Middleton.

By the time of their marriage, Laurie Helen's father, Paul Miller MacGregor, was no longer at Crowton Farm, but was described as a licensed victualler of the Three Tuns Inn, Wolverhampton. One of the witnesses to their wedding was Laurie Helen's sister, Emma Ida McGregor.



### The six children of John Forbes Lawrie and Laurie Helen

**Helen Ida Lawrie** was born 26/5/1910. She married Jim Ward in 1941. They lived at No 46 Dalbeattie Street, next door to us at No 48.

Ida and Jim's children were Ian Arthur in 1942 and Helen Rose in 1944. Ida died 4/7/1957. Ian became a Merchant Navy officer. I remember my father driving us with Ian to the Merchant Navy College around 1958.

Helen used to visit us at No 48 before school so that our mother, Morag, could comb her long golden hair.



Helen married and had two children but sadly then developed Huntingdon's chorea. This had a terrible effect on her mental state so she was confined to an asylum before she died. It appears that she inherited it from Jim Ward, her father. Helen's granddaughter, Jodie, lives in Australia. Ian lived long enough to retire from the sea and migrate to Australia. He died, at the age of 75, of Huntingdon's chorea, on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2017. Ian has a daughter, Kylie, from his first marriage living in Manchester. Ian's daughter, Catherine, from his second marriage lives in Western Australia.

**Edith Annie Lawrie** was born 22/12/1911. She sadly died young on 17/4/1930 of TB.

**Clarence Forbes Lawrie** was born 7/10/1915 and died 11/8/1977 in Australia. He married Doris Webster and had three children: Neville John (1/6/1942) Jean Margaret (19/10/1944); and David Roderick (26/7/1949) . Clarence worked at Avro, Manchester, on Aircraft construction during the war.

1. Neville John married Margaret McLean and had Brian (21/5/1966); Alan (29/7/1968); and Peter (7/7/1971). John has contributed some pages to this book which appears later.



2. Jean Margaret married Gary Wilson and had Diana (11/3/1965); Paul (3/8/1966); Linda (22/11/1968); and Ian (25/11/1971). Jean told me that all four have married. Between them, they have presented Jean & Gary with sixteen grandchildren, of whom four are married and a further three will be married by the end of March 2023. She wrote “we already have six great grandchildren and one due in January so our family is growing fairly quickly.”
3. David Roderick married Marilyn Trigwell in 1969. They have three children: Paul (25/12/1969); Jason (13/8/1972) and Nicole (19/8/1979)

**Jean Laurie Lawrie** was born 19/10/1918 and lived a long life until 15/3/2016. Jean never married. She trained as a confectioner and baker with her mother and eventually took over the shop on Church Lane. Jean retired with her father, John Forbes, to Hesketh Bank where he died in 1967. Jean, herself, then moved to Blackpool and finally to a care home in Bishop Auckland.

**John Lawrie** was born 22/3/1920 above the Newsagent shop at 135 Church Lane, Moston, Manchester. He was a heavy smoker and died before his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday on 28/2/1970. I have written about John, my father, at considerable length elsewhere.

**Laurie Helen Lawrie** (aka Auntie Billie) was born 10/11/1922 at Wallasey. Laurie Helen McGregor's sister, Emma Ida McGregor, the widow of Austin McDonald, was a nurse/midwife in Wallasey. After service with the WRAF during the war, Auntie Bill would herself become a district midwife, based in Partington, a suburb south-west of Manchester. She married Norman Clayton 24/8/1974. Auntie Billie was also a smoker and died, on 23/10/1986, aged 64.

Shortly after my 11<sup>th</sup> birthday in June 1960, Morag left our father, John, taking brothers, Duncan, Gordon and myself to Inverness. My memory of John Forbes Lawrie, therefore, is of an elderly gentleman who wore a three piece suit with a watch chain and lived in a large gloomy house with a baker's shop alongside. It seems hard to believe, but at the time of writing, I am about the age he was in 1960! One's definition of "an elderly gentleman" does alter over time!



Above: The marriage of Clarence Forbes Lawrie and Doris Webster

Below Left: Malcolm McGregor with Helen Ida Lawrie at her wedding to Jim Ward

Right: Ida & Jim's son, Ian Arthur Ward, engineering officer in the merchant marine



I can remember Glen Villa, Jean's bakery and the glen, but only from a child's perspective. It's all gone now, along with the various properties he owned. I discovered that my grandmother, Laurie Helen MacGregor, had trained as a confectioner before her marriage to John Forbes in 1908. So when they purchased Glen Villa it was altered to incorporate a shop for Granny with a bake house in the room behind. Granny trained Jean, her daughter, who in due course took over the business. Granny died in 1957. I can recall watching Jean baking cakes for sale in the shop, while anticipating the treat of being allowed to scrape the sweet remnants from the mixing bowl. Jean also used to bake bread for sale in the shop. Sometimes I was allowed to serve customers in the shop.



As I looked more closely into family history, the career of John Forbes Lawrie interested me. Various photographs and other documents, which were retained by Jean have been passed on to me, (with thanks to Jock, Paul and Jane). The Manchester archivist provided me with entries from the street directories from 1908 until 1961 from which I was able to identify JF's moves from being a tobacconist in 1909, to Newsagent between 1910 and 1924, and thereafter Motor engineer at Glen Villa.

During the 1950s, as I understand that neither Clarence nor John wished to take over the business, Grandfather began running the garage down. He finally sold the Glen Garage to a Mr Savage in 1957 for £4600 and Glen Villa itself for demolition by Mr Savage for £4800 at the end of 1961. Thereafter Grandfather and Jean moved to 143 Moss Lane, Hesketh Bank, north-east of Southport.

JF invested in property, buying at auction the freehold of multiple terraced houses in a street. I have the purchase deeds of some of them which Jean had retained. In 1947 he purchased 32-50 Vauxhall Street, Blackley, for £700. At about the same time it was renamed Dalbeattie Street. In 1954, JF leased the workshop at No 50 to Mr Jones, a joiner, for £104 per annum, with the lease rising to £150 pa from 1960 to 1972 - a total lease payment to JF of £2592 over 18 years. Not a bad return for one property out of the nine!

John Forbes died on the 20<sup>th</sup> August 1967 (aged 81) at 17 Cornwall Place, Blackpool. The cause of death was carcinoma of the oesophagus. Jean continued living in Blackpool for some time. While she remained fit and well, she enjoyed many foreign holidays, including visiting relatives in Australia and Canada. She stayed with us for a short holiday in Broughty Ferry and we occasionally visited her in Blackpool. On one visit there we met with Jean's cousin, Frank McGregor, from Canada, and on another, with my second cousin Paul Wilson. Clarence's daughter Jean Margaret had married Gary Wilson in Australia. Their youngest son, Paul, trained as a vet and returned to the UK. He is married to Jane and practised in Bishop Auckland, until he retired recently. When Jean's eyesight worsened due to age-related macular degeneration she entered a care home in Blackpool. As her mental faculties declined, Paul and Jane moved her to a

care home in Bishop Auckland so that they could keep an eye on her. Jean died on the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2016 at the age of 97 and was cremated in Bishop Auckland.

**From Neville John, known as John or Jock, the son of Clarence.**

John, Clarence's son in Australia, emailed in response to my questions, to say that he knew nothing about any war service by John Forbes (JF) and his brothers. John said that his family had lived in Stockport and didn't visit Glen Villa very often, firstly due to the war years, and subsequently due to his father (Clarence) being a fairly sick man, suffering from rheumatoid arthritis from his mid twenties. This limited his working capabilities and made money scarce. John said that he did remember the old army trucks (which I had mentioned to him) and also a Model-T Ford on which, he said, he and his brother used to play on. He said that they had some fun times exploring the house which seemed to be so big.

John went on to say that "Clarence had never mentioned anything at all about the relationship between John, your father, and his with JF. Clarence used to say that JF was a hard man. I think in their early years both our fathers at some stage worked for JF but he paid them a pittance. Perhaps that would be the reason why they both avoided joining the family business. John said that he didn't like JF. He remembered if Grandma gave his Mum any materials for her to make clothes from, JF used to charge for the materials, so Grandma used to say to Mum 'don't let Dad see this'. JF may have been a smart man with many irons in the fire, so to speak. JF's will stated that whatever was left after his sons and daughter passed, the residue of the estate was to be shared between myself and my brother David; Ian and Helen or our families if we passed. He saw fit to leave out my sister Jean, you (PJL) and your brothers. He also provided Aunt Jean free use of the house plus all bills and an allowance but, between Aunt Jean and the lawyer, the house was sold and she moved to a pensioner's cottage, so that she could benefit from the sale proceeds". John continued, "The things you (Peter) have discovered about the various business dealings of JF make some interesting reading which he was never aware of. As I have previously said, he was a smart man but that alone didn't make him a nice person. I can remember a couple of years before we left for Australia in 1961, when Dad was sick and money was short, he asked JF for a loan

to help with the family finances, but it was refused. From that day I hated him with a passion”.

To finish, John wrote, “The last 3 years have not been kind to us. In 2016 Margaret spent time in hospital with Pneumonia, bronchitis and Emphysema. Then, in 2017, she had cancer of the oesophagus. Also, I was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis. Then in 2018 Margaret had a massive heart attack. She died of lung cancer 29/12/2019”



Above left are Jean and John Forbes Lawrie as I remember him, possibly at Hesketh Bank after they left Glen Villa in 1961.

On the right are John Forbes Lawrie and his friend, on the right, John Budge. I think this may have been taken at JF’s marriage to Laurie Helen MacGregor in 1908.



According to the Manchester Street directories, from 1910 until 1919, JF Lawrie had a Newsagent's shop at 29 Moston Lane. The picture on the left must be that shop.

Standing in the doorway, according to Jean's note on the back was John Forbes with his brother Clarence.

Helen Ida (born May 1910) and Edith Annie (December 1911) were registered in Prestwich / Blackley, while the family presumably lived above this shop. Clarence's birth was registered in October 1915 also in Prestwich / Blackley when the family would still have been in Moston Lane. This shop was demolished during the clearances of the 1970s.

From 1874, Blackley, Harpurhey and Failsworth formed part of the Prestwich registration district, but from 1925 they all came under Manchester North district. Jean's birth was registered in October 1918 at Prestwich / Failsworth, suggesting that the family had actually moved to 135 Church Lane by then, despite the street directory recording them still in Moston Lane in 1919. John's birth was also registered in Prestwich / Failsworth in March 1920. Failsworth itself lies between Newton Heath and Moston. 135 Church Lane must therefore fall in the Prestwich / Failsworth district and that shop must have been where John and Jean were born.

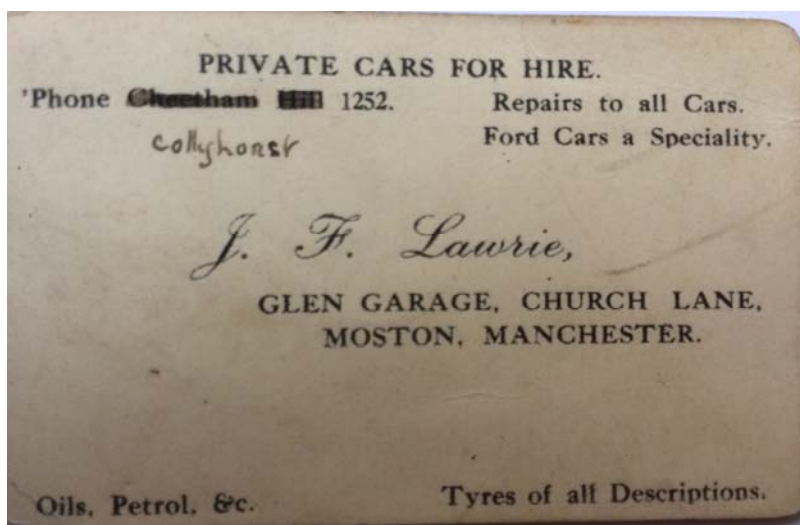
JF and LH Lawrie's last child, also named Laurie Helen (but known to all as "Billie") was born in November 1922, but her birth was registered at Birkenhead / Wallasey. Paul Miller McGregor, Laurie Helen's father, had lived at Garston, across the Mersey from Birkenhead from 1908 until his death in 1925. Her brothers Malcolm and Duncan may have been in business somewhere near Wallasey or Birkenhead. However, LH's sister, Emma Ida McDonald, residing at 31 Hillcroft Road, Wallasey, was a trained nurse. Ida had been widowed when husband Austin McDonald had been killed on Western Front 6th June 1917. Ida had sons, Hector and Bay McDonald, who appear below in the 1929 photograph at Glen Villa.



The Manchester archivist kindly provided me with information from the street directories. From 1920 until 1924 JF Lawrie was recorded as a Newsagent, at 135 Church Lane, Harpurhey.

The shop at 29 Moston Lane has gone - demolished as part of the general clearances of the 1960s and 1970s. However, according to the above picture from Google street view, there is still a Newsagent at 135 Church Lane, Harpurhey. In which case, Jean and John were probably born here in this Edwardian corner shop with the family living in the accommodation above. It would have been crowded for a family of 8 when Billy arrived in 1922. Glen Villa, which lay less than 100 yards away to the west along Church Lane, would have provided lots of space for the family.





From the 1925 street directory, the family were at 1 Glen Villas in Church Lane, Harpurhey with the adjoining Glen Garage. J F Lawrie was now a motor engineer. Perhaps the move from Newsagent to Motor Engineer would have been simpler in the 1920s as I have found no record of JF training as such! JF may have taken over a going garage concern as the street directories for 1920 to 1924 records Thomas Henderson, motor engineer, at Glen Villas. John Lawrie's marriage certificate in 1946 gave his address as 122 Church Lane, but in the street directory for 1933 the confectionery shop was listed as 108 Church Lane.

An undated clipping from a local newspaper in Jean's papers concerned Edith Annie, their second child, (who would die of pulmonary TB on 17/4/1930 at the age of 18). The extract reported that Edith had been in the wooden office of the garage when an oil stove overheated and burst into flames. The report stated that Edith was 16, so this probably happened during 1928. Edith phoned her mother at the house for help. By the time she escaped the flames she had suffered burns to her face and hands. A passer-by successfully operated the extinguisher so that the fire was almost under control by the time the fire brigade arrived. The nearby chemist provided first aid before Edith was taken to Ancoats hospital by ambulance. She was allowed home after treatment.

As the card shows, the Glen Garage sold petrol, offered repairs for all cars, especially Fords; supplied tyres and provided cars for hire. JF also operated a local haulage

business, perhaps using army surplus trucks after 1945. As a child I remember playing on the remains of a number of ex-military trucks parked alongside the house. The haulage business was sold to a Mr Taylor in November 1954. As the Glen Garage does not appear in the street directory from 1954 onwards, it has to be assumed that the garage business closed at the same time. JF would have been 68 in 1954.



Jean did not save any photographs of the garage, so instead here is a photograph of my own blue 1933 Austin seven saloon, (VT9016 on the left), along with two others at a classic car show at Errol, near Perth. These would have been typical of the cars frequenting the Glen Garage.



The equivalent "baby" Ford was the 2-door, 933cc "Eight". By the late 1950s when I remember Glen Villa, the garage had gone, but a row of wooden rental lock-ups remained.



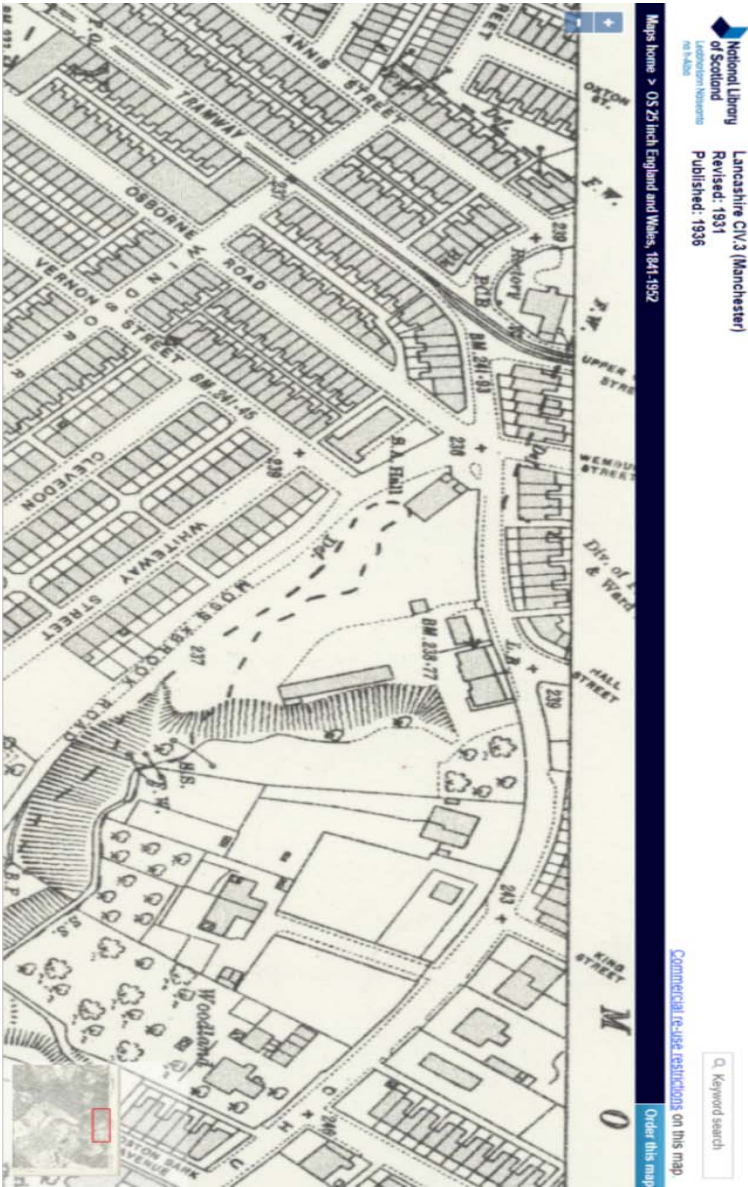
In this image, with 1929 written on the rear, the whole family was pictured outside Glen Villa. Note how they were all wearing hats apart from Jean.

At the rear left was Helen Ida ("Ida", aged 19); mother Laurie Helen MacGregor); Edith Annie ("Edith", aged 17); and cousin Hector MacDonald. In front, Jean Laurie ("Jean", aged 11); Laurie Helen ("Billy", aged 6); John (he called himself "Plain" John, aged 8); Bay MacDonald and Clarence Forbes ("Clarence", aged 14). There are very few photographs of Edith, who died in April 1930.



This was Glen Villa from the street side with the baker's shop. I find it difficult to estimate its age. It was probably early Victorian, but definitely not a Georgian style of house.

The 25-inch map shows that it was actually a pair of semi-detached houses. Grandfather owned both. The garage and lockups are to the west. Behind the house was a wooded glen with the headwaters of the Moss Brook which fed into the Moston Brook. The grounds were extensive. The OS map indicates, roughly a triangle, with a baseline frontage on Church Lane of around 130 yards and going back to an apex downstream of at least 150 yards and possibly more. The entire site has now been levelled and the glen partly in filled for Thorntree Close, a modern housing development.





This was a view of Glen Villa from the garden side. The photograph is in poor condition. I can't make out who is standing on the steps. I remember a lovely flower garden kept by Jean with lupins and peonies, but she left no photographs of the garden.

In the "History of the Ancient chapel of Blackley", by John Booker, I found - "In an indenture bearing date January 2nd 1812 .... William and Henry Hulton and William Cross grant ... to Robert Andrew the message ... situate in Harpurhey together with the several closes or fields thereunto belonging: ..... and also all that river or stream of water called the Moss Brook .... Having completed the purchase, Mr Andrew erected thereon an elegant and commodious mansion, in which he continued to reside until his death, June 9th, 1831."

In [discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/GB2008\\_CD4-3.pdf](http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/GB2008_CD4-3.pdf), William Hargreaves of Glen Villa, Harpurhey, Manchester is included in a draft conveyance CD4/11/34/19 of June 10 1878. I think the 1812 "mansion" may have been the detached building opposite King Street on the map.

It is not possible to be certain. The Glen Villa land included the source of the Moss Brook, but I think the "elegant and commodious mansion" erected in 1812 by Robert Andrew may have been further along Church Lane. After 150 years and the complete change in the locality from a leafy rural area to an industrialised, smoky and overcrowded suburb, I would not have described Glen Villa as 'elegant' but it was certainly commodious, in contrast to the two-up-two-down terraced houses which were erected all around at the end of the century when the new electric trams arrived.



John and, presumably, Clarence, his older brother, attended Lily Lane boys school. The evidence is in the Form 1 photograph opposite dated 1931. I don't know when he left. I think that John is fourth in from the right in the back row.



This family picture at Glen Villa has been dated 1939. At the back: brother & sister, John and Jean with their cousin Harold, the son of Robert Cheetham Lawrie. In front: Mrs Laurie Helen Lawrie, Harold's sister Ethel and John Forbes Lawrie on the right.



This 3" by 2" print has been creased, so it is not very clear. I guess that it dates from around 1939. At the rear left is Ida (aged ~30 - she married in 1941); Clarence Forbes (~25); Jean (~22). At the front John (~20) with the dog; JF and LF and finally Helen (~18) with the cats



This must date from between 1945 and the early 1950s. Grandmother died in 1957.



This image is of my father, John, in RAF uniform, possibly in 1940. John told me in 1969 before he died that he had served as RAF ground crew, maintaining aircraft in Egypt, Libya, Palestine and Kenya.

He said about his postings in Libya and Egypt that every station had been attacked by German aircraft before his posting there and after he left, but never while he was there!

In a letter to Jean dated 1941, he was based at an airfield on Islay in the Inner Hebrides and spoke of his forthcoming posting to Stornoway. John would meet Morag MacLeod, my mother, at the end of the war while stationed at Dalcross airfield, near Inverness, where she served in the Observer Corps.

In one of those trivial but revealing asides, John told me that as a boy he had not been happy that his siblings, aunts and uncles all had double first names often referring to earlier family names, but he did not. Hence he decided to call himself "Plain John Lawrie" or PJ Lawrie - and as a result when I was born in 1949, I was baptised Peter John. Clarence's son John told me that his father was not called up, but spent the war years at AVRO working on aircraft construction.



Peter John Lawrie with Dad in August 1967 standing outside 48 Dalbeattie Street. This was just before my hitch-hiking adventure across Europe after my first year at St Andrews University.

I hitch-hiked, wearing a first world war army kilt, through Belgium, Germany, Austria, Yugoslavia, Greece to Istanbul where I spent a few days and then took a stand-by flight to Tel Aviv. After a week in and around Jerusalem, I took the ferry from Haifa back to Athens in Greece and hitch-hiked home from there.





Most of Dalbeattie Street has been demolished and partly replaced by nondescript terraces of modern houses. However, Nos 11 to 53, which had been opposite No 48, have survived. I have captured a Google street view image of numbers 25 to 33. I note on Zoopla that in the most recent sale, in April 2018, No 39 sold for £72,000. (No 39 wasn't any different from the others, but in 'Street View' it was obscured by a large van when Google visited!).

When I joined the MOD in 1971, I was posted to Blackburn, to the North of Manchester. The house on Springbank Terrace which I purchased was very similar to Dalbeattie Street and cost me just £850. It worked out cheaper than renting "digs". I had fun learning how to rewire it, seal the slab floors, decorate and make various other improvements. The picture was taken in 1974 when my wife and I returned from our wedding in Broughty Ferry. (The car was a Hillman Hunter from Hertz)

Some weeks later, my wife and I moved to Tarrant Keyneston in Dorset for 6 months and then to London in 1975. The almost identical 2-up, 2-down mid-terraced house which we purchased in West London cost us £12000. While the Manchester and Blackburn houses are long gone, I noted recently on Zoopla that our former London home is now "valued" at £700,000. I have put quotes around "valued" as, even though we have experienced significant wage-growth, price-inflation and a shortage of new-build homes, that price is simply jaw-dropping, Especially as we had been informed by a neighbour when we lived there that the houses had changed hands in the 1950s for a

few hundred pounds, just as they did at that time in Manchester. "Location, location, location" as they say.

On the registration of my birth in 1949, John and Morag were resident in Acomb Street, Moss Side. The street still exists but the area of their home is now a school. Around 1950 they moved into No 48 Dalbeattie Street, one of Grandfather's properties. John's sister Ida with her husband Jim Ward and their children, Ian and Helen, lived at No 46. Grandfather sold most of the houses to sitting tenants on self-financed mortgages for £500-£600 each. He retained the rent-charge on them, usually £3 per annum. Tenants were given the choice of continuing to pay rent, of less than £1 per week, or to purchase their house on a mortgage loan at a somewhat higher rate which they would repay over periods ranging from 3 to 11 years, depending on their circumstances. My father and Jim chose not to buy.

While I only remember 48 Dalbeattie Street as a child, it seemed OK to me at the time. There was lots of space at the back for us and the neighbour's children to play on our bikes, and a hundred yards or so up the road was the Boggart Hole Clough - an extensive area of parkland. I don't look back on it and feel "deprived". Dad added a bathroom & WC to the kitchen, replacing the outside toilet at the bottom of the yard.

On a property website, I found a picture of a terraced house, which was almost identical to both 48 Dalbeattie Street and 3 Springbank Terrace (but without the satellite dish) and situated in Mill Hill, Blackburn, very close to the one we had in Springbank Terrace. It was up for auction at a guide price of £35,000. It has a nice new kitchen and bathroom, but relative to average wages, £35K now may be considered quite close to £500 in the mid-1950s.

Fundamentally there seemed to be little difference in the design and construction of the three houses. This is not to claim that certain areas of Manchester, particularly Ancoats towards the city centre, did not suffer from dreadful overcrowding, shoddy construction and a heavily polluted environment. However, among the slums, many perfectly good houses appear to have been swept away in the craze for "improvement". Although my

opinion has been formed by a perusal of "Google street view", it does not appear to me that the nearby streets of modern terraced houses are any better!

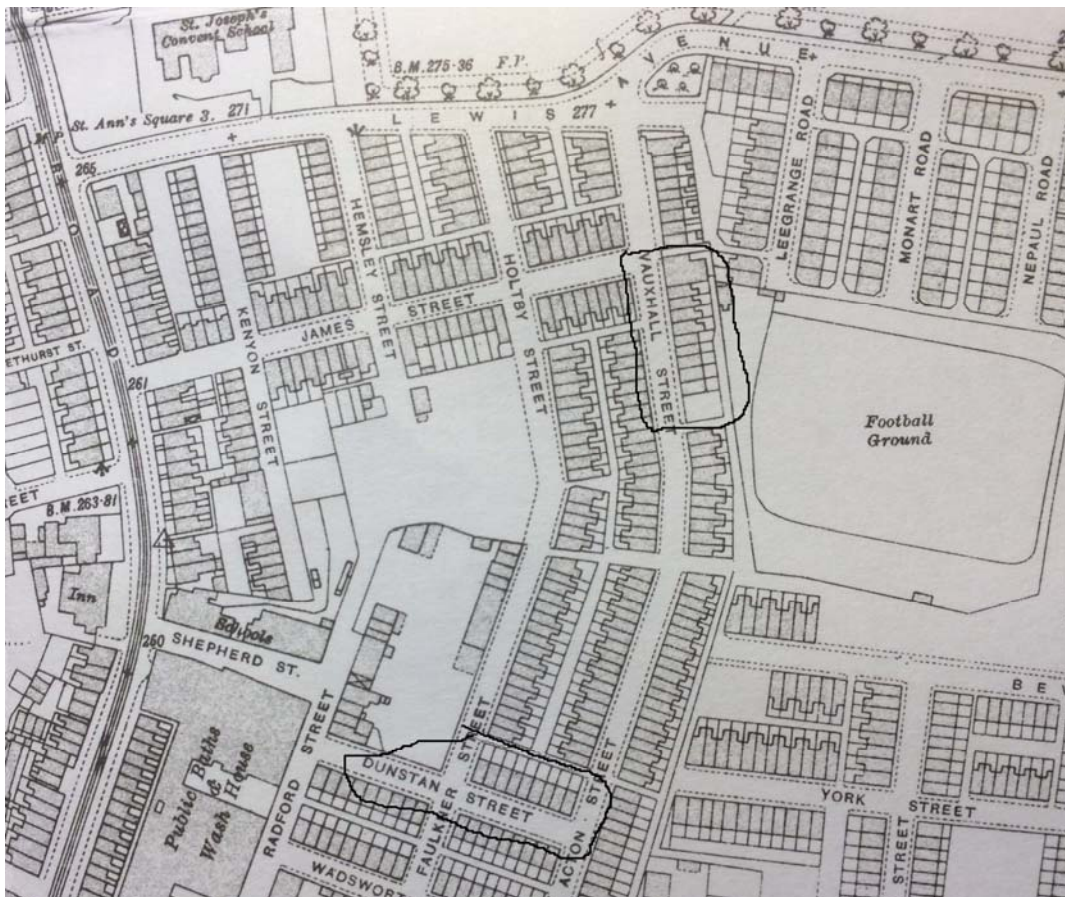
During the 1950s, adding to 32-50 Dalbeattie Street, JF purchased further blocks of similar houses with freehold around Blackley and Harpurhey. Numbers 4-14 Westfield Street, Harpurhey in 1951 for £700; Numbers 2-18 Dunstan Street, Blackley in 1953 for £760. Two other blocks, for which the deeds are not in the collection retained by Jean, were 73-79 Middlewood Street, Harpurhey, 18-22 and 57-59 Church Lane, Harpurhey. Of these 36 properties, which Jean continued to manage after Grandfather's death in 1967, the mortgages on all but 9 which were still rented had been paid up by 1974. The Manchester slum clearance schemes from the late 1960s until the 1980s cleared around 54,000 properties across the city including all of grandfather's.

Later he seemed to concentrate on purchasing rent-charges - known as ground-rents elsewhere in England (and, in Scotland, feudal-superiorities for which fixed annual feu duties were paid.) The problem, as became apparent with the monetary inflation of the 1970s, was that these charges, usually set in the 1890s were fixed with no provision for inflation. Thus he might purchase for £200 of 1950s-money, based on a ten times multiplier, a rent-charge of £20 per annum on a property. This would provide an income of £20 per annum in perpetuity - even if the property on the land was demolished and redeveloped.

However, an income of £20 per annum in 1950 had much greater purchasing power than a £20 income in the 1990s. Legislation of 1977 ended the creation of new rent-charges and provided for their redemption by payment fixed at an agreed multiple of the charge. Jean's notebook which contained the annual income from the rent-charges stopped in 2002 (when she was 84). I understand that her solicitor continued to collect the income thereafter.

Below is a plan of Blackley, Manchester, showing two of Grandfather's properties: 32-50 Vauxhall Street – renamed Dalbeattie Street - and 2-18 Dunstan Street.

In the plan, Number 50, the larger property in Vauxhall Street/Dalbeattie Street at the Northern end of the terrace was a joiner's workshop. Our home at Number 48 was next door. There was a vacant site next to Number 32 at the Southern end of the terrace. The "football field" was waste ground when I remember it. It is now covered by new housing.



### **Robert Lawrie (1903-1982).**

While idly googling, as one does, I discovered to my great surprise that, according to Wikipedia, there is a glacier in Antarctica bearing our name! The Lawrie Glacier (66°4'S 64°36'W:) flows between Mount Genecand and Mezzo Buttress, and enters the head of Barilari Bay between Cherkovna Point and Prestoy Point on the west coast of Graham Land, Antarctica. It was charted by the British Graham Land Expedition under Rymill, 1934–37, and was named by the UK Antarctic Place-Names Committee in 1959 for Robert Lawrie, an alpine and polar equipment specialist who supplied the boots and other equipment for the expedition.

When I came across this reference to a Lawrie glacier, I googled Robert Lawrie and discovered that he was the first cousin of my grandfather, John Forbes Lawrie! He was the son of Robert, the younger brother of John Lawrie who died in Rochdale in 1890.

*Obituary of Robert Lawrie by Charles Warren - Alpine Journal, 1983 Vol. 88 pp.260-261.*

Rob was a man of parts. But above all he was a mountaineering boot maker extraordinary! He had learnt the craft of boot and shoe making from his father in Burnley when he worked in his shop there before moving to London in the twenties to set up on his own as a specialist boot maker; and it was in that trade that he first made his name. And what marvellous boots he did make for some of the most famous mountaineers, walkers and explorers from all over the world! I, myself, am still wearing a pair of Lawrie boots which he made for me when I went to Mount Everest in 1938; and when I go out in them on SMC meets fellow members admire them with astonishment. (SMC Journal 1982, p 293.)

Rob designed the original mountaineering boots he made himself, and a pair of Lawrie boots was instantly recognisable. When in 1935 I found the body of Maurice Wilson, near Camp 3 on Everest, I wrote in my diary of that time (now in the AC's archives): 'I saw a boot, one of Lawrie's, lying in the snow and a little ahead was a green mass'. (The body of Wilson.) Soon after he had set up in London, Rob expanded his business as a specialist boot maker to take in the provision of mountaineering equipment of all kinds for walkers, mountaineers and explorers and so by the 'thirties' the firm of Robert

Lawrie, Ltd, had become the principal supplier of such equipment in this country. The first major Himalayan expedition to be supplied with climbing boots by his firm was Frank Smythe's successful one to Kamet in 1931. Thereafter, over a period of some 50 years, almost every important British expedition was supplied with specialist equipment by him.

But, as I said before, Rob was a man of parts. One of his ambitions over a number of years had been to compete in the Le Mans 24 hour motor race and this he achieved when, in the first post war revival of that event on 25 June 1949, he entered with his Aston Martin 2-Litre Sports (DB1) and came in 11<sup>th</sup> place. He also came 11th in 1951 driving his Jaguar XK-120C. He competed twice more at Le Mans, but with less success. He was a member of the racing drivers' club there and used to pay regular visits to watch the race. What a heady occasion it was when we and some of his other friends dashed over to France to watch that first race!




Robert Lawrie being congratulated for his success at Le Mans in 1949.

Rob was also interested in fire-arms and was a keen revolver shot. I can remember an excursion with him to a gravel pit near Newark during the war for some pistol practice at which, to my relief, I acquitted myself quite well having been taught as a boy not to snatch at the trigger but to squeeze it.

Rob's health deteriorated over the last few years of his life following a serious motor accident on the Continent in which he was concussed and suffered injuries to his knee and back from which he never completely recovered. Of a most friendly and outgoing personality, Rob had friends all over the world. In its hey-day there never was another establishment quite like that of Robert Lawrie, Ltd. There you received personal advice and attention from Rob himself and his two faithful and charming partners; and would invariably meet some famous personality of the mountaineering world.

But let me end on a personal note. I got to know Rob soon after he came to London; and when I went to Everest in 1936 I sub-let my flat to him. Later on he moved into another flat in the same house and so for several years we saw a lot of each other until on the outbreak of war in 1939 we became separated. During the war he moved his business to Newark and supplied equipment for the services and I visited him there. Rob always remained a very dear friend of mine. *Charles Warren, SMC*

Robert Lawrie's Advert in 1939 'Fell and Rock Climbing Journal'



**CLIMBING BOOT AND EQUIPMENT SPECIALISTS**  
CLIMBING BOOTS—from 29/9 including nailing. Other Types un-nailed 29/6 upwards.  
CLIMBING JACKETS. Double texture from 25/9.  
ICE AXES various makes and sizes from 18/6  
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PULLOVERS, Shetland, handknit, 4½ ozs., 14/-.  
CRAMPONS from 21/-.  
Rope, Line, Pitons, Socks, Stockings, Gauntlets, etc., etc.  
*Write for Catalogue.*

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38 Bryanston St., Marble Arch, W.1.  
Telephone : PADDINGTON 4993.  
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Repairs and Nailings at reasonable charges.

[HTTPS://VAULT.SI.COM/VAULT/1969/10/13/AN-URBANE-RESIDENCE-IN-CENTRAL-LONDON-IS-ACTUALLY-A-SHOP-FOR-MOUNTAINEERS](https://vault.si.com/vault/1969/10/13/an-urbane-residence-in-central-london-is-actually-a-shop-for-mountaineers)

Edward Lear wrote his nonsense rhymes at No. 30 Seymour Street, London W. 1, just behind the Marble Arch — or Tyburn that was. Close by, at No. 54, a brass plate admits ROBERT LAWRIE LTD. (LATE OF BURNLEY), ALPINE EQUIPMENT SPECIALISTS! A subplate announces a complicated set of business hours and, were it not for these two quiet signs, there would be no indication whatever that the dignified London terrace house conceals a thriving mountaineering equipment shop run by the triumvirate of Mr. Lawrie and his wife Ursula with their Yorkshire-born secretary, Miss Elsie Lane.

The shopper rings the bell, and the door is opened to a hallway with a club-type letter rack holding picture-postcard views of mountains, snow, rocks and lakes. A room to the left of the hall is the shop itself, and even there, among the parkas, crampons, climbing ropes and stacks of boots, the quiet clubby atmosphere persists — or would were it not for the staccato bell ringing as climbers wander in to kit out for some far-off peak. Such constant interruption makes conversation difficult, yet the management trio and their assistants remain calm, courteous, cool and unruffled. Certainly more of a club than a shop, but business is business.

Robert Lawrie, 65, tall, beams benignly and talks with increasing enthusiasm about mountaineering in the soft, flattish tones of Lancashire where he was born and inherited his father's boot and shoe factory. A limp, he explains, comes from an automobile accident when he was on a holiday in France two years back — "French trees are just as hard as any other trees." The accident has temporarily put an end to climbing, but the company of mountaineers and customers seems to compensate.

As a schoolboy Lawrie "enjoyed wandering about in the hills" of the Lake District, traditional nursery for future climbers, and then, after he had gathered enough experience, to the Pyrenees and Alps. In those days the kind of boots worn, heavy shepherd's boots, proved uncomfortable and inadequate, so Lawrie went ahead and made some for himself and his companions. Despite the "accidental sort of start"



Lawrie emphasizes that the boot design was far from accidental. Word of the new boot and its excellent qualities quickly came to the notice of the 1933 Everest expedition led by Hugh Ruttledge. In his subsequent account of the expedition, Ruttledge wrote, "Few of the men who have experienced frostbite on their toes or on the soles of their feet" would not appreciate the importance of a well-insulated boot. The order, for some 20 pairs for the members and a further 50 for the Sherpa porters, was sufficient to establish Lawrie, not only as a first-class maker of high-altitude boots, but in his comfortable London house. "Burnley," he says nostalgically, "was not well-placed for this kind of thing."

There were further meetings, further requests and business flourished. One reminder of those days is a pair of size 15 boots made for Dr Raymond Greene, a Harley Street physician and 6'6" brother of Graham Greene, who took part in the '33 Everest climb. The boots are beauties, works of art, and Lawrie points out how the nails were all filed by hand, both to give a grip and to save a vital few grams in weight. But he is careful to add that boots of that sort are not made to last. They are made to be worn immediately and for one expedition only — "They won't fit forever" — he warns.

As for price of the boots, Lawrie allows a 10% discount for bulk buying on handmade boots costing between £17 and £30 (\$40 to \$75), but he also sells them "off the peg" (ready-made) for between £10 and £20 (\$24 and \$48). Even though boots are the basis of the business, all the paraphernalia of mountaineering is also for sale in the shop and, just to help out, the Lawries provide maps of most of the popular climbing areas and free advice. In fact, advice is an important part of every transaction, and they keep closely in touch with the rarefied world of mountaineering.

During World War II, Lawrie shut up shop in London and moved to an army camp in the North where he made boots for the parade ground. It was there at Newark, Nottinghamshire that a strange party of three captains and two majors led by a sergeant major in the Norwegian army turned up to be fitted out with specially-made boots designed for skiing and walking. A stipulation in the manufacture was that the boots must show no signs by which their origin could be traced, and this meant using

materials, even nails, which could not be identified. Lawrie himself was sworn to secrecy but he often wondered what became of the Norwegian group and their sergeant major.

It was not until after the war had ended that he learned the party who needed the special boots had destroyed the German heavy-water plant in central Norway, putting an end to plans for a Nazi atomic bomb. The sergeant major, now promoted officer, turned up at Newark with a thank-you letter for Lawrie from the Norwegian government. This letter, together with numerous wood carvings, flags and ice axes, forms the Lawries' own private collection of memories of a full and happy life in the world of mountaineering.

- *CONOR P. O'BRIEN- OCTOBER 13, 1969*



A pair of brown leather climbing boots with layered leather soles and heels. The soles have notched studs around the outside, starred studs in the centre and clawed studs around the heel. The laces are leather and the boots are well worn. "Hand Made/ Robt Lawrie/ London" is handwritten on a tag with the boots.

<https://collection.pukeariki.com/objects/7331/boots-climbing>

### **Neville John Lawrie**

“My name is Neville John Lawrie, the eldest grandchild of John and Laurie Helen Lawrie. I was born on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 1942 at my maternal grandmother’s house, 2 Bramwell Street in Stockport, Cheshire. My parents were Clarence Forbes Lawrie and Doris Webster.

“Dad was born on the 7<sup>th</sup> of October 1915 in Manchester to John and Laurie Helen (MacGregor) Lawrie. My father was named Clarence after his Uncle Clarence who had died at Gallipoli that same year. My mother was born on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 1919, the second youngest of thirteen children born to Ann (aka Annie) and William James Webster. I never thought to ask how my parents met and for how long they went out together. They were married at Saint Mary’s Church in Stockport on the 26<sup>th</sup> of December 1939.

“Mum worked as a sewing machinist and Dad was employed as a fitter at AVRO, working on the Lancaster Bombers which were instrumental in changing the course of World War Two. He worked there until about 1948 when he developed rheumatoid arthritis. He then drove a taxi until we left for Australia in 1961.

“I have a sister, Jean, born on the 19<sup>th</sup> of October 1944, and a brother, David, born on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July 1949. In Australia, in 1964, Jean married Gary Wilson, a farmer born in 1943. They have four children and, currently, sixteen grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. They had a business in Albany until they retired in 2015. Also in Australia, in 1969 David married Marilyn Trigwell, born in 1952 and they have three children, four grandchildren, and one great grandchild. David was a glazier and became manager of Albany glassworks until retiring in 2004. Jean and David and their spouses still live in Albany.

“Growing up in England, I attended Banks Lane Primary School and then Dialstone Secondary School, both in Stockport, until leaving school at the age of fifteen to start an apprenticeship as a plumber. Dad’s arthritis was getting worse, and the doctors told him he would prolong his life if he moved to a warmer climate. Since he had relatives living

in Western Australia, his Auntie Peg (MacGregor) who was married to Harry Wiley, my parents decided we would migrate to Australia.

“On the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1961, we left on the SS Fairsky and arrived in Fremantle on 19<sup>th</sup> March. We settled in Albany, a small town on the lower southwest coast. Albany did not impress me with its slow pace, after living in the hustle and bustle of the UK. Due to my age, I couldn't get a plumber to take me on as an apprentice, so I worked on the wharf unloading ships, on farms picking potatoes, and icing down salmon at the local fish canning factory. These were all casual jobs where you lined up each morning and the foreman would pick out who would be working that day. After a few months I managed to get a permanent job at the canning factory until I joined the Air Force.

“Dad's rheumatoid arthritis was worsening and in 1963 he had to give up working. Mum worked at Albany Woollen Mills until 1965 when she left Dad and went to live in Perth with Bob Mooney (born 1933). I wasn't too happy about this. However, after seeing how Mum and Dad were still very good friends and Mum was so happy with her new life, I accepted that these things happen, even to your own family. After Mum and Dad divorced in 1967, Mum and Bob were married in 1968. They lived in Perth until returning to Albany in 1999 where they lived until Mum passed away in 2011. Bob has two daughters from a previous marriage, Anne and Irene, so now I have two new sisters who I love dearly. Although the doctors told Dad a warmer climate would extend his life, he passed away in 1977 at the age of 61, just 16 years after arriving in Australia.



In 1962 I went on a blind date with a girl named Margaret McLean, the daughter of George McLean (1905-1986) and Margaret (Peg) McLean (1908-1988), who migrated to Australia in 1949. Margaret had two sisters, Moira (1940-2018) and Christine, Margaret's twin (1942- 2011), and a brother, David (1950- 2013). Margaret and I fell instantly in love, so much so that I asked her to marry me on that first date. Thankfully, she said yes, and we were married on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December 1963.

“Not long after getting married, Margaret and I had decided we could see no real future in Albany, so I joined the RAAF in August 1964 and served until April 1989. During this time, I served in most mainland states of Australia and had two tours of Malaysia, as well as many deployments over the years, including New Zealand. Although it meant packing up house every two to three years, I think that as a family we enjoyed our life and the boys have had well-rounded lives with many experiences. On my retirement after twenty-five years’ service, I got a job as a stores manager in an envelope manufacturing firm in Perth until finally retiring in 1998 due to ill health.

“During our married life Margaret worked in several part-time jobs but her main goal in life was our boys; she was everything a mum should be and more. With my RAAF work and countless trips away, the responsibility for the greater part of raising them fell squarely on her shoulders and she gave them unconditional love, installing in them the values she believed in – to be strong, independent, and compassionate. This has served them well.

“We have three children: Brian, born 21<sup>st</sup> of May 1966; Alan, born 29<sup>th</sup> July 1968, and Peter, born 7<sup>th</sup> July 1971. Margaret also miscarried another boy in 1965.



Brian followed in my footsteps and joined the RAAF. He served thirty-seven years. Brian has never married but is very happy with life.



“Alan went to university and gained a degree in commerce. After graduating, he spent just over four years in the UK where he met Dawn Wyatt who he married on 14<sup>th</sup> October 1996 on his return to Australia. They have a son James, born July 1997. James has recently graduated as a medical doctor. Alan and Dawn own a pizza shop in Perth.



“Peter joined the RAN and served six years during which time he met Sheree Pearson who was also in the RAN. They married in November 1997 and have two sons: Joshua born September 1999, and Jordan born September 2001. Joshua works in the Insurance industry and is in a relationship with Jade. Jordan is an apprentice electrician and is in a relationship with Kayleigh. Peter is a senior team leader with Tabcorp and Sheree a practice manager for a financial advisory practice, and they live in Queensland.

“In 2016 Margaret’s health started to decline and over next few years she was diagnosed with oesophageal cancer which she overcame. This was followed by a severe heart attack, and then in 2019 she developed lung cancer which she tried to beat with everything she had. However, she passed away in my arms on the 29<sup>th</sup> of December, eight days after our 56th wedding anniversary. My life since that day has been on hold; hopefully one day I will begin to enjoy life again. However, my love for Margaret never ceases to be.



My grandsons: Top left: Jordan age 21 in 2022. Right: Joshua age 21 in 2020  
Below: James age 21 in 2018



*Neville John Lawrie, November 2022*

### **Jean Margaret Wilson (nee Lawrie)**

“My name is Jean Margaret Wilson (nee Lawrie). I am the second child of Doris and Clarence Lawrie, born 19<sup>th</sup> October, 1944. I was named Jean as I was born on Auntie Jean’s birthday. My schooling was at Banks Lane Primary in Stockport and then Offerton Secondary Modern. On leaving school, I started an apprenticeship as a pastry cook but had to give it up after 13 months when we emigrated to Australia.

“In January 1963 I met Gary Wilson, a farmer born 6<sup>th</sup> January 1943. We were married on 7<sup>th</sup> March 1964. We have four children: Diana, 11<sup>th</sup> March 1965, Paul, 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1966, Linda, 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1968, and Ian 25<sup>th</sup> November 1971.

“We moved to Torbay in 1971 and started our business designing farm machinery, also a wrecking yard and a repair section. The business was called Wilson Machinery and also Wilson Wrecking. In 2000 it became Wilson (WA) Pty Ltd.

### **Diana**

“Diana got a job at the Commonwealth Bank after leaving school. She met and married Chris Cooke on 9<sup>th</sup> February 1985. They have four children and five grandchildren. Fiona, was born 20<sup>th</sup> June 1989. After leaving school she became a physiotherapist. She married Ben Shanks on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2018. They have two girls: Bronte, 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019, and Alba 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

Janet, born 28<sup>th</sup> December 1990, is a primary school teacher. She married Matt McGregor on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2019. They have two boys: Otis, 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020, and Dustin, 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

Kirsten, born 17<sup>th</sup> October 1992, is a nurse. She married Matt Ashworth, 27<sup>th</sup> March 2001. They have a son, Mason 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022.

Allan, born 13<sup>th</sup> July 1994, is an engineer and designs bridges. He is getting married to Verity Williams on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

### **Paul**

“Paul qualified as a veterinary surgeon. After working for about fourteen months, he decided to go to England in 1988 for a working holiday as a locum. He met Jane



Hillam. Paul and Jane bought a rundown vet practice in Bishop Auckland. They were married on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1993 and have two daughters. Over the years they built up a state of the vet practice, before selling and retiring in 2016. Hannah was born 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1994 and now has a PhD degree in Chemistry. Sophie, born 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1997, has a degree in Mathematics.

### **Linda**

“Linda, born 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1968, had a job at the Commonwealth Bank. She married Ashton Mills on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1991. They have eight children, six girls and two boys.

Katie born 10<sup>th</sup> August 1994 works with students that cannot do mainstream schooling. She is engaged to Andrew Wyres. They are getting married in January 2023.

Sophie, born 18<sup>th</sup> July 1996, met and married Chris Matowitz on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2017. They have one boy - Connor, born 28<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

Wendy, born 28<sup>th</sup> October 1998, is a sports teacher. She is engaged to James Warnock and they are getting married on 28<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

Mary, born 10<sup>th</sup> March 2001, is training to be a teacher.

Chloe, born 19<sup>th</sup> December 2002, is working as a barista.

Hayden, born 14<sup>th</sup> December 2004, has just graduated from school.

Jack, was born 7<sup>th</sup> January 2007.

Zoe, was born 4<sup>th</sup> November 2010.

### **Ian**

“Ian, born 25<sup>th</sup> November 1971, is a heavy duty mechanic and is now the owner of Wilson (WA) Pty Ltd. He met Laura Cassie, a veterinary nurse who had worked for Paul in England. They married on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2008 and have two children.

Dylan, was born 11<sup>th</sup> March 2007.

Lani, was born 15<sup>th</sup> January 2009.

“In 2014, Ian and Laura bought the business off us and we retired to Albany.

*Jean Margaret Wilson*

## Section II –Morag Mackay MacLeod (21/1/1926-29/9/2016)

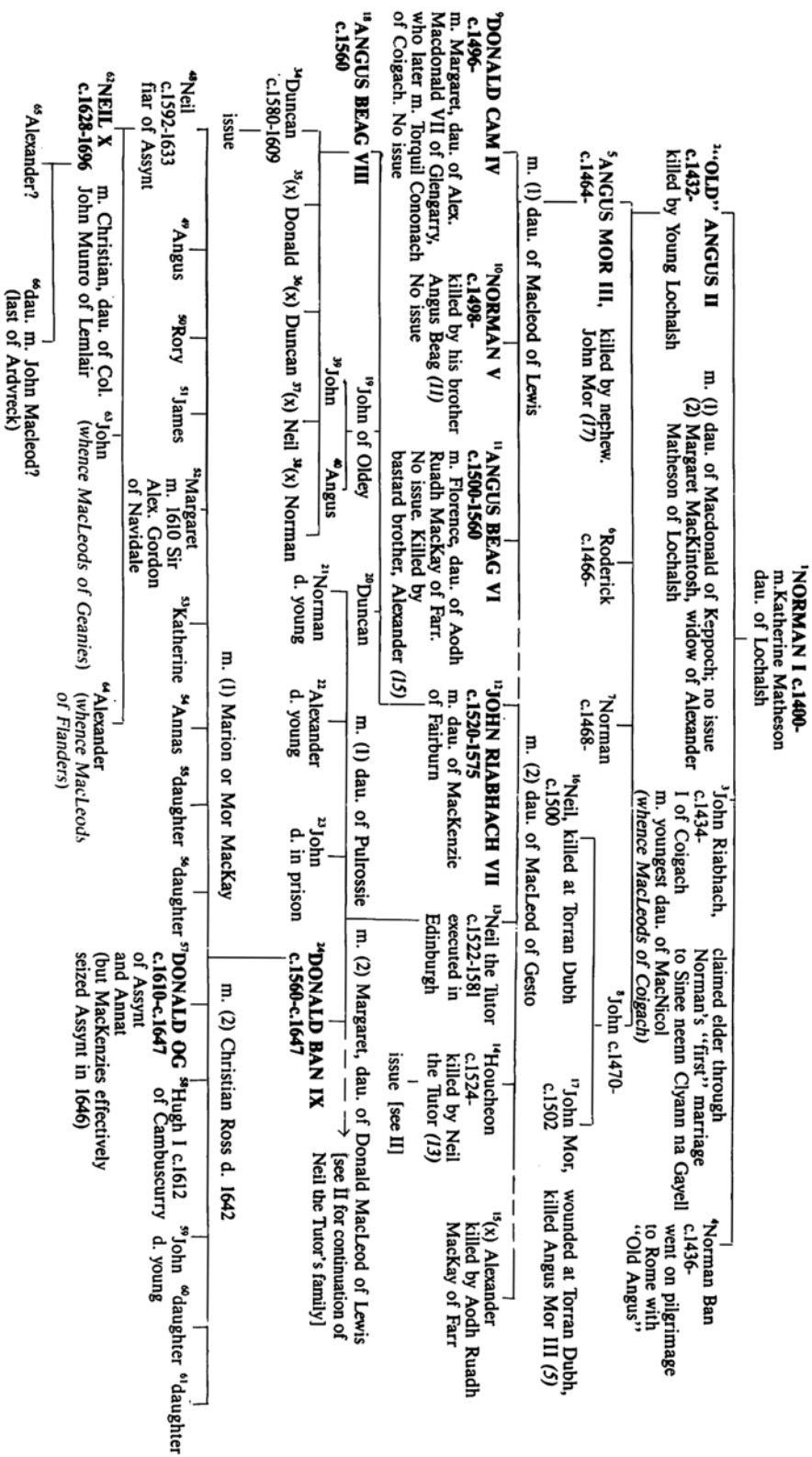
*Leòd* was the eponym, or name-father, of the MacLeods. *Leòd* may derive from the Norse name *Ljotr* or *Ljot-ulf* meaning ‘Ugly wolf’. The MacLeod chiefs were traditionally said to be of Scandinavian origin, but DNA has now proved that they were Gaels. W.D. Sellar, the late Lord Lyon, wrote that *Leòd* had married **the daughter** of Olaf the Black, one of the last Norse kings of Man and *seneschal* of Skye. However, many MacLeods today do have Scandinavian DNA as their male-line ancestry is from ‘part-takers’ and not directly from *Leòd*. Dunvegan Castle on Skye dates from 1266 and may be the oldest house in Scotland occupied by the same family since its construction. (Traquair Castle in Peeblesshire dates from 1107 but has only been occupied by the Stuarts of Traquair since 1491). *Leòd* also acquired lands on Harris.

The senior branch of the clan was the *Sìol Tormod* – the MacLeods of Skye and Harris; the junior, from *Torcall* a grandson of *Tormod*, was the *Sìol Torcaill* or the MacLeods of Lewis. In the fourteenth century David II granted a charter of the barony of Assynt in Sutherland to Tormod MacLeod of Lewis. This, along with other acquisitions of land, gave the *Sìol Torcaill* the power to rival their cousins, the *Sìol Tormod* on Skye.

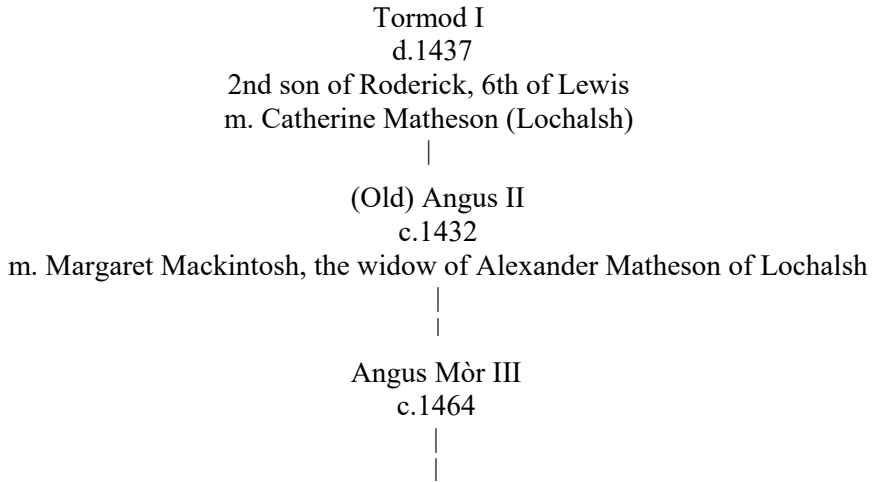
The MacLeods of Lewis assisted Donald Dubh MacDonald in his rebellion to regain the Lordship of the Isles. When that attempt failed, the MacLeod lands were forfeited, but were restored five years later. In the 16th century the *Sìol Torcaill* became involved in a succession of feuds with neighbouring clans, and within their own clan. James VI formed a particular antipathy towards the MacLeods of Lewis and the MacGregors, both of whom he termed "maist barbarous" and ordered that they "be exterminat and ruttit out". He granted Lewis to the Fife Adventurers but the MacLeods fought them off. Later the Mackenzies of Seaforth successfully dispossessed them and took over Lewis.

The MacLeods of Assynt were a fratricidal family with brothers and cousins killing each other in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Ultimately, Neil XI of Assynt became bankrupt and his lands were taken over by the Mackenzies. Iain, his younger brother acquired the estate of Geanies in Easter Ross through marriage to the heiress of Ross of Kindeace.

## THE MACLEODS OF ASSYNT — I



**My summary of the ancestry of the MacLeods of Assynt.**



-----  
m.(1) dtr of MacLeod of Lewis  
-----

-----  
m.(2) dtr of MacLeod of Gesto  
-----

Domhnal Cam  
IV  
c.1496

Tormod  
V  
c.1498

Angus Beag  
VI  
c.1500-1560  
m. dtr of MacKay  
of Farr

Iain Riabhach  
VII  
c.1520-1575  
m. Christina,  
dtr of Mackenzie of  
Fairburn

**Neill**  
**c.1522 -**  
**executed.1581**  
m. Margaret, dtr  
Donald bro. of  
MacLeod of Lewis



Angus Beag  
VIII  
c.1560-1582

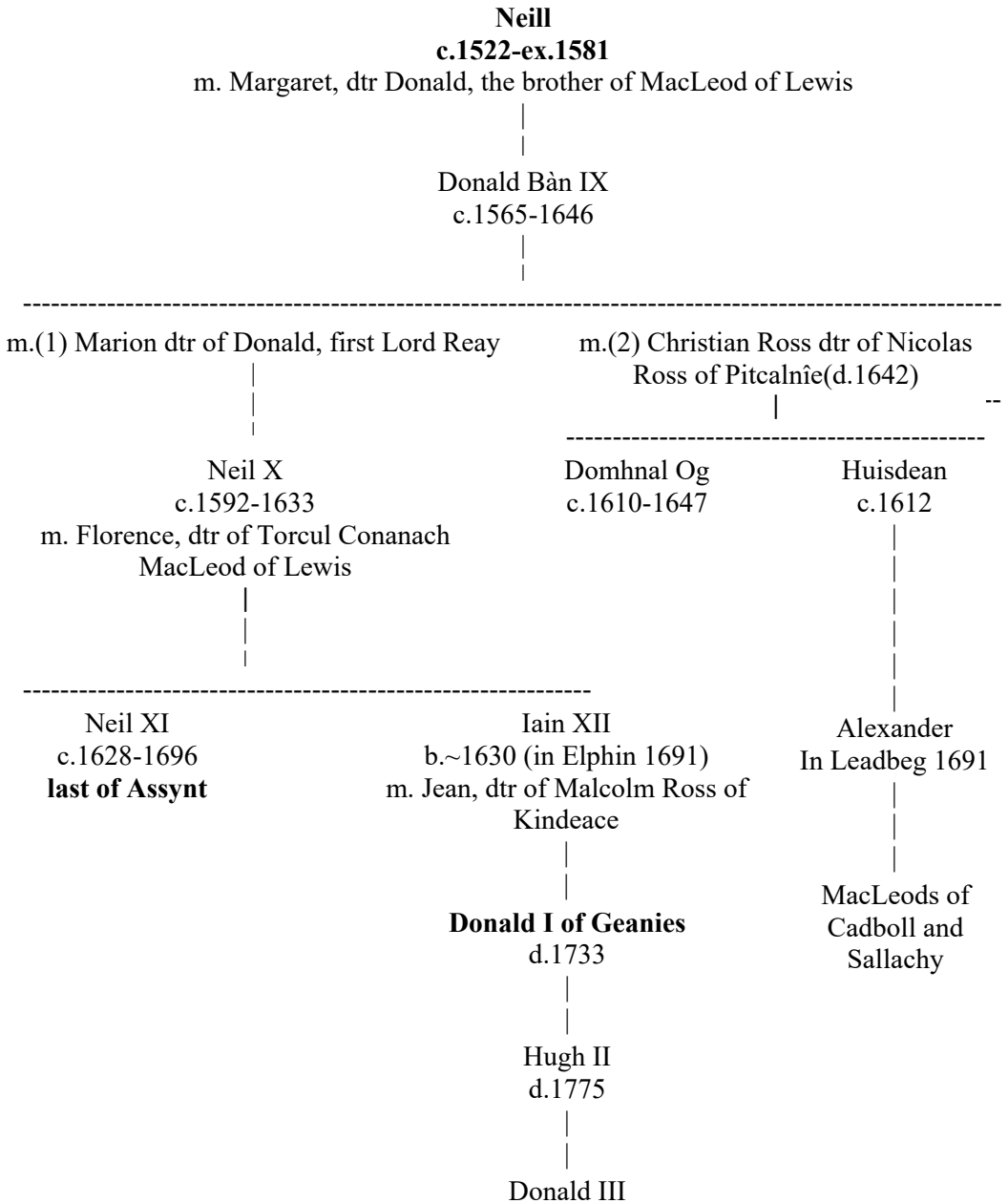
|

Duncan  
c.1580-1609

Ardvreck Castle, seat of the Macleods of Assynt, dates from around 1490. The castle was besieged and captured by the Mackenzies in 1672. In 1726, Calda House, now also a ruin, was built by the Mackenzies, recycling some stone from Ardvreck Castle.

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e9/Ardvreck\\_Castle\\_Loch\\_Assynt.JPG](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e9/Ardvreck_Castle_Loch_Assynt.JPG)

Cgfletch, CC BY-SA 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons



## The Highland Clearances

Consideration of the events surrounding our Sutherland family origins brings me to the Highland Clearances, one of the most controversial subjects in modern Scottish history, and the events in Sutherland were among the most notorious. By some dubious legal alchemy the *duthchas* of Highland people had been transformed into the private estates of their erstwhile chiefs. After 1745, agricultural and social 'Improvement' spread across the Highlands with the introduction of large flocks of cheviot sheep replacing black cattle. Native occupiers with age-old traditional rights were evicted from their farms which were enclosed and consolidated into larger farms usually let to incomers.

The 'first wave' of clearances began as early as the 1780s. Many estate owners planned to re-deploy the population (whether they had agreed to it or not) to other parts of their estates, especially to the coastal fringes to labour in the fishing and kelping industries.

The most infamous clearances took place in Sutherland, from 1809 to 1821. Around a million acres were "owned" by the Countess of Sutherland, married to Lord Stafford, one of the wealthiest men in Britain. Assisted by her commissioner, James Loch, the Countess had comprehensively cleared nearly 15,000 people by 1821. The pasturelands in the interior became huge sheep walks supervised by a few imported shepherds. Estate income increased three to four times from what it had been. The native people were allotted miserable crofts of 1 to 3 acres, often by the coast on land previously thought unfit for cultivation. The scale of these clearances was huge, both in cost and number of people involved. The methods used to evict, by men such as Patrick Sellar, made them stand out to both contemporaries and since. Sutherland has come to symbolise the entire sweep of clearances in the early nineteenth century. The speedy and often violent process was often met with resistance, but this was always overcome, sometimes by calling in the military.

After the great re-organisations early in the century estate managers and owners hoped the crofting population would settle down into their new crofts and employment - fishing and kelping - but the end of the Napoleonic wars brought returning soldiers and a collapse in the value of kelp to the landlords. Poverty for the small tenants deepened.

Potato blight hit the Highlands in 1836-7, followed in 1846-8 with an even more serious subsistence crisis, recognised then as the Great Highland Famine. Only the efforts of charities and the state prevented widespread mortality among the destitute population. Landlords' incomes collapsed. Some of the native Highland lairds became bankrupt, but incomers, typified by one of the most hated - John Gordon of Cluny - saw the crisis as an opportunity to rid themselves of a useless population, as they saw it. The poorest class of small tenants were evicted, sometimes with great cruelty. Large numbers were consigned to the colonies in "coffin ships".

Economic conditions improved somewhat after 1855, and the Highland population experienced more favourable conditions, with stable rents and rising prices for their produce. That period came to an abrupt end in the winter of 1880-1 when a general agricultural depression began to bite. Perhaps inspired by events in Ireland, crofters on the MacDonald estate on Skye resisted attempts by the landlord to remove sections of their grazings at Braes in April 1882 and the "Crofters War" began. This time, crofter protest and resistance spread across the region, particularly affecting Skye, Lewis, Tiree and parts of western Sutherland. Added to this was support from urban Scotland and a broadly sympathetic Liberal government under W. E. Gladstone. In 1883 Gladstone appointed a Royal Commission under Lord Napier whose report provided the basis of state intervention in 1886, with the Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act. This legislation gave Highland crofters some security from eviction, the benefit of their improvements and set up the Crofters Commission with the legal power to set fair rents, adjudicate on arrears and facilitate extensions to crofts. This Act was followed, in 1897, with the Congested Districts (Scotland) Act, which legislated for state land purchase on behalf of crofters and investment into the transportation and agricultural networks of the region; and then by the Small Landholders (1911) and Land Settlement Acts (1919) aimed at addressing (with mixed success) the chronic land hunger of the region, which many blamed on the clearances of a century earlier.

Later in this section, I will discuss the involvement of Great Grandfather Joseph Macleod in the struggle for improvements in the rights of the crofter community.

### Our Connection to the Clan MacLeod

So, how do we connect to the Clan MacLeod? I was informed by Morag who got it from her father and grandfather that our line descended from the MacLeods of Assynt. I needed a Y-DNA result which could be compared with members of the MacLeod group at FTDNA.com. Of Morag's brothers, Torcul had one daughter; Iain had a son, Andrew, but he has died; Duncan has no children. Angus has a living son named Andrew, but he did not appear to be interested.

The Assynt MacLeods descended from *Tormod*, a younger son of the chief of the *Siol Torcaill* MacLeods of Lewis, who died before 1437 in Assynt. The genealogy of the MacLeods can be found in the "History of the MacLeods" by Alexander Mackenzie, 1888, or "The MacLeods – the genealogy of a clan", by Alick Morrison, published by ACMS. Volume V includes Assynt.

I arranged for a Y-DNA test for Uncle Duncan. The Y37 test came back as I-M253 which is the Viking Haplogroup I1a. That genetic signature is carried by around 39% of all men in Sweden. There are 25 I1a results in the MacLeod B-1 group at FTDNA, several reporting Assynt origins. Notable among those was a Murdoch MacLeod who migrated to Canada in 1848, onboard the "Greenock" sailing out of Loch Laxford. His descendant, Robert MacLeod wrote that "virtually all of the 417 passengers onboard were from Assynt, assisted in migrating by the Duke of Sutherland." There are some differences between Robert and Duncan's results, suggesting a relationship as far back as the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is clear, then, that we do not descend from *Leòd* in the male line R1b-P312-DF27, but from "part-takers" with Nordic ancestry. However, assuming our Viking ancestor settled in the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, there might be around 24 generations of intermarriage with women, some of whom did descend from *Leòd*.

There is an issue which is common to many Highland clans. The elite families, the clan chiefs, tended to be inclusive with their names. In contrast to many noble families elsewhere who are jealous of sharing their names and exclude the *hoi-polloi*. What I mean by this inclusivity is that, in their semi-tribal past, clans tended to expand their numbers by absorbing the people on their lands, who were sometimes called part-



takers, and encouraging them to use the chief's name. As an example, the Camerons in Lochaber had a policy of only letting farms to people bearing their name. If a prospective tenant didn't, no matter, he simply had to adopt the name Cameron henceforth. There was even a name for this procedure – they became “Camerons of the henstone”, after a boulder situated close by the house of the chief at Achnacarry. The Mackenzies in the Gairloch did the same, so that when the Mackenzies of Seaforth took over Assynt, some MacLeods were encouraged to change their names to Mackenzie. Thus, for most clans, only a minority actually have a genetic link to the founder. Even in the Clan Gregor, despite 170 years of proscription, less than half of the men bearing the name in the MacGregor family group at FTDNA actually descend from the founder. In clans such as the Campbells and Mackenzies, the proportion is a great deal less.

Such practices account for the large numbers of people bearing the name MacLeod. A quick internet search indicates that there are 14,500 MacLeods in Scotland and over 6,000 in England. But there are almost 19,000 in Canada; over 11,000 in the USA and around 5,500 in Australia and New Zealand.

So that is a synopsis of the Clan MacLeod from its origin, moving forward. How about our family going back in time to close the gap? At the time of writing, I still haven't been able to do so. I would be delighted if I could pinpoint a place in Assynt where our ancestors lived. The MacLeod chiefs in Assynt lost their lands in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. The published genealogies only deal with members of the chiefly family. Thus I have only been able trace our line, with certainty, back to the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The Kildonan Old Parish Record (OPR) only began in 1790. Thus our definite MacLeod ancestry, as far back as it is possible to reach, starts with Joseph who was born in 1791 to Alexander MacLeod and Janet Polson, in Eldrable, Kildonan. Eldrable was a jointly held township about 4 km west of Helmsdale on the southern side of the Strath of Kildonan. Its four tenants were surnamed Gordon, MacLeod and Polson.

After the family were cleared to West Helmsdale in 1819, a shepherd's cottage was built close by the Eldrable site. When I visited in the late 1980s, the cottage was a ruin

on the grouse moor to be glimpsed from the train as it thunders up the empty strath. However, I noted in 2022 that the cottage appeared to have been reroofed but with no sign of habitation.

The family tradition from my mother and from Alasdair, her father, is that we sprang from the MacLeods of Assynt. Grandfather Alasdair's eldest son was registered in 1921 as Joseph Gentles MacLeod but was subsequently baptised and known to all as Torcul Mackay MacLeod – I wonder if that came from Grandfather's belief in our connection to Assynt and Lewis, or due to a conflict with his father, Joseph?

Despite my investigations into the Sutherland archives, I have been unable to fill the gap between the people listed in Assynt in the 1691 hearth tax and children of Alexander in Eldrable a century later. Most of the Sutherland estate was let, or wadset, to tacksmen (the gentlemen of the Highlands), who were not, usually, themselves farmers but let their holdings to sub-tenants who paid them rent. A portion of that rent was then paid to the Sutherland estate. A wadset usually involved a significant initial payment by the tacksmen which would be recovered with profit over time from the rents of the sub-tenants. Unfortunately there is no surviving record of the wadsetters' rentals. Towards the end of the 18th century, the estate began a process of buying out the wadsetters and collecting rents directly from the small tenants. Thus there are surviving records of rentals for the short period before comprehensive clearance by Sellar, et al, from 1809 to 1821. A number of other lists survive in the estate records around the beginning of the 19th century.

In the OPR, during the period from 1790 to 1816, there were three MacLeod families in the lower strath and five more in the 'Heights of Kildonan'. As well as Hugh in Caen, the other two heads of family in the lower strath, were named Alexander. One, married to Jean Ross, had four children in Torrish between 1795 and 1809 and probably the same family in Gailable where they had another three children between 1811 and 1816. The other Alexander was in Eldrable, married to Janet Polson with four recorded children. From records of their post-1855 deaths, Alexander in Eldrable had been previously married to Marion Polson with at least three children who survived long

enough for their deaths to be recorded in the statutory record. I came to the conclusion that it was very likely that Alexander in Torrish had been an earlier son of Alexander in Eldrable, born around 1770 and deceased before 1855.

Earlier than that time, almost the only available nominal source was the list of fencible men on the estate compiled by the Earl in 1745. There were 2174 men listed aged between 16 and 60 and able to bear arms. There were 47 MacLeods in the parishes on the East coast of the county, five of them in Kildonan. On the assumption that the 1745 census-takers of able-bodied men in Kildonan had started at the coast and worked up the strath to the Heights, and also assuming that the MacLeods in Kildonan in 1745 were ancestral to the MacLeods there in 1791, the five were - Robert at 7, Angus at 26, John at 27, William and Hugh at 78 and 79. Robert was probably on or near the coast and as there are no children named Robert in subsequent generations, I have ignored him. There was no indication whether 26 and 27 may have been brothers, or father and son. William MacLeod at no 78 and his, specifically noted, 'son Hugh' at 79 were labelled "Leusach" - that is, from the Isle of Lewis. Three of the post-1791 Kildonan MacLeod families in the Upper strath are headed by 'Hugh' and one by 'William', so I have assumed these descended from the 'Leusach'.

Our descent is from Alexander in Eldrable. I have assumed that he was born around 1745. He disappeared from the rental and presumably had died before 1809. Therefore he could well be the son of one of those listed in the 1745 list for Kildonan. The oldest certain child of Alexander in Eldrable was Angus born around 1775 (died 24th November 1856, aged 81), but I think, as discussed in a previous paragraph, that he and Marion Polson may have had an earlier son named Alexander. Thus it may be a reasonable conjecture that Alexander in Eldrable's father had been John (27) and his grandfather Angus (26). In the 1745 list, 26 and 27 would have been born somewhere between 1685 and 1729 (to be aged between 16 and 60 in 1745). Number 26, Angus, if aged under 60 might have been born around 1690, while John (27) his over-16-year-old son, could have been born between 1715 and 1725. If John married around 1745, that would place his birth date in that range. I noted that all five of Alexander in Eldrable's sons (Alexander, Angus, William, Joseph and John) had sons named Alexander; three

had sons named John (William, Joseph and John); three had sons named William (Alex, Angus and Joseph); and two had sons named Angus (Alex and Joseph). So these forenames – Alexander, Angus, John and William – are significant.

There were no MacLeods listed in the 1691 hearth tax for Kildonan so they had come in subsequently. In the 1691 hearth tax for Assynt, there are only a very few using MacLeod as a surname: one was John in Elphin, brother of Neil the last chief (following an advantageous marriage he would become the first of Geanies in Easter Ross); another was Alexander MacLeod of Salachie in Ledbeg. Almost all the other entries in the tax list used patronymics. I excluded all but the entries using Alexander, John, William and Angus to arrive at the following possibilities:

Achmalvich: John McAngus vic Angus: (John son of Angus of the line of Angus).

Glenlerock: John McAngus VcEan – (John, son of Angus of the line of John).

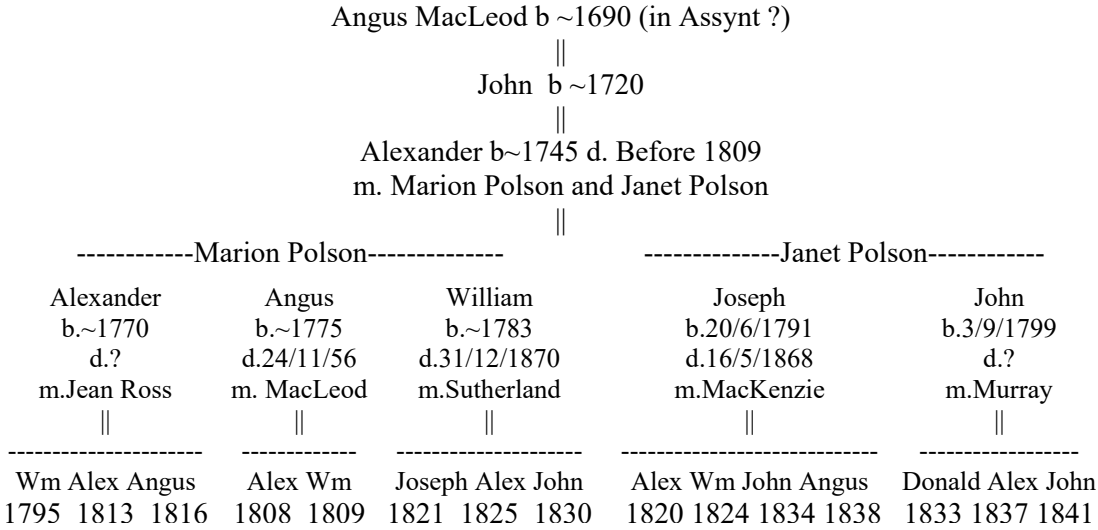
These two men were householders in 1691, possibly with adult children. They or their children could have had a son named Angus, born around 1690, who might have featured in the 1745 Kildonan list with his own son John. On OS Landranger map 15, Glenlerock is Glenleraig at the head of Loch Nedd – OS ref NC316148 – 5Km WNW of Quinag. Achmalvich, now Achmelvich is on the coast at OS ref NC246058

The genealogies of the Assynt MacLeods do not help, as we now know that we are not genetic descendants in the male line. Although Alexander, Angus and John were common names among the Assynt MacLeods, that does not mean much as, among the 2174 names in the 1745 list, nine first names accounted for 1961 of them: - there were 463 named John (Iain), 288 Alexander and 88 Angus. Even so, it does not rule out the probability that Angus and John were descended from MacLeods who had been displaced from the Assynt lands.

In 1649, following the battle of Carbisdale, the fugitive first Marquis of Montrose was arrested by dependents of Neil MacLeod, eleventh chief of the MacLeods of Assynt, and delivered to the Covenanter regime in Edinburgh for execution. Following the Restoration of the Stuarts in 1660, Neil MacLeod was prosecuted by the second

Marquis of Montrose. After three years of imprisonment, he eventually obtained forgiveness from Charles II under the Act of Indemnity, but due to his legal expenses, he became bankrupt and the Mackenzies had acquired Assynt by 1691. The Earl of Sutherland ultimately purchased Assynt from the bankrupt Mackenzies in 1757.

Thus, in this genealogy, (of sons only): Angus, born ~1690; with his son John born ~1720; Alexander born ~1745; and Joseph, baptised 20th June 1791 in Kildonan.



Three successive generations of MacLeod men appear to have lost their first wives. According to the post-1854 death registrations, Alexander in Eldrable had at least three children to Marion Polson up to Ann in 1788. Joseph was born in 1791 to Janet Polson, who had three subsequent children (two of which may have died). Joseph, in turn married Minnie Mackenzie in March 1819. Their son Alexander was born on 31/12/1820. Joseph, must have lost his wife, although her death is not recorded, and shortly afterwards married Barbara Mackenzie in January 1822. Alexander, by then a shoemaker in Helmsdale, married Margaret Grey in 1852. Margaret must have died prior to the introduction of statutory registration in 1855. In July 1855, an illegitimate daughter Margaret surnamed MacLeod, was registered by Ann MacLean, the house-servant of Alexander MacLeod. In January 1857, Alexander married Ann MacLean and they went on to have a further six children between 1859 and 1869.

**Alison McCall**

The ancestors of Alison McCall were cleared from Torrish to Marrel in 1819. Alison has proved her descent from Alexander MacLeod and Katherine Polson who had a son named William in Torrish. He died aged 90 in 1865, so born in about 1775. That William is clearly not the same as William, the son of Alexander and Marion Polson, who died aged 87 in 1870. I believe that there was a relationship, but, as the parish record only began in 1791, here is my explanation of the coincidence of family names.

Angus and John, aged between 16 and 60, feature in the 1745 list. I have assumed here that Angus must have had other sons, (??) born no earlier than 1730, so they would have been aged under 16 in 1745. Next I assumed that one was the father of Alexander, born in about 1752, and then, in turn, Alexander had a son William in 1775. Note that, ignoring daughters, William's sons also include Alexander, William and Angus thus matching the children of his probable cousins. (Donald and George were common names among the Polsons and must have come from the maternal line). Also in this table is Hugh, born around 1760. His family in Caen is discussed on page 170.

Angus MacLeod b ~1690 (in Assynt ?)

||

? a son ?  
b.~1730

||

Alexander  
b.~1752

m.Kath Polson

||

? a son ?  
b.~1735

||

Hugh  
b.~1760

m.Lexy Polson

John  
b.~1720

||

Alexander  
b.~1745

m.Marion Polson

||

William  
b.~1775

d.3/9/1865

m.Rose Polson  
Torrish

||

Alexander  
b.~1770

d.?

m.Jean Ross  
Torrish

||

Angus  
b.~1775

d.24/11/56

m. MacLeod  
Eldrable

||

William  
b.~1783

d.31/12/1870

m.Sutherland  
W.Helmsdale

||

Alex Donald William George Angus  
1809 1811 1813 1818 1831

Wm Alex Angus  
1795 1813 1816

Alex Wm  
1808 1809

Joseph Alex John  
1821 1825 1830

MACLEOD  
 Hugh MACLEOD = Lucy (Eppie) POLSON  
 Marion POLSON = (1) Alexander MACLEOD = (2) Janet POLSON  
 d. between 1799-1809 alive 1819

John Joseph William Catherine Angus  
 20/6/91 twins - 26/6/93 b.1785 b.1775  
 d.6/6/66 d.7/3/1875 d.24/11/1856  
 m.Catharine =  
 Murray  
 16/6/1820 m.12/2/1807

John William Ann  
 b.1783 b.1788  
 d.31/12/70 d.28/8/1855  
 m.Elsebeth m.William  
 SUTHERLAND POLSON  
 m.12/2/1819 b.1815  
 d.9/8/74 m.17/1/1822 m.5/3/1819 (see next sheet)

Alexander Ellen James Hugh William Isabella Margaret Hugh Alex Mary John Janet Joseph Heman  
 14/2/28 17/2/24 26/6/31 7/10/20 9/4/09 1810 20/6/17 20/7/20 1825 1824 1830 1832 18/8/21 1/5/37  
 unkn. d.1912 (B) d25/3/99 d.1860 d.21/12/90 7/5/92  
 Robert m.Margaret m.Janet m.William m.Chris m.Angusina m.Jane m.Cath.  
 1829 ---(A)--MACLEOD (1879) 4.2.59 MACDONALD POLSON POLSON MACKAY MACLEOD  
 to Ness --- (1879) --- (sisters P.Gower m.15/3/49) (m.26/6/68)  
 then Quebec (b.1847- (Auster.) (Canada) b.1831 b.22/10/39  
 d.30/5/1912) d.21/6/1906 | shoemaker W.Helms

Helen Catharine John Ann Mary Adam Mary Donald William John John William Ann Marion George William Elsie Alex. | Anne | Christina Johan  
 9.1.83 26.3.80 1881 1884 1830 1837 1839 1842 1844 1846 1854 16/6/56 1858 5/2/61 1867 b.4.76 2.70 7.69 | 12.74 | 31.7.73 31.3.78  
 d.1910 d.1920 d.1916 d.1882 1877 m.Murdo 1883 d.2.46 3.50 Dolina Jessie 1959 7.11.82 29.3.81  
 Also Josephina & Alice MACPHERSON (mostly unmarried - W.Helmsdale)  
 13.5.87 25.9.88

Catherine Anne Angusina Alexandrina Alexander George John Betsy Margaret  
 b.1.5.62 21.1.64 17.12.65 18.7.67 31.12.76 26.3.78 3.4.80 15.7.83 24.7.84  
 d.14.3.42 1940 m.Daniel m.Hugh Sutherland  
 Donald Janet Alexander Catherine John Chirsty Margaret  
 19/10/33 1835 25/6/1837 22/10/39 1841 1844 1846 (A)  
 m.Betty m.Wm m.Janet m.Heman  
 Mackay Macleod Sutherland MACLEOD  
 29.10.58 (B) 8.2.64 (see above) MACLEOD MACLEOD  
 Donald 1862-1938

Alexander William John Daniel Jessie Jessie Donald William John Catherine Alexander  
 b.20.7.92 12.10.93 19.7.98 1908 1886 1897 1897  
 d. 1961







### Hugh MacLeod and Eppie Polson in Caen

On the first Wordstar chart, top left, is Hugh MacLeod married to Eppie Polson. They had children baptised in Caen between 1785 and 1793. I included this family originally because their son Joseph, baptised 26/6/1793, married Catherine Murray in 1820 and had a son Hugh who married Margaret MacLeod, the youngest child of John MacLeod, youngest son of Alexander MacLeod in Eldrable. (See the chart at bottom of page)

I had assumed that the name Hugh might indicate a possible descent from William and his son Hugh, numbers 78 and 79 in the 1745 list who were labelled Leusach. Then I was contacted by Graham MacLeod in New Zealand who descends from William, the twin of Joseph born in 1793. Graham told me that William's son, Hugh, emigrated to New Zealand and named his farm there "Elphan Grove". Elphin, of course, is in Assynt, close to Ledmore and Ledbeg where the chiefly family of the MacLeods of Assynt lived. This suggests that Hugh in Caen also had Assynt origins. We now know from DNA that the descendants of Hugh and Alexander are very closely related.

Hugh MacLeod = Lexy Polson Caen 		Alex. MacLeod = Marion/Janet Polson Eldrable 		
-----		-----		
Joseph b.26/6/1793	William b.26/6/1793	Catherine b.1785	= Angus b.1775	John b.1799
m.Cath. Murray 6/6/1820	m.Janet Murray ??	m.12/2/1807 Eldrable		m.Ann Murray 6/1/1831
-----	-----	-----		-----
Hugh b.1820	Hugh m. Janet Inglis	William Hugh 1809 1820		Margaret 1846
m. Marg. MacLeod 1879	To NZ			m. Hugh MacLeod 1879

Although the forename Hugh was not recorded in the Eldrable kin prior to these marriages, I believe Angus (b.~1690) must have had another son, the father of Hugh MacLeod, thus Alex's son Angus and Hugh's daughter Catherine were second cousins, and Hugh (b.1820) who married Margaret (b.1846) in 1879 were third cousins. It is also quite possible that Lexy, Janet and Marion Polson may have been closely related.

**Remember the Homeless**

By Graham McLeod, New Zealand, descendant of William, bapt. Caen in 1793

Remember the homeless, the starving and poor,  
Their coffin ships leaving, they can stay no more.  
From homes in the black house, the strath and the glen  
Seeking a land, not returning again.

A starving of belly, a starving of soul,  
Such sadness of leaving, they cannot control.  
The glens still are empty but hope stays alive,  
A place to return to, if they can survive.

New lands await them but home is still heart,  
But distance in miles, will keep kin apart.  
A clutching to memory, of family and friends  
No longer crofters, back in the glens.

A new life is waiting for those who must leave,  
A time full of sorrow for family who grieve.  
The men left behind and the women who weep,  
The clearance of those who must make way for sheep.

The sounds of the pipes, a highland lament,  
From those who remained on the shore as they went,  
To places far distant, from chieftain and clan  
But stayed Scots forever, the heart of a man.

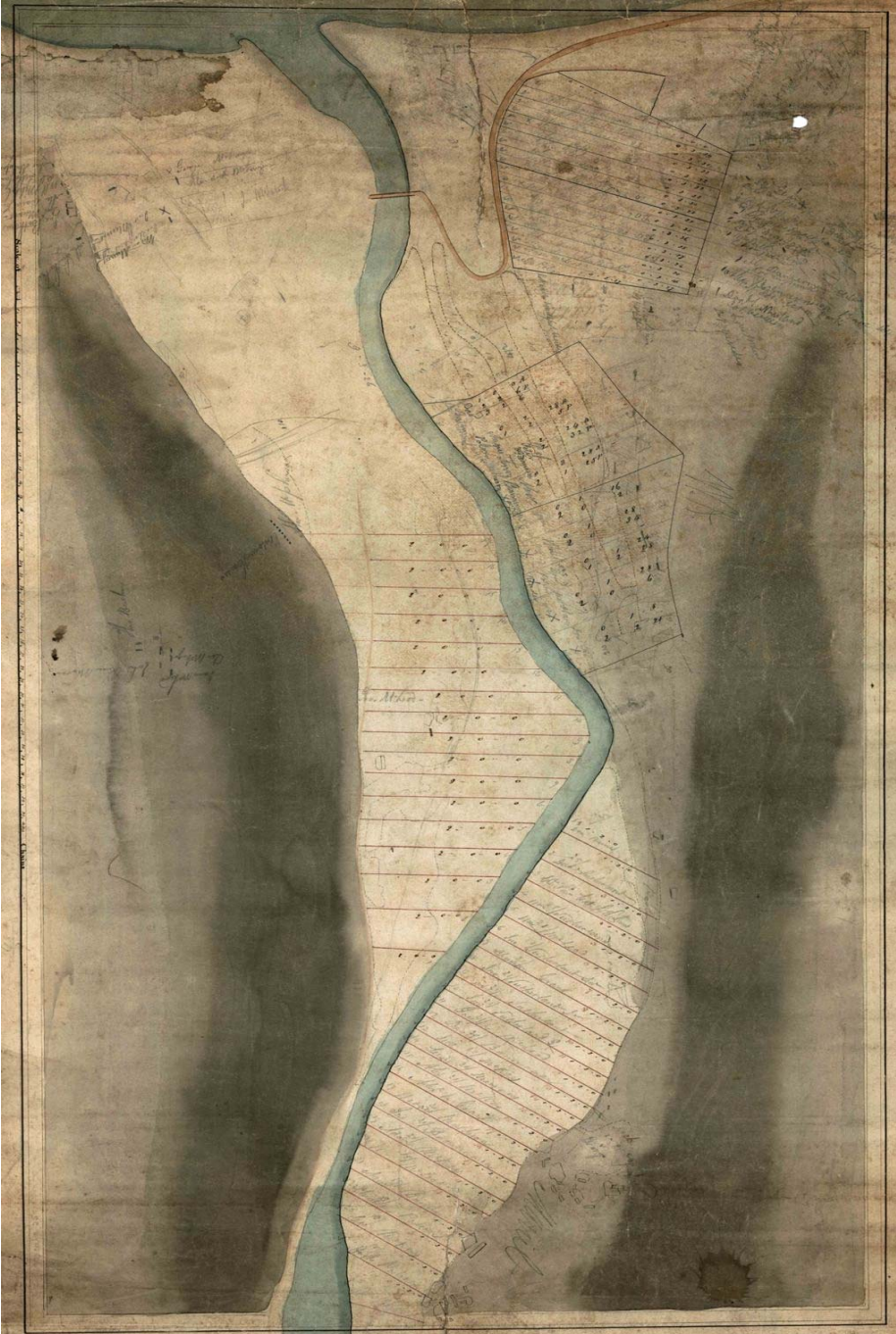
Hugh MacLeod – m.Eppie Polson Caen / Marrel (g.g.g.gfather)  
||  
William MacLeod – m.Janet Murray Marrel ( g g.grandfather}  
||  
Hugh MacLeod – m.Janet Inglis (married in Edinburgh and went to NZ). (g.grandfather)  
||  
Inglis McLeod - m.Prescilla Crow -- NZ (grand father)  
||  
Ward Vincent McLeod – m.Eileen Peoples -- NZ (father )  
||  
Graham McLeod

When Duncan's DNA result came, it was an exact match on 37 markers with Graham McLeod in New Zealand who descended from Hugh MacLeod in Caen. The Y-37 result was I-M253, in the "Viking" I1a group. Another testee, Roderick MacLeod, whose family also has a tradition of Assynt descent is also in the Viking I1a group. So, the answer to whether Hugh, the father of Joseph and William in 1793 descends from William and Hugh (78 and 79), the Leusach in the upper strath in 1745, or from Angus and John (26 and 27) in the lower strath must be the latter. It may be significant that Graham's gt-grandfather, Hugh MacLeod, named his NZ farm Elphan. In the 1691 hearth tax, there was an Angus McHuchean Vic Ean in Elphin, Assynt. That is Angus, son of Hugh and grandson of John. The names fit and it's the only clue we have!

I-M253 is found at its highest density in Northern Europe and other countries that experienced extensive migration from Northern Europe, either in the Migration Period, the Viking Age, or in more modern times. It is found in all places invaded by the Norse. According to its Wikipedia entry Haplogroup I-M253, also known as I1, is a primary branch of Haplogroup I-M170 (I\*). Haplogroup I1 is believed to have been present among Upper Palaeolithic European hunter-gatherers as a minor lineage but due to its near-total absence in pre-Neolithic DNA samples it cannot have been very widespread. Neolithic I1 samples are very sparse as well, suggesting a rapid dispersion connected to a founder effect in the Nordic Bronze Age. Today it reaches its peak frequencies in Sweden (52 percent of males in Västra Götaland County) and western Finland (more than 50 percent in Satakunta province). In terms of national averages, I-M253 is found in 38-39% of Swedes, 37% of Norwegians, 34.8% of Danes, 34.5% of Icelandic men, and about 28% of Finns. More than 99% of living men with I1 belong to the DF29 branch. All DF29 men share a common ancestor born between 2500 and 2400 BCE. The oldest ancient individual with I1-DF29 found is Oll009, a man from early Bronze Age Sweden.

FTDNA suggest that our MacLeods have a common male-line Viking ancestor, who lived around 900 CE, with the composer Ludwig van Beethoven. Perhaps this ancestor had lived on the island of Gotland in the Baltic? One of his descendants went to the Western Isles of Scotland while another went to Germany.

## Clearance to West Helmsdale



This is a Sutherland estate plan of the lotting of East & West Helmsdale and Marrel (area furthest upstream) dated circa 1817. The mouth of the river is to the East. (Thanks to Timespan for the image).



In this magnified image the names of the tenants in each strip of West Helmsdale become a little clearer. The old bridge over the river on the left of the image is to the North. The plan does not convey the steepness of the hillside. The allocations were around three acres each. From the top, the first name appears to be John Bannerman, then Joseph MacLeod. At the other end of the lotting was Angus MacLeod and the triangular 2-acre plot alongside is marked J. Polson, which could be Joseph and Angus's mother.

Joseph MacLeod married Minnie Mackenzie 5/3/1819. Their son Alexander was born 31/12/1820. Minnie must have died in childbirth or shortly after. Joseph married Barbara Mackenzie on 17/1/1822. Joseph and Barbara had a further six children baptised between 1824 and 1838. In the 1851 census, Joseph was described as a mason, which probably meant that he would have been away from home much of the time.



I think this picture must be dated to around 1900. Alexander MacLeod (1820-1907) and Ann MacLean (1830-1927) are seated. Alice Macintosh told me that the older woman in the middle at the back was Mary MacDonald (b.1830), a cousin of both Alexander and Ann. I can only speculate as to which of their four daughters are pictured. Two of them are at the back. Margaret had married in John Macintosh in 1894 but lived locally in Gartymore. Anna Bella, the youngest, married John Gentles in West Lothian in 1897, so the two pictured here could be Jane, who would marry John Whyte in Edinburgh in 1902 and Williamina who would marry David Robertson in Edinburgh in 1905.

Alexander was the first son of Joseph MacLeod. His birth was not recorded in the OPR, but Great Aunt Wilrine had it written on the fly-leaf of her bible as 31<sup>st</sup> December 1820. His father Joseph had married Minnie Mackenzie on the 5<sup>th</sup> of March 1819. I can only assume that Minnie died around the time of Alexander's birth because Joseph married again to Barbara Mackenzie on 17<sup>th</sup> January 1822. I couldn't find them in the OPR, so it has been impossible to tell whether Barbara and Minnie had been sisters, but Joseph would have needed someone to look after his infant son

The next time I could find a mention of Alexander was in the 1841 census when he was in business as a shoemaker in Helmsdale. In the 1851 and 1861 census his business was in Dunrobin Street Helmsdale, but the advent of the railway in 1870 would be a disaster for him and his family. Cheaper shoes could now be imported by rail from the English factories and he was unable to compete. In 1871, Alexander and Anne were living at the Barracks in Carnlaggie, just outside the town with their children. The Barracks were a block of single-roomed cottages, labelled in an early plan of Helmsdale as "almshouses". Their youngest child, Anna Bell, was just over a year old. Alexander received some parish relief until Anna Bell reached sixteen. Their oldest son, also Alexander, was born in 1860. He was employed as a roofer and died in 1891 after falling from the roof of the Free Church in Helmsdale while it was under construction.

James Hunter, in his 2019 book, *Insurrection*, wrote of the crisis caused when Scotland's 1846 potato crop was wiped out by blight. In the Hebrides and the West Highlands a huge relief effort came too late to prevent starvation and death. Further east, towns and villages from Aberdeen to Wick and Thurso rose up in protest at the cost of the oatmeal that replaced potatoes as people's basic foodstuff. The soaring price of oatmeal was blamed on the export of grain by farmers and landlords who were cashing in on even higher prices to be obtained elsewhere. As a bitter winter gripped and families feared a repeat of the calamitous famine which was then ravaging Ireland, grain carts were seized, ships boarded, harbours blockaded, a jail forced open, and the military confronted by mobs. The army fired on one set of rioters. Savage sentences were imposed on others. But thousand-strong crowds also gained key concessions. Above all they won cheaper food.



Hunter wrote that in many communities, the shoemakers appeared to be central to the rioting. He identified protests in Wick and Pultneytown where the shortage of meal coincided with a downturn in the fishing industry meaning that many fishermen and on-shore processors were out of work. Similarly in Dingwall, Inverness and the Moray coast. However, he did not mention any rioting on the Sutherland coast, so I emailed him to confirm that no unrest had been reported from the ports of Helmsdale, Brora, Golspie and Dornoch. It seemed so out of character to me that the Sutherland estate factors had ensured that sufficient grain was available for those that needed it.



Lexy Mackay of West Langwell, Rogart married Joseph MacLeod on 25<sup>th</sup> February 1890. Lexy's mother was Alexandrina Polson (pictured) from East Helmsdale, daughter of Donald Polson and Merran Murray. Donald was a son of Robert Polson, a shoemaker, and Margaret MacLeod who married in 1800 and had been cleared from Gearrag, Kildonan.

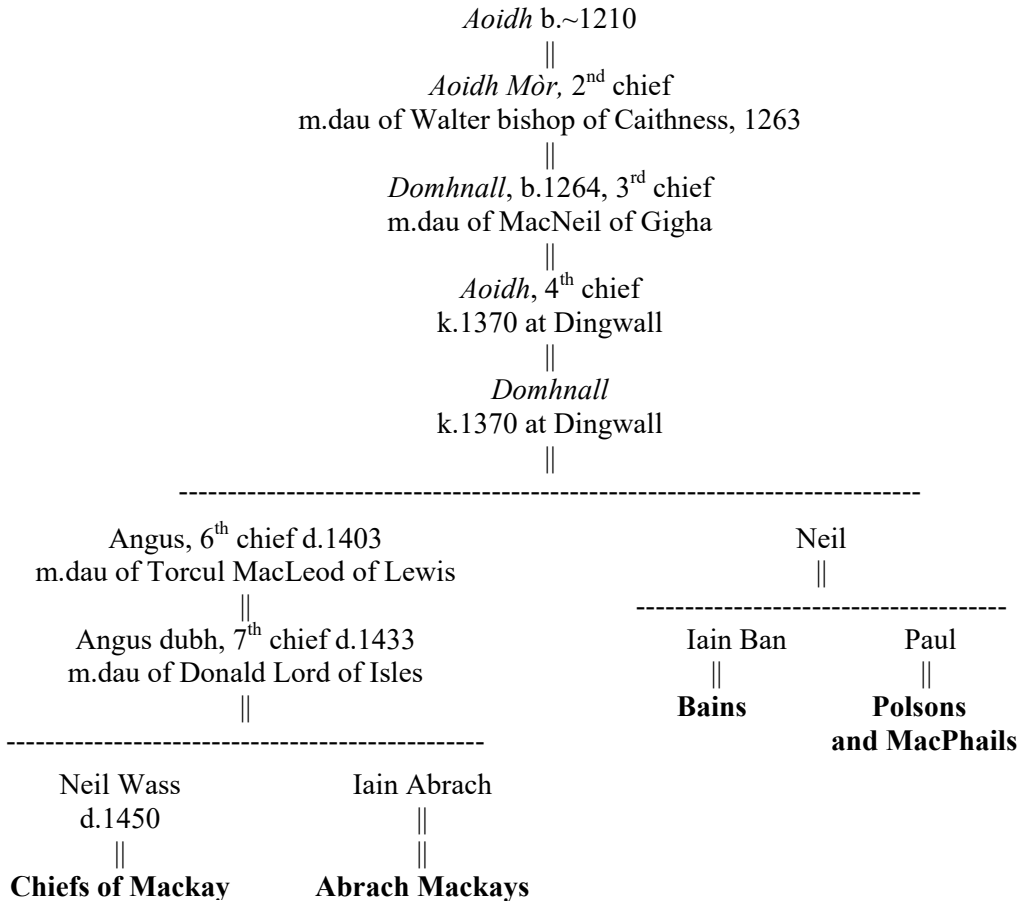
Lexy is an abbreviated form of Alexandrina. The photographer was James Auld in Ellon where Lexy's granddaughter, Ann (Nan) MacLeod was born in 1895, so Lexy Polson, born in 1836, would have been around 60 in this photograph.

Donald Polson and Merran Murray's family in East Helmsdale appear in the 1851 census but I could only find Alexandrina in the 1861 census after her marriage to John Mackay. I discovered that the family had migrated to Australia during the 1850s leaving Alexandrina behind. One can only assume that she had been unwilling to leave her sweetheart John Mackay whom she married on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1860. A number of years ago I published a letter in an Australian newspaper looking for descendants of their family, I received replies from a number of descendants of Polsons from Helmsdale but not the family of Donald and Merran.

## Mackay and Polson

Alexander MacLeod in Eldrable was married to Marion and then Janet Polson. Great grandfather Joseph married Lexy Mackay in Rogart, the daughter of Lexy Polson from Helmsdale. So this page is a consideration of the Clan Mackay in Sutherland and their sept, or offshoot, the Polsons.

### A simplified genealogy of Clan Mackay – *Clann Mhic Aoidh*



In the *Blackcastle MS* by Alexander Mackay, published by Angus Mackay in “The Book of Mackay”, it was stated that Iye (*Aoidh*), 1st chief of the Clan Mackay (*Clann Mac Aoidh*), who was born in about 1210, was a descendant of Malcolm MacHeth, 1st Earl of Ross who died in about 1168. Malcolm MacHeth, Earl of Ross may well have been related to the early rulers or mormaers of Moray. According to the *MS* sometime in the 1160s after conflict with king Malcolm IV of Scotland, the MacHeths

and their supporters fled northwards over the hills of Ross into Strathnaver, where they were welcomed by the Norse Harald Maddadsson, Mormaer of Caithness who was then in a state of enmity towards the king. The MacHeths and the MacWilliams again rebelled against the king in 1215 but were defeated by Fearchar, Earl of Ross when Kenneth MacHeth, the grandson of Malcolm MacHeth, was killed. It is possible that the Strathnaver Mackays are descended from this Kenneth MacHeth, and that *Aoidh*, the 1st chief of Clan Mackay may well have been his son or nephew. According to the *Blackcastle MS*, the son of *Aoidh* was *Aoidh Mòr*, the 2nd chief, who married a daughter of Walter, Bishop of Caithness in 1263.

According to Major-General Stewart, the Mackays were amongst the clans who supported Robert the Bruce at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314. Later in the 14th century, in 1370, *Aoidh*, 4th chief of Strathnaver and his son, *Domhnall*, were murdered at Dingwall Castle by Nicholas Sutherland, 1st of Duffus, head of one of the junior branches of Clan Sutherland. Much bloodshed followed, including a retaliatory raid on Dornoch in 1372. The cathedral was once again set on fire and many men were hanged in the town square. After this, the feud quietened down as both sides were called away to fight against the English.

In 1403, the Battle of *Tuiteam Tarbhach* (literally meaning “substantial bloodfall”) was fought between the Mackays and MacLeods of Lewis. Angus Mackay, 6th of Strathnaver, had married the sister of the MacLeod of Lewis but when MacLeod found that his sister had been mistreated, he raided Strathnaver and Brae-Chat in Sutherland. In the ensuing battle, MacLeod was killed with many of his followers.

In 1411, Donald of Islay, Lord of the Isles challenged the Stewart royal family for the Earldom of Ross. Angus Dubh Mackay, 7th of Strathnaver joined the Stewart Confederacy and, in the Battle of Dingwall, Donald of the Isles defeated Mackay. However, Angus Dubh Mackay later married a sister of Donald of the Isles, who was, also, a granddaughter of Robert II of Scotland, indicating how important the Clan Mackay had become.



This 17<sup>th</sup> century German print has been assumed to show men of Mackay's Regiment in Stettin during the Thirty Years' War. The original caption states, "They are a strong and hardy people who survive on little food. If they have no bread, they eat roots [turnips may be intended]. When necessary, they can cover more than 20 German miles in a day's forced march. Besides muskets, they carry bows, quivers and long swords."

In April 1616 Donald, the Mackay chief, went to London and was knighted by the king. In 1626, Sir Donald Mackay embarked with 3000 men at Cromarty under Count Mansfeld for the Thirty Years' War in the service of the king of Denmark alongside their colonel, Robert Monro. In March 1627, Sir Donald Mackay was created a Baronet of Nova Scotia, and in 1628 was elevated in the peerage as Lord Reay. In 1630, Donald Mackay, 1st Lord Reay accompanied his regiment to Germany, and was present at the capture of Stettin and Colberg. The following year in 1631 Lord Reay was empowered by Charles I to raise another force of men for service with Gustavus Adolphus, king of Sweden. During 1632 Gustavus Adolphus, king of Sweden was killed at the Battle of Lützen. Lord Reay was not repaid the large sums of money due to him by the king.

Strathnaver, in the north-west of the modern county of Sutherland, was the territory of the Clan Mackay – known in Gaelic as *Duthaich mhic Aoidh*. It consisted of the parishes of Farr, Tongue, Durness and Eddrachillis. It was not until 1829 that

Strathnaver became part of Sutherland when the Mackay chief sold the remainder of his peoples' homeland - *Duthaich 'ic Aoidh* - to the Countess of Sutherland.

During the Jacobite rising of 1715 Lord Reay and the Earl of Sutherland opposed the Jacobites, taking the side of George I of Great Britain and defending Inverness Castle against the rebels. In 1719, a detachment of 80 men from the Clan Mackay fought at the Battle of Glen Shiel where the Jacobites were defeated.

During the Jacobite rising of 1745 Lord Reay and his clan again supported the British Government. In an engagement known as the Skirmish of Tongue in March 1746, the frigate *Sheerness* chased *Le Prince Charles* with gold and supplies from France into the shallow Kyle of Tongue. The crew got ashore with the gold but the Mackay companies, along with some men from Loudon's Highland regiment, intercepted them and captured the gold.

On 15<sup>th</sup> April 1746, independent Highland Companies led by Ensign John Mackay, fought at the Battle of Littleferry where they defeated the Jacobites and, on the same day, captured George Mackenzie, 3rd Earl of Cromartie at Dunrobin Castle.

It is noteworthy how widespread the Mackay name was in Sutherland. In the 1745 muster roll of 2174 fencible men, there were 315 Mackays in total. Rogart with 95 had the largest number. There were only 40 listed in the parish of Farr, but there were many men with patronymic names in the Farr list who, in later years, would use the surname Mackay. Apart from Farr and Rogart, there were 21 Mackays in Clyne, 35 in Creich, 36 in Dornoch, 20 in Golspie, 18 in Kildonan, 51 in Lairg, and 8 in Loth.

Out of a total 22 Polsons in the list, there were 12 in Loth, 8 in Kildonan, 1 in Dornoch and 1 in Golspie. There were 8 Bains in Farr and 3 in Golspie, none in Rogart.

## Rogart

Strath Fleet is a broad strath running slightly south of east from the coast at Loch Fleet to Lairg. The A839 leaves the A9 at the Mound and runs up through the strath. The railway here leaves the coast and makes its circuitous way through Strath Fleet to Lairg and from there back to Golspie and its eventual destinations of Wick and Thurso.

Roughly half way along Strath Fleet is Pittentrail, a small settlement around Rogart station, which has built up on the main road here. There is an inn, a shop, a mix of traditional and modern houses and a collection of sheep pens. Pittentrail marks the southern extent of an unusually well populated landscape in the Highlands with a population of around 450. It measures some two miles from east to west and extends north for four miles to the river Brora.

Rogart Parish was created in the thirteenth century at the time of the creation of the 1st Earl of Sutherland. The Parish church, dating from 1770, lies a mile or so north of the crossroads near Rogart Station. It is the latest in a series built on the same site.

Evictions and reorganisations in Rogart, during the Clearances, began in 1807 and continued each year until 1819. This resulted in the near complete clearance of Strath Brora and Strath Fleet in order to create large sheep farms. By then, the Sutherland estate was extracting three times more rent than it had in 1807. The native people had been concentrated onto the more marginal areas of Rogart between the two straths with much less land than they had previously.

From the 1812 Statute Labour list examined by Malcolm Bangor-Jones, out of 446 heads of families in Rogart, there were 113 Mackays, 72 Sutherlands and 46 Murrays.

### The descendants of Marion Mackay, sister of Lexy in Rogart

From Jean Sutherland (nee Thomson) - corroborated on Scotlandspeople in **bold**:

William Mackay (1769-1859) married Catherine Sutherland (1773-21/5/1855) in 1799 at Rovie Kirkton. Their children were:

Alexander (Jean has 1812, but OPR has baptised **27/1/1807**)

Niel **31/10/1807**. m. Merrian MacDonald 9/2/1847 g.f of Andrew Sutherland, Craigton  
Marion **21/2/1816** – died 1848 Ontario

Mary (Fanny on OPR) **21/2/1816** - died 30/9/1893 Ontario

John **10/6/1817** in OPR. m. Lexy Polson, Helmsdale, 1860. died 20/11/78 aged 66

Jean also mentioned George (b.~1799-not recorded) who died 10/3/1884 in Zorra Ontario, and Peter (b.~1813- not recorded) who died 1864, in Zorra, Ontario.

John Mackay, was baptised 10/6/1817, in West Langwell, Rogart. He married Alexandrina (Lexy) Polson from Helmsdale on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1860 (aged 42). John died 20/11/1878 (aged 66) in Rogart. Their son William (b.25/9/1862) emigrated to New Zealand, where he married another Lexy Mackay, from Rogart, on 14/3/1905. William died on 10/1/1907. Alexandrina was adjudged bankrupt in 1925 and died 7/3/1926.



Jean Sutherland told me “According to my mother (Kate Thomson) William was always poaching. I am sure it wasn’t all sold. Much of it would have fed the family as he would have been the only breadwinner after his father’s death. The estate knew he was at it but never managed to catch him. Eventually his mother was told that if he didn’t leave the country she would be evicted. She sold their horse to pay William’s fare”. William Mackay went first to Australia and then on to New Zealand where he purchased a sheep farm.

Jean Sutherland said that William became a Lieutenant in the Kelso Mounted Rifles. She quoted from "Families and Farming from West Otago": -

"Lieutenant Mackay passed away at his residence Castle Rock, Marathon Park, Lumsden on January 10 1907 from injuries sustained when thrown from a trap on New Year's Day. He had been suffering from a long illness and attacks of apoplexy. He gave his services and assistance in the formation of a company at Dipton and Mossburn. He was buried at Lumsden Cemetery."

A daughter of John Mackay and Lexy Polson, Catherine (b.21/3/1864), died unmarried in Edinburgh on 20/10/1916. Their youngest daughter Lexy (b.2/12/1867) married Joseph MacLeod in Rogart in 1890. This section is concerned with the descendants of Marion (b.6/11/1865 d.23/9/1911) who remained in Rogart.

Marion married John Bain, a weaver at Corry Achvraile, Rogart. He was born 21/9/1867 and died aged 72 on 3/9/1940. Marion died 23/9/1911 (45). John Bain's parents had the dubious distinction of being the last family in the parish to have been evicted, in 1883, by the Sutherland estate. John and Marion Mackay had three daughters in West Langwell: Johan Williamina Mackay Bain, (1898-1982); Catherine Ross Bain (21/9/1899-29/7/2002) and Marion Mackay Bain, in 1906, who died at birth.

Johan Williamina Mackay Bain married Angus Murray of Rhilochan, Rogart in 1923. He died in 1964. Their children were John (1925-2011); Catherine (Kate) Bain Murray (1932-5/4/2017); Agnes Mackay Murray (1935-1977). Three other children died young – Marion (1932); Margaret (1930); Bain (1927-1931).

John died unmarried at Rhilochan 23/4/2011. Agnes Mackay Murray married Hugh Cameron Mackay in 1958. Kate Bain Murray married John Ross in 1957 (he was bynamed John Porter). They lived at Balchlaggan. Kate died 15/4/2017, aged 84, she was the mother of Joan, Angela, Mackie and Johnny "Hen" Ross (6/4/1965 - /7/2016).



Catherine (Kate) Ross Bain married Ian Baillie Thomson (21/5/1900-1/8/1956) of West Langwell in Golspie in 1924. Their children were

Jamesina Stewart Gunn Thomson (Essie) – b.11/11/1924 at Balchlaggan, Rogart;

John Bain Thomson b.28/10/1932 at Drumerigid, Rogart and died 26/6/2007;

Jane Christina Thomson (Jean Sutherland) – b.4/4/1935 at Rhilochan, Rogart.

Kate has the rare distinction of having lived in three centuries, having been born in the 19<sup>th</sup>, on 21/9/1899 and surviving until the 21<sup>st</sup> (29/7/2002). My wife and I met Kate in the 1990s when she was resident in a nursing home in Golspie, but still working on her embroidery.



Photo c.1903 (with thanks to Jean Sutherland). - **L to R:** John Bain & Marion Mackay, his wife; Mrs Buckley; Lexy Polson; Lexy Mackay (my great-grandmother); Catherine Mackay. The children at the front are Kate and Johan Bain. The unrelated boy in front of Catherine was recuperating after illness.

The men were Mrs Buckley's horseman and carriage driver.

**Obituary, the late Miss Catherine Mackay, Rogart.** - It is with feelings of deep regret that we have to record the death of Miss Catherine Mackay, eldest daughter of the late John Mackay, West Langwell, Rogart, and only sister of Mrs Joseph MacLeod, Arddonnel Terrace West, Inverness, which took place at Chalmer's Hospital, Edinburgh, on Friday. Miss Mackay, who had undergone an operation, was progressing most satisfactorily, and her unexpected death has therefore been a great shock to the sorrowing mother and sister and friends. Miss Mackay, while resident at Rossal, Inverness and Troughend, Brora, made numerous friends who will receive the sad news with profound sorrow, the deceased being a general favourite with all with whom she came into contact. The deepest sympathy is extended to the sorrowing relatives. The funeral, which was largely attended, took place to Rogart Churchyard on Monday afternoon. – She died 20 October 1916.

Jean Sutherland, the daughter of Kate Bain and Iain Thomson, wrote “I can recall an incident when I was quite young of my brother and I being outside with my father when a shooting party arrived and parked up outside the house, my father took off his cap and bowed to them. They walked down through our fields trampling through the crops, something we knew never to do, only to walk at edge of fields. When the grouse shoot started my father took us inside. Something inside told me this wasn't right, I never forgot it, and in later life as I learned about the Corry eviction I vowed the day would never shine when I would bow or curtsy to anyone and for 20 years I was employed by T M Hunter Brora in the Mill showroom where the main customers were the landed gentry and I never broke my vow, not even for Prince Charles.”

Jean continued – “Strange how things can change, I think the present Sutherland in Dunrobin can nearly see all he owns from the castle and his son was once employed by a gt-gt-grandson of Alex Bain!”.

“No matter how long I live, I will never forgive or forget that they threw my ancestors and their possessions out on the hillside and I can remember my grandfather and two of his brothers. “

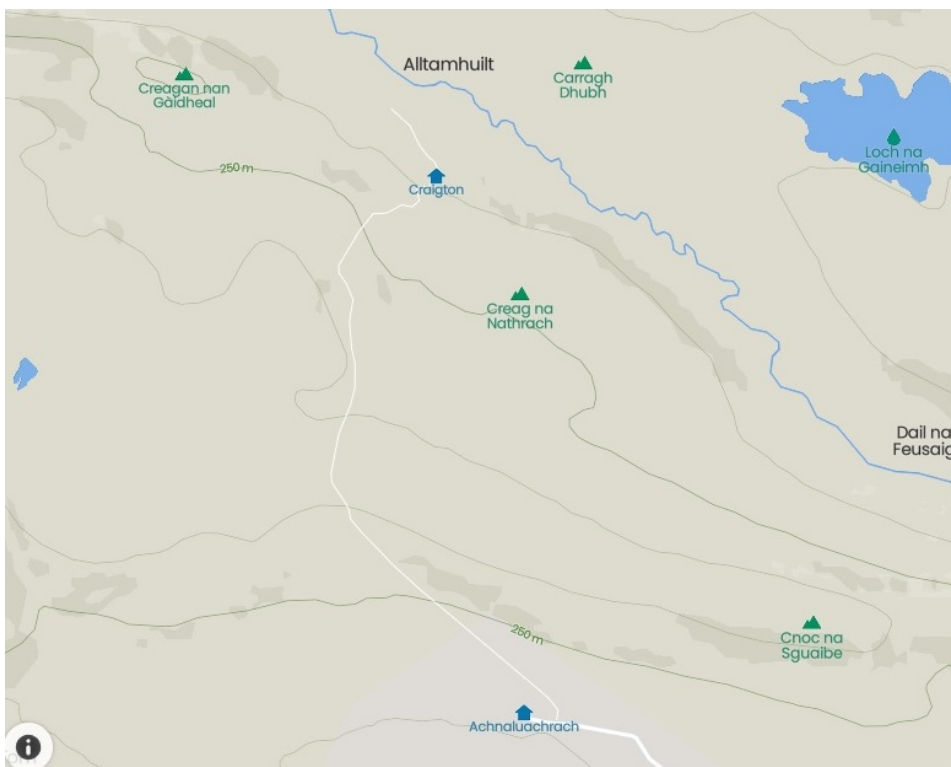
### Craigton, Rogart

Alexandrina Polson married John Mackay on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 1860. John Mackay had been born in 10/6/1817 in Rogart. When I was younger we used to visit Andrew and Johan Sutherland at Craigton farm, which lay on the river Brora. The unpaved track over the hill to Craigton left the West Langwell road just before Achnaluaichrach. I was not told, at the time, what relation we had to the Sutherland family at Craigton apart from friendship. I can remember being shown how to fish by Bertie Sutherland in *Loch na Gaineimh* (just visible in the distance) which lay on the other side of the river Brora from Craigton. I have included a number of extracts about Neil, Donald and John William, sons of Robert Sutherland of Craigton, and the brothers of Andrew.



**Cairn near Craigton, Strath Brora, - <https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/6450689>**

A stone commemorative cairn standing atop *Creagan nan Gaidheal* in remote upper Strath Brora. The east face of the cairn (not visible in the photo) is inscribed 1907. The isolated farmhouse at Craigton is visible among the trees in the background. I am uncertain when Robert Sutherland obtained his tenure of Craigton, but it seems that he built the house and the road to it. The house has a date of 1895 on the gable wall. Robert was already resident at Craigton in 1901 according to Andrew's birth registration. Monica heard from Torcul that the cairn may have been built by Robert's sons when they returned on visits home from the USA.



*From the Northern Times, 9<sup>th</sup> August 2013.*

The passing of Johan Macdonald Sutherland on 12th July this year, just months from her 100th birthday, brings closure to the connection within Rogart parish to the people who lived through the years of the Great War of 1914-1918. Her uncle Hector, a regular soldier, died of wounds when she was a year old. Her parents were John Sutherland of Milton Bank, Rogart, and Williamina (Sutherland) of Backies, Golspie. Her father, in addition to working his croft, was for many years the local gravedigger and also undertook contract carting. Johan grew up with much knowledge of the parish people and was frequently called upon to help people seek their ancestry. She was a lady of strong and forthright opinion who enjoyed helping with valid inquiry, but would not suffer fools gladly. In 1935 she married Andrew Sutherland of Craigton, Upper Grumby. Andrew had taken over the sheep farm from his father Robert and with Johan as his wife there began a close partnership which endured for 53 years. Andrew died in 1988. Craigton is a lovely spot but isolated in modern times, ever since the population was cleared from upper strath Brora at the time of the Clearances.

The Sutherland family connection to this area preceded this traumatic event. Old Robert Sutherland and his sons built two miles of roadway to connect their holding to the county road at Achnaluachrach – one mile up and one mile down the other side of the hill. The roadway summit, lying at about 1000ft, made the elevation one of the highest in the county and vulnerable to closure during winter. Vehicles for transport were usually unique to Craigton. Andrew being very inventive would make alteration to suit the conditions. One long-serving vehicle was the Jeep acquired at the end of the war.

Such a remote spot did not mean that the Sutherlands never saw a soul; on the contrary, their home was a welcome retreat to friends who appreciated the solitude of the hills and who enjoyed some excellent trout fishing. Frequent visitors were the local gamekeepers of Tressady and Dalreavoch Estates and there were always crofters from across the hill in Langwell visiting their ground at Aultimult, across the river from Craigton. The postie delivered three days a week. Hospitality was a matter of course to all visitors and callers, always ready for a tea and some of Johan's fresh scones. Craigton ran a premier flock of North Country Cheviot sheep and hired out tups, Lairg being their main market venue. A "clipping at Craigton" was a big day, with a host of friends and neighbours coming to help.

Johan and Andrew had two sons. Robert John (Bert) born in 1936, and Andrew Neil, born in 1945. In the mid 1960s, Johan and the boys were caught out by a sudden snowstorm while returning home from meeting the Co-op van at West Langwell. This experience, along with a decline in fitness, saw the family move down to Johan's old home at Milton to spend the next winter. In 1968 Bert took on the tenancy of the neighbouring croft of Reidchalmine and after a few years the Sutherlands made this their main residence. Another move came in 1991 when the Croft of 200 West Pittentrail, the abode of Andrew's brother and sisters, became available.

Johan was a valued participant in parish activities. She was a life-long supporter and member of the WRI and acted as grazings clerk to Rhemusaig Hill. She enjoyed

going along with Bert to the Sutherland Accordion and Fiddle Club and, with Ivy Fraser, served as tea ladies. She was fond of Scottish music and in her younger day played the fiddle. When in 2008 Bert passed away it was a sore bereavement for her to bear and in 2009 Johan moved into Seaforth House in Golspie where her declining years were passed in comfort and under good care. In 2012, Neil moved to live in Golspie to be near his mother.

*End of obituary in Northern Times.*

Torcul and Duncan MacLeod from Inverness attended Johan's funeral.



An early photograph of Craighton with the river Brora in the background, (thanks to Christina Perera of Rogart Heritage). This is quite an old image as when I used to visit Craighton in the 1960s, I remember a shelter-belt plantation of quite mature trees below the house as well as above it. Christina said that the photograph is dated 1923.



A “work day” at Craigton about 1960.

My mother, Morag, and I are on the right. Bertie is crouched at the front, with Gordon (standing) and Duncan (sitting) beside him. Andrew and Johan are at the back.



Gordon assisted by Johan Sutherland is feeding an orphan lamb, with Duncan, on the left (characteristically rubbing his hands), and Peter looking on.

From a search on [Scotlandspeople.gov.uk](http://Scotlandspeople.gov.uk), I found that Andrew Mackay Sutherland was born on 21<sup>st</sup> July 1901 at Craigton Farm, Rogart. His father was Robert Sutherland and his mother Catherine Mackay. They had married at Harbour Brae, Pultneytown, Wick, on September 9<sup>th</sup> 1879. Their marriage record shows that Robert was 31 and resident at Dempster Street, Pultneytown. His parents were Donald Sutherland and Margaret Murray. Catherine Mackay aged 20, gave her address as Morness, Rogart. Her parents were Neil Mackay (deceased) a farmer and Marion MacDonald.

I then looked for the birth of Neil Mackay and found his birth on 31/10/1807 to William Mackay and Catherine Sutherland at Morness, Rogart. Morness is North-West of Pittentrail and just south of East Langwell, Rogart. This was the link which I had been looking for as Lexy Mackay who married Joseph MacLeod in 1867 was the daughter of John Mackay, born in 1813 to William Mackay and Catherine Sutherland in Rogart. John's death record on 20/11/1878 stated that he was 66 and the son of William Mackay and Catherine Sutherland. In the 1841 census of Langwell, Rogart, Catharine Mackay, widow (60) had sons Alexander (30) and John (25). In the 1851 census of

Bardmore, Langwell, there was just Catharine (76) and John (36). Catharine died 21/5/1855. In the 1861 census of West Langwell, was John Mackay (48) and Alexandrina (25), his wife from Helmsdale.

From the censuses, John had been born between 1812 and 1815. William Mackay and Catherine Sutherland had recorded children in Morness, Rogart: Alexander on 27/1/1807; Neil on 31/10/1807; John on 22/4/1813 and Marion on 22/2/1816. The nine month gap between Alexander and Neil in 1807 is only just credible, but the record is of baptisms, not births, so Alexander might have been born during 1806. Neil Mackay married Merrian MacDonald 9/2/1847 in Rogart. Catherine was born 26/1/1859 at Ardachu, Rogart (on the Rogart-Lairg road) to Neil Mackay, labourer and Merrian MacDonald. Catherine married Robert Sutherland 9/9/1879 and was the mother of Andrew Sutherland who later farmed Craigton, Rogart. John Mackay, Neil's brother, and Alexandrina Polson from Helmsdale were the parents of Lexy Mackay who married Joseph MacLeod on 25/2/1890.

William Mackay == Catherine Sutherland  
 d. before 1841      b.~1775 d.21/5/1855  
 m. ~1805  
 Morness, Rogart  
 ||

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Alexander b.27/1/1807	Neil Mackay b.31/10/1807 m.Merrian MacDonald 9/2/1847    Catherine Mackay b.26/1/1859 d.12/1/1956 m.Robert Sutherland 9/9/1879    Andrew Sutherland b.21/7/1901 d.1988 m.Johan Sutherland 1935    Bertie b. 1936	John Mackay b.22/4/1813 d.20/11/78 m.Alexandrina Polson 2/3/1860    Lexy Mackay b.2/3/1867 d.4/7/1933 m.Joseph MacLeod 25/2/1890    Alasdair MacLeod b.6/7/1892 d.12/7/1957 m.Norah Chew 23/6/1920    Torcul b. 13/1/1921	Marion b.22/2/1816 emigrated to Canada
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Robert Sutherland, a journeyman joiner, and Catherine Mackay were married 9/9/1879. In 1881, Robert & Catherine were lodging with Catherine McPherson who was an aunt of Catherine where Robert was described as a carpenter. They had one child, also Catherine. I traced the family through the 1891, 1901 and 1911 censuses. Their ten children were, with approximate birth dates: Catherine 1880; Neil 1882; Margaret 1887; Donald 1889; John William 1890; Marion 1893; Alexander 1894; Christina 1896; Liliias 1898; and finally Andrew 21/7/1901.

Grandfather Alasdair MacLeod used to visit them regularly and I was shown a boulder at Craigton on which Andrew Sutherland had chiselled a memorial to Alasdair after his death in 1957. He added Norah's name after her death in 1967. Andrew once told me that an uncle of Catherine Sutherland had operated a whisky still early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century on a secluded spot on the moor behind Achanaluachrach. Andrew called it *Bothan shandaigh* (Alec's bothy) and pointed out its general direction.

### **The sons of Robert Sutherland and Catherine Mackay**

#### **The Cowboy from Craigton – Neil Sutherland**

From <https://z-upload.facebook.com/RogartHeritage/posts/5193464087366797>

In the early years of the 20th century Neil Sutherland left his family to embark on a life abroad. He would have been about 20 years old. The eldest son of ten children of Robert Sutherland (1848-1932) and Catherine Mackay (1859-1956), Neil was born at Morness on 26 December 1881. Neil set out to establish a life in the rugged west of the United States. Shortly after his arrival he started to send post cards and photographs of his life in Montana to his family in Craigton.

In one, Neil and a colleague stand in front of a tent and a Mackenzie sheep wagon. In due course Neil set about improving his living accommodation; one picture shows “a log cabin built by Neil Sutherland in 1905 and occupied by him until 1917. It had a covering of clay or gumbo earth on the roof which had washed off some years ago. Another photo shows Neil with his brother Donald (piper, watch repairer, pipe-maker and athlete). Donald had just come from Peru and stayed with Neil for the winter of 1913 and 1914. The small snap is dedicated “For Father and Mother”.

Other pictures followed - Neil branding a calf, Neil on horseback at the E V Ranch at Hardin. It was here that he bought his first cattle, which were branded with a linked EV symbol. Neil also shows off the quality of his beasts. "This Rambouillet ram was Champion at the Montana State Fair 1934 & 35. This fleece weighed 44lbs. He is my best shown ram." I wonder what a Craigton Cheviot would have produced at that time.

After his death on 10 July 1937, at the comparatively young age of 55, Neil's brother went on a pilgrimage to visit the places where he had put down his roots. Several photos show a Mackenzie sheep wagon, one of which appears in the very first postcard. There is also a photograph of Neil's grave which was sent to the youngest brother, Andrew, who was still residing in Craigton.

From **John William Sutherland**, "Impressions of Northern Athletes and Athletics," 1912-13. *A series of Articles in the John O'Groat Journal*,"

<https://athlos.co.uk/books/impressions-of-northern-athletes-and-athletics/>

John William Sutherland was born at Craigton, in one of the highest and most remote parts of Morness in Rogart parish, in 1890. His father, Robert, and his mother, Catherine (née Mackay), already had an established family and John William (who was known in the family as Jack) had older brothers and an older sister; the family continued to grow and Jack eventually had nine brothers and sisters. By 1908, when he was 18, he was living at Golspie, on the south-east coast of Sutherland, and by 1910 he was back living at Rogart, a few miles inland, where he wrote his book *Scientific Athletics*. He was brought up in an athletic family and in a culture that valued throwing and, although he was not a big man (nor a big boy or youth) he excelled in the throwing events, particularly the Shot and Hammer. Indeed, so slight was he that he created something of a sensation because he was very successful when very young and was much smaller than the people he competed against. In August 1908, the *Aberdeen Journal* described him at the Dornoch Highland Games as 'a lad of 17 years of age and weighing 10 stone' [140 lbs.; 63.5kg] and 'he was repeatedly cheered' when he won the

Hammer Throw (16lbs) [7.26 kg] by 8 inches [20.3cm], and was second in Putting the Ball (22lbs) [9.98kg].

Jack Sutherland's family was always an important part of his athletic life; in August 1908 (above), for example, it seems likely that his oldest brother, Andrew, was a prize-winner in the wrestling competition, and Donald, who was two years older, was a piper and an athlete, and won prizes in the Reels & Strathspeys competitions. In his book *Scientific Athletics*, Jack Sutherland includes a photograph of "D. Sutherland, Rogart" (p. 63) and in Chapter XIX, *Prominent Scottish Athletes and Their Performances*, he describes D. Sutherland as a "successful all-round athlete" and gives details of his best throwing and jumping performances, but fails to mention that he was his younger brother. Donald was also known as *The Rogart Hercules*, but he was also an accomplished piper and we hear of him later, composing pipe-music too. At about this time Donald left Scotland and went to Australia, from where he went to Peru before travelling to Oregon and finally settling in Montana. Neil, another brother, had also emigrated and lived in Montana.

In his early competitive years, writers repeatedly commented on Jack's youth and his diminutive stature. In September 1908, *The Aberdeen People's Journal* wrote, "A young athlete competed here, who promises exceptionally well. John William Sutherland, by name, he is 17 years of age, 5 feet 7 inches [1.70m] tall, and weighs 10 stones 7 lbs. [147 lbs.; 66.7kg]." They went on to say that he had thrown a 16lb [7.26 kg] Hammer 'well over 95 feet [29m]', putt a 22lb [9.98 kg] Shot 32 feet [9.75m], and 'was good for 5 feet 3inches [1.60m]' in the High Jump (ground to ground). All these distances can be authenticated in Sutherland's own diary. He retained this boyish appearance throughout his athletic career and, in September 1911, the *Aberdeen Journal* again commented on his youth and size - "He was, to all appearances, the youngest athlete in the heavy events, and his victory was a popular one"; he was 21 years old and was still 5ft 7ins [1.70m] tall and still only 10½ stone [147lbs.; 66.7kg]. In that event he won 'the Light Stone' by over a foot with a throw of 38ft [11.58m], and won £2; this would be equivalent in purchasing power to £200 in 2021. By this date, however, his diary (as reported in *Scientific Athletics*) had come to an end, so we can

only guess at how heavy the ‘light stone’ was. The *John O’Groat Journal* was to make similar comments about his age and size a year later.

John William Sutherland’s performances are not easy to trace; his performances were sometimes reported under the name, ‘John William Sutherland’, sometimes ‘J.W. Sutherland’, and sometimes ‘John Sutherland’, but in the same competitions there were other Sutherlands, and even a *John, J,* and *W. Sutherland*, and some were even from Golspie and Rogart. By June 1909, John William Sutherland had joined the Territorial Army and he competed in the Camp Sports at Burghead, winning the Hammer Throw for the 5<sup>th</sup> *Seaforths* (i.e. the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Seaforth Highlanders).

Jack Sutherland’s diary comes to an abrupt end after reporting his results for August 1911; his entry for 18 August records that he had been at the Durnoch Highland Gathering and had been ‘indisposed,’ nevertheless he set a ‘county record’ for the 16lb. [7.26 kg] Hammer, and putt the 15¾lb. [7.14 kg] ball 45ft. [13.72m], [listed as 15lb. (6.80 kg) in the press] and high jumped 5ft 4 ins. [1.625m], but did not record in his diary that he was also 2nd= in the Pole Vault. He also failed to note that although breaking a county record, he finished outside the first three in the event. Nevertheless, he was thought to be particularly impressive on that day with the *John O’Groat Journal* reporting that he was “well to the front” in the heavy events, “as he indeed nearly always is”, and that he went in for “a system of physical training, and is particularly well developed for a young man.” It was, therefore, a good advertisement for the book he had started.

The entry for the following day (19 August 1911) records that he is still ‘incapacitated,’ and ‘greatly indisposed,’ but did compete at the Brora Games and competed in two Hammer, and two *Putting the Ball* events – but well below his previous standard. This entry is confusing and must have been added later, for he not only makes reference to the Brora Games which took place on 2nd September, but also to the Lairg Highland Gathering on 20th September, in which his performances were also below his normal standard.

1912 was both the pinnacle of Jack Sutherland's athletic career and its effective end, and it all happened within a few days. On Friday 9 August Jack Sutherland opened his season at the Bower Athletic Sports, winning the 16lb. [7.26 kg] Hammer with 117ft. 1 inch [35.69m], and Putting the 16lb. [7.26 kg] Ball 48ft 10 ins. [14.84m] He was also 2nd in the wrestling. His Putting the Ball performance was reported to be 1 foot 2 inches [35.5cms] better than the World's Record, but was downhill, nevertheless, on the basis of those performances he challenged A. A. Cameron, known in Scotland as the "World's Champion," to a series of events to decide the "heavy weight championship." The challenge appeared in the newspapers one week later, on Friday 16 August. The Wick Riverside Committee was quick to seize on this and started to plan for the Sutherland/Cameron Championship Challenge to take place at the Wick Gala on Wednesday 28 August, just 12 days ahead.

On the same day that Sutherland's challenge appeared in the newspapers (Friday 16 August), Jack Sutherland entered the Durnoch Highland Gathering, competing in the Open events, and also in the events open only to those born in the county – a very busy afternoon in which at the beginning of the meeting he "dislocated" the cartilage in his right knee in a Pole-Vaulting competition. As a result, in the County events, he was 1st= in the Pole Vault, but 2nd= in the High Jump, and 2nd in Putting the 16lb. [7.26 kg] Ball. In the Open events he was 3rd in the 16lb [7.26 kg] Hammer, 3rd in the 22lb. [9.98kg] Hammer, and 3rd in the Long Jump. The "intense pain" clearly incapacitated him and he could hardly bend his knee, and before the week was out he had written to Cameron withdrawing his challenge. Jack Sutherland did not compete again in 1912, and in 1913 seems only to have competed once – at the Brora Highland Gathering, and was 2nd in the Open Hammer event, 10 feet [3m] below his performance of the previous year, and was also 2nd in Putting the 16lb [7.26 kg] Ball – over 9 feet [2.74m] less than the year before, but that was the end of his athletic career in Scotland. Almost immediately he emigrated to America.

Despite recording a 16lb. [7.26 kg] putt further than the World's Record, J. W. Sutherland is remembered in athletics history only for his book, "Scientific Athletics" which he wrote when he was under 21, perhaps the youngest ever author of a technical

book on athletics. He writes with such authority and certainty that any reader not knowing his age might imagine the author to be a white-haired veteran. He writes with a florid style, seldom choosing a short word when he can find a longer one; he also writes a series of articles for the *John O’Groat Journal*, writes replies to his newspaper correspondents, and also probably reported on his own performances in his very distinctive writing style in the *John O’Groat Journal*, but under the nom de plume “X.Y.Z. Perhaps we should not expect him to reveal everything about his life in *Scientific Athletics*; he does not, for example, mention that he and his brother Donald gave weight-lifting demonstrations in the local drill hall and offer a prize to anyone in the audience who could emulate them – a prize that was never won. He also doesn’t mention the importance in his life of piping. From childhood he was exposed to the bagpipes and he and his brothers all played; indeed, even as children they learned how to make them, and learned how to burn holes with red-hot wires in the wooden pipes (chanters) on which they would later make music. The chanters were later attached to the bag made, perhaps, out of sheep-skin, and then the drones were added to form the bagpipes.

With at least two of his older brothers already settled in America, it is not surprising that Jack Sutherland wanted to try his luck there too, and in the autumn of 1913 he crossed the Atlantic and settled in Silver Springs, Clackamas, in north-west Oregon, close to the Canadian border. With his wife, Janess Elizabeth Sutton, he made his home there and became a school teacher; and he and Janess had three children. He was, however, a Scottish Highlander to the core and he began to compete in Highland Games there, though there are no records of his results, and he continued his piping and even wrote pipe-music. Jack Sutherland was a highly talented and versatile man, and he not only played the pipes, he was also an unusually talented composer, and teacher of piping. One observer wrote of him as “an accomplished and talented piper with a very keen understanding of the subtleties of the music,” but was so eager not to be seen to outshine his brother Donald, he kept his real musical relents partly hidden.

Jack Sutherland was a highly talented and accomplished man but he was also full of contradictions; his writing revealed him to be self assured and confident, and he always

performed well when under the pressure of competition and in front of a crowd, but those who knew him described him as shy and modest, later, his son even called him a private person. Very unusually, no photographs exist of Jack Sutherland, with the exception of the portrait shot of his shoulders and the back of his head in *Scientific Athletics* (facing title page); one contemporary Scot explained that Jack Sutherland may have “felt circumspect about photographs, like many Gaels of his day.”

In Oregon, Jack Sutherland continued to follow athletics all his life. In a letter to his brother Andrew after the 1968 Olympic Games, he commented on the Russians’ perceived lack of success and regretted that Neil [Neal] Steinhauer, an Oregon thrower, had been unable to compete because of a “sprained back”, recalling that he (Steinhauer) had thrown 69 feet [21.03m]; and he mused on the fact that back in his youth, in the days of *Scientific Athletics*, he had thought 50 feet [15.24m] to be just about the limit of possibility! His interest in an Oregon thrower shows, however, that although a complete Scottish Highlander, after more than fifty years in the U.S.A., John William Sutherland had also become a thorough American. He died in 1970 at the age of 80.

*End of John William Sutherland.*

### **Pioneering Bagpipes - Donald Sutherland 1888-1963**

<https://www.strathnavermuseum.org.uk/pioneering-bagpipes/>

In 1910 Donald Sutherland a shepherd from *Coire Chaorachaidh*, Rogart received his eagerly awaited immigration papers. From that moment Donald, a talented piper and heavy weight athlete, embarked on a globe-trotting adventure over the next several decades.

### **Donald’s Early Life**

Donald was a man of many talents and was described in an article in the *Northern Times* as the “Rogart Hercules” due to his athletic prowess. Along with his brother John William, Donald competed as a heavyweight athlete in Highland Games across the north of Scotland. John William, who also emigrated to America, held records at the Halkirk Highland Games in Caithness that stood for decades. The *Northern Times* reported:

“Mr Donald Sutherland and his brother (J.W), two outstanding athletes, gave weightlifting exhibitions at a concert in the local Drill Hall. A prize offered to anyone in the audience who could emulate their feats was not won.” (Northern Times, 1910)

The brothers shared another talent and were both keen pipers and talented composers. Rogart at this time had a lot of pipers who it is said all learnt from and influenced each other. Donald had learnt piping from George Murray of the Lovat Scouts, which had a reputation for piping. He also studied with Donald MacLeod, Golspie and stayed in communication with both men.

Despite such success Donald yearned for another life as can be seen from his great nephew Alasdair Mearns description of the moment Donald received his immigration papers:

“The place he was working is called Craigton, or in Gaelic, *Creagach an Nathrach*. The road to Craigton goes well over 1,000 feet. They were working on that road, breaking metal as they called it at the time, the stones and stuff. It was hard, hard work. Apparently the postman came with Donald’s papers that he could go and he just downed tools and left, saying ‘I’m oouta here’. He was just so fed up with the way things were. It was a tough life and he saw another chance.” (Piping Times, 40)

### **South America and beyond**

Donald’s first adventure was to Peru where he worked as a sheep farmer and reputedly lost his favourite chanter in the Peruvian mountains. He then spent some time in Argentina before arriving in the United States of America in 1913.

By the 1920s Donald was in Australia where he met and studied with Simon Fraser and his son Hugh. Donald returned the USA in 1930 where he worked on Tom Mor MacRae’s ranch near Cohagen, Montana. It was to Montana that Donald’s older brother Neil had also emigrated, and he had settled in Billings a city founded in 1882 and nicknamed the ‘Magic City’ due to its rapid growth which made it seem to appear overnight. There were other pipers working on the ranch allowing Donald to continue to hone his skills. The pipers included Farquhar Ewen Finlayson, a renowned New Zealand piper, A.K. Cameron, John and Donald Renwick and Kenneth MacDonald. It



was here that Donald learnt to make pipes; Colin Macrae said Donald made at least 3 sets of pipes. One of these sets was made from the oak and brass fittings of an old wagon that had come across the Oregon Trail, probably in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is said Donald had come across the old trailblazer's wagon on a farm in Oregon where he'd put his pipe making skills to use. The Oregon Trail is a 2,170 mile wagon route and emigrant trail that connected the Missouri River to the valleys in Oregon. Initially laid by fur traders from about 1811 to 1840 it was only passable on foot or horseback. By 1836 a wagon trail had been cleared to Fort Hall, Idaho and cleared increasingly farther west eventually reaching Fort Walla Walla by September 1840. The first transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869 proving faster, safer and usually cheaper travel although some emigrants continued to use the trail well into the 1890s.

### **Donald's compositions**

Donald's talent for composition is evident in his *Collection of Highland Bagpipe Music* published in 1960 by Hugh Macpherson Highland Outfitters in Edinburgh. Donald's book contains several tunes that have since become classics.



The story of his life can be glimpsed from the titles of his tunes such as '*Farewell to Craigton and Strath-Brora-1910*' and '*Donald Sutherland's Welcome back to Rogart*'. There is evidence that Donald was compiling a second volume as a table of contents for a second volume was found amongst his papers after his death.

In the preface Hugh Macpherson writes: "This unique pipe music book compiled in the United States by Donald Sutherland, a native of Rogart, contains some very attractive tunes, which will appeal to pipers in all parts of the world. It has been a labour of love, because, like so many Rogart men, Donald Sutherland reared in a lovely Highland parish, thrills to the sound of the *piob mhor*, which is all the sweeter when one is six thousand miles from home. I am particularly pleased to publish this music book,

because Donald Sutherland and my father, Robert A. Macpherson, were boyhood friends in Rogart, and, indeed in their early days, were heavyweight athletes of no mean prowess. To all those who have assisted, Donald Sutherland expresses his sincere thanks. He is particularly indebted to Pipe-Major Donald Shaw Ramsay, B.E.M. for his helpful advice.” Donald’s brother John William also composed many tunes, but modesty prevented him from publishing and before his death he instructed his wife to burn all of his compositions. John taught mathematics in a High School near Portland, Oregon, coached track and taught piping at Colin MacRae’s Oregon College of Piping.

When Donald died the pipes were sent to his nephew, Bert Sutherland in Rogart who in turn passed them to his first cousin once removed Alasdair Mearns. Alasdair kindly donated the pipes to Strathnaver Museum where they have been added to the collection.

The last time Donald visited Scotland was in 1938. However, he didn’t forget his roots and in 1958 he offered to buy practice chanters for necessitous students in Sutherland if the school would allow piping instruction. Donald settled and lived the rest of his life in Glide, Oregon, married twice and still has family there. He died on July 8<sup>th</sup> 1963.

From [https://www.thebagpipemuseum.com/Sutherland,\\_John\\_William.html](https://www.thebagpipemuseum.com/Sutherland,_John_William.html)

I found this page in thebagpipemuseum webpage. It refers to the brothers, John William Sutherland and Donald Sutherland. The compiler states “I knew nothing of John William Sutherland and was later to learn that he was a private and quiet man. His brother, Donald, (1888-1963) published a collection of tunes in 1960 with Hugh MacPherson, Edinburgh, the publisher of the Edcath collections.” I extracted the following from a link to a pdf of a typed letter from John William in 1936.

John William wrote from Oregon in 1936:

### **The Bagpipes in the Sutherland family - A few Early Recollections**

It is hard for many adults to remember many of their early auditory sensations. My earliest recollection of the bagpipes is very hazy. I cannot recall having heard them at Morness, when I was a little child. When I was taken from Morness to Ardachu by our cousin, Isie, I must have heard the pipes often, because Uncle Neil had a set, and so

must have played them frequently. I think that I can recall Uncle Neil's playing the pipes at Craigton about the time that the stone barn and some of the other buildings were being erected, or at the time the house was being built. My picture of him is one in which I see him marching with the pipes back and forth close to the barn in front of the stable door. If that early impression is true, the part of the barn facing south, consisting of the dipper, store-house, and chicken-house, had not then been built. Instead there was an open space, rough and green.

Years passed -- long years to childhood, because they had so much crowded into them -- and then memories became more definite. The Murrays across the meadow had pipes. There were Eric and George Murray. Often across the meadow and over the hills must have pierced the strident notes of the pipes. We made and played chanterers at an early age. How did we make them? I do not know where we got the idea, whether by accident or by observation, but we discovered that we could bore a hole into a piece of wood by means of a red-hot iron or wire. This wire we cut about eighteen inches in length, put a curve at one end to make the handling of it easier, and pointed the tip to make more rapid progress in the boring, although this often had the tendency to cause the wire to deflect and burst with a sizzle and a puff of smoke through the side of the wood being bored.

We often got severe scoldings at those boring-events, for when the red-hot wire was applied to the wood and pressed into it, a steady stream of smoke issued into the air, filling the room with a smell that was a delight to our noses, but a source of agony to our elders. So our operations were often carried on under adverse conditions, although on the whole the older folk were tolerant, for we made chanterers by the dozen for many years. Even yet -- after thirty years -- there is an element of fascination about boring a hole with a red-hot wire, especially when the second generation looks on in silent wonder -- Neil (8), Marilyn (6), and Bobby (4). For example, we can never tell where the hole is to appear -- whether at the end or at the side. Almost always the red-hot wire, especially if sharp and pressed rather too hard, will follow the line of least resistance -- that is, along the grain. So that often, it is possible to predict, fairly accurately, where the sizzling borer will appear. But often it is not possible to make

such predictions, and too often the wandering wire will burst out at the side. The boring is rather a slow job. In the case of fir, when a sharp wire is used with a red-hot point, each application of the wire may advance the bore as much as an inch. But the speed of progress will depend on the size of the wire, the sharpness or the point, the heat maintained, and the hardness or the wood.

Such was the philosophy which our young minds worked out in the smoky atmosphere of chanter-boring. A favourite piece to bore was a slender branch, straight and of the desired length, about fifteen inches. The borers naturally followed the line of least resistance -- the pith -- and the appearance of the borer in the centre of the other end of the wood afforded no surprise. Where the wood has no such central pith, the appearance of the wire at or near the centre of the other end of the stick affords much satisfaction. But we cannot be too sure of the success of the bore in the latter type of wood until we look through the bore to see how straight it is. It may be crooked; it may follow a wandering path, and accidentally, as it were, emerge in the centre at the other end. But such bores are the exceptional cases, not the rule. Having succeeded in boring a hole through the wood, then came the whittling, or, in Gaelic, *snagherach*, (the spelling is not correct), which was done with a sharp knife, which in our earlier days was not a real pocket-knife, but an ordinary table knife, trimmed short, the handle shortened, the blade cut or about half-way, and then ground narrow. If the metal happened to be good steel, we got a keen edge. We called this instrument a "cuddy". With it, we soon sliced, peeled and cross-cutted our chanter out of the bored piece of wood. Additional scrapping, rubbing, and even sand-papering, soon produced an instrument which gladdened our boyish hearts.

Probably no two chanters ever had the same sound; each had, and still has, its own individuality. To be sure, the nature or the wood, its length and thickness, always play an important part, in fact explain the whole difference, in thus producing an endless variety of chanter-tones. After the *snagherach* came the very important job of boring the finger-holes in the chanter. There are eight of these holes -- one back-hole for the thumb of the hand placed on the upper part of the chanter, and seven other holes

directly opposite that hole and placed at the proper place and at appropriate distances. The form of the finished chanter is graceful, as most musical instruments are graceful. As we bored the holes, we placed them in the wood to conform to the size of our small hands. As we grew older the chanter grew bigger, and the holes were automatically placed farther apart. We located the proper places for the holes by measuring the distances between the fingers.

The hot iron left a rather charred and brownish area around the holes, but some additional sand-papering wore the wood down, so that the holes stood out clearly. Experience soon taught us how to whittle the chanter, but seeing the fine ebony chanters of our neighbours, the Murrays, helped us in gaining a more complete picture of the mature instrument. The thinner the chanter, the thinner the tone; and the sonorous element would be decreased if the instrument was too thin or too thick. A chanter of excessive thickness yielded only a dull, lifeless tone. The nature of the wood made a distinct difference, for hard woods have more resonance; the soft woods gave softer tones; but use and a steady drying process heightened the tone of the softer woods, somewhat. A good chanter, we thought, had a lively but rich tone.

As a rule we seemed to have made chanters more often during the winter, because the chilly outside world kept us more inside, especially at night, and the long nights soon passed to the tune of the chanter. Sometimes in the day-time, in winter, the day is short. Ben Clebric and the hills all around are under a white coat of snow. The sky is filled with clouds, snow banks rising in voluminous formations. Chilly winds blow at times, but the sun comes through in strong splashes at times; the snow is melting off the slate and sometimes it comes down in masses which almost catch us below. These masses make a characteristic sound as they slide down the zinc on the byre or barn. At the eaves water drips on to the slushy ground below. The snow all around is melting, more heather is coming through, and the dark patches among the white snow on the meadow show that the river is rising, and there will soon be a lake two miles long and about half a mile wide. The stream by the house is singing, the cows can be heard, the chickens make a varied cackle, the snow-birds are merrier than usual after the cold spell. It is dinner time --meat, potatoes, soup, bread, butter, and tea. A turn is taken on

the sheep. Once back home in the work shop over the stable are pieces of wood, one or two of which are chosen and rounded by the plane on the old bench. Then we bring them into the house and the boring begins.

For many years we played a variety of home-made chanter before we tried our hand at making bagpipes. Our first attempt was to fix a bag to a practice chanter. We did that several times. To add a drone or two was the next natural step. In our boyish imagination, this was another step toward the ideal.

But the set that is outstanding is one made by Donald. He had a practice chanter which one night he started to enlarge. Boring away with a hot iron, he increased the hole considerably and also enlarged the finger-holes. After some experience, the chanter was found to be relatively true in tone. It sounded like a real chanter, but with a smaller tone, since this instrument was much smaller than the full-size bagpipe chanter. We did not quite realize the significance of this achievement, until we tried making other chanters. These later attempts were not quite as successful. The first little chanter with a cracked bottom, if I remember right, held the premier place in our estimation for a long time. Eventually we obtained a large bit especially adapted for boring pipe chanters, but even with this chanter-bit we never turned out another instrument that compared favourably with the small chanter. At the time we got this new large chanter-bit, we naturally thought that the matter of making a real chanter was well within our grasp. But that proved to be a mistaken notion, as our subsequent attempts were not pronounced successes.

Donald's little bagpipe set deserves special mention. He made a bag out of a sheep-skin. This he deftly cut out and sewed by hand, making the necessary holes for the drones, chanter, and mouth-piece. Small drones were made to fit the chanter. This little set sounded remarkably well. George Murray, Aultimult, visited one evening. I can still see him there in the old kitchen. The old folk were there. Father sat in his large wooden chair, over which was a well seasoned sheep-skin. "Man, you made a fine job of them," George said with a broad smile. "That chanter sounds well. I can't understand how you ever got it to sound true. It is like a real one." But the little bag was leaky. So the little pipes were notoriously hard to blow. George tried them. "Man, they're too hard to

blow." He finished a tune breathlessly."You mustn't use that bag too often, or you'll spoil your breath." Donald did affect his wind with that old set; for I remember how easily he seemed to run out of breath when we ran together. What became of that old set? If any set ever earned a place in a museum, surely that set did. It was discarded when more approved instruments appeared on the scene.

The time came when Donald went to the Public School. He stayed at Uncle Donald's farm at Pitfure. One day he arrived at Craighton with an old set which he got from a little old man --Willie MacNeil -- a nomad. Old MacNeil had his virtues, for he must have loved to play the pipes. Many of the old tunes must have touched the better part of his rough inner nature. Donald must have felt a strange elation when he first realized that he possessed a real ebony set, even granting that they were old. We were deeply interested in this old set when he brought them home. We played them many a time.

One day George Murray came over. On seeing the pipes, he gave a hearty shout: "What, old MacNeil's set? Well, what do you know about that?" or words to that effect. And as he spoke, his eyes feasted on the old set, for his mind could see many unusual experiences lying back of the set played by MacNeil on his continuous peregrinations. George played the pipes not so badly, as he belonged to a pipe-band, if I recollect properly; and the old set seemed to peal out a hidden spirit which longed to move over the lonely hills and meadows.

There was another occasion when Donald and I thought that we would make a set comparable to the best sets there were. I well remember how we climbed up through the woods on Dalmore Rock, visited the granite quarry, and found straight pieces of branches of fir or pine. We took several pieces home. Later we bored away with the red-hot wires, and made several successful drills through the larger pieces, but when we came to fashion the drones, the hole proved tortuous, for we cut into it; and so the idea of a first class set seemed to have vanished.

At a time when Donald and I were very small, our brother, Neil, obtained a set from Uncle Neil, Ardachu. This set he played for several years. I seem to have a few

memories of that set. On New Year's Day, Neil used to be up and out with the pipes at an early hour -- sometimes at four o'clock in the morning. Donald and I played on that old set. Neil used to play for some time, and then we would stand around waiting for our turn to have a blow on them. He used to march with them at the end of the house. I have pleasant memories of his playing them there on clear frosty evenings, just before darkness came on. The air was clear, and the sound of the pipes could be heard for miles around.

One of our boyish antics was to stand on a spade and jump as long as possible. With a little practice we used to go some distance along the road. I recall Neil's playing the pipes as I hopped on the spade, during which he laughed loudly to throw me off, without letting the drones die out. Another incident was that of the peat-cutting time at Aultimult. That was a big day, as many "tusks" were kept going, striving was common, and the young folk met and had a social time. Around the house, especially at the back, the pipers would march, especially Eric Murray and Neil, both of whom were fast friends. I can still see Neil moving back and forth, but we could tell it was he more readily from his playing, for he had a style of play essentially his own.

When Neil left Craigton for America, he carried the pipes with him. After landing in New York, he must have played the pipes in his hotel, for he later wrote home and said that the New Yorkers were interested. Reading his letter, we visualized him marching through the streets of New York with every citizen interested. How limited is the imagination of youth. Away to the west, into far off Montana, he carried them. He must have played them often as he herded the sheep on the Montana prairies. There is a possibility that this old set went through the Battle of Waterloo. When Donald came to Montana, he got the old set from Neil, and continued to play them. While Donald was in Peru he made the drones of a set and used an old chanter. I now have this set at Oak Grove, Oregon. Donald sent them to me in 1934. I had not possessed a set before then, so it was a bit of a thrill to renew the old associations after about a quarter of a century. The chanter on this set was made by Glen. It has been in use for many years, as the holes are worn down well.



The desire to play the pipes possessed us at an early age, no doubt due to the fact that we heard the pipes being played all about us from the beginning. The Murrays played them across the meadow; while down in Rogart there were several pipers. Thus, from the making and playing of our own small home-made sets, we progressed to the larger sets. Donald had another set, mounted in silver and ivory, which he played at the Highland Games, taking many prizes. He took this set out to Peru.

When I spent the summer with Donald at the Flat Creek Ranch, owned by an old man named Carmichael, he and I spent some time playing the pipes. On the day I arrived, Donald showed me a set he had made for the sheep foreman, an Alex Muir. He had made a fine job of this set, having made use of better tools. He had thus two sets. He played much better than he did years ago, when as a young fellow, he competed at the Highland Games. His technique was now much refined. When I went out to the woods to herd a bunch of sheep, Donald appeared on the scene one hot Sunday carrying the pipes. We played them in a canyon, on the bank of a small stream, with a high hill in front of us. Every Sunday from there on, Donald came up, and invariably we had a few tunes on the pipes. He went to much trouble copying down tunes for me. One of these tunes was the "Glengarry Highlanders" in its modern style. He also copied some other tunes, including one given him by a John Renwick.

It was in the summer of 1935 that I spent the summer in Montana with Donald. During the summer of 1936, I remained at home, and spent most of the time writing, and doing various other things. But during all this time the bagpipes have been much in the foreground. I made the acquaintance of the Vancouver Police Pipe Band, which played at the Rose Festival this summer. They came from Canada along with a section of the Mounted Police. I have also associated with the Canadian Legion Pipe Band at Portland, most of the members of which are Scottish. In addition, I made the acquaintance of the pipers of the Clan MacClay. I have been playing the pipes a good deal with these pipers. I got acquainted with a William Purvis, whom I have mentioned frequently in my correspondence with Donald. From Purvis I hope to gain a finer insight into playing, and especially to get a grasp of the pibrochs.

*End of John William Sutherland's letter from Oregon.*

## **The Travels of the Craigton Sutherlands**

Our MacLeod family connection to Craigton is through Lexy Mackay, the first cousin of Catherine Mackay who married Robert Sutherland in 1879. However, the following account kindly supplied by Christina of the Rogart Heritage Society is of interest.

Three pages of typed family history notes dating from 1954 and some wonderful photographic portraits help to sketch out the life of John (Ballan) Sutherland (1754-1844) and his descendants. John is said to have been evicted from Sciberscross and landed at a place called Ballan, near the burn of the same name, and from which his byname was derived. John married Catherine (Kate) Reid whose people resided in Craggie for many generations. Their youngest son, Donald, was born in 1802. In his boyhood he was sent down to a relative at Greeanan near Loch Brora to attend school. The story is told that his early efforts consisted in forming his letters on levelled sand - paper and even slate were so scarce in those times.

Later Donald lived at *Creag na Nathraich* (the rock of the serpents - Craigton is an anglicised version of it); his wife was Margaret Murray from Morness. Donald was evicted from Craigton and made his home at Tighcraig, some 5 miles to the south west of Craigton. Family lore tells that the marks of this home were still to be found to the east of Tighcraig Burn.

Robert, the third son, settled in Craigton and became a Free Church Elder whilst farming at one of the more remote corners of our parish. His marriage to Catherine Mackay produced five sons and five daughters who each made their mark around the world.

We have photos of Neil who went to Montana to work as a cowboy. Donald travelled to Peru and Australia before settling in Oregon. John William also went to Oregon where our photograph shows him teaching trigonometry. But he also coached track and field events, drawing on his own systematic athletic training.

Of the daughters Catherine (Katie) became a matron in a London hospital. There is a photo of Lily who worked for the YMCA in Egypt. She subsequently travelled to South Africa before returning to be a companion to Miss Hunter of Brora. Minnie was a housekeeper to her Uncle Andrew on the Isle of Man. One photo shows Maggie as the proud owner of a Morris 8 motor car. She returned to Craigton for the first time, in 1948. She had been away since 1913.

*Text credits: John W Sutherland (1954) Notes On The Strath Brora Sutherlands*

### **Seven Ages of a Man**

Some new photos in the Rogart Heritage archive illustrate the life of Robert Sutherland, Craigton. Born at Tighcraig, Rogart on 8 February 1848 the boy became a Free Church Elder, a master joiner, and the father of ten children.

The earliest image - a studio photograph - was taken in Chicago in the 1870s. Another picture from that period is dated 1874 and shows a group of workers, each holding the tools of their trade. The original image is very faint, but having enhanced it we can see one man holds a saw, another a large square. A later photograph, presumably taken after his return to Rogart, shows Robert in his forties. Posing for a photographer and seated on a chair, his boots are highly polished. His face is heavily tanned below the shade offered by his hat.

Years passed and Robert appears to have been photographed at work. He wields masonry tools and seems to be building a dyke. The final photograph was taken around 1926 - six years before his death. Now Robert is an elderly man, almost 80 years of age and he leans on a stick. His once long and bushy beard is now short and thin.

Robert's gravestone in the new cemetery tells us that he died at West Pittentrail 23rd March 1932, aged 84;. He had come into the tenancy in 1911. His wife of 53 years, Catherine Mackay, died on 12 January 1956, age 96.

*End of the travels of the Craigton Sutherlands*

## Robert Sutherland, Craigton



Thanks to Christina Perera of Rogart Heritage for this photograph of Robert Sutherland, Craigton. He died 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1932.

The only one of his five sons not mentioned above has been Alexander (Sandy). I was told that he remained in Rogart and held a croft at West Pittentrail. Bertie inherited the croft when Sandy died.

Christina Perera says that in addition to Craigton, Neil, Bert and Johan inherited a number of crofts in Rogart, including West Pittentrail, Reidchalmi and Miltonbank, from various aunts and uncle. I understand that Catherine spent her last days at West Pittentrail.

## Mother's last stay at Craigton



An image of this photograph was sent to me by Christina of Rogart Heritage Society. It is labelled on the back 1932 and “Mother’s last stay at Craigton”. The four ladies around Catherine Sutherland who is seated in the middle are her daughters. In front is Minnie and Katie and, at the rear, Chrissie and Lily. Referring back to my findings of Robert’s family in the census, Minnie was born in 1893 and Katie, the first child in 1880. Chrissie was born in 1896; and Lily in 1898.

Catherine Sutherland, m.s Mackay, was born 26/1/1859 and married Robert Sutherland on 9/9/1879. She died aged 96 on 12/1/1956 – long after this 1932 photograph. Robert Sutherland had died 23/3/1932, which must have been the approximate date of the photograph and would mark the takeover of the farm by Catherine’s youngest son, Andrew Sutherland. Andrew did not marry Johan until 1935.

Catherine is Peter’s great grand aunt, as her first cousin, Lexy Mackay became the wife of Joseph MacLeod from Helmsdale.

### Sutherlands and people of the Upper Brora.

Christina Perera of Rogart Heritage provided the following:

Robert Sutherland was recorded in the list of men suitable for military service to the Earl of Sutherland in 1745. In 1812 he is recorded as boman (cattleman) in Craigachnarich, also known as Craigton, for Captain Sutherland of Kinnauld, who had tack of the land. His family had great influence in the Parish of Rogart during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

John Sutherland (Ballan or Ballum) married Catherine Reid, (of the Reids of Craggie, Rogart.) and had family.

Robert born c 1784. died 1862 Craigachanarich, *m Catherine Murray.*

Catherine

Christy.

John, born 1789, died Nova Scotia 1852.

Alexander 1790, died Nova Scotia 1864.

Mary 1799.

**Andrew** 1800 died Pittentrail 1876.

Donald 1804 died Morness 1884

**Andrew Sutherland was** born in 1800, son of John (Ballum) Sutherland and Catherine Reid. In 1824 he is recorded as a labourer in Aultimult, which is just across the river Brora from Craigton and opposite his home at Ault na Sac. Andrew married Lily Sutherland and had family John, 1825; Robert, 1827; Alex, 1829; and William 1831. Lily died soon after the birth of William and Andrew got married again to Christina Mackay and they had further family. Catherine, 1834; Merran, 1836; William, 1838; Charlotte, 1840; Andrew, 1842; and Hugh who was the youngest son.

The family moved over the hill to Corriefroes and Hugh became the shepherd there. Corriefroes was a stopover for the drovers coming across from Reay via Kinbrace and the Skinsdale.

### **Corryfrose. Census 1871**

Andrew Sutherland, former shepherd, (70), Rogart.

Christina, wife, (59), Golspie.

Hugh, son/shepherd, (24), Rogart.

Johanna, dau, (18), Rogart.

The family was there in 1861 but the place was empty by 1881, when a new shepherd's house was built downstream at Dalbreac

The family prospered and eventually moved to Pittentrail where Hugh built property, including a home and shop which they called Burnside. His Parents died in Pittentrail.

Prior to Robert Sutherland taking over Craigton, the hirsle of Upper Grumby records the following.

### **Ault na sack. 1881**

Mary Mackay, head/ shepherds wife, (46), Moffat.

Betsy, dau, (17), Rogart.

Jesse, son, scholar

### **Ault na sack. 1891**

Alexander Mackay, shepherd, (62), Lairg.

Margaret Mackay, wife, (56), Dumfries.

Barbara Mackay, dau, (26), Rogart.

Jesse Mackay, son, (20), Rogart.

Jane Mackay, g/dau, Rogart.

### **1901 Ault na sack is empty.**

Robert Sutherland took over the lands of Aultnasack and Upper Grumby to create the sheep croft/farm of Craigton. He built a new home, some 300m to the east.



Above is a photograph of the Commer shooting brake belonging to my father, John Lawrie, when we visited Craigton in either 1958 or 1959. I initially thought that my brother and I were sitting on the tractor behind, but blond-haired Duncan was only six at the time and the boy on the right is older than that. It is very likely to be Bertie (aged 22) and Neil (aged 13). When I sent this photo to Christina Perera, she thought it was the “Woods tractor” which the family acquired in 1939. Christina sent the photo below (around 1950?) with Bertie, Neil and Johan behind.







In the image above from Christina Perera at Rogart Heritage which is dated to 1950: leaning against Alasdair MacLeod's car is Bert Sutherland and Duncan MacLeod. Neil Sutherland is standing in front of the radiator grill with Johan Sutherland behind and Duncan's father - my grandfather - Alasdair MacLeod on the right. I thought the car was a Wolseley Ten, but Duncan told me it was a Fourteen. (1818cc 6-cylinder – 1938-48)



In this image at Craighton (circa 1960) is Torcul and Ann MacLeod (Aunt Nan), Andrew and Johan Sutherland, Johan MacLeod (Aunt Sis), Bertie and Neil.

### **Bert Sutherland - Obituary in the Northern Times, January 18, 2008**

Robert John Sutherland (Bert) was born on the 24th July 1936, eldest son to Andrew and Johan Sutherland. Home was the hill holding of Craigton, in the upper valley of the Brora river. It then ran a Cheviot flock comparable to the best anywhere in Sutherland. Tups on hire from Craigton were in demand. Bert grew up with this hill farming background and helped his father run the holding. In his youth, he loved the hill ground of his ancestors and the sense of freedom he felt there.

Craigton was very isolated but the hospitality extended to everyone who visited or dropped in while passing was in keeping with the best of Highland tradition. There was always someone calling, often to go over to Loch Beannach or Gaineimh, both excellent trout lochs. Bert enjoyed Beannach best. He had his favourite spot, and with a spinner and worm he was devastating. I remember one day I fished with the fly and got nine trout, while Bert with his worm and special spot got seventy-five. Friends and family got immense enjoyment from these outings.

Winter time presented a problem, especially as his parents grew older. The road into Craigton would frequently block with snow and remain so for weeks. So began a period when the family came down country for the winter, first to stay at Milton Bank, the home of his mother. In 1968 they got the tenancy of neighbouring Reidchalmine and moved to live there. As time went on, the summer trip to the hills got shorter and shorter. In the fullness of time Andrew took over West Pittentrail, which was a family holding, and Bert, his brother Neil, and their parents moved down into the valley of the Fleet. When his father passed away in 1987, Bert was faced with running the lands. Not taking kindly to regulation and form filling, his enthusiasm waned and he found more satisfaction in helping others.

Bert was talented in many ways. His sense of humour and summing-up comment brought many a laugh. He was a cartoonist, expressing his humour through this medium and also through words. His composition and rendering of local songs was guaranteed to have his audience in stitches. He composed monologues with great humour and with great feeling, usually for his friend Murdo to perform at ceilidhs.

Bert had a good singing voice. His first performances in public go back to the mid-1940s when he was asked to join a local stage group which sang the popular cowboy type songs of the day. They were directed by John Grant of Corrylinn and Marilyn his niece. I remember one of the songs, "Bye-Bye Blackbird". During the 60s and 70s Bert got into singing country music and was very popular on the local dance scene. His rendering of "The Auctioneer" was unforgettable. He could fair yodel as well. Bert's escape in life was to play his accordion. He started while still at Rogart school with a Hohner Black Dot double row, a very popular accordion of the time. He cut his teeth getting to play at local dances and ceilidhs, usually with Alex, James and George Fraser. Then Bert got himself a five row accordion. It had very small buttons and we had never seen anything like it before. But he liked it and soon became even more proficient. This was superseded by a new Hagstrom five row and this style of accordion was to remain Bert's main instrument.

For around 50 years, Bert played accordion solo or with various bands and arrangements of musicians. He was known by everyone. He was very much an individual in music as well as in life, and recognised as one of the most talented accordionists on the northern circuit. He was always composing. Somewhere on reel-to-reel tape there are excellent military two-steps and waltzes which Bert composed and played but probably never wrote down. It was later in his playing career that he became proficient at writing music. He was one of the founder players of the Sutherland Accordion and Fiddle Club and laid out many of the sets which they still play.

In later years, Bert got great happiness in playing for local dances and dance classes while encouraging up and coming musicians, seeing in them the continuation of the traditional music and dance which had been such a major part of his life.

Just recently Bert stopped playing. He gave away his music. Something was not right with him, and so it proved to be. On 3rd January he passed away suddenly but peacefully at his home in West Pittentrail, aged 71. He is sadly missed.

At his funeral service, from the Free Church, Rogart, the pipes played “Lament to Catherine Mackay Sutherland of Craigton”, by Donald Sutherland USA (Bert’s uncle) in honour of his mother, and “Johan’s Waltz”, composed by Bert himself to Johan Mearns of Muie East, probably the youngest of Bert’s family line in the parish today.

The bearers called to the committal were Neil Sutherland, George Durie and Ian Macdonald; Bill Mackay and Brian Mearns; Duncan MacLeod and Bobby Durie; John Duncan; John MacDonald; Duncan Mackay, Pittentrail; Hugh Murray, West Langwell; Ian Bain and Monica MacLean. The strap bearers were John Gordon; John Moodie; Torquil MacLeod and James Fraser; and Robin Calvert.

Heartfelt condolences have been extended to his mother Johan and brother Neil.

*JM – (John MacDonald)*



Bert Sutherland at his father Andrew’s cairn at Craigton

**The daughters of Alexander MacLeod and Ann MacLean in Helmsdale**

**Margaret MacLeod 19/7/1855 d.18/9/1938**  
 m.John Macintosh, 1894 (he died 7/5/1936)

||  
 ||

-----Gartymore-----

Minnie  
 b.1895  
 d. 8/8/1941  
 unnm.

John Hugh  
 b.1897  
 d. 7/1/1916  
 France

Alice  
 b.1900  
 d. 18/6/1995  
 unnm  
 Gartymore.

William  
 b.1903  
 d. 1941  
 m.Helen Miller

||  
 ||  
 Canada

-----  
 John Ann



John Hugh Macintosh, died France 7/1/1916

McIntosh memorial stone in Helmsdale burial ground:

- John McD McIntosh, Gartymore, died 7<sup>th</sup> May 1936,
- His wife Margaret MacLeod died 18<sup>th</sup> September 1938
- Their daughter Minnie died 8<sup>th</sup> August 1941
- Their son John Hugh died in France on war service 7<sup>th</sup> January 1916
- Their daughter Alice died 18<sup>th</sup> June 1995.

**Williamina MacLeod b.5/12/1864 d.1940**

m.David **Robertson** 1905

||  
||

Uphall, West Lothian

-----  
Annabel MacLean MacLeod

b.1909

m.George Edward **Small** 1936  
(Edinburgh St Giles)

**Annabella MacLeod b.17/11/1869 d.1938**

m.John **Gentles** 1897

||  
||

3 Millar Place, Edinburgh then Blackburn W. Lothian

-----  
Anna Bella MacLeod

b.1898

m Charles **Hunt** 1930

||  
||

Anna Hunt

John

b.1900

Robert MacLeod

b.1908

Anna Hunt lived in Curry Rivel, Somerset. As far as I am aware, she never married.

**Jane MacLeod b.22/8/1867 d.1960**

m.John **Whyte** (15/1/1877-12/9/1945) on 14/11/1902 in Edinburgh

||  
||

-----Edinburgh-----

Ann MacLean Whyte

b.1904

d.1904

John Whyte

b.1906

d.1979

m. Edith Maria Arkell  
(1914-2003)

||

Alexander MacLeod Whyte

b. 19/12/1908

d. 1999

m.Alice Ada Debnam  
(1914-1962)

||

-----  
Alan

b. 7 Nov 1934

d. 2020

John

b.20/1/1936

Leicester

Ann

b.17/4/1942

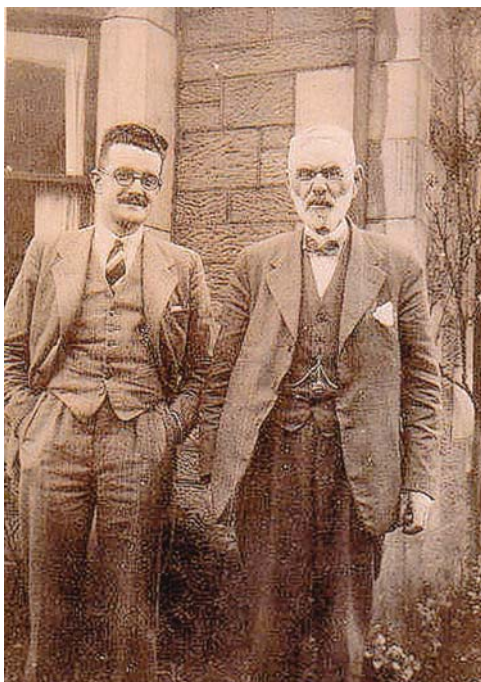
-----Hertfordshire-----  
Peter John

b.21/7/1941

Barnard Castle

David Alexander

b.10/11/1942



Alexander MacLeod Whyte, on the left, visited his uncle, Joseph MacLeod, at 41 Crown Drive, Inverness.

This was probably in the late 1930s. The photo was sent to me by his son, Peter John Whyte.

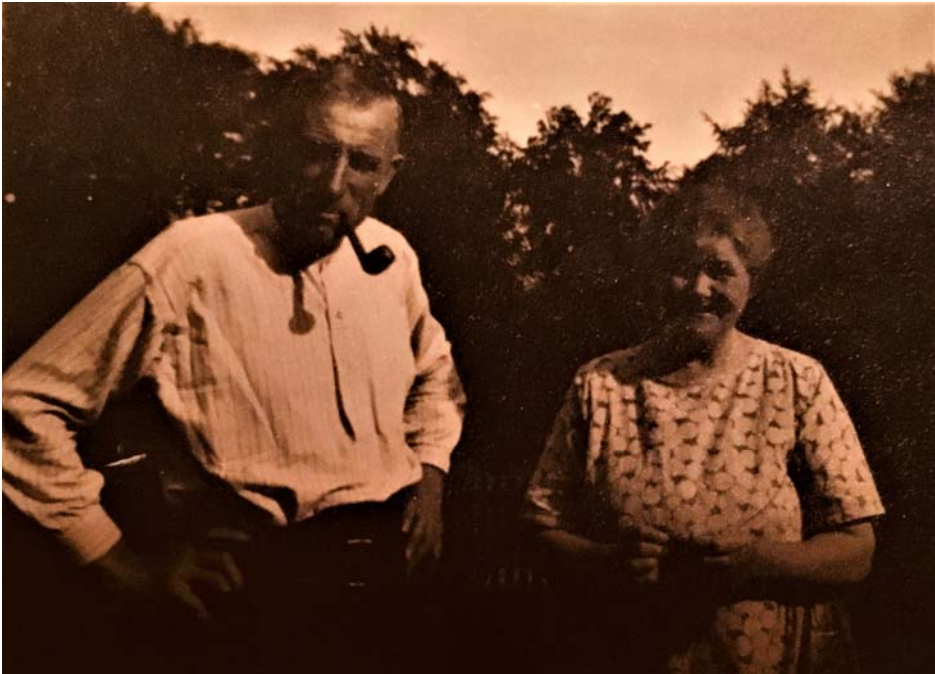
The text below following was supplied to me by Peter John Whyte:

The family of John Whyte and Jane MacLeod moved from Edinburgh to Helmsdale and were there during World War I. They then moved to the Hertfordshire/Essex border, probably in the late 1920s. John was by profession a coachman and groom and was employed at Hassobury, the Victorian mansion which was the home of the Gosling family.

Their eldest son John (1906-1979), who served in the army in World War II, settled in Cirencester (Gloucestershire) and married in 1934, at Ampney Crucis, Edith Maria Arkell (1914-2003), with whom he had two sons: Alan (7 Nov 1934 - 2020) and John (b. 20/1/1936), and a daughter, Ann (b. 17/4/1942).



Jane and John Whyte's younger son, Alexander (1908-1999), who served in the RAF in World War II, settled in Bishop's Stortford (Hertfordshire). In 1940, at Albury (Herts), he married Alice Ada Debnam (1914- 1962), with whom he had two sons: Peter (b. 21 /7/1941) and David (b. 10/11/1942).



Above left: Jane Whyte, nee MacLeod (1867-1960).

Right: John Whyte (1877-1945)

Below: John Whyte and Jane MacLeod

Photos with thanks to their grandson, Peter John Whyte, Barnard Castle



### **Joseph MacLeod, son of Alexander MacLeod and Ann MacLean**

Alexander MacLeod's second son, Joseph MacLeod, was born in 1862. Joseph was a prominent Land-Leaguer in the 1880s and 1890s. He gave evidence to the Royal Commission on the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, in 1892, on behalf of the crofters of Rogart, Sutherland where Lexy, his wife, came from. He later wrote a biographical account of fellow Land-Leaguers in 'The Highland Heroes of the Land Reform Movement', published in Inverness in 1917. From 1901, Joseph had tenancy of part of Dunabban Villa at the foot of Lochalsh Road, Inverness, a few hundred yards along from where Morag spent her retirement years. In the 1902 directory he was described as the Liberal Party organiser for the Inverness Burghs constituency. By 1925, Joseph and his family were tenants of 21 Ardconnel Street. After 1929, Joseph was listed as the proprietor of 'Langwell', 41 Crown Drive. He was a member of Inverness Town Council for many years, a Baillie and Magistrate and the Liberal party organizer for Inverness-shire. In 1933 he was awarded an MBE for services to the Burgh of Inverness. Joseph married Lexy Mackay from Rogart in Sutherland. They had three daughters and a son. Johan, or 'Sis' in 1891 and Alexander, usually known as Alasdair, in 1892, were both born in Brora, Sutherland; then Anne, or 'Nan', in Ellon 1895 and finally, Williamina Catherine, known as 'Wilrine', in 1897 in Peterculter Aberdeenshire. In the photograph below from 1916 or 17, Nan is on the left, Alasdair is in his uniform, and Sis is standing on the right. Seated are Lexy, Wilrine and Joseph.



Lexy died 4<sup>th</sup> July 1933 and Joseph 25<sup>th</sup> December 1949. Both interred at Helmsdale.

This four generation photograph dated to about 1925, outside John and Margaret Macintosh's home at Gartymore, Helmsdale, where Ann MacLean, Margaret's mother spent her final years after the death of her husband, Alexander MacLeod in 1907.



Ann MacLean (1830-1927), her son Joseph MacLeod (1862-1949), toddler Kathleen Clark (1923-2009) with her mother, Joseph's daughter, Nan Clarke, (1895-1987)



Kathleen Clarke was born in India. She taught music at St Leonard's School in St Andrews, before she married Johnny McCall. They spent time in Nigeria where Johnny became a district commissioner before independence in 1960. They retired to Burnside, West Linton, where Kathleen ran the music group.

## Alasdair MacLeod



Alasdair became an apprentice with an Inverness dentist in 1909. The university element of his training began in Edinburgh in 1914, but his studies were interrupted by the Great War.

In February 1917, he was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant in the Cameron Highlanders and later seconded to the Machine Gun Corps.

Social status was of great significance in obtaining a commission in the army in the Great War. Most officers were selected from private schools. According to the published record of the Cameron Highlanders, Alasdair had attended Fettes College in Edinburgh. I contacted Fettes but the school said they had no record of him. I suspect that Joseph had “pulled strings” to obtain his commission.

The percentage losses of junior officers in WW1 were actually higher than that of other ranks. The overall numbers of casualties among Scots in the trenches would be disproportionate to their population share of the UK.

M A C

F.P.D. A.20863

MACLEOD Alec  
 Lieut. M.G.C.

Rép: Mr. Mac Leod, Ariconnel  
 Terrace, West Inverness  
 Scotland.

-----

23.8.17. Tél. Macleod Inverness." Lieutenant Alec Mac Leod writes. Am prisoner but well. Please send Food parcels, flannel trousers & other junio underclothing shirts boots and soap. Expecting reply. Love."

-----

27.8.17 Tél Lieut Macleod Karlsruhe." "Angehörigen grüssen und haben das Nötige für Sendung Nahrungsmittel & Kleider getan".

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On the 1st of August 1917, day two of the Battle of Passchendaele, Alasdair was captured and spent the next 18 months in German POW camps. On the 23rd of August 1917, the family received a postcard from Karlsruhe camp, through the Red Cross, advising that he was uninjured but in need of a food parcel and clothing.

On his return from Germany in February 1919 he resumed his dentistry course at Edinburgh University in the winter term 1919 and summer term 1920. But the record shows that he did not attend classes in the winter term of 1920.

NAME OF STUDENT		NAME OF INSTITUTION	REGISTERED
MacLeod Alexander			July 1914
S.E.D.			
YEAR OF ADMISSION	SESSION	COURSES ATTENDED	DATE OF PASSING
1919	Winter	Anatomy, Physiology, Deut. Hosp. Pract. Deut. Anat. Deut. Mechanics, Roy. Inf. Surgery, Clin. Surgery.	
1920	Summer	Hosp Pract. Hist. Metallurgy	
1920	Winter	Did not attend Hospital	

In Edinburgh, Alasdair met Norah Chew from Samlesbury, near Blackburn in Lancashire. They married on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 1920 at St Stephens United Free Church, Comely Bank, Edinburgh. On their marriage registration, in the parish of St Bernard, Edinburgh, Alasdair used his baptismal name of Alexander and described himself as a dental student, residing at 2 Marchmont Crescent, Edinburgh. His new wife was recorded as Nora Chew, (not Norah), and her address as Oakbank, Beauly, Inverness-shire. Her father, John Alfred Chew, was described as a dairy farmer. One of the witnesses was Johan M MacLeod, Alasdair's sister (Sis). They had a reception after the wedding at the Caledonian Hotel on Princes Street. By a remarkable coincidence, Xin Luo arranged her reception in the Caledonian Hotel on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2019, following her marriage to Peter's son, James Andrew. They had married in the Edinburgh Registry Office in the City Chambers on High Street. Although the hotel had been renamed the Waldorf Astoria Caledonian, it was still the same building where Alasdair and Norah had had their reception - almost exactly 99 years earlier.



Alasdair's 1957 obituaries in the Scots Independent and the Inverness Courier spelt his name as Alisdair. On their marriage registration, their names were Alexander and Nora Chew. His death registration has "Alexander Alasdair MacLeod", with his widow's name spelt as Nora instead of Norah. The informant was Torcul. However, she spelled her name as "Norah" in her will. On her birth certificate and death certificates, her name was clearly Norah.

Alasdair and Norah's first son, Torcul was born on the 13th January 1921 in Blackburn West Lothian. The statutory registration of his birth has Joseph Gentles MacLeod. An unofficial annotation on the back of his birth certificate indicates that he was later baptised Torcul Mackay MacLeod. Annabella MacLeod (b1869) was the youngest sister of Joseph MacLeod. She married John Gentles in 1897. In the 1901 census of 3 Millar Place, Edinburgh, John & Annabella Gentles had daughter Annabella, (2) and John (11mo). When I was a student in 1967 I met with Anna Hunt in Curry Rivel, Somerset. I understood that she was my mother's cousin. Anna Bella MacLeod Gentles married John Hunt in 1930 and was Anna Hunt's mother. Nobody now can tell me the reason why Torcul's name was changed in this way.

Alasdair joined the Civil Service, and became a clerk in HMRC. Initially he was posted for periods away from Inverness. I was informed that the children from Sheila to Morag were born in Great Marlowe, Buckinghamshire - Sheila on 18th January 1922; Angus on 21st January 1923; Iain on 27th June 1924; and Morag, on Angus's birthday, 21<sup>st</sup> January 1926. These five children were separated by only 5 years. However, Iona told me that Sheila had been born in London, not Great Marlowe.



Back in Inverness, they first lived in a cottage beside the road from Inverness to Culloden, south of the town - a rural spot with few other houses nearby. Maeve was born on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1929 and finally Duncan on 18<sup>th</sup> February 1936.

Later they moved to Oaktree cottage at Essich and from 1947 until Alasdair's death in 1957 to a croft at Creraig, Hughton, by Beauly.

Iona passed to me Alasdair's copy of "The Scots Book" by Ronald MacDonald Douglas. Publication date 1935. On the fly leaf is written:

*"Alasdair Mac Leoid, leis gach dhùrachd,  
Raghnall Dòmhnallach Dubhghlas, Inbhir Nis, Nollaig 1937".*

Ronald MacDonald Douglas (1896-1984) was a prominent Scottish Nationalist in the 1930s and a friend of Alasdair.

"The following is from <http://www.siol-nan-gaidheal.com/rmdoug.htm>

Ronald MacDonald Douglas was one of those who surrendered their respectability at a time when declaring yourself for Scotland effectively excluded you from the favour of the establishment. He was of the generation which paved the way for the modern Independence Movement, the generation which named itself 'The Scottish Renaissance'.

"Among the whirlwind of well researched historical and inspired creative writing which burst forth from our country at that time, was a book by Ronald MacDonald Douglas. Never a sugary man and totally contemptuous of 'arty-farty' types of people and styles, he presented the world with his 'The Scottish Book of Lore and Folklore', in June 1935. This very practical primer in Scottishness was an attempt to redress the imbalance in Scotland by the total exclusion of Scottish content from school curricula. In such a school orientated society as Scotland, the denial of a Scottish Ethos during school life, then as now, denied credibility to the concept of Scotland in later life.

"This book produced in 1935 is a sort of Scottish miscellany and brings together a widely varied selection of quotes and pieces of information which should, by right, be the basic cultural stock of any Scot. It is as relevant today as it was in 1935, and its reissue in 1949 and subsequently is a reflection of the timelessness of the need for a raising of National Consciousness, clearly expressed in Scotland and deeply felt by so many today as it was in the thirties.

"Ronald MacDonald Douglas was not only concerned with literary work however, in the mid thirties he was putting together a secret military organisation and was using his personal fortune to purchase arms and ammunition for a planned insurrection. In 1935

the veterans of Ireland's War of Independence were still young and able and a few offered assistance, while their victory certainly inspired confidence in young Scots at the time. Ronald MacDonald Douglas knew the Scottish patriot Amhlaidh MacAindreas who had fought alongside Patrick Pearse in Dublin in 1916. These two and certain others were at the centre of a network of highly motivated Scots who were ready to fight in Scotland but whose names we will never know because their small force was infiltrated by British Military Intelligence and they were smashed before they had their opportunity to make history.

“While in Geneva buying ordnance in late 1935, Ronald MacDonald Douglas was ambushed by British Agents. He was taken to a 'safe house' where he was beaten up quite efficiently - that is the Germanic way, after all - and his fingers were broken. It was suggested to him that this was specifically to lessen his enthusiasm for pulling triggers. However, he was eventually released with a strong warning that for his own good, he should not return to Scotland.

“Not a man to scare easily, he arrived back in Edinburgh shortly afterwards, but was arrested and charged with High Treason. The Lord Advocate visited him in jail and suggested to him that with certain tensions building up, it would not be good for England to hang a Scottish patriot, likewise, a hanging would be unlikely to benefit Ronald MacDonald Douglas either! Furthermore, he told Douglas that it was known that he had been approached by German agents who had been offering help to Scottish Nationalists in order to subvert their potential enemy should war break out. Ronald MacDonald Douglas was only one of the many Scottish Nationalists who rejected these Nazi advances outright. However, he was well aware of the harm which any suggestion that he might be in the pay of Nazi Germany would do to his cause.

“There was only one way out for all concerned, the Lord Advocate explained. He would authorise the release of Douglas pending further investigation in his charge of High Treason. During this freedom, Douglas should proceed to The Irish Free State, there to remain forever in exile. With the gallows as alternative, this was an offer difficult to refuse and Ronald MacDonald Douglas slipped over to Ireland where he was



to stay for over thirty years. There is a Special Branch file on Scottish Nationalism in the 1930s, ref HO4525472, at Kew, London. It mainly consists of reports on MacDonald Douglas and his recruits to his Scottish Defence Force around Glasgow and Edinburgh. His organisation had been infiltrated but dismissed as not being a threat.

“When he eventually returned to Scotland it was to the hopeful atmosphere following the West Lothian by-election in June 1962. He found new scope for his literary attentions, launching and editing "CATALYST", the magazine of the 1320 Club, in December 1967. By then Winifred Ewing had won her historic epic victory in Hamilton and the modern Independence struggle had lifted off in earnest.”

Bearing in mind his “sentence” to permanent exile to Ireland, I wondered at the wording of his dedication of the book to Alasdair at Christmas 1937 which appears to suggest that he had visited Inverness, despite the threat to his life by the Authorities.

This brings me to an exploit by Alasdair. In 1834, a massive monument to Leveson-Gower, the 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Sutherland, had been erected on the top of Ben Bhraggie, above Golspie. A “voluntary” contribution towards the cost was levied from all of the tenants on the Sutherland estate at the time, no matter how poor. Donald MacLeod wrote: in “Gloomy Memories”, letter XIV, "all who could raise a shilling gave it, and those who could not awaited in terror for the consequences of their default". Listed among the subscribers were the brothers Joseph and John MacLeod of West Helmsdale who each gave a shilling and their brother William who gave a shilling and six pence.

Despite many calls for it to be removed, the “Mannie” still stands atop Ben Bhraggie on a massive plinth supporting the 100 ft (30 m) statue. The word "monster" has recently been sprayed across the plinth in green paint. In November 2011, two large sandstone sections were wrenched out from the plinth. Since then, repair work has been undone and even more stones have been extracted from the northwest corner of the plinth. An ultimately unsuccessful campaign was launched in 1995 by the late Sandy Lindsay, of Newtonmore, to tear down the statue, and erect in its place a commemorative Celtic

cross or a plaque dedicated to the victims of the Clearances. The statue's removal remains an active topic of debate.

So, why have I included this, apart from remembering that some of our ancestors in Sutherland were among those forced to contribute. It is common knowledge among Alasdair's sons that he was involved in an attempt to destroy the statue at some time in the 1930s. I was originally informed of this by Duncan MacLeod, but since then, Monica and Fiona have both informed me that their fathers told them about it too.



The Mannie on top of Ben Bhraggie

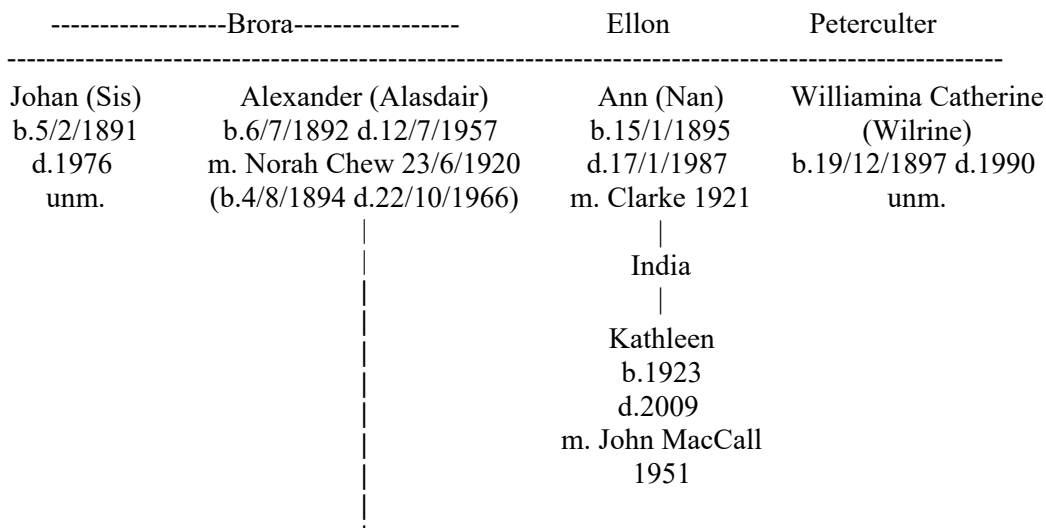
Alasdair with some others planned to topple the statue with gelignite, but on their way, Alasdair crashed his car on a bend on Struie Hill. Fiona said that her father told her that it happened close to a small bridge. They buried the gelignite before seeking assistance to recover the car. Some time later, plans for road works to realign that corner were announced. The gelignite had to be urgently recovered.

I don't know how accurate this story is, who was involved - apart from Alasdair - and exactly when it took place?

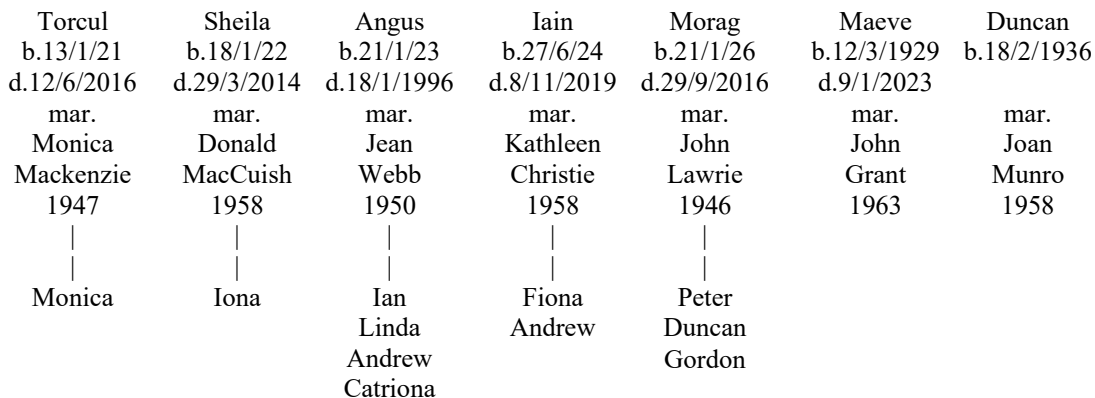
Monica said that Torcul told her that whoever had come up from Edinburgh (presumably with the gelignite?) had wanted to change cars to avoid attention. A local car such as Alasdair's might be less suspicious. Apparently the crash happened when the brakes on Alasdair's car failed. There is nothing in the Home Office files at Kew suggesting that Special Branch had any interest in Alasdair's activities.

**The family of Joseph MacLeod and Lexy Mackay**

Joseph  
 b.16/5/1862 d.22/12/1949  
 m. Lexy Mackay 25/2/1890



W. Lothian      -----Great Marlow, Bucks-----      ----Inverness-----



Alasdair MacLeod died on 12<sup>th</sup> July 1957. (Both obituaries spell his name incorrectly.)

His obituary in the **Inverness Courier** reads as follows:

Mr Alisdair MacLeod, Creraig, Hughton near Beauly, whose death took place last Friday, was the only son of the late Joseph MacLeod, Inverness.

A member of the Inland Revenue staff in Inverness, he was well known as an amateur actor of more than ordinary ability. He appeared in many theatrical productions in Inverness and before the war was a regular member of the Little Theatre cast. He took a particularly keen interest in the Community drama movement, and in addition to playing in drama teams which were successful in local and divisional finals and also at the S.W.R.I. festivals, he and his wife gave a trophy to the Inverness district, to be given to the runner-up in the festival each year. His enthusiasm and acting gifts enabled him to undertake parts which called for experienced treatment and his performances invariably pleased audiences.

Mr MacLeod, who is survived by his widow and grown-up family, was a man whose genial manner and courtesy won him many friends who will regret his passing.

Obituary in the **Scots Independent** of July 1957,

Alisdair MacLeod was one of the first members of the National Party of Scotland because there was no need to convert him to Scottish Nationalism - it was always in him. As one of the most vigorous supporters of John MacCormick in his memorable Inverness campaign, he went recklessly beyond the restrictions imposed by the Government on civil servants. It was another of the peculiar circumstances of his position that the Election Agent of the virulently anti-Nationalist M.P. was his father!

He was a man of great personal charm – with a lovely voice and outstanding dramatic ability – such a lively and youthful personality that his death must appear incredible to those who knew him.

[John MacCormick lost to National Liberal Murdoch MacDonald in the 1931 and 1935 elections in Inverness. Alasdair's father, Joseph, was MacDonald's election agent.]



Left: On WWI service, Sis, Alasdair and Nan MacLeod. These photographs came from Iona MacCuish.

Below, early 1950s Creraig  
back row: Duncan, a friend  
and Iain;  
front row: Norah, Alasdair and  
Maeve.





Torcul, Iain and Duncan MacLeod

### **Duncan Mackay MacLeod**

Of Alasdair and Norah's seven children, only one remains in 2023. Maeve passed away, aged 93, on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023, in a care home in Grantown-on-Spey. However, Duncan with his wife Joan, are still living on their croft at 19 Cabrich near Kiltarlity. I visited Duncan in December 2022 along with Torcul's daughter Monica.

Peter recalls growing up with two brothers and the dynamics of the relationship with siblings, as one grows up, can remain through adult life. In Duncan's case, he was the youngest in a family of seven and, in speaking with him, it is apparent that he has been shaped by these relationships. Duncan told me that although his older brother, Iain, had pressed his parents to take on Creraig, - the croft near Kiltarlity - in 1947, it seemed to Duncan that he had to do most of the farm work without any help from his brothers. He mentioned one occasion when a message had been sent to him at school summoning him home to deliver a calf. Alasdair retired at the age of 60 in 1952, but he seemed to be more interested in his amateur dramatic group than working the croft. Duncan said that Alasdair could be dogmatic in his opinions. He was hard on his sons and expected them to take care of their sisters.

When my mother took us to Inverness in 1960, I felt that there was a strained relationship with the Aunts at Crown Drive. Duncan confirmed this and said that it was probably due to political differences between father and son. Joseph had been very active in Liberal party politics, while Alasdair became a founder member of the SNP.

Duncan expressed his great fondness for Craigton, Rogart. He and Torcul used to visit the Sutherland family regularly.

Duncan mentioned that there was a WW2 Prisoner of War camp on the Essich road not far from the family home at Oaktree cottage. He said that Alasdair had learned German during his time in a WW1 camp in Germany and he would meet some of the inmates and invite them to Oaktree cottage – He mentioned one named Herbert Reinveltd. According to the Inverness Local History Forum, the PoW camp was situated on the Essich Road just past the Torbreck turn off, directly opposite the field where the Pictish Boarstone used to stand. The site included a large number of single storey timber and Nissen huts situated inside a high barbed wire fence, and the buildings remained in place for some years after the war. In the 1960s it was used as a radio research station. Nothing remains of the camp today. The camp on Essich Road was probably a satellite camp of the largest local PoW camp on the Brahan Estate, four miles from Dingwall, the remnants of which still exist today.

"The only foreigners we saw were the Italian PoWs or internees; we used to go up to the Boarstone near where their camp was and chat to them. They used to go out to the farms and worked on them. They all wore sort of brown boiler suits when they were out working on the farms and fields." ('Inverness, Our Story' Book 2, p25. 2007)

".....there was a German Prisoner of War; he worked as a gardener at the Scott-Swanston's house at 91 Culduthel Road. He was a lovely man; he used to give us rides in his wheelbarrow. His English became quite good and I remember him telling us that he had two little girls himself in Germany. Obviously the poor man was missing his family and maybe we made up for a wee bit, but he used to play with us and take us around in his wheelbarrow." ('Inverness, Our Story' Book 1, p180. 2004)

**Maeve Mackay MacLeod (1929-2023) & John Grant**



Maeve MacLeod married John Grant in 1963. The wedding was conducted by Rev. Donald MacCuish at Caddonfoot.



On the right of Maeve is bridesmaid Sheila MacCuish, Maeve's elder sister, with her daughter Iona in front and Donald beside her. Next to the right is Aunt Sis. Next to John is his daughter, Jean; then his son Peter and son Jim behind Jean; then Granny Norah and Torcul. Morag is looking over John's shoulder. Aunt Nan is behind Maeve and Sheila, Aunt Wilrine is behind Donald and Sis, and Mona is standing at the back, directly behind Maeve.

Maeve Mackay MacLeod, Mrs Grant.

12/3/1929 – 9/1/2023



**Iain Mackay MacLeod (1924-2019)**



Fiona Mowatt sent me this photo of her father, Iain Mackay MacLeod, with Johan and Andrew Sutherland of Craigton, Rogart

### **Morag Mackay MacLeod (1926-2016)**

This account of Morag's life was adapted from one created for her funeral in 2016.

Morag was an exceptional lady with great charm, energy, zest for life, warmth and above all, kindness. She had a knack for putting people at their ease, and was very well-liked. Morag had a wide circle of friends in her church and in the wider Inverness community, she had a passion for helping others, often driving around to pick up friends to help them with errands, take them shopping and to appointments. She also volunteered in the WRVS shop at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, and the Highland Hospice shop in Inverness town centre.



On the left is a photograph of 19-year old Morag in her Observer Corps uniform in 1945 when she served at Dalcross airfield. The right hand photograph is Morag, possibly in her early thirties.



Morag remained active around Inverness until her eighties.

Below is Gordon celebrating Morag's 90th birthday with her at St Olaf's





These photographs, in mid-1929, of the family at their house at Culloden were found in Kathleen Clarke's album. Cousin Kathleen was holding baby Maeve. Torcul was standing at the back with Sheila beside him and Angus to the right. Iain was sitting on Kathleen's left and Morag on her right.

In the other photo, Kathleen was feeding the hens, with Morag beside her.

Tiny Morag weighed just 2 pounds at birth on the 21st January, 1926 and nobody expected her to survive 90 years. She spent her early months literally wrapped in cotton wool, with a dresser drawer for her cot. Older brother Angus referred to her as his birthday present as her birthday coincided with his. Being such a small baby and having to fight for life definitely shaped her character as she continued to battle all through her life. Despite her diminutive stature she had an inner strength and determination that belied her size.

Apart from Alasdair's early death in 1957 and Norah's in 1966, aged 72, following a fall, the family proved to possess the genes for long-life. Their eldest son, Torcul, passed away in June 2016, aged 95 and was buried at Tomnacross burial ground, Kiltarlity, alongside his parents. Torcul was active and continued driving until only a few months before his death. Of Alasdair's sisters, Sis reached 85, Nan 92 and Wilrine, 93. Sheila and Morag both reached the age of 90 and Maeve was 93 when she passed in January 2023.



Later the family moved to “Oaktree”, a cottage at Essich to the West of Inverness. Today, the line of cottages are in a cul-de-sac off the re-aligned road, with new bungalows springing up like mushrooms in all directions, but in the 1930s there was space all around to play in. I was not sure whether the image from Google maps is “Oaktree” as it is today, but Duncan (who lived there) confirmed that it is. The family had seven children living in this cottage. Morag said that Alasdair used to invite prominent nationalists, such as Oliver Brown, to visit and camp in the garden.



Alasdair seems to have had a difficult manner, perhaps due to his harrowing experiences in the War. Life in the 1920s and the Depression years of the 1930s must have been very difficult with a large family.

At the end of the Second War, in 1945, following service in the Observer Corps, Morag enrolled on a typing course and met Lorna from Drumnadrochit who became her lifelong friend. Lorna passed away at her home in Dundee in September 2016, just a week before Morag. While serving in the Observer Corps at RAF Dalcross, Morag met John Lawrie, an aircraft engineer from Manchester. Apparently, John cycled from Dalcross to Essich to meet Morag's parents but was not well received by her father. One day, the family had arranged to meet at the Balmoral Restaurant in Eastgate. Morag was expected to join them but instead Alasdair was handed a note telling him that his young daughter had romantically eloped with John for Manchester. Morag was just 20, while John was 26.

John and Morag married in Glasgow on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March 1946 in the office of the Blythswood registrar. At that time John may not have been demobilised as his occupation was described as Motor Engineer (aircraftman, Royal Air Force). His home address was given as that of his parents at 122 Church Lane, Manchester, and in brackets – now engaged in war service. Morag's address was that of Alasdair and Norah at "Oaktree", Essich Road, Inverness. John Forbes Lawrie was described as a motor engineer, and Alasdair MacLeod as a clerk – Inland Revenue. There were no family witnesses, just E.M.Smellie and Jessie Coles, both residing in Glasgow who I presume were local staff at the registrars. Two witnesses were required in law to make the marriage legal.

In Manchester Morag met John's parents, John Forbes Lawrie and his wife, Laurie Helen MacGregor. JF Lawrie's father had come to Lancashire from Tillicoultry, Clackmannan in the late 19th century. They lived in a large old house, Glen Villa on Church Lane. The house had extensive grounds, especially a wooded ravine or 'glen' with a stream, deemed unsuitable for development, plus a line of letting garages. Glen Villa has long gone, replaced by a modern housing development, but the 'glen' is still

there. JF Lawrie had acquired a number of 2-up 2-down terraced houses. Today, some of the sites of these are occupied by an Asda superstore.

There were five children of whom John was the second youngest. The family warmly welcomed Morag. To begin with, John and Morag lived at Acomb Street in Moss Side, a Victorian suburb which has since acquired a bad reputation for drugs and gang violence. Peter was born when they lived there, but shortly after they moved to one of grandfather's houses at 48 Dalbeattie Street, Blackley.

Peter was born on 7<sup>th</sup> June 1949 at St Mary's hospital in Prestbury. According to Wikipedia, along with Wilmslow and Alderley Edge, Prestbury is among the most sought-after places to live in North West England. It is, especially, a favourite place for footballers on ridiculously-inflated salaries to reside and garage their expensive cars. I wouldn't know, as I have never been near the place since! However, it features on my passport and driving license. Hence, on the very few occasions, on which I have been interviewed by the boys in blue for speeding, I have been obliged to mention Prestbury. Only as I write this, did it occur to me to Google for an explanation:

“During the war, with the possibility of German air raids, the St Mary's Hospital Board closed their Manchester city centre maternity wards and relocated them to Collar House in Prestbury. The house was owned by the Moseley family who were then living in Wales and rented it to the hospital in 1939 as an annexe. It was a large house with extensive grounds, its own water and electricity supply as well as a laundry. It was converted to hold 45 beds and had maternity wards and nurseries as well as a theatre, dispensary and accommodation for 30 staff. Nearby Prestbury Hall and Adlington Hall were also to become hospitals. St Mary's remained at Collar House until 1952 when the maternity wards returned to the City. During those 13 years, more than 14000 children were born at the three Prestbury hospitals.”

This explains to me why Duncan and Gordon were registered as having been born at St Mary's maternity hospital in Manchester, while I emerged into the world at St Mary's in Prestbury, Cheshire.



Morag in Manchester, in the late 1940s, with her sister-in-law Jean and father-in-law, John Forbes Lawrie. This photo was probably taken in the “glen” beside the Moss Brook which formed a part of John Forbes’s land. I was told that, when I was a toddler, Mum broke her leg in the “glen” chasing after me.



Peter with Morag and John.



Peter and his new brother Duncan



On the left is Duncan with Morag and Peter, perhaps in 1955. On the right, Peter, an unhappy Gordon obscuring Duncan behind, possibly in 1957.







Gordon was pictured here with Dad's Commer "shooting brake" – MXJ749 in 1958 or 1959. I think it was actually a Rootes group van in which Dad had installed side windows. There was a very similar Hillman Husky Estate. Vans did not incur purchase tax, but private cars did, so it was not an uncommon practice to cheat the taxman in this way. There are none of these left licensed to run on the roads in the UK, according to the [howmanyareleft.co.uk](http://howmanyareleft.co.uk) website. Although the Dundee Transport museum does have a non-running white saloon version of this car.



Duncan, Gordon and Peter. Possibly taken around 1957.

John worked as an electrical maintenance engineer on the night shift at Ferranti. He took on freelance work too, fixing all sorts of electrical devices and rewiring houses.

John's sister Ida lived at 46 Dalbeattie Street, with her two children Ian and Helen. Brother Clarence migrated to Australia in 1961 with his family. Youngest sister, Helen who everyone called 'Billie' became a district midwife based in Partington the western side of Manchester, while Jean operated a baker's shop at one end of Glen Villa.



I think this photo may have been taken on Blackpool Beach, possibly in 1957.

Ann Kavanagh, a neighbour in Dalbeattie Street is behind. Then from left to right: cousin Helen; my brother Duncan is being held by Ann's brother; cousin Ian; Peter on the right.

Some of my earliest memories are of visiting Jean in her bakery behind the shop and waiting in anticipation of the sweet remnants from the bowl of whatever cake mix had just gone in the oven. Sometimes I was even allowed to serve in the shop!

My brother, Duncan, was born on 15th October 1952 and Gordon followed on 26th November 1955.

In the living room we had a large radiogram which included a record turntable and a TV cabinet with wooden doors hiding a tiny screen. I vaguely remember a programme with lots of men on horses and big, funny hats, which was probably the Coronation in 1953. We also had a dog, Jeff, a wonderful, but very hairy, Old English sheepdog.

Ida did not keep well and passed away in 1957, so our cousin Helen would come to us every morning for Mum to comb her long golden hair before she left for school. I think that Mum had to do a lot of parenting for Ida's children.

We had freedom to jump on our bikes and race around the open space behind the house. Later we explored further, especially through the extensive Boggart Hole Clough parkland at the top of the street. Mum took us regularly to Church and Peter sang in the choir for a time. School was Alfred Street Primary. Looking at the map today, the walk from home to school was only around 500 metres, although it seemed a long way to a five year old. In the days before the Clean Air Acts, with coal burning fires in all homes and many belching factory chimneys, there were often thick, smelly smogs, through which we would have to almost feel the way to school.



Alfred Street Primary School, today, as illustrated in this Google Street View. It is still a Primary School but now has the grandiose title of Harpur Mount Academy Primary.

Granddad, Alasdair MacLeod, died in 1957 at Creraig by Kiltarlity, the croft which he and Norah had taken on later in life. Norah then moved to a semi-detached villa at 10 Southside Road in the Crown district of Inverness. John rewired her house, with 5-year old Duncan crawling under the floorboards to pull the cables through. John also rewired Caddonfoot Manse where Aunt Sheila had married the Rev. Donald MacCuish.

Peter's primary school days came to their conclusion with the eleven-plus and the receipt by Mum & Dad in May 1960 of a large envelope through the post giving me the choice of every school in Manchester, topped by the Manchester Grammar. I have only very recently learned that the premises of the Manchester Grammar school in the 1960s, where I might have gone to school, were in Long Millgate and were taken over by Chethams in 1978.

It was a great shock in June 1960 when Mum took the three of us on the train to Inverness without Dad. That was the end of their marriage. They divorced in 1962. Mum went down to Manchester for the court hearing, accompanied by Torcul. I was sent to a Boys Brigade camp at Carrbridge for a week. I hated it.

A trivial but long-abiding memory for Peter of this was the chuff-chuff of the steam-hauled train and its clinkety-clack along the rails for hour after hour. This was followed, when we arrived in Inverness and briefly moved in with Granny at Southside Road, by a deep, slow thumping, which turned out to be the pile-drivers for the new bridge over the River Ness replacing the old 1850 castellated suspension bridge. The bridge was completed and opened to traffic in 1961.



*Photo Wikimedia commons.*

Gordon told me recently, that some time in 1960, Duncan found a ten shilling note and went down to Inverness station with five year old Gordon. He tried to purchase a ticket for Manchester. Torcul soon appeared and took them both home to a frantically worried Morag.

## Inverness from 1960



Gordon, Peter and Duncan at Castle Grant, Kingsmills Road. Probably in 1964.



The Inverness Royal Academy at Midmills. It dated from the 1890s, replacing the earlier building on Academy Street which had its Royal Charter from George III in 1793. In August 1979, the school moved to a new site at Culduthel. The Midmills building has been transformed into a “Creative Hub” which opened in 2018.

Peter entered first year at Inverness Royal Academy in August 1960, despite being a year younger than the rest of his class. It was a struggle to catch up. Peter finished his sixth year here in 1966. It is interesting to note that the previous two Academy buildings still exist in Inverness. The original grammar school on Church Street is the oldest building surviving in the town, while its 1793 successor is on Academy Street.



Duncan joined the Crown Primary, while Gordon started his primary schooling at the Crown infants, where, he says, the headmistress was his 'scary' Great Aunt Wilrine.

When we arrived, Granny Norah managed somehow to accommodate us in her three bedroom semi-detached house for a few weeks. At the time, Granny's youngest son Duncan and his wife, Joan Munro, were also living with her. It was an unexpected squeeze for the four of us.



The illustration from Google street view shows 10 Southside Road as it is today.

The windows and front door have been modernised since Granny lived there.

Later that summer of 1960, after a short stay in her brother's flat in MacDonald Street while Iain and his family were in Shetland, Morag obtained a 6 month joint tenancy during the winter of a detached house at 29 Glen Urquhart Road. It was a lovely big house with a large garden, but with no electricity. There was gas lighting in the principal rooms and we had to use paraffin lamps or candles upstairs. There was a coal fire in the left hand reception room which we had the use of and a coal or coke fired iron range in the kitchen. Hence the affordable rental which was shared with a single lady who had the right hand rooms.



This image of the house at 29 Glen Urquhart Road, as it is today, has been taken from Google street view.



This picture has been taken from a 2011 “Inverness Remembered” calendar published by the Inverness Courier. The narrative has “a busy day in Academy Street in 1961 from its junction with Station Square, looking south towards Inglis Street.”

My interest is in the ladies chatting just behind the cyclist turning into Station Square. I’m sure that the lady in profile is Morag and perhaps Maeve with her back to the camera. I tried zooming in for a clearer view, but the result was excessively pixelated. I contacted the Courier for an original image but they could not supply it.



On the left is the same view from a current Google street view. Stewart’s restaurant with its distinctive rose window is long gone, demolished to make way for the Eastgate shopping centre.

Mum started a job at a solicitor's office and in 1961 obtained the tenancy of a two room flat at Castle Grant in Kingsmills Road. She then joined the Crofter's Commission as a Clerical Officer and the family were able to move into a bigger flat at Castle Grant. The rightmost window on the middle floor, along with the room behind it, was our first flat. Later we moved to the ground floor left where, to begin with, we had three rooms. There was an old man living in the fourth. Our sitting room was on the left, with the three boys in the next room at the front. The kitchen in the back room had a bed recess where Morag slept. When the old man died, Mum obtained the tenancy of that room too and I was given my own room.



The image is of Castle Grant as it is at time of writing and taken from Google street view.

In 1964 Mum obtained a four-roomed Council flat at No. 37 MacEwan Drive. In the Google street view image, No. 37 was the top-right flat.



In order to store our bikes I decided to build a shed in the garden. That must have been in 1964 or 1965 when I was 15. Together with Duncan and Gordon, we obtained some recycled timber joists and sheets of chipboard.

When Morag died in 2016, I visited MacEwan drive and was greatly surprised to see that the shed was still there, in use, and looking just the same, more than fifty years later.



Duncan notes that most of his childhood memories were of an incredibly selfless Mum struggling mightily to make ends meet as a single mother. Morag put aside any self-interest during those years as the boys grew up and she taught each of them the importance of discipline and hard work.

Summer Holidays were often in a caravan on the beach in Nairn. One year Morag splashed her year's savings to take Duncan and Gordon on a boat from Oban to the Hebrides. Duncan says that the only thing he remembers about that investment in Scotland's wild west and the Minch was the side of the boat and Morag joined him there most of the time.

Morag regularly took the boys to Church. Her faith was very important to her and certainly helped her through some of the difficult years. She tried to instil that strong belief in the boys.

The work ethic demonstrated by Morag clearly rubbed off on all three boys with them all taking on paper rounds with Tom MacDonald, the newsagent on Kingsmills Road, at a young age.

One by one the boys moved on. Peter graduated in science at Andrews University in 1969, Duncan took an engineering degree at Liverpool, while Gordon opted to join the RAF as an apprentice in 1971.

After the boys had left to live their own lives, Morag married widower Ernest Rasche on December 31st 1970. Morag and Ernest moved to a new home at 224 Oldtown Road in Hilton, Inverness. Ernest proved to be the love of her life. The ensuing years were probably the happiest of Morag's life. They enjoyed the next eighteen years together until Ernest died aged 82. During those years they travelled regularly to Mediterranean resorts, to the United States and extensively throughout Scotland. Ernest was devoted to her and delighted in surprises which often involved champagne and weekend hotel stays.

A rare family visit on the lawn with the Aunts at Crown Drive in 1957 or 1958.



At the back is Aunt Sheila, Great Aunts Nan and Sis (slightly in front), Granny Norah, and Dad (John Lawrie).

Seated: I am not sure who is holding Gordon. Next are Morag and then Helen Ward from Manchester. In front, Gordon (as mentioned), Me (Peter Lawrie) and Duncan.



Peter's wedding in Broughty Ferry, 1974: Duncan, Morag, Gordon and Peter



After their marriage, Morag and Ernest moved to a new home at 224 Oldtown Road, Hilton in 1970. Parked in front is Ernest's Wolseley 1500 in which he taught Morag to drive.

When the stairs became too difficult for Ernest they moved to a ground floor flat at 118 Lochalsh Road. Ernest died in 1988. Morag remained here until going to St Olaf's care home in 2015.



In the course of time, Morag's three boys married and made her a grandmother eight times over. She had four great grandchildren before her death in 2016. Four more, Rayf James (2016), Zander (2019), Max (2019) and Elisabeth Nora (2021) have been born since then.

Morag was a very proud and fastidious lady. If one sat down she would move you in order to straighten the cushion you were leaning on and make you lift your feet so she could vacuum under them and that never changed during her whole life. David and Kirsteen remember that if they were told Granny Morag was on her way for a visit, there would be a stampede through to their bedrooms to tidy up before she arrived. She may have been very small but they certainly weren't brave enough to risk her catching them with an unkempt room.

Granny Morag was also a large figure in the lives of her American grandchildren, often visiting in the summers when they were small. As the only girl, Melissa remembers receiving special counsel from Granny Morag after upsets with her three brothers. She was certainly highly qualified in dealing with three boisterous boys! Granny Morag was a great pen pal, never missing a birthday letter or Christmas card. Her letters often showed up as multiple pages of tiny print on very thin air mail paper and were always a joy to receive.

In her late 80s, Morag's health began to deteriorate and hospital spells were followed by her being fed properly for a number of weeks by Rhona until she was deemed fit enough to go home. During these years her elder brother Torcul was virtually a permanent fixture in the house. He kept a close eye out for his two youngest sisters.

Following a heart attack and stroke in early 2015, Morag spent some time in Raigmore. Sadly, Alzheimer's ultimately took hold of her, despite this she never lost that inner strength, sense of humour or that twinkle in her eye.

## Morag's 80th



At Morag's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration in Dalneigh Hall. Peter is in the kilt, Duncan is standing behind Morag and Gordon on the right.

Below: Morag and her siblings: Torcul on the left, Morag, Iain's wife Grace, Iain and Maeve



At the end of 2015, it was arranged for Morag to move to St Olaf's Care Home in Nairn close to the home of Gordon and Rhona. The family are very grateful to the staff for the loving and attentive care that she received in her final months. It was a comfort to know that she was well looked after.

Monica says that shortly after Morag went into St Olaf's, she took Torcul through to Nairn to see Morag. He could no longer wear a tie and on the way through he was worried about her reaction to seeing him without one. When we went in Morag's face lit up. She said 'I thought you had gone' then she looked again and said 'and where's your tie, my boy'. She still had some awareness.

Morag celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday at St Olaf's in January 2016. Morag's eldest brother, Torcul, died on June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at the age of 95. He had been in remarkably good health and had only stopped driving the year before. Then unexpectedly, Rhona, Gordon's wife, died on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016. Morag attended Rhona's funeral in Nairn.

Just over a month later, Kirsteen phoned me to say that Morag's condition had deteriorated. Gordon had returned to his work in Saudi a few weeks earlier to finish his last stint before retiring and was unable to return in time. Between Kirsteen, Monica and myself, we sat with Morag until she died on the 29<sup>th</sup> of September 2016.

Morag was interred at Kiltarlity Church, Tomnacross, in the same grave as Torcul and their parents, Alasdair and Norah. The pall-bearers were Morag's three sons, Peter, Duncan and Gordon, along with her youngest brother, Duncan MacLeod. Her eight grandchildren were cord-holders: David Lawrie, Benjamin Lawrie, Craig Lawrie, Kirsteen Williamson, Andrew Lawrie, Jason Lawrie, Christina Lawrie and Melissa Lawrie.



A four generation photograph shortly after the birth of Christina's daughter Mairi-Anna in May 2011 when Morag, aged 85, was still living in her flat on Lochalsh Road. Mairi is on the left with Christina Mairi, Morag, baby Mairi-Anna Stevens and Peter

**Joseph MacLeod (1862-1949)**



Joseph MacLeod as a younger man, probably around 1890, when he was active in Sutherland politics.

In 1932, on Joseph's seventieth birthday, in the offices of the Liberal agent, there was a meeting of friends of the Liberal cause in the Inverness Burghs and the county of Inverness for the purpose of presenting Mr Joseph MacLeod with a testimonial in recognition of his service to the cause as political agent. The article in the Highland News read as follows.

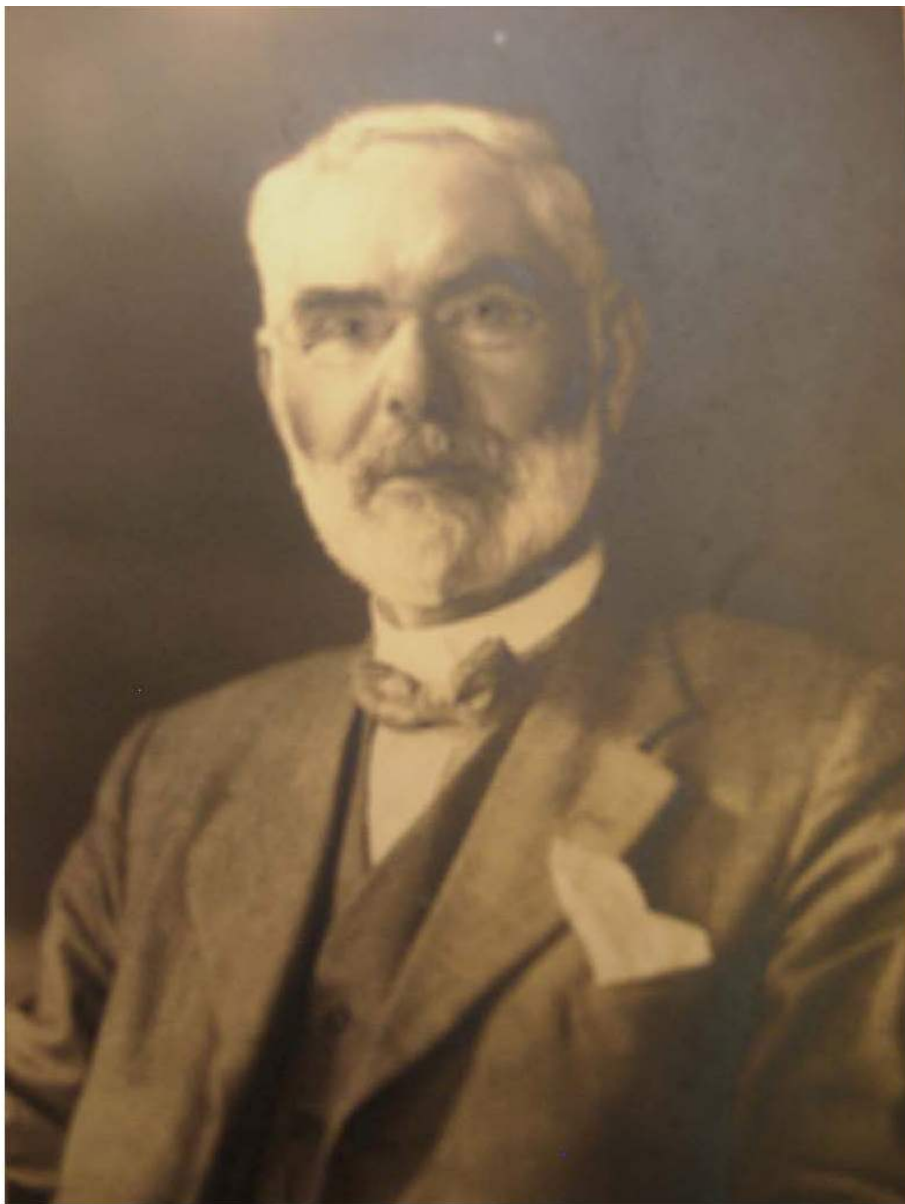
“Mr Joseph MacLeod, liberal organiser, who has just received a well-merited recognition for his strenuous and successful work on behalf of Liberalism and the cause of the Highland people will be remembered by many for the prominent part he took in connection with the crofters' movement prior to the Lord Napier Commission visiting the Highlands, which was the stepping stone to the Crofters Act of 1886, and which brought so much contentment to the crofter population.

“Mr MacLeod is one of the “stalwarts of Sutherland”, one of the men who, by devotion and perseverance raised the county of Sutherland from being merely the territorial possession of a lordly house, the pendicle of a ducal family, to the position it occupies today. Mr MacLeod was born in famed Kildonan in 1862. His ancestors were amongst those who were burnt out of their homes and harried out of the county by Sellar and Co. It is interesting to know that Mr MacLeod's grandfather was the only man in the strath who had the courage to resist the common enemy, and which he did to the bitter end. Mr MacLeod, like his ancestor, has the fighting spirit in him, and is never daunted in standing up for what he believes to be the right.

“He was one of those who inaugurated the Kildonan branch of the Highland Land League, which was the pioneer society in the land agitation in Sutherlandshire and the Highlands. Mr MacLeod will also be remembered for his deep interest in the people of Assynt during the Clashmore “Riots”, as well as the prominent part he took in the struggle which culminated in the return of Mr Angus Sutherland to Parliament, visiting and organising the county amidst great difficulties.



“As a county councillor for his native county, Mr MacLeod rendered invaluable service, which commended him to the goodwill of his constituency and to those who lived around him. Mr MacLeod’s valuable assistance and evidence given on behalf of the crofters of Sutherland before the various commissions have been recognized in the public acknowledgement extended to him when leaving his native county.”



**Baillie Joseph MacLeod JP MBE.**

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Joseph was the author of “Highland Heroes of the Land Reform Movement”, published in 1917, a book which has become difficult to find. Some may consider that a book about the heroes of the Land League may not seem very relevant a century later. I have recently re-read it and considering that two-thirds of Scotland's land area is still "owned" by only 1,252 landowners, with much of it being private hunting preserves, I believe Joseph's thoughts do remain relevant.

Joseph wrote at a time when religious faith was almost universal, so his references to the bible and the faith of the people are understandable. He was also writing during the Great War - with his only son in uniform on the Western front - and at the high-point of Empire, so his references to the Highland regiments at the front and Highlanders making their way in the various imperial possessions and dominions have to be understood in that context. Donald MacLeod's writings in “Gloomy Memories” showed an even greater absorption with the empire and the military. Nobody today is likely to advance the proposition that the Highlands should be repopulated in order to provide many more battalions of cannon-fodder for the Empire.

Joseph put very little about himself in his book. So a brief biography is needed. Joseph was born in 1862, a second son and the fourth of seven children of Alexander MacLeod and Ann MacLean in Helmsdale. They had five daughters, one of whom died in infancy while the others survived to marry and have children of their own. Joseph's elder brother, Alexander, died in 1891 of a fall from the roof of the Free Church in Helmsdale which was then under construction.

Alexander's parents were Joseph MacLeod, described in the 1841 census as a stone mason, and Williamina Mackenzie. It seems likely that Williamina may have died at or shortly after his birth at the end of 1820, as Joseph remarried at the beginning of 1822 to Barbara Mackenzie, (perhaps a sister). There were six children of the second marriage during the next 16 years, born and reared at their tiny croft on the steep, barren slopes of West Helmsdale.

Prior to the Kildonan clearance, the family were joint tenants with three other families at Eldrable, on the southern side of the strath of Kildonan, opposite Kilphedir and Torrish, about 4 km from Helmsdale. Joseph and William MacLeod were specifically mentioned in the Sutherland estate papers and marked for eviction, in advance of the general clearance of the strath, by Patrick Sellar for the "crime" of taking a small amount of tree bark. The use of tree bark for the purpose of tanning leather from the hides of one's own livestock was an age-old traditional right of the commons. The new management of Young and Sellar on the Sutherland estate now defined it arbitrarily as a crime. Joseph was also mentioned as a participant in the Kildonan "riots" in 1813.

Alexander MacLeod in Eldrable, Kildonan, had at least two sons and a daughter with Marion Polson before 1790 and then a further three sons and a daughter with Janet Polson between 1791 and 1799. Alexander MacLeod died before 1808. In 1819, during the Sutherland Clearances the family were cleared to West Helmsdale, a crofting township to the south-west of the new village of Helmsdale. The sites of the crofts allocated to the Widow Polson, later occupied by her son Joseph MacLeod, and to Angus MacLeod were noted from an estate map in the NLS Map Library. Of the four surviving sons, according to the OPR, Angus married in 1807; William in 1819; Joseph in 1819 and again in 1822 after the death of his first wife, presumably in childbirth in December 1820; and finally John in 1831. Each of them was allocated crofts around Helmsdale. These crofts were small, 1.5 to 3 acres each, with poor land on steep hillsides, deliberately calculated to be inadequate for the maintenance of a family. The crofters were intended to provide cheap labour for the immigrant farmers and fish processors planned by the Sutherland Estate. Subsequent to writing this, I decided, on the balance of probabilities, that Alexander MacLeod who married Jean Ross in Torrish in 1794 had been an earlier, and probably the eldest, son of Alexander MacLeod.

Alexander appeared in the 1841 census as a shoemaker in Helmsdale, a business in which he continued from premises on Dunrobin Street until the railway reached the village in 1870. The railway brought cheaper, factory-made footwear and clothes from the South, so the Poor Roll that year showed outdoor relief payments, not just for Alexander and his family but also for the other shoemakers and tailors in the parish.

Poor roll payments of between one and two shillings per week continued to be recorded for Alexander and Ann, with some gaps until 1885 when their youngest child reached sixteen. There were no payments recorded after that.

Alexander died in 1907 and his wife Ann, by then living with the family of Margaret her eldest daughter and mother of Alice Macintosh in Gartymore, died at the age of 97 in 1927.

Returning to Joseph: As he says, on page\_29, in 1881 (at the age of 19) he was "among the first to make a stand". Quoting from page\_216 of his book

"In 1881, a tyrannous time in Sutherland, as in other parts of the Highlands, Mr Macleod was stirred to action. Along with Donald Bannerman (Bual); Donald Watson (Gartymore Shore), and John Fraser (A' Choire), he formed a small but resolute brotherhood, who met almost nightly to lay plans for the restoration of the land to the people. At last they asked Mr Angus Sutherland to come North and address a public meeting. He agreed, with the result that the first branch of the Sutherland Association, the parent of the Highland Land League, was formed."

Joseph travelled the Highlands organizing meetings and making speeches on behalf of the HLL. With the greatly increased electorate following Parliamentary Franchise reform in 1885 (which abolished the property qualification), their activity resulted in the election of Angus Sutherland as M.P for Sutherland in 1886 along with five other Crofters' Party MPs across the Highlands. The Crofters' Holdings Act of the same year conceded their minimum demands: security of tenure, fair rents, compensation for improvements and a Land Court to rule on disputes with landlords. Joseph subsequently witnessed on behalf of the crofters of Rogart to the Deer Forest Commission of 1892. Later the Congested Districts Board of 1897 and the Small Landowners (Scotland) Act of 1911 made further improvements to the condition of crofters on the land to which they had been cleared, and token attempts at resettling some of the dispossessed on land which a few landlords condescended to make available. The Land League's desire for a more root and branch resolution of the great wrongs perpetrated during the previous century remained unfulfilled.



In 1991 Joseph and his fellows were commemorated by a cairn, erected at Gartymore on the croft of John Fraser, a leading light of the land reform movement, the first branch of the Sutherland association, and the parent of the Highland Land League.



These men by their efforts succeeded in bringing about the first crofting reform acts, ensuring security of tenure for crofters that they would never again be "treated by owners of tenure of the soil as good for nothing, but to be cast out trodden under feet of men"-(Sage)

“This memorial cairn, erected by voluntary effort in 1981, on the croft of John Fraser honours the founders of the Land League movement in the Highlands of Scotland. Stirred to action in 1881, a tyrannous period Highland history, four crofters - Donald Bannerman, John Fraser, Joseph MacLeod and Donald Watson - laid plans for the restoration of the land to the people. They formed the Kildonan branch of the Land Law Reform Movement, which was the first branch of the Sutherland Association, the parent of the Highland Land League which, at national level, was eventually supported by 15,000 members. Independent crofter members of Parliament were elected for Sutherland, Caithness, Ross, Inverness and Argyll to champion the cause of Land Law Reform.

“They formed a Crofters’ Party which forced land law legislation on the major parties with success unparalleled in the history of industrial politics. They achieved the passing of the Crofters’ Act of 1886 (still the keystone of the crofting system) which ensured security of tenure for crofters.

“An instalment of justice had been won for the crofting population of the Highlands. Principal builder was Donald Sutherland Fraser, master mason, Gartymore.”



The **Highland Land League** (*Dionnasg an Fhearainn*) emerged as a political force during the 1880s in the Highlands and Islands.

It was also known as the **Highland Land Law Reform Association** and the **Crofters' Party**.

The emblem of the League is on the left.

Following the electoral reform acts of the 1880s, male crofters obtained the vote. Joseph was elected on to the Sutherland County Council, to the great annoyance of the Sutherland estate whose representatives had previously controlled the county. Joseph took a part share in a grocer's shop in Brora, but it was recorded in Joseph's evidence to Lord Napier, on behalf of the crofters in Rogart, that the estate factors had refused to him the right to continue as the property was leased from the Sutherland estate. His activities on behalf of the crofters had made him no friends among the Sutherland estate management.

Joseph and his wife Lexy Mackay from Rogart spent time in Aberdeenshire and Edinburgh before settling permanently in Inverness as a representative for Lipton's Tea. He was elected to the Inverness Burgh Council and became a Baillie and JP, as well as being the election agent for Sir Murdoch MacDonald, Liberal MP for Inverness-shire. In 1933 he received an MBE from the King for his services to the community.

When Joseph died in December 1949, at the age of 87, his memory was honoured by one of the last 'walking funerals' in Inverness, where a considerable proportion of the population followed the horse-drawn hearse from the church to the station for his conveyance to Helmsdale burial ground where he was interred alongside his wife.

### **The Kildonan gold rush, by Joseph MacLeod - People's Journal March 23 1935**

If I were asked to give the most exciting incident of my youth I would unhesitatingly state the occasion when some of Helmsdale's people took violent possession of the goldfields. And why? Because I was one of the ringleaders of that famous rush, although I could not have been more than 18 years of age.

*[Note, this event is undated in the article in the "Journal", however, as Joseph was born in 1862, he must be referring here to 1880]*

The reason for our agitation was a legitimate one, although eventually we were forced by the long arm of the law to end our venture. That year the fishing, upon which the village depended so much for its existence, proved a failure. In addition the potato crop was extremely poor. The result can be imagined. Most of the villagers could see little but destitution in front of them and became desperate. With a desire to make money in some fashion or other, and the knowledge in their heads that there was gold near the Kildonan burns, there could be but one result.

To be frank, everyone in Helmsdale was convinced that there was money for the taking in Kildonan. Some years before, in 1868, a Robert Gilchrist, who was a native of the glen and spent many years digging for gold in Australia, returned home for the purpose of retiring. He was impressed by the resemblance of the formation of the hills and the soil of the Kildonan Glen to that of the Australian district where he had worked. The result was an examination and the discovery of gold. As a consequence people of every class came to Helmsdale, and digging went on until 1870, when under pressure from the farmers and shooting tenants, the mines were ordered to be closed.

To revert, however, the people of the village in the year of which I speak thought that under the exceptional condition of poverty the Duke would permit them to search for gold. I was one of those who approached county personalities in an endeavour to get permission, but even the aid of the great Dr. Aird was of no avail. I honestly believe our wish would have been granted but for the fact that the big sheep men opposed the idea tooth and nail.

The feeling of indignation soon grew. Several of the land leaguers, of whom I was one, felt that the cause of the people was our cause. To our way of thinking the proposal of the villagers would do no injury and might relieve much of the hardship and distress. And so it came about that we held a huge demonstration in the Free Church School to air our views on the subject, and, if necessary, take appropriate action.

What a night that was. The old school was crowded to the utmost, and amid scenes of enthusiasm it was decided to take forcible possession. The moving spirits were Donald Gilchrist, of Portgower, who, I think, was a relation of the man who first discovered gold in Kildonan; William Polson of Marrel, and myself. Needless to add, we had plenty of supporters. A few days later 60 of us left home for the goldfields. We were of all callings. With cradles, sluices and dishes we toiled away, getting fairly decent returns for our labour. At the weekend we used to take the gold home in a little bottle and dry it in a saucer - the old and common practice. Truth to tell, our early inexperience soon vanished, and by the time our venture was brought to a conclusion we were capable gold-seekers.

We had a song of our own. It ran like this:  
*I'm off to Kildonan at the dawning of the day,  
With my pick and my spade  
And my brogues newly made,  
And a bottle of the best to cheer me on my way,  
I'm off to Kildonan at the dawning of the day.*

For a short time - until the farmers realised our game - we were permitted to work in peace. But then they took action. We all worked in parties of three, and they began by interdicting certain groups. Knowing that opposition would have dire consequences, I made it my job to see that the interdicted men went home and that others took their places. So the struggle went on for some time, until eventually we had to give in. But we succeeded in our purpose, and many families benefitted from the "rush". I was surprised at the attitude of the farmers, for I can assure you we had no intention of doing them or their stock any harm. One of my tasks, as a matter of fact, was to see that



the men filled in all the holes that they had dug so the sheep would not be injured. But they did not want to understand or appreciate the situation. The results of the gold digging expedition were not all bad. I knew one man whose daughter was being wed, but could not afford to give her a wedding present. In less than a week in the fields, they had made £20 - a fabulous sum in those days.

Others were equally lucky. They got gold in the Kinbrace, Kildonan, Torrish, and Suisgill streams. I may say that the ore got at Suisgill was not as good as the others - containing more silver - but, from reports, the other nuggets found were superior to the stuff being brought from Australia. It may be of interest to note that Mr John Fraser, chemist, Helmsdale, found one nugget and fixed it up in its rough state as a tie-pin. Another, weighing four ounces was utilised for a gold ring given to Mr Angus Sutherland, M.P. I am sure there are many in the parish of Kildonan can still produce local gold.

Some time after we took violent possession a man came to Helmsdale and commenced to cart down quarry stones from Kildonan. He had a furnace in the village, down at the shore, and John MacLeod, a local fellow with a flair for chemistry, acted as his overseer. But it could not have proved a paying speculation, for he soon gave up.

And yet I am one of the many who believe that a fair fortune could be made at Kildonan. Having been there, and knowing the nature of the countryside, I feel justified in saying that in the crevices near the burns is enough gold to make mining remunerative. And I say that despite the assertions of the authorities, who declared that it would not pay. It was said of the stationmaster at Kildonan that he could get the ore at any time from the burn at the back of the station. Whether that was true or not I cannot tell, but I do know that the glen has plenty. Even at Helmsdale bridge (I wonder how many of the villagers know this?) gold is to be found. At one time the authorities refused permission to look for the precious metal, as such operations would undermine the structure.

### **My Share in Land Reform Battle - People's Journal March 30 1935**

It's a far cry to the day when people were driven from their crofts and had to seek shelter where they could, and I consider it the greatest thing of my life to have served in the cause which brought about the change. As a descendant of those who were ruthlessly driven from their homes I could add many tales of woe told to me when a boy by my grandfather, but let that past bury its dead. It is too tragic a memory.

In my youth the stories of those days were related in almost every home. At that time, too, the crofters had no security of tenure, and were often over-rented. The smouldering fires eventually broke forth in 1881, when I, along with Mr Donald Bannerman, Bual; Mr Donald Watson, Gartymore Shore; and John Fraser, A'Choire, formed a small but resolute brotherhood, who met almost nightly to lay plans for the restoration of the land to the people. To have been associated with Mr Bannerman - whose daughter still lives in the old home and whose son is a railway inspector at Inverness - will always be a pleasant memory. As his forebears had also been ruthlessly removed from the Strath of Kildonan, it is needless to say we were always great friends.

I must relate the incidents which actually led up to the formation of the now-famous branch. In 1882 eight of our local crofters received summonses of eviction on account of the sheep that were on the hill pastures of Gartymore, Portgower, West Helmsdale and Marrel. The people did not refuse to put the sheep away, but refused to sign a promise never to put animals on that part of the pasture grounds. For fear of eviction which could easily be enforced in those days, all the crofters signed with the exception of Joseph Mackay, Donald Watson, Simpson Mackenzie, John Fraser, John Bannerman, Mrs David Bannerman, Miss Barbara Ross, and Mr Fraser.

The case was put in the hands of the late Mr Macleay, solicitor, Tain, and eventually the summonses were withdrawn. In the meantime, however, our little brotherhood was busy at work. I was one of those who set out to organise Sutherlandshire. I was only 19 years of age at the time, but I was full of zeal. Travelling was different then. Rivers had to be crossed by chain-boat, roads were poor, and conditions none too inspiring, but the reception all over was good enough to encourage me to further labours.

Following on the summonses to the crofters we decided that the time had come for definite action, and agreed to form our association. Perhaps it might be of interest to append the names of the office-bearers. They were:- Mr John Mackay, Hereford, president; Mr Angus Sutherland (later M.P.), vice-president; Mr Adam Bannerman treasurer; Mr Donald Bannerman and Mr John Fraser, joint secretaries. As a result of the activity displayed there was formed the famous Napier Commission. I was one of those who gave evidence when they investigated the local state of affairs, along with Messrs Angus Sutherland, Sinclair Couper, Duncan Mackay, Alexander Gunn, Adam Bannerman and George Munro of Navidale.

Our chief ambition after this was to have our own representative in Parliament, and with that aim in view we invited Mr Angus Sutherland, who was then a teacher of philosophy in Glasgow to contest the general election of 1885. At that time the promise of success was particularly bright, despite the fact that his opponent was the Marquis of Stafford.

The great day came, and the result, I must confess it, was a terrible blow to find our man defeated by 640 votes. But we did not let it upset our feelings. Many of the older Helmsdale folk will recall how on his arrival Mr Sutherland was greeted by 72 torches and a procession headed by pipers, and how he was marched in triumph to the old Free Church school. "What are you going to do now?" he asked me after the applause had died down. Knowing that we were far from vanquished, I had only one reply. "Will you be prepared to stand again?" I asked. His reply, of course, was in the affirmative.

The following year Mr Gladstone was defeated on the Irish Home Rule question, and instead of the Marquis being his opponent Mr Sutherland discovered that he had to face another native of the county and a supporter of our association in the person of Mr John Mackay of Hereford. But Angus won a great victory by 880 votes, and thus went to Parliament as the first representative of the Sutherland crofters. I may say, however, that I had a great deal of respect for Mr Mackay of Hereford who did a tremendous amount of work for his native Sutherland. By acts during his lifetime and bequests at his death he did much to assist those who were not too well blessed by this world's

goods. His nephew, who died recently, was one of those who protested against the proposed scheme of the Endowment Commissioners in such striking fashion.

Mr Sutherland, of course, joined a resolute band of land reformers in Parliament, for in 1885, the Highlands returned several independent members who were pledged to devote themselves to the people's cause. In the county of Argyll, Mr Donald Macfarlane secured a runaway victory; In Inverness-shire, Mr Charles Fraser-Macintosh overcame Sir Reginald MacLeod and Sir Kenneth Mackenzie of Gairloch; In Ross and Cromarty Dr MacDonald defeated Lord Novar; and in Caithness Dr Clark almost doubled the votes polled by Major Clarence Sinclair of Ulbster. How stubborn and unyielding they proved! While this independent Highland party held together the North and West were properly represented.

When Sir George Trevelyan introduced the Crofters' Bill in 1885 no provision was made for extensions of arable land, and other important factors were missing. But the representatives of the crofters fought so well that Sir George and the Liberal Government were obliged to give way. Of the Highland group none struggled with more determination than Dr Clark, who afterwards fell into disfavour with the Caithness people. He moved most of the amendments and created the scenes. What a furore he caused when he declared that a certain nobleman - who had raised a crofter's rent because the latter had erected a building on it - should be indicted for theft. The bill as was anticipated was roundly condemned by all over the Highlands. Its failure to recognize the real claim of the cottar proved the greatest drawback. But it had one good point. It conferred on the crofter security of tenure.

Then a Royal Commission was set up to report on the grievances of the people on whose work the Crofter Act was founded. That the crofters' claims were justified was proved later, all doubts upon the point being removed by the first judgements delivered by the Land Court. And so it came about that the land reform battle, which commenced in Skye and spread all over the North and West, ended in satisfactory fashion - so satisfactory, indeed, that the fight is now almost forgotten.

**Obituary - from the Inverness Courier Tuesday December 6<sup>th</sup> 1949.**

**Joseph MacLeod, M.B.E., Inverness.** The funeral took place to Helmsdale yesterday of Mr Joseph MacLeod, who passed away at his home, Langwell, Crown Drive, Inverness, on Friday in his 88<sup>th</sup> year. A funeral service was held in the East Church of which Mr MacLeod had been an office-bearer for many years and the interment took place thereafter at Helmsdale. The service was conducted by the Rev. G. Elliott Anderson, B.D. East Church and the Rev. George H. Grant, B.D., West Church and was attended by the Provost, Magistrates and Town Councillors. Mr MacLeod's death despite his great age was unexpected for only last Wednesday he attended the annual meeting of the Inverness Harbour Trust,

No political organiser in the Highlands was better known than Joseph MacLeod. His interest in politics dated back to the Land League and in his native Sutherland he was regarded as a champion of crofters' rights. As a Liberal organiser he took a prominent part in elections in Inverness-shire and elsewhere and he acted as an election agent for Sir Murdoch MacDonald in all his successful campaigns in Inverness-shire. An experienced campaigner and electioneer, and a Gaelic speaker, Mr MacLeod had nothing to learn about the conduct of an election campaign in the Highlands and he wielded great influence among the older school of Liberals, particularly on the West Coast. When the split came in the Liberal ranks a quarter of a century ago, he sided with Lloyd George for whom he had a great admiration.

Outside his political work Mr. MacLeod found time to engage in a great deal of public work. His association with education went back to the old school boards and he was a member of the old Inverness-shire Education Authority and the present day Education Committee. For the past 28 years he was a member of the Inverness Town Council serving as convenor of various committees. At the municipal elections he invariably topped the poll in his ward for he appreciated the value of a personal canvas and he knew a tremendous number of people in all walks of life. Anyone who approached him with a request to use his influence on their behalf in matters coming before public boards had in him an attentive listener and able advocate. For his public services he received the M.B.E several years ago. Mr MacLeod is survived by one son and three daughters

### **Alice Macintosh, Gartymore**

Obituary by A.S. Cowper in the Northern Times, July 14<sup>th</sup> 1995.

Fond Memories – with the recent death of Miss Alice Macintosh of Gartymore a link has gone in the chain of Highland memories. I have a vivid recollection of Alice, then an octogenarian reciting by her fireside “The last sabbath in Bonnie Strathnaver”. Her memory was excellent and her emotions deep.

As a girl she was present the commemoration of the Kildonan Clearances at Caen on the 5<sup>th</sup> August 1914, the day on which the British Army was mobilised for War. It was fitting that Alice cut the ribbon when the memorial cairn was raised for the Highland Heroes of the Land League at Gartymore, celebrating a hundred years 1881-1981 of the crofting struggle.

Alice recalled for me her memory of the postman coming to the croft with the letter of condolence from the chaplain at St. Omer telling her parents of her brother John’s last hours on January 1916 when he lay dying, aged 18, a Seaforth Highlander serving in France. She recited the contents of the letter word perfectly. She also told how John’s Ingersoll watch, which hung on a hook in the cottage, stopped at 7PM, the hour and day of his death.

Alice was a staunch member of the Free Church at Helmsdale, faithful in her attendance week days and Sabbaths. She was a genuine Christian seeking nothing for herself but doing good works quietly.

A life like that of Alice Macintosh is the real material of Highland history and heritage.

*A.S. Cowper, Edinburgh*

**Torcul Mackay MacLeod (1921-2016) – by Monica McGee**

As one of the Baby Boomers I can look back and say we have had the best of things such as NHS care, education and careers. My brother was born three years before me but then medical care was private and he did not survive. My father found it too difficult to speak about him. He is buried in an unmarked grave on Tomnahurich (Hill of the Fairies).

Food rationing had just ended but food was still in short supply. Waste was not allowed. I was sent to La Sagesse Convent School and then attended Inverness High School. Both schools were strict and I do remember not being allowed to write with my left hand. The nuns would make sure you were right handed!

Grants were available at the time I went on to higher education, not so now. I can remember when I was about ten years old, my father taking me to see Harold Wilson in the Town Hall. I remember being impressed by the passion with which he spoke and also the huge chandeliers in the room.

Holidays were spent either at Caddonfoot Manse or up North. I do remember one holiday at a chalet in Scourie. Dad took us fishing. We caught a few but he went back at night and ended up with a lot, some of which he passed on to the local hotel. At Craigton my father was very happy helping out or talking to Andrew. I once went out on the hill with them and they had a stag which they ‘grallached’; then we all had to help take it home!

At New Year, Andrew and family would know that dad would be up on New Year’s Day no matter the weather. They were so sure of his visit that they would come out with the tractor if he had to leave the car away back. Dad also took on the tradition of first footing the Misses MacDonald on Southside Road. He went up after the Bells and would have to go in with a piece of coal, turning round three times.

During the war dad was stationed at Tobruk. He didn't speak of the war. I know that his brother, Iain, hitched a lift on a lorry going from Cairo to Tobruk and met up with dad. Iain went back the same day on the lorry.

My father worked hard at AI Welders, only interrupted by the War. I know that he became a member of the Union in order to stop some of the 'communist element' taking over the union. He became treasurer of the Welfare Fund and paid money out to the sick. He was given a Certificate of Merit by the AUEW. After my mother died he helped out at Red Cross events with First Aid.

Dad was very proud to be asked to help out when he was about 86. The managing director came along and asked him to help with calibration of a huge piece of machinery which had been sent to India. A part was broken and it had been sent back for repair. This was done in Hillington industrial estate near Glasgow. He was taken there in a Jaguar which he loved. He was amazed by all the roundabouts there. He had to do the calibration himself as the 'young folk' didn't know Imperial measurements! Dad was given a plate of soup at Ballinluig on the way home after. When I said that was a bit mean, he said he was just happy to be asked and to be the only one who remembered anything about it. He knew exactly when the machine had been built as he had worked on it. He had to go out to Crearag after work to sit with his father Alasdair, when he was dying in 1957.

It was thanks to Maeve and Morag that he learned to cook at the age of 59. His mince and tatties were my family's favourite whenever we came to Inverness. As the years went on dad helped both sisters out with shopping etc. He was always responsible for his brothers and sisters. This stemmed from childhood where he would be in trouble if the younger children did anything wrong. When they lived at The Round Tower, Culloden, they would leave their boots at the edge of the field and run to school.

I know dad watched the blacksmith after school. Perhaps this is where his interest in making things came from. He and his neighbour, Tommy Cameron, were well known



for being able to repair anything that was brought to them. I was given a bicycle but it ended up in parts on other bicycles which needed repair! Everything had a use.

Although my father became very deaf, his other senses were heightened. His neighbour, Peter MacPhee, died in a fire. Dad had smelled smoke and tried to get in but realised he couldn't. He had alerted the fire brigade and he managed to get another neighbour, Tommy Cameron, out. My father was a Highland gentleman, always happy to help others. He is very much missed.

Monica wrote of her career teaching:

In 1975 poverty was evident in my first teaching post in Craigmillar. Children came in cold and hungry in the morning. I kept spare bottles of milk and had biscuits to hand out so that children could be in a position to learn.

I once made a home visit to a home where children were dressed very poorly. There were no internal doors in the home as they had been used for firewood to heat the house. There were piles of clothes on the floor of a bedroom. I was later told the children used to sleep there and then wear some of the warm clothes in the morning.

Following eight years in Craigmillar in 1984 I worked in Blackburn, West Lothian - This was an area of deprivation also. British Leyland had pulled out of Bathgate and since then employment had become difficult to find.

When we moved to Aberdeenshire I was lucky to work on Behaviour and Support for emotional and behavioural issues. I travelled from Strathdon to Echt for different pupils. It was a privilege to drive through such beautiful countryside. Some of the issues stemmed from rural isolation on farms. Children who didn't see others very often found difficulty settling in to school.

I then moved to work in Aberdeen City for Barnardos, working with families and children to stop exclusions from schools. I did a postgraduate certificate in Special Educational Needs. I then worked for fourteen years until retirement on a project

between Education and Social Work. Again I worked with families in the inner city to help children get back into school after exclusions and support them to stay there.

At the present time - December 2022, - teachers' strikes have just taken place. I can remember marching down Princes Street in Edinburgh when teachers were striking for better pay and better opportunities in education. That was in the 1980s. It looks as though times are very similar today. Teachers' pay and conditions are being eroded yet again. After the Pandemic and price rises in food, fuel etc children are still suffering from poverty. They are still coming to school hungry and cold.

Great Aunt Willrine once told me about her experience when she began teaching in the Farraline Park School in Inverness. The school was a large hall with a gallery. She had to teach eighty pupils whilst walking round the gallery above them. Changed days!

My mother, Mona MacKenzie, was born on 16th July, 1914, 'within the sound of Bow Bells', thus making her a Cockney. The family moved from Islington in London, to Inverness when she was two years old. Their house was just opposite the War Memorial by the Infirmary Bridge. Mona was the second of four children. Their mother had died in 1918 from Spanish Flu. My grandfather and great uncle started an Ice Factory at Diriebught. There was a succession of housekeepers who would send the children out in the morning with a 'jam piece' to the Ness Islands to play and be there all day.

My grandmother had been from an Italian family named Brunetti. When she died they had been given a lot of help and support from the Italian community in Inverness. Bishop Walsh was a good friend to the family, although my grandfather was not catholic. The children were eventually sent to boarding school - the girls to St Joseph's in Aberdeen and the boys to St Saviours in Jersey. It was a very male oriented house. My grandfather and great uncle turned the dining room into a billiard room and friends often came along to play. The two gents enjoyed a whisky and because they made dry ice they had stills. They used such things as potato skins to make the alcohol.

When my mother met my father at a dance they had to wait until 1947 before getting married as dad only came home from North Africa in 1946. After I was born in 1952 we moved to 25 Daviot Drive and remained there until they were given a house just two doors away from where mum was brought up. She was very happy to be back beside the river. My Uncle's name is on the war memorial as his ship, HMS Kanby was torpedoed.



The family moved out to Loch Ness to build a house. My grandfather and my father helped build a pipeline to harness power to make electricity. It proved to be very successful. When the new owners of Abriachan Gardens renewed the power turbine, not long before dad died, he was asked to open the new powerhouse.

Dad, at the opening of the powerhouse, with my cousin Rob Woodward.

Whilst living at Loch Ness they saw 'the Monster'. This was reported in the Courier as they had been very sceptical about its existence. The loch was like a millpond when they looked out and suddenly something was seen speeding along, then suddenly submerging, putting a huge wash up on the shore. My grandfather believed it to be a giant eel which perhaps had bred in the waters.

My mother was a gentle lady with a great sense of humour. She enjoyed a game of Whist. She had been delighted to become a grandmother and had a very happy year with her grandson before dying suddenly in October 1980. She is fondly remembered.

*Monica*

**Sheila Mackay MacLeod (1922-2014) – by Iona MacCuish**

My Mum, Sheila, was very proud to be born in London. A few years later the family moved to Inverness. She was teased about her place of birth at school. Some of the pupils called her a ‘Sassenach’! Her parents were often busy, and sometimes the children were looked after by a home help. On one occasion my Mum was locked in her bedroom by this person, for some alleged misdemeanour. Undeterred, she opened the window, climbed out and went to visit a friend and her mother. The three of them took the train to Nairn and spent a very happy day there! Her anxious parents were waiting for her at the station when she returned.

As the eldest daughter, my Mum was relied upon to help out quite a lot. The family was growing and life was always very busy. She escaped into the world of literature and music. However, her piano teacher was another disciplinarian. He used a ruler as a method of correction! Luckily this did not affect her love of music. When she left school she went to work for the Bank of Scotland in Inverness. Then, when the Second World War broke out, she joined the Wrens (WRNS). Initially she worked as a Wren Writer in the Pay Department, and was later promoted to the post of CPO Wren Welfare Officer. She was based in Chatham and Liverpool. For two years during the war she was posted to Malta. She was awarded the War Medal and the Defence Medal. Altogether, she worked for The Admiralty for nineteen years, until she married in 1958. When she left the Wrens she was awarded the Royal Navy Medal.

*[In the picture, Sheila is at the centre of the front row]*



My Mum was good fun, vivacious, caring and generous to a fault. She once won first prize on the Wilfred Pickles BBC Radio show. Of course, being my mum, she said that she would like to donate her prize money to charity. The listeners were surprised and delighted, and she received several offers of marriage as a result!!

She met my father, Donald, a Church of Scotland minister, in St. Andrew's Church, Liverpool. It was a long distance romance as my mother was living in Liverpool while my father lived in the Scottish Borders! They were married in the Reid Memorial Church, Edinburgh, after a relatively short number of meetings! At the time of their marriage, my father was a widower, with a teenage daughter and two teenage sons.

Life as a minister's wife was always busy, especially as my father was chaplain to the Borders Hospital, in addition to being the parish minister. Everyone was welcome at the manse. Visitors varied from 'gentlemen of the road' to people of title. The former were also recipients of my Mum's generosity! My mum was very artistic and musical. She played the piano and church organ, and she was a trained singer. She also sketched brilliant and very amusing cartoon characters. Furthermore, she was a bit psychic! Her wise words often came to pass!



My mum and dad made a wonderful team. They both provided kindness and support in abundance to the people of the Scottish Borders, and beyond, when these were needed; and in happy times there was much joy and laughter in Caddonfoot Manse.

When my mum died in 2014 I received many kind cards and letters of condolence. Several of these referred to 'a kind and gentle lady.' I was very lucky to have had her as my mum.

My earliest memories are of Caddonfoot Church and Manse. Christmas, in particular, was a magical time. On Christmas Eve we would have a Church Nativity Play for the children in the evening, followed by a Watchnight Service at night. We had a real donkey called Honey in the Nativity Play. Everyone loved her. Our Watchnight Service started at 11.15pm. About thirty nurses in full uniform would come along with lanterns from the Borders Hospital. Towards the end of the service four of them would take the collection. The proceeds would always go to a Borders Children's charity.

I attended Caddonfoot Primary School for several years, before going to school in Edinburgh. Thereafter, I went to Edinburgh University to study English Language and Literature, and then Law. As part of my degree in English I wrote a paper on the derivation of Scottish place names. This report is held in the School of Scottish Studies, Edinburgh. I qualified as a Secondary School Teacher and Solicitor, and spent time working as both.

Our family holidays were often spent in the lovely Isle of Harris. My father was from Harris, and was a fluent Gaelic speaker. Over the years we had two lovely dogs; Cara, a Cairn Terrier, and Corrie, a Golden Retriever. Cara once found the front door of the Church open when my father was taking a wedding. Much to the amusement of the guests, she raced up the aisle and started tugging at the groom's kilt flashes! My father took the first opportunity to hand her over to the Church Officer!

I'm currently a volunteer with Citizens Advice, Edinburgh, and also a volunteer tutor with the Volunteer Tutors Organisation. The VTO offers free tutoring for children and young people whose parents/guardians can't afford to pay for private lessons. For the past couple of years I have been studying Gaelic online. I had previously completed an extramural course in Gaelic at Edinburgh University. I play the keyboard on a regular basis. I used to play the keyboard for Sunday afternoon services at the Borders Hospital. Sometimes I also played the beautiful pipe organ in Caddonfoot Church.

*Iona MacCuish*

### **The Land Question, the Root of all Social Evils by Joseph MacLeod**

Joseph published a slim pamphlet in 1902 entitled “The Land Question, the Root of all Social Evils”, printed by the Highland News, Inverness. He described himself as Organising Secretary, Inverness Burghs and County Liberal Associations. Copies are impossible to find, but I obtained the text with thanks from the National Library of Scotland ref QP1.78.856. I have included the full text of this short pamphlet. It was written at the conclusion of the Boer war when, it may be argued, the British Empire was at its greatest extent. One should also bear in mind that, at the present day, the ownership and use of land in the Highlands remains an important unresolved issue.

Joseph wrote:

“THE iniquitous Land Laws which exist not only retard the social progress of the Highlands of Scotland, but also affect the well-being of great masses of the people throughout the whole British Empire.

The first thing I would notice in connection with the land question - and one that ought never to be lost sight of in all our investigations on the subject - is, that land, from being limited in quantity, is different and distinct from anything else we find necessary to our existence. Not only so, but from the very constitution of our nature, in being deprived of our freedom in the land, we are thereby, in a great measure, also deprived of all the other essential rights which Nature intended us to enjoy spontaneously without money and without price :- such as air, water, light, exercise, &c. All comforts and conveniences in connection with food, raiment, and shelter depend on our own exertions yet these cannot be exercised except with the consent of those who claim possession of the land.

Even in countries where food is most abundant, and the population sparse, some exertion is required to satisfy the most primitive and simple demands of Nature, much more so when once the comforts of civilisation come to be appreciated. Nevertheless, it ought surely to be a source of congratulation to us all that we seldom have to complain of people refusing to work for their living, even, it must be confessed, with very inadequate encouragement, though we often hear great indignation expressed that

people who are able and willing to work cannot find employment. Why? Because landlordism has taken possession of and monopolised more of the land than they themselves are able to cultivate, and thereby prevent others willing to do it from having access.

Let us or any other person seriously consider for a moment and see if he could discover or invent a system by which the inhabitants of a country could more effectually be reduced to a state of slavery and bondage than by seizing the land and dedicating it to sporting purposes, and I am certain he would fail. If the people were slaves, their masters' pecuniary interests would be involved in at least their bodily health, but the landlords of Scotland seem rather to be anxious for the annihilation of the people.

This is shown at the present moment by their eager desire to establish easy means for immigration to South Africa, which can be seen is not so much the deep interest in the well-being and betterment of the immigrant as his use to influence and bind together in affectionate brotherhood a brave people among whom the capitalist has created so much mistrust and discord.

This is no new theory on the part of landlords. They have always shown a desire to have people compulsorily shipped off to distant lands, there to cultivate waste and solitary regions, instead of giving them encouragement and liberty to settle at home and improve the numberless tracts of superior land that lie neglected in a natural and unimproved state in many parts of the country with which every patriotic feeling is associated, and which is as dear to many of us as life itself.

Immigration because there is not sufficient subsistence at home sounds rather a strange doctrine to be inculcated in a country like ours, where there is such a wide sea teeming with fish, and also plenty of land if the people only got liberty to take possession of it.

The town citizen is not so often counselled to seek fresh fields and pastures new, although there are thousands who must pick up a very precarious living. No! it is only



in the Highlands, where the people have the imprudence to disturb the game, that they are advised to leave their country for their country's good.

The question of Reform of the Land Laws has made greater progress in recent years than any other political question. Twenty-five years ago it was seldom referred to in election addresses, but now no candidate for Parliamentary honours can shirk it. If he tries to do so, he is sure to lay himself open to strict and lengthened heckling.

It might not be out of place for me to say here, that the Highland crofter has done more than any other class to bring the subject of the unjust Land Laws into the prominent position it occupies to-day. The instalment of justice - the earnest of victory - they have won in the Crofters Act encourages them to persevere in a work of beneficence which will add greater lustre to the Celtic name than all their prowess in war.

I am safe in saying, that in the very near future the test question will be the reform of the existing Land Laws. The land is the great inheritance of the nation, and the just and equitable management of that inheritance for behoof of the whole community is the first duty of Government. It is a duty that has been almost wholly neglected, and millions of people are without lot or portion in that inheritance for which their fathers fought and bled and died, while certain individuals styling themselves land lords have obtained exclusive possession and absolute control of the national inheritance.

It is fully admitted by politicians of all parties, that the present condition of the Land Laws is unsatisfactory, and that the grossest injustice and the most pernicious abuses are occasioned and fostered by the laws as at present existing and administered. The Land Laws invest a few individuals in every parish with the power to retard progress and discourage improvements of land and houses, preventing the settling of local industries, reducing the rural population, impeding the prosperity, and undermining the health of our nation.

While always boasting that Britons never shall be slaves we have permitted the landlords to filch our liberties and inherent rights from us. What then is our boasted

freedom but liberty to do but just what the landlords allow us. What else could be expected while they are allowed to frame the laws which cause so much injustice and terrible suffering as is to be witnessed in every town and locality?

"By the sweat of thy brow shalt thou earn thy bread." This is the law of God, and is the law we have ignored. This is why poverty exists among us to such an alarming extent, bringing with it the misery and squalor and the vice and crime that are its natural and inevitable results.

We believe that the world was created by God, and that it is by His will and His providence that mankind exists in the world. He created man with certain physical wants, upon the satisfaction of which the maintenance of life depends. He gave man the right and power to satisfy these wants by his own exertions. That is to say, he gave man the right and the power to labour, and put upon him the necessity to labour. He also gave him the material upon which to exert his labour. This material is land. Land is the source, and labour is the producer of all wealth. The two last statements are axioms of political economy. The land yields us the raw material which we by our labour, fashion into whatever form of wealth we desire. These two factors - land and labour - are absolutely necessary to the production of wealth.

Labour is the active and land is the passive factor in this combination. Nature yields only to labour. Now, labour cannot have free access to land so long as land is held as the private property of individuals, for if it be permitted to an individual to hold as his private property the storehouse of nature, he can exclude labour altogether from access to the raw material for producing wealth. Even although he does not exclude labour altogether from access to this raw material, he can extract from those who use it part of the wealth which they produce, leaving only to the producer just as much as will yield a bare subsistence - in a multitude of cases very much less. It is, therefore, our bounden duty to secure free access to the land for the purpose of producing wealth, to leave no stone unturned until we abolish, root and branch, the institution of private property in land.

There is no question which bulks more largely in common thought and common speech today than the question of the right of all men to an equal share in the bounties of nature - the land. It is now realised and recognised as the root of the social question. Our present system, under which the land is made the private property of individuals, and under which the many must pay toll to another before they are allowed to produce for themselves, is a direct and flagrant denial of the most primary natural rights, and the best endeavours of those who call themselves Social Reformers should be directed towards securing the abolition of this primary social wrong.

You will readily admit that the true right of ownership springs from labour. It is the right of labour that enables a man to say of anything - "This is mine. I made it." This right attaches to things that are the result of labour, and derives its validity from the Law of God. No man made the land, therefore no man can have any exclusive rights to it. This is the essential difference between property in land and property in things that are the result of labour, a difference which is quite recognisable, and which has always been recognised both by economic writers and in the laws and institutions of both savage and civilised communities.

The earliest system of land tenure in this and most other countries was a system of co-operative farming carried on by communities. This was followed by the system of each family cultivating special portions for themselves, the pastures and waste land being held in common.

When William I. conquered England he introduced the Feudal System. Under this system, the nobles were simply tenants of the Crown, not owners of the land. They were required to render military service and to furnish a certain number of men-at-arms. This system was found clumsy, and a money payment was substituted. During the war of the "Roses" the old nobility were nearly extinguished, and there arose a new order that looked upon the land as a commercial commodity and the people who occupied it as mere rent-producing machinery.

The manufacture of woollen cloth was at that time coming into prominence, and the landlords began rack-renting and evicting the people in order to rear sheep. Then was turned the arable land into pasture and the enclosure of common lands, as well as the consolidation of farms, whereby the people were eaten up as bread to satisfy the greedy desires of a few who waste profusely as they do gather unconscionably and bring to their posterity that woe which is pronounced against those who add house to house and lay field to field.

But, in conclusion, this institution has grown up among us, and all we can do now is to demonstrate that it is an injustice, and do our very best to educate public opinion in regard to such bad laws in order to have them totally abolished. If they be evil - and no right-thinking man will deny that they are - then let us not hesitate, but lay the axe to the root and cut down the poisonous growth.

### **Rights of the People - Oppression by Landlords**

**by Ex-County Councillor Joseph MacLeod, Sutherlandshire**

The following article by Joseph was published in the People's Journal.

*[It can be dated to around 1911, as the Small Landholders (Scotland) Act 1911 extended the 1886 Act to the whole of Scotland and replaced the Crofting Commission with the Land Court. All agricultural tenants in Scotland who were already crofters or whose holdings on 1st April 1912 did not exceed £50 in rent or 50 acres in extent and who were resident on or within two miles of their holdings became landholders.]*

To begin with, allow me to say that we land reformers in the Highlands owe the "People's Journal" a deep debt of gratitude for the great prominence it has given at all time to the question of the land, as well as other social reforms which are awaiting solution. No one can estimate the value of its columns more than I personally do. I have read it from boyhood, and from my wide knowledge of the Highland counties I can testify to the valuable and educative influence which for the last twenty years it has imparted to the people of the Highlands. As for the crofter population, it is their constant companion. In a large portion of these glens no other paper is to be found but

itself, and for this reason alone I greatly rejoice to see that its columns are to be devoted to a series of articles on the land and other social questions, when at no other time since the "Battle of the Braes" were these questions more eagerly discussed than at the present time. I am exceedingly glad that this is so, as for a considerable time after the passing of the Crofters Act, a good deal of apathy set in, no doubt largely due to the estimable boom secured by the fixity of tenure, which the Crofters Act conferred upon those coming under its scope.

The terror under which the people lived before this period was one of unquestionable misery; and how could it be otherwise when for one reason and another which had no foundation in fact, they were open to removal at any moment by the landlord and his underlings, and that from the homes and lands which they themselves created from the bleak and boggy moor, during which period they had been subjected to great hardship, while many were deprived of these without any compensation for the labour and money expended on the holdings? Such, then, was the cause of putting to rest much of the vigorous agitation which was so much in evidence before and after the Lord Napier Commission, which commission was the first step towards effecting a rectification of the wrongs under which they laboured. Yet although fixity of tenure had afforded a large measure of relief and contentment, the people never lost sight of the necessity of additional land, which was the real cause of the discontent which existed. The excessive rents charged on the people's own reclamations and improvements were a source of great injustice, but the holding of the land for sport and such like was the real cause of the widespread discontent.

It might not be out of place for me to say here that the Highland crofter has done more than any other class to bring the subject of our unjust land laws to the prominent position it occupies today. The instalment of justice - the earnest of victory - they have won in the Crofters Act encourages them to persevere in a work of beneficence, which will add greater lustre to the Celtic name than all their prowess in war. And yet we cannot forget the regrettable fact that only some 20,000 crofters came within the scope of the Act, while some 30,000 have been excluded from its benefits, because "forsooth", they were under lease, and, as was contended at the time by the landlords

and their friends, the inclusion of this section under the Act would be a breach of contract; and so these have been all those years subject to landlord conditions, although they were identical with the former in every respect. They reclaimed their land and created homesteads for themselves in the same way as those who happened to be tenants at will at the passing of the Crofters Act.

The extent to which land monopoly existed in the Highlands was accountable for all this condition of things. Every man was anxious to procure shelter and means of subsistence for his family, and the powers that were took advantage of the people in their dire necessity, and got them to sign impossible leases. They were practically forced to "make bricks without straw". As a proof of this we have many of these leaseholders today on many estates compelled to surrender to the landlords and trustees the value of their permanent improvements executed on the holdings so as to meet the arrears of rent which have accumulated year after year through no fault of the leaseholder, but because of the exorbitant rents charged for their holdings. Indeed, within the last year or two, several of these were evicted because they would not comply with the oppressive and impossible conditions attached to the renewal of those leases, and have been accordingly deprived of all that was expended on those holdings by themselves and their predecessors, while on the other hand, if these had the benefits of the Crofters Act, they would have had the right to compensation and security of tenure. This is a most deserving class which, I am hopeful, will be brought within the extended Land Bill, and I hope to see produced within a few weeks.

It is a notorious fact that many of those leaseholders who have been paying 6 per cent per annum for material supplied after it has been paid for three times over its original value, not to mention the fact that the said material has been replaced years ago, as it was completely useless. One very prominent case occurs vividly to me while writing, where the crofter was supplied by the estate with what is so well known as the "Caithness" slates which were at one time very much in use in the Highlands for roofing purposes, and which were purchased at a cheaper price than those in use today. Well, after a period of years these slates were rather heavy for the wood to bear, and consequently they had to be removed to prevent the roof giving way and killing the

crofter and those who resided with him. Now although these slates are piled at the back of the crofter's house, still the interest continues to be charged, and this is only one among a multitude of such anomalies I could picture, but the foregoing must suffice for the present; while always boasting that "Britons shall never be slaves" we have permitted the landlords to filch our liberties and inherent rights from us.

The land is the greatest inheritance of the nation, and the just and equitable management of that inheritance on behalf of the community is the first duty of Government. It is a duty that has been almost wholly neglected, and millions of people are today without lot or portion in that inheritance for which their fathers fought and bled and died, while those who toil not have obtained exclusive possession and absolute control of the national inheritance.

One cannot feel but impressed with the need for a speedy settlement of the land question when so many are eagerly waiting for the power to secure the creation of new homes, where our robust and healthy youth would find scope for their energies other than seeking a miserable pittance in the large towns where already much distress is rampant. I hope, in any settlement of this great land question, it will be always born in mind that the Crofters Act recognised the inherent and historic rights of the people to their native soil. The plea of some in favour of land purchase would deprive them of these rights, and would, if adopted, acknowledge the landlord as the rightful owner. I hope to be able to deal at another time with this phase of the question, as well as the necessary amendments to the Crofters Act, which would put the people in a position of comfort and prosperity, and yet the landlords would realise more for their estates than they presently do from deer and sport.

The security of tenure obtained under the Crofters Act is as secure as proprietorship. In Uist, where the purchase scheme was carried out, the proprietor, Sir Arthur Orde, agreed to give the land to admit the tenants under the Crofters Act, and to have the rent fixed by the Crofters Commission. Now if other landlords would do likewise, the settlers could very well start with less than a tenth of the obligations on their backs, and would be absolutely certain to succeed. The many exponents of land purchase overlook

the fact that land reformers have by their continuous agitation convinced the world that the Highland Clearances were a mistake and a crime. The landlords now foreseeing what is coming on are anxious to clear out, knowing that every day the hour of reckoning is coming nearer.

It is now a question with them how much they can get. They well know that every day they delay the less they will get, and it must be kept in mind that for all practical purposes the land and the price of the land are to the landlord now the same thing. The extension of the franchise and the Crofters Act has taken away part of the control which the ownership before that gave to the landlords over the lives and destinies of the people. Parliament has taken away that power from them. Now, therefore there is nothing but the rent, the money value, and that is rapidly falling, so the landlord's idea is to run away from the position his misdeeds in the past have made, and yet to have the full price in his pocket, and to leave the descendants of the already wronged people in the lurch with all this money to pay for getting back what belonged to their fathers before them, and for which they were never paid.

I am certain no well-wisher of our Highland people would like to see a land purchase scheme begun with conditions which would eventually end in failure. The tenant has to pay interest on the purchase price at nothing less than 3.5 per cent, instalments of repayment of principal, outlays on buildings, fences, drains, roads, stock, &c., together, remember, with double rates, while under the Crofters Act the people would be as secure as if they became their own proprietor, and yet the purchase money would be saved and also the double rates would be avoided, and the teinds for the upkeep of the church as well, for on becoming proprietor of a holding this burden of the teinds also falls on the crofter, as can be seen in the case of the Strathnaver crofters, which demand sheets I had the privilege and curiosity of looking into last year when visiting that memorable strath.

If under the Crofters Act things did not turn out well, the Crofters Commission would, of course, reduce the rent, while purchasers who fall into arrears could not expect the same consideration and sympathy, and indeed would be sure not to receive it at the



hands of the Treasury, while in the case of crofters under the Crofters Act they can demand readjustment from time to time. I often fear the eager desire to have the land will make the people not look at the terms on which it may be offered, but that thoughtlessly they will undertake obligations and responsibilities which they cannot carry through. Surely if the people have waited for 90 years or more for restoration of the land, they should not rush into conditions of purchase many of which have already well nigh failed because of the exorbitant price charged, and which have placed a burden on the crofters which is yearly crushing them down with no bright future before them other than leave all, making their latter state worse than their first, having in the case of some to seek pastures new. The united tale of those who are now working under the purchase scheme "is that the lines have not fallen to them in pleasant places", all of whom, let me say, are capable agriculturalists and able-bodied workers. My contention, therefore, is that compulsory power to acquire land at a fair rent, with security of tenure and compensation for improvements conferred under the Crofters Act, the size of the holding to be sufficient to maintain the crofter and his family with a degree of comfort, and is in my opinion the best and real solution of the land settlement.

In view of the promised land legislation by the Government, one often hears much about the landlords rights being confiscated under compulsory powers; but why all this cry? I personally can never look at the existence of landlordism from any other than an historical point of view, namely, that they possessed the lands on conditions that they fulfilled certain obligations, which obligations, never let it be forgotten, have been removed to the shoulders of the people, and yet landlordism enjoys the same benefits as when these conditions were carried out. Where, then, does confiscation come in? It is all the other way about. They reap where they have not sown. But let me say that the land question in the Highlands cannot any longer be trifled with, and the present Liberal Government knows this full well, and intend to deal effectually with it at the earliest possible moment. Indeed the mind and conscience of the nation will not much longer consent to have things remain as they are. Landowners must be compelled to supply suitable land at a fair rent, in quantity sufficient to enable a family by honest industry to acquire a comfortable livelihood. Of course, it is asserted by those who prefer sport to human beings that the people are not able to take the land even if they got it. Is it any

wonder if such be the case? These good people who passed the greater part of their lives in the enjoyment of abundance, and in the exercise of hospitality and charity, possessing stocks of 10, 20 and 30 breeding cows, with the usual proportion of other stock, are now pining on one or two acres of the bleakest land, with one or two starved cows, and for this accommodation a calculation is made that they must support their family and pay the rent of their lots, not, mind you, from the produce, but from the sea.

No wonder therefore if their financial position is inadequate to the stocking of new and larger holdings, when landlord oppression and tyranny drove the people from their possessions, where abundance was theirs, into destitution and exile. Now that this state of matters has been brought about by the Principalities and Powers that were, it is surely not an unreasonable proceeding that the Government should come forward and aid the people in retaking the land. The Highlands at present are represented by men to whom they can look for support and sympathy with their grievances and who can properly and persistently represent them in Parliament, along with the fact that the country has discovered beyond any question that the people are in earnest and mean to look after themselves. The people are now beginning to find a new meaning in the old question: "Is not a man better than a sheep?".

### **A personal view on the Land Question**

Here is my own opinion on the Highland Land Question.

Highlanders of the generations prior to the turbulent 18th century, belonged to clans (Gaelic: *clann* meaning family or kin-group) which were kin-linked people organised for the control of land based resources. The land occupied by the clan was considered as their *duthchas*. At the head of the clan was the chief, usually the descendant of the eponym or founder of the kindred many hundreds of years earlier. While a clan can be considered as a tribal organisation, the land laws of Scotland had been feudal since the time of David I in the early 12th century. Feudal organisation is top-down. Land would be granted by charter to an individual lord by the king in return for his service. The lord in turn could sub-infeudate to his supporters, usually men able to bear arms and maintain the lord's power. At the bottom of the feudal tree were the people who tended the land and provided labour service. Despite this being the legal position, across the

Highlands until the clans were effectively smashed in the aftermath of the '45, the people did not view their chiefs as feudal lords, but as fathers to their people and custodians of the joint property of the entire clan. It would have been inconceivable to them that the chief might dispose of or sell their *duthchas*. The people had a responsibility to support the chief, both in food and services as well as militarily if called upon. Equally the chief was regarded as the guardian and protector of his people, while, at the same time, he might be a feudal lord in the eyes of the crown. Ideally, every tribal clan leader would also possess feudal charters from the crown for the *duthchas* of their clan - that was often not the case. Apart from the periodic cattle raids on one's neighbours to demonstrate manhood, the principal cause of Highland feuding had been the mismatch between the occupation of territory by a clan and the feudal ownership, in the view of the crown, of that same territory.

In the case of Sutherland, the increasing indebtedness of the Chiefs of Mackay had enabled the Sutherland family to take over their lands. Similarly the lands occupied as their *duthchas* by the clan Gunn in the heights of Kildonan had become part of the feudal possessions of the Sutherland Earls. Assynt became part of Sutherland in 1757.

In England, feudalism began to decline in the late 14th and 15th centuries, being replaced by a cash economy. This would be a dramatic change. Until then, across the whole of Europe, there had been an understanding that land could not be owned individually and was a communal asset, subject to duties and obligations. However, in this radical innovation, land became defined as a commodity which could be owned, like any other form of property, by individuals. This idea transformed rural England during the next three hundred years as successive waves of enclosure deprived the peasantry of access to common land. This idea was slower in coming to Scotland. The Lowland clearances of Scotland began in the 17th century. Attempts by the Scottish crown, beginning with the statutes of Iona, to reduce the perceived military power of the Highland chiefs focussed on educating their heirs in the Lowlands - teaching them English and making them accustomed to a 'higher', more expensive standard of living.

The final 'nail in the coffin' of clanship would be the 1747 Act of the UK Parliament which abolished the Heritable Jurisdictions. Until then, Highland chiefs had the delegated responsibility of maintaining order in their localities, providing justice and, as a part of the role, they had the right to levy fines. The Act of Abolition compensated the chiefs for their loss of income, but no thought was given to the future welfare of the clansfolk or of the wider social impact. In the ensuing generation, the attitude of most of the chiefs changed, from acknowledging their responsibility for the welfare of their clansfolk, to concentrating on income maximisation in order to support their increasingly expensive lifestyles in the South.

John Macpherson of Glendale wrote in the Introduction to the "Highland Clearances" by Alexander Mackenzie, "...their ancestors had tilled those lands and lived free and untrammelled. By every moral law, if not by the law of the land, they had a right to the soil which had been defended with their own right arm and that of their ancestors. These were the days when they were useful to the chief, who assumed some indefinable right to the land. But the day came after the "Forty-Five" when men were no longer assets to the chief. His territorial jurisdiction was broken. He wanted money, not men, and the lonely silences of the hills instead of merry laughter and prattle of children singing graces by the wayside."

The above may be a simplistic generalisation but it is broadly true. As the middle ranking gentlemen of the clan, the *daoine uasail*, were effectively forced into emigration in the latter part of the 18th century, many chiefs placed lowland factors, usually lawyers, in charge of maximising income. Sutherland is probably the most extreme example of widespread practice. Here, Young and Sellar brought in new non-Gaelic speakers at every level - farmers, shepherds, fishermen, builders. Many of the incomers were made J.Ps, and it was made quite clear to the ministers of the established church that their glebes and stipends depended on their support for the new order. Whether or not the Duchess-Countess of Sutherland knew or cared about what was going on can be argued, but she took little notice of events and any of the Highland peasantry who contacted her for amelioration, very soon after would experience the displeasure of the factors. There seems little doubt that the incoming capitalist farmers

would have preferred to have the natives expelled entirely, but preferably not at their expense. James Loch boasted of the huge expenditure by the Stafford family, but it was entirely for the benefit of the incomers. Perhaps in previous centuries the reaction would have been violent, but the clan leadership had been removed and the ministers played a most important role in convincing the people that it was God's judgement for their own sins and that any resistance would be a greater sin against God's laws.

Tory historians have argued that the Highlands were backward and overcrowded by peasants living at a low standard. The modern world had arrived, the empire was growing and there was a huge un-met demand from the South for mutton and wool. While some change was inevitable that does not in any way justify the enormous cruelty and abuse of the law during the Clearances. The native Highlanders had built up the fertility of the pastures in the inland glens for cattle rearing over many centuries. Overstocking of sheep by the get-rich-quick incomers exhausted most of that fertility in little more than a generation. When the returns on mutton fell, the cash-strapped chiefs sold off huge tracts to meet the demand for hunting preserves by the wealthy from the South and - increasingly in the 20th century - from countries all over the world whose own laws would not permit them to behave in such a way at home.

Perhaps of even greater significance to us today, and the reason why "Highland Clearance" is still relevant, is the concept that any piece of land could be exchanged for cash at the whim of the owner, irrespective of the customary rights of the people actually resident on that land. The law assigned ownership absolutely to the feudal Lord and to the succeeding post-feudal landowner, with nothing for the tenant. The only tenant rights which the law would recognize were fixed-term leases for defined rentals, at the end of which, the tenant could either attempt to enter a new lease, at whatever rental the estate demanded, or leave the land which they and their ancestors may have occupied and taken care of 'since before the memory of man'.

In Switzerland, Denmark and Norway for example, the peasantry have retained far more of their rights to the soil. The clearances experienced in Scotland and especially in the Highlands could not happen there, thus the remote Norwegian valleys are populated

by small farmers, unlike the Highland glens where only the deer and grouse are permitted to live, for the summer enjoyment of alien plutocrats.

Many people hoped that the establishment of a Scottish Parliament in 1999 might mean changes to our system of land tenure. Indeed, there have been some changes: it is now easier for crofters and other small people to launch community buyouts, but only when the "owners" are willing to sell. Perhaps in an independent Scotland, one day, we may achieve a state where all our land is dedicated to the needs of the people who actually live on it. It would be wonderful too, if some of those people were the descendants of the dispossessed able to return home from exile around the world and able to find new ways to live in an ecologically sensitive and sustainable Highland economy.

I trust that I would not be viewed as a Marxist crackpot for questioning the ownership rights of many of the occupiers of large Highland estates which they may visit for just a few weeks in the year to shoot a few deer or grouse. One can argue that the descendants of clan chiefs who still possess some of their clan's ancestral *duthchas* should have to account for their stewardship. But what about those who have purchased, or inherited from parents or grandparents, a Highland shooting estate? Should they be ejected without compensation? What about corporate pension funds, Overseas Investment funds, Institutional owners which are headquartered and operated from outwith Scotland for a sectional interest, such as the RSPB or Forestry Commission? It's a thorny question, but as Joseph pointed out, the view expressed in the bible from thousands of years ago was that the land belonged to the community, not the individual and "the first charge on the land was the support of the people that laboured upon it".

The land of Scotland, the *duthchas* of the people of Scotland, should not be the property of wealthy individuals to do as they will with it. The chief - the Government of Scotland - should provide the security which would enable the people on the land to make best use of the land for their own benefit, benefit to their community and to Scotland as a whole.

### **The Kildonan Clearance**

The A897 follows the river and railway from Helmsdale, or *Bunillidh*, on the east coast of Sutherland through the lonely Strath of Kildonan for 18 miles inland to the tiny settlement of Kinbrace. The road and railway continues through deserted Strath Halladale to the North coast, while the B871 follows the river for a further five miles to Loch Badanloch and on through empty Strath Naver to the Clearance village of Bettyhill on the North coast. Travelling up the Strath of Kildonan, after Helmsdale there are very few inhabited houses until Kinbrace. It was not always so. Kildonan was so savagely cleared in the years between 1813 and 1819 that it provoked one of the first recorded protests against the evictions anywhere in the Highlands.

The upper reaches of Kildonan was part of the *duthchas* (ancestral homeland) of the Gunn kindred, whose progenitor flourished in the 12th century, and who had been settled in upper Kildonan since the 16th. They once held their lands in their own right, but like much of Sutherland and the Reay Country, legal ownership had passed through conflict, chicanery and debt into the hands of the Gordon Earldom of Sutherland.

In the lower strath lived Sutherlands and Gordons; Mackays and their Polson sept; as well as Mathesons, MacLeods, MacBeaths, Murrays, Rosses, and others native to nearby parishes of Sutherland and Ross.

Our own ancestors (Alexander MacLeod and his wife Janet Polson) were at Eldrable, across the river from Kilphedir and Torrish, three to four miles upstream from Helmsdale. The settlement was a joint farm with four tenants - MacLeods, Polsons and Gordons. They were evicted in 1817 and allotted miserable plots on the hillside at West Helmsdale.

This image of Eldrable clearly shows a group of buildings which are not so obvious when viewed on the ground. In 1870 the railway was constructed up the strath of Kildonan separating the remains of the houses from the township's arable ground beside the river.



Above: The joint farm of Eldrable was cleared in 1819. There were four tenants including Alexander MacLeod and his wife Janet Polson. Traces of the houses and runrig can be seen in this aerial view from Google Earth.

Subsequent to the clearance of Eldrable, a cottage was built for a shepherd. Robert Telfer, from Roxburgh, and his family were here in 1851. The cottage was in ruins in the 1980s but has now been reroofed by Torrish Estates



Dunrobin Castle near Golspie, is on the site of the earlier castle of the Earls of Sutherland. It was rebuilt at huge expense as an occasional summer residence for the fabulously wealthy Leveson-Gowers while they indulged in hunting, shooting and fishing.





This is an artist's impression from Timespan in Helmsdale of the largest of the excavated longhouses at Caen. Note the double doors and possible chimney. In many longhouses, livestock would be housed at the lower end and people at the upper end. Also it was more typical for smoke from the fire to permeate through the thatch. This sketch appears to show a chimney. Below is a plan of the 2013 excavation at Caen.



Sutherland longhouses probably used more stone than turf in their construction and do not appear to have had the double stone wall construction found in Lewis.

Below: Kildonan church. The glebe field to the right was the site of the muster of a thousand men for the 93<sup>rd</sup> regiment – The Sutherland Highlanders - in 1800. Many were killed at the battle of New Orleans in 1815. Only a few would return to Kildonan.





These traditional buildings are reconstructions, largely in turf, at the Highland Folk Museum site in Newtonmore based on archaeological work in Badenoch.



The reconstructed Hebridean style blackhouse at Newtonmore had a double stone wall with turf in between. The thatch overlaid the inner wall, so that rainwater was directed through the turf layer in order to increase insulation.



Like the Strath of Kildonan, Glen Loth has been settled for at least five thousand years. *Carn Bran* near the entrance to the glen is a tumbled iron-age broch. A few hundred metres further on the other side of the burn is another, better-preserved broch. There are standing stones dating from the Neolithic. RCAHMS lists in the Strath of Kildonan itself at least five brochs, eight souterrains, several stone circles and up to ten chambered cairns - evidence of a settled community over a very long time.

Thomson's Atlas of Scotland showed the settlements in the lower strath of Kildonan.



The map below shows the huge extent of the sheep farms planned in 1813.

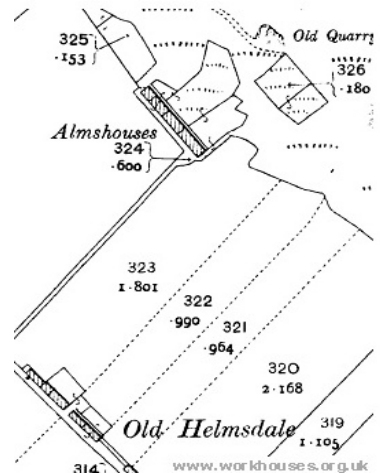




This aerial image, thanks to Highland Aerial Views, includes part of Old Helmsdale on the north side of the river and Marrel to the south. Much of the green land in the distance is a modern golf course. A bright, sunlit modern colour photo does not properly convey the original brutality of the settlement.

The plan on the right is from the Sutherland estate maps dated 1813-1819, showing some of the crofts with the almshouses known as 'The Barracks' intended to hold up to six families at the top.

Each of the lotts in the image originally had a strip of a very few acres judged to be just sufficient to keep a family alive. Lotters had to build their houses at their own expense. Only favoured incomers in Helmsdale village proper or on the newly laid out large farms had buildings erected at the expense of the estate. It was assumed that the people would have to find work as labourers as well - provided any work was available.



In 1807 Elizabeth Gordon, 19th Countess of Sutherland and wife of the Marquess of Stafford - *a leviathan of wealth* - wrote that "he is seized as much as I am with the rage of improvements, and we both turn our attention with the greatest of energy to turnips". As well as turning land over to sheep farming, Stafford planned to invest in a coal-pit, salt pans, brick and tile works and herring fisheries - none of which, poorly planned and executed, have survived. They also made hugely expensive additions to Dunrobin Castle for their rare visits to their Northern estates.

That year his agents began the evictions and 90 families were forced to leave their crops in the ground and move their cattle, furniture and timbers to the land they were offered 20 miles away on the coast. They were forced to live in the open until they had built shelters for themselves. This plan has been described Michael Fry in *Clearances? What Clearances?* as a "typical example... of social engineering which met neither the hopes of the benefactors nor the needs of the beneficiaries, but produced social disaster"

The Countess, on seeing starving tenants on the estate, remarked in a letter to a friend in England, "Scotch people are of happier constitution and do not fatten like the larger breed of animals."

Using the birth numbers alone clearly precludes the unmarried and couples whose last child was born prior to the start of the OPR, while giving undue weight to the more fecund couples. Identifying married couples with one or more recorded births rather than using the total number of births, still takes no account of childless and elderly couples, but is the best that can be done.

There were 1232 births to 383 families (including 20 flagged as illegitimate) in Kildonan prior to 1820, and 259 births (5 illegitimate) to 99 families after 1820. In Loth, prior to 1820, 568 births to 230 families and afterwards 1560 births to 536 families (30 illegitimate - The illegitimacy rate was between 1.6 and 1.9%). The drop in population of Kildonan and increase in Loth is very apparent. However, there is also a generational shift as only a few families from pre-1820 Kildonan are still having children in post-1820 Loth. Examination of the rentals for Kildonan for 1808 to 1817

does not help as in general the renters are of the older generation and their possible children who may be having families after 1820 do not appear in the rentals.

The dramatic decline in the Gunns and Bannermans is apparent. There were 54 Gunn families in Kildonan prior to 1820 but none thereafter while Gunns in Loth increased from 5 to 15. Similarly, the Bannermans dropped from 27 to zero in Kildonan after 1820; rising from 12 to 23 in Loth. These two kindreds probably formed a large proportion of the emigrants to Canada. The Mackays and their Polson sept in Kildonan dropped from 59 to 15, rising from 31 to 79 in Loth. Sutherlands and Gordons in Kildonan dropped from 94 to 12, rising from 49 to 88 in Loth. This suggests that these four surnames formed much of the lower level of tenants in Kildonan and many of them probably cleared from their inland farms to the coast as a result of the Clearances.

Similarly with the next five groups on North Highland surnames - MacBeath, MacLeod, Murray, Matheson and Grant - who numbered 77 families in Kildonan prior to 1820 and 8 thereafter, rising from 32 to 67 in Loth. Finally a further group of seven North Highland names - Fraser, Bruce, Ross, Macpherson, MacDonald, Munro and Mackenzie - dropped from 47 to 11 in Kildonan, rising from 42 to 89 in Loth. By contrast, many incomers to the parishes are apparent. In Kildonan, prior to 1820 there are just 25 (6.5% of 383) non-local names and 53 (53.5% of 99) after 1820. Ten of the twelve pre-1820 men with the occupation 'shepherd' have non-local names. After 1820 there are 34 shepherds, five of which have local names. In Loth there were 61 (26.5% of 230) non-local names prior to 1820 and 175 (32.7% of 536) after 1820. Of these, 55 are single instances, such as Bell, Berry, Bethune, Boyne, Brock and Broomfield.

The 18 top surnames among the families identified previously in Kildonan drop from 93.5% to 53.5% of the total. In Loth the drop is from 73.5% to 67.4%. While Loth has had a considerable influx of incomers, there is not a large drop in the 'locals' due to the resettlement of many of the 'Cleared'.

An examination of the fathers' occupations is quite illuminating. In Kildonan 295 families prior to 1819 have the fathers' occupation recorded as 'tenant', only 8 such

occur after 1820. A further 12 are 'IN' and 10 'residenter', these can be included in a total 380 families to the pre-clearance community of inland small tenant farmers. Very few occupations are recorded in Loth parish prior to 1828, After that there are 48 labelled 'labourer', 35 'lotters' and 10 masons. These 93 families are almost entirely to men with North Highland names located in the settlements of East and West Helmsdale, Marril, Navidale, Gartymore, Portgower and Culgower. Six of the 16 'farm servants' probably also belong to this group.

Included in the post-1820 native married couples in Loth are 9 army pensioners, many of them survivors of the 93rd Sutherland Highlanders which had suffered very heavy casualties at the Battle of New Orleans in 1815. These men had been persuaded to join the regiment in 1799 by promises of security of tenure for their parents in their holdings. In 1813 Patrick Sellar brushed aside these promises as being of no significance. (*Adam, Sutherland Estate Management*)

Fathers' occupations which only occur in Loth after 1828 include 15 shepherds (in addition to the 34 in Kildonan), 9 fishermen, 4 fish curers, 39 coopers, 2 boat builders, 12 carpenters and cart wrights, 7 blacksmiths, and 9 merchants. Local craftsmen include 21 shoemakers, 6 tailors and 6 weavers. It may be suggested from the residence and names that some of these can also be numbered among the 'cleared', but many were incomers whose surnames do not occur prior to 1819.

From the 1851 census, male heads of household, aged 40 or over therefore born before the Clearances were examined. In Loth, which by 1851 excluded Helmsdale and surrounding townships, 41 out of 63 were born in Loth and just 2 (both Sutherlands) were born in Kildonan, 15 of the remainder were from elsewhere in Sutherland, Ross and Caithness with 4 from other counties in Scotland and one from England.

In Kildonan parish, which by now included Helmsdale as well as the strath, out of 239, 65 reported they were born in Loth (including some 'Kildonan-Helmsdale') while 93 were Kildonan - of these there were 9 Bannermans, 7 Gunns, 7 MacLeods, 18 Polsons

and 8 Sutherlands. 57 of the remainder came from elsewhere in Sutherland, Ross or Caithness; 9 from Banff, 14 elsewhere in Scotland and 3 from England.

In 1830 Lady Stafford made a rare visit to her Sutherland estate and found tenants living in 'primitive hovels'. Unable to comprehend how people could live under such conditions, but speaking no Gaelic, she was not able to ascertain the condition of her tenants' lives and did nothing about it.

When Lord Stafford, recently elevated as Duke of Sutherland, died in 1833, plans were made by those who had benefited most from his 'Improvements' for a monument to be erected on Ben Bhraggie in his honour. All tenants on the estate were "requested" to subscribe. Donald MacLeod wrote: in letter XIV "all who could raise a shilling gave it, and those who could not awaited in terror for the consequences of their default".

In the 13th Century, the Seer Thomas of Erceldoune (Thomas the Rhymer or True Thomas) reportedly prophesied about the Highlands:

*"The teeth of the sheep shall lay the (useless) plough up on the shelf."*

Approximately 350 years later, Coinneach Odhar, the Brahan Seer, predicted:

*"The day will come when the Big Sheep will put the plough up in the rafters... ..the Big Sheep will overrun the country till they meet the Northern Sea... ..(and) in the end, old men shall return from new lands..."*

The railway reached Helmsdale in 1870 and in the following years the line was completed to Wick and Thurso. While the new line gave a boost to the fishing industry, it threw the remaining craftsmen in the parish, the shoemakers and tailors, into poverty, as they were unable to compete with factory made goods from the South.

Ultimately it would sound the death knell of large scale sheep farming which was already in decline due to exhaustion of the arable land created so laboriously over centuries by the victims of the Clearances. From now on, the railway would provide easy access for the wealthy to enjoy their summer breaks - shooting deer or grouse and



fishing for salmon. Fancy lodges would be built in the Strath and increasingly, the shepherds would be cleared in their turn and the conversion of thriving rural communities to a man-made desert would be completed.

A feature on the 'World Railways' website describes the inland route of the line, avoiding the steep Ord of Caithness, on its way to Wick.

“The seashore is followed closely to Helmsdale where the route heads inland. This is spectacular country as the line threads its way up the Strath of Kildonan with signs of habitation decreasing as the coast is left further behind. Wild moors with snow fences along the line suggest that winters might be harsh. Small stations are passed without stopping - Kildonan and Kinbrace were both listed in the timetable as request stops. There was not even a sheep in sight!”

Iain Fraser Grigor, provides an excellent synopsis of the fate of the Highland people since 1745 in *Highland Resistance* (Mainstream, 2000) - "After 1745 the Highlands of Scotland became subject to first a military and then a commercial and finally a recreational colonial occupation. The chief features of this would become clearance and emigration; the exploitation of natural resources through large scale sheep-farming and deer-afforestation; the exploitation of population resources through military recruitment; the smashing asunder of the traditional society and its established class relations; the divorce by force of the common people from the occupancy of a land they looked upon as their own; and the invention of a tradition identified today as the cult of Balmorality. The process was crude but it represented for the government a very firm grasp of the essentials."

The Gaelic poet John MacCodrum wrote

*'Look around you and see the nobility without pity for poor folk, without kindness to friends; they are of the opinion that you do not belong to the soil, and though they have left you destitute they cannot see it as a loss'.*

Andrew G Newby states in *Land and the "Crofter Question" in nineteenth-century Scotland*,-

"The Improvers could not foresee, even less understand, the reluctance of the Highland population to move away from traditional agriculture, and the early years of the nineteenth century witnessed a huge push towards rationalization of some Highland estates. Events on the vast lands of the Countess of Sutherland, between 1807 and 1821, have come to symbolise the human consequences of Clearance. Her marriage to one of England's wealthiest landlords, the Marquess of Stafford in 1785 ensured that there would be the resources to pay for estate reorganisation. This was given further impetus by the arrival of Morayshire farmers William Young and Patrick Sellar in 1809. Both were zealous Improvers, but the speed with which they proceeded in attempting to establish sheep farms in Kildonan led to riots in 1813. The forced evictions and burning of house roofs and frames — along with the trial of Sellar for the culpable homicide of an elderly tenant — became an important symbol of the oppression of landlords and their managers in the Highlands. The trial ensured increased public awareness of the Clearances in Great Britain, and under the management of James Loch the estate became more sensitive to public opinion. Nevertheless, rationalization and eviction continued into the 1820s."

While the practicalities of Highland lifestyle may well have been less than idyllic, there are many accounts of Highland life by independent observers such as James Boswell, Samuel Johnson, Thomas Pennant and others, which showed that there was much in Highland life and culture which was to be admired. The people, far from being lazy, were hospitable and industrious. Their homes, while simple, were practical, and well suited to their environment. Highland culture, although largely oral (and therefore greatly undervalued by outsiders) was rich in song, history and legend.

Landlords, and more particularly, their agents, repeatedly blackened the Highland character. They claimed that the Highlanders were lazy, idle, drunken, ignorant and dirty. This discourse was identical to that used by imperial powers to denigrate their subject peoples, and portray colonised people around the world as less than human and undeserving of respect. These are the tactics of bullies, dictators and oppressors of

humanity everywhere. Their victims have to be dehumanised so that crimes against them will not be seen as crimes but as necessary actions.

On 23 July 2007, the Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond unveiled a 3-metre high bronze *Exiles* monument, by Gerald Laing, in Helmsdale, commemorating the people who were cleared from the area and left their homeland to begin new lives overseas.

The statue, which depicts a family leaving their home, stands at the mouth of the Strath of Kildonan and was funded by Dennis MacLeod, a Helmsdale born mining millionaire who also attended the ceremony. An identical 3-metre high bronze *Exiles* monument (shown above) has also been set up on the banks of the Red River in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.



### **An analysis of Wages and Prices in 19th century Sutherland**

I discovered that Alexander MacLeod began receiving Poor Law payments from 1870 until his youngest daughter reached 16 in 1885. This led me to look into the operation of the Poor Law in a rural Highland parish. Alexander was a shoemaker with premises on Dunrobin Street, Helmsdale. As such, he can be traced in the 1841, 1851 and 1861 censuses with his growing family. The railway reached Helmsdale in 1870 making it much easier to ship factory made shoes from English factories. In the 1871 census, Alexander is still described as a shoemaker but his address is now given as Carnlaggie. This was the site of “The Barracks” a row of small cottages reserved for “The Poor”. Each comprised of a single room, roughly 14 feet by 10 feet. Alexander wasn’t the only local craftsman to be affected. Another shoemaker and several tailors would also begin receiving poor relief from 1870. Although the poor relief ceased in 1885, Alexander and his wife Ann MacLean continued living there until he died in 1907. Ann MacLean then moved in with her eldest daughter, Margaret, married to John Macintosh at Gartymore. It was not uncommon for the able-bodied, under the poor-law, to be given nominal payments in return for acting as nurses for sick and disabled paupers. I understand that this was Ann’s role.

### **“Cost of Living” in Helmsdale in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century,**

What was the true cost of living for Agricultural labourers and paupers in Sutherland? From these numbers it is hoped that a better appreciation of Poor Law payments can be made. The data has been obtained from a number of sources and certain assumptions and extrapolations have been made in order to create the table. These numbers are not claimed to be precisely correct but should serve as a useful guide. The years 1868 to 1915 has been used since the Kildonan Poor Law returns cover this period.

The Wages index was obtained from A.L.Bowley, “Wages in the UK in the Nineteenth Century”, published in 1900. In Table II of Appendix I., page 132-3, A table with a graph alongside of Agricultural labourer’s wages is given covering the years 1840 to 1891, with the index for 1891 taken as 100. The index relates to England only, so my first assumption is that they can be also used for agricultural labourers in Sutherland. Taking the figures given for 1866, 1870, 1874, 1877, 1880, 1883, 1886 and 1891 the

intervening years were filled in by interpolation from the trend. I continued the series to 1915 using the trend of the Prices index, lagged by one year. Wages do not necessarily follow prices in this way but I have made this assumption lacking any other source.

From the Board of Trade report into “The Earnings and Hours of Labour of Work people in the UK”, Vol. V - Agriculture, published by HMSO in 1910, a table of the wages of ordinary agricultural labourers in 1907 was used. The average weekly earnings varied from 13/10 in Orkney and 14/2 in Caithness to a high of 21/4 in Clackmannan. The values for Sutherland were 12/2 (61p) for cash and 5/7 (28p) for payment in kind giving a total of 17/9 (89p). Banff and Aberdeen had higher payment in kind components with Cash components a few coppers lower. Apart from these four Sutherland had the lowest Cash payment. In total Orkney and Caithness paid considerably lower and four Highland counties slightly lower than Sutherland. Taking this 1907 figure and the index at 96, the corresponding figures for the rest of the table were calculated. By way of corroboration, this produced an annual income for an agricultural labourer in 1892 of £48.98 which compares with the £49 given by Bowley on page 56. Bowley also gives a daily rate in 1892 for labourers in Northern Scotland of 3/- (15p) which is close to the calculated value.

The Index of Prices with 1900 taken as 100 was taken from the Board of Trade enquiry into “Working Class Rents and Retail Prices in Industrial Towns in 1912”, HMSO, 1913. The first problem is in the title as the data relates to industrial centres in England and Scotland. One table gives typical wage rates, rentals and basic foodstuffs in Perth. I noted that the prices tended to be higher by about 10-20% than the figures quoted by Rowntree for York in 1900. The index however had risen from 100 to 115 in that time so the cost of basic foods, given by Rowntree, were probably comparable. It may be a large assumption to take these values as typical for Sutherland but I have no data to confirm or contradict this. The Board of Trade index covers the period 1877 to 1912 so it was necessary to extrapolate for the missing years. For 1913 to 1915, I assumed inflation at 5 points per year. There was a 5 point jump between 1911 and 1912, and of course the start of the war probably caused a larger jump than this. Prior to 1877, for

want of any other data, I have extrapolated from the wages index. This is a dubious assumption but might not be too far adrift.

The starting point for prices has been taken from B Seebohm Rowntree's "Poverty A Study of Town Life", MacMillan 1902. The study relates to York, but as mentioned above the cost of food appears comparable to Perth in 1912 as inflated by the rise in the index. I also took the cost of Sundries - that is fuel, clothing etc., - from Rowntree. The figures for the table were then calculated from the index. The least comparable cost is rent. I have quite arbitrarily used a figure of 1/- (5p) per week or 26/- per year with no allowance for change in the index during the period. I am quite sure that this will not be accurate, however entries in the Kildonan Roll indicate that rents of between 20/- and 40/- were being paid by the Poor Board. The weekly and annual expenditure for one adult, two adults and two adults with two children were then calculated. For two adults I doubled the food and sundries but not the rents. For the children I took 80% of the adult rate for food and 50% of the adult rate for sundries. The surplus resulting from subtracting the expenditure from the annual wage shows that two adults could survive above the primary poverty level on a labourers wage throughout the period. However, at no time was there a surplus when two children also had to be fed and clothed, with no supplementary income. In the worse case, in 1883, there was a deficit of almost 42%, and at best in 1899 the deficit was 5%. Rowntree states that his figures for food are less generous than the rations allowed in English Workhouses. Family sizes in Sutherland are more likely to be 4 or 5 rather than 2 children. However, no income from work by the wife or any of the children has been assumed, and in practise such additional income may have been likely. Also, most labourers in Kildonan would have at least some potato ground if not a croft to work. It may be that the figures in the Board of Trade report for earnings in kind took some account of this. Such a resource was much less likely in urban areas. Other food income may have been available from relatives with more land and less demand on it, or even from poaching!

Having established that an income of £40 to £50 per annum in Kildonan for a family of two adults and two children probably meant primary poverty and around £20 a year was needed for a single adult to live just above the poverty level, this highlights the plight of

widows with children living off Parochial board payments of at most £12 per year? Poor roll comments occasionally indicate that the rent has been paid, presumably it was not if no such indication is given. A Poor House inmate cost the Parochial board about £10 per annum. For out-relief, weekly doles to paupers with no dependants of between 1/- and 4/- were being paid. I believe that many of the paupers were receiving supplements to their resources on the basis that at least 3/- per week was required for food alone. The highest weekly dole of 5/- might indicate a pauper who was incapable of obtaining any income for themselves.

A diet from an example given for a poor family in York in 1900 (Rowntree, 1902) is unlikely to have been the same as the Helmsdale diet, so I have made some changes to reflect different prices, specifically increasing amounts of fish, potatoes and oatmeal, and reducing meat products. The sample Rowntree family (a widow and 4 children) had a factor of 2.86 to calculate a single adult's requirement which is used for comparison. The cost of basic food for an adult in York was calculated to be 3/- in 1900. I had to include an amount against 'misc' to bring this example up to 3/-. The prices were then calculated for Helmsdale by using the 1870 index of 124 against 100 for 1900, assuming that the relationship was the same throughout the UK. For certain items (marked in **bold**) Helmsdale prices were used, in place of the adjusted York price. Helmsdale prices are taken from the surviving records of a grocer there from around 1870. In general the prices are higher, reflecting a higher real cost of living so 'misc' has been reduced to compensate and adjust to the 'ideal' 19p in the table for 1870. The final weekly amount of 44.5d or 18.5p which was determined is close to the 19p calculated for 1870 from the index. The York diet provides energy of 2783 kcals per day, sufficient for light work for a man. My version provides more kcals per day at 2863, somewhere between the requirement for light and medium labour and not enough for heavy labour. The pauper's 2/- provides 1912 kcals - a little over the basal needs of an adult man at 1750 and less than the 2000 recommended for female sedentary work.

The left side of the table below is York in 1900, followed by the comparable Helmsdale values with prices adjusted on the basis that the 1900 index was 100 and 1870 had a

prices index of 124. Bold Helmsdale prices are 1870 actuals. All prices are in old pence and amounts in pounds weight (unless otherwise stated).

Food	Y	O	R	K	1900 -	H	E	L	M	S	D	A	L	E		
	lbs - family	lbs - 1adult	Price / unit	Cost pence	weekly Kcals	-----	lbs - family	lbs - 1adult	inflated York price	actual price if known	Cost pence	weekly Kcals	lbs - 2/- pauper	cost pence	kcal / 100g	weekly Kcals
Beef	1.75	0.61	5.14	3.15	622		0.5	0.17	6.37	6.37	1.11	178				224
Liver	0.5	0.17	5	0.87	225		0	0	6.2	6.2	0	0				284
Dripping	1	0.35	2	0.7	1270		1	0.35	2.48	2.48	0.87	1270				800
Bacon	1	0.35	6	2.1	948		0	0	7.44	7.44	0	0				597
Fish	0.5	0.17	4	0.7	187		6	2.1	4.96	<b>1</b>	2.1	2238	1.5	1.5	235	1067
Eggs (12)	1	0.35	1	0.35	259		1	0.35	1.24	1.25	0.44	259	0	0	163	0
Cheese	1	0.35	4.5	1.57	675		1	0.35	5.58	6	2.1	675	0.13	0.75	425	241
Butter	0.25	0.09	14	1.22	315		0.25	0.09	17.36	16	1.4	315	0.06	1	793	225
Milk pints	3.5	1.22	2	2.45	367		3.5	1.22	2.48	2.5	3.06	367	1	2.5	66	300
Flour	14	4.9	1	4.9	7778		4	1.4	1.24	<b>5</b>	6.99	2222	0	0	350	0
Potatoes	10.5	3.67	0.81	2.97	1250		21	7.34	1	<b>1</b>	7.34	2500	7	7	75	2384
Oatmeal	3.5	1.22	1.71	2.09	2245		12.75	4.46	2.12	<b>2.25</b>	10.03	8177	5	11.25	404	9171
Sugar	4	1.4	1.5	2.1	2438		2	0.7	1.86	<b>4.5</b>	3.15	1219				384
Rice	1.5	0.52	3	1.57	848		1	0.35	3.72	<b>4</b>	1.4	565				356
Onions	0.5	0.17	1	0.17	16		0.5	0.17	1.24	1.24	0.22	16				20
Peas	0.5	0.17	2	0.35	39		0.5	0.17	2.48	<b>2</b>	0.35	39				49
Tea	0.25	0.09	16	1.4	0		0.13	0.04	19.84	<b>42</b>	1.84	0				1
Misc	1	0.35	21	7.34	0		0.25	0.09	26.04	26.04	2.28	0				0
			Total pence	36.01	19481						44.66	20039		24		13387
			New pence	15	2783						18.61	2863		10		1912
		at index	124	44.65												18.6

The next table is an analysis of the weekly dole paid by the poor board in the returns. Any additional amounts paid annually for clothing, fuel or rent is not included. Paupers who received occasional relief but not a regular dole are not included. Where a pauper received assistance for a number of years I have tended to use the higher amount received, in order to give a single figure, rather than apply any sort of arithmetical average. Payments made to patients in the Asylum or Poorhouse is not included, but those few living in other parishes receiving weekly doles funded by Kildonan are included. Two columns are shown here. In the first case statistical values for all the doles are given, in the second, I have removed all entries with dependents so that the numbers should represent the money actually paid to individual paupers for food and other weekly expense.



Statistical analysis of poor law payments in Kildonan

	All paupers		Singletons	
Minimum weekly dole	0.025	6d	0.025	6d
Maximum weekly dole	0.45	9/-	0.35	7/-
Average	0.127	2/6d	0.112	2/3d
Median	0.112	2/3d	0.1	2/-
Mode	0.125	2/6d	0.1	2/-
Standard deviation	0.068		0.05	

The previous table showed that the cost of food calculated by Rowntree for a basic diet varied between 4/- in 1870 and 3/- in 1900. The exceptional maximum doles given above were for paupers receiving nursing care and medication. The median and modal figure above of 2/- per week would not be adequate to purchase Rowntree's basic diet at 1870 prices. Using the York table with quantities and prices modified for Helmsdale, 2/- would buy the following food to last a week. 7 lbs potatoes, 5 lbs oatmeal, 1.5 lb fish, 2 oz cheese, 1 oz butter and 1 pint of milk. I determined this to give the maximum calories and protein/fat/carbohydrate for the median dole of 2/-. As can be seen it provides less than 2000 calories per day. Though it might be possible to survive on this, 2500 kcals is the amount necessary to maintain an adult in health and capable of light to medium work. This, of course, allows nothing for the cost of cooking facilities - fuel, pots, cleaning materials etc. It is noteworthy that the doles paid tended to increase somewhat between 1868 and 1915 despite the cost of living index falling. In the crofting townships there was always the possibility for all except the most disabled or bedridden to grow potatoes, kale or cabbages. In Helmsdale paupers were lodged in tiny cottages, with no land or other resources apart from waste or surplus fish found at the harbour or casual charity of stale bread and so forth from the grocer or baker. The Barracks were a terrace of cottages, each with a single main room, approx 14 feet by 10 feet, built in 1879. I noted that some paupers who were moved to the Barracks subsequently received higher weekly doles, perhaps 2/6 instead of 1/6 or 2/-, possibly illustrating the lack of any garden ground for growing food or otherwise obtaining an income. If relatives were available it could be expected that the poor inspector would require them to care for the pauper themselves.

### An Open letter to the Countess of Sutherland

The following is only indirectly related to our family history but our Joseph MacLeod had a namesake, Joseph Todd Gordon MacLeod, who wrote Clearance poetry under the alias Adam Drinan. One of his poems really made an impression on me. I discovered the "Open Letter to the Countess of Sutherland" among some papers while researching "our" Joseph MacLeod. But the "Open Letter" was not written by our Joseph. Instead it was by war-time BBC Newsreader Joseph TG MacLeod, (1903-1984).



The younger Joseph visited the elder in Inverness, during 1941. A blood relationship between them is tenuous, except perhaps many hundreds of years ago - the parish records do not go that far back. However, on reading the poem below, I feel that they must have found much to discuss about the Clearances and the Highland land question. With no more evidence than the dates to support this, I wonder at the coincidence of his visit to Inverness being followed in 1942 and 1943 by Adam Drinan's Highland and particularly "Clearance" poetry in *Men of the Rocks* and *Ghosts of the Strath*.

Among the JTG MacLeod papers, now in the National Library of Scotland, is a letter from Joseph in Inverness dated April 1941. In it, Joseph responds to "an interesting letter" from JTG MacLeod in which he had mentioned his connection with Kildonan. Joseph responded indicating that he would help in any way he could when JTG MacLeod came North. He also mentioned that he knew the (late) Rev. Adam MacLeod of Croy, who was a cousin of JTG's father, and his son who was a minister in Leith. Unfortunately this is the only letter in the archive, we don't have JTG's original enquiry

or an indication of when he did actually visit Inverness and presumably go on to Kildonan.

The ancestors of both men came from the East Sutherland parish of Kildonan, which had been subjected to a notorious Clearance of the populace by the Sutherland estate between 1813 and 1819. I found the ancestry of Joseph Todd Gordon MacLeod by searching Parish Records, census returns, familysearch.org and the Free Church records. JTG's great grandparents, as written in the *Open Letter*, were George MacLeod, the dominie of Kildonan, and his wife Ann Gordon. Ann Gordon's family had been one of the many burned out of Strathnaver by Patrick Sellar in 1813. George and Ann were left at the Kildonan schoolhouse after 1819, to teach the children of the incoming shepherds as there was virtually nobody else left living in the strath. Their three sons and two daughters were born between 1817 and 1825. George Gordon MacLeod, the youngest, was born 25/4/1825, entered Aberdeen University in 1845 and graduated MA. He served as the Minister of Duke Street Gaelic Free Church in Glasgow. On 24th June 1858 in Banff, he married Anna Ross MacPhail from Lochbroom, Wester Ross. Adam, another son of George and Ann, born 14/9/1821, also became a Free Church Minister and four of Adam's sons, in turn, would follow him into the ministry of the Free Church. One of the four, the Rev. Adam Andrew Gordon MacLeod (1856-1928) became the minister of Croy, mentioned above in Joseph's letter.

George Gordon MacLeod and Anna Ross MacPhail had three sons and a daughter (George, James, John and Helen). George Somerville MacLeod, was born 11/1/1861 Blythswood, Glasgow and followed his father to become a Free Church Minister. James Gordon MacLeod was born 6/12/1863 and John Somerville MacLeod on 2/5/1865. Their last child, Helen, was born in May 1867 but died the same year, as did her mother. James Gordon MacLeod married Dundonian Helen Kidd Todd on 17/4/1898. Helen had been born in Dundee on 5/10/1873 to Thomas Robertson Todd and Eliza Cunningham Kidd. James G MacLeod and his wife moved to London where he became the managing director of the Rio Tinto Trading Company. The birth of their only son, Joseph Todd Gordon MacLeod was at 19 Inglis Road, Ealing, Middlesex, on 24 April 1903.

The following brief biography of Joseph Todd Gordon MacLeod has been taken from online references, including the website of Waterloo Press. He was educated at Rugby School and Balliol, Oxford and passed his bar examinations, though he never practised as a barrister, preferring a career as an actor, and to fulfil his hopes of becoming a poet. In 1937 he became secretary of Huntingdonshire Divisional Labour Party and stood as a parliamentary candidate, but failed to gain election. In 1938, after researching and recording a well-received programme on Russian theatre history, he joined the BBC as announcer and newsreader, becoming a renowned wartime newsreader, but resigned from the BBC in 1945. JTG died in 1984. Between 1940 and 1953, he published under the pseudonym Adam Drinan. Drinan's works were admired by W. S. Graham, Compton Mackenzie, Neil M. Gunn, William Montgomerie and Edwin Muir, who marvelled at his ability to render Gaelic rhythms and assonance in English, and at his vivid descriptions of the Scottish landscape and inhabitants. "Through the Drinan verse, particularly in *Men of the Rocks* (1942) and *Ghosts of the Strath* (1943) MacLeod sought to develop a 'documentary' style which focused upon community and locality, particularly the people of the Highlands and Islands, whilst referencing past atrocities such as the Clearances".

I am intrigued by his admirer's comments on his rendering of Gaelic assonance in English, which even great Gaelic poets such as Sorley MacLean had struggled to do. It might even suggest that MacLeod had been a Gaelic speaker himself. In the context of the time this would have been remarkable. Born in London and educated at Rugby and Oxford, it seems hardly credible that his father would have taught him the language. My own Joseph had been brought up in a Gaelic speaking home in Helmsdale but the almost universal prejudice at the beginning of the 20th century had been that Gaelic was a handicap to "getting on in life" and therefore he discouraged his children in Inverness from using it. Thus the Gaelic dialect peculiar to East Sutherland is now extinct.

Elimination of the Gaelic language had been an ambition, as expressed by Sir Robert Gordon's advice to his nephew, ever since the Gordon family captured the Sutherland earldom at the end of the 17th century. The Clearances and the estate's domination of

every aspect of life in the 19th century, and with compulsory education provision from the 1880s, enabled them to achieve this ambition. The last elderly native speakers of the distinctive East Sutherland dialect of Gaelic died in Embo in the 1980s. MacLeod may have learned some Gaelic as an adult, but few adult learners achieve real proficiency.

In James Fountain's 2010 thesis, I found this poignant and intense synopsis of the personal reality of the Clearances from Poem VII of *Men of the Rocks*. Unlike much of MacLeod's verse, this needs no explanation from a literary critic. MacLeod expresses succinctly in just three stanzas the suffering of the people and the heartlessness of the factors and their employers. Donald MacLeod needed many pages in letters XIX and XX of *Gloomy Memories* to convey the same outrage - his own family had been similarly treated while he was away working. Although Donald's wife had not died, he wrote of her "... she is now, except at short intervals, a burden to herself, with little or no hopes of recovery. ... the injuries she received in body and mind, were too deep for even her good spirits and excellent constitution to overcome, and she remains a living monument of Highland oppression".

Here was a youth, a young wife, and two children,  
a third to come. They paid less rent than sheep.  
Here was their croft, this stump the stonechat chides from.  
Deep the heather as that night's snowfall deep.

Here was a ditch. She cuddled the children, thanking  
almighty God for his loving kindly mud;  
and drew across the top a smouldered blanket  
and praised Him for the love wherewith He loved.

The factor searched and came upon the litter  
and prodded with his stick until they fled.  
The husband was away to earn his living.  
At dawn on the white hill the wife was dead.

*The Open Letter to the Countess of Sutherland*, was published in 1978 under his own name. Why does the *Open Letter* resonate so strongly with me? It expresses MacLeod's personal, implacable anger towards the Sutherland earldom which was responsible for the appalling treatment of his ancestors - and mine. He admits that while the 20th century Countess of Sutherland whom he addressed was not personally responsible for the dreadful actions of her family, - "it is not yourself indeed we are hating or blaming," but the memory, "the sack on time's back", passed by his forebears to MacLeod (and also to the wider community of descendants of the 'cleared of Kildonan'). He says "I did not fill the sack either".

"My father's father's sister" was Mary MacLeod, born 20/7/1819 and still residing with her parents and her brother, trainee Free Church minister George Gordon MacLeod, at the Kildonan schoolhouse in the 1851 census. From the census returns it is apparent that Mary remained unmarried at Kildonan until at least 1901, aged 81, therefore, "in her croft on the hunger line above the Helmsdale shore" is poetic license with regard to her location, but not her straitened circumstances. She had treasured her father's writings, only to have them taken and destroyed as unwanted evidence by estate functionaries.

While Mary MacLeod may not have actually resided on the Helmsdale shore, our own Joseph MacLeod's grandfather most certainly did exist in a "croft on the hunger line above the Helmsdale shore" thanks to the "improvements" introduced by the ancestors of the Countess of Sutherland. While I, personally, like many descendants of the 'cleared of Kildonan' may be comfortably off today, our present well-being was not the intent of the Countess's forebears towards ours.

Unlike Joseph TG MacLeod, I have no poetic talent with which to express my anger. I am not alone in this sense of outrage, Pat Bukalska, a Polish journalist, who contacted me for assistance with an article she was writing about the Clearances, wrote "When I talked to people in Brora and Helmsdale I was surprised how strongly they still feel about the past — it is almost as if it happened 20 years ago, and not 200 years ago."

## **Open letter to the countess of Sutherland**

Lady, it is not yourself indeed  
we are hating or blaming. No. no,  
that burden of birth on your back it was not  
your shoulder bound  
for your bending. But the sack on time's back  
that has moulded my shoulders,  
I did not fill the sack either.

In my veins implacable blood beats  
of Gordons out of Strathnaver:  
through my semen seed spirits  
from the dominie of Kildonan,  
and from his father the packman from Tain  
who married the dominie's daughter  
and crowned himself dominie.

Expelling that son, you, Lady, expelled my father's son  
now not even a ghost of the Strath  
which was yours by the law; not among sad ghosts,  
results of your law—  
him the dominie, and  
him the minister, and  
Muckle Donuil the minister's man.

And the father of me, Lady,  
(never a mean nor a spiteful soul  
spoke from my father's mouth)  
but what I now tell,  
since the time of telling at last has come,  
my father told to me  
not once but again

and again and  
again, with grief on his humble highland  
face. things unobliterable:  
that I might never forget  
the fact in the phantom,  
dream in abolished home,  
the rich wished sigh  
which sougns on Kildonan.

It was my father's father's sister.  
as my father told me,  
in her croft on the hunger line  
above the Helmsdale shore,  
your ducal factor came to:  
meaning, Countess,  
on that day you came to me.

Another man was with him,  
unknown, or not ,to be known.  
They sought in the written hand  
of the last,  
outcast, safe-dead-fisted  
dominie of Kildonan  
writings known to be treasured in the croft.

One, the Sessions Book  
kept by the dominie as Sessions Clerk  
belonged to the Kirk  
(our kirk, not yours, by the fish-profuse  
Minister's Pool);  
the other a penning dawn after dawn,  
eve after eve, of



the doings in the Strath and the wilderment  
in the thinkings of the Strath,  
now, now our wilderness, season after season,

year after year of  
life flattened down to  
a rabbit-run in a green trade  
to make your profits  
from southern sheep,  
Or bracken.

That anonymous, no-one-responsible,  
shadow from your family, sleuthing  
our aged lady on the hunger line,  
intimated His Grace of Dunrobin  
would be liking to read these books  
in the dominie's hand.

So the grace that had been in the Strath  
graciously in the graceless croft lent them.

These loans Dunrobin,  
ducal by loans and purchases,  
never returned,  
And never will the books, Lady,  
be found in your Castle,  
nor are they interred  
in your papers at Register House.  
Not even smoke they are any more,  
Like the sky over Auschwitz.

Would it surprise you to hear  
that when this cultured voice of mine

was loved at a microphone during a war,  
not seldom, in bed, I dreaded  
that maybe the course of my duties  
in a south-british studio  
might order my sounds to be suave  
to one of your family.  
Or be seeming suave,  
Might tell me to welcome, kilted in brightly  
brittly-echoed walls of talking,  
to plaid itself, gag itself, over 'old wrongs'  
state-reconciled  
stately-wise  
by time to no-time.

Notions at night long years ago  
are now long dead, but dreads remain,  
and the deeds of the dead remain,  
and the tall thick  
idled grasses of Kildonan remain,  
obliterating my grave there,  
my absence of burial there,  
and all of us still remain in exile.

Indeed you did, you do, you would do well  
to renounce:  
for yesterday once was today, and still  
all yesterdays are today.  
Because of this, Lady, we are tied together,  
you and I,  
yours and mine,  
victimised  
for ever.

### Section III – Paternal Grandmother - Laurie Helen MacGregor

(29/5/1884 – 15/3/1957)

First of all, a brief word about the usage of MacGregor and McGregor. It was also common in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and earlier to write M'Gregor. Some people today can be quite touchy about whether they spell their names as MacGregor or McGregor, or indeed McGrigor. These are all forms of the same name. Mac is the Gaelic for son, hence MacGregor, or properly in Gaelic Mac Ghriogair which is the genitive form, son of Gregor. I tend to always use "Mac" as the correct form, but the families in Weaverham, Australia and New Zealand usually used the "Mc" form. As a further aside, in Gaelic, while one's son is *mac*, one's daughter is *nighean*, shortened to *nic* or sometimes *neyn*. Hence, taking John as Iain and Mary as Mairi; the proper usage is Iain Mac Ghriogair and Màiri Nic Griogair. (note: lenition of the masculine). I have mentioned this here as some of the genealogies included later may include these forms.

I should make one other point on the naming pattern. In creating the early genealogies I have been aided by three and four generation patronymics. Thus: Iain MacPhadraig **Mhic**Sheumais **Mhic**Ghriogair is John, son of Patrick, descendant of James of the tribe of Gregor. [*Mhic* is often recorded as *Vic*.]

I have included in this section a discussion of the origin of the Clan MacGregor which is *Clann Ghriogair* in Gaelic. Unlike our MacLeod ancestry, it has been possible to establish our direct DNA connection to the founder of the clan, which I will discuss later. There has been a long tradition that the MacGregors descend from the Dark Age Kings of Dàl Riata in Argyll. A comparison of DNA results of MacGregors with other Argyll clans which claim a similar origin indicates a high probability of a common origin sometime in the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, I do not accept the popular myth that Giric, a nephew of Cinead Mac Ailpein, (Kenneth I) in the 9<sup>th</sup> century gave rise to Clan Gregor. This myth can be found widely on the websites of Highland tat retailers. Instead our eponym, Gregor, lived at the start of the fourteenth century. This will all be discussed later.

Until the 18<sup>th</sup> century MacGregors in the Highlands would have been Gaelic speaking. However, apart from the Book of the Dean of Lismore, most of the sources we use for Clan Gregor history have been written by English speakers and names have often been anglicised. To an extent, in my genealogies, I have converted names to their Gaelic forms.

However, as a guide to English equivalents these are some of the most common MacGregor names: *Alasdair* = Alexander, (but Alasdair has become a common English form); *Domhnall* = Donald; *Donnchadh* = Duncan; *Dubhgall* = Dougal; *Eoin* or *Iain* = John; *Eoghan* = Ewen; *Maolcoluim* or *GilleColuim* = Malcolm; *Niall* = Neil; *Pàdraig* = Peter or Patrick; *Seamus* = James; *Uilleam* = William; *Uisdean* = Hugh.

Epithets or descriptors are often used to discriminate between different individuals with common names. I have included the anglicised forms of these in brackets: *bàn* (bane) = fair haired; *beag* (beg) = little or small; *breac* = speckled (usually by smallpox); *buidhe* (boy) = yellow haired; *cam* = one-eyed; *dubh* (dow) = black; *glas* = grey or sallow; *mòr* = big; *og* = young; *ruadh* (roy) = red.

Clan or *Clann* is the Gaelic word for family or, to be more exact, kindred sharing an assumed common ancestor. Kin-based clans developed as a practical means of controlling land and allocating its resources. Their growth and eventual decline related to the weakness or strength of government.

I searched for many years for the ancestry of Duncan who baptised a son Alexander in 1776. Recent DNA results have shown a relationship with the line of Evan Forbes MacGregor in New Zealand, who probably descends from Alexander, born around 1700. Alexander's first marriage around 1720 included sons, Alexander in 1722, John in 1725, possibly George in 1729, Duncan in 1731, and James in 1734. Alexander (~1700) and his brothers John & Duncan were among the 24 MacGregors led by the Laird of Inverenzie at Culloden. Only six would return to their homes. Alexander then fled to Germany, changed his name to Coleman and had a family there. His brother, John, died

at Culloden while his brother, Duncan, was probably the "Duncan in Tarland" who was captured and transported.

Three DNA results at FTDNA almost certainly derive from Roro settlement in Braemar. Dr Richard McGregor commented: "Almost certainly Kath's (Captain Charles) line split off first and depending on probability it could be anything from 150-300 years before the split of the other two. Evan Forbes and Neil Malcolm are quite close - comparing them to Kath there is only one difference common to Neil and Kath and that is an unreliable marker for mutations so I've virtually discounted it. On the other hand Evan and Neil share the SAME mutations on three occasions and then Neil has three other mutations which are more likely unique to him. I went back to Frank's results, such as we have, and that showed one mutation that was unique to Neil and one that Frank and Neil shared - the third mutation was not available in Frank's Y67 result. My conclusion is these are all Roro, Kath's line split off first from the common post S690 ancestor - quite possibly as early as 1460 but probably by 1560, Neil's (and Frank) split off next but much later and separated from each other maybe as near as two or three generations (we just can't tell if it's 1 or 2 mutations difference in 111 STR)"

Reading again Richard's comments, it seems that Duncan, (b.1747 - the son of Gregory and grandson of Charles) might be too early a split. Alexander (b.1/2/1722) had a brother Duncan (b.29/5/1731). Now, I had assumed that a man marrying in 1772 was likely to have been born in the 1740s, thus Duncan (b.10/1/1747) would have been 25 in 1772. However, Duncan (b.1731) would be 41. His bride, Grissel Gairden, might have been born in 1746, so a 41-year old marrying a 26 year old woman would not be exceptional. Duncan (1731) is 7 generations to Evan Forbes. Going back to Charles would be a further 3 generations.

Following this discussion of the closeness of the DNA, I decided that it was most likely that Neil Malcolm descended from Duncan, baptised in 1731, so that the difference would be 7 generations, rather than the suggested second cousin of Alexander (b.~1700) which could be 10 generations.

I have been vice-chairman of the Clan Gregor Society for many years and built up a substantial number of genealogies. Instead of continuing back through the generations, I will now look into the beginning of the Clan in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and trace forward. To begin with, it is necessary to consider the genealogies in the Book of the Dean of Lismore.

Sir James MacGregor, the Dean of Lismore died at Fortingall, Glen Lyon in 1551. [‘Sir’ was a courtesy title for an ordained priest] He came from a line of ordained priests. His father was recorded as Sir *Dubhgall* and his grandfather *Iain riabhach*, or tonsured John. They descended from *Iain a’ bhicair* – John, the vicar of Fortingall, appointed in 1406. James has been recognized as the author of the book of the Dean of Lismore, one of the oldest surviving Gaelic texts. Apart from poetry and fragments of Ossian, the work contains a genealogy of the Clan Gregor which purports to go back as far as Kenneth MacAlpin in the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

A translation was made by the Rev. Thomas M’Lauchlan in 1862, with a forward by the historian William Skene. The beginning of Skene’s forward includes the following.

“In the heart of the Perthshire Highlands, and not far from the northern shore of Loch Tay, there lies a secluded vale of about six miles long. The river Lyon, which issues from the long and narrow valley of Glen Lyon through the pass of Chesthill meanders through it. On the east bank of a small stream which falls into the Lyon about the centre of the vale, is the Clachan or Kirkton of Fortingall, anciently called Fothergill, from which it takes its name; and on the west or opposite bank is the mansion of Glen Lyon House, anciently called Tullichmullin.

“In the latter part of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries, there dwelt here a family of the name of MacGregor. They were descended from a vicar of Fortingall, who, at the time when, during the century preceding the Reformation, the Catholic Church was breaking up, and their benefices passing into the hands of laymen, secured for himself and his descendants the vicarage of Fortingall and a lease of the church lands.

“Of the history of this family we know somewhat from an obituary commenced by one of his descendants, and continued to the year 1579 by the Curate of Fothergill, which is still preserved:-.

“His son, whether legitimate or illegitimate we know not, was Ian Rewych, or John the Grizzled, termed Makgwykar or son of the Vicar.

“His grandson was Dougall Maol, or Dougall the Bald or Tonsured, called patronymically, Dougall Johnson, or the son of John.

“This Dougall Johnson appears in 1511 as a notary-public, and dwelt at Tullichmullin, where his wife Katherine, daughter of Donald M’Clawe, *alias* Grant, died in 1512. He is twice mentioned in the obituary or Chronicle of Fortingall; in 1526, as repairing the cross in Inchadin, or the old church of Kenmore, situated on the north bank of the river Tay, nearly opposite Taymouth Castle; and in 1529, as placing a stone cross in Larkmonemerkyth, the name of a pass among the hills which leads from Inchadin to the south. Of Dougall the Bald, the son of John the Grizzled, we have no further mention; but of his family we know of two sons, James and Duncan.

“James was a Churchman. He appears as a notary-public, an office then held by ecclesiastics, along with his father, in the year 1511, and he early attained to honour and influence, through what channel is unknown; for, in 1514, we find him Dean of Lismore, an island in Argyllshire, lying between the districts of Lorn and Morvern, which was at that time the Episcopal seat of the Bishops of Argyll. He was, besides, Vicar of Fortingall and Firmarius or tenant of the church lands; and died possessed of these benefices in the year 1551, and was buried in the choir of the old church of Inchadin.

“In 1552, Gregor Macgregor, son of the deceased Sir James Macgregor, Dean of Lismore, as became the head of a small but independent sept of the MacGregors, and with a due regard to its safety, bound himself to Colin Campbell of Glenurchy and his heirs, “taking him for his chief, in place of the Laird of Macgregor, and giving him his calp.” In 1557 Gregor and Dougall MacGregors, natural sons of Sir James MacGregor, receive letters of legitimation; and, in 1574, Dougall MacGregor appears as Chancellor of Lismore.

“It is unnecessary for our purpose to follow the history of this family any further; suffice it to say, that the two brothers, James and Duncan, members of a clan which, though under the ban of the Government, and exposed to the grasping aggression of their powerful neighbours, the Campbells of Glenurchy, considered themselves as peculiarly Highland, and had high pretensions, as descended from the old Celtic monarchs of Scotland—connected with the Church, and as such, possessing some cultivation of mind and such literary taste as Churchmen at that time had, yet born and reared in the farm-house of Tullichmullin, in the secluded vale of Fortingall, and imbued with that love of old Highland story and cherished fondness for Highland song, which manifests itself in so many a quiet country Highlander, and which the scenery and associations around them were so well calculated to foster—the one, from his high position in the Church of Argyll, having peculiar facilities for collecting the poetry current in the West Highlands—the other, though his brother, yet, as was not uncommon in those days, his servitor or amanuensis, and himself a poet—and both natives of the Perthshire Highlands—collected and transcribed into a commonplace book Gaelic poetry obtained from all quarters.

*End of the extract from Skene*

I have quoted the above extract to introduce the genealogy of the Clan Gregor chiefs.

Page 127 of the Dean of Lismore’s Book (McLauchlan and Skene) has this genealogy:

*Eoin Mac Phadruig,*

*mhic Mhaoilcholuim,*

*mhic Eoin duibh,*

*mhic Eoin,*

*mhic Grigoir,*

*mhic Eoin,*

*mhic Mhaolcholuim,*

*mhic Dhonchaidh bhig,*

*mhic Dhonchaidh a Sraileadh,*

*mhic Ghillfhaolain,*

*mhic Aoidh Urchaidh,*

*mhic Coinnich,*



*mhic Alpain ;  
agus an Coinneach sin b'e ardrigh Albain gu deimhin 's an uair sin ;  
agus an t-Eoin so an t-aon duine deug o'n Choinneach so a dubhairt mi.  
Agus Donnchadh daoroglach Mac Dhughail,  
mhic Eoin Riabhaich, do sgrìobh so leabhraibh seanachaidh nan rìgh ;  
agus ro dheanadh Anno Domini Millesimo Quingentesimo duodecimo. [1512]*

Here is the English translation of *Eoin Mac Phadruig, mhic Mhaoilcholuim*,  
John son of Patrick,  
son of Malcolm,  
son of Black John,  
son of John,  
son of Gregor,  
son of John,  
son of Malcolm,  
son of Duncan,  
son of Duncan,  
son of Gillelan,  
son of Hugh,  
son of Kennan.

Down from Alpin, heir of Dougal there are twenty and one besides thyself.

The chart below gives the first four generations back from Malcolm who died in 1498. As can be seen, reference is made to Alpin, with twenty one generations in between. Clearly the Dean did not know ancestors prior to Kennan, but worked out that there had to be 21 generations back to Kenneth MacAlpine in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. We could easily take this as aggrandisement except that modern DNA comparisons between the various West Highland clans which claim to descend from the Kings of Dalriada suggest that they do appear to have a common ancestor in the Dark Ages.

Various writers have taken this claimed descent to suggest that the Clan Gregor are one of the oldest Highland clans and, as we saw in the Hollywood production of Braveheart, “a band of MacGregors from the next glen” appeared in support of Wallace. Actually, a

1989 doctoral thesis: “The History of the Clan Gregor to 1570” by Dr Martin MacGregor, indicated that the name Gregor came into Scotland much later than this and that the eponymous Gregor actually lived at the start of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

Dr MacGregor states in his introduction:

“The key factor which made a clan a clan was the claim to descent from a common ancestor or eponym, many of whom can be identified as historical figures. In examining the origins of Clann Griogair the first task we must set ourselves is identification of the eponym.

“The forename which in modern Scottish Gaelic is normally spelt Griogair, derives ultimately from the Greek verb *gregoréo*, ‘to be watchful’. Thus *Gregórios* (Lat. *Gregorius*) meant ‘watchman’, and we can readily understand how the pastoral connotations of the name gave rise to its considerable popularity in the ecclesiastical context. It was borne by two fourth century fathers of the Eastern Church, and by no less than 16 Popes, commencing with St. Gregory the Great at the turn of the sixth and seventh centuries.

“Between the early twelfth and late thirteenth centuries, *Gregorius* was applied to several Scottish ecclesiastics: bishops of Moray, Dunkeld, Ross and Brechin, a dean of Strathspey, and an archdeacon of St. Andrews. it is possible that some of these men had Gaelic personal names with which *Gregorius* was being equated. *Gregorius* could then have come to be used as a Gaelic forename in its own right, ultimately assuming the form *Griogair*.

“The earliest 12<sup>th</sup> century bearers of the name in Scotland - Gregory de Melville and Gregory son of Geoffrey (possibly one and the same person) were clearly Norman incomers. In Scotland, the earliest occurrence is apparently *Gregor Makenkerd* (i.e. *mac an ceaird*, son of the gold- or silver-smith) in 1297. What was to prove the most significant attribution of the name in this context, namely to *Griogair*, eponymous ancestor of the MacGregors, must have taken place about this time, in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth centuries.”

Dr MacGregor goes on to suggest that a dominant kindred known as *Clann Ailpein* existed in the West Highlands in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. Possibly as a result of the succession crisis of 1286 or the growing power of the Clan Dougal, the kindred fragmented. One probable offshoot of *Clann Ailpein* was recorded in contemporary documents as Malcolm of Glen Orchy. His eldest son and successor was John of Glen Orchy who appears to have died around 1297, perhaps alongside Wallace in the conflict with the English invaders. John's daughter, Mariota, married John Campbell, created Earl of Atholl by Bruce and therefore the superiority of the Glen Orchy lands passed to the Earl. Although John Campbell and Mariota left no offspring, Bruce then granted the superiorities to John's cousin Colin Campbell for his support during the Wars of Independence.

John of Glenorchy had a brother, or possibly a nephew, Gregor, the eponym of the future clan, who lived, approximately, between 1275 and 1350. As a result of this, under feudal tenure, Gregor and his successors became vassals of the growing Campbell lineage from the beginning.

Despite Hollywood fantasies, during the lifetime of Gregor, there were no MacGregors! The first recorded use of the name MacGregor was by Gregor's grandson, *Eoin dubh* or John dhu McAnecham VcGregor who died at Stronmelochane (Stromnilchan at the foot of Glen Strae) in 1415. For reasons which I will discuss later, various lists of the descendants of Gregor were created between the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries and hence it has been possible to create possible genealogies of the early clan by reference to the 16<sup>th</sup> century patronymics.

### The earliest generations of Clan Gregor

I have created a series of genealogical charts in an attempt to understand the later divisions of the clan based on their patronymics. The descendants of the eldest son of *Eoin dubh* have been labelled “Glenstrae chiefs”. Their line would die out with the death of a later *Eoin dubh* in 1519. The second son, *Alasdair* had possibly died at the battle of Homildon Hill in 1402, but he left descendants who would succeed as the chiefly line after 1519. They are identified as *Mhic Alasdair*.

Gregor, a probable son of *Eoin dubh*, was mentioned as a witness to a document in 1432. It is my belief that he was the ancestor of the MacGregors of Ardenconnel and Laggarie in the Gairloch. I will not be looking into that kindred, except to say that, after 1603 they adopted the name Stewart as an alias and exchanged their lands in the Laggarie with the Ballylawn estate in Ireland of Sir Aulay MacAulay of Ardincaple. A descendant of this line was Robert Stewart of Mount Pleasant who was created Lord Castlereigh for his role in the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and subsequently Marquess of Londonderry.

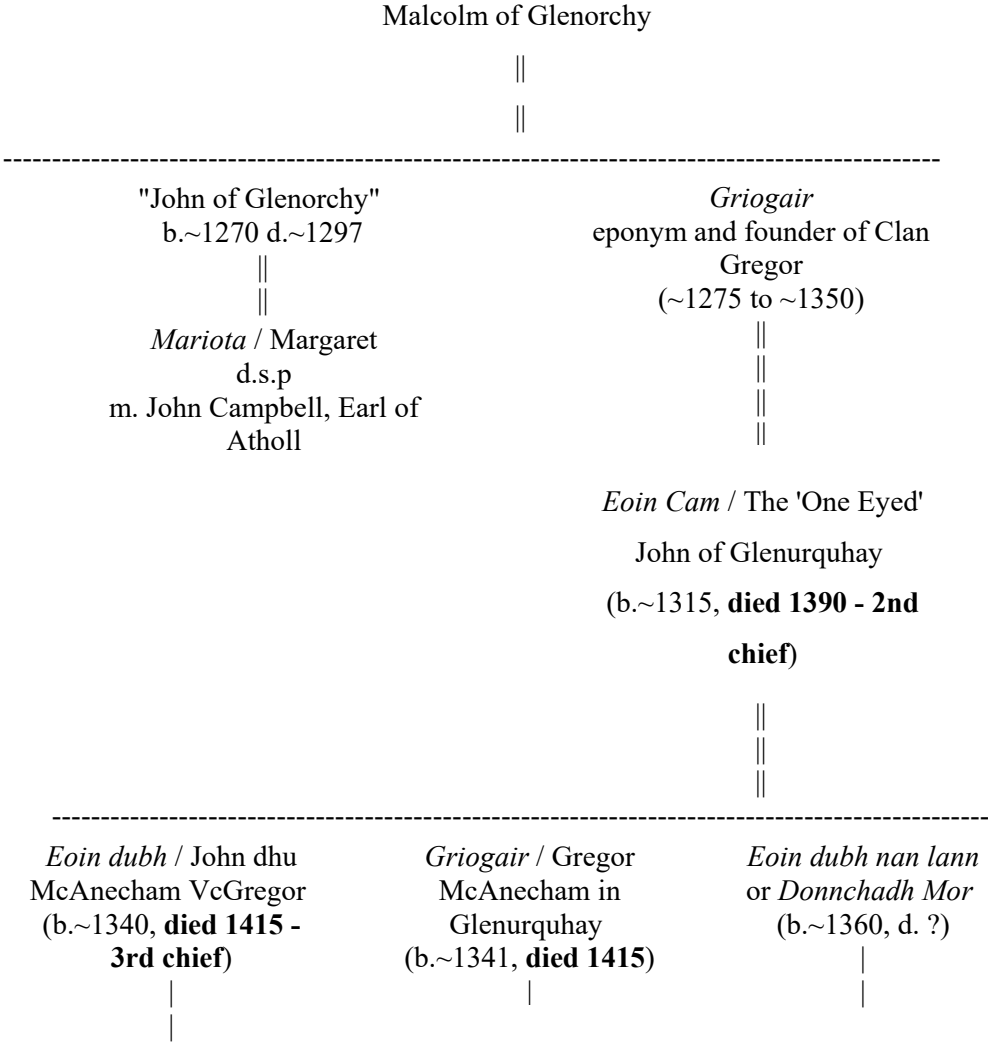
In my opinion *Eoin a' mhicair*, mentioned earlier as the Vicar of Fortingall, may have been a younger son of *Eoin dubh*. It was common for significant families to send younger sons into the church.

*Donnchadh mòr* (Big Duncan), a younger brother of *Eoin dubh* was founder of the Roro kindred. As our family descend from Roro, my later discussion will concentrate on that line.

For context here, I have included a summary of the genealogy of Clan Gregor from its inception up until the 18<sup>th</sup> century family in Braemar.

There is documentary evidence of the existence of Gregor with the approximate dates shown below. In later years the clan developed into a number of distinct lineages as it expanded from its origins around Loch Awe in the 15th century.

For the sake of neatness, as much as anything, I have included on this page, as sons of Eoin cam, the MacEoin dubh line of the chiefs; the MacAnechams in Glenorchy; and *Donnchadh mor* who is assumed to be the father of *Donnchadh beag* and ancestor of the MacGregors of Roro and Rannoch.



Eoin dubh / John McAnecham VcGregor b~1340 d. 1415

3<sup>rd</sup> chief

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Maolcoluim / Malcolm b ~1370 d. 1440

4<sup>th</sup> chief

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Padraig / Patrick b.~1410 d. 1561

5<sup>th</sup> chief

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Eoin dubh / Black John b ~1445 d.1519

6<sup>th</sup> chief

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m (1) Ealasaid from Glen Lyon

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||

Katherine nyn Gregor b. ~1461

m(2) Marioune Stewart

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||

Maolcoluim / Malcolm  
b.~1478 d.1498 s.p.

End of this line as Malcolm predeceased his father. The chiefship of Clan Gregor now passed to the descendants of Alasdair, the second son of *Eoin dubh*

The descendants of *Donnchadh mor*

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*Uisdean*  
b.~1425 **d.1505**

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||

Iain malach  
macHustone  
b.~1450 **d.1524**

||  
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Ardeonaig

*Donnchadh beag*  
or Duncan Lionach  
b.~1416 **died 1478**  
**m Elizabeth McNaughton**  
**(Dunderaw)**

||  
||

**First of Roro**

*Uilleam*  
b.~1425  
**Rannoch**  
||  
||  
3 sons all ancestral to  
Rannoch lineages

The descendants of *Donnchadh beag*

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<p><i>Griogair</i> b.~1438 <b>d.1503 or 1515?</b> m.dtr. Menzies of Weem <b>Morinch</b></p>	<p><i>Alasdair mor</i> b.~1440 <b>Dunan</b></p>	<p><i>Padraig ruadh</i> b.~1442 <b>d.1522</b> <b>Culdarbeg</b></p>	<p><i>Donnchadh dubh</i> <b>Learagan</b></p>
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The descendants of *Griogair* in Morinch (Loch Tay)

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<p><i>Donnchadh dubh</i> b.~1464 m. dtr of Keppoch <b>Leargan</b></p>	<p><i>Seumas</i> b.~1466 m. Ogilvie</p>	<p><i>Eoin dubh</i> b.~1468 <b>alive.1531</b> <b>Murelaganmore, Glen Lochay</b></p>	<p><i>Maol coluim</i> b.~1470</p>
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Ancestor of the Gregories

The descendants of *Donnchadh dubh*

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<p><i>Griogair V</i> of Roro b.~1490 <b>d.before 1554</b> m. dtr of Colin Campbell of Glenorchy <b>Roro</b></p>	<p><i>Eoin cam</i> b.~1492 <b>Tulichmullin</b></p>	<p><i>Eoghan</i> b.~1495 <b>died 1555</b> <b>Croit garbh</b></p>	<p><i>Padraig</i> b.~1498 <b>died 1522</b> <b>Morenish</b></p>
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*Alasdair odhar*  
b.~1520 **killed.1551**  
by **Duncan Ladasach**

The descendants of *Griogair V* of Roro

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<p><i>Griogair VI</i> of Roro b.~1530 <b>d. before 1601</b> m.dtr of Robertson of <b>Fascally</b> ~1530</p>	<p><i>Alasdair breac</i> b.~1531</p>	<p><i>Calum dow</i> b.~1545</p>	<p><i>Eoin dubh mor</i> b.~1550</p>
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The descendants of Griogair VI of Roro

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*Donnchadh* VII of Roro  
b.~1570

**Roro**  
**m.dtr of Duncan**  
**Campbell of Glenlyon**

*Eoin dubh*  
b.~1572 **exec.1612**

**Invervar**

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||  
||

*Donnchaidh*  
Duncan McGregor of  
Ardochie, Aberdeenshire  
b.~1595

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||  
||

*Griogair*  
b.~1575 **d.1624**  
**m.dtr of Cameron of**  
**Letterfinlay**

The indictment of John Dow (*Eoin dubh*) preceding his execution in 1612  
Jone Dow, brother of Duncan McGregor of Roro: July 28 1612. " the said Jone Dow  
moir McGregor in Rora for stealing and away taking of a great number of goods  
pertaining to mylord Ogilvie furth of Glenylay And sicklike for taking and keeping of  
the island called Island varnach against his Majesty's commissioner and hiring and  
oppressing of the whole tenants and inhabitants of the country about, taking and  
inbringing of the haill guids and be all to the number of eight score cows and oxen,  
eighteen score sheep and goats which were eaten and slain by them within the said  
island."

**Roro**

Roro is an area in Glen Lyon. Glen Lyon itself rises from the hills of Breadalbane, the  
north-south spine of the Highlands south of the Great Glen and runs, more or less, due  
East. It is often called the longest, loneliest and loveliest Highland Glen. The river Lyon  
is a tributary of the river Tay which eventually makes its way to the North Sea. I have  
personally camped on a spot among the hills at the head of the glen where on one side,  
rivulets flowed downhill to the River Lyon and a few yards away similar rivulets  
flowed westward to the river Orchy on their way to the Atlantic.



*Donnchadh Beag* (Little or Young Duncan) is the first identifiable member of *Clann Donnchaidh Liobhunnaich* on record, but is not necessarily to be regarded as its eponym, for the epithet he bears makes it probable that he was the son of a *Donnchadh Mór* who might equally be identified with *Donnchadh Liobhunnach*. *Donnchadh Mór* - if such there was - must have flourished in the latter part of the first half of the fifteenth century, and we would need to assume that he established himself in Glen Lyon within that period. It might be objected that he has left no trace in the surviving contemporary records, scanty though they are. But what does seem to favour his identification with *Donnchadh Liobhunnaich* is the fact that, as we shall see, *Niall Breac*, *Uisdean* and *Uilleam*, with whom the Farnan, Ardeonaig and Rannoch branches of *Clann Donnchaidh Liobhunnaich* seem to have respectively originated, were more likely to have been brothers of *Donnchadh Beag* than his sons. Hence the most attractive (though tentative) reconstruction, for which parallels could readily be adduced, would equate *Donnchadh Liobhunnach* with *Donnchadh Mór*, father of *Donnchadh Beag*,

The Roro kindred, described as a “house and branch” in its own right in a document of late 1566 or early 1567, was the most important component of *Clann Donnchaidh Liobhunnaich*, which makes it likely that *Donnchadh Beag* was the eldest son of *Donnchadh Mór*. After *Donnchadh Beag*’s death in 1478 his descendants continued to occupy Roro while expanding into other parts of Glen Lyon and into Loch Tayside. Possibly a son of *Donnchadh Beag* was *Eoin mac Dhonnchaidh*, who was already leasing the eastern part of Eddergoll near Balloch c.1480, and who died at Balloch in 1492.

The MacGregor chief *Eoin Dubh* had a residence at Balloch at the east end of Loch Tay and it may be that *Eoin mac Dhonnchaidh* was its keeper. He does not appear to have had any progeny, for by the mid-sixteenth century Balloch was occupied by a different MacGregor lineage. Definitely sons of *Donnchadh Beag* were *Griogair* and *Pàdraig*, who died in 1503 and 1522 respectively at Morenish in Deas-fhaire - probably Wester Morenish, since we know that *Pàdraig*’s son *Alasdair Odhar* held it in tack of Menzies of Weem. [Chron. BDL, 10 September 1503; Chron. Fortingall, October 1522. *Pàdraig* is mentioned in a precept of remission in 1507, along with his brother *Eoin Dubh*. The

latter may be the John Dow Makgregour Duncansone on record in 1531 along with Donnchadh MacGregor his brother in Morenish, but is apparently not to be identified with the Johannes Dow Duncansoun on record in Glen Lochay in 1528 This lineage came to an end with *Alasdair Odhar* (murdered.1551), and by the later sixteenth century Wester Morenish was held by a scion of the MacGregor ruling family.

The line which we have to follow is that of Gregor, the fifth of Glen Lyon who died in 1554. His son, also Gregor, the sixth of Glen Lyon had sons *Donnchadh* who succeeded him as the seventh chief; and *Iain dubh* in Invervar, Glen Lyon. *Iain dubh* fell victim to the persecution of the clan and would be executed in 1612. His son Duncan MacGregor of Ardochie was the first of this lineage to take refuge from Campbell and state persecution in upland Aberdeenshire.

### **The persecution of the Clan Gregor**

So how did the persecution of Clan Gregor come about? To explain this, I have attempted to summarise the 1989 doctoral thesis of Dr Martin MacGregor on the Clan Gregor until 1570 and Professor Jane Dawson on the letters of Grey Colin Campbell of Glenorchy, here: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/divinity/research/resources/breadalbane>

Much of the land of the central Highlands between Atholl in the East and Lorn in the West were defined as crown estates, with their rentals intended to pay the expenses of the monarchy. However, during the reigns of Robert II and III, their sons seized much of these lands for their own benefit. These included the Earldoms of Lennox, Menteith and Strathearn and Atholl as well as these Royal lands. Within these territories lay an area which Dr MacGregor termed the central zone: The Appin of Dull, including Rannoch and Glen Lyon; the lands around Loch Tay; and Glen Dochart, Strath Fillan and Glen Falloch, stretching from Finlarig to the north end of Loch Lomond. Most of these lands fell into the hands of Robert and his son Murdoch, Dukes of Albany during their regency.

In 1425, on his return from English captivity, James I attempted to centralise authority on the English pattern by weakening the great lords. Among others, Murdoch, Duke of

Albany, was executed. Some of his lands were retained as crown estate but, following the assassination of James in 1437, they were to become a power vacuum ripe for colonisation. The lack of a single powerful lord or kindred in this area created an opportunity for Campbell expansion. Colin, first Campbell laird of Glen Orchy was involved in the capture of the regicides for which he was later knighted and granted the lands of Lawers on Loch Tay.

The 15th century saw an uninterrupted increase in Campbell power at local and national levels. In 1457, their chief was created Earl of Argyll. Kilchurn Castle, only two miles from the MacGregor residence at Stronmilchan, was built as the principal residence of the Glen Orchy Campbells in the 1440s. It may seem surprising, but for much of the 16th century the MacGregors of Brackley were the hereditary keepers of Kilchurn. The relationship between Campbell and MacGregor appears to have been one of co-operation. Clan Gregor had become a client or subordinate kindred of the Campbells.

Between 1437 and 1550 MacGregor expansion eastwards through a zone extending from Rannoch south to the Lennox was instrumental in enabling the Campbell chiefs to bring these territories into their sphere of influence. The pre-eminence that the Campbells of Glen Orchy achieved in Breadalbane owed much to their close relationship with the MacGregors and to their extensive settlement in the area. Clan Gregor must have been better armed and led over a long period than any other kindred in the zone. In recognition of the reality of Campbell power, successive earls of Argyll between 1475 and 1549 were made lieutenant and justiciar of much of the central zone lands. Only the earldom of Atholl was to be a barrier to Campbell expansion and for much of the 16th century there was tension between them with Menzies of Weem caught in the middle.

As a result of the rapid eastward expansion of the MacGregor kindred it subdivided into distinct septs. The Glen Lyon kindred itself subdivided into the lineages of Roro, Fearnan, Ardeonaig and Rannoch. The kindred of *Donnchadh Ladasach* were in Glen Lochay and Glen Dochart. The kindred of *Padraig Choaldich* were found in Glen Lednock. *Clann Dùghaill Chèire* was in Balquhidder and Glengyle. The *MacRaibert*

lineage was found in Strathyre and the MacEoins or Johnsons were in Perth. In the period 1437-1550, only the Glen Lednock lineage acquired a heritable legal title.

In the period 1513 to 1550, the Glen Orchy Campbell lineage declined in influence, relative to the Campbells of Lawers, Cawdor and Glen Lyon. At the same time a resurgent Earl of Atholl obtained lands in Glen Lochay. MacGregor military power in this period seems to have been in the service of Cawdor, brother of the third Earl of Argyll. Following the acquisition of the thanage of Cawdor in 1512, evidence of MacGregor settlement can be found in the Elgin and Forres area. During this period Clan Gregor are reported in Government records for violent actions at the behest of the Campbells, but Argyll's position in Government ensured that little came of these.

James IV followed a policy of weakening the authority of clan chiefs, by cancelling charters and fomenting conflict. In 1490, James forfeited the MacDonald Lordship of the Isles, and thus began a century of feuding over its remains. In 1502, he elevated Menzies of Weem to control of Appin of Dull and Rannoch, thus creating a bitter feud with the Stewarts of Fortingall which weakened both and permitted MacGregor expansion into Rannoch, by *coir a' chlaindheimh*, or sword-right. Once settled in Rannoch, Menzies found it impossible to remove them and following mediation by Campbell of Lawers in 1543, Menzies granted MacGregor of Glen Strae a formal tack of Rannoch.

Prior to 1550, the servants and followers of the Campbells of Glen Orchy appeared to be overwhelmingly Gaelic. After the accession of Grey Colin in 1550, increasing numbers of non-Gaelic names including their notaries, reformed ministers and stewards appear in the records. Grey Colin and Black Duncan also embarked on a building programme of castles, bridges, inns and churches as well as forestry. Grey Colin was an enthusiastic supporter of the Reformation and succeeded in obtaining most of the lands of the Carthusian Charterhouse and the Priory of Strath Fillan.

Clan Gregor and other kin-based lineages of Breadalbane all experienced reduction in status under the Campbell hegemony after 1550. This pattern was typical of the

dynamic of kin-based societies. Unusually, however the Clan Gregor lineages responded with a sustained and violent resistance. There was an exceptionally violent and bitter feud with Grey Colin between 1562 and 1570 that left a permanent legacy.

There was also a 70-year struggle over the MacGregor lands in Glen Strae. Glen Strae was important to Clan Gregor because in legal terms it was the only territory held by the chiefs on a heritable basis. There was an emotional attachment since the chiefs had held Glen Strae since the inception of the lineage in the early 14th century and the fertility of the lower strath made the land economically important as well.

They held Glen Strae as vassals of Argyll until 1554 when, during the minority of Gregor Roy, Grey Colin purchased the superiority. When Grey Colin acquired the superiority of the MacNab lands in Glen Dochart he allowed the MacNabs to remain as vassals in the bulk of their lands. However, Grey Colin granted Glen Strae to his own son, Robert, instead of Gregor Roy. Between 1562 and 1570 Gregor Roy and his kindred fought a guerrilla war against Grey Colin. They continued to hold the glen without legal title. It took until 1624 before Black Duncan gained actual possession.

Due to the way that the Campbells had used the MacGregors to colonise Breadalbane it was inevitable that during the consolidation phase they were affected most. When the Earl of Argyll attempted to mediate in 1565, suggesting the MacGregors be allowed to re-occupy their kindly possessions, Grey Colin answered, "I cannot meet your Lordship's request by reason that the Clan Gregor allege that most of the lands I have should be theirs".

Alasdair of Glen Strae had died in the late 1540s, 'of the hurt of an arrow', leaving a minor, Gregor Roy as heir. Duncan Ladasach in Glen Lochay became his tutor or guardian. It is difficult to determine whether Duncan's violent acts after 1550 were committed as acting head of Clan Gregor or as part of his personal feud with Grey Colin. In 1550 *Alasdair Odhar* signed a bond with Grey Colin resigning the important MacGregor holding of Wester Morenish to him. In late 1551, Duncan Ladasach killed *Alasdair Odhar* for this act. By March 1552 Grey Colin had contracted James Stewart of Baldoran and Andrew Drummond to pursue Duncan, as the task must have been

beyond his own resources. In May 1552, Grey Colin and Duncan Ladasach were apparently reconciled and signed a bond whereby Colin forgave their crimes and gave Duncan his protection. However by 16th June the Chronicle of Fortingall reported the execution of Duncan and two of his sons. Thereafter Gregor Roy was fostered by his mother's family, that of Campbell of Ardkinglas.

In 1562 Gregor Roy reached his majority. When a Rannoch MacGregor who had given his manrent to Grey Colin was killed, Grey Colin agreed to grant the Glen Strae lands to Gregor - but only in return for surrendering the murderers and other conditions that severely compromised Gregor's authority as chief. The defiant MacGregor response was the ambush and killing of a number of Campbells of Glen Lyon. Gregor Roy's supporters included several that renounced their earlier bonds with Grey Colin. The ensuing feud was exceptionally bitter.

Violence and destruction prevailed over much of Western Perthshire. Its development was conditioned not just by the politics of the Campbell and MacGregor kindreds but also by the national dimension of the difficulties of Mary Queen of Scots. Argyll was hereditary Justice General of Scotland and he appointed Grey Colin as his Justice Depute. In the early part of 1563 commissions were issued guaranteeing immunity for any violent acts against MacGregors. Grey Colin gave bonds to MacDonald of Keppoch and MacIain of Glencoe for their service in the pursuit of Clan Gregor. Argyll also issued immunities to MacGregors who had not been actively involved in an attempt to isolate Gregor Roy from his clan. In September 1563 further commissions against the clan were issued to the Earls of Moray, Atholl and Errol, the Lords Ogilvie, Ruthven and Drummond as well as Argyll and Grey Colin.

On 1st October 1563, Argyll wrote to Gregor Roy suggesting that he came to terms, but Grey Colin remained uncompromising. Indeed Argyll and Grey Colin became divided from each other. Letters indicate that the hunters were being denied shelter and food while the hunted were being covertly supported and maintained. In January 1564 the Privy Council passed Acts forbidding reset of Clan Gregor. Minutes of the Council in March indicate concern about the excesses committed by Grey Colin. As a result only

Argyll and Atholl were given new commissions to pursue Clan Gregor while Grey Colin was restricted to pursuit of the resettlers and he was made liable, for the first time, for crimes committed by him and his servants.

At this time Argyll was assisting MacDonald of Dunivaig against the O'Neils in Ireland and it appears that Gregor Roy and his men were in Antrim between March and June possibly as part of Argyll's military force. Mary issued instructions that Gregor Roy and his men should not be permitted passage back to Scotland, but by October reports to Cecil in London showed that they had returned by way of Carrick. Mary severely reprimanded Grey Colin in August for excesses and abuse of his powers but did nothing more against him and by the end of the year the feud had resumed as before.

In the summer of 1565 Argyll and Grey Colin supported the Earl of Moray against Mary in the rebellion known as the 'Chaseabout raid'. Atholl and Lennox were among Mary's main supporters. Now Argyll and Grey Colin needed the MacGregor military strength as servants of the Campbell power, but Mary and Atholl also courted Gregor Roy. In July Argyll offered a settlement on the basis of Gregor's offer. By August the Campbells were in open war against Mary and Atholl. Moray and Argyll continued to urge a settlement with Clan Gregor on Grey Colin, while Mary and Atholl tried to foment the quarrel. In September, most of Clan Gregor, excluding those on Atholl's lands, came to a settlement, with their lands restored as before, and mutual forgiveness on both sides. Thereafter, the MacGregors did give military service to the rebels but by November the rebellion had collapsed. Following the murder of Riccio in March 1566, Argyll was rehabilitated and the crimes of Clan Gregor were included in the remission granted to the Campbells.

In the abeyance of the feud between late 1565 and mid 1567, Gregor Roy married Marion, daughter of Duncan Campbell of Glen Lyon. Despite the settlement, it seems that there was no forgiveness of damage, Gregor Roy was not infeft in Glen Strae and there was no general restoration of MacGregors to their 'kindly rooms'. Indeed Grey Colin's expansionist activities resumed in Strathearn, Balquhidder and Glen Lednock. The MacGregor lands of Achallader and Wester Morenish were granted to Campbells.

It was Mary's influence that prevented further open hostility, but in July 1567 Mary was imprisoned and forced to abdicate. Within a day of James VI's coronation Argyll gave permission for some of his followers to assist Grey Colin against Clan Gregor. In May 1568 Atholl and Grey Colin, along with Menzies of Weem and Stewart of Grandtully allied themselves against Clan Gregor, although Argyll was not involved.

By late 1568 general hostilities had broken out once more and, in mid 1569, pursuit of Gregor Roy's men was exceptionally intense. In August Gregor Roy was captured. The Regent Moray demanded that Grey Colin surrender Gregor for trial by him, but Colin refused although he was politically unable to execute him. Moray was assassinated in January 1570 and a new Regent was not appointed until June. Argyll came to a new agreement with Atholl in late March and gave Grey Colin a license to execute Gregor Roy, in return for which he promised to grant Glen Strae to Gregor Roy's baby son Alasdair. Grey Colin personally, beheaded Gregor Roy at Kenmore. Marion composed the well-known lament, Griogal Cridhe in his memory.

Clan Gregor's revenge during the next six months saw the worst violence of the conflict. Despite his promises, Grey Colin granted Glen Strae to his own son, Black Duncan. The MacGregors found refuge in the Lennox, particularly among the MacFarlanes. The national government, in the person of the Regent Lennox used the feud as a weapon against his bitter rival, Argyll. The submission of the Campbells to the Regent's authority led to the final settlement in October 1570. In the treaty, Grey Colin accepted Ewin, as tutor to the two sons of Gregor Roy; he promised the wardship of Glenstrae; to restore kindly rooms in Rannoch; and that crimes and damages on both sides would be forgiven. The brothers of Gregor Roy and sons of Duncan Ladasach came to an agreement with Atholl in the following August. However, covert agreements between Atholl and Grey Colin on the same day showed a degree of duplicity that did not augur well for the future.

It was Campbell expansionism and Grey Colin's inflexible greed that had begun the conflict. In the words of the prayer, - "From the greed of the Campbells, good Lord deliver us".



During the course of the conflict, Glenorchy's men had committed serious violence against suspected resettlers and others whose lands he desired. However, following the violence of the 1560s, it was the MacGregors, not the Campbells, who came to be perceived as the most violent and lawless of the clans.

In 1581 Ewin, the tutor of Glenstrae signed a bond with the powerful Sir John Campbell of Cawdor. Grey Colin died in 1583 to be succeeded by Black Duncan who continued his father's policy of repression and acquisition. When Argyll died in 1584, Cawdor was appointed the principal tutor or guardian to the young Earl. Despite a raid in 1586 after which Alasdair and 104 other MacGregors were temporarily put to the horn, times were relatively quiet for Clan Gregor.

In 1588 Alasdair Roy came of age and applied to be enfeoffed in his lands of Glen Strae. Black Duncan refused. In the same year Drummond-Eireannach, the King's keeper of the Royal forest of Glenartney, hanged several MacGregors whom he had caught poaching. Next year Drummond-Eireannach was killed in revenge. The killers took his head to the house of Stewart of Ardvorlich where his sister was married to the Laird. The sight of her brother's head drove Lady Ardvorlich to wander the hills half-mad. Later in Balquhiddy, Alasdair Roy and most of the assembled clan swore to protect them. The Privy Council issued commissions to apprehend Alasdair and 138 others who were to be tried and executed immediately on capture. The Drummonds and Stewarts were hearty enough in the pursuit but Black Duncan was the most active. The MacGregors defended themselves stubbornly. Atholl and Cawdor gave the outlaws refuge. In December 1590 Cawdor caused the Chancellor to command Black Duncan to forgive Clan Gregor. The two sides pledged to end the violence in mid 1591 and soon after Glenstrae and his followers were pardoned.

Cawdor was closely allied to the Earl of Moray in the Presbyterian party. The Catholic party led by the Earl of Huntly was arrayed against them. Cawdor effectively controlled the Earldom of Argyll. Black Duncan resented his exclusion. He plotted with Ardkinglas and Lochnell to destroy Cawdor and the young Earl. Lochnell was to get the title while Black Duncan took most of the Argyll lands. Black Duncan moved closer to

the Huntly interest and became involved in a wider conspiracy that was intended to procure the death of Moray as well. In February 1592 one Gillipatrick MacEllar shot Cawdor dead using a gun supplied by Ardkinglas. Soon afterwards, Huntly and others killed Moray at his house of Donibristle.

“Ye Hielands and ye Lawlands, oh where hae ye been? They hae slain the Earl o’ Moray and hae laid him on the green.

In reaction to these killings the Presbyterian party succeeded in forcing the King to accede to an extreme Presbyterian form of Church government. The plot had left the plotters with no reward and Argyll still lived. In 1593 Argyll, now old enough to act on his own behalf, discovered the plot. As hereditary Justiciar-general, he had MacEllar tortured to reveal Ardkinglas’s name. Ardkinglas, in turn revealed the rest. The Catholic Earls were found to be in league with Spain and forfeited. By 1596, Huntly had been ruined and Lochnell was dead, though Ardkinglas was in hiding from the Earl’s revenge. Black Duncan contrived his reconciliation with Argyll.

The new Earl, *Gilleasbuig Greumach* or Archibald the Grim had all the Campbell passion for land grabbing. There was neither truth nor pity in him. He made mischief on all sides, stirred his neighbours against one another and then, armed with legal commissions, quenched in blood the flames he had kindled. Thus he acquired Kintyre, Islay and Ardnamurchan and the undying hatred of Clan Donald for the Campbells.

Bereft of Cawdor’s protection and in spite of the 1591 pardon, the Drummonds and Stewarts continued their feud with the Balquhidder MacGregors and in 1593 the government issued new letters of fire and sword to the Buchanans among others. Aulay MacAulay of Ardincaple in the Lennox, a kinsman who had secretly given his bond to Glenstrae in 1591 complained to the Privy Council about the actions of the Buchanans and the letters were cancelled.

Parliament passed the General Band in 1587 making landlords personally liable for the actions of their followers and dependants. “Broken men” were declared to be the

responsibility of the proprietor on whose lands they lived. Clan Gregor appeared at the head of a list of “clans that have chiefs on whom they depend, oft-times against the will of their landlords”. King James began to enforce this act in 1594 and Black Duncan found himself summoned for the actions of his bitter enemies. Proprietors once more tried to evict their MacGregor tenants. Life was becoming even harder for Clan Gregor. In desperation, Alasdair Roy turned to Argyll, the one magnate who might be willing to protect the clan. Argyll, in return for his protection, desired that MacGregors should prosecute the private feuds that, as Justiciar-General, he did not care to be seen openly involved in. Alasdair found the price too high; Argyll wanted him to attack both Ardkinglas and Aulay MacAulay. Ardkinglas was Alasdair’s kinsman and friend while MacAulay had aided Alasdair when he had been outlawed in 1593.

In July 1596, Alasdair presented himself before the King at Dunfermline. A blanket pardon was issued acquitting the whole clan of the murder of Drummond-Eireannach and all other crimes. This was made conditional on Alasdair remaining at court, but it did not last, for by 1597 he was back in Rannoch and had to find caution of 20,000 merks and give hostages for the behaviour of the clan. He could do neither and soon found himself outlawed again. In fact the record of Clan Gregor in the period 1592 to 1602 was relatively good, in comparison to the feuds and depredations elsewhere. Argyll did not forgive Alasdair for his appeal to the King and in 1598 sent a raiding band of MacLeans on to Alasdair’s lands in Rannoch. Rather than retaliate, Alasdair took his case to the High Court in Edinburgh. He won his case and was awarded damages, but MacLean, secretly backed by Argyll, ignored the judgement.

In March 1601, the Privy Council once more denounced Clan Gregor, although there is no record of any fresh offences. Argyll was given an extensive commission to take sureties for all complaints against Clan Gregor since 1596. By Argyll’s subsequent actions it is apparent that he had now got Clan Gregor entirely in his power. Black Duncan burned the house of Stronmilchan and finally drove the MacGregors out of Glen Strac. He received a prompt remission from Argyll for this violent act. Argyll gave Clan Gregor *carte blanche* to raid his enemies and took no action on the resulting complaints against them. Alasdair still refused to attack Ardkinglas or Aulay

MacAulay, but Argyll had other enemies who were not kinsmen or friends of Clan Gregor. One of these was Colquhoun of Luss.

Alasdair Roy reived 120 cattle from Colquhoun's lands of Glen Malloch in June 1602, but Argyll ensured that no action was taken against him. In December Duncan MacEwin stripped Colquhoun's lands of Glen Finlas of every beast and all moveable gear. Two of Colquhoun's tenants were killed. The booty was reset by Argyll's order among the Campbells of Strachur, Appin and Lochgoilhead. Colquhoun appealed to the king and organised a procession before Stirling Castle with women carrying shirts daubed in ox-blood at spear-point. Despite the blanket commission he had already issued to Argyll, the King issued a new commission of fire and sword to Colquhoun against Clan Gregor. Colquhoun, aided by the Buchanans raised 300 horse and 400 foot from their estates and the town of Dumbarton. Alasdair was warned about the expedition, giving him time to raise around 200 men and march them down the side of Loch Long. Alasdair chose to fight at Auchengaich in **Glen Fruin**. Although Alasdair was out-numbered and in Colquhoun's own country, in the ensuing battle 140 of Colquhoun's men were killed for just two MacGregors – including *Iain dubh*, Alasdair's brother. Alasdair then harried the lands of the Lennox. He took a large booty of livestock, much moveable gear and burnt every house on the lands of Luss. Again most of the booty was reset in Argyll among the tenants of the Earl.

James was about to depart for London to succeed Queen Elizabeth when he received the news. Argyll had no further use for Glenstrae and so he would not protect him. The Privy Council ordained that the name of MacGregor should be altogether abolished and that persons of that clan should take themselves some other name on pain of death. Anyone was given liberty to kill a MacGregor, whether or not they had been involved in the raid, and to take all his possessions as a reward. Any outlaw who did so was to be pardoned his crimes as well. Bounties were paid for the heads of MacGregor men. Children were to be forcibly adopted and reared as servants. Women were to be branded on the face and transported.

At first, there were those who helped and sheltered the clan. But the new law was

enforced with a thoroughness and vindictiveness which had not been seen before. The clan did not meekly submit. They maintained themselves in bands in wild places and harried the lands of their persecutors. Alasdair was betrayed by Ardkinglas, his foster-brother - the Campbell he most trusted - when at his house on Loch Fyne. Somehow, while being transported to Inverary by boat, Alasdair escaped and swam ashore.

In January 1604, Alasdair surrendered on a written promise from Argyll that he would be permitted to travel safely to England, in order to put his case to the King. His escort took him over the border at Berwick. There he found the Edinburgh town guard waiting to take him back. There was a trial, but Alasdair's bitterest foes sat on the jury and he was hanged the next day with a number of kinsmen. Argyll was rewarded with £20000 and the Clan Donald lands in Kintyre.

The following bond is an example of the measures used by the Campbells in their pursuit of the Clan Gregor: - (A 19<sup>th</sup> century version of the 16<sup>th</sup> century original)

**The rent for land held from Duncan Campbell of Glen Orchy is paid in MacGregor Blood. - Donald and Dougal McTarlich's Bond.**

“Be it known to all men by these patent letters, we, Donald Mac Tarlich, and Dougal Mac Tarlich, brother, are bound and obliged, and, by the meaning of this bond, do bind and oblige ourselves faithfully and truly, either of us, during our lifetime and in the lifetime of a male heir lawfully to be begotten of either of our bodies, to the right honourable Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy and his heirs that, inasmuch as the aforesaid Duncan is obliged to make, give and deliver to me, the aforesaid Donald, a letter of land-lease during my lifetime and after my decease to a male heir lawfully to be begotten of my body during his lifetime, the entire two-mark land of Glen Eurin and the one-mark land of Elir, with all that belongs thereto, in the lordship of Lorne within the Shire of Argyle, and to me and the said Dougal during my lifetime and after my decease to an heir male lawfully to be begotten of my own body during his lifetime the entire half-mark land of Glen Katillie with all that belongs thereto in the lordship and shire aforesaid our entrance to the respective lands aforesaid, to be consequent on our performance and accomplishment of the following conditions and not otherwise.

Therefore we, being of a mind to do this before ever we shall crave possession of the aforesaid lands by virtue of the condition and promise aforesaid made by the aforesaid Duncan, and understanding Clan Gregor to be manifest malefactors and his Majesty's declared rebels for sundry slaughters, evil deeds and oppressions done by them to divers persons his Highness' leiges, we bind and oblige us, and either of us, that with the whole company and forces we may or can make, we shall, immediately following this date, enter into deadly feud with the Clan Gregor, and shall endure and continue therein and in making of slaughter upon them and their adherents both secretly and openly and shall in no manner of way or persuasion leave the same or desist and cease therefrom until the time that the aforesaid Duncan Campbell of Glenorchy finds himself by our travails and diligence satisfied and content with the slaughter we shall do and commit upon them, and especially abstract and withdraw us therefrom by himself as also will he find the way to make an agreement and pacification between us and the Clan Gregor for the slaughter we shall commit upon them, so that thereafter we may possess and enjoy the benefits of the aforesaid manner according to the tenour of the aforesaid assignment, and to this end we bind and oblige us and our aforesaid (heirs) faithfully and without fraud or guile.

Subscribed with our hands as follows at Balloch (Kenmore) the 18th day of May, the year of grace, 1588, before these witnesses, Colin Campbell, son to Campbell of Lawers, Gavin Hamilton, Donald MacAngus and Marcus MacNaughton.”

As late as 1611 the Privy Council continued to pay the bounty on MacGregor heads. Heavy fines were levied on resettlers. Argyll made so much money out of it that the King demanded a share. As the years passed the persecution became less bitter. The survivors took aliases and settled down where they could find shelter. Some few, such as Gilderoy remained as outlaws in the waste lands. In 1624 the Earl of Moray took 300 MacGregors from Menteith to confront the Macintoshes. Many settled in Aberdeenshire and Moray including the famous academic family of Gregory and our ancestors in Glen Gairn.

In 1633, on the accession of Charles I, it was re-enacted that none could bear the name; No minister could baptise the child of a MacGregor; No agreement with a MacGregor was legally enforceable; the killing of a MacGregor was not punishable in law.

According to Professor Keith Brown, in the period 1570 to 1630 there were more than 360 blood-feuds in Scotland, most outwith the Highlands. Some of these exceeded in violence and destruction anything in which Clan Gregor had been involved. But only Clan Gregor was subject to the vicious and sustained punishments that have been described. Having contributed greatly to the creation of Campbell hegemony in Breadalbane, Clan Gregor had become the greatest threat to that power. Therefore it lost Campbell patronage and protection. The remarkable aspect of the Clan Gregor story was not the experience of Campbell and State violence, but the survival of the clan through that period.

For service in the Stewart cause in the civil wars, Montrose promised the restitution of Clan Gregor lands and an end to proscription. At the restoration of Charles II in 1660, although the Earl of Argyll was executed, the Campbell interest was too important to offend. In 1661 the act of 1633 was repealed but none of the other promises were honoured. Another Earl of Argyll was executed in 1685 for treason. In 1689 Donald Glas of Glengyle, the father of Rob Roy, led a Clan Gregor contingent in support of the deposed James VII. As a result, in 1693, the resurgent Campbell interest after the Revolution settlement saw the proscription re-imposed though without the earlier virulence.

By 1774 the idea of clanship had become an anachronism. Only then was the name MacGregor declared legal to be used in Scotland. After using their aliases for generations many continued to use them. By the very nature of the proscription we have only tradition rather than documentary evidence that some of these are truly MacGregor aliases.

**The MacGregors of Deeside**

*Donnchaidh* / Duncan McGregor of Ardochie, Aberdeenshire  
b.~1595

||  
||  
||

***Griogair mòr nan cogaidhean***

(Big Gregor of the battles)

b.~1620

m. Agnes, dtr of MacGregor of  
Strathaven

||  
||

***Calum òg alias Grierson of Delfad***

b.~1650 d.~1715

m. Mary Gordon (of Dalperrey)

||  
||

**Alexander of Glengairn.**

b.~1675

His brothers included Gregor, the priest,  
1682-1741

Alexander married Margaret Cameron,  
Cuilmhuilinn, Rannoch

||  
||  
||

***Pàdraig ruadh nan craiceannan***

b.~1631 **d.1667**

||  
||

**Para ruadh**



**The descendants of Alexander of Glen Gairn**

Alexander b.~1700 Alexander was among 6 survivors of the 24 men of Inverenzie at Culloden. Adopted Coleman; went to Germany and remarried after 1746    	John b.~1702 died 16/4/1746, Culloden m.Mary Duguid, Achnah'uaigh	Duncan b.~1704 in Tarland captured after Culloden and transported	Malcolm & Alpin went abroad
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Two or three Alexanders had children baptised in RC record of Braemar St Andrews Catholic chapel 1722-1736. This is my best guess, but they all probably descend from Duncan of Ardochie. I have shown the parallel descent to Neil Malcolm McGregor.

Alexander b.1/2/1722 m. ~1762    Malcolm b 25/12/1763 m. Jane McDonald    Donald b.10/2/1791 d.1861 m.Rachel Grassick 18/4/1816    Donald b.11/10/1817 d.22/3/1867 m.Jane Wattie 29/12/1848    Charles Forbes 22/12/1858 d.1/8/1922 m.Sarah Wellings 28/4/1887 <b>emigrated to New Zealand 1888</b>    Gordon Forbes 5/3/1896-24/5/1939 m. Ida Hedderwick 1/9/1925    Evan Forbes McGregor 23/1/1935-5/4/2021 m. Carol Yvonne Miller 30/6/1962    Robert Forbes McGregor 18/8/1964 m. Jo - Anne Rowan 17/12/1994	John b.8/1/1725 and James b.20/2/1734	George b.31/3/1729 d.1777 m.Mcintosh    Descendants in Braemar	Duncan b.29/5/1731 m.Grissel Gardiner 7/11/1772    Alexander b.29/2/1776 d.30/11/1857 m. Ellen Morton - 13/1/1803    John b.13/5/1816 d.13/3/1891 m.Helen Miller 3/2/1846    Paul Miller b.13/12/1847 d.10/10/1925 m.Edith Walley 14/10/1885    Gordon Stuart b.7/10/1900 d.25/11/1981 m.Elizabeth Chidlow 26/7/1927 <b>Emigrated to Australia 1928</b>    Peter Malcolm b.27/7/1928 m.Edna Kelly 15/9/1951    Neil Malcolm b.1961
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The following pages are quoted from Michie's "Deeside Tales", chapter 2:-

Tradition has it that there were MacGregors in Deeside, two distinct families, from the early 1500s, if not before. At the moment no documentary evidence supports this, but certainly by the 1630s they were settled there. Before that, and after 1603, is difficult to penetrate because of Proscription, but tradition holds that the MacGregors of Ardoch were originally from Glen Lyon in Perthshire and there is no doubt that they were well connected - a fact we can establish from the land and property transfers which they were involved in.

The truth is that Macgregors did not figure in Deeside history till a much later date, and their emigration to the north was owing to the critical experiences which they passed through in the reign of James VI. The savage proceedings carried out by him against this clan need not be referred to here further than to point out that large numbers of Macgregors fled from their native seats, seeking for a living wherever it was to be found. They gravitated most naturally to the north, where the chronic clan feuds and quarrels had reached a height that was indistinguishable from civil war. Some of the more disreputable went to swell the ranks of "broken men," living by cattle-lifting and robbery; others sought protection and employment in a more regular way under the northern chiefs and lords, who quietly turned a blind eye on the laws and ordinances, pains and penalties, by which King and Council sought to forbid landlords from having any dealings with the proscribed clan. So far from joining or assisting the Royal boycott, these potentates would appear to have competed with each other for the services of the wandering Ishmaels.

Soon after 1600, considerable bodies of Macgregors had taken refuge in the north. Their chief protectors were the Clan Chattan and the Marquis of Huntly. The Privy Council called the latter to account in 1611 for sheltering them on his lands; he did not deny the fact, but pretended that they were there against his will; and the Councillors got no further satisfaction. In the same year they appear for the first time on Abergeldie, also a Gordon possession, and afterwards one of their favourite haunts, from which the Council struggled for many years to expel them. They make their debut on Deeside in highly characteristic fashion:-

*“Complaint by George and James Rossis, tenants to William Gordon of Abiryeldie of his lands of Eistoun and Loichmaynis [in Cromar] that, albeit the reset and intercommuning ‘with that unhappie and rebellious race and handfull of wicked people callit the clan Gregour’ is strictly discharged, yet on 27th August last Nicol Davie in Muirtoun, accompanied by ten or twelve persons of the said clan and others to the number of fourscore persons, all armed with swords, gauntlets, platesleeves, bows, darlochs and dirks, maist feirslye set uponn the said complenairis at the market of St Marie’s Fair, with great rungis and battonis’ felled them to the ground, and would have slain them if they had not been relieved. Indeed there had been such a tumult in the fair that all the people had dissolved without making further market” (Privy Council Reg.1611.)*

The strength of the entente cordiale established between the Gordons and the Macgregors was revealed in 1634 when a savage vendetta arose between the Crichtons and the Gordons consequent upon the mysterious death of the Marquis of Huntly’s son in the conflagration of Fren draught: -

*“Thair cam in to the countrie,” says Spalding, “about 600 Hielanders of the Clangrigour, Clan Chamaron and utheris, and opinlie declairit thay had takin pairt with the Gordons, the friendis of the lait brynt laird of Rothiemay, and wold sie the samen revengit”*

These Macgregors belonged to the Roro branch of the clan, and in return for this service some of the leaders obtained settlements in Strathavon in Banffshire — at Dalnabo, Dalvorar, and Gaulrig, where they founded families that gave some distinguished soldiers to the British army in the succeeding centuries. The close connexion which they maintained with their patrons is evidenced in a deed executed in 1711 at Gordon Castle by which with all due formality John and James M’Grigor, sons of Grigor M’Grigor of Dalvorar, bind and oblige themselves and their heirs and successors to call themselves Gordons for ever, “and that both in word and write.”

Close on the private Crichton feud followed the wars of the Covenant, a struggle big enough to make the last man that Huntly could put into the field of value. The

Macgregors eagerly supported him on the Royalist side, and their services were of such importance that, unlike most of the King's men, they emerged from "the Troubles" richer than they began. Tradition says that it was at this time that the Glengairn Macgregors became established as lairds on part of the Gordon lands there, at Inverenzie, Dalfad and thereabout. This is probably, in the main correct, but it is certain that others of the clan owed their lands to the Earls of Mar, and at an earlier date too. There is a charter of 1633 from the Earl of Mar to Thomas Erskine of Rinabrouch in Glengairn, the name Erskine, we are told, being an assumed one, instead of Macgregor (in accordance with the law of 1603 which commanded the clansmen to discard their own surname and choose another—in this case the family name of the Earls being taken). In the public records of the district "Erskine alias Macgregor" occurs more than once, so that "John Gregory's" narrative, referred to above, contains this amount of truth that some of the Deeside Macgregors owed their position to the favour of the Earl of Mar, though he greatly antedates their appearance on the Dee.

At one time or other in the 17th century the following lands were in the possession of owners bearing the name— Auchallater in Braemar; Wester Micras in Crathie; Tomawarran in Abergeldie; Belnabo, Rinabrouch, Richarkarie, Ardoch, Dalfad, Torran, Inverenzie in Glengairn; Ballater in Tullich. Though these lairdships were fairly numerous, most of them were small, and they gradually passed into the hands of the richer and bigger lairds. Macgregors of Ballochbuie figure in most of the local guide-books, the last of them as the hero of a quite incredible story. He sold, it is said, his estate to one of the Farquharsons for a tartan plaid—a transaction which is commemorated on the stone erected by Queen Victoria on the property when it passed into her possession, "The bonniest plaid in Scotland." There may have been tenants of the name at one time in this place, but public records seem to be quite silent as to whether it had ever having been owned by a Macgregor.

Sheltered among the mountains of Glengairn and fortified by a tenantry mostly of the same name and blood, these Macgregor lairds were the leaders of a little sept or miniature clan that presented a bold front to all and sundry. In character and habits they were Highlanders to the core— proud, spirited, and clannish, devoted to the old faith

and the old dynasty, famous for their readiness “with word and blow, but the blow first.” Their enemies, it is true, would likely have added another less pleasing feature of character, which may be described in the words of Gillecallum Macpherson concerning another clan: “When at war with the Macintoshes bolt your door once, when at peace bolt it twice.” The most famous of the race was Malcolm, commonly known as Calum Og of Ballater, an addition which he or an ancestor made to the Glengairn lands, but which did not remain long in their possession. Apart from tradition, the little that has hitherto been known of him is contained in the short notice in Blakhats Narration (Spalding Club), but since the publication of Miss Macgregor’s researches several interesting particulars can be added to his dossier.

In February, 1692, he is denounced as a “lawless man\* (Records of Justiciary). Four months later, “*Malcolme McGregor of Ballater, Alexander McGregor in Tilliechurder are indyted along with Gordon of Abergeldie, etc., at the instance of Robert Stewart of Innerchat [in Birse], for burning his house,*” etc. Some years afterwards he is found borrowing 700 merks from Farquharson of Invercauld and 280 from Grant of Grant. Following on the ecclesiastical changes introduced at the Revolution, there was held in 1704 an inquisition of Roman Catholics in Glenmuick and the neighbourhood. The minister of the parish, the Rev. James Robertson, in presenting to the Presbytery his list of papists, priests, and apostates, puts Calum at the head of it for boldness and inveteracy. He keeps mass and Popish conventicles in his house. He has sent his eldest son to Douai to be trained for the priesthood. He has lately erected a crucifix on a little hill near to his house to be adored by all neighbourhood. He is worth about 500 merks per annum, but much of his fortune “is now adjudged upon decreits obtained against him for robbing the Laird of Glenkindie’s house [the Strachans were a strong anti-Stuart family and old enemies of the Macgregors], and other such like barbarities. Only he makes a considerable deal of money by blackmail, extorted from several low country parishes, such as Fordun, Strachan, Fettercairn, etc., under pretence of protecting them.” One of his escapades touched the worthy minister to the quick. Calum had stepped over from Gairnside to Allanaquoich one day to a wedding feast where there was a large company present, and had contributed his share towards the entertainment of the guests in a unique manner. “After he had at first ridiculed the protestant religion,

he next went to his knees and with a loud voice uttered a deal of horrid blasphemie, pretending to personate protestant ministers in their prayers and then fell a preaching, to the great astonishment of the beholders.” The warmth of the minister’s feelings and language is no doubt due to the fact that it was at him that Calum’s caricature was levelled. A year or two before, the minister of the three upper parishes, an Episcopalian, had been deposed “for gross negligence in preaching, etc.,” and Robertson, his successor, the first Presbyterian minister, no doubt introduced a pulpit manner which was new to those parts, and which, if we may judge from a contemporary satire, “Scots Presbyterian Eloquence Displayed”, must have presented considerable temptations to the lively laird of Ballater. In the narrative by John Gregory, mentioned at the beginning of this note, Calum also figures.

*“The lairds of Inverenzie were in opulent circumstances until at last when one of them, young Mallcom, one of the most valiant men in his day, by misfortune was inveigled in a process of law before the Court of Session, in defence of which process he almost spent his all, so high was the spirit of this brave man. After being told by his advocates that he would inevitably lose, unless he would sell some part of his estate in order to maintain the cause, so much perplexed was he that he did not know how to behave; but upon retiring to his room in Edinburgh he betook himself to his pair of trumps and there was making a tune to himself by way of recreation. The lawyers now finding, as they thought, that he would be obliged to sell his estate or at least a good part of it, they would go and advise him to advertise the same. Upon their approaching the room they were confounded to see him in such top spirits as he seemed to be; however, so dexterous was he at that kind of music that the lawyers insisted on his playing on, and after some hours play and a handsome treat no doubt, they left him without ever advising him to dispose of any part of his estate; and next day, or a few days after, upon considering the high spirits of such a brave man, gained his plea.”*

His descendants continued true to the traditions of their house to the last. One of his grandsons, Captain Macgregor of Inverenzie, mustered his little band of followers on the haugh at Dalfad and marched off to join Lord Lewis Gordon’s regiment in the ‘45, and if Grant’s Legends is to be believed two others perished in the Gairn within sight of their own house as they were returning from a cattle-lifting expedition in the west.

It was probably soon after this that they had to part with their estates, a misfortune which in view of their manner of life was plainly inevitable. In the Roman Catholic burying ground at Dalfad a rude flat tombstone bears the inscription,  
“G. M. G. 1734. Here lies John Gneron. Who died the 2nd day of May, 1787.”

The second name is said to refer to one of the last of the lairds. Though no longer figuring as landed men, the race did not become extinct on Deeside, and there is, or at least there was in existence some years ago, a manuscript account of the doings of Captain Macgregor of Culloden fame, carefully cherished by his descendants:-

The CATERAN Macgregors.—The landed Macgregors with whom we have been dealing, wild and reckless as they were, might pass for law-abiding citizens compared with some others of the name who kept Deeside in a ferment about the beginning of the 17th century. These were “broken men” of the clan, whose leader was Patrick Macgregor alias Gilderoy or Gilroy, “the red lad,” the hero of the ballad, “*Gilderoy was a bonnie boy.*” Whether the popular rhyme concerning the burning of Culbleen and the harrying of Cromar refers to his depredations or not, it is known that the centre of his operations was in that neighbourhood. The so-called Rob Roy’s cave near Loch Kinnord probably owes its name to him, and the Cairn of Gilderoy in Strathdon is another reminiscence of this notorious freebooter. In a proclamation issued by the Privy Council (Mar., 1636) it is stated that:

*“Patrick Macgregor and others hes associat and combynnd themselves togidder, hes thair residence neere to the forrests of Culblene, Glentinar, and in the mountains of Tullich, Glengarne, Strathdie, Strathdone and Cabrach, and from these parts they come in the darknes of the night down to the incountrie, falls unawars upon the houses and goods of his Majesteis poore subjects and spoyles thame of thair goods, and, being full handed with the spoyle they goe backe agane to the bounds forsaid where they keepe mercat of thair goods peaceablie and uncontrolled, to the disgrace of law and justice. For the remeid whairof the Lords of Secrett Counsell charge all landslords and heretours, where thir brokin lymmars has thair resset, abode, and starting holes, to rise, putt thamselffes in armes, and to hunt, follow, and persew, shout and raise the*

*fray, and with fire and sword to persew the saids theeves, and never to leave aff thair persute till they be ather apprehended or putt out of the countrie.”*

Impudent and systematic spoliation like this would of course have been impossible had the band not had supporters among the people. A fortnight after this proclamation, another follows directed against those who “reset, supplee, assist, maintain or defend” Gilderoy and his followers, or who “hoord thair goods, blocke, buy or bargain with them thereanent”. More than a hundred and fifty of these reseters are mentioned by name, the great majority belonging to the Upper Deeside parishes. The list supplies a highly instructive example of the difficulties with which the forces of law and order had to contend in bringing the lawless to justice. It embraces all classes of the community, beginning with “brewsters” and brewster women (with whom the country seems to have been more than well supplied) and even some representatives of the Cyprian sisterhood, and rising up through cottars, tenants, and tacksmen to the Laird of Abergeldie on the summit of the social pyramid. He, like his father before him, was the chief local supporter of the Macgregors, “broken” or unbroken; but in almost every “town” from Aboyne to Balmoral, Gilderoy had his secret allies.

The Council go on to issue a commission to Lords Forbes and Pitsligo, Farquharson of Invercauld and others to pursue Gilderoy, to arrest and deal with reseters, and in short to abate the plague by any means that seemed likely to be successful. A reward of £1000 is offered “in present and thankful payment” for the presentation of Gilderoy and his chief followers alive or dead, and a long series of proclamations and fulminations concludes with a rather amusing confession of weakness:—

*“And whereas in the execution of the commissioun the saids commissioners will be sometimes constrained to employ persons not altogidder answerable and obedient to law and justice, and the Lords of the Council being willing if thir person sail do anie worthie and memorable service that they sail have some taste of his Majesties favour for thair panes, theirfoir the saids Lords promises that if anie person will take and bring in a more notorious and powerful lymmarnor himselffe and find caution for good behaviour he sail have his Majesties gracious favour and pardon for all bygane offences.”*



This is the method which Spalding describes as that of “garring one devil ding another.”

Gilderoy’s capture was finally effected by one of the chief enemies of his race, Lord Lorne afterwards Marquis of Argyle, somewhere in the West Country. He was taken, with nine of his band, to Edinburgh to be tried. There they were speedily sentenced to “be hangit quhill they be deid; and Patrick Gilroy and Johnne Forbes sail be hangit upon ane gibbet, quhilk gibbet sail be advanced ane grit degrie heicher nor the gibbet quhairupone the rest sail suffer.”

Though Gilderoy was thus well disposed of, matters were not greatly mended on Deeside. His brother promptly served himself heir to the leadership of the *Gillean Ruadh*, and when he was captured and executed in turn, still another of the same brood stepped forward to captain the band. Equally steadfast was the Laird of Abergeldie in his defiance of King and Council. He again figures in a new list of reseters as one who “*has suppleed and inter-commoned with the brokin lymmars, furnished them meate, drink, poulder, lead, lunt, and all others things necessar, keeps intelligence with them be word, writt and message, and ministers unto them all kynde of confort and assistance.*”

Deeside was at last relieved of these Macgregor desperadoes by the outbreak of the Civil war in 1639. They found employment with the anti-Covenanting forces, but so bad was their character that the more moderate Royalists doubted if the credit and strength of their cause were not injured by the presence of such auxiliaries.

Though they left no successors who operated on quite so daring and magnificent a scale, the trade of spulzie continued to have its devotees on Deeside, as everywhere else in the Highlands. After the commotions of the 17th century, when lawlessness reached its height, the forces of order gradually proved the stronger and the business might be described as a declining industry. Still the practice of cattle-lifting had been an established Highland institution from the earliest times (the first Act against “*thift, stouthreaffe, and violent and maisterfull oppressioun*” dating from as far back as 1384),

and so it continued to the last, in fact until all the Highlanders were disarmed after Culloden. The local caterans levied their toll on the surrounding lowlands; Deeside itself was preyed upon by the bands whose headquarters lay further west, especially by the Lochaber men, who were reckoned the most finished experts in their profession. The lairds and the law did their best to protect the industrious tenant, but never, as long as the clan system lasted, with perfect success. In fact, the insecurity pertaining to live stock had to be accepted as one of the unavoidable risks of ordinary Highland life. As the Gaelic proverb had it,- “I took my milch-cows to the fold; with me to-day, from me to-morrow.” Even in the cradle the young cateran heard the praises of his future pastime and was inoculated with the proper spirit There is a sweet lullaby, I once heard in the Lochaber district, the first verse of which runs—

*“Cagaran, cagaran, cagaran gaolach,  
Cagaran foghainteach, fear de mo dhaoine;  
Goididh e gobhair dhomh, goididh e caorich;  
Goididh e capull is mart o na raointean.*

“Hushaby, baimie, my bonnie wee laddie  
When ye’re a man ye shall follow your daddie,  
Lift me a coo, and a goat and a wether,  
Bringing them hame to your minnie thegither.”

Such was the immemorial antiquity of the practice of cattle-lifting, and so closely allied with the methods of clan warfare, that the caterans almost claimed a sort of toleration from public opinion. When Donald Cameron, the leader of what was probably the last band in the country, was caught and condemned to death in 1752 at Kinloch Rannoch, General Stewart records that “at his execution he dwelt with surprise and indignation on his fate. He had never committed murder, nor robbed man or house, or taken anything but cattle off the grass of those with whom he was at feud.”

*[End of quote from Deeside Tales]*

Callum Og died around 1715, though probably not as a result of taking part in the Jacobite Rising of that year - but we can be sure he was a supporter. A local story tells that:

*‘.he greatly repined towards the close of his life, that he was acquainted with no MacGregor who could bear his heavy `armachd-chatha` [battle arms]. "Let rust eat them up", he said. "rather than they should pass, after my demise, into the hands of any man of another clan, if a MacGregor cannot be found worthy of them"*

His son, Alexander was likewise a supporter of the Catholic Church and `perverted his wife Margaret Cameron` to that religion by `threatenings and other wickedness` - but what he thought of his father's last statement, history does not tell us.

Alexander`s son John was `out` in the `45. Very little is known of the part that Deeside MacGregors played in the 1745 Rising but tradition holds that 24 MacGregors marched to Culloden and only 6 returned. To this day there is near the chapel at Ardoch a mound called the Laird's Seat, where he is supposed have sat day after day mourning the MacGregors slain at Culloden. Unfortunately, this story cannot be exactly true for he himself was one of those slain at Culloden.

‘McGrigor of Inverigny [as he was then known], and Fleming of Auchintoul, fell wounded side by side... In the evening, while both lay writhing with pain, some soldiers passed, and one of them, seeing McGrigor move, drove his bayonet through his shoulder, and thus died the Laird of Inverigny`.

Alexander had other children, but they are all supposed to have left the glens before the `45. Of these children, one went to Germany and took the name Coleman - descendants of this man were still living in Germany this century.

The charts of the Glengairn lineage begin with Griogair, VI of Roro. As mentioned previously, his son *Eoin Dubh nan arm cruaidh* (Black John of the strong arm) was executed in 1612. *Donnchaidh*, the grandson of Griogair, known as Duncan McGregor of Ardochie was probably the first MacGregor to settle in upland Braemar, possibly

among the 300 MacGregors brought to Aberdeenshire in 1624 by the Earl of Moray. His descendants became known as "the heirs of Duncan McGrigor of Ardochie".

Four generations later, Alexander was among the twenty four men of Inverenzie and Glen Gairn who were at Culloden in 1746 with the Farquharson regiment. Only six returned home. Alexander adopted the name Coleman and went to Germany where he remarried and has left descendants. As far as I can tell from the records of the Roman Catholic chapel in Braemar, he already had a family in Braemar.

The youngest of Alexander's family was Duncan, baptised 29/5/1731. In view of the DNA evidence discussed below, I believe this Duncan is the most likely candidate for the marriage to Grissel Gardiner in Newcastle in 1772 and father of Alexander in 1776.

### **The McGregor DNA Trail in New Zealand**

The eldest son of Alexander in the record, baptised 1/2/1722, and thus the inheritor of the farm, was also named Alexander. That Alexander's grandson, Donald (1791-1861), moved to Strathdon in Aberdeenshire. His grandson in turn, Charles Forbes McGregor (1858 -1922), grandfather of Evan Forbes McGregor, emigrated to Opunake, South Taranaki, New Zealand in 1888 after a short time in South Africa where he married Sarah Wellings.

Charles followed his two brothers, Donald McGregor, John Forbes McGregor and sister Rachel McGregor, who had migrated several years earlier to the same area of New Zealand. Further information about all four and their descendants is provided in later pages. Charles and Sarah had one son, Gordon Forbes McGregor, and three daughters, Eva, Amy and Charlotte. Gordon married Ida Hedderwick. They had three sons Evan, Graeme, Allan and two daughters, Jacqueline and Judith.

Evan married Carol Miller and they had three sons, Robert Forbes, Grant Andrew and Douglas William McGregor. Robert was the only one to marry. He and Jo-Anne Rowan had two sons, Claymore Forbes McGregor (born 23 March 1995), and Lachlan Kincaid

McGregor (born 18 January 1997). Lachlan and his partner Madison Butcher have a son, Hudson James McGregor, born 17 October 2022.

In 2015 Iain McGregor Stockwell persuaded Evan, who he knew had unbroken male descent from Donald McGregor and Jane Wattie, to have a 37 marker DNA test. This revealed genuine McGregor ancestry and that, according to Richard McGregor 'it is highly likely you were from the House of Glengyle'.

In February 2021 with the encouragement again of Iain and Clan Gregor Society member, David Stephens, Evan did the Big-Y 700 test. The costs of this test were covered jointly by Evan and his wife Carol and seven great grandchildren of John Forbes McGregor: Iain McGregor Stockwell, Mairi Stockwell, Donald McGregor Stockwell and Bruce Stockwell whose mother Margaret McGregor (1913 – 2000) was a granddaughter of John; Denise Tookey whose mother Betty McGregor (1923 – 2013) was another granddaughter and Keith Whyte, whose mother Mary McGregor (1926-2011), was the last of the granddaughters. Margaret's mother was Mary Isabella Jane McGregor (1887 – 1957) and George Donald McGregor (1886 – 1951) was the father of Betty and Mary McGregor. George and Mary were the two children of John Forbes McGregor and Sarah Rashleigh. Their infant son had died on the voyage from Scotland to New Zealand in 1885.

Evan Forbes MacGregor died on 5 April 2021 several weeks before the results of the test became available in May. However, he had ensured that the results were sent to Iain's email address of glenotoki@xtra.co.nz. Glenotoki (a blend of both Scots and Māori words) was the name of the John Forbes McGregor's farm, near Hāwera, New Zealand. Evan's yDNA test results proved that Duncan (29/5/1731) was our ancestor.

### **The McGregor Family Ancestry Tree in Scotland**

Iain McGregor Stockwell, the great grandson of John Forbes McGregor, first visited Scotland in 1975, and again in 1986 and 1993. He has attended Clan Gregor Society Gatherings in 2003, 2009, 2014, 2016 and 2018. In 2010 he was appointed the Clan

Gregor Society New Zealand Representative. Below are details of his line of descent from Braemar with some comments by Dr Richard McGregor.

Iain's great grandfather, John Forbes McGregor, in a handwritten note dated 1 May 1912 with the heading 'The McGregor Family Tree', recorded the following as being what he knew of his family ancestry: *First mentioned was Alexander McGregor who was reputed to have originally come from the McGregors of Rob Roy's following, or of Patrick Roy's men. He (Alexander) was first a farmer at Richarkie, Glengairn and afterwards a crofter at Aberarder, Crathie, Braemar. He left Glengairn in command of 24 McGregors to fight for Prince Charles Edward Stuart at Culloden Moor 1746, and only 6 including himself left the battlefield alive.*

Alexander McGregor was said to have been born about 1700 and was four times married with children by all wives. From the fourth marriage he had 4 sons and one daughter: Donald, James, John, Charles and Jane.

Donald McGregor, eldest son of Alexander's fourth marriage, (and the great grandfather of John Forbes McGregor), was born 1763 and had sons and daughters. His son Donald McGregor, grandfather of John Forbes McGregor, born in 1791, became a blacksmith. He married Rachel Grassick (born 1786) in 1816. Donald, aged 71, died of pneumonia at Torranbuie in Strathdon on July 6<sup>th</sup> 1861. Rachel died of gangrene in her legs on 20<sup>th</sup> August 1861, aged 75. Her parents were William Grassick and Margaret Stewart.

**Comment by Dr Richard McGregor, to Iain, August 2002:**

'I have a large collection of material on MacGregors in the area - according to Donald [married Rachel Grassick]'s death certificate, his father was Malcolm and his mother Jane McDonald. Their first child was Donald in 1791 then John 1794, Margaret 1797, Alexander 1802, James 1805, Charles 1807, Jean 1809. That Donald is your Donald.

The confusion may have arisen because there was another Malcolm born 1777 and died 1863, who married a Janet McDonald 30 years later in the same parish. The Malcolm father of your Donald might well have been born in 1763. The confusion might have arisen because of the mother's unmarried name. There is indeed a Callum baptised 25

December 1763 to Alexander in Milntown of Aberarder [no wife given] who could well be a son of Alexander [born 1700] son of Alexander MacGregor alias Grierson, son of Callum Grierson of Ballater. According to family tradition Alexander born 1700 fled to Germany and adopted the name Coleman [with descendants to the present day].

However, this family was often confused with that of Alexander McGregor, tacksman in Auchallater by Braemar who was an active catholic in those days, as indeed was Callum Grierson and his son / grandson Alexander. Richard said he could not say which of these families was Iain's actual ancestor, given that they were often mixed up even within 50 years of their deaths. Evidence is wanting all round but it is very likely that these families were originally connected and came from Duncan MacGregor, a younger son of Roro who went to Deeside anytime between 1590 and 1625.

According to the membership register at the Strathdon Post Office (seen by Iain in 1975), Donald's father, Donald, was a foundation member in 1823 of the Lonach Highland Society. The Society is still in existence and its annual Highland Festival of dancing, pipes and drums; caber throwing etc is famous throughout Scotland.

*During my visit to Strathdon in 1975, Iain Stockwell says, I was introduced to William McGregor who invited me into his Candacraig Cottage to share a wee dram of whisky. I enjoyed the meeting. William was not in good health and died a few years later. The cottage was subsequently owned for many years by the Scottish comedian, Billy Connolly, and his New Zealand born wife, actress Pamela Stephenson.*

Donald McGregor, (born 11 October 1817) at Knocklea had a sister, Isobel born 27 January 1821, a brother, James Stuart born 3 April 1823 and another brother John born 1831. Their parents, Donald McGrigor and Rachel Grassick, married 18 April 1816.

Donald McGregor, a farmer, was quite a wild lad, and given the lack of birth control in those days plus high levels of testosterone, there was the inevitable result – he had (according to the parish records that Iain perused at the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registry, Edinburgh) two illegitimate children as follows: -

*'Donald McGrigor, Knocklea and Barbara Keir had a child in fornication, a son born 29 November 1840 and named William '.*

*'Donald McGrigor Knocklea and Mary Grant Haugh, Morlick had a child in fornication (his second, her first), a son born 4 March 1844, named James'.*

By the time the Rev. Robert Meikeljohn married Donald McGregor and Jane Wattie of Bellabeg on 29 December 1848, the McGrigor had become McGregor. Jane Wattie was born in 1821 and according to JF McGregor her father was Alexander Wattie, (a miller at Hill of Bellabeg). In the 1841 Census Alexander was recorded as 60, Ann Wattie 25, James Wattie as 25 and Jane Wattie as 20 years. Alexander according to JF McGregor, married Ann Kinnear in 1809 and he was the youngest son of James Wattie, (1715 – 1788), born at the Mill of New, Strathdon.

Donald and Jane had 7 children. In the 1851 census, Donald is recorded as ‘a farmer of 33 years farming 56 acres employing 5 labourers’ at Knocklea, Strathdon, with wife Jane, 31 years and a son John 1 year. Also recorded at the same address were John Stewart, agricultural labourer 22 years; Isabella Stewart, servant 15 years; Alexander Cameron, servant 17 years; Janet Farquharson, general servant 21 years.

They had moved by the time of the 1861 census, to Bourtie, Aberdeenshire. Donald was recorded as 43, Jane 41, John Forbes 11, Donald 7, Rachel 6, George King 4 and Charles Forbes 2. There were 9 other household members recorded – Isaac Milne 38, James McLeod 13, Margaret McReben 47, Elizabeth Marter 25, Robert Smith 26, Peter Moir 58, James Heard 20, Jean McKie 27 and Mary Murray 31.



**Donald McGregor 1817–1867 born Strathdon, Aberdeenshire, died Inveravon, Banffshire.**

Photograph taken at the Lonach Highland Games between 1850 and 1855.





**Donald McGregor / Jane Wattie and their seven children, in 1862 / 63, from left to right George King, Donald, Donald McGregor (father), Mary, Rachel, Isabella, Jane Wattie (mother), John Forbes, Charles Forbes (With thanks to Iain McGregor Stockwell).**

Donald McGregor died 22 March 1867, in the District of Inveravon, County of Banff, before his 50th birthday, after being ill for 14 days with pneumonia. His son JF McGregor was with him when he died. Donald's wife, Jane Wattie died 22 years later, on 31 December 1889. They are buried together in the Inveravon Cemetery.

At the time he died, Donald McGregor was a tenant farmer on the estate of Ballindalloch, owned by Sir John McPherson Bart. The factor was John Fleming Esq. In 1865 the annual rent for the farm at Garline was 83 pounds, according to the records held in the National Archives of Scotland.

Iain Stockwell said that during a visit to the National Archives of Scotland in Edinburgh, July 2003, he was able to read the following: *At Banff on 10 July 1867 Inventory of the Personal Estate of Donald McGregor presented by William Heming, Solicitor, Grantown, registered by Benjamin Robert Bell, Esquire, Advocate Judge, Inventory of the Personal Estate, wherever situated of Donald McGregor, farmer, Garline, Inveravon, in the County of Banff, who died at Garline 22 March 1867. Farm stocking, household furniture and effects belonging to the deceased, inventory and valuation by John Grant, licensed auctioneer, Grantown valued at 401 pounds 10 shillings and two pence. Amount due to the deceased by John Gordon, farmer Campdelmoret, three pounds 11 shillings but from the circumstances of the debtor it is supposed to be not worth more than 5 shillings in the pound. Allow 17 shillings and 6 pence Total amount of personal estate 402 pounds seven shillings and 8 pence*

*wherever situated Referred to in my affidavit of the date 8 July 1867 signed Jane Wattie or McGrigor, residing at Garline, Inveravon, Executrix of the deceased, Donald McGregor, before John Fleming, one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace for Moray.*

Besides John Forbes McGregor, born 30 October 1849, there was his sister Isabella Jane born 17 July 1851; a brother Donald born 9 June 1853; another sister Rachel born 29 October 1854; a brother George King born 13 October 1856, another brother, Charles Forbes, born 22 December 1858 and finally another sister, Mary Ann born 20 July 1861. As can be seen we have two of the sons of Donald McGregor with the middle name of Forbes. What was the connection with the Forbes clan? Perhaps Forbes was the name of the landowner from whom Donald McGregor leased land? But of most relevance could be that in Aberdeenshire a sept of Clan Forbes was Wattie, the maiden name of Jane, wife of Donald McGregor. The latter would appear to be the logical explanation for the second name of two sons being Forbes.

It was Sir Charles Forbes, 1st Baronet of Newe and Edinglassie, who established in 1823 the Lonach Highland and Friendly Society. This charitable organisation, based in Strathdon, Aberdeenshire, organises the Highland Games. Perhaps Charles Forbes McGregor was named after Sir Charles Forbes? His grandfather, Donald McGrigor, was a foundation member of the Society and could well have influenced the decision about the child's name. There was no history of Charles as a boy's name in the family.

In the 1871 Census, four years after Donald McGregor died, it is clear that Jane had taken on the farm tenancy with her family. The following details are recorded: Jane McGregor, Inveravon Civil Parish, Banffshire County, Garline address, farmer of 86 acres. Household: Jane 51 years, John 21 years, Isabella 19 years, Rachel 16 years, George 14 years, Charles 12 years, Mary 10 years. Donald, the son, was recorded in Inveravon, where he was an apprentice blacksmith. Also recorded at the same address were James Carmichael 34 years, Marjory Grant 19 years, and Robert Spence 16 years. It was a smaller household overall following the death of Donald McGregor. There is no record of the family at this address in the 1881 Census as the sons had either married or left to undertake other work elsewhere.

**Donald McGregor, the first of the four family members to come to New Zealand.**

We have no written record as to why Donald McGregor chose to emigrate from Scotland. It can be assumed that it was for economic reasons, because he wanted a better life for himself and his wife, Jean Bremner, who he married in Aberdeen, 1879. Her family was from Deskrie, near Strathdon. He would have been motivated by access to land, the availability of small holdings and not being a tenant farmer, subject to the whim of a landlord as was the case in Scotland. Why did he choose New Zealand, the furthest from Scotland, as a destination rather than Australia, Canada, South Africa, or the USA? There were no family connections with New Zealand. This is a question to which we will probably never have an answer. And why in New Zealand did he settle in Taranaki, establish his blacksmith business and take up farming near Opunake? Again, we do not know but the presence of existing Scottish settlers could have been a reason.

Dr Marjory Harper, Aberdeen University, is quoted by Peter Atkinson and Andrew Cassell in their book (*The Lowland Clearance: Scotland's Silent Revolution 1760 - 1830*, 2003 page 113) as calculating '*that two million Scots departed for North America, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand between 1800 and 1911 and although perhaps a third returned home, this still represented a huge slice of Scotland's population*'. She said on page 116 that '*there was an obvious attraction: land in abundance, land they could buy, land which they could buy for the equivalent of a year's rent at home, and land that would be theirs in perpetuity without interfering landlords*.' And on page 116 '*lands where no masters, either Lowland Laird or Highland Chief would call the tune*'.

Ann Thwaite, in her book '*Passageways: the story of a New Zealand Family*' (2009), commenting on what motivated people to emigrate, quotes New Zealand social anthropologist, Te Rangi Hiroa (Sir Peter Henry Buck 1877-1951) "*All migrations of people are caused by a push from behind or an alluring prospect in front.... the push could be poverty, over population combined with a sense of adventure. The prospect ahead was a land that was rich in possibility and extraordinarily beautiful.*" and from historian Michael King (1945-2004): "*The basic need driving human history is the*

*search for a secure place in which to live. To live means to eat, shelter, reproduce and practice cultural or spiritual values.”*

It would have been a difficult decision too, as Donald knew, as did most who emigrated, that they would not be able to visit their homeland and in his case, he would not see his mother or probably any of his siblings, other relatives and friends again. The lives of his descendants were completely different, as a result of his brave decision, from what they would have been if he had stayed in Scotland. And the same applied to the life experiences of his siblings, John Forbes McGregor, Rachel McGregor, and Charles Forbes McGregor, who he persuaded to join him later, and their descendants. As the *'Listener'* (13 January 2018 page 51), a New Zealand magazine, aptly commented: *'No one leaves their country flippantly. This decision to leave is not taken lightly. There are long term costs, physically and emotionally'*.

Taranaki had, in the first 30 years of substantial European settlement, a turbulent period of land disputes with Māori, many of whom were opposed to selling land. In 1860 conflict arose over the sale of land in Waitara and the first of the Taranaki land wars started with the invasion of a large contingent of Imperial troops. The wars continued for the next 10 years, and indeed lasted longer than in any other part of New Zealand. More than 700 people were killed (Te Ara The Encyclopaedia of New Zealand).

In 1881, the year that Donald McGregor arrived in Opunake, the **Parihaka** township, only 25 km away, was invaded by 1,500-armed constabulary and volunteers. The Māori village of Parihaka had been established among the lahar hills, inland from Cape Egmont, in the late 1860s after the Taranaki Land Wars. It became the centre for passive resistance against the confiscation of Māori land. In 1881 the leaders, Te Whiti-o-Rongomai and Tohu Kakahi, were arrested, the settlement destroyed, and residents dispersed, with many sent to prisons in Dunedin and the Chatham Islands. After negotiations in 2017 the Crown paid \$9 million in compensation. In 2020 a \$14 million grant was made to the Parihaka Trust by the Provincial Growth Fund to build a visitor centre and make other improvements to the settlement.

A map showing how long it took to travel around was a highlight of the 1890 Official Handbook of New Zealand. A relevant comment was that *'the trip from Auckland to New Plymouth overland was a three day adventure by rail, horse and canoe'*. And it took 7 hours to travel by coach from Opunake to New Plymouth and 6 hours to Hāwera.



**Donald McGregor, Blacksmith, Opunake, South Taranaki, Jean Bremner, Second adult male from the left, Donald McGregor with a wagon made in his business c 1893.**

As far as we know Donald first arrived in Opunake (the word means the underground springs that lay beneath the land), in 1881 as there is a news report stating that his wife Jean joined him in 1882. She was accompanied by her mother and brother. The mother died in July 1896. He soon established himself in the town and district as a competent blacksmith and was elected Chairman of the Opunake Town Board and also to the Licensing Committee. He served on the latter for close to 10 years. Early on he was elected the Mōa Riding representative on the Taranaki County Council (**Taranaki Herald 12 November 1887 page 3**), and a piper in the Opunake Caledonian Pipe Band. The population of Opunake was an estimated 200 when he arrived, increasing to 275 in 1891 and 401 in 1896. Donald's business and social life featured in a number of issues of the 'Taranaki Herald': and 'Hawera & Normanby Star'.

In the **Hawera & Normanby Star 5 May 1884 page 2** there was mention at the Opunake Town Board meeting that *'Mr McLeod has recently sold out his blacksmith's business to Mr. D. McGregor'*. The 16 October 1885 page 3 issue had a report that *The Presbyterian Church choir are rehearsing a service of song - 'General Gordon, the*

*Christian Soldier* - which is to be performed in aid of their church funds shortly. Mr McGregor, who is the happy possessor of an American organ of exceptional power, has kindly invited those taking part in the same to practise at his house. There is every prospect of the entertainment being a great success.

Donald's business acumen was highlighted in the **Taranaki Herald 30 November 1885 page 2**, report: *As an instance of the progression of the town the work turned out recently by the local smithy may be noticed ...a double seated buggy, which for strength and lightness is thoroughly adapted for the rough work of a hilly country, while in appearance it would do no discredit to a central establishment. Two spring carts have also been turned out, which reflect great credit on the shop. Both of these were built to order. Mr McGregor has some thoughts of patenting his invention ( Editor: he should do so at once or, like the American ploughman who invented a very useful share, he will find someone coming round his way and making him pay a royalty for using his own invention). It is probable, as the dairy factory money circulates, there will be a demand for suitable milk conveyances, which Mr. McGregor is well able to supply as he is gradually adding more and more machinery to his plant.*

And on **17 July 1888 page 2**, it was reported: *A small water wheel, the first of many which will probably shortly abound on the streams of the coast, is now being manufactured at the establishment of Mr Donald McGregor, to the order of Mr W Costello. It is to be placed on the Otahi River, to the north of the town, on Mr Costello's property. It will first be used for chaff cutting, but other work will no doubt soon be found for so useful a power. The wheel will be worked at the breast and has a diameter of 9 ft, with a width of 3 ft 6in. The shaft was obtained from New Plymouth, but this will be the last piece of iron turning obtained outside the place, as Mr McGregor has now in transit from Wellington a lathe which will enable him to do such work.*



### **Robert Burns Centenary Celebrations 1896, Opunake.**

**Donald McGregor**, member of the Opunake Caledonian Pipe Band, dressed for the occasion.

Three months later, in the issue of **25 October 1888 page 2**, it was reported: *The result of the 'Black Budget' has become very satisfactorily visible in Opunake. The local smith having an order for a plough to be imported from a large centre, remembered his ancient training, and considered he could himself turn out an article more useful to the district than any of those made elsewhere, and at the same time one which would compete with the world as to durability, make, finish and price. Mr. McGregor is an Aberdeen plough maker, thoroughly trained, and as such has made a real Aberdeenshire plough, which is peculiarly suitable to the pig- rooted lands between Stony River and Otakeho; being short in the beam and long in the stilts, the ploughman has full command of his implement while, being a swing plough, with only a depth wheel, all parts, even the lowest, will in their turn be brought to the surface. The whole of this plough, with the exception of the mould board, obtained from a southern foundry, is of Mr. McGregor's own make and compares favorably with the imported article. Probably the best thing which can be said in its favour is that within a short time of its being finished an order was given for a similar one. This plough will be able to be seen at work in Opuia and should attract a share of attention. Should its working answer to its appearance we may expect to number the 'McGregor' plough as one of the exports of Taranaki.*

**The Taranaki Herald 4 December 1888 page 2**, reported: *A new settler has arrived in the town; Mr. McGregor, who was instrumental in introducing so many farmers from Scotland a few years ago, has another brother lately arrived from the Cape, who has determined to settle in Opunake, and work at his trade as a saddler and harness maker. There can be no doubt but that there is a want which Mr. McGregor will well supply.*

He kept a close eye on contractors as was shown in the report published in the **25 February 1890 page 3** issue about the Taranaki County Council meeting where: Mr D. McGregor is quoted as saying *'he would like to have it decided to keep contractors surfacing under strict supervision...they had not adhered to specifications in the past'* His viewpoint was accepted and it was agreed that Council members should assist the overseer to ensure this occurred.

Donald was one of the early pioneers in Opunake. He clearly demonstrated the qualities of hard work, ambition, risk taking and had an innovative approach to engineering challenges with farm machinery. In addition to farming on Watino Rd, Pihama, near his brother John Forbes McGregor, in 1914 he erected the McGregor building in Opunake which is still standing over 100 years later. Donald died 26 January 1917, only 8 months after his daughter's marriage and two months before the birth of his first grandchild. The death certificate said that the cause was 'Malignant Papilloma Bladder Cachexia' which he had had for 18 months. Jean, who died 18 April 1923, at 66 years, was able to see both of her grandchildren.



**The grave, in the historic Opunake Cemetery of Donald McGregor and his wife Jean Bremner.** The tombstone has his name inscribed on one side and his wife on the other side.

Donald was held in high regard in the community as the following tribute in the ***Opunake Times* 26 January 1917 page 2** clearly shows:

*The news of the death of Mr Donald McGregor was regretfully received in Opunake. Deceased was exceptionally well-known on this coast. He succeeded the late Mr McLeod in the blacksmithing business in Opunake in the very early days. During his many years in our midst he always took an active part in local affairs, having been a member and Chairing of the Opunake Town Board, of the Cemetery Board and other local institutions. In his younger days he gladdened the hearts of those who hailed from the land o' cakes by his skirls on the pipes. Some 12 years ago he left here to reside on his farm on the Watino road. About 12 months ago he underwent a serious operation and later complications supervened resulting in his death. Under all circumstances Donald was of a very genial disposition and a cheerful personality. We join with the many friends in offering our condolences to the bereaved relatives. The funeral takes place in Opunake tomorrow. On the same page the Funeral Notice said 'the funeral*



*will leave from the residence of his son-in-law D .G. Smart 'Garlane' High St, Hawera for the Opunake Cemetery on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> inst. at 10am, arriving at Opunake about 1.30pm. Friends will kindly accept this intimation. A H Arthur, Hawera.*

In the ***Opunake Times* 2 February 1917 page 2** it was reported that: *At the meeting of managers of the Opunake, Awatuna Presbyterian Church a resolution of sympathy was passed to Mrs D McGregor in her bereavement. Mr Donald McGregor was one of the original trustees of Church property in Opunake.*

Donald and Jean had one child, a daughter, Isabella Elsie Bremner McGregor. Elsie was born in 1886. On 29 April 1916 at the age of 29 years she married 34 year old Solicitor, David Gordon Smart. He was born 8 May 1881 at Blackness Farm, Strachan, Kincardineshire, near the Brig O'Feugh. He was the youngest child of farmer George Smart (born 17 February 1828) and his wife Jane Lyon (born 15 December 1835). In 1893, when David was 12 he was orphaned – his mother died of septicaemia 4 March 1893 at 56 years of age and 5 months later his father died at 65 years, on 28 August of 'accidental drowning' in the burn that ran through the farm.

David Smart was then brought up it appears by his three older brothers, mainly the eldest John, who had graduated with an MA in 1886 from the University of Aberdeen. John subsequently had a teaching career, culminating as Headmaster of Cushnie School, Aberdeenshire for 18 years, until he retired in 1929. David, from the family records apparently was a bright student and won several scholarships. In 1898/99 he passed with distinction a paper at Aberdeen University in Logic and Metaphysics. By 1903 he had graduated with a Bachelor of Laws. In 1908 he and an older brother George emigrated to New Zealand, and in December arrived in Dunedin. By 1910 the Aberdeen University Roll of Graduates noted that David was a 'Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of New Zealand'. George returned to Scotland while David stayed on, worked in Carterton and then Hāwera where he met Elsie McGregor.



### The wedding of Elsie McGregor and David Gordon Smart

David, on 22 December 1916, enlisted in the army. The service records (Reg. No.48386) mention that he was 5'11" in height, weighed 11 stone 4 lb, had dark hair and hazel coloured eyes. He was called up on 5 March 1917, with his first son Donald McGregor Smart being born 4 days before. He was posted overseas 28 February 1918 and after training was promoted to Lance Corporal on 7 April. Then he was sent to the Western Front in July, as a member of 'The Dinks' who were also known as 'Lord Liverpool's Own'. Two months later he was wounded in a shoulder and sent to Scotland to convalesce on the farm of his brother James, at East Kilbride. He returned to New Zealand and was discharged on 2 March 1919, 1 year 364 days of service, with 338 of the days overseas. He re-established his legal practice, retiring in 1963 at 81 years of age. In 1920 David was a foundation member and Honorary Solicitor of the Hāwera Returned Services' Association. He was made a Life Member and Patron in 1965. As the photograph below shows he was also Patron of the Hāwera Bowling Club.



**Elsie McGregor and David Smart**

In their Hāwera home garden 1949.



WATCHED BY MEMBERS OF THE HAWERA BOWLING CLUB, Mr. D. G. Smart, patron, plays the first official bowl of the new season on the club's greens — and probably the first official bowl of the season in South Taranaki. A good number of club members turned out for a one-day progressive fours tournament which opened the season today. Further official ceremonies were to be held this afternoon with visits from Taranaki centre officials. All other Southern Division clubs also opened their seasons today, and

Their eldest son, Donald McGregor Smart, born 1 March 1917, was killed in World 11 on 23 November 1941, while serving with the New Zealand armed forces in North Africa (Libya). His parents were not notified until 2 January 1942. Donald had been employed as an auctioneer and stock buyer with Newton and King Ltd before volunteering at the age of 22 years, to go overseas on 17 May 1940. He embarked for overseas service to join the Lustre Force on 27 August 1940, arriving in Egypt on 1 October 1940. His rank was Private in the 25th Wellington Battalion, 6th Infantry Brigade, registration number 32950. Donald, according to the records at the time he volunteered, lived at 8 High St, Hāwera., was single, had fair hair and brown eyes, was 6 '1'' in height and weighed 13 stone 7 lb.

Donald McGregor Smart died in the Battle of Sidi Rezegh, November 1941. It was part of a relatively unknown campaign, called Operation Crusader, fought in Libya by the New Zealand Division and the Eighth Army. The New Zealanders suffered their worst losses of WW 11 with 879 men killed, 1699 wounded and 2042 taken prisoner out of a total strength of 20,000. At one point the New Zealanders were almost completely encircled by the German forces, but they launched a surprise counter attack and successfully fought their way out, suffering high casualties.

In February 2012 news was received that graves of New Zealand servicemen had been desecrated in Libya. Iain Stockwell contacted the Ministry of Culture and Heritage and was advised on 7 March by Margaret Marks that:

*'Your late relative Pte Donald McGregor Smart is buried at the Knightsbridge War Cemetery, Acroma, Libya. Please be assured that no graves in this cemetery have been vandalised; it was only graves in the Benghazi War Cemetery which have been affected. It is a terrible event but the Commonwealth War Graves Commission will be restoring the Benghazi cemetery to its former state as soon as possible.'* She advised that *'Knightsbridge War Cemetery was located 750 metres south of the main road from Benghazi to Tobruk, about 25km west of Tobruk. Standing in open country, with the Cross of Sacrifice set high above the level of the cemetery it is easily visible from the road and is reached via an unmade track branching off the main road.'*

In Memory of  
Private DONALD MCGREGOR SMART

32950, 25th Bn., New Zealand Infantry  
who died age 24  
on 23 November 1941  
Son of David Gordon Smart, and of Elsie Smart (nee McGregor), of Haw  
Taranaki, New Zealand.  
Remembered with honour

KNIGHTSBRIDGE WAR CEMETERY, ACROMA



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Donald's name is engraved on the Hāwera War Memorial panels listing those who died in both World War I and II. In March 1950, his war medals: the 1939 – 45 Star, the Africa Star, the War Medal 1939 – 45 and the New Zealand Medal were sent to his father and mother, who were residing at 7 Albion St, Hāwera. His mother died shortly thereafter on 15 June 1950 at the age of 63 years and his father on 6 March 1970 at 88 years. They are buried in Hāwera Cemetery.

The second son, Gordon David Smart, born 19 May 1920, had his secondary school education at Hāwera High School. He excelled, we were told, at cricket and boxing. His brother Donald McGregor Smart, had been in the top teams for boxing, rugby and cricket. Gordon appreciated the academic tuition he received and the instruction in the various sports. Years later he donated the Dux Ludorum trophy to the school.



#### **Gordon David Smart 1944**

Part way through his legal degree at Victoria College, New Zealand University, Gordon enlisted in late 1942. He was a Private, Infantry Reinforcements, 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force (Reg. No. 295193). After training Gordon was based with the intelligence corps in Cairo, Egypt.

Within a year of his return home, while still a law student, he married a Registered Nurse, Patricia Espagne, on 30 November 1946 at St. Joseph's Catholic Church. This caused some disquiet with his parents who were Presbyterians. Gordon died in Hāwera on 15 April 1995 at the age of 74 years with his wife living for another 11 years until

she died 6 September 2006 at 85 years of age. They are buried together, in the Presbyterian section, Hāwera Cemetery, in the grave next to Gordon's parents.

Gordon joined his father's legal practice in 1948. He was a highly regarded Solicitor in Hāwera and the surrounding district, specialising later in criminal cases. Iain Stockwell remembers him handling the estate legal matters for his grandmother, Mary Isabella Jane Peters (nee McGregor), after she died 2 November 1957. John Billington, a student at Hāwera High School the same time as Iain, Donald and Bruce Stockwell (and Gordon's son Donald), credits Gordon Smart with inspiring him to pursue a legal career. John Billington is currently a Queen's Counsel. Gordon had a reputation as a very erudite Defence Counsel whose oratory won many cases for his clients. Gordon was innovative too as was shown when he allegedly wrote a constitution for the Black Power gang based on that of international service organisation, Rotary. A constitution, he apparently thought, might instil more discipline and lead to less unruly behaviour affecting the public. Subsequent events, over the years, were to prove otherwise.

Their only child, Donald Gordon Smart, was born 13 September 1947. At Hāwera High School, he passed all of the relevant exams and was prominent in field events (discus and hammer throw), and indoor basketball. He represented the West Coast North Island Centre in the hammer throw at the Junior National Championships. Don enrolled in law at Canterbury University. It was not to his liking and after a year he withdrew, and had a 'gap year' where he went overseas and also visited his Smart relatives in England and Scotland. After Don's return home he worked as a journalist in Wellington and for a time in London. Later he had a gift shop in Hāwera, and with his father, bred and raced horses. Their horse, 'The Bishop' was well known. Donald did not marry or have any children, and in later years suffered badly from rheumatoid arthritis. He was confined to a wheelchair for over 15 years.

In his latter years he became very interested in his McGregor ancestry about which he knew very little. Iain Stockwell shared his knowledge with him. Donald had inherited his great grandfather's sword and a framed portrait of him in his kilt. He gifted these items to Iain as he wanted them to stay in the wider McGregor family. Donald died on

2nd September 2022, in the Taranaki Base Hospital, just over a week short of his 75th birthday, following a fall at his home. At his request there was no service, just a private cremation. His ashes are interred in his parent’s grave. In his Will he also left to Iain his great grandfather’s christening mug; his snuff box, dram bottle and his uncle’s WW 11 medals. None of these items could be found afterwards.

Don Smart had a quirky sense of humour – he left instructions that the inscription about himself on his parent’s grave should simply say ‘*Loved son of Pat and Gordon Smart. Gone to have a look. Back soon*’



**Three Generations of Smarts**

Left to right Pat Smart, Donald Smart, David Smart, Gordon Smart 1955.



**Smart Family 1 Fyson Place, Hāwera 1969**

Left to right: Gordon, Don and Pat Smart

### John Forbes McGregor, the second brother to emigrate to New Zealand



**John Forbes  
McGregor, Police  
Constable, Glasgow**

**John Forbes McGregor** was born at Knocklea, Strathdon, Aberdeenshire, on 30 October 1849. He was a policeman in Glasgow when he married Mary Ann Kennedy on 30 April 1875 at Kelvin. There were no children and after living apart for some time, they were formally divorced in 1883.

According to family sources he had, in 1881, an illegitimate son by Catherine Forbes Symon, a headmaster's daughter. The boy was named John Forbes Michie Symon. John Forbes later tried to persuade the boy, when he was a teenager, to join him in New Zealand but was not successful. Instead he emigrated to Canada and died in WW 1, 28 August 1917, aged 36 years, while a Sergeant, 31<sup>st</sup> Battalion Canadian Infantry (Alberta Regiment). He was buried in the Barlin Cemetery, Pas-de-Calais, France.

Iain Stockwell was told that his great grandfather was asked by his own family to leave Scotland for a period of time because of the outcry about his behaviour. He supposedly met his second wife, Mary Sarah Rashleigh, in Lima, Peru where she was a governess. Iain's mother, Margaret McGregor said that, according to family legend, he found out that MS Rashleigh had £700 in savings and this meant she was worth courting. They were married on 10 June 1884, in Glasgow by Minister James Nicoll 'after banns according to the forms of the Free Church of Scotland'. She was originally from Trevellas Downs, St Agnes, Newlyn, Cornwall, born 5 July 1847, the daughter of Joseph Rashleigh, miner, and his wife, Leah Catherine (nee Latcher).

They emigrated to New Zealand, arriving in South Taranaki, on Boxing Day, 26 December 1885. The ship they were on, the '*Te Kapo*' from Sydney, berthed in New Plymouth, 24 December, 1885. Sadly, their first child, John Rashleigh McGregor, aged 8 months, died 22 December during the voyage. This was mentioned in the **Taranaki Herald, 24 December 1885** '*Arrived at 9 a.m. Te Kapo, from Sydney. During the voyage an infant son of Mrs McGregor died from natural causes, and was buried at sea*'.

John bought land and established a dairy farm. In the **11 November 1895** issue of the **Hawera & Normanby Star** the following advertisement was on page 3 - **Wednesday 13 November. At 12.30 sharp. Unreserved Clearing Sale**

*On the Farm, corner Watino and South roads, between Opunake and Pihama.*

*W.D. Scott has received instructions from J.F. McGregor Esq. (who is giving up dairying) to sell by public auction as above, the whole of his choice herd of Dairy Cows, consisting of,-*

*50 first class dairy cows in full profit and to calve*

*8 purebred Aberdeenshire Polled Angus Bulls*

*2 thoroughbred upstanding hacks*

*1 trap horse*

*1 spring rap and harness*

*1 strong dray (in good order) and harness*

*2 pig troughs*

*Milk cans, utensils etc*

**Lunch provided.**

*The attention of dairymen is specially directed to the above sale. Mr McGregor has been in the dairying line for ten years, and his herd, which consists of all young cows, is one of the best on the coast, he having spared no expense in importing pedigree bulls (Polled Angus).*

Then 5 years later, in the **28 November** issue of the same newspaper, a report appeared on page 2 that *'The attention of stockowners is directed to the sale of Polled Angus bulls to be held by Messrs Nolan, Tonks & Co, on account of Mr J.F. McGregor, Pihama. All the bulls are entered, or eligible for entry, in the New Zealand Herd Book. The animals will be offered without reserve. Mr. McGregor's cattle are acknowledged to be of exceptional merit.'* Then, in the **8 December 1900** issue, a report appeared on page 1 under the heading '**Nolan, Tonks & Co Hawera Stock Report** that *'Polled Angus cattle sold on account of Mr J. F. McGregor were keenly competed for, yearling bulls fetching from 6 1/4 to 8 guineas, 2-- year old olds 8 to 10gns, 3-year olds 28gns'*.

A number of years later J.F. McGregor had obviously resumed dairying as there was a report on page one, in the **Taranaki Herald of 24 April 1907** about a court case in the



Supreme Court - McGregor v. the Pihama Co-operative Dairy Company Limited.  
Seven months later the dispute was clearly outlined in the news report below:

**Hawera & Normanby Star 19 November 1907 page 5. An Important Dairy Factory Case: Cooperative Companies and Their Shareholders:** *At the District Court in Hawera, before His Honor Judge Haselden, a case of great interest to all engaged in dairying was heard. John Forbes McGregor v. Pihama Dairy Co - Mr. Caplen and Mr. McCarthy for plaintiff. Mr. Quilliam for the defendant company.*

*The claim was that the defendant company had wrongfully deducted 1/2d per lb on milk supplied by plaintiff ( a shareholder) from 1st May, 1903, to 31st October, 1903, in the month of January 1907, and from 1st to 22nd March 1907, totalling 8 pounds 10s 9d. Also that the defendant company refused to take milk from the plaintiff except at a price 1/2d a lb less than that paid to other shareholders and suppliers, in consequence of which the plaintiff had to incur loss and expense amounting to 35 pounds 5s. A sum of 20 pounds was claimed for the infringement of plaintiff's rights as a shareholder. The total claim was 63 pounds 15s 9d.*

*It emerged during the hearing, that ' the minute- book contained resolutions which showed that the defendant company had decided to pay 1/2d a lb less for butter-fat to those who refused to pay the bond for 4000 pounds....the plaintiff was the only one of the suppliers who had refused to sign the bond. It was not possible to carry on operations without bonds, unless all shares were fully paid up when the company first commenced'.*

*John Forbes McGregor in his statement said that 'he commenced as a shareholder with the company in September 1902. His milk had been refused by the company on the grounds that he had to accept 1/2d per lb less for butter-fat or sign the bond of 4000 pounds. He then supplied the Crown Dairy Co. at 3 1/2d per gallon. He had signed a previous bond for 3000 pounds. It was about 4 1/2 miles to Opunake from his farm. Pihama was only half to three - quarters of a mile away. It cost him about 5s a trip. He had also lost money because Pihama Company had paid a higher price than the company he supplied'.*

In the written decision by District Judge Haselden we find that John Forbes McGregor had taken the Pihama Dairy Co to court in March / April 1906 where it was decided by Judge Cooper ' *in the Supreme Court New Plymouth that the company is a co-operative and has not the right to purchase milk outside its own shareholders... and it was agreed that for the future there should be no difference and that the plaintiff should receive the same price as the other suppliers of milk to the company. This agreement has been carried out, and the present action is brought with respect to matters before the trial.*

The Judge went on to rule against McGregor as there 'is a resolution of the directors in the minute book to the effect 'that 7 1/2d per lb be paid for butter-fat for the month of May to any supplier who refused to sign a bond in accordance with the Articles of Association'. In the event of an appeal (which Mr. Caplen said was very probable), District Judge Haselden ruled ' that 15 guineas in cash must be lodged in court'. In the Taranaki Herald of 1 July 1908 it was reported that 'the appeal was dismissed with costs 3 pounds – 3s'



**John Forbes McGregor, Mary Sarah McGregor and their two children.**

**Left to right back row:** Mary Isabella Jane McGregor, George Donald McGregor.

**Front row left to right:** John Forbes McGregor, Mary Sarah McGregor

Photograph taken 1910 at the Watino Road, Pihama farm, South Taranaki, New Zealand.

John had a charming personality with outsiders – the 1910 photograph of him, his wife Sarah and their two children, clearly shows this. He was typical of the times and ruled the household in a no-nonsense manner. Mary Sarah found life very hard in New Zealand. From fragments of letters sent to Mary Sarah from her mother we know she was quite unhappy. In a letter from her mother, Catherine Rashleigh, dated 2 July 1889, there are the words from her niece Beatrice Mary (she wrote the letter as her grandmother was going blind) 'Grandma is very sorry to hear you have to work so hard. She would have thought you would have your living without working so hard after

*all these years.* ‘ and then some comments from Beatrice herself: ‘ *I think it would have been much better if you had stayed in England for I don’t see that you have done much good for yourself in going away* ’.

In a fragment of another letter from Beatrice Mary’s mother, J. Knuckey, wife of M S Rashleigh’s brother, about the same time, we have the words ‘ *I hope George and Polly are keeping well, please give them my love. Things are still very difficult with a lot of unrest in every part of the country; we must hope for the best and go on day by day. Of course it is your winter. I trust you will stand the cold alright.... I think I must come to a close for the time and hope that you are in Bright Spirits* ’.

According to Iain’s mother she found solace in prayer. Hopefully she got some happiness from her granddaughter, Margaret McGregor, who lived with her grandparents and mother on the farm for four years at Pihama and on the second farm ‘Glenotoki’ at Meremere, a few miles from Hāwera.

Hāwera, the major settlement in South Taranaki, was established in 1866 as a military base for government forces and the town grew around a blockhouse in the early 1870s. Prior to this the Māori name was '*Te Hāwera*' (meaning '*the burnt place*', other translations were '*breath of fire*' and '*burning plains*'). The name originated from the fighting between two local sub tribes that resulted in the whare (house) of the tribe under attack being set alight and burnt to the ground.

George Donald McGregor worked for his father on the farm at Watino Road, Pihama and then on the Allen Rd Meremere property. In 1917 he was asked to report for military service in WW1. The representations to the Wellington Military Appeals Board, were reported in the **Hawera & Normanby Star** newspaper, on **11 February 1918**: John Forbes McGregor farmer, Meremere, for whom Mr O’Dea appeared, appealed for his son, George Donald McGregor. Appellant gave evidence *that he owned 357 acres at Meremere. He was 68 years of age, and unable to do any work on the farm. His son, with the assistance of another, did all the work on the place. His wife*

was also in delicate health (certificate produced). The Board reserved its decision. On 12 February the Board granted George exemption sine die.

Four months later, in the **8 June 1918** issue of the newspaper, it was mentioned, under 'Business Notices' that: *A fine farm at Meremere, belonging to Mr J. F. McGregor, on the Allen road, and comprising 357 acres, is advertised for sale by Messrs Lynskey and Evans, of Hāwera. The farm is close to dairy factories, school, and post office, and has on it a good house and outbuildings. It is very suitable for mixed farming.* The background to the decision to sell the farm, according to his granddaughter Margaret McGregor, was that John Forbes McGregor had suffered heavy financial losses with the purchase of a pedigree herd of cattle.

Three months later Mary Sarah McGregor died on 2 September 1918 with the following report in the newspaper on **3 September**: *Many friends in South Taranaki will regret to learn of the death of Mrs J. F. McGregor, of Meremere, on Monday last. She had been ill for a considerable time, and her death was not unexpected. Mr McGregor will have the sympathy of his many friends.*

By early 1919 the farm had been sold and JF McGregor retired to live at 66 Wilson Street, Hāwera. He died in his sleep on 8 August 1919 and was buried in the plot he had purchased, in the Presbyterian section of the Hāwera Cemetery. John Forbes McGregor had spent what must have been a small fortune on the family burial plot. After his wife died 2 September 1918 he ordered a large shipment of Scottish granite for the tombstone which arrived a week after he died. The McGregor Monument, as it came to be known, was erected as set out in drawings he had commissioned.

In his will, dated 18 September 1918 John Forbes McGregor said ' *I direct my Trustee to expend such sum as he may think fit but not exceeding the amount receivable from my policy in the New Zealand Government Life Insurance Department, in the erection of a suitable headstone and lettering over the graves of myself and my deceased wife*'. The following phrase is inscribed, after his wife's name on the tombstone - '*Her ways were ways of pleasantness and all her paths were peace*'. In the plot are currently

buried JF McGregor, his wife, their two children and spouses plus two of the grandchildren and one great grandchild. Margaret McGregor (1913 – 2000), the only grandchild at the time he died, is buried in the Returned Services section of the Hāwera Cemetery with her husband Edwin Thomas (Roy) Stockwell (1908-1988). He had served in the Royal New Zealand Air Force in WW II.

George McGregor was a builder and married Alice Mary (Minnie) Munro in Hāwera on 6 July 1920. They had four children, the first two being twin boys. It was a hard birth on 23 January 1922, with **Donald Alexander McGregor** dead 18 days later on 10 February 1922. His brother, **John Bruce McGregor**, suffered oxygen deprivation at birth and was always 'slow'. However, he held down a full time labouring job at the Patea Freezing Company where Iain and Donald Stockwell had also worked during the summer school holidays. Bruce, as he was known, died 15 September 1979, aged 57, of a massive heart attack. He had no issue and with his death the male McGregor line ceased for this family. George died at 65 years of age at 18 June 1951, after suffering for many years from rheumatoid arthritis. Alice spent the next 9 years mainly living with her daughter Betty, and died in New Plymouth 24 March 1960 at 76 years.



**Alice and George McGregor c 1935**

The third child was **Betty Munro McGregor**, born 23 April 1923. She married Leslie Mervyn Lovatt (born 1919), on 28 December 1948. Les served in the RNZAF during WW II as a radio operator in the Pacific Islands and afterwards worked for the New Zealand Post Office. They had one child, a daughter, Denise who subsequently married a Canadian IT specialist Carl Tookey. They have two sons, Dustin and Brett. Les Lovatt died 2 February 2005 at 83 years and Betty on 4 January 2013 at 89 years of age. They are buried together in the Awanui Cemetery, New Plymouth.

**Mary Ellen McGregor**, the youngest child, was born 3 May 1926. She married local farmer Mervyn Whyte (born 3 February 1923), on 18 June 1949. They were to have 6

sons: Donald, Ray, Ian, Basil, Keith and Geoffrey. The boys all gained engineering qualifications and later worked either in the farming / agricultural sector or the pulp and paper industry. Donald McGregor Whyte worked in the latter and is currently a member of the Morwell (Victoria) Caledonian Pipe Band, having lived in Australia for many years. He and his brother Keith Whyte in New Zealand are members of the Clan Gregor Society. Mervyn died at 84 years of age on 20 December 2007 and Mary on 15 November 2011 at 85 years of age. They are buried together in the Hāwera Cemetery.

**Mary Isabella Jane (Polly) McGregor** daughter of JF and Sarah McGregor, in 1913 became pregnant by John ‘Mac’ McNaught McGinley, a Scots migrant (born 1891), who was working for her father on the farm. John McGinley’s parents were Samuel McGinley (ploughman) and Margaret McNaught. They were 26 and 23 years of age respectively when they were married 1 December 1886, at the Free Church, Parish of Penpont, County of Dumfries. Penpont is a small village three miles (5km) west of Thornhill and 16 miles (24km) north of Dumfries.

John McGinley asked to marry Polly. J F McGregor refused to give permission as he did not regard him as a suitable son-in-law. **Margaret McGregor** was born 11 December 1913 and lived with her mother and grandparents for the first 5 years of her life.



**Left: Mary Isabella Jane Peters (nee McGregor) and FG Peters, 1926.**



**Right: John McNaught McGinley c 1965**

Mary Isabella Jane subsequently married Frederick George Peters, an English migrant who had been working on her father’s farm. He had sufficient education to satisfy John

Forbes McGregor. They were married in July 1919, a month before her father died and before 'Mac' returned from WW1 service in Europe with the Otago Regiment.

Margaret's mother and stepfather, along with her, moved to 4 George Street, Hāwera. Three children were born there: Eric Douglas Peters (1923-1996), Frederick Ian Peters (1925-1994) and Patricia Aileen George, nee Peters (1927-1959). Fred Peters established his own brush making business after the family farm was sold. However, by March 1930, with the Great Depression, there was a substantial decline in sales by his company, Dairyland Brush Factory. Fred committed suicide at the age of 41 on 22 March 1930. Margaret found his body on the floor of the factory after being hoisted through a window by a policeman. Given the community attitude to suicide in those days, the family decided that '*high blood pressure*' was the best way to explain his death. Iain, doing family research in 1990, sixty years later, discovered the Coroner's report and became aware of what had actually occurred.

Margaret, who had been doing very well academically (as well as being the Hāwera High School Senior Girl's Athletic Champion, a school prefect, member of the netball team), had to leave school two days after his death in order to help her mother provide for her much younger two brothers and sister. Margaret's mother, Nana Peters as we knew her, was in a precarious situation with no husband, no income and three young children. Her husband's life insurance policy divided the proceeds into four with Nana only entitled to a quarter and their three children's allocation being held in trust until they were 21 years of age. The eldest child was 7 and the youngest three years old. There was no provision for Margaret who had not been formally adopted by FG Peters.

Donald Stockwell gave a presentation on his grandmother, at the 125th McGregor anniversary dinner in 2019. Some of his comments are repeated: *Nana was resourceful and took in boarders to provide for the family. A sleep-out was built on the section, which was like an army type barracks. Later as the family left home, she let out bedrooms in the house as well. Her boarders were men transferred to Hāwera, by various businesses, such as train drivers, line workers and Post Office and Power board employees and young bankers, clerical workers in the Railways system etc boarded there.*

*To help make ends meet, Widow Peters, as she was known, had the use of a paddock at the bottom of High Street. Some kind person gave her the use of a paddock which was accessed by walking along the rail line toward South Road, about where the steam train was derailed, many years later. Twice daily she would go down and milk the cow in a rough cow bail. This was really only a hole in the huge boxthorn hedge. To keep me occupied I had to go to the milking as well, ostensibly to assist. After milking, we would return along the railway line. Nana would carry two partially filled four-gallon kerosene tins of milk up the hill to 4 George Street. I would imagine they held just over a gallon of milk (approximately 4-5 litres) in total. She was still doing this in 1952 and I would accompany her supposedly to assist with milking. And she also had hens for eggs and a large vegetable garden to help with feeding the family and boarders. He remembered the news coming to his mother that Nana had lost a finger while chopping kindling wood for her fire in the winter of 1955. She had boarders until she died, on 2 November 1957, just after her 70th birthday on 11 October. Her grandsons remember her as being medium height, of slight build but a formidable and no – nonsense person. The grandsons have fond memories of the magnificent mixed fruit steam pudding she used to make and at Christmas there would be 3d and 6d pieces inserted as they had up to 50% of silver content so could be used safely in food.*



**After the 5 November 1957 interment of their mother, Mary Isabella Jane Peters (nee McGregor), in the McGregor plot, Hāwera Cemetery.**

**Left to right:** Patricia George (nee Peters), Margaret McGregor, Eric Peters, Ian Peters.

Margaret started work in April 1930 as a secretary / accounts clerk at Wann & Mackay Limited, who sold and serviced 'Raleigh' and 'Rudge' bicycles; BSA, Triumph, Douglas, Ariel and Indian motorcycles, as well as Courtenay Radios, retailed and distributed HMV (His Master's Voice), whiteware, music and gramophones and in later years sold Briggs and Stratton, Morrison and Masport lawn mowers. Here she met her future husband, Roy Stockwell. As Margaret was helping support her widowed mother



and three younger siblings, they had a long courtship, being engaged in 1938 and married on 28 October 1940. He was 32 and she was 26. During WW II Margaret lived with her mother at the house she had grown up in, 4 George Street, Hāwera.



**Roy and Margaret Stockwell's first car  
December 1944.**

**L to R:** Roy Stockwell, Margaret McGregor;  
Roy's mother Annie Maud Stockwell nee  
Young in the front passenger's seat. Note the  
RNZAF Harewood Air Base pennant.

After his WW II service ended, Roy and Margaret moved into their first and only house, at 7 Laurent V.C. Street, Hāwera, named after a local soldier who had been awarded the Victoria Cross for bravery in the Great War. They had four children: Iain McGregor born 5 December 1944; Donald McGregor, born 11 February 1946; Bruce Alastair, born 29 February 1948; Mairi Margaret, born 19 February 1956. Margaret was very proud of her Scots ancestry so all four children were named accordingly. The family dog was called Dougal! The McGregor tartan was displayed on the wall of the lounge of her Hāwera home and she wore her McGregor tartan skirt wherever possible. She made her only visit to Scotland in 1975, with an itinerary arranged by Iain who was at that time living in Toronto, Canada. She also loved the sound of the bagpipes and the poetry of Robbie Burns and Sir Walter Scott. One of her favourite lines was from 'The McGregor's Gathering' by Sir Walter Scott: *'While there's leaves in the forest and foam in the river McGregor despite them shall flourish forever.'*

**The Invisible Father / Grandfather**

Margaret was not told by her mother that John McGinley ('Mac') was her biological father. She was left to work it out for herself over the years. She kept in regular contact with 'Mac' after she was married, taking her children to visit him at his very modest Waitara home in North Taranaki. They knew him as 'Uncle Mac' and had been told by her that he had no family in New Zealand, and that their mother kept in touch with him because he had worked on her grandfather's farm. Iain remembers how 'Mac's eyes used to light up with pleasure whenever they visited him. Each January he was also

transported to the family bach at Urenui, 20 minutes drive from Waitara, for lunch and dinner over the summer break. He also attended Iain and Donald's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday functions. Margaret's mother used to also visit the bach before she died in 1957 but not at the same time as 'Mac'. It so happened that 'Mac' never married and when he died 31 May 1969 at the age of 78 years, he left everything to his daughter. Iain later, while doing family research in the late 1980s, found out about the real relationship with 'Mac'. We learnt 20 years later that 'Mac's older brother in Scotland had expected to inherit a substantial estate, as he thought Mac was a '*wealthy retired sheep farmer*'. He had been unaware of Mac's daughter Margaret's existence.

John McGinley was buried in the Returned Service's Association section of the Waitara Cemetery. And it was there in late December 2006 that Iain, while showing his daughter Alannah and her cousin Shona where 'Mac' was buried, had an amazing chance meeting with a Mr and Mrs Kilpatrick. They had lived in the same street as 'Mac' for many years and were intrigued to see us at his grave. Mrs Kilpatrick asked how we knew him. Iain simply said '*He was my grandfather*'. She responded '*I know all about you as he told me about his daughter and her family*'. She then went on to tell Iain that she had been sending Christmas cards since 1969 to John McGinley's niece in Scotland. She later gave Iain the address and he wrote to the niece. The response came from her daughter as the niece had died. She passed on the letter to her brother Wullie Graham, grandson of 'Mac's older brother, who lived in Bristol. His wife had lived in Australia for many years at one stage of her life and a visit was planned in January 2008 to see her father in Perth. Iain persuaded them to add New Zealand to their itinerary to meet the New Zealand relatives and visit John McGinley's grave. Since that time Iain has visited them in Bristol and has kept in regular contact with Wullie.

**Life in the 1950s and early 1960s:** Hāwera grew steadily, from a population of 5,342 at the 1951 Census, to 5,620 in 1956, and 7,536 at the 1961 Census, and 10,300 in October 2020. The town, in the mid/ late 1950s was riven with religious intolerance and prejudice, there being a clear division between those belonging to the Protestant

churches and those who were of the Roman Catholic faith. This continued in parts of New Zealand for many years. Fortunately, this is no longer the case.

For Iain, as a young boy growing up in the small rural town of Hāwera, South Taranaki, where his great grandfather, John Forbes McGregor, born in Scotland, was buried; and his mother was proud of her McGregor ancestry, the connection with Scotland was very real. Viewing the film *'Rob Roy McGregor'* at the Hāwera Opera House in 1953 reinforced this and made a huge impression. As did the novels by Nigel Tranter about the McGregor's such as *'The McGregor's Gathering'* (1957); *'The Clansmen'* in 1959. There were street names in Hāwera with Scots connections – Burns St, Glasgow St, Cameron Street, Campbell St, Argyll St, Caledonia St, McLean Street, Burnside Avenue, Scott Street, Davidson Street, and Douglas Street. There was too the Hāwera Highland Pipe Band which played a prominent role on the town's social life and indeed was also the Pipe Band for Clan McLachlan in New Zealand.

There was also the strong link with St John's Presbyterian Church, where the funeral services for Iain's great grandfather and great grandmother were held. His grandmother Mary Isabella Jane McGregor was married and her funeral service held there, as were both for his mother, Margaret McGregor Stockwell and his father. Iain's brothers Donald and Bruce were married at the church too.



**Roy Stockwell riding a penny farthing bicycle in the Queen Elizabeth 11 Coronation Parade, High Street, Hāwera, 1953.**

Life was not easy as Roy had been financially supporting his parents for several years. His mother died in 1952 and his father, Tom Stockwell, a year later asked to come and live with him and his family. This meant building another room to accommodate him.



**Bruce, Donald and Iain Stockwell with their grandfather Tom Stockwell, prior to attending the Hāwera 1961 ANZAC Parade.**

The boys are in their Hāwera High School uniforms. Tom was a veteran of the South Africa Anglo -Boer War 1899 – 1902.

ANZAC parades are always held in New Zealand and Australia on 25 April each year to commemorate those from both countries who have died in conflicts overseas.



Roy Stockwell and Margaret McGregor, at the New Zealand Cycle Dealers Federation Conference Dinner 1967

All four children were prominent at both Hāwera High School and/or at the Taranaki Secondary School Championships - Ian in athletics, rugby, cross country and indoor basketball; Donald and Bruce with swimming and hockey; Mairi in swimming and netball. Their mother Margaret was an inspiration to them all – she had been Senior Girl’s Athletics Champion, at Hāwera High School, in 1929, and had also represented Taranaki, in both athletics and netball. Whenever possible she attended the sporting activities they participated in.

Iain, after graduating MA from Victoria University, joined the New Zealand Public Service and spent 20 of the 42 years of his working life, overseas with the New Zealand Trade Commissioner Service in Canada, Fiji, Thailand, India and Singapore. Donald was a Stock and Station Agent and Auctioneer, then in later life an Economic Adviser to Venture Taranaki and the South Taranaki District Council. He was a mature student

gaining his degree at the age of 63 years. Bruce worked for the Bank of New Zealand for 47 years, qualified as an Accountant and had two secondments in London. Mairi gained her Library Diploma and then went overseas where she met her husband Peter Paige from South Australia. They married in 1984. She has lived in Australia since then with him and their four children. Mairi and Peter own a lobster fishing business.

Iain was first married to Mary Jennings, a science high school teacher, at Hutt Valley High School on 25 November 1972. They separated in 1978 and divorced March 1981. Mary and Ian had one child, Rachel Whetū Stockwell, born 29 July 1975, in Toronto, during Iain's posting to Canada where they also lived in Montreal and Vancouver. Later in Fiji, while he was Trade Commissioner at the New Zealand High Commission, he married Jenni Walkden-Brown. She was a Lecturer at the University of the South Pacific, Suva.

Jenni had her primary and secondary school education in Fiji and her tertiary education in New Zealand where she graduated with an Arts degree, majoring in English Literature and French, from Otago University, Dunedin. She then completed her teacher training at the Canterbury Teacher's Training College, in Christchurch, before returning to Fiji. Iain adopted Jenni's 9 year old daughter Shauna. Jenni and Iain's first child, Simon McGregor Stockwell, died at birth. Their second child, Alannah Morag Stockwell, was born in Suva in September 1981. She was with them during the postings to Bangkok, Thailand (1984-1991) and New Delhi, India (1994-1998).



#### **Urenui Bach 1984**

**left to right:** Shauna Stockwell, Jenni Brown, Roy Stockwell (carving the roast), Cathie Stockwell, Rachel Stockwell, Iain Stockwell, Judy Stockwell, Lynne Stockwell, Margaret Stockwell.

Roy died, on 6 March 1988, at New Plymouth Base Hospital, just two weeks after his 80th birthday family celebrations, at Urenui, North Taranaki. The Death Certificate stated the cause of death as being “*undiagnosed cancer*”. His doctor had sadly failed, over a two year period, to identify the cause of his deteriorating health until the day before he died. His funeral service was held at St John's Presbyterian Church, with a huge number of friends and relatives attending. At the service there were eulogies by representatives of the South Taranaki RSA and the Masonic Lodge. He was buried, with the "Last Post" playing, in the RSA section of the Hāwera Cemetery.



**Margaret McGregor Stockwell (80 years), and her four children, at her home, October 1994 during the Hāwera High School 75<sup>th</sup> Jubilee.**

**Left to right:** Bruce, Iain, Mairi, Margaret, Donald Stockwell

In July 1996 Margaret McGregor was in Wellington for the happy occasion of her granddaughter Rachel's 21st birthday. A celebratory lunch was held at the home of Rachel's mother, Mary Jennings. Iain Stockwell flew back from New Delhi, India where he was in the third year of a four year posting as Trade Commissioner at the New Zealand High Commission. Rachel was fortunate to have both grandmothers present.



**Rachel Stockwell's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday with her parents and grandmothers**

**29 July 1996**

**Left to right:** Iain McGregor Stockwell, Margaret McGregor Stockwell, Rachel Stockwell, Faye Jennings, Mary Jennings.

Margaret McGregor Stockwell was for many years an elder of St John's Presbyterian Church, Hāwera and belonged to many clubs and associations, reflecting her wide

range of interests. She was often out several nights a week. When Margaret was older she delivered meals on wheels at a time when she probably needed them herself! She died on 1 July 2000, just 5 months short of her 87th birthday. At the funeral service her casket was draped in McGregor tartan, all her children wore the tartan; the piper played 'The Flower of Scotland' at St John's Presbyterian Church and a karanga (Māori lament) was called for her by the local Kuia of Ngati Ruanui Iwi. The 'Highlander's Lament' was piped at the graveside.

Margaret was to her children and grandchildren, a positive person who would listen, and take action on matters of importance to her and the family. She was best described in the Gaelic proverb:

*Some people make things happen,  
Some people watch things happen.  
Others consider what has happened.*

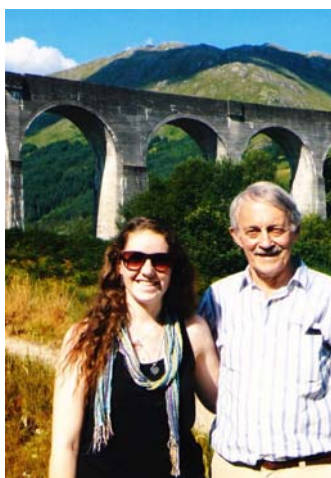
Iain said his mother was the rock of the family. The Māori whakataukī or proverb '*Me he toka tū moana*' uses the image of a rock that stands firmly in the ocean to describe someone steadfast and strong in their culture or beliefs. He remembers only too well that it was she, with her emphasis on education, who persuaded him to undertake university study. This ultimately led to the career that he had with the New Zealand Government for his working life. Iain, in his 32 page contribution '*John Forbes McGregor and the Invisible Grandfather*' to the Dunedin Family History Group's publication '*A Scottish Father*' 2012 said:

*This family history report, about my great grandfather John Forbes McGregor, his two brothers, and my 'invisible' grandfather John McNaught McGinley, is dedicated to my mother, Margaret McGregor (1913 – 2000). She ensured that I too, treasured our Scots ancestry and her great love for Scotland, shortbread, the bagpipes, Scottish country dancing, Highland Games and whisky; and to my father Edwin Thomas 'Roy' Stockwell (1908 – 1988), who was swept along with the prevailing wind.*

Margaret would have been pleased with the educational achievements of her 6 grandchildren in New Zealand: Cathie Stockwell (BA secondary school English / French teacher); Lynne Stockwell (B. Com / Accountancy professional exams); Rachel

Stockwell (BA Hons Senior Policy Analyst, Ministry of Justice); Alannah Stockwell (MbChB (Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery), PG Dip OMG (Post Graduate Diploma of Obstetrics and Medical Gynaecology), FRNZCGP (Fellowship of the Royal New Zealand College of General Practice), Advanced Clinical Certificate of Skin Cancer Medicine and Surgery); (Shona Stockwell BA / Law degree); Hamish Stockwell (Architecture Honours degree); and her 5 grandchildren in Australia : Shauna Stockwell (Executive Chef); Fiona Paige (Physiotherapist); Marsha Paige (Diploma Remedial Massage); Lilah Paige (Bachelor of Business -Tourism Management; Callum Paige (Qualified builder, Class V Skipper's and Engineer's ticket).

Iain retired in August 2009 and then worked as Business Development Manager, at Aviation New Zealand, an industry organisation, for several years. He belongs to several environmental organisations such as the Lake Rotokare Scenic Trust, the Galapagos Trust, the Taranaki Kiwi Trust and was a Trustee of the Otari Wilton's Bush Trust for 10 years. Iain has been a Trustee for the past 25 years of the Ranichauri Eastwoodhill Trust; a Team Leader and on the management board of the Karori Food Bank. Scottish Country Dancing is another strong interest and as mentioned earlier he is the New Zealand Representative for the Clan Gregor Society, Scotland. He and Jenni have sponsored students in Mussoorie, India, through the Tibetan Children's Relief Society of New Zealand, for the past 20 years.



Iain Stockwell and his niece, Lilah Paige, August 2014, with the Glenfinnan Railway Viaduct in the background, after the Clan Gregor Society International Gathering.

The viaduct has become famous, as a result of it being mentioned, by J K Rowling in her 'Harry Potter' books.





**John Forbes McGregor's eldest great grandson and youngest gtgt-gt-grandson celebrate their December birthdays together in Nelson, 2021. Left to right: Jenni Brown, Douglas McGregor Heal (1 year old), Iain McGregor Stockwell, Alannah Stockwell, Nina Heal.**

### **Blessing of the McGregor Monument**

The Rev. John Wilkie, Minister of St John's Presbyterian Church, Hāwera, officiated at the unveiling of the new inscription, on the McGregor Monument, 13 August 2011. Mary Whyte (nee McGregor) had generously arranged for this to be done as the existing lettering had badly faded after the passage of 90 odd years. Four generations of family members have been baptised, married and farewelled at St. John's Church.



**Left to right: Dulcie Peters, Betty Lovatt (nee McGregor), Iain McGregor Stockwell, Mary Whyte (nee McGregor), Denise Tookey (nee Lovatt), Keith and Derryn Whyte.**



**The McGregor Monument. The new inscription, on black stone, can be seen at the base of the plinth.**

### **Charles Forbes McGregor, the third brother to emigrate to New Zealand**

Charles Forbes McGregor (1858 – 1922), emigrated to Opunake, South Taranaki, New Zealand, in 1888. He met his wife Sarah Wellings, in South Africa while enroute, married her on 28 April 1887, and adopted her son Arthur from a previous marriage. The move to New Zealand was in effect chain migration as he was joining his eldest brother John Forbes McGregor (1849 – 1919), who had emigrated in 1885, with his wife Mary Sarah McGregor (1847 – 1918) and become a dairy farmer. Already settled there, from 1881, was another brother Donald McGregor (1853 – 1917), a blacksmith and dairy farmer, and his wife Jean Bremner (1857 – 1923) and a sister Rachel McGregor (1854 -1921) and her husband George Taylor. The four siblings left behind in Scotland their mother Jane Wattie (1817 – 1889), brother George King McGregor (1856 – 1922), and two single sisters, Isabella Jane and Mary McGregor.

Charles Forbes McGregor soon settled into the local community as the three news reports below show:

#### **Taranaki Herald, 9 January 1891 page 2 Opunake Report**

*A report that 'Messrs. Chas. McGregor and Samuel Prosser, two energetic members of the Town Board' assisted Mr. John Ross to 'salvage a 5 cwt gun from the wreck of the barque 'Harriet which was wrecked off Cape Egmont on April 29th, 1834'. The 12 pounder gun was presented to the town of Opunake.*

#### **Taranaki Herald 7 April 1897 page 2 Opunake Report**

*A most pleasant evening was spent at the band room on Tuesday, 23 inst., by the members of the band. The festivity was a social gathering to Mr. C. F. McGregor on his retiring from the band. Mr McGregor had been one of the main stays of the band, was a most regular attendant at meetings, and much regret was expressed at his retirement. His instrument was E flat bass. The proceedings opened by the full band playing the favourite airs of the guest. Mr. W.W. Middleton, President, Messrs. T. Knowles and Webb, Vice Presidents, made complimentary speeches, and also referred to the ability the Secretary had displayed since taking that office. A medal was presented to the guest.*



**Charles McGregor and his two youngest daughters, Amy and Charlotte, 1895 / 96**

**Taranaki Herald 10 April 1897 page 2 Opunake Report**

*On one of the principal corners, opposite Mr Middleton's hotel, Mr. C.F. McGregor has erected a large double shop for his saddlery business, and being situated on a prominent site is a good addition to the town. The building was erected by Messrs Christie & Co; Mr. O'Brien, of the same firm, being architect, and Mr. A. Elgar doing the plumbing work.*

Charles (saddle, harness maker / bee keeper), and Sarah had four children: **Gordon Forbes McGregor** (1896 – 1939), and three older children, all daughters: Eva (1889 – 1956), Amy (1891 -1966) and Charlotte McGregor (1893 -1981). Only Eva married and none of them had children. Charlotte, according to Margaret McGregor, was reputed to have ‘second sight’ - the ability to foretell the future. This belief led to extended McGregor family members being cautious in their interactions with her.

Charles, from the news report below, had established a reputation for good quality clover honey and was exporting to London.

*Opunake Times 11 June 1915 page 2 from Rahotu to London is a long way, but we notice that the local bee farmer ( Mr. C/ McGregor), has just sealed down the last of his pure clover honey which is intended for the London market and a specially good example it is. Mr McGregor has just installed an up-to-date honey extractor which is a great labour saving machine and enables the owner to put his honey on the market in the purest form.*



**The grave at Te Henui Cemetery, New Plymouth of Charles Forbes McGregor (1858–1922), his wife Sarah (1856-1925 ) and eldest granddaughter Jacqueline McGregor (1925–2019).** There is a plaque attached commemorating their only son **Gordon Forbes McGregor (1896–1939)**, buried at Oamaru, South Island, New Zealand.

Gordon volunteered at 18 years of age. He was working as a clerk in the New Zealand Post Office when he enlisted on 29 May 1915 at 20 years of age. According to the service records he was 5' 6 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in height, weighed 9 stone 4 lb and had blue eyes and light brown hair, and was 20 years 2 months. He was a Sapper in C Company, 1st Battalion, Trentham Regiment. Gordon first saw action with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force in the Middle East and was wounded in Egypt on 23 January 1916 and re-joined his unit three days later. Later that year he was transferred to Europe. He was wounded in action again in France September 1916 and re-joined the battalion late October 1916. Mid - June 1917 he suffered gas poisoning and was transferred to a convalescence depot. In March 1918 Gordon was admitted to hospital with influenza – the strain that was, by December that year, to kill millions of people in many countries. He left the hospital on 9 April 1918. His final discharge from service was on 18 October 1919.

In 1922, three years after the Great War, Gordon was not in good health. He was to face an even more daunting challenge. His father, Charles Forbes McGregor, had been suffering for several months that year under the stress of declining orders for his leather goods but more tellingly from the unwarranted and totally misguided fear that his eldest daughter, Eva McGregor, was about to lose her farm. The family were sufficiently concerned about his state of mind that Gordon was asked to come home and talk to his father. Sadly, Gordon, who was 26 years old at the time, was not able to set his father's mind at rest about Eva's farm and Charles, in tragic circumstances, committed suicide on 1 August 1922. Gordon had the traumatic experience of finding his father and dealing with the Police and the Coroner. His mother, Sarah McGregor, was to die a few years later on 11 November 1926 at 69 years of age. Charles and Sarah are buried together in the Te Henui Cemetery, New Plymouth.

Gordon suffered ill health, from the 1917 gas poisoning, for the rest of his life. In 1925 he married Amelia Ida Hedderwick. They had 5 children: Jacqueline, Evan, Graeme, Allan and Judith. The last child was born a few months after his premature death on 24 May 1939 at 42 years of age. At the time of his death Gordon was the Postmaster at

Oamaru, in the South Island of New Zealand. Afterwards Ida took the family to South Taranaki where Gordon's sisters were farming, as they could provide family support.

Evan was four years old at the time of his father's death. He attended the local primary school, and also from the age of 9 years milked cows on the farms of his McGregor aunts, Charlotte and Army. Life was to change dramatically when his mother, at 48 years of age, died 10 weeks after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, on 25 November 1949. She was buried with Gordon in the Old Oamaru Cemetery, Presbyterian section. Ida left 5 children – Jacqueline (23), Evan (14), Graeme (12), Alan (11) and Judith (10). The three boys came under the care of the Great War Heritage for Orphans Trust and were sent as boarders to Wesley College in Auckland. Gordon's half-brother, Arthur McGregor, and his family, lived in that city and provided the three boys with family support. In 1951 Evan left Wesley College and enrolled in a one year course at the Ministry of Agriculture's Flock House Farm Training Institute, at Bulls. He then worked as a shearer for three years, followed by another three years in a retail sports equipment shop.

He had always had an interest in the seafaring life and in 1959 joined the Royal New Zealand Navy as a trainee signalman. After training, during his 8 years of service, he served on three Royal New Zealand Navy New Zealand frigates. Early 1962 Evan met, and later that year on 30 June married Carol Yvonne Miller (born 20 December 1940), at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. They had three sons: Robert Forbes McGregor, born 18 August 1964, Grant Andrew McGregor born 2 March 1966, and Douglas William McGregor, born 25 September 1967. After the birth of his last son Evan decided it was time for a change and he joined the Marine Division, Ministry of Transport. He spent 19 years working for the Ministry and then in 1985 was employed by the Auckland Harbour Board as the South Head Signalman at the Manukau Harbour entrance, on the Awhitu Peninsula. He enjoyed this job immensely, with its relatively isolated environment, living by the sea, and was to spend 35 years there before finally retiring in 2020. He was not replaced.

Graeme Lindsay MacGregor, the third child, was born in Dunedin on 2 December 1936. He held positions as chief reporter and then leader writer / deputy editor of the Taranaki Herald in New Plymouth, was a senior journalist on the Auckland Star and the New Zealand Herald in Auckland, and for eight years was senior group editor at Suburban Newspapers in Auckland. He married Ava Marylyn Coxhead on 17 May 1961 in New Plymouth. They had two daughters, Rachel and Sarah. Rachel, the eldest daughter received widespread media coverage after she resigned in September 2014 as Personal Assistant to Colin Craig, leader of the Conservative Party of New Zealand. She cited unwarranted attention from him. They both ended up in court suing each other over defamation of character. Finally in 2021 the High Court awarded Rachel \$400,000 in damages. See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colin\\_Craig](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colin_Craig) for full details.

The fourth child, Allan John McGregor, born 18 January 1938, married Raewyn Sullivan, born 21 December 1942, on 15 January 1972. They had one child, Gavin James, born 9 May 1979. He has a daughter Zoe Rose Slater, born 10 June 2001 and a son, Dex Marley McGregor born 2015. Judith, the last child married Gilbert Ward. They had four children - Gordon Alexander Ward, Joanna, Michael and Paul. Gordon, an accountant / financier secured private investment for the Pike River coal mine, West Coast, New Zealand. He was CEO but resigned over performance issues with the Board of Directors. Six weeks later, on 19 November 2010, a methane explosion at the mine resulted in the death of 29 miners. A Royal Commission of Inquiry was established by the Government. Gordon Ward refused to return from Australia and testify. See <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/culture/pike-river-mine-disaster> and <https://pikeriver.royalcommission.govt.nz> for details on the findings 30 Oct 2012.

Evan suffered a stroke in early April 2021 and died several days later on 8 April. The service on 17 April for Evan had, given his keen interest in all things Scottish, a strong flavour of Scotland. The Order of Service had on the front page a photograph of Evan as a young man in his Royal New Zealand Navy uniform and another of an older Evan with his Edinburgh Military Tattoo cap, and on the inside of the cover page, the McGregor crest. Eulogies were given by Barry Magee (a relative who won a bronze medal in the 1960 Olympics marathon– his mother was a McGregor), his son Robert

McGregor and two Presbyterian Ministers. One Minister mentioned Evan's membership of the local Whisky Connoisseurs Club. Iain knew, from personal experience, that Evan enjoyed a wee dram or two!

The piper farewelled Evan from the St. James Presbyterian Church, Pukekohe with a range of Scottish songs: 'Scottish Soldier,' 'Loch Lomond', 'Scotland the Brave', and 'Auld Lang Syne' as the hearse left the church grounds. Donald McGregor Stockwell, David Stephens, and Iain McGregor Stockwell wore their McGregor kilts at the service, as did Robert Forbes McGregor, Evan's eldest son, with one of Evan's grandsons too. Another grandson was in his New Zealand Army uniform. Iain was asked, by Evan's family, to read the Clan Gregor Society Prayer at the service. The Prayer was written for the Society by the Rev. James Benson, former Minister at Balquhidder Church. It is used by the Society every year at their annual Memorial Service in the Balquhidder Church. Evan's wife Carole arranged for Gerald Muir to do a video tribute to Evan, and this is now on You Tube at <https://youtu.be/duOmTkryBnA>

### **McGregor Family Gathering 22/ 23 October 2011**

It was decided to have a reunion in Hāwera, late October, as it was 125 years since John Forbes McGregor and his wife Mary Sarah McGregor (nee Rashleigh), left Scotland and settled in South Taranaki. Those invited to attend were all descendants of either their son George Donald McGregor or their daughter Mary Isabella Jane (Polly) McGregor. Forty seven family members were present at the luncheon, held at the home of Donald and Judy Stockwell. Afterwards 5 tanekaha trees were planted in Naumai Park representing the branches of the family present: Whyte, Eric Peters, Ian Peters, Stockwell and the Lovatt/Tookey families. Donald McGregor Whyte piped 'Flower of Scotland' as the trees were planted. Ten family members travelled from Australia to attend the 125th anniversary events.

Dinner was held at the Hāwera Club with 50 guests attending – many of them wearing the tartan. Donald McGregor Whyte piped in the guests to the music of 'Scotland the Brave'. The room was decorated with the Clan Gregor flag, the Saltire, and the Royal Standard of Scotland with New Zealand flags on each table. Donald McGregor

Stockwell was the MC for the evening, Mairi Stockwell recited Robbie Burn's 'Selkirk Grace' and Iain Stockwell gave the speech dedicated to the Guest of Honour, Betty Lovatt (nee McGregor) grand daughter of John Forbes and Mary Sarah McGregor. Sadly the other Guest of Honour, also a grand daughter, Mary Whyte (nee McGregor) was ill and unable to attend (she died 15 November 2011 at 85 years). Denise Tookey dedicated her speech to past, current and future members of the family. The evening concluded with 'Auld Lang Syne'.



### **At the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner**

#### **Left to right:**

Dulcie Peters, Iain McGregor Stockwell,  
Mairi Stockwell, Donald McGregor Whyte.

On Sunday 23 October family members gathered at the Hāwera Cemetery to pay their respects to John Forbes and Mary Sarah McGregor and descendants. Iain Stockwell led the service, Betty Lovatt laid a floral tribute, and the Clan Gregor Prayer was recited. Donald McGregor Whyte concluded the service with 'Amazing Grace'. It was estimated that there were, in October 2011, 127 descendants of John Forbes McGregor and his wife Sarah.

### **McGregor Family Gathering 24 / 25 August 2019**

It was decided to have an August 2019 gathering in Hāwera, to mark the centenary of the death of John Forbes McGregor, on 8 August 1919. The proposed dates were good for two reasons - it was only two weeks after the actual anniversary date and it was still within the 100th year since John's wife, Mary Sarah McGregor (nee Rashleigh), died on 2 September 1918. We were delighted that Evan and Carol McGregor; their son Robert, his wife Jo-Anne and their two sons, Claymore Forbes and Lachlan Kincaid McGregor (descendants of Charles Forbes McGregor), accepted the invitation to join us. We were fortunate to have two members, Donald McGregor Whyte (Australia) and Rex Peters (Germany), as pipers for the events. A lunch was held on Saturday 24 August at the Hāwera Community Centre, Albion Street with 40 people attending. One



of the highlights was the piping in of Dulcie Peters (the oldest attendee at 89 years of age), in her wheelchair, by her son Rex Peters, to the tune 'Castle Dangerous'. The youngest attendees were Dulcie's great grand daughter, Parker Prentice at 12 months, and Alannah Stockwell's daughter, Nina Heal, at 16 months.

### Some of the Descendants of JF and MS McGregor



Left to right: Keith Whyte, Iain McGregor Stockwell, Rachel Stockwell, Donald McGregor Whyte, Denise Tookey, Rex Peters, Judy Stockwell, Hamish McGregor Stockwell, Vicky Whyte, Donald McGregor Stockwell, Liam McGregor Miller.

That afternoon the extended McGregor family went to the Hāwera Cemetery to pay their respects to the three generations of ancestors who were buried there. The service commenced at the McGregor Monument where John Forbes McGregor, his wife Sarah and their two children: the daughter Polly (Mary Isabella Jane) McGregor and her husband Frederick George Peters, their daughter Patricia Aileen George (nee Peters); the son George Donald McGregor and his wife Alice Mary (nee Munro) are buried, and their son John Bruce McGregor. Donald McGregor Stockwell gave the tribute and then Donald McGregor Whyte played 'Scotland the Brave'. A similar pattern was followed at the 7 other graves with different members making the tribute; Rex Peters and Donald McGregor Whyte alternately playing a Scottish tune. It was an unforgettable time with the spine tingling skirl of the pipes echoing around the cemetery.



**Left to right:** Iain McGregor Stockwell, Carol McGregor, Evan Forbes McGregor and grandson Clay Forbes McGregor. Note Evan is displaying both McGregor and Forbes tartans. Photograph by Carl Tookey.

**Dinner:** The venue was at the TSB Hub, the \$20.7 million sports, recreation, events and function centre. A wall of the function room, where the dinner was held, featured the Clan Gregor crest, the Saltire and the Lion of Scotland plus laminated A1 size reproductions of the Clan Gregor tartan – modern, ancient / traditional and hunting. Evan did not like public speaking but was persuaded by Iain to say, what we know in New Zealand, as ‘The McGregor Grace’:

*Oh Lord, grant we may not be like cornflakes – lightweight, empty and cold, but like porridge warm, comforting and full of natural goodness.*

Various family members delivered speeches on John Forbes and Sarah McGregor, their two children Mary Isabella Jane McGregor and George Donald McGregor; and on the three cousins - Margaret McGregor and her husband Roy Stockwell, Betty McGregor and her husband Leslie Lovatt; Mary McGregor and her husband Mervyn Whyte. An extensive treasure trove of family history was revealed and is now recorded. McGregor tartan covered the table that was set up against the length of the wall. On the table were photographs of Donald McGregor (1817 – 1867) and his four sons: John Forbes McGregor, Donald McGregor, Charles Forbes McGregor and George King McGregor. Three commemorative kauri trees, in liaison with the South Taranaki District Council Parks Department, were planted at the Hāwera Cemetery, near the McGregor Monument, by the Whyte / Tookey, Stockwell and Evan Forbes McGregor families.

### **Rachel McGregor, the sister who emigrated to New Zealand**

It had been understood that only the three McGregor brothers emigrated to Opunake, New Zealand. Margaret McGregor (1913 – 2000), my mother, the person with the knowledge of the family, certainly did not know otherwise. But then we need to remember that she left Pihama, when she was almost four years of age to live near Hawera and also that her mother, Mary Isabella Jane Peters (nee McGregor), was close lipped and passed on very little information about the McGregor relatives to her.

In early February 2023, Iain was very surprised to read the following, while researching Charles Forbes McGregor, in a digital archive of newspapers. **Opunake Times 25 March 1921 page 2 – Obituary: Mrs Rachel Taylor.** *The death took place at New*

*Plymouth Hospital on Monday (21 March) of Mrs Rachel Taylor, relict of the late Mr George Taylor of Opunake, at the age of 66. The late Mrs Taylor resided in Opunake for about 34 years. George, her daughter and husband predeceased her some years ago. **Mr Chas. McGregor of Rahotu is a brother.** Of late years Mrs Taylor has been in indifferent health, and has been an inmate of the hospital for some months. She is held in high esteem throughout the district and general regret is expressed at her demise.*

Iain was most intrigued, after almost 102 years since Rachel McGregor's death, to learn that she, one of the sisters of the three McGregor brothers – Donald McGregor, John Forbes McGregor, and Charles Forbes McGregor - had also emigrated to Opunake, New Zealand. He had named his daughter, Rachel Stockwell, after Rachel McGregor. Iain checked the obituary for her husband George Taylor who had died of lung congestion in 1894 (**Opunake Times 23 October 1894 page 2**), and found the following pertinent information:

*It is with deep regret that we have to chronicle the death of Mr George Taylor, at the early age of forty-two years. Deceased was a native of Aberdeenshire and had been about eight years in the colony, most of which he spent in the Opunake district and that **He was brother-in-law to Messrs D, CF and JF McGregor of this district** and leaves a wife, son and daughter to mourn his loss. They will have the deep -felt sympathy of all settlers in the district in their bereavement.*

He then obtained a copy of Rachel Taylor's death certificate. It was mentioned that her maiden name was McGregor, her mother's maiden name was Wattie and her father was a farmer. It stated that she was born in Scotland and that she had spent 34 years in New Zealand. It is wrongly recorded that her parents were John and Mary McGregor – they were her brother and his wife (Iain's great grandparents). It could be assumed that her son had no record of his mother's parents who were Donald McGregor and Jane Wattie. She married George Taylor, Dairyman, in Glasgow on 25 March 1879. The causes of death were recorded as being asthenia (extreme weakness / fatigue) and cardiac failure (one day). Rachel Taylor's age of 66 years ties in with the date of Rachel McGregor's birth in Scotland, at Strathdon, 29 October 1854.

The daughter, **Agnes Taylor**, died before her mother (**Opunake Times 15 October 1906 page 2**). *'We regret to report the death of the daughter (Agnes) of Mrs Geo. Taylor. The young lady (16 years of age), had been ill for the past 18 months with consumption, which took her from this world of cares to a brighter one. We join with Mrs Taylor's friends in extending sympathy in her sad bereavement'*.

In the **Opunake Times 13 January 1922 page 2 'Shooting Tragedy'** the suicide of the son, **George Stephen Taylor**, contractor, 37 years of age, on 11 January, was reported. The note he left said *'I am tired of life. Forgive me for taking your gun Chris'* The news report said he *'was a well known Opunake identity....and although he was somewhat eccentric was universally liked and an honest man'*. He was buried in the Opunake Cemetery near his father and sister. His mother, **Rachel McGregor**, had been buried in the Wesleyan section, Te Henui Cemetery, New Plymouth, a short distance from the grave of her brother, **Charles Forbes McGregor**. A family marred by tragedy.

The **Opunake Times 17 February 1922 page 2** reported that **Mrs Rachel Taylor** had left the residue of her estate to the Taranaki Hospital Board: a 6  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre section that had a house on it plus another acre of land. In September 1922, the properties were transferred to the newly established Opunake Cottage Hospital so that the rental income could help to fund its operating costs.

### **George King McGregor, the brother who stayed in Scotland**



**George King McGregor (1856 – 1922)**, the only one of the four brothers who remained in Scotland, was a meal miller, police constable and eventually Superintendent of the River Spey Salmon Fishery. He also served as a Councillor for several years in the town of Aberlour. He married Barbara Weir (born 1858 in Kemnay, west of Aberdeen in Garioch, Aberdeenshire), on 7<sup>th</sup> November, 1879 in Kintore, a small town located on the south-west bank of the River Don, about 12 miles north-west of Aberdeen and three miles south-east of Inverurie. Her parents were James Weir (farm servant) and Barbara Watt.

They had seven children:

George McGregor born 9 October 1880, died 13 June 1936

James Weir McGregor born 29 January 1885, died WW1 1917

Jane Frances Georgina Coath McGregor born 3 September 1888, died 1 April 1976

Charles Wattie McGregor born 1 June 1890, died 9 April 1939

Allan Grant McGregor born 8 June 1895, died 13 March 1981

Barbara Helen (Nell) McGregor born 14 November 1896, died 8 June 1942

Mary McGregor born 28 August 1901, died 1 April 1978.

Only George, Jane and Mary were to have children. Living descendants currently have the surnames of Thomson and Donaldson.

Iain Stockwell was fortunate, along with his brother Donald, his wife Judy and cousin Denise Tookey, to meet George and Barbara's great granddaughter, Frances Carey, in Aberdeen, July 2014 after they attended the Clan Gregor Society International Gathering. Contact had been established between Iain and Frances in June after Iain's brother Bruce and his wife Annette, at his request visited Aberlour, when they were in Scotland. They went to 48 High Street, the last address of GK McGregor. The neighbours at 50 High Street, also McGregors, but no relation, passed on Frances's email address. Iain and Frances have been in regular contact and he has stayed with her after the 2016 and 2018 Clan Gregor Gatherings.

Frances provided the following family information to Iain:

**James Weir MacGregor**, the second son, served in the British Expeditionary Force in the Great War. Jill Stewart, a World War I historian wrote an article in **The Northern Scot newspaper, Elgin, 18 August 2017**, on local men who died in that conflict. On Gunner J W MacGregor (McGregor in some records), she said: *He was born in Lossiemouth, in January 1885, the second son of George and Barbara MacGregor. His father was a police constable in Branderburgh. By 1891 the family had moved to the High Street in Aberlour where his father worked as the Superintendent for the Spey Fishing Board. James served for a few years in the Glasgow Police but returned to Aberlour about 1908 when he established a general merchant business in the town.*



**Gunner James Weir McGregor, died Belgium 1917.** *He enlisted in November 1915 (Reg. No. 73123), but was not called up until 23 March 1916. By February 1917 he was in France and transferred to the Royal Garrison Artillery, 85th Siege Battery. He was killed in action on July 27th 1917 when he was struck by a shell and is buried in the Brandhoek New Military Cemetery near Ypres. A younger brother, Allan, served in Mesopotamia and survived the war.*

George died 12 May 1922. The following obituary appeared in the Aberlour newspaper.

**Late Mr. G.K. McGregor Death of Ex - Superintendent of Spey Fisheries**

*The death of Mr. George King McGregor, ex- superintendent of the Spey fishings, took place on Friday evening last week at the age of 65. By Mr. McGregor's death is removed one who was known over a large area of country and who, wherever known, was held in the highest esteem. Mr. McGregor had been laid aside for over two years.*

*A native of Strathdon, Mr. McGregor left school at an early age and served his apprenticeship as a meal miller with the late Mr. John Wattie, Mill of Newe. He became a member of the Glasgow Constabulary, but remained for only nine months, before he returned to the milling and was for a number of years at Uppermill, Kintore, with the late Mr. Alex Watt. Mr. McGregor, however, had more than a passing fondness for the police force and ultimately he joined the Elgin Constabulary and was stationed at Elgin, Lossiemouth, and New Elgin. He was a conscientious and diligent officer, and in three years was promoted to the rank of sergeant. After serving for five years, he was, out of a long list of candidates, unanimously appointed a superintendent of the River Spey Fishery Board. This position he retained for 15 years, only resigning two years ago on the grounds of bad health. As in the police force he proved an efficient and hard- working official, being held in high esteem by all members of the Board and with all those whom his professional duties brought him into contact.*



**Grave of GK McGregor (1856-1922) and his wife Barbara Weir (1859-1933). Also mentioned on the memorial is their son, James Weir McGregor (1885-1917) and daughter, Barbara Helen McGregor (1896–1942). Aberlour Cemetery.**

### ***A Keen Conservator***

*The area of which he had supervision included the whole of the River Spey and its tributaries and also the fishings of the estuary. This responsible position he filled with the utmost satisfaction. He was never known to take up a case of poaching or infringement without success. Added to these duties he had also the supervision of the River Spey from pollution, and came much in contact with the distilling industry in the discharge of his duty, and for some years was actively engaged in Court of Session prosecutions. A man of considerable force of character, he was no mean antagonist in whatever he undertook, but withal he tried to act justly in a somewhat difficult situation. He took a keen interest in the life of the community of Aberlour, where he resides, and was a member of the Town Council for some years. He was an ardent Conservative in politics and an attached member of the Parish Church.*

*He is survived by his wife and grown-up family, for whom much sympathy is felt in the loss they have suffered. In his younger days he was a great pedestrian, and used to have an annual walk over the hills to Strathdon.*

Frances Carey's grandmother, Jane Frances Georgina Coath MacGregor, was the third born child, of George MacGregor and Barbara Weir. She married Adam Gray Thomson. It was their daughter, Barbara Elizabeth Thomson, born 24 April 1915, who married Gordon Hunter MacKenzie Carey, a RAF Flight Sergeant, in 1941. He was killed on 28th June, 1944. The plane was shot and damaged as it crossed the Channel but made it to the English side before crashing on the cliffs. Frances was born three months after her father's death. She and her mother Barbara (1915 -2006) lived with their grandmother / mother, **Jane Frances Georgina Coath McGregor** (1888-1976), in the family home at 48 High Street, Aberlour.

She was encouraged by both of them to further her education, after attending Aberlour High School and a year at Girl's High in Aberdeen. Frances was a student at the University of Aberdeen, graduating in 1967 MA French Studies. Frances was employed by a company importing French dairy products, leaving that in 1969 / 70 to undertake teacher training at Aberdeen College of Education. From 1970 to 2004 she was a language teacher at St. Margaret's School for Girl's, Aberdeen and in the latter years

was Deputy Head too. Since retirement Frances has enjoyed walking, gardening, and the opportunity to travel extensively with friends in Europe, Peru, Mexico and Indo-China; attend concerts, visit art galleries and exhibitions.

Frances said of her grandmother: *Granny was quite different, partly, I think, because she had to be. She was the manager, the one who held the purse strings and who constantly worried about everything being paid. In an old handbag in the front room she kept several envelopes marked "rates", "electricity" and "emergency". When my mother was paid at the end of the month and gave Granny housekeeping money, it was carefully allocated to the respective envelopes. Nothing was bought unless it could be paid for. Any bill was paid on the dot.*

*She loved language and ought to have been given the opportunity to further her education. But as one of a family of 7 and a girl, that would have been out of the question. The fact that my mother, Eddie and I all had a good education was a source of great pride to her. Any word she encountered which she did not know was immediately looked up in the dictionary. When Eddie was a student and wrote home, she would correct any spelling or grammar mistakes and send them back to him!*

*Granny always wore an apron, and frequently wore two so that if the doorbell rang unexpectedly, she could whip off the working apron and appear in a nice crisp, clean one. She was an excellent cook and baker, good wholesome traditional dishes for lunch using cheaper cuts which required long, slow cooking. Her shortbread and melting moments were famous. No one to whom she gave her recipe ever seemed to manage to make it as well. Was it the way Granny kneaded the ingredients together with the base of her hand? She made appetising pies and tarts with fruit from the garden, always eaten hot. Gingerbread was another specialty eaten with lashings of butter.*

*She firmly believed that you were better off at home. She also believed that she was always right – "I may be wrang, but I'm nae often" was a favourite expression and, annoyingly for the rest of us, it was usually true! By the end of June we would hear*



*that the nights were drawing in and it would soon be winter. It didn't work the other way as the days grew longer. Better to be prepared for the worst..... . She would quite literally have lain down and died for any of us.*



**Clan Gregor at the 152<sup>nd</sup> Turakina Highland 31 January 2016**

**Left to right** Iain McGregor Stockwell, John Gregory



**Clan Gregor Society members at the 153<sup>rd</sup> Turakina Highland Games, 28 January 2017, the second oldest Games in the Commonwealth.**

**Left to right:** Keith Whyte, David Stephens, Bain McGregor, Iain McGregor Stockwell

**Bain McGregor**, a noted New Zealand Pipe Major, was one of the judges for the Solo Piping and Pipe Band contests. In 1985 /86 he was Piper in Residence for the 10<sup>th</sup> Duke of Atholl, Blair Atholl Castle.

### **The family of Gordon Stuart McGregor in Australia**

Gordon Stuart McGregor (Neil Malcolm's paternal grandfather who died in 1981) emigrated from England to Albany, Western Australia, in late 1928 with his wife Elizabeth (nee Chidlow or Chitlow - records vary - died 1986) and one son, Peter Malcolm (my father, born 1928, died 2008). In Australia they had a daughter Joan who died of polio, probably 1956-58. Gordon and family set themselves up as dairy farmers in the Albany region. Peter did well academically and moved to Perth to study science at the University of Western Australia. He went on to become a Geophysicist, primarily concerned with seismology and the earth's magnetic field.

Gordon and Elizabeth sold the farm and followed Peter to the Perth region, first to Fremantle, suburban Perth and then to the beautiful seaside town on Mandurah. Gordon was a bit of a jack of all trades by then, including installation of new-fangled aluminium Venetian Blinds, which were becoming popular in the sixties.

Peter started operating and then managing seismic observatories around the southwest corner of Western Australia, including the wheatbelt town of Watheroo. There he met his wife Edna Pauline Kelly (born 1932, died 1993), the youngest of 10 children of a railway driver (Robert Kelly) and his wife (Julia Brennan). They were married in 1951. Peter was a keen football player (Australian Rules) and was proud, later in life, to be named "Centre Half Back of the Century" by the local football club.

They moved back to the Perth area (Mahogany Creek in the Stirling Ranges) and had four children – Peta Helen (1954), Paul Maurice (1958), Robert Gordon (1960) and Neil Malcolm (1961). Peter and Edna had a few years in Melbourne in the mid-fifties, when Peter overwintered at the newly established Mawson Antarctic base, continuing his scientific work, before moving back to Perth. In 1966, the family moved to Canberra, following Peter's career, and built the final family home in the suburb of Mawson. Most of their children's education took place in the southern suburbs of Canberra.

Peta Helen became a teacher (now artist), studying at the University of Canberra and working in Canberra before moving to Sydney. There she met and eventually married visiting Englishman Christopher MacKenzie Davey of London. They married in London and spent around 20 years there and in Leeds before returning to settle down in Canberra. They have two children in the UK, Paloma and Maximillian.

Paul Maurice became a motor mechanic, setting up his own businesses in Canberra and Sydney. He then moved on to teach motor mechanics and allied trades at technical colleges in Sydney and Newcastle. He's been married twice, first to Frances Hamilton (one daughter Jamie Lee) and now to Tracy Holdsworth (three children Daniel, Dean and Sarah). Paul and Tracy were married in 1994. They live in the Newcastle region, and enjoy travelling in their caravan.

Robert Gordon became a fire fighter and is now a bush fire consultant. He remains in the Canberra region and married Karen Lee in 1985. They had two children Carly and Dayne. Tragically, Dayne died of heart failure just before his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. Carly is married and has three children, and live nearby in Bungendore NSW. Robert and Karen are now very active grandparents!

Neil Malcolm studied Mathematics and Computer Science at the Australian National University and became a computer programmer, then business consultant. He married Fiona Frances Wholohan (born 1966 in Dunedoo, NSW), another computer programmer, in 1995, and stayed in Canberra until 1997. They have one daughter, Julia Francisca, who was born in 1999 and is currently studying to be an airline pilot. Looking for a "tree change", Neil and Fiona established Yarrh Wines in 1997, a small boutique winery in the small but highly regarded Murrumbateman wine region of NSW, in the Canberra District.

With thanks to my siblings Peta, Paul and Robert!

*Neil McGregor, Murrumbateman, December 2022.*

[I am most grateful to Neil for the Y-DNA test which, when matched to Evan Forbes McGregor's result, proved our family connection to Braemar, Aberdeenshire. PJJ]

**The descendants of Duncan McGregor in Monkwearmouth**

Alexander b.~1700

||

Duncan

b.29/5/1731 Braemar

**m. 7/11/1772 to Grissel Gardiner at Tynemouth**

Assuming that Grissel was a Scot there are two possibilities in the OPR

Probably: Grissel Gairden born 15/6/1746 in Auldearn to Alex Gairden and Isobel MacBeth  
less likely: Grissel Gardiner born 21/8/1747 in Cargill to Peter Gardiner

||

baptisms at Robinson Lane, NC Chapel, Monkwearmouth

||

Alexander

b.29/2/1776 d.30/11/1857

**Bailiff to Lord Westminster at Eaton Hall**

m. 13/1/1803 Ellen Morton (~1782-17/8/1819) - Lower Peover, Cheshire

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The family of Alexander and Ellen Morton at Eaton Hall

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Mary.	Grace	Jane-Cathn.	Alexander	Ellen	Robert	John
b.2/1/1804	b.1/1/1805	b.1808	b.10/5/1810	b.31/12/1811	b.23/6/1813	b.13/5/1816
d.10/8/1885	d.15/2/1870	d.25/3/1861	d.24/1/1889	d.17/3/1852	d.23/12/1864	d.13/3/1891
unm.	m.Edwards	unm.	m.Cath Wilson 1847	m.Ridgway	m.Emma Churton	m.Helen Miller 3/2/1846
					Grace	
					b.1846	<b>descendants of</b>
					m.Plowman	<b>John MRCS</b>
					John Paine	
					1870	

The family of **John McGregor MRCS** and Helen Miller at Weaverham

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Alexander Duncan	<b>Paul Miller</b>	Ivan Gregor	Helen Ida
b.9/11/1846	b.13/12/1847	b.1850	b.21/7/1852
d.4/1/1897	d.10/10/1925	d.24/5/1908	d.7/5/1919
LRCP Edinburgh, MRCS London	farmer, Crowton Hall, Northwich	merchant navy officer	m. Samuel Andrews
m.Laura Ephetitia Ionia Marie Meane 1879 India	m.Eliz Bradford and Edith Walley	m. Sarah Bradford 24/6/1879	
she died 29/12/1938			

The five children of **Paul Miller McGregor and Elizabeth Bradford** at Crowton Hall.  
 (They actually had six, their first, Elizabeth, died at birth.)

Mary Barbara b.7/8/1875 d.3/12/1884	Alexander <b>Duncan</b> b.17/5/1878 d.? m.Elizabeth             Oldham	Emma <b>Ida</b> b.25/12/1879 d.? m. Austin MacDonald kia.16/6/17    Wallasey	John <b>Malcolm</b> b.15/1/1882 d.sp 1958 m.Bessie Young 30/7/1913	Laurie <b>Helen</b> b.29/5/1884 d.15/3/1957 m.John F. Lawrie 29/10/1908       Manchester
	<hr/>	<hr/>		
	Annie	Hector Bay		

The eight children of **Paul Miller McGregor and Edith Walley** at Crowton Hall

<b>Donald William</b> b.29/4/1887 d.16/2/1954 m. Florence Woodward 26/8/1914    Canada	Edith Margaret b.7/11/1888 d. 1978 m. Harry Wiley 1909       Australia	Mary Barbara <b>Louise</b> b.11/3/1891 d.15/4/1931 m.Herbert Beard	<b>Paul Douglas</b> b.19/6/1893 d.1936 m.Ann Dixon       Canada
<hr/>	<hr/>		<hr/>
Phyllis b.21/8/20 d.1/9/16 m.Butler    Carol	2 chdn		Frank       Christine
			Desmond d.21/12/40
<b>Gilbert Colin</b> b.2/3/1895 d. before 1940 m.Edith Dixon 14/6/1922 d.21/12/40    	Roderick b.11/9/1896 d.? m. Ethel Howse       Australia	Gillian <b>Janet</b> b.7/1/1899 d.? m.John Stratton       	Gordon Stuart b.7/10/1900 d.25/11/81 m.Elizabeth Chidlow       Australia
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Brian Eileen Both died in Wallasey bombing 21/12/1940	Margaret Robert John	William Ann	Peter Malcolm    Neil Malcolm



John McGregor, MRCs (1816-1891) and his wife Helen Miller



Paul Miller McGregor (1847-1925) and his second wife Edith Walley. Alongside them is Gordon Stuart McGregor, their last child and grandfather of Neil Malcolm McGregor in Australia

### **Ancestry of Ellen Morton in Lower Peover, Cheshire**

Penny Duce looked into the ancestry of Ellen Morton, after finding the marriage license of Alexander McGregor and Ellen Morton on 10<sup>th</sup> January 1803 in the Chester archives.

Penny checked the IGI for more on Ellen and her family and discovered her baptism on 21 Oct 1781 at Great Budworth (near Plumley and Lower Peover), but no mother given. There were a couple of possible Cheshire marriages for her father Robert Morton in the mid 1760s, not necessarily too early. (Robert Morton was a witness on Alex's marriage licence) One was to Elizabeth Royle, 16 June 1765 at Northenden; the other to Mary Empson at St Oswald's Chester, 9 July 1766.

Martha Morton, who witnessed Alex's marriage, was born 21 Feb 1787 at Northenden according to the IGI; father Thomas Morton, so possibly a cousin of Ellen, Thomas being Robert's brother? And they may have hailed from Northenden. It looks like Ellen could have had a brother Robert, because there was a Robert Morton married Ann Gleave at Lower Peover 12 April 1803 (unless this was a second marriage for Robert Senior). She said she had not yet followed these up in the PRs, but says that she did find a directory entry for Robert farming at Plumley in 1803.

### **Alexander McGregor fined and imprisoned for 6 months.**

On 6<sup>th</sup> May 1807 John Egerton of Oulton Park was elected in place of Richard Erle Drax Grosvenor as one of the two MPs for Chester. [General Thomas Grosvenor, brother of Earl Grosvenor of Eaton Park, continued in office as the other Chester MP, but the Grosvenors' stranglehold on Chester politics had been shaken]. In honour of the election one of Egerton's friends composed an ode, *The Glorious Sixth of May, an original Ode to Freedom*, later set to music by Richard Taylor, a musician in Chester. It caused considerable offence to Robert, Second Earl Grosvenor. Party spirit 'became more violent in the City'.

Penny Duce found this at the Chester Record Office Item no. C/LP/124 - In 1810, a number of men were charged with "certain Riots Assaults and Misdemeanours" in the case of the King v. Taylor, McGregor, et al., King's Bench 1810

The trial evidence illustrates the working of party politics and aristocratic influence in the 'pocket' constituencies before the reforms of the 1830s. Both Egertons and Grosvenors were wealthy landowners: the Egertons were based at Tatton Park, Cheshire, John Egerton's seat was Oulton Park; the Grosvenors were fast developing their fashionable London estates around Belgravia and Pimlico, as well as in Cheshire and Wales. In Chester, they jealously guarded their hold over local affairs as these events show. But while Thomas Grosvenor and Sir Richard Grosvenor, the first Earl, (d.1802), were both firm supporters of William Pitt and the interests of the independent country gentlemen, Robert the second Earl rejected his father's Tory allegiance. Following Pitt's death in 1806 he adopted liberal Whig views which he held for the rest of his life, befriending the victims of the Peterloo massacre in Manchester, and supporting the causes of Catholic emancipation, the repeal of the Corn Laws, and in particular, the Reform Bill.

#### **From the trial record - Alexander McGregor**

"He gives an outline of his evidence. He says in addition that the 6<sup>th</sup> May song 'was always understood by all persons at Chester to be meant as a Song of Triumph by the friends of Mr Egerton (who call themselves the Independent Freemen of the City of



Chester) over, and an insult to, the friends of the opposite party commonly called the Grosvenor or Eaton Party'; and though the music of the said song may have been publicly played several times and 'it had always excited a great deal of animosity', he says the 3<sup>rd</sup> January was the first occasion on which attempts had been made to sing the song at the Public Theatre. He says that John Moulson, one of the principal prosecution witnesses, is a 'violent partisan of Mr Egerton', who took an active part in singing the song at the theatre on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January and issued the challenge for Bannister to fight any of the Grosvenor Party for 10 guineas. He is also an officer in the local Cheshire militia, of which John Egerton is Major. He believed that the notice that the song would be performed at the second concert was 'for the sole purpose of insulting the Grosvenor Party', and accordingly on the 12<sup>th</sup> January he 'accompanied several persons (who together with himself were then in the employ of Mr Webb in laying out the grounds at Eaton Hall) to Chester, for the purpose of ...hissing the said song' ...

McGregor says George Taylor was intoxicated. He himself did not witness the altercation between Taylor and the Mayor, but he was informed that something unpleasant had passed between them, and he expressed his regret for the incident to the Mayor and Mr Alderman Edwards when he later met up with them. Having heard later that the Mayor had stopped the performance, he then asked him if this were so; the Mayor denied that he had the authority to stop it, or he would have done, and expressed his disapprobation of Mr Egerton's Party 'introducing politics upon the stage'. McGregor then said that if the Mayor would stop the performance, he would use his endeavours to get the men who had accompanied him to leave the city immediately.

McGregor said that he then went to the house of Mrs Letitia Wilkinson, [Moore notes in the margin that this 'respectable' witness should be called upon to make an affidavit], and 'drank tea' for half an hour, before making his way to the theatre, when he learned for the first time that the doors had been forced. But he says the assembled crowd outside the theatre also included many of the Egerton Party.

'He hath been informed and verily believes that this prosecution is carried on at the instance and expence of the committee for conducting Mr Egerton's election, of which the said John Moulson is one, and that they have entered into a subscription for that

purpose, and that Mr Humberton the Attorney for this prosecution is the Confidential Agent for Mr Egerton'. He believes that 'it was the intention of the partisans of Mr. Egerton to attempt to beat the partisans of the Grosvenor Party on the evening of the said 12<sup>th</sup> January, and that the said John Moulson ... said publicly that he was very angry with the Chester lads (meaning certain partisans of Mr Egerton) for not performing their promise of beating the Eaton men (meaning the partisans of the Grosvenor party) out of Chester. And this Deponent further says that Peter Haywood, Robert Jones and John Todd ... are notoriously partisans of Mr Egerton'.

He denies being involved in the violence: 'He neither incited nor was he privy to the forcing open of the door of the Theatre'. He also denies that he divided the men into squads as alleged by Thomas Orme, or that he said 'Eaton expects &c.', or that he was striding about arm in arm with George Taylor.

'And this Deponent further saith that he has a wife who is now pregnant and 4 small children who are dependent upon this Deponent for their support from his own industry and the profits of his labour'.

**Taylor and McGregor:** sentenced to 6 months in the King's Bench [Prison], and to find security each of £300 and £150 surety.

The convicted men served their sentences at the Marshalsea Prison in London, according to records in the National Archives. Did Lord Grosvenor pay their fines? Did he put them up to it? He may have felt indebted to Alexander McGregor for his partisan if misguided loyalty, as Alexander was subsequently employed as bailiff at Eaton; from as early as June 1812 he was writing regular detailed reports to the absent Earl about the progress of the huge works on the estate. But perhaps he had learned not to try to interfere in local politics following this experience, or possibly he was ordered not to. Alexander remained at Eaton for the rest of his life, living in a farmhouse on the estate, and in the 1851 census he was still recorded as bailiff to Lord Westminster. He died in 1857.

The Marshalsea prison was in Southwark, and was second only to the Tower in importance. At the time Alexander was there it was linked with the King's Bench, and although most prisoners were debtors, it also housed smugglers and political prisoners. Conditions were poor if you had no money, but not so bad if you could pay your way and bribe the keeper. The better off and those committed for less serious offences were governed by the 'Rules', which meant that they had liberty to move and lodge within a radius of three miles of the prison. This applied, for example, to Lady Hamilton, who was committed to the Marshalsea in 1812 after falling into debt following Nelson's death. Charles Dickens's father was imprisoned there for debt (1824), and his family lived in the prison with him for a time; Dickens features debtors in the Marshalsea in both *David Copperfield* (Mr Micawber) and *Little Dorrit*.

The trial report in the paper referred to the accused being kept in jail in London, on remand presumably, for several months before the trial itself. This must have been very hard on the family, besides the sentence itself of course, but I would hope that Lord Grosvenor assisted them financially to some degree – he certainly ought to have.

Penny Duce says that she checked the prison records at the National Archives in London during her visit and found these documents.

- (i) The first document is the record of Alex's discharge from remand at the Marshalsea on January 18<sup>th</sup> 1811, into his attorney's charge preparatory to the Chester trial in early February. (Note the record book assumes all prisoners are debtors).
- (ii) The second document is the official record of the King's Bench/Marshalsea committals for all the accused, with details of the charges and sentences, and notes at the left hand side of their discharge.
- (iii) And finally, the third copy is from the Keeper's daybook of committals (there are some nice doodles on the front of this book by the way, including perhaps the Keeper's name - 'John Dodgson officer to the Marshal', in copperplate). Alex and George Taylor have 'Rules' written against their names, so life in the Marshalsea may not have been too bad for them after all.

***WILL OF ALEXANDER McGREGOR, 1853, Extracted from the Public Episcopal Registry of Chester. Will, October 11, 1853*** (Found by Penny Duce)

*I Alexander McGregor* by the Mercy of God being at this time in good health and sound mind do give and bequeath all the property I now possess in the following manner.

1. To my son Alexander at this time living in Ireland I give and bequeath the sum of one hundred pounds now invested by me in my name in the Shrewsbury and Hereford Railway being ten shares in the same
2. To my son Robert McGregor the sum of fifty pounds and his daughter Grace the sum of twenty pounds to be paid by my daughter Mary who I now constitute my sole Executrix
3. To my son John McGregor now a surgeon at Weaverham I will and bequeath ten shares in the Preference eight per cent now worth £18 and standing now in my name in Shrewsbury and Chester Railway
4. To Wm Shephard Sen. of Ludlow the further five shares in the Shrewsbury and Hereford Railway the shares now being paid up full
5. To my two daughters Grace and Jane McGregor now living with me at Eaton I give and bequeath the sum of one hundred pounds being fifty pounds each which sums to be paid by their sister Mary McGregor
6. The sum of £630 I bequeath to my oldest daughter Mary McGregor which will be left after paying £500, who I leave my sole Executrix, the Railway shares to be taken at value they may be at my decease.

This I sign and seal as my last Will and Testament

- Alexander McGregor

Witnesses William Hewitt, Martha Griffiths

On the seventh day of March One thousand eight hundred and fifty seven the Will of Alexander McGregor late of Eaton in the County of Chester Gentleman deceased, was proved at Chester in common form of law by Mary McGregor Spinster the sole Executrix therein named, the right of every person being saved and time allowed to exhibit an Inventory.

H. Raikes Registrar

Proved at London the 12<sup>th</sup> March 1857 before the Judge by the Oath of Mary McGregor Spinster the daughter the sole Executrix to whom administration was granted, she having been first sworn by Commission duly to administer.

## Elizabeth Bradford



This was James and Mary Bradford, dated 1863. Mary Bradford (m.s. Newale) died in 1865. They were Laurie Helen McGregor's grandparents. Laurie Helen's mother, Elizabeth, was the girl on the left. She was born 21/3/1847.

In the 1861 census of Whitley Superior, Cheshire - James Bradford and wife both aged 40; Daughter Elizabeth (14); Sarah (10); James (5); William (1).

In 1871 census of Weaverham, Cheshire, James was a widower. Elizabeth (24), Sarah (20), James (17) and William (12).

Mary Bradford was recorded as having died at Northwich in 1865. In 1863, Elizabeth would be 16, Sarah 12, James 7 and William 4. It's not perfect, 16 year old Elizabeth looks under-developed, Sarah perhaps about right, James the 7-year old does not look much older than the 4-year old. The parents, James and Mary, were both 42

The photographer was marked Thomas Birtles. Thomas Birtles was born in 1832. He was only recorded as operating his photographer's business in Northwich in 1865 but he may have operated earlier. It is a remarkably good image to be so early. The severe expressions are due to the long exposures which were necessary in early photography.



This appears to be the wedding photo of Elizabeth Bradford in 1873 to Paul Miller McGregor. She died of typhoid at Crowton Hall in 1884 shortly after the death of her eldest daughter, Mary Barbara, also with typhoid.

## The marriage of John Forbes Lawrie and Laurie Helen McGregor



John Forbes Lawrie and Laurie Helen McGregor, married on the 29<sup>th</sup> October 1908. Two of their daughters had the first name Laurie – Jean Laurie Lawrie was born 19/10/1918 and Laurie Helen Lawrie (always known as Billie) was the youngest of the family, born 10/11/1922. So where did the “Laurie” come from?

Granny – Laurie Helen McGregor - was the sixth (one had died at birth) child of Paul Miller McGregor and Elizabeth Bradford at Crowton Hall Farm, Northwich, Cheshire.

Paul Miller had an elder brother, Alexander Duncan McGregor (9/11/1846 to 4/1/1897). He was a surgeon (LRCP Edinburgh and MRCS London) serving with the British army in India. In 1879 he married Laura Ephtitia Ionia Marie Meane. Apparently she was called Laurie for short by the family. Eventually I found that she was the daughter of a senior army officer, General Meane, and had been born in Ephtitia in the Greek Ionian Islands, hence the name. The couple appear to have been childless. Alexander died quite young of an illness acquired in India and Laura retired to Margate where she died on 29/12/1938. Paul Miller had another brother, Ivor Gregor (1850-1908) who was a merchant navy officer.

Mary Barbara, an older sister of Laurie Helen died of typhoid at the age of nine on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1884. Shortly afterwards on 6<sup>th</sup> December 1884 her mother, Elizabeth Bradford, also died of typhoid, not long after the birth of Laurie Helen on 29<sup>th</sup> May 1884. Jean said that the water supply at Crowton Hall came from a well which was often contaminated. Three of Laurie Helen’s full siblings survived to adulthood and marriage - two brothers: Alexander Duncan and John Malcolm and a sister: Emma Ida.

Paul Miller married for a second time to Edith Walley on 14/10/1885, and they had a further five boys and three girls in the following fifteen years.

In the 1881 census for Onston village, Paul Miller McGregor (33) was recorded as a farmer of 47 acres, employing 3 men. His wife, Elizabeth (34) was from Whitley Superior, Cheshire. Their children were Mary Barbara (5), Alexander D. (2), Emma Ida (1). Also listed were James Bradford (26), PM's brother-in-law and farm bailiff. They had a 15-year old general servant and a 13-year old nurse.

In the 1891 census, Paul Miller McGregor (43) was the farmer at Crowton Hall. His second wife Edith (34) was from Laughton. Paul's children were Emma Ida (11), John Malcolm (9), both born at Onston. Laurie Helen (7) was born at Crowton. Edith M. (2) was a child of Paul's second wife, and Mary Barbara was aged 1 month. Paul's mother, Helen, a widow of 74, was "living on her own means". They had two female servants.

In the 1901 census for Crowton Hall, Paul Miller (53) and Edith (44), had the following family: Alexander D. (22), Malcolm J. (19), William D. (13), Edith M. (12), Mary B.L. (10), Paul D. (7), Gilbert C. (6), Roderick (4), Gillian J. (2), Gordon S. (5 mo.). Ellen Simpson was a 56-year old widowed visitor; and one servant Hannah Woodward (20).

In the 1911 census for 1 Chapel Road, Garston, Liverpool, John Malcolm McGregor (29) single was the householder described as a provender dealer. His father, Paul Miller McGregor (63) was a retired farmer with his wife Edith Elizabeth (54). Also present, was Donald William McGregor (23), an electrical engineer, Mary Barbara Louise (20) housekeeper, Gilbert Colin (16) railway clerk, Roderick (14) insurance clerk, Gillian Janet (12), Gordon Stuart (10) both scholars.

Paul Miller's father was John McGregor (MRCS London 1844), bapt.13/5/1816, died. 3/3/1891. John was the surgeon at Weaverham Cheshire where he married Helen Miller on 3/2/1846. In the 1851 census for Weaverham, John McGregor (35) was described as a member of the Royal College of Surgeons of London, and in General Practice. He was born at Eccleston, Cheshire. His wife, Helen (34) was from Farndon, Cheshire.



Their children were Alexander (4), Paul Miller (3), and Ivan Gregor (1). They had a servant Ann Wright (16). In the 1861 census, on Tarporley New Road, their children were Alexander (14), Paul (13) and Ivan (11), all scholars. In addition, Robert McGregor (48), a married brother of John was in the house on the day of the census, he was described as a General Agent. Robert's daughter, Grace, would marry Plowman John Paine in 1870. Also present on the day of the census was Letitia Jane Taylor, aged 1. She was John's niece, the daughter of his sister Ellen. The family had a servant, Elizabeth Rideway (21).

### **The diary of Paul Miller McGregor of Crowton Hall**

Paul Miller McGregor's diary covered the period from February 1873 to May 1893. My transcription runs to 32 pages so it is too long to include in its entirety. Here is its beginning - February to March 1873:

- 15 Feb 2 tons boiled bones Dobell.
- 22. Sowed Sparks bones 1 ton 2cwt. Red cow Tipping calved bull - sold it for 17/- . J Allen Thos Gandy and P Hallcross came to look at pump.
- 24. Whitehall cow calved - heifer. Mr Horner called. 1/8 for milk from March to Nov. And 2/1 for Nov to March.. 4 boxes Widona in cellar and 9 small Dalmahoy. Enid Brammal and Chas. Williamson wed. Packed up the kidneys in even 78 boxes. A very eventful day.
- 25 Whitehall cow died (of) milk fever. Sold her for 12/-.
- 27. Sowed bones 1 ton in Court meadow.
- 1 Mar. Finished ploughing Freckells field for oats. Sow pigged 3 pigs. Finished hedging the two Jay meadows.
- 3 Engaged Irishman for 13/- per week for Mar and April. 14/- for May. Felled Poplar tree and took it to A Lewis.
- 5 Mr Bradford sent us a heifer.
- 11 Ploughed garden and pruned Apricot tree. Transplanted turnips in Stoners butts. Took out Mr Gandy's colt.
- 12 Fetched corn from Cuddington Station. 1 bag oats to mill and brought back 2 bags india meal. Hooked Gandy's colt in chains. Honey parcel came. Bevin's cow calved heifer.
- 13. Rode Mr Gandy's colt. Turned the midden in the by field and began cutting. The hedge.
- 14. Began working Mill flat for Mangels.
- 15. Working home all day carting manure and cinders.
- 16. Carting cinders home morning. Load coal 11cwt 13/5 1/2. Brammalls sale afternoon, entered Allan's cow. Bought in the pony (?) Bought white cow 17/5.
- 19. Drilling in Mill flat. Sarah came. Had a row with Liz about bank books.
- 20 Wm Lewis' sale took punch did but sell him (?) Sold him at night 38/- to Mr Fanchurch Bellfields. Which satisfied.
- 21. Liz's birthday, dear girl. Began working Cross Hay for turnips and potatoes.
- 22 Began working bean ground in Cross Hay. Had Smith's mare in the afternoon. W Bankes and Shama (?) came.

I have taken just the personal entries from later entries in the diary

1874 June 16 - Elizabeth born and died.

1875 July 7 Lizzie confined - little girl. M.B. (Mary Barbara bapt. 25/8/75)

1877 Aug 27 Ivan left Acton for Sydney in the "Athelred"

1878 April 17 Lizzie confined a little boy. (Alexander Duncan – bapt. 24/8/1878 )

1879 Dec. 25 Lizzie confined, a little girl. (Emma Ida)

1880 May 6 Emma Ida christened. Mrs Horton, Lizzie and myself standing.

1880 May 29 Went with Liz and Ida to Eccleston.

1880 Nov 3 Received £20 from Mr W Bankes for Miss M.B----

1880 Nov 9/10 Crowton bazaar - a great success.

1880 Nov 11 Received £5 from Aunt Mary, Eccleston

1882 Jan 15 Sunday, Lizzie confined a boy, 1.25 am (John Malcolm - bapt 9 Jul 1882)

1882 Jan 21 Sandy arrived home in SS "Rydall Hall" - (brother Alexander b. 1847)

1882 Feb 25 Ivan arrived. (Brother Ivan, 1850-1908)

1882 July 9 Malcolm christened, self, Walter and Laura standing sponsors.

1882 Sep 16 Last week children ill with a slight attack of scarlet fever, are all better.

1882 Oct 27 Sandy sailed for Bombay in "Rydal Hall SS". Came ashore off Holyhead and carried to Liverpool, all saved.

1883 May 31 Ivan's baby died.

1883 Jun 2 Buried Ivan's baby at Hill cliffe. Present Mr Bradford, Edmund (?) Walker, J Renshaw, H Lightfoot & myself. Was buried immediately on top of the coffin of Lizzie's mother, the next stone to it (is) Lewis Doodson on the right hand when you stand facing the chapel, We found out that our little one is not buried in the same grave, but lies in a grave between Sharples and J Bamford when facing the same way.

1883 Sep 15 Duncan very poorly all week. Sep 22 Duncan rather better (but) still in bed. Sep 27 (Duncan) got up, better.

A page is missing from the diary which would have Laurie Helen's birth on 29/5/84

1884 Nov 28 Barbara and Lizzie both unwell. Lizzie went (to) Northwich and came home complaining of cold. Fetched Barbara some medicine. Both in bed by 8. Lizzie could not get warm and a bad night passed by both.

1884 Nov 29 Carried Lizzie into Barbara's room where there was a fire. Both were worse this morning. Went and fetched the gran (? - surgeon? - is it gran(dad)? - Paul's father John MacGregor was a surgeon) who said they both were very ill and gave medicine, both were very much purged and continued very ill all day.

1884 Nov 30. Still no better. I have had a wearying night attending both. Fetched gran, still no better all day, an awful long day, had a fire lighted in our room and took Lizzie back again. She could get no rest on account of Barbara's delirium. She could get none in her own (room) for she could still hear her, poor thing and powerless to help. God help them.

1884 Dec 1 Fetched gran. Mrs Cowap came and stayed with Barbara all day. Lizzie tried to sleep but could not. Sent to Northwich for some things for them. In the evening Tom and Mercy Antivis came. Mercy stayed all night with Barbara who began to get worse about 2 in the morning. I slept with Lizzie but was disturbed a good deal by little Helen who was very restless and unwell, this also spoiled Lizzie's rest.

1884 Dec 2 Mrs Dale came. Lizzie hoped to get better then and the old woman was very good. Gran came. Owing to the purging having stopped in Lizzie he ordered a small dose of castor oil which worked her a good deal and caused a very large flow of blood which should have come 3 or 4 days ago and has no doubt been one cause of her illness. This sudden flow caused the poor girl to entirely lose her reason. I sent again for gran who ordered her champagne. I fetched a bottle from Mr Stanhope's cook who has been very kind. The champagne at first caused her to doze, but after a second glass she gave a deal of trouble and was very wild and raving incessantly, calling me very unkind names. About 3 am Mrs Dale knocked for me. When I ran and found her overpowering the old woman. I lifted her after a deal of trouble into the bed and lay down by her side with my left arm under her and hers under me. After kissing and fondling her for some time she upbraided me for allowing my whiskers to grow and after stroking them for some time she wound them around her fingers and refused to loose, saying that she had happed me and said she would never loose and I do not think she intended to. I then caused the lad to be knocked up and gallop to Mr Antivis and bring them both. We lay about one hour when she began to doze and I got my fingers through hers and managed to release my whiskers. I then got a pair of scissors and cut them off. She making three attempts to get at me out of bed. To return to Barbara, poor girl, she still grew worse,

her ravings being very loud and pitiful all day and a great thirst always taking her medicine, still unable to stop the purging and so she continued all day and night. I gave her at 10 a little champagne which seemed to make her rave more and at 12 a little more. She still got worse during the night and after eating an orange at about 5 am and a pear a little later she gradually began to get weaker and her eyes sank and it was very plain she was dying. This was a terrible time to be by myself. I gave her a little more champagne but no use and after giving me a kiss she died, poor little Barbara at about 6.30 am.

1884 Dec 3. Poor Lizzie still unconscious. Fetched (gran) and Mrs Shill who said there was just hope and so ??? she continued all day refusing both medicine and food, but in the night she took a little by teaspoonful. Gran and Mama stayed all night. Mrs Wilbraham called and was very kind and several others. Jas Smith called again late.

1884 Dec 4. Still unconscious but taking little nourishment. All day the same. Mrs Dale and Mrs Cowap both excellent. Smith came at night. Still said there was hope but I could see none. Poor dear wife still lying on her back with eyes faced on the ceiling, taking no notice of anything.

1884 Dec 5. Another sorrowful day. Lizzie still unchanged. Mama thought at about 7 she was dying and fetched me and the others up. I took her hand and sat by but was forbidden to speak after about 1/2 hour. She muttered some few words when I kissed her and asked her to speak to me. When she rallied a little and grew a deal wilder and stronger I thought it a better sign and left her. At 3 we buried little Barbara. Lucy Jackson and Ann Pickering carried her. We had a very nice funeral. The hymn "Gentle Shepherd thou has stilled" being sung very feelingly by the choir, Several of the lads had tears in their eyes. Mr Stanhope had great difficulty in getting through the service. At the grave we sang "Brief life is here our portion". Very nice. Mr Andrews and Sarah each brought a beautiful wreath and Clara made for me a nice cross from white double chrysanthemums from Mr Woodmanrey, very pretty and all was over for little Barbara, little angel now better off. When we returned Lizzie was still the same. Weaker through the night. Rambling weaker and less often.

1884 Dec 6. When I went into Lizzie's room she was very quiet. Mrs Cowap said she had had a quieter night. At 7.20 Mama came down with the sad news, all was over. My

poor dear wife dead. Poor Lizzie, all thy troubles now over. I would have died for her. I seemed to be in a dream, failing altogether to realise the sudden bereavement.

1884 Dec 7. Sunday very quiet. I took Duncan and Ida a long walk, poor little innocent things.

1884 Dec 8. Mr Stanhope came early. He told me that Mrs W wished to have little Helen, Mrs Hutton and Mrs Gandy sent 2 beautiful wreaths and Mercy Mrs Garner and Sarah Cash brought one and Clara made me a beautiful cross of double chrysanthemums from Delamere House. We buried poor dear Lizzie at 3 o'clock. The service was very feeling by word and song. Mr Stanhope having a great difficulty in going through his part. The choir sang Lizzie's favourite hymn "God moves in a mysterious way". I had asked Mr S to allow the choir to sing it and also the song "Now the labourers work is over" and at the grave "Brief life is our portion". The following attended: myself, Ida and Duncan, Gran and Mr Bradford, Sarah and Clara, James and Helen, Jon and Mercy and Mama, Mr Garner and Walter, Jas and Sarah Ann, Anne and Lucy, Mr Garner and Mrs Tayler met at the church. Geo Chiens had made a beautiful grave and thus saw the last of poor Lizzie. As good a wife and mother as ever lived. I have lost more than I fear I can ever tell and daily already I miss her so much and God help me I cannot see my way at all.

1884 Dec 9. Sent 45 funeral cards away and have received a great number of the kindest letters sympathising with me. Have asked Gran (?) and Mama to come and live here, they are here at present.

1884 Dec 14. Sunday, a very wet day. Mr Bradford (Lizzie's father), Sarah (Lizzie's sister), Clara and Walter and Mr & Mrs Garner came to go to church with us. The church was very well attended, considering the weather. Mr S(Stanhope) preached a very touching sermon and made a good deal of loving allusions to my lost ones. His text was 14 Rev(elations) 13 V(erse) and Solomon's song 4, verse 2 and her favourite hymn as above.

1884 Dec 28 Miss Walley came and engaged her as housekeeper at £20 per year.

1884 Dec 29 Gn and Mama went home and Miss Walley started.

1884 Dec 31 Thus ended the year. A good one for farmers as regards the weather but very bad (also) the prices of produce being so low. A fair year on the whole. In this farm stock has been very healthy and lucky. Everything with one great exception: my

very great loss which seems (to be) getting worse each week. God only knows how another year will find us, may He in His infinite wisdom deal gently to me and mine and learn us to do that which is right and keep us in the right way.

1885 Jan 15 Went Liverpool, fetched Malcolm home from Helen's. (*Who is this? - mother Helen is Mama in Acton. Aunt Helen died in 1852. Bro in law, James Bradford's wife may have been Helen, did they live in Liverpool? - PJJ*).

1885 Feb 1 All the children are unwell with colds. The baby is ill with her teeth and her tongue is blistered all over. Makes her very cross, poor little thing.

1885 Feb 5 Children got mumps.

1885 Aug 10 Aunt Mary died.

1885 Aug 13 Went funeral Eccleston. Afterwards heard new will read which Helen (PMs sister?) disputed & a nice scene followed.

1885 Oct 14 Married Edith E Walley at Norley church. Mr Whytehead and Mr Stanhope, Thos Antinus standing as best man. All went off well. Hope and pray that I may never regret it, Went to Birmingham after.

1885 Oct 19 Returned home, found Sarah had been and ransacked the house and returned a bed, Said it was not one that had been sent from Acton. (*Sarah was Lizzie's sister - PJJ*)

1885 Oct 20 Wrote to Sarah and I expect a breach between us.

1885 Dec 2 Uncle Sandy at Weaverham. Wrote Helen.

1886 Dec 7 Mr Bradford's funeral.

1887 April 29 Edith confined - a boy. (William Donald)

After May 1888 only occasional entries until last on May 13 1893

**At the back of the diary and in another hand, presumably all written at the same time, after Paul Miller McGregor's death in 1925.**

**Interred at Weaverham Parish Church, Weaverham, Cheshire.**

Douglas McGregor, son of John and Helen McGregor of Acton died April 3 1858 aged 6 months.

Robert McGregor of Chester. Died December 23 1864, aged 50 years.

Letitia Jane, Daughter of William and Letitia Taylor of Haverstock Hill, London, died Acton, Sept 16th 1866, aged 6 years.

John McGregor, Surgeon, formerly of Acton, Died at Crowton Hall, March 13th 1891. Aged 75 years.

Helen McGregor, wife of John, died July 26th 1893.

Ivan McGregor, son of John and Helen McGregor, died May 24 1908. Aged 58 years.

**Interred at Crowton Parish Church, Crowton, Cheshire.**

Elizabeth McGregor, wife of Paul Miller McGregor of Crowton Hall, died December 6 1884, aged 37 years.

Mary Barbara McGregor, daughter of Elizabeth and Paul McGregor who died December 3 1884 aged 9 years

Paul Miller McGregor of Crowton Hall who died October 10 1925, aged 78 years.



Paul Miller had this pub in Wolverhampton named the Three Tuns Inn. He may have become bankrupt there; in any case the assets were inventoried in 1908 and he no longer was involved after that.

Christine said that Paul Miller McGregor took up as a publican after the 1901 census, when he was still at Crowton. By the time of the 1911 census, he was living at his son's house in Garston, Liverpool.

### Penny and Dr Geoffrey Duce

Dr Geoffrey Duce, assistant professor of piano at Illinois State University and his mother, Penny Duce in Edinburgh, are descendants of Grace, the daughter of Robert McGregor, an elder brother of John, and Plowman John Paine who married in 1870.



Penny said that the 1881 census record for Bury St Edmunds recorded Plowman John Paine as a Pianoforte Dealer & Tunist, aged 36, b. Mildenhall, Suffolk; with his wife Grace, 34, b. Mirfield, Yorkshire; also with Emma McGregor his Mother in Law, aged 65, b. Whitchurch Shropshire, who was being 'Kept by Children'.

Penny says that Grace's birth certificate in 1846 in Mirfield, Yorks, shows her father as Robert McGregor, a station clerk, and her mother as Emma nee Churton. Penny's grandfather, Hubert Churton Paine, who she says she remember well, was shown as the eldest son on this census, aged 6. Robert McGregor, b.1813, was formerly a bankrupt grocer, and the son of Alexander, bailiff at the Duke of Westminster's Eaton Estate in Cheshire.





**Geoffrey Duce** is Assistant Professor of Piano at Illinois State University. He has performed in Carnegie Hall, Berlin's Philharmonie and Konzerthaus, London's Wigmore Hall, Manchester's Bridgewater Hall and Edinburgh's Queen's Hall, as well as across Europe, and in Japan, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

<https://www.chicagochambermusicfestival.com/dr-geoffrey-duce>

Geoffrey's career has featured both solo and collaborative performances. As a concerto soloist he has appeared with the Sinfonie Orchester Berlin, the Chattanooga and Olympia Symphony Orchestras, the Scottish Sinfonia, Edinburgh Philharmonic, New York Sinfonietta, and the Dundee Symphony Orchestra. As a chamber musician and accompanist he has recorded for BBC Radio 3 and performed at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. He won the Young Artists Award from Britain's National Federation of Music Societies, and was awarded the Prix de Piano at the American Conservatory in Fontainebleau, France. He has been the Peoria Symphony Orchestra's first Artist in Residence, performing concerti by Ellington and MacDowell.

He has given masterclasses at institutions including Hawaii University, St. Thomas University in New Brunswick, Canada, Shorter and Darton Colleges, GA, the Academy of Music Northwest in Seattle, for the Orquesta Filharmónica in Bogota, Colombia and in the Middle East. During the summer of 2016 he was an International Visiting Faculty member at the University of Taipei, and earlier this summer was in residence at Tunghai University, Taichung, Taiwan.

Originally from Scotland, Geoffrey initially studied at the Royal Northern College of Music and Manchester University before receiving a DAAD scholarship to the Universität der Künste, Berlin. He received his doctorate from the Manhattan School of Music, where he was also a faculty member, and has also held positions at the State University of New York (Westchester Community College) and at Indiana University South Bend.

### The origins of Alexander McGregor in Cheshire

The father of John and Robert was Alexander McGregor (29/2/1776-30/1/1857). He married Ellen Morton on 13/1/1803. The couple had five daughters and three sons. Alexander was employed as the bailiff to the Duke of Westminster's Eaton estate. He had been briefly imprisoned in 1810 when, on the instructions of the Duke's son, he broke up a rival politician's celebrations following a General Election defeat for his party. In the 1851 census, Alex McGregor, a widower, aged 75 was living in the Eaton Estate farmhouse. He was described as the bailiff to Lord Westminster. Also present was his unmarried daughter Mary (46), a housekeeper, born Overston, Northampton. And his unmarried grandson, William Shepherd (27), described as a foreman and born in Denbigh. There were two servants living in, a house servant and a dairymaid.

Between Christine McGregor in Canada, Penny Duce in Edinburgh and myself, we discovered all of the above with reference to censuses and parish records. However, finding our way back to Alexander's ancestors has taken many years. Alexander's birth was recorded in the register of Robinson Lane, a nonconformist chapel in Monkwearmouth by Duncan McGregor and Grissel Gardiner. I found a marriage record for them 7/11/1772 at Christ Church Tynemouth. It appeared that although baptisms could legally be recorded at nonconformist chapels, marriages in England at that time had to be conducted in the Church of England.

**Monkwearmouth** is a district of Sunderland in North East England. It is on the north side of the mouth of the River Wear across from the Port of Sunderland. It was once the centre of Wearside shipbuilding. Most of the congregation of the Robinson Lane Presbyterian meeting house (in existence 1727-1825) were of Scottish extraction, arriving in Sunderland as seamen, soldiers, shipwrights, etc.


So who was Duncan McGregor? He had almost certainly come down from Scotland, but there are quite a few Duncans in the Old Parish records and probably more not recorded. Aunt Jean said that her mother had told her that they were descended from Rob Roy. As I have since discovered as the Clan Gregor Society historian and genealogist, almost every MacGregor in the world thinks that they descend from Rob

Roy! However, after quite a few years trying, the Clan Gregor Society has not yet found a proven male-line descendant of Rob Roy. There are a number who descend through females but that is of no use for Y-DNA.

I did find a Duncan, born in the 1740s, a son of Robert in Stronchlachar on Loch Katrine and grandson of Gregor *Ghlun Dubh* of Glengyle, and hence a great-nephew of Rob Roy. Over the years Christine, Penny and I discovered a number of facts about the life of that Duncan. He was left a substantial sum in the 1780s by his uncle, a ship's captain and used it to buy his own ship. Later he served in the Royal Navy and ended his days in 1826 as a Naval Pensioner at Greenwich. However, we could not find proof that he was ever married, had children or had been to Monkwearmouth.

DNA came to the rescue. After a number of years trying, I traced a second cousin, Neil Malcolm McGregor, the owner of a vineyard near Canberra, Australia. Neil was a grandson of Gordon Stuart, the youngest son of Paul Miller and thus, a half-brother of Laurie Helen. He agreed to take the DNA Y-700 test, but to begin with we could not find a close match. Finally a match came along in late 2021 with Evan Forbes McGregor in New Zealand. Fortunately Evan's family, who had migrated in the 1885, had retained a good documented descent of their family from a MacGregor family in Glen Gairn, Braemar. That family in Braemar had a Duncan recorded of the right age to be the father of Alexander.

Thus, with the help of Neil McGregor and Iain McGregor Stockwell, we had succeeded in tracing that Braemar line back to the MacGregors of Roro in Glen Lyon. One of them moved to Braemar probably among the group of introduced by the earl of Moray in 1624. The Glen Gairn kindred became associated with the Farquharsons of Invercauld. Twenty four of them stood in the battle line at Culloden under the command of Invercauld, but only six returned home to Glen Gairn.

Surname	McDonald
Forename	Austin
Initials	A
Age	30
Honours/Awards	
Date died	16/06/1917
Rank	Private
Regiment	Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers
Unit/Squadron	8 <sup>th</sup> Bn.
Service Number	41990
Cemetery/Memorial	Tyne Cot Memorial
Grave Reference	Panel 70 to 72.
Further Information	Son of Mr. And Mrs. Peter McDonald, Of 152, Lowfield Rd., Stockport; husband of E. Ida McDonald, of 31, Hillcroft Rd., Wallasey, Cheshire. Educated at St. Wilfrids College, Oakamoor, Staffs.
	

#### News Report

##### Missing : Now Reported Killed

Private Austin McDonald, of 31, Hillcroft Road, Wallasey, who was reported as "Missing" on August 16, is now officially reported as killed in action. He joined the Cheshire Regt., on March 30, and later in France became attached to the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. He was formerly office superintendent for Messrs. Bowker and Co., Ltd., Stanley Street, Liverpool, and was for several years on the clerical staff of Messrs. Brunner, Mond, and Co., Ltd., Winnington, Northwich.

Much sympathy will be felt for his widow and child who as Nurse McGregor, was for some time on the nursing staff of the Victoria Infirmary, Northwich, and later for six years. district nurse for Messrs. Brunner. Mond. and Co.. Ltd.

Emma Ida McGregor married Austin McDonald. They lived at 31 Hillcroft Road, Wallasey and had two children. Hector and Bay. Austin was killed in action 16/6/1917. Emma Ida was a trained nurse, so when the last child (Auntie Billie) of her sister, Laurie Helen, was due to be born (10/11/22) she went to Wallasey to have her.



Paul Miller McGregor and family, L to R: Emma Ida (1879); PM; Laurie Helen (1884); Alexander Duncan (1878); John Malcolm (1881)

Below: Barbara (died aged 9 on 3/12/1884). Paul Miller McGregor (1847-1925)



### Some family photographs



Our McGregor family from Christine McGregor's family album.

Judging by the apparent ages of Janet (7/1/1899) and Gordon Stuart (b.7/10/1900), this family photograph must date from about 1902/1903.

Only Donald (b.1887), the eldest child of Paul Miller McGregor and his 2nd wife, Edith Walley, seems to be missing.

Back row

John Malcolm (b.1882); Laurie Helen (b.1884); Alexander Duncan (b.1878); Emma Ida (b.1879)

Middle Row

Mary Barbara Louise (b.1891); Paul Miller McGregor; Edith Walley (Mrs McGregor)  
Edith Margaret (b.1888); Paul Douglas (b.1893)

Along with Paul Miller McGregor and Edith Walley are the two oldest of their 3 daughters. The youngest, Gillian Janet, is in the front row.

Front Row

Colin Gilbert (b.1895); Gillian Janet (b.1899); Gordon Stuart (b.1900); Roderick (b.1896)



This picture, from Carol Butler's family album, is of Donald McGregor's wedding to Florence Woodward on 26th August 1914. Carol, a grandchild of Donald and Florence, provided the names of the Woodward family written on the back. Of Paul Miller's seven sons, five joined the army in WW1. Duncan (aged 36 in 1914) may have been too old for active service, while Gordon (14 in 1914) may have been too young. **Back row** #1 Frank Woodward - husband of bridesmaid; #2 possible Duncan MacGregor (b 1878) ( mar. to Elizabeth - #4 in middle row); #3 Joe Woodward; #4 possible Austin McDonald (kia 1917) ; ( mar. to Emma Ida McGregor - #8 middle row; #5 Colin McGregor (b 1895) #6 Paul Douglas McGregor (b 1893) ; ( Christine's grandfather); #7 Joe Taafe

**Middle Row** #1 Lily Taafe; #2 Malcolm McGregor (b 1882 - married to Bessie Young #3); #3 Bessie Young; #4 Emma Ida McGregor, ( wife of Austin McDonald #4 in back row); #5 I think this is John Forbes Lawrie, (b 1886); #6 Donald McGregor, the groom (b 1887); #7 Florence Woodward the bride; #8 Elizabeth, wife of Duncan McGregor #9 Laurie Helen McGregor (b 1884); ( she was the same height as husband JF Lawrie); #10 Janie - friend of bride

**Front Row** #1 Mary Barbara Louise McGregor (b 1891); #2 Louisa Walley, sister of Edith; #3 Paul Miller McGregor; #4 Edith Walley, wife of #3; #5 Annie Woodward, bridesmaid. (wife - back #1); #6 Harold Taafe; #7 wife of Harold Taafe; #8 Gladys Woodward



Edith Walley's 90th birthday. on 2 November 1946

**Back Row**

#1 Jock ?; #2 Sally ?; #3 John Forbes Lawrie (b. 1886) ; #4 John Malcolm McGregor (b. 1882); #5 Alexander Duncan McGregor (b.1878).

Who is missing ? - Paul Douglas - b.1893 d.1936; Gilbert Colin - b.1895, d.before 1940; Roderick - b. 1896 – inAustralia; Gordon Stuart - b. 1900 – in Australia

**Middle Row**

#1 Louise ? ( Can't be Mary Barbara Louise who died in 1931); #2 Laurie Helen Lawrie (Billy - b.1922); #3 Laurie Helen McGregor (Mrs Lawrie b. 1884); #4 Edith Margaret McGregor (Mrs Wiley b.1888); #5 Jean Laurie Lawrie (b.1918); #6 Florence Woodward, wife of Donald

**Front Row**

#1 Helen Ida Lawrie (Mrs Ward b.1910).; 2 Gillian Janet McGregor (b.1899); #3 Edith Walley (Mrs McGregor); #4 William **Donald** McGregor (b.1887)



### **Christine McGregor, Canada**

Two of the sons of Paul Miller McGregor married two Dixon sisters. Paul Douglas McGregor married Annie Dixon. Colin Gilbert McGregor married Edith Dixon. The families resided at Wallasey in Cheshire. Paul Douglas and Annie had two sons, Frank and Desmond. Colin Gilbert and Edith had a daughter and son, Eileen and Brian.

By the start of WWII, both women had been widowed. Frank was old enough to enlist and joined the RAF Bomber command. He served as a navigator on Lancaster bombers. His brother Desmond was too young to enlist, Eileen and Brian were younger still. On December 21, 1940, Edith left home to run errands, while her sister Annie and the three children remained at home. A German bomb fell on the house and killed all four of them. Edith returned to find her family wiped out, except for her nephew Frank, who was given the shocking news at his squadron. In 1942, Frank's aircraft was shot down over water, and the surviving crew were taken prisoner. Frank spent the next three years in a Prisoner of War camp in Poland.

After the war, Frank used his navigator training and an aptitude for mathematics to join the Ordnance Survey and trained as a land surveyor. During his training, he was billeted with the family of a land surveyor, Henry Clark, in Southampton. Thus he met Henry's daughter, Nancy whom he married. Nancy already had a son from a previous marriage, Trevor. Together, Frank and Nancy had a daughter, Christine. After some years with the Ordnance Survey, and feeling that opportunities to advance were scarce, he began considering jobs in the "colonies".

In 1953, the family of 4 moved to Canada, taking up residence in Oakville, Ontario, a town on the outskirts of Toronto. Frank had to become licensed as a land surveyor in his new country, which required retraining, articling, and sitting licensing exams. In due course, he opened his own practice, and worked the rest of his career as an Ontario Land Surveyor. He died in 2005. Nancy (Louise) died in 2011. Of the children, Trevor had a career in sales and management. He has a blended family of three children and two step children, several grandchildren and a few great-grandchildren. Christine had a career as a lab technologist, and has one daughter. They all currently reside in Ontario.

**Carol Anne Ross (nee Butler)**

Carol's mother, Phyllis Walley McGregor, was the daughter of William Donald McGregor and Florence Woodward and the Granddaughter of Paul Miller McGregor & Edith Walley.

Phyllis was an only child born on August 21, 1920 and died, aged 96, on September 1st 2016. Phyllis married Walter J. Butler and they had 2 children: D. Keith Butler, born September 1951 in Wallasey and Carol Butler January, born 1955 in Liverpool.

Carol married in 1973 and had two children: Neil M. Whitaker, born October 5, 1974 in Birkenhead, Cheshire; and Kim L. Whitaker, born June 15, 1977 in Oakville, Ontario. Carol & her first husband emigrated to Ontario Canada in 1975 but divorced in 1991. Carol remarried Daniel Ross August 30, 1997. They live in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario.

Neil is the father of Ivy Ann, born November 2013; and Vera Violet Whitaker born July 2018. Neil's spouse is Jean Trousdale. Neil and his family moved to Saskatchewan.

Kim is the mother of Wolfe Conall, born June 2020 in Hood River, Oregon, USA and Archer Torben, born March 2022 in Owen Sound, Ontario. Her spouse is Jason Reed. Kim and her family live in Southampton, Ontario.

#### **Section IV – Norah Chew**

I received very little information from Norah Chew's side of the family. Granny died in 1966 before I began to take an interest in family history. Apart from knowing that Norah was from the Blackburn area, I don't remember Morag telling me anything else, except that she commented on how strange it was that my first posting, when I joined the Ministry of Defence, was to Blackburn. Although I lived in Blackburn for four years from 1971 to 1974, I did not feel in any way that it was a "home-coming"; I was not made aware of any living relatives; nor did I feel the need to look into my ancestors here. However, when I did begin my genealogical odyssey, the Chew line had also to be included in the investigation for completeness. The Lancashire parish records proved to be extensive and relatively well preserved with few gaps and frequently going back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Iona sent me this image of Norah Chew as a young woman. It may date from around 1920 at the time of her marriage to Alasdair MacLeod.

Norah Chew was born at Aspden Fold Farm in the parish of Samlesbury between Blackburn and Preston. Her parents, John Alfred Chew and Mary Shaw, were from Blackburn.



In 1881, as a thirteen year old, John Alfred Chew was recorded living in Audley Range area of Blackburn, with his father, Thomas Chew, an iron moulder and his mother, Jane Gregson and with four siblings. John Alfred married Mary Shaw (aged 27) on 19<sup>th</sup> November 1893 in Blackburn. In the 1901 census, John Alfred was recorded as a 33 year old farmer at Aspden Fold Farm, Samlesbury with his wife Mary Shaw. Norah was born on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1894 and baptised at St Thomas's Blackburn on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1894. Her sister Jane (Jenny) was born 5<sup>th</sup> June 1899. John Alfred Chew died 27<sup>th</sup> April 1935, after which, Mary and Jenny moved to Blackburn. Mary died on 17<sup>th</sup> July 1948, and Jenny on 8<sup>th</sup> October 1953.

Today, Aspden Fold Farm in Nabs Head Lane is known as Alpaca Fold Farm, in Samlesbury, PR5 0UQ. Its website reports: “Located in the rural village of Samlesbury on a 35-acre smallholding, Aspden Fold Farm provides unique and quality accommodation suitable for short and longer stays surrounded by the peace and calm of a rural setting”.



Despite its claim of peace and tranquillity, BAE Systems have a substantial manufacturing facility and airfield at Samlesbury about one kilometre to the North which dates from April 1939, when the English Electric Company (EE) began there. By 1942, 770 Handley Page Hampdens built by EE had been delivered from Samlesbury. In 1940 a second factory was built and construction of the Handley Page Halifax began. By 1945 five main hangars and three runways were in use. By the end of the war over 3,000 bombers had been built and flown from Samlesbury. After the war such aircraft as the de Havilland Vampire, the Canberra (the first aircraft designed and built wholly by English Electric) and the Lightning were built on the site. The site has also produced parts for the Anglo-French Concorde and the ill-fated BAC TSR-2 aircraft. When English Electric merged to become BAC and later British Aerospace, it worked closely with sister plants on building the SEPECAT Jaguar and the Panavia Tornado fighter aircraft. The site builds the fuselage and other parts for the Eurofighter Typhoon and other aircraft including the Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II and the McDonnell Douglas T-45 Goshawk. I recall that when my brother, Duncan, finished University, he was employed by British Aerospace at their nearby Warton factory, on the design of the Tornado before migrating to the USA.

In the 1911 census, John Alfred Chew and his wife, Mary Shaw remained at Aspden Fold Farm. The farm was recorded as being a dairy farm. Neither of their children were present, but in a new feature of the census, it recorded that they had two children and both were still living. I found Nora Chew, aged 16, boarding with a Margaret Fielding at 12 Great Avenham Street, Preston. She was described as a student of Agriculture and Dairy, with Lancashire County Council. (I think that is what the entry meant).

Jane Chew, aged 11 in 1911, was recorded in Blackburn with her maiden Aunt, Ann Jane Chew (aged 50) at 106 Walter Street, Blackburn. Also resident was Frances Helena Chew (aged 47). Both were described as confectioners working at home.

In 1871, Thomas Chew (aged 48) and his wife Jane (ms Gregson) were residing at 138 Audley Lane, Blackburn. He was employed as an Iron Moulder and his place of birth was Clitheroe. Jane was 43 and her place of birth was Bolton le Moors. Their children were Eliza Kate (13); Ann Jane (11); Frances Helena (7) and John Alfred (3). All born in Blackburn.

John Alfred Chew married Mary Shaw in 1893. Her parents were John Shaw and Lettice Hartley. In 1871, they had lived at 29 Alma Street Blackburn. John Shaw was described as a plumber employing three men and three boys. Their children were listed as Margaret Jane (9); Alexander (8); John William (7); Mary (5); Thomas Henry (2) and Frederick (1). On the wedding registration of John Alfred Chew and Mary Shaw in 1893, John Shaw was deceased.

Norah Chew was in Edinburgh in 1920, on an agricultural course, where she met and married Alasdair MacLeod. According to a 1939 register, Jane Chew (b.5/6/1899) was a schoolteacher in Blackburn. She was unmarried and, in 1939, was living at 25 Revidge Road, Blackburn along with her widowed mother Mary (b.20/12/1865).

**The Chew Family in Blackburn**

Thomas Chew  
B~1790  
d. by 1841

Elizabeth Nowell  
b.27/6/1794

Nicholas Gregson  
Provision dealer  
b.2/3/1799

Catharine Humphrey  
b.17/10/1802

m.~1823  
Clitheroe

||  
||

Thomas Chew  
b.13/10/1822  
Iron Founder

m.18/2/1822  
Bolton le Moors

||  
||

Jane Gregson  
b.2/12/1827

m.~1857 Ormskirk  
Southport, then Audley Range Blackburn

||

Eliza Kate  
b.1858

Ann Jane  
b.1861

Francis  
b.1864

Helena

John Alfred  
b.28/3/1868  
d.27/4/1935

Thomas  
b.1873

m.Mary Shaw  
(b.20/12/1865)  
(d.17/7/1948)  
m.19/9/1893

||

-----Aspden Fold Farm Samlesbury-----

Norah Chew  
b.4/8/1894  
d.22 /10/1966 Inverness  
m.Alasdair MacLeod  
23/6/1920  
In Edinburgh

Jane (Jenny) Chew  
b.5/6/1899  
d.8/10/1953 Blackburn



### Chew in Clitheroe

Chew Moor lies between Bolton and Wigan; Chew is the name of a reservoir on Saddleworth Moor, east of Oldham. Dates as per parish record, otherwise my estimates

Robert Chew = Mary Farrerr

b.~1630

m.20/4/1656 Clitheroe

||

Richard Chew = Christian Kendall

b.~1660

m. 8/5/1700 Clitheroe

||

Edward Chew = Alice Robinson

b. 8/5/1709

m. 28/2/1731 Clitheroe

||

James Chew = Nancy Gellard

b.~1740

m. 18/4/1775 Clitheroe

||

Thomas Chew = Elizabeth Nowell

b.~1790; d.1835

m. 1/12/1821 Clitheroe

||

Thomas Chew = Jane Gregson

b.13/10/1822

m. 1852 (in Ormskirk)

||

John Alfred Chew == m. Mary Shaw 19/9/1893

b. 28/3/1868 d. 27/4/1935

**Gregson in Bolton le Moors**

John Gregson	Christopher Marsden	Thomas Morris	John Edge
b.~1665	b.26/12/1657	b.15/4/1650	b.~1675
m.Eliz. Peel	Eliz. Andrews	Heyes	m.Eliz.Roskall
12/5/90	10/5/88	23/9/80	20/3/1701
William Gregson	Christopher Marsden	Richard Morris	Jon. Edge
b.~1690	b.~1690	b.~1690	b.~1705
m. Eliz. ??	m.Ellen Gregson	m.Ellen Gaskell	m. Scowcroft
?? 1725	1726	1715	1730
Nicholas Gregson	== Eunice Marsden	Thomas Morris	== Mary Edge
b.~1725	b.~1730	b.~1730	b.~1732
	m. 11/12/1755		m.15/4/1759
	John Gregson	==	Ann Morris
	b.~1760	m.4/8/1784	b.~1760

----- Gregson - Bolton Le Moors-----

James	Mary	Nicholas	== Catharine Humphrey
b.31/10/1785	b.17/6/1787	b.2/3/1799	
			m.18/2/1822

----- Gregson - Bolton Le Moors-----

Elizabeth	<b>Jane</b>	Ann	William	Alfred H
2/3/1823	<b>2/12/1827</b>	1825	1839	1844
	m. 1852			
	Thomas Chew			



**Shaw in Darwen and Blackburn**

Thomas Shaw == Eliz Webster      Edward Yates      ==      Janet Morris  
m.27/1/1750 in Copull                      m.5/11/1751 Over Darwen

||

||

Alexander Shaw == Dorothy Fowler      James Yates == Nancy Yates  
b. -/11/1751              b.~1754              b.25/12/1758              b.13/8/1758  
d.11/5/1817              d.18/6/1816      d.1800

m.22/8/1774 in Copull

m.1/3/1783 Over Darwen

||

||

Alexander Shaw

==

Mary Yates

b.28/7/1793

b. 1793

m.23/10/1815

||

Farmer Livesey

-----  
John Shaw == Lettice Hartley (dtr of John Hartley Blackburn)

b.1826

b.1832

d. before 1893

m.21/6/1860

||

-----Alma Street Blackburn-----

Margaret-Jane Alexander John W. Mary      Thomas H. Frederick

b.1861

b. 1862

b. 1863

b.20/12/1865

b.1869

b.1870

d.17/7/1948

m.19/9/1893

John Alfred Chew

Nowell in Whalley

The Whalley record goes back to 1539. There are four generations of Roger Nowell. In Robert Neill's "Mist over Pendle" about the Lancashire witch trials in 1611, Roger Nowell was the local squire and magistrate, living at Read Hall, outside Whalley village. The source is Thomas Potts "Discoverie of witches in the county of Lancaster  
Roger Nowell == Grace Townley

||

John == Doce Hesketh

b.?? d.1526

||

Roger Nowell == Grace Sherburne

b.?? d.1567      b.?? d.1565

||

Roger == Florence Starkie

b.?? d.1591

m. 1551

||

Roger == Catherine Murton

b.1561

m.9/5/1581

||

Roger == ??

b.8/8/1582 d.1623

m.1604

||

Roger == Dorothy Holt

b.13/3/1605 m. 1627 d.1695

||

Alexander Nowell == Eleanor Heber

b.30/8/1632 d.1695

m.~1672

||

Roger == Rebecca Heber

b.19/1/1674

m.16/3/1696

||

-----  
Roger Charles == Margaret King

b. 27/12/1697 b.11/4/1725

m.12/4/1757

||

John Nowell == Alice Fielding

b.6/1/1758

m.3/2/1783

||

Elizabeth == Thomas Chew

b 26/6/1794

m. 1/12/1821 Clitheroe

## **Section V – Mairi Balbirnie Davidson or Lawrie**

Baptised as Mary Balbirnie Davidson, she is known to me and all of her friends as Mairi, the Gaelic form of Mary. I traced a number of interesting characters in Mairi's ancestry.

Mairi studied with the Open University during the 1980s and graduated with a BA degree. For one of her courses, she had to write a brief autobiography. I have summarised some of what she wrote here.

“I was born in the late 1940s in Broughty Ferry, Angus. Although an only child, I was never lonely as there was always someone knocking on my door for me to come out and play. This community was traditional and stable. People seemed to like children as we were made a fuss of and constantly being given sweets and biscuits, or home-made cakes.



“We lived not far from the beach at Broughty Ferry. Some of my earliest memories are of visits to the beach. On the right is me paddling with Dad when I was around 18 months old in 1949. On the left, Mum with me riding on Kerr's miniature railway in Arbroath.

“People were warm and giving and I think that is why I have a trusting open nature. We really were free-range children and roamed happily in the local area, more or less, wherever we pleased. At that time, we were surrounded by corn-fields, berry-fields, a forest and the beach wasn’t far away. In the summer holidays we would all go to “the berries” at 6am each day to earn money for school clothes. What happy, carefree days they were. Primary school was excellent and I left secure, quite confident and competent. I especially enjoyed primary 6 & 7 with Mrs King.

“When I was about eight, after assessment, I was awarded a violin scholarship by the local authority. I liked playing the violin but nobody explained to me the significance of the scholarship so, as the necessary practice took me away from my friends, it sometimes became a bit of a chore. I had piano lessons with Mrs Seaton and reached grade V. An end-of-term report stated that I was able to learn new music quicker than any of her other pupils. Later, I enrolled with a Highland dancing teacher. I have very happy memories of performing with other dancers accompanied by pipers in the Wellmeadow, Blairgowrie. I loved Highland dancing.



Broughty Ferry harbour at twilight - a wonderful place, full of childhood memories. This photo was taken by Mairi’s grand-daughter, Mairi-Anna Stevens, (aged 11).

“When I left school, I secured a ‘respectable job’ in a solicitors’ office making the tea for the partners and doing a lot of typing for a small monthly salary.

“I auditioned for a stage school in London and was offered a place to study dance and singing, but I was unable to secure a bursary and so was unable to take up the offer. Nobody advised me that there were equally good stage schools in Scotland for which funding might have been available. I decided instead to train as a nurse.

“I embarked on the three-year RGN course at Glasgow Royal Infirmary. I enjoyed both the theory and the practical aspect of the course, which I completed with ease. After graduation I became a nurse in Inverness, where I would meet Peter, my future husband.

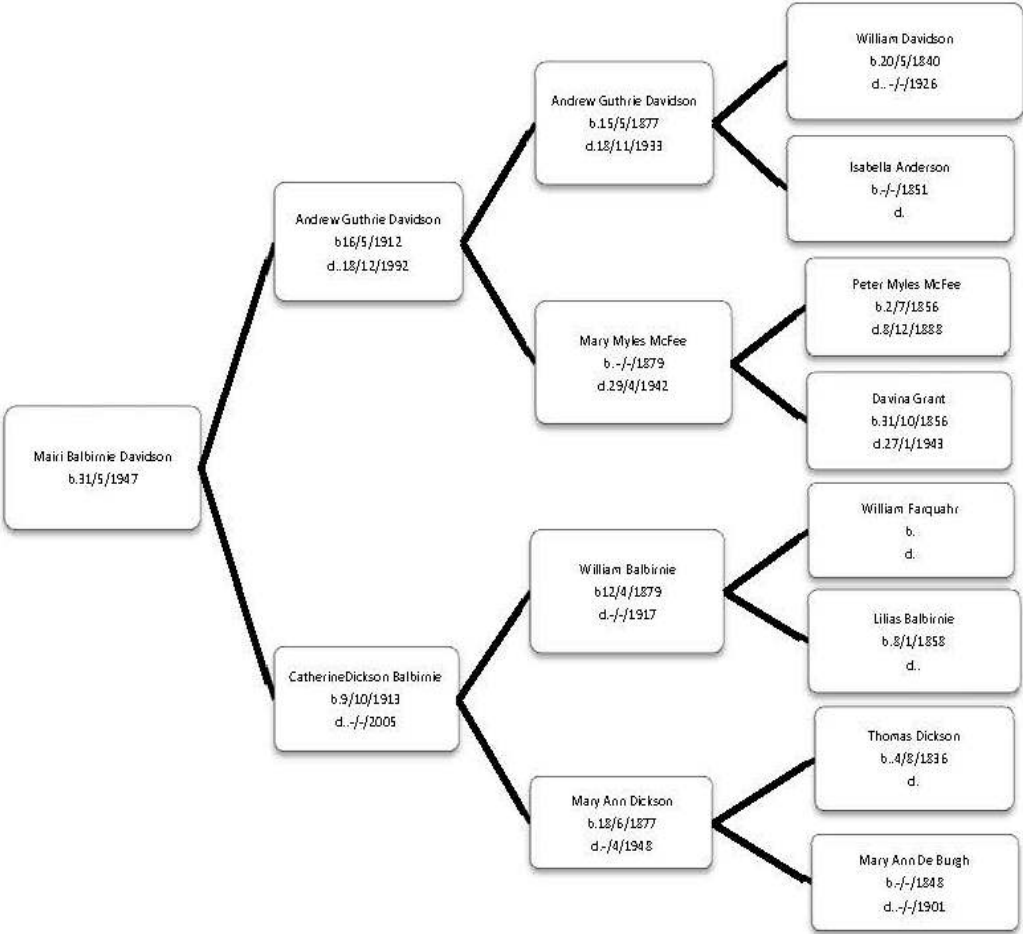
“I enrolled on courses at College in 1971 and 1972 and obtained A-passes in Higher Biology and Anatomy, Physiology & Health along with B-passes in Higher French and English. This gave me sufficient academic qualifications to matriculate at Aberdeen University. However, after my first year as an undergraduate at Aberdeen, Peter was offered a post in London, so we married in 1974. Subsequently, I studied with the Open University and graduated with a BA (Hons) degree.”



Mary Ann Balbirnie (nee Dickson) with her daughter Catherine (Kate) - Mairi's mother - in their cottage in East Links Place, Broughty Ferry, with Laddie, the dog.

The photo dates from the early 1940s. Mary Ann died in April 1948.

Here is a chart of Mairi's great-grandparents.



Mandy Gordon and Mairi with the Bass Rock in the background.  
Mandy with Alan, her husband, are our very dearest friends.



Mairi, pictured at the time of her qualification as a RGN at the Glasgow Royal Infirmary in 1970.

After Mairi passed her exams and qualified, she worked as a nurse in Inverness.



Mairi with her great friend Chrissie Mairi MacLeod from Point in Lewis with whom she flat-shared.

“Our flat was always filled with music. We had recordings of beautiful Gaelic songs, fantastic accordion bands and, of course, Country and Western music!”





Left: Peter and Mairi's wedding at St Lukes, Church of Scotland, in Broughty Ferry, 31/3/1974.

Peter hired a Hillman Hunter from Hertz for the wedding. When we set off on our honeymoon, the car had been decorated with lipstick "Just married", and tin cans were tied to the bumper. Thanks to my brothers!

Below left: Mairi with Christina, aged 3 months at "Marriotts", Tarrant Keyneston, Dorset.

Right: At eleven, Christina won the Linnets trophy for singing at the Arbroath festival.



Peter attended a 6-month-long advanced computing course at the Army Signals establishment at Blandford Forum, prior to taking up a post at MOD in London. With a young baby, we had a great welcome from the residents of the nearby village of Tarrant Keyneston, where we rented an 18<sup>th</sup> century cottage named "Marriotts".



Top left: Christina Mairi, aged five on her rocking horse from Santa in Bellevue Gardens, Arbroath.

Top right: James Andrew aged 15 months – showing an interest in tractors at Kinaldie.

Below: Christina Mairi (11) and James Andrew (4) – their first professional photo-shoot in Arbroath. Christina was about to start piano lessons with Miss Kitty McLaughlin.



We enjoyed a family holiday on the Isle of Lewis in 1986, renting a house in Barvas for a week. Mairi's dear friend from the Glasgow Royal, Chrissie-Mairi MacLeod, had married Murdo MacLennan. We spent time with Chrissie-Mairi at her home in Point, near Stornoway and visited Murdo's mother at her croft in Uig, on the west coast of Lewis. In this picture, Mrs MacLennan and Peter are guiding a black-faced ewe prior to its regular dosing. Christina is behind. Four-year old James Andrew is peering out of the door, while Marissa MacLennan is on the step. Marissa's younger sister, Valerie is hidden behind Peter.

We toured through Lewis and Harris, from the Butt of Lewis in the north, via the ancient Calanais stones, to the medieval church of St Clement at Rodel in the south of Harris. The weather was brilliant and we all had a memorable time.

### Success at the Aberfeldy Mod

In the Perthshire and Angus Provincial Mod in Aberfeldy held in June 1988, both Mairi and daughter Christina achieved successes. Mairi won first prize in the vocal duet competition with her neighbour and friend Christine Stone. Thirteen-year old Christina competed in the junior section and won the Catherine Smith Memorial Trophy for piano.

Christine Stone (nee MacDonald), a native Gaelic speaker from the Isle of Lewis, had been living with her husband, Howard, in Dundee at the time. Christine had not previously competed in a singing competition. Mairi and Christine took lessons together and decided to enter with a Gaelic duet at the Provincial Mod in Aberfeldy. Encouraged by this success, in future years Christine would go on to win the Gold Medal for singing at the National Mod.

*Picture by D.C.Thomson.*





From the John O’Groat Journal.

“Christine Stone, from Castletown, and Alec Macdonald, from Lewis, pose with the Traditional Gold Medals they won at the Royal National Mod in Dunoon.

In 2012, The John O’Groat Journal reported - “Christine Stone, originally from Back in Lewis and now based in Castletown, won the traditional gold medal for her vocal singing on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2012. “Mrs Stone has long been a stalwart of the language in Caithness and was heavily involved in bringing the national Mod to the county in 2010. As well as being a member of Melvich Gaelic Choir, she has been a key mover and shaker in getting local interest in Gaelic, which saw a record number of entries from Caithness enter into this year’s week-long festival in Argyll. “The chairperson of the local branch of An Comunn Gàidhealach, Raymond Bremner, said that there were tears of joy when Mrs Stone returned from the event to her fellow Caithness competitors.”

### **Winning the Garden Competition**



In 2008 Mairi was the overall winner of the Broughty Ferry in Bloom competition

**Christina Mairi Lawrie**



Above: Practising for a recital at Glamis Castle.

Below: Soloist in the Grieg Piano Concerto with RSNO in Dundee's Caird Hall.  
Conductor David Danzmayr.





Christina's interest in music started early! Playing the piano at one year old and showing an interest in the violin at 17 months.



Left: Christina rehearsing with the orchestra after winning the Edinburgh Festival Concerto competition in 1992. The prize was to play the Schumann piano concerto. Also in 1992 she won prizes at Southport, Bromsgrove, Madrid and Marsala, Sicily. Right: Christina with her trophies having reached the Grand Final of the under-18 Yamaha Clavinova competition at Luton Hoo stately home, Bedfordshire, in 1990.

After attending Chethams School of Music in Manchester, Christina read Music at Trinity College, Cambridge, from where she graduated with an MA Hons (Cantab). Then she studied at both the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music in London. She is now a professional concert pianist as well as being a staff pianist in the Vocal & Opera department of the Royal College of Music.

Christina says "As my love for music became apparent, my parents supported me with every step I took towards the concert platform. Mum drove me to Arbroath every Saturday for my early piano lessons, as well as taking me to the festivals in Perth and Arbroath, where I gained my earliest experience on stage. It's always useful for me to run new pieces past her, as she has a great, cultured ear for music. Dad has also been a dedicated supporter throughout my career, and he has clocked up thousands of miles driving me to my concerts and competitions over the years, as well as running my website for me. They wisely encouraged me to go to Cambridge first, before going on to postgraduate studies at the Royal College of Music, where I still work. I am eternally grateful to both of my lovely parents."

### **Chethams School of Music**

Enid Lawrie's husband, Penry Williams, taught history at Chetham's School. So when Christina went there in 1991 there was already a family connection.



Chetham's School from their website.

Pictured here in her home town, in 1991, Christina (aged 17) is about to give the first performance on the new Boston piano at the Chaplaincy Centre of the University of Dundee.

*Photo: the Dundee Courier.*



The late Yonty Solomon, Christina's professor of piano at the Royal College of Music, wrote the following recommendation for Christina:

“Christina is a brilliant performer, mature, profound and with a creative and authoritative artistry as well as a virtuoso technical command and quick laser-sharp memory. Her stylish awareness, command of her instrument and integrity in her playing are matched by a warm, charming and poetic personality.

Christina was featured as a rising star in International Piano Magazine in Nov. 2005.



A performance of the Brahms 2<sup>nd</sup> piano concerto with the Worthing symphony orchestra with conductor Robin Paige. This concerto, which Christina played from memory, is fifty minutes in length.

Christina is employed as a staff pianist by the Royal College of Music.

Here is her biography on the College website:

Christina Lawrie enjoys an exciting and varied career as soloist, song pianist and chamber musician. Career highlights include solo recitals for Wigmore Hall; Purcell Room; Leeds International Concert Season; St. George's, Bristol; Perth Concert Hall; Grieg Concerto with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and live performances for BBC Radio 3 and BBC Radio Scotland.

Christina adores chamber music and the song repertoire. She collaborates regularly with artists including her violinist husband, Marcus Barcham Stevens, and baritone Stephen Varcoe, as well as many of the RCM vocal students. Along with violinist Harriet Mackenzie, Christina recently recorded a CD of music by Grieg, Tchaikovsky and Prokofiev. The CD was released in August 2018 on the Nimbus label. Christina is a graduate of Cambridge University, the RCM and RAM. She studied with Sergei Babayan, Joan Havill, Vanessa Latache and Yonty Solomon.



Christina married fellow Cambridge graduate Marcus Barcham Stevens at Trinity College Chapel, Cambridge on 31/8/2008. Top right is Mairi, the mother of the bride. Below are Marcus and Christina with their bridesmaid Harriet, then Marcus and Christina pictured at Glyndebourne. Marcus grew up in Cambridgeshire, and he is a professional violinist. He graduated from Clare College, Cambridge with a starred First, before going on to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He is the co-leader of the Britten Sinfonia, and the Principal 2nd Violin of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. Marcus's compositions have been performed widely, at venues including St Paul's Cathedral, and on BBC Radio 3. Marcus and Christina love to perform recitals together. It seemed that the Covid lockdowns of 2020-21 would stop them from performing, but they quickly built up an online following for their YouTube series "Concert from our Living Room", which was featured by the BBC Music Magazine.



Top: Diana with Marcus and Christina, Mairi and John at the tree beside Ely cathedral which was planted to celebrate the engagement of Marcus and Christina. Below left: The wedding, and right: Christina with Harriet, Peter and Mairi.



Christina and Marcus are parents of a wonderful daughter, Mairi-Anna, born in 2011. Above: proud grandmother, Mairi, shows 12 week old Mairi-Anna.the garden.



On the left: Mairi-Anna in her new uniform for Queenswood School in the autumn of 2022.

When cousin Iona saw Mairi-Anna in her Queenswood uniform she commented on the coincidence that her brother, Donald-Douglas MacCuish, had taught at Queenswood for 16 years in the 1980s and 1990s before retiring to the family croft on Harris. The father of Donald-Douglas and Iona, the Rev. Donald MacCuish, was the minister of the reconstructed Iona Abbey Church during the 1930s. Donald ended his ministry at Caddonfoot Church in the Scottish Borders.

Donald married all three of Morag's sons, Peter in 1974, and both Duncan and Gordon in 1977.



Above: Christina with baby Mairi-Anna.

Below: Peter, Mairi, and Eleanor Brown (nee Gall) holding Mairi-Anna.

Mairi and Eleanor met on their very first day at Eastern Primary School, Broughty Ferry. They remain life-long friends and were bridesmaids for each other.

### **James Andrew Lawrie**

James Andrew Lawrie was born in Dundee in 1981 and attended Dundee High School. He later gained a BA degree from Open University.

While Christina was into music, James took a great interest in anything mechanical. He first worked at BT fleet as a mechanic, then at Tesco Distribution handling heavy good vehicles. He gained his private pilot licence and made his first solo flight in 2013 in a piper PA28 aircraft. The sky has not been the limit. In 2021, he self studied and gained his transport manager CPC in National Road Freight, with this qualification he took over as the Lead Transport Manager for a few businesses including Bullseye Haulage.

In 2015, James met a beautiful Chinese lady from Sichuan called Kathy Xin Luo. Kathy has been in love with this magical land since the first time she landed in Scotland. She graduated in 2008 from a top Chinese university with two distinctions on English, and International Business and Commerce. In 2008 she chose the University of Edinburgh out of UCL, ICL, Universites of Edinburgh and Glasgow to study her postgraduate with a scholarship sponsored by UK government due to her exceptional academic performance. She gained her MSc in the University of Edinburgh with merits in 2009.

Being a self-starter, Kathy earned herself abundant work experience at the British Council, hosting cultural, educational and political exchange events and projects between China and UK, including David Cameron's China visit. From her varied roles at VisitScotland, at Glenmornagie and Ardbeg, the reputable Scottish whisky brands, to the senior management role at Laings the Jeweller, Scotland's oldest and biggest luxury jeweller, she has developed deep ties to Scotland.

James and Kathy married in 2019, and they have a son called Max Luo Lawrie who will be 4-years old at the end of August 2023. They live in a house in Currie, west of Edinburgh, and have acquired and been managing a number of buy-to-let flats in addition to their full-time jobs.







## Davidson

Mairi's father was Andrew Guthrie Davidson (1912-1992). He told Mairi that his own father (also named Andrew Guthrie Davidson), had emigrated to Boston, USA, in 1894 where he stayed with his sister Helen (born 1874) who was a piano teacher there.

However, unable to find work due to an economic slump in the USA, Andrew had to return to Dundee in 1895. On 29/5/1896, Andrew Guthrie Davidson of 3 Thorter Row, in Hilltown, was granted hackney carriage license, no 156. He would have been 18 in 1896.

Andrew G. married Mary Myles McFee on 17/12/1897. On their marriage certificate, Andrew, of Lochee Road, Dundee, was described as a cab driver and Mary a sack merchant. I have a copy of the abbreviated certificate dated 5<sup>th</sup> October 1915 marked "issued for army purposes only".

Andrew G. and Mary would have seven children. On the register, Andrew was described as a stableman and resident at 3 Heans Lane, Hawkhill. All the children were registered in Dundee City.

Mairi's Uncle Harry was born in 1899.

Then Davina on 6/10/1900 - she died in infancy.

The next child in 1901 was also named Davina (Mairi's Aunty Dovey).

Andrew Guthrie, the first son with the name was born in 1903 and died 23/10/1904.

Mary, born in 1904, died of consumption on 1/9/1933.

Peter McFee was born in 1909 (Mairi's Uncle Pete).

Andrew Guthrie, their youngest child was born on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1912.

In the 1911 census, 3 Heans Lane appeared to be a tenement with 8 flats off Small's Wynd, Hawkhill. Living in two rooms, were Andrew (34), a stableman; Mary (33), his wife; Harry (12); Davina (10); Mary (5); Peter (2). At that time (1911) they had been married 13 years and had six children of whom four were alive.



In the photo, dated August 1928, standing in Smalls Wynd and looking towards its junction with Hawkhill. The building which is seen here on the right is 2 Smalls Wynd. [Ref: TC/EN/94 Ref: Sanitary Department Album 1 Photo 26]. I think Heans Lane is the entry to the right, off Small's Wynd. Andrew and Mary's flat may have been in the tenement facing the camera.

Andrew Guthrie Davidson would be called up for war service in 1915. He served in the 666<sup>th</sup> Horse Transport company T4/092495. When Andrew Guthrie Davidson died 18/11/1933, he was described as a General dealer, aged 56, resident at 4 Fullerton Street Lochee. His son, also Andrew Guthrie Davidson, served in Burma during WW2. He married Catherine Dickson Balbirnie on 30/9/1946, when his address was also 4 Fullerton Street, Lochee. Not long after their marriage Kate and Andy moved to 65 Forthill Drive, Broughty Ferry.



This is a Google street view image of 65 Forthill Drive. Kate and Andy Davidson moved into the top right flat in 1947 and remained for the rest of their lives.

There was a substantial common green behind the houses where tenants could be allotted plots if they wished to have one. Mairi remembers Andy's prize-winning plot which provided year-round fruit and vegetables and has inspired her to have a life-long interest in gardening.

### **The ancestors of Andrew Guthrie Davidson (1878-1933).**

In the 1891 census, William Davidson (a commission agent, aged 50) and his wife Isabella (40), born in Newburgh, were at 43 South Union Street, with their eight living children, including Andrew, aged 13.

In the 1881 census, the family were at 13 West Dock Street. Their eldest child, Helen (7) was born in Newburgh and the other three, including 3-year old Andrew Guthrie, in Dundee.

In the 1869-70 trade directory, William Davidson (junior) was a “clerk and traveller” residing at 4 Bain Square. From 1874 to 1879 he was a commission agent, with addresses in West Dock Street. 12, 14 and 13. I don’t know if the changing numbers meant he had actually relocated or if the houses had been renumbered. Perhaps he had been moving into better tenement flats within adjacent blocks. In the 1881 directory he was a merchant and commission agent with premises at 84 Commercial Street and his residence at 13 West Dock Street.

The marriage certificate on 10<sup>th</sup> October 1872, at Mid Shore, Newburgh, Fife, of William Davidson of 24 Bank Street Dundee and Isabella Anderson, gave his parents as William Davidson, wine and spirit merchant and Helen Davidson (ms. Adams - deceased). Isabella Anderson’s parents were David Anderson, seaman and Helen Anderson (ms. Inglis).

Helen Davidson (wife of a baker and spirit dealer) died on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1859, aged 44, at 54 Murraygate. Her parents were David Adams, harbour porter (deceased) and Helen Adams (ms. Smith)

William Davidson’s father was also named William. In the 1853 and 1856 trade directories, he was described as a spirit dealer at 54 Murraygate. In 1861 he was “Baker and Spirit dealer”, while in 1840 he was a baker at 64 Murraygate. The 1856 entry recorded his house as Crichton’s Close.

In the 1851 census, William Davidson (37), a baker and spirit dealer, with his wife Helen (Adams) were recorded at Crichton's Close, Murraygate. Their children were William (10), John (6), Margaret (4), Helen & Jean (1) all born in Dundee. They had two servants. William gave his place of birth as Kinnettles, Angus.

In the 1861 census, William (48) was still at Crichton's Close, a house of six rooms with one servant. His wife was now Mary, aged 42 from Mains parish, Angus. Helen Adams had died on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1859 of a stroke.

The family of James Davidson and Ann Loudon were found in the OPR for Kinnettles, Angus. George was baptised 3/2/1809; William 11/9/1813; Margaret 18/4/1818 and Robert 3/2/1822.

The 1841 census for Easter Foffarty, Kinnettles had James Davidson (63) H.L.W.; Ann (50) and Margaret (20), also H.L.W. (hand loom weaver).

Anne Loudon was baptised 2/9/1792 by John Loudon and Elizabeth Chalmers in Kingoldrum parish. (ref 295/10/49). Their other children were Isobel (1/9/1782); Helen 25/4/1784; Janet 23/8/1788. There was no sign of their marriage in the OPR. There was a possible birth for John Loudon on 15/11/1751 in Tannadice to Thomas Loudon and Elspet Whyte. I could find no trace of their marriage, but they also baptised William, 2/9/1753 and Hugh 26/12/1758.

If James Davidson was 63 in 1841, that puts his birth at around 1778. The most likely (and only one in the Kinnettles parish) was on 16/3/1777 to Robert Davidson and Elspet Small. Robert's marriage to Elspet Small was recorded in the Kinnettles parish record on 25/11/1770. The same marriage was also recorded in the Tealing parish record on 30/11/1770.

Robert was baptised 31/10/1742 by James Davidson at Finlarg. There were two other sons recorded: James 23/4/1748 and Andrew 15/3/1751 and a daughter Janet 6/10/1745.

### Davidson genealogy in Angus

James Davidson == ??		John Loudon == Elspet Whyte	
m.~ 1741			
Finlarg, Tealing, Angus		Tannadice, Angus	
-----			
James    Andrew    Robert == Elspeth Small		John Loudon == Eliz Chalmers	
b.23/4/48   b.15/3/51   b.31/10/42		b.15/11/1751	
	m.30/11/1770	m. ~ 1780	
	Finlarg	Kingoldrum, Angus	
-----			
Janet    b.8/11/1771		James        ==    Anne Loudon	
Robert    b.16/2/1775		b.16/3/1777        b. 2/9/1792	
George    b.4/7/1779		(farmer Foffarty, Kinnetles)	
William    b.14/10/1781		m. ~1808	
David      b.2/2/1785		Kinnettles, Angus	
Alexander b.18/11/1787			
-----			
George	William	Margaret	Robert
b.3/2/1809	b.11/9/1813	b.18/4/1818	b.3/2/1822
m.10/10/1835	m.16/6/1837	m.31/12/1858	
Isobel Matthews	Helen Adams	James Bennett	
	Dundee	Kincaldrum, Angus	

**Davidson continued**

James Davidson	David Adams == Helen Smith	David Anderson == Isa Tod
b.16/3/1777	b.?1762- d/12/3/1835	b.?? b.??
farmer	harbour porter, Dundee	m.27/1/1819 Newburgh

|| || ||

William Davidson == Helen Adams	David Anderson == Helen Inglis
b.11/9/13 d.16/5/79	b.25/6/1815 d.1/8/59
(baker & sprit dealer, Dundee)	(a seaman)
m.16/6/1837	m. 24/4/1844

|| ||

William Davidson	==	Isabella Anderson
b.20/5/1840		b. 4/8/1845
m.10/10/1872 in Newburgh		

||

Davidson, Dundee

Helen	William	Andrew Guthrie.	James	Harry	John	Isabella	Alexander
b.1874	b.1876	b.15/5/1877	b.1880	b.1884	b.1886	b.1888	b.1890
d.6/20/1900		d.18/11/1933					
		m.20/12/1897					
		Mary Myles McFee					

Harry	Davina	Davina	Andrew G.	Mary(Molly)	Peter McFee	Andrew Guthrie
b.1899	b.1/10/1900	b. 1901	b. /1903	b. 1905	b. 1909	b.14/5/1912
	d.6/10/1900	d.?	d.23/10/1904	d.1/9/1935	d.?	d.18/12/1992
		m. Robert			m. Jean	m.20/9/1946
		Milne				Catherine D
						Balbirnie
					Jean	Mary Balbirnie
						b.31/5/1947



Davidson family about 1914. Standing on the left: Davina Grant Davidson (b.1901), known as Dovey, married Bob Milne an artist with D.C. Thomson's in Dundee. They were the parents of Ronnie and Bobbie Milne. Next is Mrs Davidson (Mary Myles McFee) (1879- 1942). Standing behind is Harry Davidson (b.1899); Molly (b.1905, d. 1935 of T.B.); Peter Davidson (seated) b.1909. (Uncle Pete); Small boy standing in front: Andrew Guthrie Davidson (b.14/5/1912).



I am not sure about this photo. I thought that it could be Mary Myles and William McFee. The photographer is C.F.Partoon, Dundee. He started his Dundee business in 1908, so much too late to be Myles-McFee and it does not look like the Davidson family in appearance or ages.



Visiting day in the TB ward at the King's Cross isolation hospital in Dundee. Molly Davidson was dressed in black with a white bow in her hair, between two nurses just to the left of centre. She died here of TB, aged 29, on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1935. TB used to be a terrible scourge, until it was conquered by antibiotics after WW2. Edith Annie Lawrie in Manchester also died, aged just 18, of TB.

King's Cross opened in November 1889 in Clepington Road, Dundee. It was the city's first permanent fever hospital built to treat patients with infectious diseases, including typhus, diphtheria and smallpox.

By 1913 King's Cross had seven wards supplemented by a variety of ancillary buildings including King's Cross Hospital (West), built in 1893 as accommodation for cases of smallpox, with a small unit for cholera patients. These facilities were used intermittently until 1927 when the hospital had to deal with an outbreak of variola minor. This outbreak was severe enough to require an additional ward to be constructed.



### **Peter McFee Davidson (Uncle Pete)**

Mairi often speaks about her Uncle Pete. He had no training as a pianist and could not read music, but he seemed to have a natural flair for picking up a tune with the ability to extemporise and improvise from it. Pete would be the life and soul of any party. If there was a piano in the room, he would sit at it and play whatever tune was requested of him. Even if he did not know the tune, he could pick it up from a few hummed bars.

Pete himself had his feet amputated as a result of diabetes. He was so grateful to the Dundee Limb Fitting Centre for the care he had received from it that he would often visit when he, himself, no longer needed treatment, and play the piano there for the enjoyment of the patients.

Pete was married to Jean. They had a daughter, also Jean, who emigrated to the USA.

The Dundee Limb Fitting Centre was the creation of Professor George Murdoch, who specialised in the study of prosthetics. He invited the legendary amputee and air ace Sir Douglas Bader to officially open it on 20 Sep 1965. The Centre occupied 'The Lodge', a house at 133 Queen Street built in the 19th century by John Don of Don and Company, which had housed a Red Cross Hospital during World War I and later the Dundee Infant Hospital. The Centre was the first special purpose in-patient facility in the United Kingdom to offer a comprehensive, integrated service to amputees. In 1979 the Tayside Rehabilitation Engineering Services was adopted to embrace the full range of activities at the Centre and its sister unit in Dundee Royal Infirmary. The Centre moved to the Tayside Orthopaedic and Rehabilitation Technology Centre by Ninewells Hospital in 1999. The building in Queen Street has now been divided into retirement flats.

## Ronnie Milne



A picture of the Milne family from Ronnie Milne: Bob 1931-1967; Davina (Dovey) 1901- ?; Ronnie b.1933; Gerald (Ged) 1935-2012 and Lewis 1939–1993.

The above picture was taken at the wedding of Gordon Anderson to Doris Milne, Dovey's sister-in-law. Bob at top left, became a civil engineer and married Norma. They had twins, Rory and Louise. Bob tragically died in a car accident on the Isle of Lewis. Ron is on the right of their mother Davina (Dovey) Davidson. At the front, left, is Gerald who would open a garage business in the Channel Islands; and on right, is Lewis.

The inset is their Dad in his Royal Artillery uniform. Ronnie said that Dad was away for the whole of WWII. After the war he went to work in Nigeria for more than ten years. Mum went out to Africa to see him twice during that time. When she was away, Auntie Doris (Anderson) looked after the four of us at our house in St Mary's.

Ronnie's father, Bob Milne, was a talented artist and cartoonist with D.C. Thomson in Dundee.



The “Piper o’ Dundee” by Robert Milne, husband of Davina Davidson. Bob was employed as a cartoonist by D.C. Thomson, publishers of the Dandy, Beano, etc.

### McFee / Myles

The Dundee Chartist James Myles, (1818-1851), was Mairi's great-great-great-Uncle. James operated a bookshop and lending library in Dundee's Overgate until his early death on 26<sup>th</sup> February 1851 at the age of 32. Among his publications were:

"Rambles in Forfarshire" or "Sketches in Town and Country" published in 1850. In the introduction he stated that many of the sketches had previously been published by him in the Dundee Courier.

"Foo Fozzle and Friends", published in 1846 was described on its title page as "A feast of literary crumbs – poems, letters, sonnets, songs and nonsense by Foo Fozzle and friends; ancient citizens of Dundee. – The whole being prepared and made palatable by Simon Strap Esq A.F.S.D". Simon Strap was James Myles himself. I have a copy of the 58 page reprint produced William Kidd & Sons in 1951. A publisher's note to "Foo Fozzle" included a brief biography of James Myles. It stated that he was born in Liff in 1819 and trained as a mason after leaving school. He became drawn to the Chartist movement and became a notable speaker at their meetings. After a time he became a paid lecturer but then opened a bookseller's shop in the Overgate and devoted any leisure time he had to literary pursuits. The shop became the rendezvous of the literary characters of the town, whom he encouraged. Some of their productions also appeared in the magazine of the Dundee Literary Society. James Myles was a frequent contributor to Hogg's Instructor, The Dundee Courier, and the Northern Warder.

"Chapters in the Life of a Dundee Factory Boy". Chris Whatley, a Dundee University professor, has written extensively about the "Chapters", claiming that it was the anonymous autobiography of an autodidact from among the working poor, but James was, in fact, the author.

I have original copies of Rambles in Forfarshire and Foo Fozzle, but my copy of Chapters is a 1951 reprint with 87 pages published by John Scott, Dundee. As part of a course on Modern Scottish History run by the University of Dundee, I wrote an essay on print-culture in Dundee. I have quoted from part of it to consider the activities of James Myles.

Booksellers, libraries and newsprint formed the basis of this discussion of print culture in Dundee from the 1780s to 1880s. Before cinema and broadcasting, printed media provided diversion and entertainment as well as technical knowledge and intellectual stimulation. Printed media also powerfully influenced attitudes, cultural values and social coherence. Exclusion from print culture, due to price or illiteracy, inevitably limited the ability of working people to improve their economic status or widen their intellectual horizons.

Chalmers is remembered as the pre-eminent bookseller in Dundee. William Chalmers opened in Castle Street as bookseller, binder and stationer in 1788. James, his brother took over in 1809. In 1829 James was described as 'bookseller, printer and ink manufacturer'. James also was an early promoter of the use of postage stamps, although Roland Hill has been wrongly given credit for that innovation. Succeeded by James's son, Charles, from 1853 until 1877, the firm eventually became David Winters which exists to this day as Winter-Simpson in Dundee. James Chalmers introduced lithographic printing to Dundee and published many works during his career.

In 1783, there were four booksellers in Dundee for a population of 15000, but by 1858 there were 42 'booksellers, stationers and bookbinders' for a population which had grown to 87000, most with central addresses. Between 1809 and 1858 booksellers outstripped population growth producing an apparent doubling in provision between 1809 and 1858. There is no information about turnover, how much they depended on book sales or the nature and number of the titles sold. What proportion of the population bought or borrowed books? How many customers were from the city?

The 1850 catalogue of James Myles advertised reduced prices for higher volume sales. This may have been an attempt to undercut other booksellers in a competitive market. However, in the light of Myles's desire to improve the labouring classes, both morally and intellectually it may have been an altruistic strategy. He sold popular 1/- works at 8d, and schoolbooks 'at the cheapest possible rate'. Myles also supplied respectable and improving weeklies and other periodicals but excluded 'those London periodicals that dealt in seduction or murder and ministered to the lowest passions of men'.

James Myles's circulating library in 1850, which included 'all of our popular novelists and more solid productions' could be had for 2/6 per quarter or 1d per volume per week. The weekly charge appeared to be a better deal than the quarterly and seems to demonstrate further Myles's altruism. The churches, in providing education for the poor, restricted what they could read, with the purpose of social control. Libraries, such as Myles's, though still censored, provided wider access to literature. Perhaps there was also an informal exchange of well-worn books among those who were literate but too poor to buy or subscribe.

James Myles hosted some 'literary characters of the town' whose efforts appeared in *A Feast of Literary Crumbs* in 1848. Myles's catalogue suggested a 40% margin on books in 1850. Assuming that a bookseller earned £100 annual profit and had fixed costs for rent, fittings and assistance of £300, also assuming income entirely from book sales with an arbitrary mix by volume of 50% works @ 6d, 30% @ 1/-, 12% @ 2/- and 8% @ 2/6, the chart shows that he needed sales of 20200. Sales of 30950 would be required with a margin of 15% on the cheaper books.

Novelists such as Scott and Galt wrote for a middle-class readership. Up to 1914, writers such as John Buchan continued the genre of adventures with 'middle-class' heroes. John Galt complained of writing for the circulating libraries 'like an upholsterer for a piece of furniture'. Literacy appeared to be widespread among the poor, with around 90% able to read in 1833. However, the actively literate poor, able to read for pleasure or instruction, calculated at just 10%, increased markedly only after 1850, although the chapbook format demonstrated an earlier demand for secular, non-improving literature. Myles's *Chapters* has been acclaimed as one of the first novels intended for working-class readers. Many post-1850 works of didactic fiction were serialised in magazines with proletarian readership such as the Peoples Journal.

James had three brothers. David became a farmer on the Gray estate in Liff parish. John had a confectioner's shop in the Overgate. Peter became an ordained minister. Their sister Mary married William McFee - Mairi's great-great grandparents.

William McFee married Mary Myles on 7<sup>th</sup> March 1852 at Liff, when he was described as a servant to Major Gifford at Gray Mains. Their children were:

James McFee, baptised at Liff 27/8/1852; Peter Myles McFee, in Dundee 2/7/1856; Mary McFee, at Coupar Angus 29/7/1858; David McFee, in Dundee 20/10/1860; Helen Isles McFee, in Dundee 12/12/1865 and Charles McFee, in Dundee 15/9/1868. When Peter Myles McFee's birth was registered on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1856, his father was described as a coachman / domestic servant and living at 91 Ferry Road, Dundee.

The Dundee Trade directory for 1869/70 and 1871/72 had James McFee, cab proprietor of 16 East Henderson Wynd, (James died Feb 1873). The directories for 1874/75, 1876/77 and 1878/79 had William McFee, junior, cab proprietor of 18 East Henderson Wynd. The directory for 1880/81 had William McFee senior, cab proprietor of 12 East Henderson Wynd, and William McFee, junior, also a cab proprietor of 14 East Henderson Wynd,

A Gravestone at Balgay, lair 645/6L was erected by Mary Myles in memory of her husband William McFee who died 28<sup>th</sup> November 1891, aged 62, and their family: James, died 10<sup>th</sup> February 1873, aged 20; Charles, died 29<sup>th</sup> December 1898 aged 30; David, died 20<sup>th</sup> July 1865 aged 5. Mary McFee or Myles, herself died 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1908 aged 79 and was interred in the same lair.

A Gravestone at Balgay, lair 644L was erected by Davina Grant in memory of her husband, Peter Myles McFee, who was killed at East Brook Street Bridge, Broughty Ferry on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1888, aged 32. Davina herself was interred on 27/1/1943, aged 87. Mary Myles McFee, aged 64, who married Andrew Guthrie Davidson was interred on 29<sup>th</sup> April 1942. The Children of Mary Myles McFee and Andrew G Davidson also in the lair were Andrew Guthrie Davidson (aged 1) on 25/10/1904, Davina Davidson, (7 days) 6/10/1900 and Mary Davidson (26), 1/9/1933.

In the 1871 census of 14 East Henderson Wynd, William McFee (41) was described as a cabman born in Whithorn, Wigtonshire. His wife Mary (42) was from Liff. Their

children were James (19), a cab proprietor born in Liff. The other children were all born in Dundee. William (17), cabman; Peter (14); Mary (12); Helen (5); Charles (2).

Peter Myles McFee married Davina Grant on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1877 at St Salvador's Episcopal church, Dundee. Davina Grant was described as a power loom weaver, residing at 223 Hilltown. Her father, David, was a journeyman blacksmith.

Helen Isles (73), widow of David Myles, wood merchant, and mother of Mary Myles died on 15<sup>th</sup> June 1867 at Backmuir of Liff. Her parents were recorded as William Isles, grocer, and Jean Nicoll.

In the 1841 census for Backmuir: Helen Isles (45) was of "independent means". Her children (with ages to within 5 years) were: David (17); John (15), an apprentice mason; Peter (10); Mary (8) and Helen (3). Also at Backmuir the family of Robert & Margaret Kinnear, farmers, included Margaret (20) who would marry David Myles, and Helen (12) who later married John Myles.

In the 1851 census for Backmuir: Helen Isles or Myles (widow), farmer of 9 acres, born Fowlis. Still at home: Mary (21); Helen (13) and David (10) a servant.

1851 census for East Backmuir: David Myles (30) farmer of 20 acres and his wife Margaret. Their children were: William (3); James (1) and a servant Jessie Wilkie

In the 1851 census for Dundee: at 163 Overgate: Amelia Myles (widow of James) aged 31 from Liff. Their children, Robert (14) a bookseller; William (7) and James (5). Her husband, James Myles had died in February 1851.



### **David Myles**

*An obituary in the Dundee Courier of 12<sup>th</sup> March 1886:*

On Friday, Mr David Myles died at his residence of Blairfield near Birkhill Feus in his 66<sup>th</sup> year. For some time the deceased had been in wavering health but he was about his usual duties until about two months ago when he was prostrated by illness which terminated in his death. Mr Myles was a native of Liff parish and had all of his life been connected with the district in the affairs of which he took a lively interest. He was a member of a family which displayed more than ordinary abilities. His brothers being the late Mr James Myles, author of "The Factory Boy", "Rambles in Forfarshire" etc.; the Rev. Peter Myles, at one time the popular minister of St David's established church in Dundee and afterwards of Monifieth parish church; and the late Mr John Myles, a well-known confectioner in Dundee. For several years Mr Myles was a leading elder in Liff Parish Church and represented the session at the Dundee Parochial Board. He also took a strong interest in the educational requirements of the parish, and was a member of Liff School Board since its inception. For over forty years he occupied the farm at Blairfield on the Camperdown estate and had long been known as an unostentatious but shrewd intelligent agriculturist. Throughout the parish he was held in high esteem, particularly by the poor in whose welfare he took a practical kindly interest. He has left a widow, five sons and two daughters who are all grown up.

### **Rev. Peter Myles**

The Rev. Peter Myles was born in the parish of Liff and educated at St Andrews, where for some time he acted as assistant teacher at Madras College. He was licensed to preach by the presbytery of Forres and shortly afterwards became assistant to the Rev. Dr Paterson of Montrose. On the death of the Rev. J.L. Anderson of St. David's Church, Dundee, in 1852, Mr Myles succeeded him and was ordained on December 16 1852. In a short time the membership of his congregation very largely increased. Mr Myles, during his stay in Dundee, laboured assiduously to promote the spiritual welfare of his congregation and his domiciliary visits, especially among the poorer classes resident in the Scouringburn, were frequent and highly beneficial. In Dec. 1853 he was presented to the parish of Monifieth with the unanimous approval of the congregation. He had not long been at his new charge when his health gave way. He died on Dec. 24 1854.

**McFee and Myles genealogy**

<b>McFee</b>	<b>McGowan</b>		<b>John</b>	<b>Helen</b>	<b>David</b>	<b>Janet</b>
		<b>Isles</b>	<b>Niccol</b>	<b>Smith</b>	<b>Myles</b>	<b>Wilkie</b>
					1713-1804	1728-1814

Sorbie, Wigton		Fowlis, Angus	Kinnell, Angus	Inverarity, Angus
Peter == Janet		William ==	Jean	James == Agnes

McFee	McGowan	Isles	Nicoll	Myles	Fraser
b.~1770	b.1767	b.22/11/67	b.1760		
d.1/2/1832		d.18/9/1810			
		m.28/3/1789	Blairgowrie		

Charles McFee ==	Agnes Mcinally	Helen Isles	==	David Myles
b.??	b.1811	b.1788		b. 1789
d.??		d.15/6/1867		d.20/4/1838

(gardener)					(carter),
		----- Myles, Liff -----			

William McFee ==	Mary	James	David	John	Peter	Helen
b. 1829	b.1829	b.1818	b.1819	b.20/4/22	b.22/7/26	b.1828
d.28/11/91	d.23/5/08	d.26/2/51	d.12/3/86		d.24/12/54	
(cab driver)		(author)	(farmer)	(confect'r)	(minister)	
	m.7/3/1852 Liff	m.Robertson	M.Kinnear	H.Kinnear		

||

----- McFee, Dundee -----

James	William	Peter	Mary	David	Helen	Charles
b.27/8/52	b.15/5/54	b.2/7/56	b.29/7/58	b.20/10/60	b.12/12/65	b.15/9/68
d.10/2/73		d.8/12/88	d.?	d.20/1/65	d.?	d.29/12/98
		m.D Grant	m.Kermack		m. Collins	
		28/9/77				

Mary Myles McFee b. 1879 d.29/4/1942

## Grant

A great-great-grandfather of Mairi was David Grant (1816-1894), the engineer on the SS Forfarshire which went aground off the Farne Islands, Northumberland in 1838. Grace Darling, the daughter of the keeper of the Longstone Lighthouse with her father, rescued nine of the passengers from the wreck. Grace Darling's heroism was immortalised by the poem of William Wordsworth and perhaps less so by William McGonagall's poem of the same name. David Grant settled in the Hilltown of Dundee.

David Grant presumably met Janet Fleming during his travels and brought her back to Dundee. They married 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1836. Her death certificate in 1900 gave her birthplace as Woolwich, Kent. An entry in the register of the church of St Mary Magdalene in Woolwich, Kent has the baptism of Janet Fleming on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1817 with the birth on 2<sup>nd</sup> July. The parents were William Fleming and Margaret Steen. The name suggests that Margaret Steen may have been Jewish. I found online in an account of Jewry in England that there was a Jewish community in Woolwich in 1800. However, the CofE baptism suggests that Margaret might not have been Jewish, unless her Jewish parents had converted from Judaism. Margaret Steen had probably married William Fleming, an army pensioner, in London around the end of the Napoleonic Wars.

According to A.H Millar in "Haunted Dundee", 1923, page 33-39, The Forfarshire was the largest paddle steamer to have been built in Dundee up to the time of her launch on 5<sup>th</sup> December 1835. The engines were also Dundee-built. She made her maiden voyage on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1836 and began her regular runs to Hull for the next two years and four months.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> September 1838 the Forfarshire set out from Hull on the return trip to Dundee with 63 people on board, 39 passengers and 24 crew. Once at sea, a serious leak began from one of the boilers. Boiling water flooded the engine room floor and extinguished the fires. The sails were hoisted but soon a gale sprang up and eventually the ship ran aground on the Harkar's rock, among the Farne islands, near the Longstone lighthouse. One of the ship's boats was lowered and nine passengers and crew escaped and were picked up by a passing sloop from Montrose. Among these was David Grant.

William Darling, keeper of the Longstone lighthouse and his daughter Grace managed to get their dinghy alongside the wreck and rescued another nine. Forty five were drowned.

Dundee was the home of the Irish-born William McGonagall who has been described as the world's worst poet. Here is part of his 'The Wreck of the "Forfarshire"'

1. As the night was beginning to close in one rough September day  
In the year of 1838, a steamer passed through the Fairway  
Between the Farne Islands and the coast, on her passage northwards;  
But the wind was against her, and the steamer laboured hard.

2. There she laboured in the heavy sea against both wind and tide,  
Whilst a dense fog enveloped her on every side;  
And the mighty billows made her timbers creak,  
Until at last, unfortunately, she sprung a leak.

3. Then all hands rushed to the pumps, and wrought with might and main.  
But the water, alas! alarmingly on them did gain;  
And the thick sleet was driving across the raging sea,  
While the wind it burst upon them in all its fury.

6. And the engine-fires with the water were washed out,  
Then, as the tide set strongly in, it wheeled the vessel about  
And the ill-fated vessel drifted helplessly along;  
But the fog cleared up a little as the night wore on.

7. Then the terror-stricken crew saw the breakers ahead,  
And all thought of being saved from them fled,  
And the Farne lights were shining hazily through the gloom,  
While in the fore-cabin a woman lay with two children in a swoon.

8. Before the morning broke, the "Forfarshire" struck upon a rock,  
And was dashed to pieces by a tempestuous shock,  
Which raised her for a moment, and dashed her down again,  
Then the ill-starred vessel was swallowed up in the briny main

9. Before the vessel broke up, some nine or ten of the crew intent  
To save their lives, or perish in the attempt,  
Lowered one of the boats while exhausted and forlorn,  
And, poor souls, were soon lost sight of in the storm.

In the 1851 census of 19 Hospital Wynd. David Grant (34), mechanic, and wife Jessie (33), born in England. Children: William (14), Isobell (11); Margaret (5); Jane (1). In the 1871 census of 19 Hospital Wynd. David Grant (54) and wife Jessie (53), born in England. Children Margaret (24), Jane (21) and Davina (14). Grandchildren: Jane (6) and Davina (4 months).

Duncan Grant == Margaret Cochrane	William Fleming == Margaret Steen
-----Dundee-----	---Woolwich, London----
David Cochrane Grant == Janet (Jessie) Fleming	
b.25/7/1816 -d.5/3/1894	b.20/4/1817 - d.25/12/1900
(survivor of SS Forfarshire)	
m.23/12/1836	

----- Grant, Blacksmith in Hilltown, Dundee -----				
William	Isobel	Margaret	Jane	Davina
b.1838	b.1840	b.1847	b.1850	b.31/10/1856
				d.27/1/1943
				m.Peter Myles McFee
				-----
				Mary Myles McFee
				David
				b. 1879 d.29/4/1942

### **Balbirnie of Invereighy [just south of Forfar, Angus]**

The following references are from Gordon MacGregor in “The Red Book of Scotland”.

**Robert de Balbirny of Invereighy**, acquired the lands of Invereighy, near Kinnettles, in Forfarshire, and the office of Mair from King David II by charter dated 1360x1372.[1] From him descended;

**John de Balbirny of Invereighy**, is the next for whom there is evidence. He had succeeded by 1 February 1453 when he was a member of an inquest and was bailie to a resignation and subsequent infestment dated 19 September 1457[2] and was in dispute with John de Cairncross over payments due, which was brought before the Lords Auditors on 11 October 1466.[3] He was a member of the inquest at the service of Walter Ruthven as heir to his mother, Egedia Stewart, in one-half of the lands of Lunan on 28 April 1483[4] and *d.* by 1494. He was succeeded by;

**Robert Balbirny of Invereighy**, who was, in all likelihood, the eldest son and heir of the former. He had Sasine for the lands of Invereighy in 1494[5] and was father of,

**Alexander Balbirny of Invereighy**, succeeded his father and *m.* Margaret, younger daughter and coheir of John Arbuthnott of Easter Brichty, (*c/m* 26 October 1515.[6] She survived him and *m.* secondly, to John Ogilvy). He was father of,

**John Balbirny of Invereighy**, succeeded his father by 27 November 1547 when he and his wife, Margaret Gray, had a conjunct charter for the lands of Invereighy under the Great Seal.[7] He was a member of an inquest on 31 March 1579[8] and *d.* before 28 November 1584 when Mr John Moncrieff, Advocate, had a gift of the non-entries of the lands of Invereighy until the entry of the heir.[9] He was father of,

**Alexander Balbirny of Invereighy**, succeeded his father and as heir of whom he had a charter for the lands of Invereighy under the Great Seal on 22 December 1562.[10] He is named with his mother, Margaret Gray, when they disposed their sunny half of the lands of Balmakin, in Fife, to Mr John Lindsay of Menmure, in 1588[11] and was

infest in the lands of Inverighty on 31 May 1594/95,[12] which he disposed to Sir Peter Young of Seaton on 19 March 1614.[13]

He *m.* firstly, to Margaret, daughter of William Dischington of Ardross, (*c/m* 28 October 1564[14]), and secondly, to Lucretia Bethune and was father of,

**Lucretia Balbirny**, who consented to her father's disposing of Inverighty to Sir Peter Young in 1614.

[1] Robertson's Index. 50-17.

[2] RH1/6/71.

[3] PA2/1/35r.

[4] Carnegie Charters, No. 74.

[5] Ex. Rolls. Vol. 10. P. 770.

[6] Riddell's MSS. Cited in Peerage Vol. 1. P. 280.

[7] C2/31/31.

[8] RH6/2507

[9] PS1/31/1232.

[10] C2/32/438.

[11] C2/37/129

[12] Ex. Rolls. Vol. 23. P. 365.

[13] C2/47/231.

[14] RD1/7/53.

## Entries in the Register of the Great Seal

AD 1360: Robert Balbreny of Innerechtie, the office of *Maer* and the lands of Innerechtie.

(A maer is a royal official or steward below the level of a *Mor Maer* which equates to an Earl. The post was hereditary and was renewed for each generation in the register until 1614.

AD 1415: Rob de Balbirny witnessed a charter to the Bishop of Brechin

AD 1471: Jhonne Balbirny of Inverichty - riding the marches with David Earl of Crauford

AD 1547: Johanni Balbirny of Inverrichty and Margaret Gray his wife confirmed in the lands of Inverrichty held by John and his predecessors

AD 1562: Alexandro Balbirny, son and heir of Johannis Balbirny of Inverrychtie

AD 1588: Jo. et Alex Balbirny, sons of Jo. Balbirny. Alexr Balbirnie of Inverrichty; Margarete Duschingtoun his spouse, Margaret Gray his mother.

AD 1614: Confirmant carta: Alexandri Balbirnie de Inverrychtie; Margaret Betoun, his spouse, Lucretia Balbirnie his daughter. Witness Johannis Balbirnie in Torquhappie

1614 was the last Balbirnie entry in the register of the Great Seal. Originally, I thought that the Balbirnies had lost their lands in the religious conflicts of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. However, it now appears that the male line ended with Lucretia. There is a marriage of Lucras Balbirny to Rot. (Robert) Dempster on 14/4/1616 in Monikie parish (ref. 311/1014). "Quhilk day Robt Dempster and Lucrta Balbirny gave up t[hei]r namis to be proclamit and band ye forsaide to complet ye band of mariage so soone as occasion can [?] under ye pain X lib and Alex Balbirny of Densyde is found cautr to that effect."

Lucretia died not long after her marriage. Gordon MacGregor pointed out a Testament for "Lucres Balbirny, spouse to Robert Dempster, skinner, citiner of Brechin" confirmed in the Brechin Commissariat registers on 23 April 1622.

"The Inventar and Test[amen]t dative of the guidis, geir, soumes of money and debtis pertaining to umquhille Lucres Balbirny spous to Robert Dempster, skynner citiner of Brechin the tyme of her deceis qua decessit in November 1618 yeirs faythfully made & given up be the said Robert as havend best knowledge in name of



Alexr Dempster onlie bearne lawfullie procreat betwixt thame and executor dative surrogat to her in the pro[curato]r fischall place be decret of the commissaris of Brechin of the date of this presents &c...,"

The witness to the charter of 1614 was Johannis Balbirnie in Torquhappie. He was probably the younger son mentioned in 1588. "Jo. et Alex Balbirny, sons of Jo. Balbirny". On the modern map, Mains of Invereigty is west of the A90 and 4km south of Forfar. Turwhappie is around half a km to the North and may have been originally part of the lands of Inverrichtie. I have assumed that subsequent generations of Balbiriens in Angus descend from John.

Balbirnie marriages do occur in the OPR from 1661

1661: David Balbirnie m. Catherine Brandon. Forfar

1668: David Balbirnie m. Elspet Adam. Forfar

1675: David Balbirnie m. Agnes Gibson. Guthrie / Dunnichen

1692: James Balbirnie m. Isobel Sturok, Dunnichen

1693: James Balbirny m. Anna Balbirny. Guthrie / Forfar

1724: James Balbirnie m. Margaret Goodall, Inverarity

1725: James Balbirnie, Inverarity bapt. son John

19/4/1724 George Balbirnie m. Ann Petrie, Fowlis Easter

21/10/1762 George Balbirnie m. Elizabeth Doig, Fowlis Easter

1791-1803 Alexander Balbirnie & Margaret Philip baptised 8 children in Invergowrie

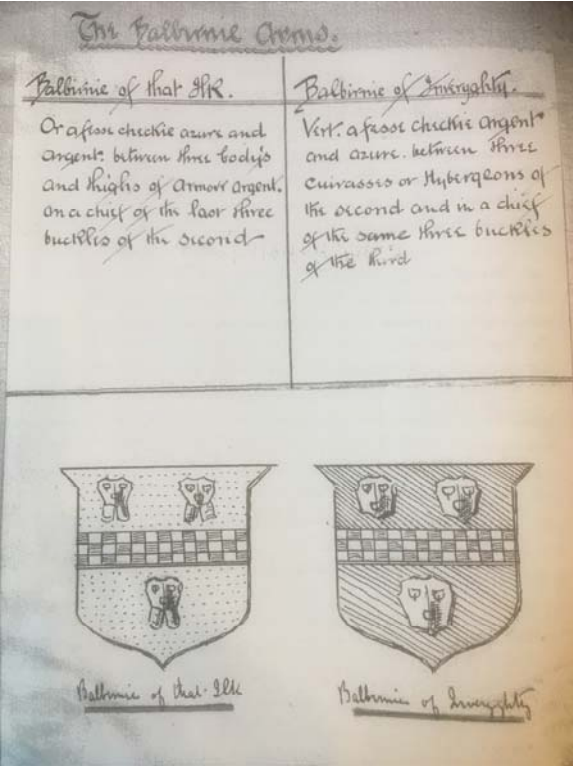
When thinking of the Balbiriens, the estate of Balbirnie in Fife usually comes to mind, but there was a distinct family of the Balbiriens of Inverrichtie. There is a mention in the registers of a knight with a name which could be a rendering of Balbirnie being granted lands near Dunfermline by King Alexander III before 1286. He could be ancestral to both, perhaps with the Angus family being the junior line. The Balbirnie estate in Fife was purchased by a George Balfour who had made his fortune as a clothier in London. He was infeft with the title of George Balfour, 1<sup>st</sup> of Balbirnie in 1642. His descendant John Charles Balfour, 10<sup>th</sup> of Balbirnie sold the estate to the Glenrothes Development Corporation in 1969.

I came across a handwritten document concerning his Balbirnie ancestry in the Scottish Record office reference GD50/218/2 by William Simpson dated 1885. It is quite lengthy. This gentleman in the late nineteenth century wrote the following in attempting to confirm that three brothers, John (b.1699), William (b.1707) and Patrick were the sons of Patrick, the last actual possessor of Inveryghty (throughout the document he refers to it as Inveryghty, as opposed to Inverrichty or Invereighty which occur elsewhere in the records) whom he speculates lost his estate during the religious turmoil of the seventeenth century. He traces their descendants to his own generation in Fife and Angus (Forfarshire) into the 19<sup>th</sup> century when most of the lines ended with daughters thus losing the Balbirnie name. He speaks of family traditions of their descent from the Balbirnies of Inveryghty but the reason for their loss had been put down to Mar's rebellion (that is the 1715 Rising) or the last Jacobite rising of 1745-46. He demonstrates that these events were too late to explain the brothers at the start of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and presumes therefore that it was due to the religious conflicts of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. I think he goes wrong in assuming that Patrick was the last of the line and thus fixing on the extreme Covenanters who were persecuted under Charles II between 1660 and the Revolution Settlement of 1689. It was my opinion that the wars of the Covenant beginning in 1634 and leading to Cromwell's Commonwealth of 1651 to 1660, were the more likely causes. Although, in fact, they disposed of Inverrechtie in 1614 before any of this. William Simpson spends an excessive amount of his writing discussing the piety of the generations following the brothers many of whom were elders in the church and of, as he says "great probity" as if this must have obviously flowed from the religious fervour which he believed to have caused the loss of the Inveryghty estate. In these secular times, I would not consider that to be proof that Patrick was the last possessor on the estate.

I had intended to include the document here, but it is excessively wordy and also it deals with Balbirnie descendants who are not connected to Mairi's line. The reason I have brought it up is that he identified a Patrick Balbirnie in Dairsie, Fife, with three sons, the eldest of whom was born in 1699. He assumes that Patrick was the last of the possessors of Inveryghty without being able to present the proof of that as the parish record for Kinnettles, which includes Inveryghty does not go that far back. In fact the

record of Kinnettles baptisms only began in 1696 and marriages in 1709. Forfar, the adjoining parish to the North began in 1633. Guthrie began in 1664. Tealing to the South began in 1599 but has many gaps. As has been highlighted above, the last entries concerning the Balbirnies which can be found in charters in the Great Seal register are in 1614. It is therefore unlikely that it will be possible to fill the missing generations between the charter of sale by Alexander Balbirnie in 1614 and either William Simpson's ancestor Patrick Balbirnie who may have been born around 1675; or George Balbirnie (b~1725) who married Elizabeth Doig in Invergowrie on 21/10/1762 who I consider to be the most likely of Mairi's ancestors.

Mr Simpson remarked at some length on the heraldic arms of the Balbirnies of that ilk in Fife and of the Balbirnies of Inveryghty. He considered their simplicity and the three coats of mail to be of great significance in establishing an ancient and martial ancestry.



Gordon MacGregor says that Nisbet recorded the Balbirny arms as: vert, a fesse cheque, argent and azure, between three cuirasses, or habergeons, of the second, and on a chief of the same three buckles of the third.

I drew Gordon MacGregor's attention to Simpson's account. He is the author of the Red Book of Scotland, a compendious account of Scotland's landed families from the earliest times.

Gordon stated: "Simpson's account is incorrect in claiming the ownership of the lands of Invereigthy by the Balbirny family post 1614. Following the sale of those lands by Alexander Balbirny, they were possessed by Peter Young, then Thomas Lyon of

Cossins who disposed them in 1630 to Alexander Bower, merchant in Dundee. They then passed with Grisel Bower (daughter and heiress of James Bower, fiar of Inverieghy, eldest son of that Alexander), to her husband, Andrew Gray, then on Andrew Gray's death, they went to his brother William who had a charter under the Great Seal for them on 16 October 1659 and whose descendants possessed them until 1727, when they were appraised. They were subsequently purchased at a private roup by George Simson in August 1766'; he was succeeded in 1773 by his eldest son, William, who died without issue in July 1794, and was succeeded by his sister, Margaret, and her husband Captain John Laurenson. Their eldest son, John, succeeded but sold Inverieghy to his sister, Jane's husband, James Aynsworth, who disposed of them in 1850. The above proves the Balbirnies did not have possession after 1614 and so could not have lost those lands as a consequence of religious conflicts of the time. That's not to say Patrick Balbirny of Dairsie Mill was not in descent from the Inverieghy family, but such a relationship would have to be proved by evidence of a good standard. I can't recall ever having come across a family with that designation.

The lands of Balbirny in Fife, passed out of the senior male line at the end of the 15th century. John Balbirny of that Ilk and his wife, on his resignation, had a conjunct charter for those lands under the Great Seal on 6 December 1494 and he had died by 14 September 1500, when David Bethune had a gift of the ward of his lands until the entry of the heir. Margaret Balbirny succeeding, she had Sasine for Balbirny in 1502. She married John Seton and their son and heir, Alexander, had service as heir to his mother in Balbirny in 1565. That John Balbirny was probably in descent from James de Balbirny of that Ilk who had died before October 1465 leaving two sons (1) John, who resigned Balbirny to his brother Patrick (2) Patrick who on that brother's resignation, had Balbirny confirmed to him under the Great Seal on 26 October 1465. Any relationship which existed in the male line between the Balbirnies of that ilk and Inverieghy can only have been as a consequence of an ancestor who lived at the latest in the mid-14th century.

A genealogy of the Balbirnies in Angus

Robert Balbreny of Innerechtie - fl. 1360

||

Rob de Balbirny – fl. 1415

||

Jhonne Balbirny of Inverichty – succeeded 1453 fl. 1471

||

Robert Balbirny of Invereighty – succeeded 1494

||

Alexander Balbirny of Invereighty == Mgt. Arbutnott 1515

||

John Balbirny of Inverrichty == Margaret Gray 1547

||

-----  
Alexandro Balbirny == Margarete Duschingtoun    Johannis Balbirnie

b.~1548                    m.1588,

in Torquhappie

d.1614

||

||

Lucretia (Lucras) (b.~1589, d.1618)

Alexander == Mgt Betoun

m. Robert Dempster 13/4/1616 Monikie

b.~1590    m.1614

||

?? == ??

(b.~1615)    m.~1640

||

David == Elspet Adam, Forfar

(b.~1640)    m.1668

||

James == Anna Balbirny, Forfar

(b.~1669)    m. 1693

||

James

b.~1694

James == Mgt. Goodall, Inverarity  
(b.~1694) m.1724

||

George (b.~1725) == Elizabeth Doig, of Fowlis Easter  
m. 21/10/1762

||

Alexander == Isabella Philip  
b.1768 d.1837      b.1778 d.1841  
m.27/12/1790

||

----- Invergowrie -----

William	George	Alexander == Isabella
b.1804	b.1805	b.1812      b.1814
d.1876	d.1832	
m.12/8/30		

m. Jessie Scott

Longforgan

5 dtrs at Bucklemaker Wynd, Dundee

Isabella (Lily) Balbirnie

b.1837

||

----- at 4 Dallfield Walk 1881 & 1891--

William Farquhar =unm= Lillas Balbirnie	David
(49 Victoria Road)	b.3/1/1858      b.29/7/1860

||

Mary Ann Dickson == William Balbirnie

b.18/6/1877 d.1948      b.12/4/1879 d. ?1917

m.2/6/1911

||

----- Monifieth (Broughty Ferry)-----

Mary Dickson	Catherine Dickson	William Dickson
b.1912	b.9/10/1913	b.1916

m. Karl Kyme      m.Andrew G. Davidson

20/10/1946

The generations from Alexander born around 1590 to George who married in 1762 are speculative. But Mairi probably does descend in some way from John Balbirny of Inverrichty and Margaret Gray in the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century,

It should be pointed out here, if it is not immediately obvious from the genealogy, that Mairi's Balbirnie ancestry involves two generations of births to unmarried mothers, and therefore in Y-chromosome terms, William Balbirnie born in 1879 did not have male-line Balbirnie descent. Isabella Balbirnie (bapt 1837) was one of the daughters of Alexander Balbirnie in Longforgan.

This was a time when Dundee was expanding rapidly due to industrialisation of the textile industry, initially concentrating on linen manufacture and, from mid-century, using cheaper Jute imported from Bengal. The continual attempt by the mill-owners to reduce costs meant that the majority of mill employees would be women and children crowded into poor quality tenements. On 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1858, Isabella Balbirnie gave birth to a daughter, Liliias. Her home was recorded as Dyers Close, off the Murraygate. Isabella signed the register with her mark so was illiterate.

On April 12<sup>th</sup> 1879, Lily Balbirnie, a jute minder, gave birth to a son William Balbirnie. She lived in a tenement at 4 Dallfield Walk at the foot of the Hilltown. The site of Dallfield Walk is now occupied by four multi-storey blocks of council flats. Most of the multistories which were built in Dundee during the 1960s have now been demolished, but these four, conveniently close to the City centre have survived. One of these blocks has been named Dallfield. Lily was able to sign her name on the birth certificate. There was a subsequent amendment to the record in the Register of Corrected entries dated 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1885 which ascribed the paternity of the child to William Farquhar of 49 Victoria Road, an employee of the Singer Sewing machine company.

In the 1871 census of 4 Dallfield Walk, Isabella Balbirnie, unmarried, aged 34 was a boarder with Jane Allan (35), both unmarried mill-workers. Isabella's daughter Lilly, aged 13, was also by then a mill-worker. There is a record of the death of Isabella Balbirnie later in 1871.

In the 1881 census of 4 Dallfield Walk, Lillie Balbirnie was a boarder with Jane Allan, both unmarried mill-workers. Lillie was aged 23 on the census date (April 3<sup>rd</sup>). Son William was not present and does not appear to be listed anywhere. However, he did appear later, aged 12, in the 1891 census for the Dundee parish of St Clement. Lillie Balbirnie died aged 71 in 1929.

William Balbirnie, a carter, married Mary Ann Dickson on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1911. He appears to have died by 1917 but his death is not recorded on Scotlandspeople. W Balbirnie, 17688 in the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders was recorded as dying in 1917. I could not confirm whether this had been him.

William Balbirnie and Mary Ann Dickson had three children in Broughty Ferry. Mary Dickson Balbirnie was born in 1912, Catherine Dickson Balbirnie (Kate) on 9/10/1913 and William Dickson Balbirnie in 1916. After Mary Ann was widowed in 1917, she earned money cleaning houses, but depended on parish relief to bring up her four children. As mentioned on page 531, below, her illegitimate child Douglas Robertson Dickson (born 1904) was academically and musically talented but forced to leave school, aged 14, by the parochial board.

Mary did not enjoy the mill and, instead, went into domestic service as a lady's companion. She became talented at embroidery. Mairi has some of her work which is of exceptional beauty and artistry. Mary married Canadian Karl Kyme (Kijm) after WW2. They lived together in Mary Ann's cottage beside the railway line in Broughty Ferry, before moving to Charleston to be near Karl's work at NCR. They had no children.

Kate also left school at 14 and became a mill-worker, earning 17 shillings per week. Unlike Mary, Kate found that mill life suited her, she enjoyed the independence. After WW2, Kate married Andrew G Davidson on 20/9/1946. Mairi, their daughter (Mary Balbirnie Davidson) was born on 31/5/1947.

Willy, the youngest, married and had two daughters, Ann and Sheila.



## De Burgh

Mairi's great grandmother was Mary Ann de Burgh. She was born, according to the census in Aberdeen in 1848 to a George de Burgh although not registered in any Parish Record. A brother, also George, was recorded in 1856 in the statutory birth records for Dundee, but he died in Dundee at the age of 1 in 1857, (ref. 282/2 513). Mary Ann lived, married and died in Broughty Ferry in 1901. Mary Ann's parents were George de Burgh and Margaret Mains or Meins. In 1841 they were living in a tenement at the East end of Princes Street, Edinburgh, close to where the coach station is now. In 1851 they were in Anstruther and seemed to have come to Dundee shortly afterwards. George was described as a general hawker. Mary Ann in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century in Broughty Ferry seems to have specialised in selling china, perhaps door to door. She lived in Long Lane Broughty Ferry.

In the census George gave his place of birth as England and from his stated age he would have been born in 1812. (The 19<sup>th</sup> century censuses can be most annoying. For a Scot born and living in Scotland, the parish and county of birth will be given, but a Scots born person recorded in England, simply has "Scotland", and vice-versa for English persons living in Scotland.) The only English record I could find was John De Burgh, a flesher, married to Margaret Smith in Leominster, Herefordshire.

I have no more information about John de Burgh from Herefordshire or his status, but it is apparent that the George de Burgh who came to Dundee was of a relatively low status and unable to sign his name. Mairi said that her Aunt Mary once told her that the family had fled to Scotland to escape punishment for a crime, perhaps a duel. There is no way of telling whether there was any truth in that.

Margaret De Burgh or Meins died on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1861, aged 36, so she was born in 1825. She died of dysentery in the Dundee Royal Infirmary, but her usual residence was given as Roger's Close in the Overgate. Her father was John Meins (deceased) and mother Rose Foster. George De Burgh was described as a general hawker and signed with his mark X. There is an OPR record of the baptism of Margaret Mains in Glasgow on 27/4/1826 (644/1 320/127) to John Mains and Margaret Dow. However, from

Margaret's death registration giving her mother's name as Rose Foster, I don't think that is correct. There was a marriage, conducted by an Episcopal minister in Glasgow on 13<sup>th</sup> July 1812 between Alexander Mains, soldier 71<sup>st</sup> Regiment and Rosa Foster, residenter of Glasgow. I could not find any children recorded, but they are probably the parents of Margaret Mains.

The 71<sup>st</sup> regiment was originally raised as the 73<sup>rd</sup> (MacLeod's Highlanders in 1777). It was redesignated as the 71st (Highland) Regiment of Foot (MacLeod's Highlanders) in 1786 and renamed again in 1810, when back in Scotland, as the 71<sup>st</sup> (Glasgow Highland) Regiment of Foot. From September 1810 until July 1814 it served with Wellington in Spain. If some of the regiment were in Glasgow in 1812 they could have been new recruits, a recruiting party or perhaps recovering from wounds.

George De Burgh died of pneumonia on 30<sup>th</sup> August 1885 at 6 Alexander's Land, King Street, Broughty Ferry. The record said that he was aged 73, so born around 1812. His parents were John De Burgh, a flesher and Margaret Smith. His daughter, Mary Ann Dickson was present. The census indicates he was born in England.

In the 1871 census of Fort Street, Broughty Ferry. George de Burgh, widower, aged 55, a hawker born in England, with Mary Ann De Burgh, daughter, a widow, aged 22, a china dealer born in Aberdeen. She must have been born in 1848 or 1849 but there is no trace of her on Scotlandspeople. I noted that Mary Ann had married David McWilliam on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1870. David McWilliam, aged 18, of Rosebank Street Dundee, St Mary, (282/2 269) died of tetanus on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1870, so Mary Ann had been widowed within three months of her marriage. David was described as a cloth lapper. David's father was Bernard McWilliams of Hospital Wynd, Dundee.

In the 1881 census, I found George De Burgh, widower, a hawker, aged 69, of 55 Fort Street, Broughty Ferry. His son-in-law was Thomas Dickson, aged 46, a gardener, born in Ireland. His daughter Mary Ann, aged 32, born Aberdeen, his grand-daughters Mary Ann Dickson, aged 3 and Catherine aged 1, both in Broughty Ferry.

In the 1891 census, Thomas Dickson (55); His wife Mary Ann Dickson (42); Children: Mary Ann (14); Catherine (11); George (9) and Thomas (5). (Thomas died in 1894, aged 8)

1901 census: Thomas Dickson (66); Mary Ann (52); Children: Mary Ann (23); Catherine (21); George (19).

1911 census: George (29). Georgina M. (0); Douglas Robert (6); Ann (30); Mary Ann (33); William Balbirnie (34)

So who might John De Burgh be? There are three possibilities I can think of. Firstly - He was genuinely of the De Burgh lineage but had fallen on hard times. Secondly, he was an Irish Burke (who do, of course, originate from the Clanricarde De Burgh family in Ireland) who had noticed that the leading Burke families had reverted to De Burgh and decided to follow suit. Thirdly: He could be anybody who decided that a fancier name might promote his fortunes. It is impossible to tell. Anyway, here follows a summary of the De Burghs by Patrick Burke.

During the Norman attempts to conquer Ireland, a family of de Burghs became prominent. Like many of the Norman incomers to Scotland too, they “went native” over time, becoming the Clanricarde and giving rise to the common Irish name Burke. As Patrick Burke’s account states, some Irish Burkes resumed the name de Burgh to distinguish themselves from the commonality of Burkes. A small aristocratic lineage of De Burghs remained in England – these were the descendants of Hubert, Earl of Kent, and Viceroy of England (1226-31).

#### **“Origins of the name Burke/Bourke, and its variants.**

**Patrick Gerald Burke supplied me with this detailed account of his research into the De Burgh family all the way back into the Dark Ages.**

“O’Harts Irish Pedigrees” states that:” This family can trace its descent from Pepin le Vieux, Duke of Anstrasia, A.D 622. His grandson was Charles Martel, whose grandson was Charlemagne, called by some “Emperor of the West”, and by others “Emperor of

the Holy Roman Empire.” O’Hart then traces the line of descent to John, Earl of Comyn, and Baron of Toursbourg, in Normandy. He was the second son of Baldwin (Baudouin) Count of Blois. He became Commander of the King of France’s fortified towns, and thus began to be called “de Bourg”. Some historians think that the spelling was “de Burgh” which meant “of the Borough” but O’Hart is quite clear about his spelling, and the reason.

John had a son named Harlowen (or Herluin), Viscount de Conteville, who married Arletta, daughter of a Tanner from Falaise, in Normandy. She had a relationship with the Duke of Normandy, but whom she had a son, later called “William the Conqueror” when he captured England in 1066 A.D. Harlowen and Arletta had two sons, Robert and Odo. When William decided to raise an army to attack England, they were among his staunchest supporters. They followed their half-brother across the Channel and got many spoils of victory after the famous battle of Hastings. Robert was made Earl of Cornwall, Odo ( a Bishop) was made Earl of Kent. Between them, their grateful brother gave them several hundred Castles and Manors all over England, making them the most prosperous family in the country.

This close relationship was to backfire in a terrible way in the next generation. . Robert’s son William, Earl of Cornwall, demanded the Earldom of Kent when his uncle Odo died. The new King, William Rufus, refused to give it to him; Whereupon William ( now called “de Burgo” as the English used Latin in their records -Domesday Book etc, or “de Burgh” by the Saxons, who could not pronounce the Latin version); Began to plot against his cousin Rufus, in favour of his brother Robert, who was actually the eldest son of the Conqueror. The plot was discovered, and the King imprisoned William, stripped his Titles and lands from him, had his eyes “put out”, and prevented him from ever moving out of England. He died in a monastery years later. He had a son, Adelm, who married Agnes, daughter of the King of France Louis VI (Capet). Adelm’s nephew Hubert, married Margaret, daughter of Malcolm IV, King of Scotland. He later became Earl of Kent, Chief Justice of England, Guardian of the young King Henry III, and one of the most prominent statesmen in all of Europe. He is a prominent character in Shakespeare’s “King John”, according to O’Hart.

But, back to Adelm, his uncle, who is regarded as the ancestor of all Burkes who ever lived in Ireland. His son William FitzAdelm de Burgo, was sent to Ireland by his cousin King Henry 11, to help to “Subjugate the Irish Barbarians”. He did such a good job, that the King made him Lord Justice of Ireland in A.D. 1177 He was also granted huge tracts of land in the west, what is mostly the province of Connaught. He also got land in Limerick. He married twice, firstly to Isabella, daughter of King Richard the First, and secondly to Una, daughter of Hugh O’Connor, last Irish King of Connaught. This cemented his relationship to one of the leading Irish Royal families.

William’s son, Richard, spread the families’ influence beyond Connaught, in to Tipperary, Castleconnell, and Limerick. His son Walter, by his father’s marriage into the de Lacy family, became Earl of Ulster. By this time, the Irish influence had caused them to start spelling the name “Burke” being the closest pronunciation to the Irish “de Burca”. One branch moved to Scotland, and soon spelled the name”Burk”. The Irish also began to call “William” “Uilliam” in Gaelic. As time rolled on, according to O’Hart, they anglicized this name to “Ulick”, which became special to the Burke family.

Patrick said that “It was only through this special and unusual name, that I was able to find our roots in Galway two years ago. I found a cousin on the Internet, whose name was Ulick Burke, who lives in Galway! It was almost unbelievable, how I stumbled across his name, and against all odds, went to Ireland and met with him and his family!!”

But, to get back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century; After Walter became Earl of Ulster,(1264) his son Richard called the Great Lord of Connaught, succeeded to this title also. He acquired, by conquest as well as business acumen huge holdings all over Ireland. At one point, he was reputed to own or control about one-third of all Ireland. This branch, perhaps because of their marriages into leading families, began to spell their name “de Burgh”. No doubt, they wanted to separate themselves from the Connaught Burkes, who they regarded as “Country bumpkins” because they had turned back to the old Irish ways of

living, dress, language etc. His grandson, William, was murdered by his own followers in 1333.

He left a baby daughter, Elizabeth, whose mother was Maude Plantagenet, of the English Royal house. Maude fled from Ireland with her baby, leaving the lands in Ulster to the grasping hands of the many Burke cousins, who refused to follow the English laws, allowing a daughter to succeed to her father's lands. The Connaught cousins grabbed all the Ulster holdings, and divided it between them, with the Mayo and the Galways branches in control. They could not take the titles of Earl of Ulster, or Lord of Connaught; These passed, through the daughter's marriage into the Mortimer family, and eventually into the British Royal family. Even today, these titles (Connaught, Ulster, Cornwall, and Kent) are held by the Royal family, and are reserved only for their immediate and close relations.

At this point, the various branches began in-fighting, even about their name! The Mayo branch began spelling the name "Bourke" after the French pronunciation, while the Galway branch kept "Burke" as there was no diphthong in the Irish-Gaelic tongue. When the baby daughter, Elizabeth, grew up and married Lionel, younger son of King Edward 111, that family demanded the Ulster lands, and sent Lionel to claim them. The Burke/Bourke clan refused to give them up, and Lionel was forced to back down.

Perhaps the one good thing that came out of this marriage was the fact that it set up the chain of succession to the present Royal family of the Windsors. In fact, through this couple, every Royal family of Europe, including the Russian, can trace their pedigree, and acknowledge them as their ancestors.

But in Ireland, the decline of the Burke/Bourke dynasty really began in earnest. There were some moments of glory left to them, such as when King Henry V11 elevated the Clanricarde branch (SE Galway) to the title of Earl of Clanricarde in 1543. The power of these Clanricardes in the region, was the only reason that the resurgence of the Irish clans during the 15 th-17 centuries, was halted in Galway.

They were constantly at odds with the crown. Their English cousin kings set up the Church of England, and outlawed The Roman Catholic church. Every Irish lord was required to swear loyalty to the new Church. The Burke/Bourke/de Burgh clan, regardless of how they spelled their names from generation to generation, were treated like everyone else-despite their Royal connections. If they did not swear allegiance to the new Church, they were treated like outlaws, and had their lands and titles stripped.

Still, somehow, by sheer weight of numbers and power accumulated over the years, three branches survived: Mayo, Clanricarde (SE Galway) and Clanwilliam Burke (Tipperary). The last to hold out was the Clanricarde branch. The 14th Earl of Clanricarde, Ulick John Burke ( now raised to Marquis ) died in 1874, leaving his new title of Marquis to Hubert George de Burgh-Canning (name changed again!) (his mother was Harriet Canning, only daughter of George Canning, a Prime Minister of Great Britain).

Hubert inherited 57,000 acres of land in Galway, a puny portion of the original holdings, but still a vast estate. By the time he died in 1916, he had lost all of the estate, except the lands around the Portumna Castle. The lands were lost in the Irish land rebellion, an uprising that changed the face of Ireland forever. The Marquis bore the brunt of the hatred and outrage and had built up among the Irish peasant class for many centuries. When it spilled over, as it would have inevitably, he was in the wrong place, at the wrong time. He was ridiculed, and laughed out of Ireland, along with the reputation of the Burkes, built up over almost one thousand years of Irish history.

But he did keep all of the vast fortunes that he had inherited from his father, as well as George Canning. This money, and the castle, went to his grandnephew Henry Lascelles. 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Harewood. Harewood married Mary, the Princess Royal,(aunt of the present Queen Elizabeth), eldest daughter of King George V, in 1922. I am sure that the Royal family, on checking his pedigree, were aware that he was a distant cousin through Elizabeth deBurgh (Burke) marrying Lionel, Duke of Clarence (mentioned above).

I am also sure that it did not hurt his acceptance into the Royal family, that he had a vast fortune, part of which came from the Clanricarde Burke side of his family. Shortly after his marriage, perhaps under pressure from the Royals, he gave up the old almost-ruined castle of Portumna that had been in the family for over 500 hundred years. His explanation was that he could not afford to pay the taxes on the castle!!

I have been to Portumna, in October 1999, and toured the castle, which is now being restored by the government of Ireland, who got it from Lord Harewood, to cover the taxes he owed. Our cousin Ulick, now a member of the Irish parliament (Dael) for SE Galway, has been a constant champion of the cause, to get monies allotted from year to year to complete the restoration. It is a beautiful old building, and something that the Burke clan should all be very proud of, knowing that it is a part of our heritage.

This has been the sad story of the rise and fall of the Burke dynasty. There are a few interesting sidebars to this search. Not only are we connected to the Royal family directly, but we are also tied in with the families of Diana, late Princess of Wales (On both sides, mother and father). Diana's mothers' maiden name was Frances Burke Roche; She is the 4<sup>th</sup> great granddaughter of Lady Dorothy Burke of Clanricarde, whose father was Richard, the eighth Earl of Clanricarde. Her fathers' 16<sup>th</sup> great grandmother was Elizabeth de Burgh (Burke), who married Richard Knightly, whose great-granddaughter married William Spencer, Father of John Spencer. He is listed on the Spencer website as the founder of the dynasty, which includes Winston Churchill.

Ulick Burke, our great-great-grandfather, is of the Clanricarde branch of Burkes. The proof and the links are in the old manuscript which I found in the Dublin Museum, and which Eamonn has very kindly restored (using photocopies of the old pages, all hand-written) for us. Patricia is copying the information into her computer program,, and cross-referencing all the names (she has made a CD of all, which is for sale). It was written at the direction of Lord Butler, Duke of Ormond, in 1748. He had been asked to get all the information regarding the pedigree of our family, from the new King, George 11, who had been told of his descent from Lionel and Elizabeth (mentioned



above). It contains a wealth of information about every one of the leading branches of the Burkes, who had spread all over Ireland.

Wherever we fit exactly, we are descendants of this amazing Burke dynasty. According to the web site “goIreland.com” put out by Ireland’s National Tourism Service surnames:

**“Burke, Bourke, de Burgh; This is the most numerous of the Hiberno-Norman surnames.** It is estimated that there are some 19,000 people of the name in Ireland today; With its variant Bourke, it comes in fourteenth in the list of commonest names (all the others are Irish-Gaelic names). It goes on to say: “ The name is not found in England, except in families of Irish background. Nevertheless, even if several different Burkes came to Ireland in the twelfth century, it is the one great family (de Burgh/Burke) which has been so prominent in Irish history. The Burkes became more completely Hibernicized than any other Norman family. Later in the eighteenth century the outstanding Burke was Edmund Burke (1727-1797) the famous statesman (descended from the Clanricarde branch). As an Author, Philosopher, Politician, and Statesman, he towered above all others, and is still today quoted for his comments on the American Revolution. Another later was Richard Southwell Burke, Governor General of India when he was assassinated in 1872. Robert O’Hara Burke also made headlines when he crossed the Australian desert on foot.” Recently, Mary Burke Robinson was elected President of Ireland, and served until 1997, when she resigned to work with the United Nations. Chris de Burgh, Ireland’s most famous contemporary singer, traces his descent for this family also.

So it’s not surprising that there are so many people all over the world, that carry our name! They are all descended from these original Norman settlers of Ireland, even if some tried to disguise this fact by changing their surnames so frequently.

*Patrick Burke, April 24, 2002*

**De Burgh in Broughty Ferry**

Peter == Jean	John == Mgt	Alex. == Rose
Dickson Adamson	De Burgh Smith	Mains Foster
m.23/6/1802 Dundee	?? Herefordshire ??	m.17/7/1812, Glasgow

James Dickson == Isabella	George ==	Margaret Meins/Mains
b.27/4/1807	Clark	b.~1812- d.1885
	-----De Burgh-----	

Thomas ==	Mary Ann	George
b.14/8/1836	b.1848	b.14/8/1856
d.1903	d.1901	d.1857

m.21/8/1876

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----- Dickson Broughty Ferry -----

Mary Ann Dickson	Catherine	George	Thomas
b.18/6/1877	b.1880	b.1882	b.1886
d. - 4/1948		d.14-18 war	

m. William Balbirnie

m.2/6/1911

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----- Balbirnie Broughty Ferry)-----

Mary Dickson	Catherine Dickson	William Dickson
b.1912	b.9/10/1913	b.1916

Douglas Robertson Dickson, an illegitimate child was born to Mary Ann Dickson, a bleachfield worker, residing in Tay Square, Long Lane, Broughty Ferry on 28<sup>th</sup> November 1904. Paternity register, volume 3 page 64. The register of corrected entries stated that on the 18<sup>th</sup> April 1905, the sheriff court of Forfarshire (Dundee district) found that the father of Mary Ann Dickson's illegitimate son, Douglas, was Joseph Robertson, furniture dealer of 206 King Street, Broughty Ferry.

Douglas was a talented musician and played with a local band - Hugh Price's Syncopators. As Mary Ann had been receiving poor relief following the death of her husband in 1917, clever Douglas was not allowed to stay on at school. He became the manager of the Regal cinema in Broughty Ferry, and later managed a large cinema in Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow.



Hugh Price's Syncopators. Douglas is second from the right.



Joseph Robertson expanded his business and in the 1930s opened his furniture emporium on four floors in an art-deco building on Barrack Street Dundee. The business closed in 2011. The building remained vacant for some time and was set on fire on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2022. Six children were charged by the police for fire-raising. The unsafe remains were then demolished.

## Dundee

Dundee greatly expanded in size during the Industrial Revolution mainly because of British Empire trade. Having outstripped local supplies, Russian flax was imported to manufacture coarse linens but, as a result of disruption due to the Crimean War, the mills switched to using jute from Bengal. By the end of the 19th century, a majority of the city's workers were employed in its many jute mills and in related industries. Dundee's riverside location allowed for the easy importation of jute from the Indian subcontinent and hosted a large whaling industry which provided the oil needed for processing the jute. A substantial coastal marine trade also developed, with inshore shipping working between the city of Dundee and the port of London. The industry began to decline in the 20th century as it became cheaper to process the cloth on the Indian subcontinent. The last jute mill closed in the 1970s.

In addition to jute the city is also known for jam and journalism. The "jam" association refers to marmalade, which was purportedly invented in the city by Janet Keiller in 1797. Keiller's marmalade became a famous brand because of its mass production and its worldwide export. Marmalade has since become the "preserve" of larger businesses, but jars of Keiller's marmalade are still widely available. "Journalism" refers to the publishing firm DC Thomson & Co., which was founded in the city in 1905 and remains the largest employer after the health and leisure industries. The firm publishes a variety of newspapers, children's comics and magazines, including *The Sunday Post*, *The Courier*, and children's publications, *The Beano* and *The Dandy*

Dundee developed its shipbuilding industry in the 19th century. More than two thousand ships were built between 1871 and 1981, including the Antarctic research ship used by Robert Falcon Scott, the *RRS Discovery*. This ship is now on display at Discovery Point in the city. Whaling ceased in 1912 and shipbuilding ceased in 1981.

The first Tay rail bridge was built by Thomas Bouch and completed in 1877. At 2.75 miles, it was the longest bridge in the world. It collapsed in a storm in 1879 under the weight of a train full of passengers in what is known as the Tay Bridge disaster. None of the passengers survived. A replacement bridge opened in 1887 and is still in use.

## **Section VI –Biographies**

### **Peter John Lawrie**

Looking back, now that I am in my seventies, I realise that I have spent almost forty years just gathering information about my roots. Now, my family have urged me to write it all down as, otherwise it might be lost. Putting myself in the shoes of my future great-grandchildren, they might say why didn't he tell us more about himself as well as the rest of the family? I have been very conscious of this as I barely knew my Grandfather, John Forbes Lawrie, before leaving Manchester just after my eleventh birthday in 1960. I only met Grandfather Alasdair MacLeod at Crearag, by Beauly, once or twice before he died in 1957 when I was eight years old. When Alasdair lay dying, my mother took us up to Inverness, but I wasn't allowed in the room. For both John and Alasdair, I was too young to be able to learn about their lives and they left no narrative behind.

Great-grandfather Joseph MacLeod did leave a narrative behind him. In his 1917 publication, "Highland Heroes of the Land Reform Movement", he wrote about other heroes but not himself. Like Joseph, I don't believe that I have very much to say about myself which people in future years might find of interest. However, perhaps I should not be the judge of that.

Joseph died in December 1949 when I was just six months old. As children, we visited his daughters, our great-aunts, at "Langwell" 41 Crown Drive, only on rare occasions and always on our best behaviour. The last of them, Great-Aunt Wilrine (Williamina Catherine MacLeod) died in 1990. I did visit her on a number of occasions when I first took up this genealogical investigation but she was never very forthcoming. Indeed, until I began the family quest, I had no idea why the house was called "Langwell". (Joseph's wife, Lexy Mackay, came from Langwell, Rogart).

Following Wilrine's death, my mother handed me the bible which Wilrine had taken to church every Sunday. On the inside front cover was a list of all the family birth dates going back to Alexander MacLeod on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1820! I had discovered most of

them in my research during the previous year, but Alexander's birth was not recorded in the Parish Record. I think that his mother, who was recorded as Minnie Mackenzie on her marriage on 5/3/1819 to Joseph MacLeod, must have died in childbirth. As the child, Alexander, survived he needed a mother, so Joseph married Barbara Mackenzie on 17/1/1822. I wondered if Minnie and Barbara may have been sisters, but I couldn't find their baptisms in the OPR. In the 1851 census, Barbara was stated to be aged 50 and born in Kildonan. Joseph and Barbara went on to have six children of their own at West Helmsdale. So there is some guesswork at the start based on two recorded marriages and an unrecorded birth.

So, let's start at my beginning – in the words of Julie Andrews in the Sound of Music “A very good place to start”. My parents, John Lawrie and Morag Mackay MacLeod, married in Glasgow on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March 1946. John was 26 but Morag had only just turned 20. I understand that Morag's father Alasdair did not approve of John so they eloped to Glasgow and married in the Blythswood registry office and then moved to Manchester.



I was born on 7<sup>th</sup> June 1949, at St Mary's hospital in Prestbury. Home, to begin with, was somewhat less than up-market at No. 78 Acomb Street, Moss Side, Manchester. Moss Side has since acquired a dubious reputation for gang-violence and drugs. Acomb Street still exists, but the area where No. 78 would have stood is now part of the grounds of a school. On my birth certificate, John's profession was given as cinema projectionist.

In the pictures below - my first photo-shoots with Mum and Dad.



Not long after my birth, we moved to No. 48 Dalbeattie Street, Blackley in North Manchester. Number 48 was part of a terrace which Grandfather, John Forbes Lawrie, had purchased in 1947. At No 46, lived John's sister Ida with her husband Jim Ward and their children Ian Arthur (born 1942) and Helen Rose (born 1944). John, my father, had been born in March 1920 above a newsagent's shop at 135 Church Lane, about a quarter of a mile away, but I did not discover that until quite recently. John found a job as an engineer at Ferranti Electronics where he would work until he died. At the back of the house was an area of ground, once a football ground but derelict when I remember it, in which local children could play. The site is now occupied by new housing. As a child I had no idea about urban planning, but I have since discovered that Dalbeattie Street, previously named Vauxhall Street, had been built around 1900 by speculative developers along the route of the expanding Manchester tram network. Much of the street, including Grandfather's terrace was demolished in the 1970s as part of the huge Manchester urban renewal project. At the top of the street lay the Boggart Hole Clough, a substantial area of parkland where we would often play.

My brother, Duncan James, arrived on 15<sup>th</sup> October 1952 and Gordon David was born on 26<sup>th</sup> November 1955.

Unlike Mairi, my dear wife, who is able to recall in great detail about her childhood and name just about everyone who was in her infant classes, I cannot recall much about my childhood. But a few ice-floes of memory seem to float on the wine-dark sea of forgetfulness. I believe that I took to reading quite early and at one point Morag took me to the GP because she thought that I had a hearing problem. She was assured that there was nothing wrong with my hearing. I could lose myself in a book or comic to the exclusion of everything else around me. We had a dog, an Old English sheepdog named Jeff who had the habit of chasing cars along the street – in those days there were not many cars around, although Dad had one – a Commer shooting brake MXJ 749.

Number 48 Dalbeattie Street was a two-up, two-down terraced house. I have some memories of it, but they may be coloured by having lived as an adult in two similar properties, one in Blackburn at 3 Springbank Terrace which has now been demolished and the other at 12 Evelyn Road in Ham, Richmond, West London. The staircases in Dalbeattie Street and in Evelyn Road were placed in between the front and back rooms, while in Blackburn the staircase lay at the side of the back room. Otherwise the three houses were virtually the same. I do remember falling down the staircase on one occasion. It must have been around Easter time as I can recall being given a chocolate Easter egg in consolation. Mum and Dad had the front bedroom, while we three boys were at the back. Dad made a set of bunk beds with built-in cupboards for Duncan and Gordon, while I had a single bed. The three of us used to climb up to the top bunk in order to jump down onto my bed. Dalbeattie Street had a back yard with the toilet by the back gate and a coal shed in between. Number 50 next door was leased as a joiner's workshop, but my father had a small toolshed at its rear, entered from our yard. As I recall looking into the kitchen, the back door was to the left with the gas stove beyond. At the far end of the kitchen was a work-top, underneath which was a bath. I think the bath may have been installed by Dad. All three of us had to bathe in the same water as there seemed to be a lot of work involved in filling it. On one occasion we were preparing for the long drive to Inverness when Duncan, in his excitement, tripped and banged his head on the bath and had to be taken to Booth Hall hospital for a stitch to stem the bleeding. If there was an accident to be had, it usually happened to Duncan. Hanging at the side of the back door was a small leather strap. It was more of a threat



than anything. I can't remember it being used but it's possible we may have had the occasional wallop with it. While a student at St Andrews in the late 1960s, I hitch-hiked down to visit Dad in Manchester several times. By then, Dad had demolished the coal shed and outside toilet and extended the kitchen with a bathroom beyond.

Dad worked as a maintenance engineer on the night-shift at Ferranti, but during the day he seemed to have a lot of "homers" as well. The front room of the house became overwhelmed by electrical equipment in process of repair. He rewired 10 Southside Road for Granny MacLeod in Inverness when she moved from Creraig in 1957 or 1958. Duncan would have been four or five, so he was sent under the floorboards to pull the cables through. He came up covered in dust from head to toe. I recall that Dad rewired Caddonfoot Manse for Donald and Sheila as well. We also had the first television in the street. I've seen antique sets like it since, so my recollection may be coloured by them. However, it was like a piece of glossy wooden furniture with doors that opened to reveal a tiny screen. I have a vague recollection of watching men with funny tall black hats on horseback escorting a horse-drawn carriage. That must have been Queen Elizabeth's coronation in 1953. Then, of course, we would watch Andy Pandy and the Flower Pot Men.

School was Alfred Street Primary. It's now been renamed the Oasis Academy Harpur Mount Primary and the terraced housing which used to lie around it has been replaced by modern houses. A vague recollection, which must have been at the nursery school stage, was of being made to have a sleep in the afternoon. There must have been cots or mattresses laid out for the class. I can remember lying there wondering why I was being made to have a sleep. I assume that Morag took me to school every day to begin with, but when I was older I made my own way. It seemed to be a long way, but Google Maps indicates that it was just half a mile. The only recollection I have is of, one day, feeling my way to school in a pea-souper fog, which were very common in Manchester in the 1950s. There would always be a policeman on school-crossing duty on the busy Rochdale Road. The fog was so thick that I walked into him.

One side of the school was for boys and the other side for the girls. The playgrounds were separate too. I can only remember two of the teachers from my time at Alfred Street. One was Miss Whyte which I think must have been in year five. Miss Whyte was a cripple who shuffled about on crutches. With the benefit of hindsight, I suspect that she must have been a victim of polio. I can remember one particular day, when the class had handed in their exercise books to be marked, we were called out individually to her desk. When it came to my turn, she praised my work, except from what I could see on her desk, I wasn't completely sure that it was, but didn't say anything. A few minutes later, I was hauled out in front of the class for "not having the gumption to correct her error"!

In Year six, the teacher was a Mr Weeks who has made the greatest impression on my memory. There was a UK General Election in October 1959. Mr Weeks organised a mock election in class. As virtually the only pupil willing to support the Liberal party I found myself nominated as the candidate and had to make a speech. I don't remember what I said on behalf of the party, but the class returned a thumping majority for Labour (although the Tories won the real election). Mr Weeks maintained order with a large plimsoll which he called Pierre, on which he would chalk the letter "P" – that stood for: penalty, punishment and pain. It would leave a significant chalk mark on one's trousers when it was administered. (In Scotland at that time, teachers would use a long leather tawse on one's hands.) In those days, primary pupils in England sat the eleven plus examination in year six which determined which secondary school one would go to. I honestly have no recollection of being aware of sitting the eleven plus. However, I do remember Mr Weeks teaching us the poem *Abou ben adhem*. While writing this account, I searched online for the poem –

""Abou Ben Adhem" is a poem by Leigh Hunt, a key figure of the Romantic movement in England. The poem focuses on an event in the life of the Sufi saint Ibrahim bin Adham (anglicized to Abou Ben Adhem). Ben Adhem encounters an angel, who is writing a record of those who love God. Learning his name isn't on this list, Ben Adhem instructs the angel to mark him down as one who loves his "fellow men." The next night, the angel returns with a second list: those who are blessed by God. Ben Adhem's name is at the top this time, suggesting that God favours those who love their

fellow human beings—indeed, that love for other people is the best way to express love for God. Hunt is not particularly well-known for his poetry, and is better remembered for his role in facilitating the work of other poets at the time (such as Keats and Shelly). "Abou Ben Adhem" is one of a handful of Hunt's poems still commonly read.

Shortly after this, Mr Weeks called me out to say that "Abou ben Adhem's name led all the rest". At home, either that day or shortly afterwards, a large manila envelope arrived in the post which listed every school in Manchester. Apparently the way the system worked, before the advent of Comprehensive schools, was that schools in Manchester were grouped into four or five sections based on their academic level. Level one included the Manchester Grammar School and the North Manchester Grammar. My letter included the choice of both of these schools.

But that was not to be. I had no idea at the time, but my parents' marriage was in trouble. My mother told me, much later, that John had had an affair and she found out. In June 1960, Morag took the three of us to Inverness. In the Scottish education system, primary lasts for seven years, not six as in England. However, in August 1960, I was taken to see Dr D.J. MacDonald, the rector of Inverness Royal Academy, who accepted me into Form I. A year doesn't make much difference when one is older, but as a small eleven-year old in a class of bigger twelve year olds, it can do. My first year, therefore, along with the trauma of separation and some victimisation for my Manchester accent, was difficult. The English class teacher in Form I maintained a class library, all the pupils were asked to bring in their favourite book which could be borrowed by others. As we had only just moved to Inverness and all my books had been left in Manchester, I had to tell her that I had none. I can remember being made to feel like dirt. Perhaps that has been behind my passion for accumulating so many books. Duncan and Gordon went to the nearby Crown Primary School. Five-year old Gordon was placed in the infants section where he said that "scary" great-aunt Wilrine ruled with a rod of iron.

At that time, Scottish education was in upheaval. Many of the burgh academic schools had been fee-paying with grant-aid from the State. If parents could afford it, their children would enter from primary one. It seemed to have been assumed that if a child

had attended the primary school, then entry to the Secondary was almost automatic without having to worry about the “Quality” – the equivalent of the eleven plus. Less academic children were directed to the High School, which offered technical education or the Millburn Junior Secondary. During the late 1950s, the semi-independent grant-aided Academies began to phase out their primary sections. They were given the choice of becoming entirely state-run and non fee-paying or going independent. A small number of formerly selective, grant-aided schools did become fully "independent" rather than enter the comprehensive world. In Dundee, for example, there were three academic schools, the High, the Morgan and the Harris. The High chose to become independent and has been able to attract sufficient fee-paying pupils from the town and surrounding countryside. The Harris and Morgan were unable to compete for the small numbers able to pay fees and so became state schools. Inverness Royal Academy did not have a hinterland sufficient to justify going independent, so it became a fully state school. When I went to the Academy in 1960, the primary section was being phased out and had gone completely by 1962. Only after I had left the school in 1966, did the process of conversion to a Comprehensive school begin.

When we first arrived in Inverness, we moved into Granny’s house at 10 Southside Road. This was a three-bedroom semi almost opposite the Crown School. Granny had moved here from Craigaig, the croft at Hughton near Beauly where she had lived latterly until Alasdair died in 1957. After a few weeks we moved temporarily to Uncle Iain’s flat on MacDonald Street, just off Haugh Road by the River Ness, while Iain and his family went to Shetland for the summer.

Mum obtained a 6-month lease over the winter of a house on Glen Urquhart Road, shared with another single woman. There was no electricity supply and the garden was badly overgrown. I presume that an elderly person or couple had lived in it. The house is still there and, today, appears spruce and prosperous. It had wall-mounted lamps with gas mantles in the living room and kitchen, but for the other rooms we had to use candles or paraffin lamps. The kitchen had a black iron range for cooking on. I presume that it would have been coal-fired. The lady we shared the house with was a smoker. One day, I took a cigarette from a packet she had left lying in the kitchen and lit up. I

remember it tasted disgusting and that has been the only one I ever smoked. In Manchester Dad had been a heavy smoker, he had a 40-a-day habit. At one time, I used to collect the Players cigarette cards from his packets. Dad would die of cancer before his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1970.

Then in 1961 Mum found two rooms in Castle Grant on Kingsmills Road. Castle Grant was a strange but solid looking 19<sup>th</sup> century stone-built building directly opposite the prehistoric “boarstone” and the Inverness Thistle football ground. It had three floors with a shared WC in the circular extension at the back for each floor. On each floor were units of four rooms to the left and right. In some cases, all four rooms were occupied by one family, but more often the four were split between several tenants. Initially we had two rooms on the first floor, with an elderly brother and sister occupying the other two. A year later, we moved downstairs and had three rooms out of four. When the old man who had the fourth room died, Mum managed to lease that room as well, which meant I could have a room to myself instead of sharing with Duncan and Gordon. In the grounds to the rear were sheds in various states of disrepair. For a while I kept two guinea pigs in our shed, until one morning I discovered a stoat had found its way into their hutch and killed them both.

When I was about fourteen or fifteen, around 1964, Mum obtained the tenancy of an upstairs flat at 37 MacEwan Drive – the other side of the Thistle Football ground. It had four rooms with kitchen and bathroom. During our time there, I built a garden shed with pieces of chipboard for our bicycles. Many years later, in 2016, I went around to MacEwan drive and found that the shed was still there, more than 50 years later, and still in use! Across the landing, at number 35, lived the White family who had three daughters, each roughly the same ages as Morag’s three sons. But there were no romances! When Vi White’s husband died and her daughters left home, Vi moved to Hilton. Morag and Vi would continue their friendship for many years after.

While at the Academy, I found a job delivering newspapers for Tom MacDonald, the newsagent along from the Crown School. I continued working for MacDonald’s until I left school. In my later years at the Academy, Tom asked me to open the shop up for

him at 7 AM and supervise the paperboys while they made up their delivery bags. I would also work behind the counter of the shop on Saturdays. The money I earned used to go to buying my clothes and anything else I needed.

Duncan and Gordon were very sporty, into swimming, running, cycling and anything competitive. Cycling for them meant pitting themselves against other similar-minded people going round and round as fast as possible. I had an old second-hand upright bike with sturmey-archer 3-speed gears. As I remember, Mum bought it for me at Christmas 1960 when we living at the house in Glen Urquhart Road. I used to do my paper-round on it every day until I could afford a second-hand Mobyette moped when I reached 16. One summer, when I was 15, I decided to visit Aunt Sheila and Uncle Donald in Galashiels, so I cycled the 190 miles down the A9 over a couple of days. I came back via Glasgow and Fort William. As far as I was concerned, the bike wasn't a tool for competing with others, but for extending my range from Inverness, - to Castle Urquhart, Nairn, Strathpeffer and elsewhere in the environs of Inverness.

The minister of the Crown Church, Charlie Smith, was of considerable assistance to Morag when we settled in Inverness. As a family we regularly attended Church on Sundays and I became involved with the Boy's Brigade and bible class. As a teenager, I became quite strongly involved in the church and must have really believed that God was taking care of me. I think Morag must have felt her status in the community would be enhanced if I become a Church of Scotland minister. So when I went to St Andrews, I was presented with a bible signed by members of the Kirk Session. Even before going to University, I was beginning to have doubts. Today, I am convinced that all religions are just forms of social control surrounded by ritual and mumbo-jumbo; and that gods were made by man, not the other way around.

Much later when my son, James, was 14 we purchased a Giant Cadex mountain bike for him. He seemed to be just as interested as Gordon and Duncan had been in competing over "technical" sections in the Sidlaw Hills. I bought a second-hand Raleigh mountain bike for myself and took him on overland trips. We went from Crianlaraich up the West Highland Way to Fort William and on to Fort Augustus and, on another occasion, from

Pitlochry over Rannoch Moor to Oban. After that he lost interest, and soon became much more interested in cars. I used the bike for one more long distance ride, from Glen Clova, over Jock's Road to Braemar, through Glen Feshie to Aviemore and finally by the old military road to Inverness.

Eventually, in 1966, my school years came to an end. I passed the Scottish Higher exams with As in Maths and History and Bs in English and Science. The Science Higher was principally Chemistry and Biology. I also had an O-level in Physics. Most of my year group at the Academy – just over a hundred – opted to go to Aberdeen University. I decided to be different. I had an offer to read History at Edinburgh, but Bob Wright, the Biology teacher at the Academy persuaded me that Science would provide more career choices so I opted for Science at St Andrews University. Only when I started at St Andrews did I discover how many English students with A-levels go to St Andrews and that many of the Scots also had A-levels or Advanced Highers. Not only that, but having been young for my year at the Academy, I was now a seventeen year old amongst nineteen and twenty year olds. That wasn't such an issue, but the teaching, which largely assumed an A-level standard, was! In my first year, I had opted for Maths, Chemistry and Physics. Maths was a disaster, I gave it up after the first term. I scraped through the Chemistry and Physics at the resits. In second year, I got through Botany and Zoology. In my third and final year, I opted for Biochemistry, Physiology and Scottish History. My original plan had been for a career in Life Sciences, for which I would need to complete the four year honours course. However, it had become obvious to me that Biochemistry would not feature in my future. However, I greatly enjoyed the 2<sup>nd</sup> MA Scottish History course run by Dr Ronald Cant. I was the first Science student ever admitted to the course. It was not possible or financially viable, to change course for an MA at this stage, but I was pleased to receive a merit for Dr Cant's class and I had achieved enough to obtain an Ordinary Bachelor of Science degree. In those days means-tested maintenance grants were available and tuition was free. I had the maximum grant of £360 per year. That doesn't sound like much today, but I survived on chips and hitch-hiked back and forward to Inverness rather than pay for the train. During the summer holidays I worked one year for a builder and in the other years as a petrol-pump attendant.



First year at Kinnessburn residence: I am standing on the left in my kilt.

At the end of my first year I had left my pedal cycle behind when I hitch-hiked home for the summer. I realised after a few days that it would be useful to have the bike in Inverness, so I hitch-hiked back down to St Andrews in the morning, arrived at around noon, jumped on the bike and cycled 150 miles back to Inverness. Unlike Gordon and Duncan, I have never been particularly athletic, so when I reached the last climb after the river Nairn, it was after midnight and I was exhausted. I could only push the bike up the hill past Daviot, Once over the summit, I was able to coast most of the way home. It had been a very sunny day, so not only was I shattered the next day, I also had a bad case of sunburn across my back and legs!

Later that summer in 1967, having earned some money and with £35 in my sporran, I decided to visit a pen-pal (male) in Aalst, Belgium. I made my first visit to Dad in Manchester on the way down and stayed a night with him. After Aalst I decided to carry on into Germany. Maybe the kilt helped but I found lifts were plentiful, including from one fellow with a souped up Ford who did almost 300kph along the autobahn near Austerlitz. I continued through Austria and Yugoslavia. I hadn't realised that Greece and Turkey were close to war, so walking over the bridge between them was a scary



experience, with many guns pointed at me. I arrived at Istanbul in Turkey and had three fascinating days seeing the sights such as Hagia Sophia and the Topkapi Palace. An American student told me that it was possible to get cheap stand-by flights to Israel. I think the cost was only about £5 and so that night I camped in a field outside Lod airport, Tel Aviv. Two armed Israeli security men woke me to make sure that I wasn't a Palestinian terrorist! This was August 1967. The Six Day war with the Arab states had been just six weeks earlier. Wrecked Egyptian armoured vehicles lay in heaps in a makeshift scrap yard just outside Jerusalem. For a couple of nights, I slept on the flat roof of the St Andrews Church of Scotland in Jerusalem. The roof tiles were scarred by the impact of shrapnel from Jordanian mortar fire. I walked the streets of Old Jerusalem and around the city walls.

Much later I read about "Jerusalem syndrome" which referred to the frequent loss of faith experienced by those brought up as Christians after visiting Jerusalem. I think that happened to me. Since I had started at St Andrews I had been questioning my Christian upbringing, but I believe the experience of the so-called "Holy Land" confirmed me in my atheism. Anyway, after a few days I hitched a ride to Haifa and took a Greek ferry boat (steerage class) to Athens. I met an Australian girl on the boat, who I think picked on me because I must have appeared to be the least dangerous prospective companion among the many Mediterranean men on board. She persuaded me to help her gate-crash the first class cabaret on the upper deck. Her name was Germaine. I have often wondered if she might have been Germaine Greer but can't be sure. Anyway, I got off the boat at Athens to hitch-hike home, while she stayed on the boat for the next port of call in Ancona, Italy. I remember the extremely uncomfortable canvas back seat of a Citroen 2CV belonging to a French couple who gave me a lift the whole length of Yugoslavia, from Salonica in Northern Greece, to Austria.

While at St Andrews I became involved with the Student Nationalists. I had joined the Scottish National Party when I went to St Andrews. In my second year, I became chairman of the University Student Nationalist club, and so I chaired the meeting at which Winnie Ewing came to speak following her spectacular win at the Hamilton by-election in November 1967. The University Tories packed the hall out and heckled

continually, so it was a difficult meeting. I also chaired a much smaller meeting when Christopher Grieve, alias Hugh McDiarmid, visited. My abiding memory of his address was the amount of whisky I had to supply while he was speaking!

Much later, I discovered that grandfather Alasdair MacLeod had been a founder member of the SNP in 1934, and that MacEwan Drive, where we had lived from 1964 had been named in honour of Sir Alexander Malcolm MacEwen (1875-1941) an ex-provost of Inverness who served as the inaugural leader of the Scottish National Party from 1934 to 1936. Great grandfather Joseph had been a prominent Liberal and the party organizer for the Inverness Constituency where he had succeeded in returning a series of Liberal MPs. When his son, Alasdair, became a committed Nationalist, it led to a difficult relationship with his father. This may have explained the coolness I found at the Great Aunts' house in Crown Drive.

My time at St Andrews ended in the Summer of 1969. I had just turned twenty with an ordinary BSc. I had no idea what I wanted to do next. So I contacted Voluntary Service Overseas with the thought of deferring the difficult decision of a career. Teaching was a possible option, so why not try teaching as a volunteer. VSO sent me to Kenya, specifically South Tetu Harambee Secondary School, in a rural area about 80 miles north of Nairobi. I was partnered with Roger, an English school leaver who had opted for a gap year before going to University, although he was almost the same age as me. Before going out, VSO arranged for a language and acclimatisation course at Reading University. Migwe, the Swahili teacher was a Kikuyu who had a prodigious ability with languages. I forget how many that he claimed to be able to speak, but do remember that he said he would live in a country for six months until he was fluent in their language and then move on. He was fluent in Latin, having lived in a monastery! I'm afraid that despite his best efforts, my grasp of Swahili was, and remained, rudimentary. The children in the school were native speakers of Kikuyu. In primary school they were taught English and Swahili. At the secondary school, all of the teaching, apart from the Swahili class, was carried out in English. The students ranged in age from around 12 to around 25. The school was a voluntary establishment (Harambee means something like "help yourself"), with some fees charged to the parents. Education was valued so highly

by the community that parents would scrimp and save to be able to pay the fees. The school was in an area where there had been Presbyterian missionaries. A nearby school at Karatina, which also had VSO teachers, was run by a Catholic. I met him several times and had a great deal more admiration for him than my headmaster. My perception was that the headmaster of South Tetu, a Presbyterian, was a good example of James Hogg's Justified Sinner. He was undoubtedly a sinner. His wife and infant child lived in the school house while he had a mistress in the nearby town of Nyeri. I suspected that the headmaster and his crony, the local chief, had a scheme going on between them to enrich themselves at the expense of the community, I was sent to the school to teach Science to O-level standard, but it seemed that I had to teach everything, except Swahili at which the students were considerably more proficient than I was.



A visit by the Minister of Education pictured outside our bugalow

These matters aside, although our salaries were quite low (and a fraction of what the American Peace Corps volunteers at the school a mile away were paid), the British Council supplied a BSA 175cc Bushman motorcycle between us. Roger didn't have a license, so I did all the riding. One time, we took a trip through the Aberdare Mountain Park at around 10,000 feet. In the thin air at that altitude, the bike struggled for speed, so Roger on the pillion seat was particularly alarmed when a big male buffalo took a dislike to us. Fortunately we outdistanced it. On another occasion, after Roger had gone home, I climbed Mount Kenya and almost succeeded in reaching the summit of Point

Lenana at 16,354 feet (4985 metres). The final few hundred feet is up a glacier with a sheer fall on one side, so without the proper mountaineering footgear I had to give up. The Batian (5199 metres) and Neilon peaks are higher but require proper mountaineering gear.

Anyway, in the spring of 1971 I came back to Scotland and the problem of finding a career. My father in Manchester had died early in 1970, so my mother, even although she had divorced him in 1962 felt that she could now remarry. Duncan was away at University and Gordon would soon leave home to join the RAF. Morag married widower Ernest Rasche on December 31st 1970 and they moved to a new home at 224 Oldtown Road. They enjoyed the next eighteen years together until Ernest died aged 82. During those years they travelled regularly to Mediterranean resorts, to the United States and extensively throughout Scotland. Ernest was devoted to her and delighted in surprises which often involved champagne and weekend hotel stays.

Well, I found myself intruding on their relationship from May until September 1971 when I left to join the Civil Service. I managed to find a temporary job in the abattoir keeping the books. I will always remember the human-like screams of the pigs on the nearby abattoir floor. It was almost enough to put me off meat for life! From my pay, I contributed towards Mum's housekeeping budget but was able to buy a cheap ex-Forestry Commission James 200 motorcycle at auction. At weekends it allowed me to explore the Highlands and go further than I had been able to on a bicycle. I climbed several Munros, including Schiehallion. But I decided that I was much happier walking the hill tracks around the Munros instead of climbing up them. There are so many beautiful places to visit in Scotland, but I've never understood the need of some people to "bag" all the Munros!

On returning from an expedition on the James, my mother told me that she had had a phone call from a young lady in Broughty Ferry. I had met Mairi Davidson some time before in Inverness and we had exchanged addresses before I went to Kenya. I jumped back on the James and rode off to visit Mairi. Her Mum, Catherine, had bought some bridge rolls and cakes from Goodfellow and Stevens, the Bakers in Broughty Ferry. She

laid them on an Edwardian folding “what-not” three-tiered cake-stand. Meaning to be polite, I lifted the stand so that Mairi could choose first. Unfortunately, this caused the stand to fold and most of the cakes and rolls ended up on the floor. Not a good start!

The job-hunting continued but seemed to generate nothing but rejection letters. I applied for the Civil Service and had a more positive result. On returning from another Sunday expedition on the James, Mum said that she had received a call from London and would I phone back immediately. So, it was just before 5PM when I rang. The man on the other end asked me to come into his office at 9 the next morning (Monday). I replied that I was in Inverness almost 600 miles away. OK, he said, can you make it by 10 then? I managed to get a ticket on the overnight sleeper train, on which one rarely sleeps, and made the appointment. I had asked for a posting to one of the Scotland based Government departments, but was told that I had been allocated as a computer programmer to a Ministry of Defence factory in Blackburn. Don’t worry, he said, it’s way up there on the map close to Scotland. In fact, Blackburn is over 100 miles from the Scottish border and 350 miles from Inverness. Well it was a job at least. I hired a van to take my James and other possessions down to Blackburn. I found digs with a family to begin with, but quite soon discovered how much cheap Victorian terraced housing there was and bought my first house not far from the MOD site for £850.

In those days, there were few University courses in commercial computer programming. The University level courses that existed were largely the province of the mathematicians. MOD Blackburn was an Ordnance factory dating from WW2 which manufactured fuses for bombs and shells. There had been a recent drive to improve efficiency by introducing computers to handle payroll and production scheduling. The computer was an ICL 1902A with four tape drives, two 4 megabyte disks and 32 Kilobytes of magnetic core memory. Let’s put those numbers in context. A typical home computer today, in 2023, might come with a terabyte of disk – 250,000 times the 1902A, and perhaps 8 gigabytes of RAM memory, again 250,000 times as much. There again, the Microsoft Windows operating system will soak up most of that. Also, today, applications of all kinds can be bought off the shelf relatively cheaply. A business today would not consider hiring programmers to write accounting applications from scratch,

but that was exactly what we were doing in 1971. The department had around 50 staff, including operators, key-punchers for data input, programmers, and systems analysts. After a couple of years, I was posted to the nearby Chorley site, where there was another 1902A, to join a team developing a new procurement system for the Ordnance factories. In 1974 I was sent on a 6-month Advanced DP course at Blandford in Dorset, prior to a posting to London.

While working at Blackburn and Chorley, my courtship of Mairi who was now studying at Aberdeen University continued. In 1972 I sold the James to buy my first car, a 1966 Vauxhall Viva SL90. What a piece of rubbish that turned out to be. I got rid of it after six months and vowed never to have another Vauxhall. One weekend when I visited Mairi in Aberdeen, the car broke down and needed parts which meant waiting until Monday before I could drive back to work in Blackburn. On another occasion, in Inverness, the water pump failed at 1 PM on Saturday just after the motor factor closed for the weekend. After another trip North, the car came to a halt just short of the mid-point of the Forth Bridge. I had to be towed off the bridge and then wait for the AA to fix the ignition problem. I sold the Viva for half what I had paid for it. For the remainder of 1972, I used a bicycle to get to work and the train to visit Mairi.

At the beginning of 1973, I was posted to Chorley, so I needed a car again. Harry Lynch, my new boss, suggested a Ford Escort, but a 1967 Morris Traveller caught my eye at a bargain price. Eventually, over the next ten years, that car covered over a hundred thousand miles with me and never let me down. Alas, by 1985, the ash frame was rotting and there were holes in the floor. By then Mairi and I were living in Dundee where a black 1959 4-door Minor saloon caught my eye. It needed some work, but eventually it was fitted with the reconditioned Traveller engine and is still in running order. The car comes out of the garage on sunny summer days.



But cars are a diversion from more important matters. On 31st March 1974 Mairi and I were married. Here, in the photo outside Queen Street Church, Broughty Ferry, L to R is Andy, Morag, Peter, Mairi, Kate and Ernest Rasche.

For a short time we lived together in Blackburn before moving with our newborn daughter, Christina Mairi, to a rented house in Tarrant Keyneston, Dorset. I was attending an Advanced DP Training course at the Royal Signals camp at Blandford. In May 1975, I took up my new post with the MOD in London. We purchased a 2-up, 2-down terraced house at 12 Evelyn Road, Ham, close to Richmond Park in London. It was almost the same as the Blackburn House but cost £12000 instead of £850.



12 Evelyn Road, Ham, Richmond, as it is in 2022 on Google street view. Bought for £12,000 in 1975. We left in 1978. It was recently sold in 2022 for £700,000!

My first role in London was in the MOD Main building on the Embankment, working for Harry Lynch from Chorley who had been tasked with proposing a system for automation of the Defence Estimates. The preparation of annual Estimates was of considerable vintage whereby prospective spending had to be presented by Government each year for Parliamentary approval. After that, I joined MS4, a department within the MOD PE with a very ambitious target to design a new automated system for Defence Procurement. My role was to visit various defence establishments in order to understand and report on how they went about procuring materials for defence equipment. I found myself becoming increasingly frustrated by this time. I wasn't happy in London and the commuting depressed me. Mairi, however, was making many friends in Ham.

In 1977, I decided that I had had enough. I remember a particular event. Every morning, after parking my motorcycle, I had to cross the front of Charing Cross Station through the hordes of commuters emerging from it. One day, I collided with someone – nothing unusual in that, - but he apologised to me. I was so taken aback by the unexpected apology that it was time to leave London. Soon I found an ad for a programming post in Arbroath and sent in my application. This was accepted so in late 1977, I joined Halliburton Manufacturing and Services in Arbroath. Halliburton are an American company which manufactures “down hole tools” for the oil industry. They had an IBM 370. I was appointed as Systems Programmer. The company arranged with Angus Council for the temporary lease of a house in Linton Road. Eventually, Evelyn Road was sold and Mairi with Christina Mairi joined me in Arbroath, when we purchased a bungalow in Bellevue Gardens and Christina Mairi started at the Timmergreens School.

In 1979 we purchased a small holding at 15 Kinaldie just outside Arbroath. The holding was 5 acres, half of it under raspberries. We put some sheep in the bottom field but one morning found that they had broken out. I finally found them half way to Auchmithie! In our first year we succeeded in cropping two and a half tons of berries. They went to Anglia Cannery, but payment was not forthcoming so I had to pester them until the following spring. They finally paid up, but quite soon after they went into receivership and other growers in the area received nothing. We discovered that winter work with



raspberries is particularly arduous! In the next year we grew an acre of potatoes in the field where the sheep had been, but had difficulty selling them. In 1981 our son James Andrew arrived and the UK economy took a nosedive as it crashed out of the ERM. When interest rates hit 14% the mortgage on Kinaldie became almost unaffordable. So we sold the holding to Alan and Mandy Gordon and moved to 95 Pitkerro Road in Dundee. Alan & Mandy became and still are good friends, as did Harry and Heather Hutchison in Kinaldie.

In September 1978, after a year at Halliburton, I found a job as IT Manager at Veeder-Root on the Dunsinane Industrial Estate in Dundee. I would remain there for the next 25 years, through four changes of ownership of the company. Until the move from Arbroath to Dundee, in late 1981, I commuted the 20 miles to work every day in my reliable Morris Traveller. In my first years at Veeder-Root, I often had to work late developing new systems. Veeder-Root had set up in Dundee in 1948 to manufacture mechanical computers for petrol pumps. When I joined the company they were introducing the manufacture of tachographs for heavy goods vehicles. In 1978, the company had 1400 employees in Dundee. By the time I left in 2003, they were down to barely 100.

To begin with, I had to manage a Sperry-Univac 90/30 system. It was somewhat more powerful than the ICL 1902A, having 57 Megabyte discs and 512 Kilobytes of main memory. There was a punch room for five part time operators. I had three computer operators and two programmers. The computer department was a division of Accounts with around 50 staff. I had to make a case to the management for a more independent IT department with a greater emphasis on service to the Sales and Manufacturing departments. In 1982, I managed the replacement of the 90/30 with a Sperry System 80, a significantly more powerful machine, at the time, with the capability for running Sperry-proprietary online systems rather than the punched-card batch systems of the 90/30. During this time, I visited the company head office in Hartford Connecticut several times and was also sent in 1984 to Sao Paulo, Brazil, to assist their subsidiary company in introducing computers for office functions.

In 1992, Neil Key, the company accountant, led a management buyout and renamed the company TVI Europe Ltd. The company would now be solely concerned with manufacturing, marketing and supporting the tachograph product across Europe. I was asked to reduce the IT costs, so over a period of 6 months or so, I migrated from the two-ton System 80 in its air conditioned room to a tower PC running a version of Linux as the file store at the heart of a PC network. Now, the IT department comprised just me and one programmer/operator. The new system which I put together, an amalgam of a bought-in accounting package and the bespoke marketing and sales system I had developed, lasted until a number of years after I had left the company in 2003.

In 2001, we moved from Pitkerro Road to a large 1880s house beside the beach in Broughty Ferry. Kate, Mairi's mother, had been born in the street behind in 1913, so it was like a homecoming for Mairi. We can sit in the lounge on a sunny day and watch the dolphins leaping on the Tay. At the time of writing, we have lived here for 22 years and hope that it will be our last move.

Also in 2001, Neil Key, sold TVI Europe to Stoneridge Inc, another US company. Stoneridge already owned a Swedish company with a series of automotive products and manufacturing operations in Estonia. Neil made a considerable profit for himself on the sale but, not long afterwards, he died of a heart attack. During the next two years, the Dundee manufacturing operation would also be moved to Estonia. During this process, I had a number of trips to Sweden and Estonia. The remaining employees in Dundee were moved to new premises at the Claverhouse Industrial estate. I was closely involved with many of the technical aspects of the move, but it was becoming increasingly disenchanted with the direction of travel, so when the opportunity for redundancy arose I took it.

In 2003, I was 54 and finding new employment was problematic, so I struck out with my own company. There were three strands to the business I set up. One was to be a tour guide and hence my new company would be named Glen Discovery Ltd. However, I don't have the outgoing, gregarious character which tour operators need to have. Nor do I have any interest in pleasing tourists who just want to be ferried around golf

courses or sites which may have featured in some Hollywood fantasy. I did find a few customers but the business would never reach the stage where I could have justified buying a minibus.

The second strand was a mail-order business, selling Bioflow magnetic therapy products online through [discoverymagnets.co.uk](http://discoverymagnets.co.uk) which did well for a time. Ultimately, I would sell more than half a million pounds of product. The Bioflow Company began with network marketing through many small distributors. Should I succeed in recruiting others to my downline network, I could earn commission on their sales. Over time, that meant a few people at the top of their trees could sit back and earn considerable amounts from the efforts of others. I did recruit one or two people myself, but they did very little. Most of my business was earned selling directly online through Google ads. There were several other distributors in the same line. Over time they began discounting to gain market share so I had to follow suit. Eventually, I concluded that Google was earning considerably more every month from my efforts than I did, so I started to cut back. Finally, Bioflow Ltd, began to retail much more through their own website. When they introduced online product promotions, which undercut their distributor prices I gave up.

My third strand would be IT support to small businesses in the local area. Ultimately it was this which continued to provide a reasonable income until the coming of the Covid pandemic in 2020 persuaded me that it was time to retire. My customers included dental practices, accountants, solicitors, surveyors, plant hire companies, fruit processors, civil engineers and property companies. With the benefit of looking back over a long IT career, it's much easier when one "owns" an IT department where one has full control of systems development and day-to-day running and more especially the acquisition and maintenance of hardware and software. Offering IT support to a variety of companies where others had specified the equipment and software is more difficult. Especially when having to resolve problems created by others. For a number of my customers, I recommended Linux systems with Samba which emulated Microsoft servers. In my experience the Linux servers were more reliable and cheaper than the Microsoft equivalent. The downside lay in the way in which Microsoft would

encourage package providers to tweak their products so that they would only run on actual Microsoft servers. I had several customers running Sage Accounting and Payroll packages quite happily on Linux servers, until a new Sage release came along which had been deliberately engineered to require a Microsoft server.

During the 1990s, I began study through the Open University. As I already had a BSc degree, I could skip the foundation levels and begin at Level 2. My first course was Cities and Technologies, which began with early civilisations and the technologies which led to such early urbanisation and ended with consideration of the technologies which permitted modern cities to exist. The next course was provided in conjunction with Dundee University covering Modern Scottish History from 1707. The third course was “From Family Tree to Community History”. I had already begun to collect material on my own family tree, so the course built on my own research and extended it to an understanding of community history. That course ended with a project based on one’s own research. I looked into the operation of the Poor Law in Kildonan. That was of particular interest, because my great-great-grandfather, Alexander MacLeod in Helmsdale had required poor relief from 1870, when the advent of the railway bringing cheap manufactured shoes from England had destroyed his business. I looked at the operation of the poor law in a rural parish from the 1850s until the 1920s. The project word limit would be a particular bugbear because I wanted to include so much more than was allowed. Despite having cut the dissertation severely, I lost marks for exceeding the limit and, as a result, I just failed to achieve a first class honours in my MA with history and humanities.

Following on from the OU degree, I embarked on a one-year, part-time MPhil course at Dundee University. There was a “taught” element, but the emphasis was on the production of a dissertation with original research. It was expected that students would choose a subject related to Dundee, particularly in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries as the city developed. There have been several books published by the University since which have drawn on research by the MPhil students. However, that was not my intention.

As vice-chairman of the Clan Gregor Society, I was much more interested in the MacGregor clan and in particular the proscription of the clan by James VI in 1603. Martin MacGregor had earned his doctorate from Edinburgh University in 1989 with a thesis on the history of the clan up until 1570. My intention was to extend the study from 1583 until 1611. As part of the project, I looked into the relationships of MacGregor families, which for that period were surprisingly well documented. From 1583 onwards, various lists of the troublesome Clan Gregor had been created, often with patronymics and locations. Thus it became possible to produce family trees to which I could link the various crimes and executions which mentioned individuals.

This project has been continuing ever since, so that at time of writing, I have 110 pages of genealogy on my website. From being a kindred which controlled extensive lands prior to 1603, MacGregors became dispersed, landless and unable in law to use their own names until 1784. Modern family searchers often find that they are unable to identify their ancestors earlier than the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, whereas many of my genealogies terminate somewhere in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century. DNA results can often assist in filling the gap, so my MPhil study has morphed into a continuing project assisting MacGregors from all over the world in identifying their ancestry. At time of writing, a DNA test by a New Zealander, has finally confirmed my own family descent from a branch of the Roro line which settled in the Braemar area in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. I had struggled for many years to find the origin of Duncan MacGregor who had a child Alexander in Monkwearmouth in 1776. My descent from Alexander is quite definite, but I could not be confident who Duncan had been until recently.

I became a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland after graduating with the MPhil. Apart from receiving the Society Journals, I can use the designation FSAScot after my name.

Following the MPhil, I enrolled on a year-long field archaeology course at Glasgow University. This was a weekly evening class so, once a week after work, I drove 90 miles to Glasgow. There were several very interesting field studies during the course. One of them was at Mugdock Park, north of Glasgow. The project was to plot and draw

the remains of WW2 anti-aircraft batteries and the supporting accommodation. The principal field-work during the course was in South Lanarkshire near Biggar. An area along the upper Clyde had been threatened by plans for gravel extraction. A team from Glasgow University including the undergraduate Archaeology students were brought in for the week. A large area of several acres was mechanically cleared of topsoil so that the underlying archaeology could be examined for traces of Neolithic settlement. I had noted damp areas which I thought may have been ditches, so during the evenings I used my dowsing rods to trace out a substantial, almost square, area of several acres in extent enclosed by ditches which was overlapped in one corner by the survey area. It turned out to be a post-medieval field boundary. Following the course, I joined the Scottish Association of Field Archaeologists and went on several projects with them. However, I found that as I became older, my knees were no longer up to spending prolonged period in trench excavations.

I mentioned previously that I bought a 1967 Morris Minor Traveller in 1973 (FTD950F). I replaced it in 1985 with an older 1959 Morris Minor saloon (JTS754). When the saloon underwent major maintenance and a respray in 1999, the larger 1098cc engine from the Traveller was reconditioned and mated with a Ford Sierra 5-speed gearbox. By 2011, the car needed another set of wings and a respray but since then it has been kept garaged and only used on dry summer days.



On an outing with the Dundee section of the Scotland North-East Morris Minor club. I am on the right in the tweed jacket. JTS754 is to my right.

In 2017, I purchased a 1933 Austin Seven (VT9016) at auction and joined the Scottish Austin Seven Club. In 2021, I was elected as the club treasurer. Both cars come out for local shows and summer road runs with the clubs. For every-day travel, we replaced our Skoda Octavia diesel with a battery-electric Nissan Leaf, in July 2021.



Since 2001, Mairi and I have lived beside the beach at Broughty Ferry, at the mouth of the river Tay. Broughty Ferry was absorbed by its bigger neighbour Dundee in 1913, but it remains a pleasant suburb with its own shopping street a short walk away from the house. The cycle path along the Esplanade forms a part of Sustrans Route one from Dover to Tain. My cycling ambitions have been somewhat less than that as, before Covid, I used to regularly cycle to Arbroath, 14 miles away.

At time of writing, in 2023, I have become the treasurer of the Scottish History Society. The Society is a charity which publishes academic books on Scottish History every year. I have been a member for almost 30 years but had not previously been actively involved apart from receiving their annual publications.

*Peter John Lawrie*

### **Duncan James Lawrie– a chronology**

These pages represent a recollection of my 70 years devoid of romance, adventure, and mischief - of which there has been plenty. Instead, to fill the requested few pages, I have attempted to walk through the years describing the events which filled my career and significant milestones.

My first 7 years were in Manchester – the heart of the English industrial North. Moving to Scotland, after my parent’s separation in 1960, was on a mainline steam train and the sounds and smells of that train journey is an indelible memory. Inverness, at that time a relatively small town of ~35,000 people, was very different with more extended family around than previously but, with that, came the unspoken disapproval of divorce. As a single parent family of four with extremely limited means there was no car, no telephone and just enough food and clothing to get by.

My paper round started at age 11 and we woke to ‘Handel’s Water Music’ at 5.45 am every day. Porridge made the night before, the bike ride to the newsagent’s shop took only 5 minutes prior to about 110 deliveries and then on to school by 9 am. This continued for 6 years – through high school - and financed a couple of trips to continental Europe with the school’s geography club during the 1960s. It also paid for my first racing bicycle at age 13 and the beginning of a passion with the sport.

The Clachnacuddin Cycling Club had, perhaps, 50 active members with another half dozen similarly sized clubs all over the north of Scotland. Of these club members about 25% were under 18 years old and this competition was undoubtedly how I avoided less desirable activities during my teenage years. The various cycling clubs all operated under ‘Robert’s Rules’ with strict responsibilities for event organization, finance, and the annual dinner & dance where prizes were awarded. We raced in all of the available time trials and massed start road races plus the grass track events at the highland games. So, naturally, we had to attend all the dinner-dances and from these came my first girlfriend! So, I had chores at home, my paper rounds to make money, school and homework, but the cycling world rounded out my existence such that I really didn’t feel unreasonably trapped by poverty.



There was another reason for my excitement regarding weekend races. The Church of Scotland was a central part of Mum's life and I have no doubt that she gained some help from the church in navigating life in her reduced circumstances. I was probably the most rebellious of her three children and punishment sometimes meant having to attend church twice on a Sunday. From the age of 11 or 12 I was already quite vociferous in my disdain. The entire concept of religious belief seemed absurd, and that stance has never changed over the years. Even aged 12 when I asked why all of the Middle-East was Muslim and all of Eire Catholic and all of India Hindu, the best that most of the devoted could come up with was that "God has a plan"! So, armed with the knowledge that religion was nothing more than crowd control and I knew I wasn't afraid of the dark, bike racing on Sunday mornings was my escape.

I did compete in cross-country running for the school as a 16 - 17 year old and did quite well. I recognize that I never worked hard enough to get to the top and this was also true of my school work and other endeavours. In fact, it's taken a very long time for me to realize how much further I could have gone had I been really dedicated to my various goals. Most of the collegiate and athletic goals set were "North of Scotland" championships. Probably around 1968 I competed in the regional junior cross-country championship in Fort William (16 – 18-year-olds). At this age these were competent athletes so my 8th place overall and 2nd place from my school was more than acceptable. Next up was the schoolboy event in Fort William for 14 – 15 year-olds and my younger brother Gordon was on the starting line. I should mention here that Gordonstoun – the elite private school Prince Charles attended – was 30 miles east of Inverness and usually expected to win everything. So, it was with some pride that I watched Gordon win the event and push Gordonstoun into 2nd, 3rd, and 4th places.

After high school in 1970 I had good grades and knew I wanted to earn a degree in engineering but I wanted earn money and buy a car more! The compromise was to serve an apprenticeship in what was the largest factory in Europe producing steam turbines for electric power generation. I was back in Manchester sharing a room in a house with a dozen other transitioning young adults. Full board with a bed, breakfast and dinner was five pounds ten shillings per week. Fifty two years on and this barely

buys a cup of coffee but I had enough left over from a £7 weekly salary to drink too much beer at least once per week. Metropolitan Vickers became Associated Electrical Industries, which became GEC. Fifty years later, the site is the largest shopping precinct in Europe but I had nothing to do with that! I did thoroughly enjoy the accumulation of skills during this time and the apprenticeship included ‘block release’ from the shop floor for 14 week college courses in engineering.

I continued to race my bicycle with the Altrincham Road Club for a couple of years and was persistent enough to be taken on by a national coach usually dedicated to the UK teams in the Olympics and World Championships. With ~10,000 miles per year on the bike I was certainly fit enough to train with these elite athletes and I had flashes when I felt invincible but it was not to be. Between work, training on the bike and a desire for a social life, I frequently found myself run down and prone to infection every time I got a scratch so the coach benched me and I never really found my way back.

In 1972, I was accepted to study Mechanical Engineering at the University of Liverpool. The Beatles had recently left, but the ‘Mersey Sound’ was definitely a thing. Liverpool is only 35 miles west of Manchester and a major shipping port. The university is old with a fine reputation – particularly for engineering – and I was particularly attracted to the Students Union. That meant lots of beer, smoking a clay pipe, juicing up my 1959 Mini Cooper S, and lots of parties. I did enjoy some of my classes and I frequently got highest marks in the class for lab work but I was not heading in the right direction! In the spring, coming home from a party, I was a passenger in somebody else’s Mini Cooper and he totalled the car putting me through the windshield. So, I spent the week of my final exams in hospital and had no option but to repeat the year.

I chose to spend the next 12 months driving an 18-wheeler articulated lorry and started making far more money than I’d ever had before. Permanent night driving from nearby St Helens to points all over the country was an experience I don’t regret. Learning some diesel mechanic’s tricks, how to secure 25 -ton loads, and better knot tying than a boy

scout are skills I still have, but I quickly realized it was time to knuckle down to my studies if I wanted anything more.

Back to university and two years further into my degree, I added to my heavy goods vehicle license with a public service vehicle license so I could drive tourist buses – taking Russian sailors from their ship to a mediaeval banquet in Chester Castle, for example. This brought some money in during the weekends. During the summer of my third year I returned to Inverness for the vacation and began driving service buses for Highland Omnibus. This took me around the town 1000 times but also to the Isle of Skye and around Loch Ness and many other places I was familiar with from my teenage cycling days. On one of these trips I picked up schoolchildren from one-roomed school houses around Loch Ness to deliver them to town for their swimming lessons. I also picked up an Australian hitchhiker making her way around the world which was clearly against the rules but what can I say? Isabel and I returned to Liverpool after the summer in Inverness where she had worked as a waitress in the 4-star ‘Kingsmills Hotel’. I do recall driving a double decker bus into the hotel car park and being unable to get it out!

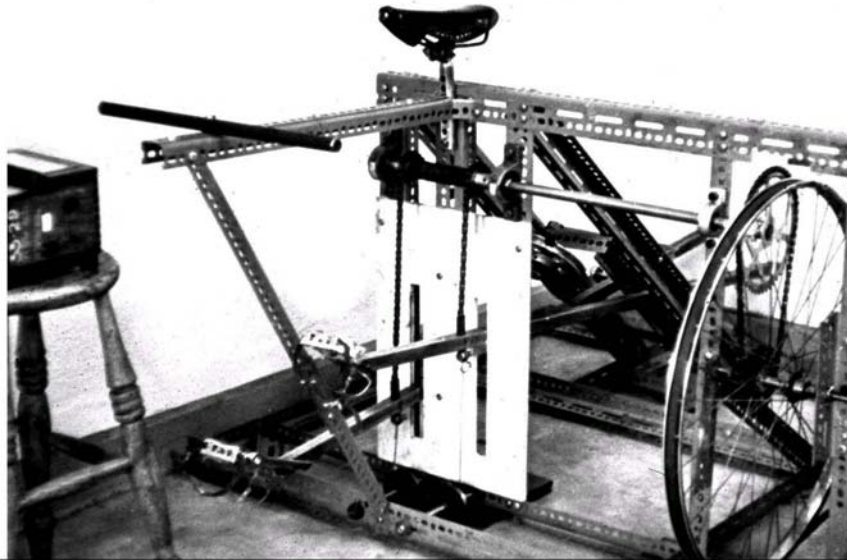
The following year Isabel and I were married at Caddonfoot Church by my Uncle Donald MacCuish. The church is near Galashiels in the Scottish borders close to the River Tweed. Uncle Donald was the husband of Mum’s elder sister Sheila and a native Gaelic speaker. Apart from being a Church of Scotland minister he was an academic with a seat on the Scottish Board of Education and I considered him a friend. At least we occasionally enjoyed a single malt whisky together and he never evangelized! Back in Liverpool, Isabel used her Australian teaching degree to accept a teaching position in a special school for Autistic children. This was 1977 and Autism was not yet a diagnosis outside of this very first school in Southport where she was the very first teacher specializing in Autism. In parallel she undertook a part time degree in Special Education from the University of Lancaster.

My personal tutor at Liverpool and advisor for my final year undergraduate project was Dr. Keith Sherwen. He had written a book entitled “To Fly Like a Bird” taking the topic of Human-Powered Flight out of Greek mythology and analyzing the possibility.

Academics and cranks alike correspond when material like this is published and a frequent question was about cycling bio-mechanics. In 1977 there had not yet been a successful human powered flight (at that time it was referred to as ‘Man-powered Flight’) and efforts were underway both to reduce the power required and also to increase the power available. Most readers will be aware that a very competitive runner will complete a marathon in a little over two hours but a very competitive cyclist will complete the same distance in a little under one hour. This conversion by a cyclist of chemical (food) energy into kinetic energy (locomotion) is more efficient than any insect, bird, mammal or machine ever devised – independent of speed. Nevertheless, the lofty goal of human-powered flight demanded any further improvements we can find. So, the most common questions concerned the circular motion of the pedal / legs combination and the fact that the down stroke from 2 o’clock to 5 o’clock provides the majority of the power available.

There are many quick-return mechanisms in engineering intended to get quickly back to a preferred position and spend as much time there as possible. One crude example would be an old-fashioned treadle sewing machine where the leg motion is reciprocating rather than circular. My final year project had me building an apparatus in the lab which dissipated human energy through a calibrated generator - first via cycling and conventional 7 inch long cranks and then via reciprocating 40 inch long cranks. The results showed the shaft power from conventional circular pedalling – albeit variable torque - far outstripped the high torque reciprocating motion and this was true over any time span from 10 seconds to 4 hours. Years later I would consult with Americas Cup yacht builders regarding the big armed men used to wind the “coffee grinders” when the sail has to be shifted across the wind. This is better achieved with the leg’s muscle mass rather than with the upper body and with an elliptical chain ring rather than circular. *An undergraduate project to determine efficiencies of reciprocating vs circular pedal cranks. 1977*

I now had a conjunction between cycling and engineering and some very publicly discussed objectives for human powered vehicles.



*An undergraduate project to determine efficiencies of reciprocating vs circular pedal cranks. 1977*

After Liverpool, in 1978, I accepted a job as a Stress Analyst at British Aerospace, Warton – between Preston and Blackpool in Lancashire - and we had bought our first home in Southport. This was a short walk for Isabel to Peterhouse School and a 26 mile bike ride for me to Warton which meant I was around 300 miles per week on the bike and once again getting fit. During 1979 – 80 I met Roger Hardy who had built an unsuccessful Human-Powered Aircraft at Prestwick in Scotland but was now at Warton and interested in trying again. I took on structural aspects and Roger project management and aerodynamics. I was also the power plant and could maintain 300 W for 20 minutes+ at that time. Unlike terrestrial vehicles where power required increases linearly with weight, the power to fly an aircraft is proportional to Weight  $1.5$ . So, my power was not the only consideration but my skinny 157 lbf frame helped. However, somebody maintaining only 250 W and weighing 140 lbf was a better pilot choice than I was so I had to watch what I ate! We secured hangar space at Blackpool airport while a television crew filmed a WWII movie. The aircraft weighed 92 lbf without the pilot and had 600 sq. ft. of wing area and a 105 ft span. Weight was critical so we used balsa wood ribs, mylar skin, and a braced wing with kingposts and piano wire. This approach allowed for design take-off speed at 8 mph which also meant that we could not leave

the hangar in wind speeds above ~3 mph. This in turn meant lots of 3 am mornings looking for an opportunity to fly. After 2000 hours of build time and my first thrill of leaving the ground to ~12 ft altitude we had a wing failure and it was also time to head off to Cranfield College of Aeronautics for my Master's degree in Aeronautical Structures. The aircraft was repaired, the movie crew finished filming and we were without hangar space so the 'Dragonfly II' went to the Scottish Museum of Flight near Edinburgh where it remains.



*First time aloft! Blackpool airport 1980*

Melissa Jane Lawrie was born in Southport in March 1982 at Christiana Hartley hospital and I was back at the hospital having developed my B&W 35 mm images in our dark room at home within an hour. What a difference 40 years of technology advancement makes!

Later in 1982 I began my post-graduate studies at Cranfield near Cambridge and this time around I was dedicated. This was a 2-year degree program culminating in 18 x 3 hour long examinations which comprised only 30% of the degree with the research dissertation making up the rest. My research concerned carbon fiber composite materials used in aircraft primary structure and how fatigue damage accumulated – particularly after barely visible impact damage. About halfway through my 54 hours of

examinations Benjamin John Lawrie was born in Bedford General hospital and I never slept again!

Between 1980 and 1983 I also designed and build several Human Powered ground vehicles with custom bicycles inside fully enveloping aerodynamic shells. These shells increased the frontal areas but greatly reduced the drag coefficient such that we could reach 50 mph on level ground with no wind. Of course there was seldom 'no wind' and occasionally the low drag shell would become an aircraft wing and cost me several square feet of skin! The last of these two-wheeled vehicles I took to a competition on the Zandvoort Grand Prix circuit near Amsterdam. On a blustery day I achieved 49.6 mph over 200 m beating the European record holder and taking second place to the world record holder.



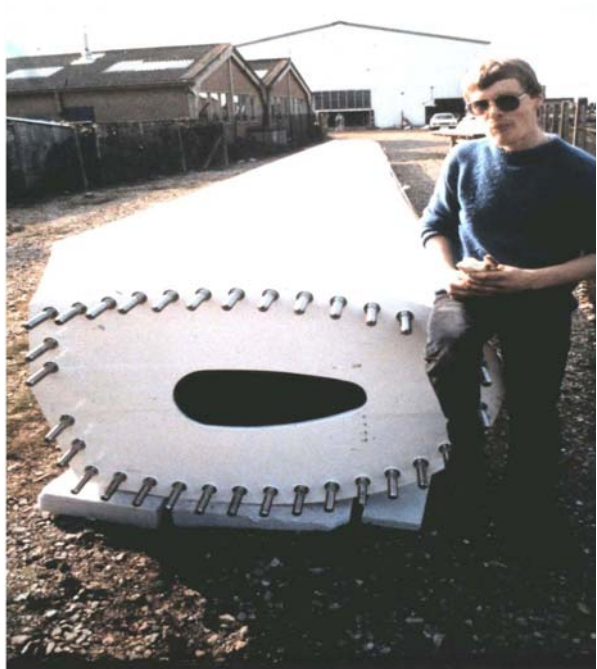
*Zandvoort Gran Prix circuit. A little claustrophobic at ~50 mph. 1983*

In an effort to improve stability I made the shift to a larger three-wheeled vehicle and this time – as a graduate student – I had free access to the world class wind tunnel facilities at Cranfield. We also used the newly available software for 3D modelling and Computational Fluid Dynamics. The result was a 12 ft long recumbent vehicle demonstrating the lowest drag of any road vehicle ever built. Many years later, when my teenage children were in High School in Erie, Pennsylvania, they came home from

school somewhat embarrassed that their Dad was pictured in this vehicle in the middle of the 9th grade science book – part of a discussion of Fluid Mechanics. This vehicle was also the centrepiece of a NOVA documentary in 1984 on the topic of Human Performance.



*Less claustrophobic but very hot! 1984*



*My 750 kW blade with challenging root attachment. 1985*

After Cranfield I accepted a position near Southampton in the New Forest working on the first MW sized wind turbines – latterly as Chief Design Engineer. This was before the modern wave of wind turbines globally and we used skilled boat builders for the tooling and laminated African mahogany for the structure. These blades were shipped to California for installation in the Altamont Pass inland from San Francisco and the design and manufacturing methodology set the scene for the enormous investment which followed. There was a hiatus in the industry as US tax credits for renewables expired and I took that opportunity to move to the United States and join Sundstrand Aviation in Rockford, Illinois.

Arriving in Chicago's O'Hare airport in the early hours of the morning to -20F temperature and 3 ft of snow with two exhausted toddlers we then had to drive 90 miles west to Rockford on the wrong side of the road. Nevertheless, Rockford was a good



town with lots to do and the work on aircraft power systems interesting. In 1986 the UK aerospace industry was subject to government cancellations of military projects and the US industry could not find enough qualified engineers. My stress office was staffed with about sixty engineers and just five of them were US citizens.

Being so far from the ocean the winters hovered between -25F and 0F for many months and the summers climbed to 100F – 110F. I had owned 26 cars in the UK and had never once used a garage for repairs but with these temperatures that changed, and I have seldom climbed under a vehicle since. I began to run competitively again with 10K races being the most popular event and I got down to 34 minutes for these. I remained interested in cycling record attempts though and met with the new TREK Bicycle Company and two ultra-long distance cyclists called Pete Penseyres and Lon Haldeman setting Race Across America records in 1986 and 1987. I built handlebar extensions and wheels for these 3000 mile marathons which they completed in under 8 days.

Identical twins Craig Ian Lawrie and Jason Ross Lawrie arrived in 1987 at Swedish American hospital in Rockford. After three years in Rockford we received US Permanent Residence (Green Cards) which meant we were no longer captive and I could look for other opportunities. I accepted a position as Manager of R&D for a division of Lord Corporation in 1988 which was a \$500 million company providing solutions to shock, vibration and noise in aircraft, road transportation and marine. We moved to Erie Pennsylvania and that was the last of the major moves.

Erie's winter was much warmer than Rockford's but it had a reputation for excessive snow fall. The summers, however, were the best we had ever experienced with 75 – 85 F typical. Work with novel materials and cooperation with major universities was fulfilling but much of the research income came from the US Dept of Defense and prime contractors and this all changed with the end of the cold war in 1992. This time I arranged to purchase some of the manufacturing assets from my laboratory and Lawrie Technology, Inc. (LTI) was born. This particular disruption was also the end of my marriage to Isabel and we were divorced in 1994 after 18 years together.

An early product of LTI was rotating “Ferrous Wheels” which I designed for a local OEM specializing in magnetic separation of materials. Having designed the rotating parts of their equipment we won the contract to build 15 sets and these were installed in Chihuahua, Mexico. Over the next 5 years this equipment recovered more than 100 million tons of iron ore tailings – material which would otherwise have remained in landfill.

In 1995 I met Angela, marrying within 6 months, and her two children, Joshua and Diana, brought the total to six. LTI remained focused on research and development opportunities and we began to win US government contracts. One long lived concept was for flexible drive shafts with initial applications in helicopter tail rotor drives. Succinctly, long drive shafts become unstable like a skipping rope above a certain speed and the higher the stiffness the higher the speed at which instability occurs. However, it is always necessary to accommodate imposed motions on the ends of the shaft because the airframe distorts or the temperature changes, for example. Conventional solutions bolt flexible titanium couplings at each end of a stiff spacing tube and use 50 – 100 components in doing so. The LTI patent tailored a carbon fiber geometry to build ‘virtual hinges’ at either end of a stiff spacing tube in a single component. This concept of tailoring material properties to create multi-functional products has been common to ~150 projects over the 30 year history of LTI.

While computer simulation and numerical analyses are central to most projects, advanced composite materials are a specialty and filament winding or pultrusion usually the manufacturing method. Pultrusion was used to develop secondary structure for the Boeing 787 (“Dreamliner”) and also wirelines for the oil industry. Most Oil reserves were from 1,000 to 15,000 ft underground for 70 years. Well preparation companies like Halliburton and Slumberger use helically wrapped steel armor to encase copper wires with their diagnostic tools attached to the end of the wireline. Today, remaining oil reserves may be, commonly, 25,000 – 35,000 ft underground and the self-weight of conventional steel wirelines limits their use, so LTI developed a pultruded carbon fiber profile at 20% of the weight with coaxial cable and fiber optic filaments at the centre.

Filament winding has been used extensively over the years for our flexible driveshaft development but also for crucible reinforcement in metal refining. When refining steels, silicon metals, aluminiums and the like, a crucible often contains a 25,000 lbf charge and the melt might be at 3,000 F, say. The refractory material used to make the crucible is therefore at 3,000 F below the melt line but exposed only to hot air above it. All materials expand and contract with temperature change and this produces large stresses causing rapid failure around the melt line. LTI developed a carbon fiber ‘belt’ with precise fiber architecture to contain these stresses and greatly extend the crucible life.

Other filament wound engineering developments at LTI include pressure vessels for stored gases and a novel containment solution for hydrogen fuel cells. As the hydrogen economy builds it remains necessary to construct re-fuelling stations at 12,000 psi with 10,000 psi vehicle dispensing. A stack of 250 fuel cells, supplied with electricity and emitting hydrogen at 12,000 psi, must remain compressed together for electrical continuity and therefore require a containment structure. The area of the fuel cell acted on by the pressurized hydrogen produces a tensile load of 1,500,000 lbf in the containment structure and a similar pre-compression keeps them in contact. It proved impossible to sustain the 3,000,000 lbf total load using steel in any geometry so LTI developed a wound carbon fiber solution with complex process control.

In 2007 Angela and I divorced and children were all either in college or graduated. I was then 55 years old and realized that while contract R&D might be challenging and sometimes fun - but without production volumes a small workforce seldom produces much income if I’m not at my desk. Projects selected from then on were chosen based upon the likelihood of production volumes possible.

In 2009 I married again to Minnie. Both empty nesters now, we continued earning a living through LTI and travelling for pleasure when we could. Coming from very different backgrounds a pact was made that Minnie would learn to ride a bicycle (I thought everybody knew how to do that), swim and ski. For my part I had to learn ballroom dance and to play golf. I can now make my way around a golf course although

I have never beaten Minnie in 15 years and I ended up as President of the local Ballroom dance club. Minnie still does not know how to ride, swim or ski!

As the oil industry began giving way to renewables, wireline work went away and electrification of aircraft propulsion and automobiles picked up. Packing greater power density into lighter electric motors meant the permanent magnets bonded to the rotor had to spin much faster. At 20,000 rpm the conventional methods for containing these no longer worked. LTI developed a method of winding carbon fiber over these at ultra-high tension such that the magnets were supported for the life of the motor. In 2022 this capability remains unique to LTI and resulted in several development contracts with NASA, private enterprise and a number of universities. It might finally turn into a production opportunity generating income even when I stay at home!



*Balancing a 1200 lbf Permanent magnet rotor after ultra-high tension wrapping with carbon fiber*



However, 70 is the new 40 and retirement is never discussed. A comfortable income going forward is also desirable because cycling worldwide has grown in popularity yet a modern racing bicycle now costs as much as a car – and I’m racing again.



Burns Supper, Erie, PA 2023 - Craig taught all the Scottish country dancing Duncan and Minnie; Jason and his girlfriend, Emily Sheppard, in the middle; Craig and his wife, Britta Koepf, on the right.

*Duncan James Lawrie*

### Gordon David Lawrie

My first memories are from Inverness, as I was four and a half when we left Manchester. Primary school was at the Crown school from where I went across the road to Grannies after school to do my homework. When I did well with my homework, the reward was a trip next door to the bakers for vanilla slices. Granny supervised from the doorstep every night. I blame her for my sweet tooth.

I vaguely recall the house on Glenurquhart Road, then moving to Castle Grant. I remember being upset when we moved downstairs as I couldn't watch the football at the Thistle Park across the road from my bedroom anymore.

I think I might have been five when Duncan decided we should go back to Manchester. Sneaking out of the house we finished up at the train station after finding a ten shilling note in a corner. Big Duncan, aged about eight, tried to buy tickets to Manchester. Uncle Torcul appeared at some point and two little boys were returned to a frantic mum.

Duncan started racing in 1966 and I followed him into cycling, riding some Clachnacuddin Cycle Club events at the end of 1967. My first racing season was 1968 and I have completed every year until 2022 when illness prevented me from competing at any level. Cycle racing has seen me competing all over Britain, West Germany, Holland, Belgium, United States, Saudi Arabia and in Qatar. I have also done expeditions riding from Oslo to North Cape in 1975 and From Calgary to Vancouver and back over the Rockies in 1986.

Back to school days, on completing Primary school I passed the 11 plus and was faced with the choice of the Inverness Royal Academy or High School. I was more drawn to the technical aspects of the High school and spent the next four years there. I was never great with exams and opted to join the RAF as an apprentice in September 1971. Two years training at RAF Halton in Buckinghamshire was a struggle for me academically, but I got through it and was posted as a Junior Technician to RAF Kinloss in September 1973.



Whilst at Kinloss working on second line maintenance on Nimrod MR1 aircraft, I met Rhona who was the eldest daughter of a Warrant Officer. He was at Christmas Island for the nuclear tests when I met her.

After a bit of a whirlwind we married within a year of meeting in December 1977.

We were posted to 16 Squadron at RAF Laarbruch in November 1978 where I worked on Buccaneer S2B aircraft. The variety and volume of work on a front line squadron during the cold war was, at times, challenging and meant some very long hours. We did work hard and play hard though. During our time at Laarbruch, David was born at RAF hospital Wegberg and we returned to RAF Lossiemouth in November 1981 with a 7 month old baby.

I then spent the next five and a half years in a number of different roles all associated with the Buccaneer, getting promoted to Sergeant in the process. We were allocated a married quarter in Elgin that was so unimpressive, that we bought our first home at Forbeshill in Forres within 4 months. Kirsteen arrived in 1984 and we moved to a larger home in Forbeshill in 1986. Having just got the new house the way we wanted, the Air Force decided to post me again.

The next five years were spent as a team leader carrying out structural repairs to RAF and Army Air Corp aircraft in West Germany. This posting also included a four month spell in Bahrain for the first Gulf War where my role was as a team leader for Battle damage repairs on Tornado aircraft in theatre.

The end of our time in Germany saw us posted back to RAF Lossiemouth with me now working on the Jaguar Operational Conversion Unit. After five years there I managed to get a posting back to RAF Kinloss to the job I had left nineteen years earlier, but now as a supervisor. I expected this to be my last posting, but the RAF decided to promote me again and my last two years were spent in a supervisory post within Engineering Operations at RAF Wittering.

On retiring from the RAF in 2003 I found myself back at RAF Kinloss doing structural repairs to flying controls on Nimrod aircraft undergoing major maintenance. Oddly enough my supervisor was my first boss from arriving at Kinloss in 1973.



Pictured at David's graduation in June 2008:  
L. to R.: Gordon, Kirsteen, Morag, Rhona and David.



I was approached by a friend in 2008 and invited to apply for work in Saudi Arabia where I went to work in December 2008. Our plan was for me to do seven years and build a nice retirement pot. That seven years stretched into 2016, before I put in my notice following the sudden death of my wife, Rhona, in August. Fortunately, I was at home and able to do something in an attempt to save her life. I returned home the week after Mum's passing at the end of September with the intention of retiring.

Once again a phone call from a friend resulted in another job some six months later. This was a complete change of direction as a delivery driver and general assistant for Allan's of Gillock in Inverness. I quickly switched to part time work three days a week as I didn't need full time work. As an unexpected job I found it enjoyable and travelling all over the central Highlands on deliveries was what I needed at that point in my life.

I decided to retire as I approached pension age expecting to spend a large chunk of my retirement travelling the world. The early part of 2022 changed that dramatically with a thymus cancer being diagnosed in April and the last six months being given over to chemotherapy. A rather gloomy life expectancy forecast was matched by my health in April, but the treatment has so far been successful and there has been a significant improvement up until now. What the future holds, at this moment I can only wonder.

*Gordon David Lawrie*

[After chemotherapy, Gordon had an operation to remove the tumour at the Golden Jubilee Hospital, Clydebank on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2023. He returned to Nairn on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March to recuperate at home. PJJ]

## David Lawrie

Morag left John in 1960 and they divorced in 1962. Following the divorce, John found a new partner, Pauline. I met their infant children, David and Christopher when I visited them at 48 Dalbeattie Street in 1968 and 1969. Many years later, I was contacted by a friend of David wondering if my brothers and I would be willing to communicate with him. Gordon and I subsequently met with David in Blackpool and we then visited Aunt Jean in the care home where she was then resident.

I asked David to contribute to this book. I am delighted that he has agreed to do so. I found a wedding photo for David and Renata among photographs left to me by Jean. The picture of David with his taxi came from an internet search.



I think David looks much more like John Lawrie than I do.

## **David Lawrie – where from, where to?**

My story is somewhat different to that of my siblings, so please bear with me.

My Father, John Lawrie, passed away in February 1970, before I got chance to know him. I was only 11 months old then, having been born 19<sup>th</sup> March 1969. John's death resulted in my mother, allegedly, suffering a mental break down. My older brother, Tony and I, were taken into our first children's home and so my life began to take on its own path until such time as I had any say in how it was to develop.

This first move was not as simple as it could have been. I was collected from school in the morning, taken to a local social services office, sat around in a waiting room until we were taken to a different one, and then a different one. Eventually we landed in the first home, which was an assessment centre, (short term residence) and then on to another home.

This process was not a one-off. It would be repeated more than fourteen times throughout my first 14 years of life, including an additional five foster homes, and brief visits back to our Mother between each one. This made it extremely difficult to follow us, or indeed for us to maintain contact with anyone including friends and family.

I have been told of events and activities that took place during this time but have little or no direct memories of the earlier incidents until I reached around 10 or 11 years old, at which point I have brief and fleeting memories of homes, schools, and brief encounters with people along the way. Including one occasion where the school were organising a foreign trip to Paris, and collecting funds over a period of time to pay for those taking part. Naturally, I could not go, but when it came to the last day of collecting, the teacher called me forward to inform me that all the parents had contributed towards paying for me to join the group. I was heartbroken that someone cared but, due to being in care, it was not to be. The feeling that gave me was probably the turning point for me to take control of what lay ahead.

My Mother had been married prior to meeting my Father, which resulted in an additional half-sister, Christine Lowe, whom we met a few times. Mother went on to

remarry after the passing of John Lawrie to Peter Bevan, from whom we have another half-brother, Michael Bevan. I am going to leave my mother's story there, not least because, in truth, having spent most of our childhood in child care facilities, she really didn't have that much input into our lives anyway.

As I was growing up, I did hear stories of there being an additional family, but we had never met them, and there was little to no information provided to us, so I could only hope and pray that, actually, we were not alone. But for the moment I just had to make the best I could of a very bad situation, turn that around, and do something with it. Spin the magnet around and attract the positives.

At the age of 14, at the brink of a breakdown, I launched a group which was to be known as the National Association of Young People in Care (NAYPIC). We had annual meetings at Borwick Hall. We invited children in care homes and foster care, care home staff, foster parents, foster siblings, social workers, teachers and anyone else who had an interest to attend. We held small group workshops through the weekend, and finished off with a general conference with the head and deputy head of social services, Preston, where we presented our findings and concerns.

As a result of those workshops, we saw the launch of "halfway houses" which were a stepping stone approach to allow young people to care for themselves, sourcing things like electricity, gas, water, food, jobs etc, with someone on site to assist and support when required.

Fast forward to leaving school, whilst I may not have achieved top marks as some may have done, I did quite well under the circumstances and left with five O-Levels and six C.S.E's as they were known back in those days. I went on to sixth form at the local Grammar school, however, having moved into my own residence, to be my own foster parent for want of a better term, it was too much and I had to leave and focus on working.

My first hope was to work in child care and make change happen from the other side, but that was not to be, so I went into the nursing home sector instead. I worked in various nursing homes. I loved the job, but it was far too female focussed, so that did not work out long term. So onwards I travelled, through various roles including shoe manufacturing, cloth machining, timber merchant labouring, auto electrical work, and various other attempts until landing on taxi driving in the late 1980s. Around this time I met my first partner, and at the age of 18, my first child, James Daniel, was born. Three years later, a second, Katherine Elizabeth was born. However, as time went on, their mother and I grew apart and we separated.

Once I had entered into the taxi driving role, all of my career desires came together in one place. I found that I was helping the elderly, overseeing young children, taking those with special needs to schools, working with cars and driving. It soon transpired that the taxi drivers needed a collective voice, so I launched a local taxi drivers association and started to make changes and improvements for them by giving them a voice, just as I had done with NAYPIC.

I never lost hope of fulfilling my dreams of finding those I had only heard little bits about - my family that were out there, somewhere!

During this time, and in my role of taxi driving, I met Renata, who for some odd reason which I have still to work out, managed to sneak through the cracks in my defensive wall, without me even seeing it happen! Nevertheless, we were soon to be married and so it came that whilst we were delivering invitations to the wedding, a close friend of mine, Terry Haslam, asked how I was getting on tracing my father? I said I have all but given up. Every time I felt that I was getting close another brick wall would present itself. Terry offered to use his contacts as a former headmaster and, having traced his own family tree, to see if he could help.

On my 40<sup>th</sup> birthday, a large envelope landed through my letterbox containing a copy of my father's death certificate, signed by his sister, Auntie Jean, and a copy of two census records for the address where they had lived. This showed me that my father was one of

five siblings and also showed his parents, my grandparents! It was the best birthday present I had ever received. It opened up a whole new world for me using various platforms to go further back through the generations and then bring it back forward. Then I discovered I had three, yes, three living brothers and their children. My life was complete, I was no longer alone!

Contact was made and a meeting was arranged in Blackpool with Gordon with his son David and with Peter. We then went to meet Auntie Jean who was living in a nursing home in Blackpool. To say I was nervous was an understatement, to say the least, but they were amazing, so welcoming and nice. They were MY BROTHERS, I had family, finally.

Since that time we have kept in touch. I have met Duncan and his family too, been to family events and really felt welcomed, as if I have always belonged. We were even introduced to their mother, Morag, at her request. That was a bit nerve racking too, but just as smooth and welcoming.

Other aspects of life have also changed. Renata gave birth to the latest addition to my branch of the Lawrie family tree, Emma Mia on the 31<sup>st</sup> of Jan 2012. I have moved away from taxi driving now. Recognising the need for better safety and protection for the industry, I designed an in-car CCTV system and launched a company marketing that. I was then asked to take over the National Private Hire and Taxi Association (NPHTA) as its director. I am doing the same as I did with the local taxi association, but on a national scale, and dealing with government levels too.

*David Lawrie*

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This is not a comprehensive list. A family member asked me to include a short bibliography. My research has been conducted over many years and, in some cases, my notes do not mention where information came from.

Much of the genealogy included in this book came from sources which are now online, although when I started I used the Mormon IGI, microfilms and occasional visits to the archives in Edinburgh.

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