

HIGHLAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY



Volume 38, Issue 4

August 2020

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES for year 01/09/2020 – 31/08/2021

Category	United Kingdom	Overseas	Overseas (PDF)
Ordinary	£12.00	£15.00	£12.00
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Highland Family History Society
Comunn Sloinntearachd na Gaidhealtachd
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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & SOCIETY TALKS

Due to the closure of the Archive Centre in Inverness as a consequence of the Coronavirus pandemic, the Highland Family History Society AGM, due to be held on 25 March 2020, had to be cancelled.

It was hoped that we could undertake the AGM on 23 September 2020 and likewise start our winter talks at this date but restrictions due to be put in place at the Archive Centre as part of its gradual reopening mean that we cannot have our AGM and that there will be no talks/meetings for the foreseeable future. We can only apologise for those who enjoy our winter meetings.

Please keep an eye on our Facebook page and our new website <highlandfhs.org> for any updates. The website is newly created and therefore a few corrections might be required, so please bear with us and it. Thank You.

EDITOR'S COLUMN

The Society is always looking for new articles from members, however small, so please contribute what you can. We also accept queries and please send them to the editor for inclusion in the next journal.

New Publications. The Society is pleased to announce the following new publications:

Church Miscellaneous - Marydale Catholic Church Cannich, Strathglass Births & Baptisms 1793 – 1828 & Marriages 1811, 1827 – 1844 and Eskadale Congregation Census of 1851 and Portree United Presbyterian Church Births & Baptisms 1855-1911 & Marriages 1856-1864 and 1880-1897 and Altnaharra Free Church Baptisms 1872-1916.

Monumental Inscriptions – Invershin Burial Ground, Sutherland.

Monumental Inscriptions – Corrimony Burial Ground, Inverness-shire.

These are all ready to purchase!

Stuart Farrell

MEMBERS' DETAILS

New Members:

2815. Ms Sue Mackenzie, Blackwood, South Australia.

2816. Mr William Henry, Leicester.

2817. Mr David Knight, Neutral Bay, NSW, Australia.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

The new financial year for the Society commences on the 1st September 2020 and this is my annual reminder to members that their membership subscriptions are now due. The action you need to take, if any, depends on the method you use to pay your annual subscription. Each member will fall into one of the three categories 1, 2 or 3 below.

NB. For UK members, there are now only two rates – that of Ordinary Membership at £12 and Institutional Membership at £18. Overseas members have the option of receiving the quarterly journals in the form of a PDF at £12 per annum. If they wish to continue receiving the journals by airmail the cost will be £15 per annum.

1. If you pay your subscription by Banker's Order, make sure your bank sends the appropriate amount to the Clydesdale Bank plc [Bank Sort Code: 82-65-18 and Account Number: 20290121]. If you have been paying the Senior rate of £8 or Family rate of £16 previously, please change the amount to £12.
2. If you have paid your subscription in advance, a slip is enclosed acknowledging that fact.
3. If you fall into neither of the above categories, a pink reminder slip will have been enclosed with this journal. If you have received the reminder, please pay your subscription as soon as possible and preferably by the 15th October 2020.

If you prefer to pay using an on-line bank facility, the Society's bank details can be found in 1 above. Remember to include your membership number.

The Society has a 'stand' on **GENfair, the Online Family History Fair and Genealogy Bookstore**. This has been very successful from our point of view as many members joined the Society for the first time using this method and it is a very easy way of renewing your membership. In addition several members and non-members have purchased publications using this very secure system of payment.

If you have a credit or debit card, and have access to the Internet, you can use this facility to renew your membership. This will be of particular benefit to overseas members who do not have a sterling bank account. At present they incur additional charges either in obtaining a sterling cheque or a bank draft. Using **GENfair** also saves postage and you will receive on-line conformation that your subscription has been paid. To use this service: -

1. Go to **highlandfhs.org**
2. On Home page, click on **Membership**
3. On Membership page, click on **GENFair**
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If you still prefer to pay your subscription by cheque (Sterling cheques only), the enclosed reminder slip should accompany your payment. This will ensure that it is credited to your membership number.

Donald Beaton – The Great Victorian Gardener Part 2

By Laurel Lahay

I was very pleased to discover that the *Cottage Gardener* – Country Gentleman's Companion had been digitized by the Biodiversity Heritage Library and I found it to be more of a book rather than a periodical with each edition containing hundreds of pages. Donald's colourful autobiography was located in the 1855 edition, volume 13, pages, 153-158. Donald paints a fascinating and amusing account of his Highland life.

The Surrey Comet newspaper carried the following appreciation on the 28 November 1863:

'The Late Mr. Donald Beaton. To The Editor of the Surrey Comet. Sir, - "The King died uncrowned," may be truly said of Mr Donald Beaton, who died in his own house, on the 31st of October, aged 63, and whose remains were deposited in the same grave as those of his second wife, in Surbiton churchyard. His internment was superintended by the Editors of the *Journal of Horticulture*, who deplore his death as a public loss.

His history is extraordinary, instructive, and interesting, and may he had, with his portrait, from the *Horticultural Journal* office, 162 Fleet Street.

I quote a few facts and incidents from the *Journal*, "He was a native of Ross-shire, where, his genealogy is easily traced back 23 generations, most of who were brave men. At 12 years of age he did not know one word of English, but at 16 he could translate from Virgil and Ovid onto English. He made shoes, stockings, dyed woollen yarn, tanned leather, made butter and cheese, was a family butcher, manufactured fishing rods and lines, dressed fly-hooks to suit all waters at all seasons. He was a gamekeeper and sportsman of some eminence, a successful eagle-catcher, also a trapper of badgers, foxes and wild cats. He washed starched, and ironed most satisfactorily. He was a thorough cook. He began to learn to ride on a bull calf. He however learned military exercise with precision. He lost the ownership of the Isle of Skye, and the title of being a Lord in a boat race. He was a good agriculturalist and cattledealer; was advanced in education for the Church. He was a schoolmaster. As gardener he was apprenticed in Beaufort Gardens, and journey man in Altyre Gardens, where he became acquainted with Mr Sinclair so prominently brought to notice in the Russian War. He prosecuted horticulture in Perth, Edinburgh, and London, was head gardener on Herefordshire, in Middlesex, and in the princely gardens of Shrubland Park, near Ipswich. From there he retired to Surbiton."

The Editor of the *Journal of Horticulture*, Nov. 3, 1863 writes, "That we are mainly indebted to Mr Beaton for the present direction that has been given to English gardening; that his skill in harmonising colours operated in all the best establishments in the country. That perhaps there is not another example recorded in the history of British Gardening, of one who applied the science of Botany so beneficially to practice, as Mr Beaton did. The accomplished botanist, the Rev. Dean Herbert, founded the Genus *Betonia* on honour of him. Upwards of 30 years he was in the van of English Horticulture. The last 14 years the Editors of the *Journal* found him an able co-adjutor. As a friend, sincere, cordial, and constant. As a neighbour, generous, benevolent, and kind; strict in integrity, he had a scrupulous sense of honour, and a charitable feeling to all with whom he was brought in contact. It be chafed occasionally at opposition, in good time he made amends by proofs of his acknowledgement of his errors and his corrections."

I beg leave to add a few ideas of my own. For the last 27 years I have been personally acquainted with Mr Beaton. For the last 30 years his name has been familiar in all parts of the known world, as far as English gardening was read of, and before he entered the far-famed gardens of Shrubland-park. There, however, his fertile imagination found full development, for there Sir William and Lady Middleton themselves were amongst the highest authorities for refined taste and unbounded liberality. Thus in Beaton's hands Shrubland became the index of horticulture, and in 1856 we find the immortal Prince Consort there, among many of the nobles. His visit, of course, was to be commemorated by planting an oak tree. Beaton in a forethought proposed that a new tree should be in lieu of an oak. Accordingly a tree was obtained from Clapton Nursery for £5, and about five inches in height. To explain this departure from the old custom, Mr Beaton wrote all that was known of the tree. As the illustrious procession started towards the site laboriously prepared for the first of a species ever planted in Europe, the Royal planter read these enchanting documents with astonishing distinctiveness and animation. The whole being over, H.R.H. burst forth in the warmest eulogium on the writer as a scholar and a gardener; Beaton instantly acknowledged the Royal condescension with becoming manners, concluding by wishing the Prince's life to be spared to see the five inches the tallest in the forest; after this auspicious event, the Prince never forgot Beaton, and this variety became a royal favourite. From the rapidity with which it grows in Surbiton, I suppose, the Prince's tree is now 20 to 30ft high. In Chile it attains 200ft. high, and produces the best of red deal. Whoever plants five trees, this variety should be one of the five. *Libocedrus Chilensis*, cheap and quite hardy, and tinged with silver, in the most elegant sea green.

In 1852 Mr Beaton became a proprietor of land, near Surbiton Railway Station; he reared hundreds of geranium seedlings on his window sills, and in his small greenhouse; also in a range of frames he ripened the largest black grapes that I ever saw, in the open air. The late Mr Jackson introduced him to the late Miss Fassett, who held him in the highest respect till her death. The experimental gardening so richly alluded to in his writings was conducted in part of Miss Fassett's garden.

In 1853 I had an interview with him on the qualities of cocoa fibre – his opinion led me to increasing views of it ever since - but not till he proved it repeatedly we find it in his reports years afterwards. If the cocoa fibre company would erect a monument on his remains, they would give a fresh stimulus to the sale of the fibre, and it would not be too much for the labour and talent he exercised to bring their golden treasure to public notice.

In Surbiton he devoted his time more immediately to the interest of horticulture, through the medium of the *Journal of Horticulture*, and he declined the numerous invitations of the nobility and gentry in order to reserve his vigorous mind for experimental research, which he considered of more extensive importance. There are few useful plants of the vegetable kingdom which he did not write on, and was always desirous to explain their utility to his brother man. I hope some enterprising person will gather up all his writings in one book, for the use of future generations.

His geraniums engaged public attention for years. An eminent writer of last summer states that "he would rather be the riser of Beaton's geranium (*Stella*) than all the geraniums in England." Also he adds "that it will immortalize Mr Beaton's name in floral history." Such a man never passes through this world without some opposition, more or less guided by

circumstances. Mr Beaton had his share, and in battle array with such he was peculiarly well armed. We find the B.A.'s of our Universities directing their fire against him, but if they escaped wounds in one direction, they were sure to suffer loss on the opposite side. In any controversy, if he failed to convince his opponents, he threw a bundle of broad facts in their camp. He, however, gave all their due – even at the loss of a point he was faithful. He frankly received merited rebukes, and regarded confession as a privilege. All editors of the public press owe a tribute to his memory for his high opinions of the respect due to them. I am prepared to prove that some of respected judgement though Surbiton honoured by the residence of such a visitor. From his first entry onto the garden every step raised him higher, till, in the height of fame, he fell into the grave,

“Teach us so to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”

Surbiton, Nov. 25. I am, Sir, &c., J. R.

It was to be over two months after his death when *The Inverness Courier* of 7 January 1864 carried the following obituary:

The Late Mr. Donald Beaton. We have been favoured with some interesting notices of this famous gardener, who died lately in Surrey, aged 63. He was born in Urray, but his father removed early to Inverness, where he joined in partnership with one of the largest cattle-sealers and breeders in the country, Mr Hugh MacLean of Craigscone. In an autobiographical sketch, Mr Beaton says –

“They rented large tracts of grazing lands round Beaufort Castle, under the late Lord Lovat, together with a few square miles of summer pasture further up among the hills, a place called Corycharbie, then celebrated for its free-trade in Highland sports, including deer-stalking, shooting grouse, and fly-fishing, without certificates – a bad place for young Norvals, and for conjugating verbs, active or passive. Thither my father removed from the ‘Lowlands’ every season, in May, with his family, herds, flocks and *ghreighs* (droves of young horses), and returned with them to Beaufort Castle at the beginning of October, just as we do now with bedding-plants. In this land of Goshen, I might be some twenty miles from the parish school – every parish in Scotland has an endowed school – but still I learned some useful things if I forgot my lessons; I learned to knit and darn stockings; to make and mend shoes and coarans – a kind of sandal made of untanned hides; to tan leather, and dye worsted yarn with lichens; to roast or boil potatoes; to make oatcakes and porridge; to milk cows and goats, feed calves and kids, strain milk and cream, make butter and cheese; and ‘kill and dress’ any animal fit for the shambles. I also learned to make fishing-lines and rods; dress fly-hooks for different seasons, lochs, burns, and rivers: and for my proficiency in this branch I often went without my dinner, and there was no ‘tea’ in those days. I learned to load and unload guns and rifles, and clean them; to shoot grouse and to stalk deer, more after the way taught by Mr St. John, in his ‘Highland Sports,’ than that practised by the Prince Consort when he was at Blair Athol, though I believe his deer-stalking has been sportsman-like since he has been fiefed a Scottish laird; but I never poached; the late Lord Lovat allowed all who rented his lands to shoot over them, and when the present Lord came into possession, I became one of his Lordship’s deputy gamekeepers, and assisted to harry out eagles’ nests, trap badgers, foxes, and wild-cats; also, to ‘break’ dogs, and exercise them ten days or a fortnight before the 12th of August, the first day of grouse-shooting. I have eaten salt with his Lordship for six or seven

'seasons'; studied under his man-cook, Luke Lucas, a regular Yorkshireman; and was taught to wash, starch, and iron shooting neckerchiefs and jackets by his Swiss valet, Calo. All of us had the best master in the world, who was then the best shot of the day. He has never forgotten one of his greatest admirers, and although red-deer, dogs, and horses are not the best gardeners, his Lordship declares to this day, that he has reared one of the best gardeners in England."

Mr Beaton was for some time a pupil at the Inverness Academy, where he was known by the nick-name of "Crichton," and contested for the head of the first Latin class "against two brothers of the name of Denoon, and another named Kinloch" – names familiar to Invernessians. Mr Charles Grant promised "to keep the youth in mind," but in the meantime, to keep the wolf from the door, he went into Lovat's garden till "something should cast up." There he remained and ultimately tool to gardening as his vocation in life. From Beaufort he removed to Altyre, thence to Perth, "the best neighbourhood in Scotland," he says, "for good gardening." And after a few years at Edinburgh, removed to London, whence he was appointed to Haffield in Hereford. Here is a bit of pawky Scotch wisdom:-

"When parting with Mr Mackay, he gave me excellent advice, saying that every family has a tune of their own, and that all servants who wished a quiet life, and to rise in the world, ought to learn to whistle the particular tune of the family they lived with. 'Gardening, and all that sort of thing, is easy enough, *if you study to please*; and I can now vouch for the saying."

Mr Beaton filled various situations, but ultimately settled down in charge of the splendid gardens of Sir W. F. F. Middleton, of Shrubland Park. The Journal of Horticulture, in noticing Mr Beaton's death says –

"We are mainly indebted to him for the present direction that has been given to English gardening; his skill in harmonising colours operated in all the best establishments in the country. Perhaps there is not another example in the history of British gardening, of one who applied the science of botany so beneficially to practice, as Mr Beaton died."

The Rev. Dean Herbert founded the genus *Beatonii* in honour of our countryman. In 1856 the Prince Consort visited Shrubland, and planted a tree selected by Beaton. After the ceremony was over, the Prince pronounced a warm eulogium on Mr Beaton as a scholar and a gardener. He seems to have been much esteemed in private life, and it is hoped that there may be a judicious collection made of his contributions to the *Journal of Horticulture*, the *Gardener's Chronicle*, and other periodicals, through which he chiefly directed the changes that suggested themselves to his mind in the rearing and cultivation of plants.

Sadly no headstone, if he had one, to Donald Beaton survives at St. Marks Church, Surbiton, Surrey as the church which was built in 1845, was destroyed by bombing on 2 October 1940 and rebuilt in 1960, the majority of the gravestones being removed. Neither it seems, was any collective works made of his of writings, alluded to in both newspaper articles. Sadly also now little of any of his work at Shrubland Park survives; later gardeners heavily altered the gardens and currently at the time of writing the house and gardens have been abandoned by its current owners. And the species of tree that was planted by Prince Albert at Shrubland he recommend to be planted did not take off and is now quite

rare in the UK, though his use of coconut fibre was ahead of its time and is still recommended today for use in gardening for bedding plants.

Postscript – The marriage registration of Rebecca Parfett – nee McLennan (niece of Donald Beaton) arrived in a later mail. Her father was Kenneth McLennan. I found Rebecca's mother and siblings living in Glasgow on the 1851 and 1861 census. Rebecca's mother was also named Rebecca. According to the death record of Rebecca Parfett's mother, her mother's parents were Donald Beaton and Christina McLean. Donald Beaton and Christina McLean would have also been the parents of Donald Beaton, the Gardener. According to the death reg. of Rebecca McLennan, her husband Kenneth was a Sergeant in the 78th Regiment of Foot (Seaforth Highlanders).

Sources

¹ Brent Elliott. 1990. *Victorian Gardens*. B.T. Batsford, pp 206-9.

² Cambridge University Press, *The Correspondence of Charles Darwin*, 1863, Vol 11, p. 730.

³ D. Beaton, *The Journal of Horticulture*, 24 Nov 1863, Vol 5, p. 416.

⁴ J R, 28/11/1863, The late Mr. Donald Beaton, Surbiton. *The Surrey Comet*, London.

⁵ Charles Darwin, 18 May 1861, Letter to Charles William Crocker, *Cambridge University Press, The Correspondence of Charles Darwin*, Vol 9, 1861.

⁶ Death of Mr. Donald Beaton, *The Journal of Horticulture*, 1863, Vol 5, p. 349. *Cottage Gardener, Country Gentleman's Companion, Biodiversity Heritage Library*.

Donald Beaton, 'My Autobiography,' *The Cottage Gardener and Country Gentleman's Companion*, Vol 13, (1855), pp 153-158.

Donald Beaton photo: *The Cottage Gardener, Country Gentleman's Companion*, 1855, Vol. 13, p 153-158.

The Late Mr. Donald Beaton, *Inverness Courier*, 7 Jan 1864, p 8.

David Poole, *House and Heritage*, (Shrubland Park photo), May 17, 2019, <https://houseandheritage.org/2019/05/17/shrubland-hall/>

General Register Office, UK, marriage & death registrations, <https://www.gov.uk/general-register-office>.

Seeking Anderson Families by Stuart Farrell

Do you have Anderson relatives in Ardersier, Cromarty or Avoch?? A few issues ago I submitted a small article on a Jonathan Anderson, Merchant in Glasgow who died in 1806 and left money to Inverness for a Poor Fund. In his will he left quite a lot of money to his nieces and nephews (having no children of his own), I am struggling to get his story told (and its very interesting so far) so I am asking for help. Here is some of his family (given in Sasine and Will):

- James Anderson of Demerara, son of James Anderson Merchant in Campbeltown.
- John McLeod, Merchant in Cromarty & wife Elizabeth Hendry (children Elizabeth, Margaret, Helen, Christian & John)
- Helen Urquhart wife of Hugh Reid, Ship Carpenter in Avoch; Isobel Urquhart daughter of late Alexander Urquhart, Merchant in Avoch. [Will give more family in next issue]

David Murray and Kincardine Mill Part 1

by David Murray

Kincardine village was situated close to the southern shore of Dornoch Firth some 13 miles west of Tain and a mile east of Bonar Bridge near the east boundary of the large Kincardine parish. In days gone by the Earls of Ross resided on land between the church in Kincardine and Dornoch Firth. Descendent of the Earls, Ross of Balnagown was the largest land holder in the parish of Kincardine. Valuation of land in 1765 recorded his lands were valued at £940 (Scots)¹.

At one time a great white quartz stone (Clach Eiteag)⁵ believed to have originated from Sutherland lay in Kincardine village near the school. According to tradition the local fair would be held wherever the stone was sited. Many years ago the stone was moved to Ardgay where it was incorporated into the foundation of a new hotel (Balnagown Arms Inn) owned by Ross of Balnagown². The hotel was destroyed by fire in July 1943⁶ and the stone is now exhibited in the Ardgay village square.

The well-known annual fair Feill Eiteachan was held there in late November for many years. Crofters were able to bring their livestock and produce for sale and local people took part in festive activities³. The fair is mentioned in the Statistical Account of Scotland 1845¹ as is the licensed Inn at Ardgay. The fair events were regularly reported in the Ross-shire Journal and the decline of activities in 1907 and 1908. Popularity of the market was such that special trains ran from Inverness to Bonar Bridge (Ardgay) to carry passengers and live stock during 1870-1900 period⁴.

Like many small villages the residents of Kincardine departed seeking better conditions and prospects elsewhere. Old homes have been demolished and little remains as evidence of a small community which inhabited the area a hundred and fifty years ago. Two old buildings remain today; the St Columbus Kincardine Church (built 1799) and the Kincardine mill.

Origin of the Kincardine Mill is not known but may have been in the area for many years. The book "Old-Ross-shire and Scotland as seen in the Tain and Balnagown documents" records "1573 Patrick Davidsoun Rossherald collector wtin ye boundis of Ross grantis me to have resavit fra ye handis of Alexander Ross of Balnagoun....the silver restand on the Laird for ye myln of Kincardine.....xii bs (bolls)".⁷ In 1808 a survey of the Ross estate in Kincardine and other parishes was prepared by George Burns for Sir Charles Ross of Balnagown⁸. The map shows water for a dam was diverted from a stream (the Kincardine Burn) which lead to the mill to power a water wheel. The mill croft was of 2 acres 3 roods and 12 perches of arable land plus 7 acres 2 roods and 11 perches of pasture and wood land. Only four houses are indicated on the map where the village was. David Boyd is named as a resident in that area and may have been the meal miller.

From 1833 to 1859 Dr. William Gordon paid rent of £50 per annum for the Kincardine mill. From 1833 to 1837 he also paid 17/2½d for his half share of insurance on the mill⁹. Dr Gordon did not live in Kincardine for a large part of this period. William Gordon was born in

Farr c1811, son of John Gordon (Farmer) and Mary Munro¹⁰. His marriage to Jane Gray Scobie in the parish of Eddrachillis in March 1843 was performed by Rev Charles Gordon of Assynt¹¹. At the date of the 1841 census¹² Dr Gordon was living at Badcall (Eddrachillis) where he is described as a surgeon, age 30. William and Jane had three children born in Badcall, Louisa McKay, John and Mary between 1844 and 1847¹³. The family moved to Bonar where William appears in the 1851 census as a surgeon with his wife and three children¹⁴. A son, Charles Donald was born in September 1851 at Bonar¹³ and a further daughter Hughina was born in Kincardine in May 1853¹⁵.

The last of the Highland Clearances took place in Strathcarron in 1854 when twenty women and girls were wounded during the eviction of tenants by a force of forty constables from Ross-shire and Inverness. According to Prebble a Dr Gordon from Tain attended the injured and gave evidence at the Court of Inquiry which followed¹⁶. The census of 1861¹⁷ records the family living in the village of Kincardine. The household included a governess, house maid, cook and herd man. William was described as a surgeon and a farmer of 76 acres employing 2 labourers and a boy. A decade later¹⁷ William and his wife were still at Kincardine together with three of their children. Other people in the house included a visitor and two servants. The following year William Gordon is recorded in the Valuation Roll 1872¹⁸ as a property occupier in Springfield and Chapel Street, Tain. Dr Gordon died in Tain August 1877¹⁰. Dr Gordon's three daughters became matrons at three hospitals; St. Thomas and Charing Cross in London and Liverpool Infirmary (Liverpool).¹⁹



Kincardine Mill c1870-1880 © Author.

Mackenzie² wrote that William and Duncan Boyd operated the mill on Allt Eideagan (Kincardine Burn) where the people of the district had their oats ground into oatmeal and some produce returned to the owners to make sowens. William Boyd also grew carrots in a field near the mill which was harvested with the help of school children. The 1841 census¹⁷ of Kincardine names William Boyd (age 40, born in Ross and Cromarty) as the miller with his wife Margaret and six children. Ten years later¹⁷ he is still in Kincardine, a widower with five children. William Boyd (late tenant in Kincardine)²⁰ described as a miller died at Ardgay in October 1861 age 66, son of David Boyd (a miller) and Catherine Ross.¹⁰

Duncan Boyd does not appear to have taken an active part in operation of the meal mill. In 1841¹⁷ he is described as a farmer (age 45) with his wife Janet and three children in Kincardine. Duncan and his three children were living in Ardgay in 1861 where he is described as a carrier.¹⁷ Duncan died at Gledfield 1881 age 88, a pauper, formerly a tenant, son of David Boyd and Catherine Ross. The mill is not specified in the Valuation Roll of Kincardine for 1855 but may be included in the item "Croft of Boyd" which had a rental value of £18. Two other "Croft of Boyd" properties each had a rental value of £8 and a third property of £4. Dr William Gordon's interest in the property is not mentioned but if his lease was for a period of nineteen years (which was common) it would have expired by 1855. However, according to Balnagown Estate records record he paid rent to 1859. Perhaps his leasehold interest was just not recorded. Sir Charles Ross advertised in the *Inverness Advertiser* in July 1851²¹ that farms were available to let for 19 years in the parishes of Nigg, Logie, Edderton and Kincardine. The Kincardine land included "the Mill of Kincardine and Lands possessed by the Messrs Boyd".

David Murray (see cover) arrived in Kincardine late 1855 or early 1856 with his wife Janet (Jessie) and daughter Catherine. David Murray was born at Coul, Alness 1827¹⁵, son of Donald Murray and his second wife Elizabeth Ross. Donald Murray a farmer at Dalneich, formerly of Fyrish and prior to that held a nineteen year lease of land from Huge Munro of Teaninich, died 1830. His will stipulated that the three trustees were to be "tutors and curators" to the children and further provided that payments could be made to the beneficiaries prior to attaining majority "for apprenticing them in any profession business or employment or for their instruction therein or otherwise for their benefit or advancement in the world".²² The task of caring for three Murray boys fell upon trustee John MacDonald, a school teacher. The three sons of Donald Murray were living with John and Isabella MacDonald together with their two daughters (June and Mary) at Balchraggon in Logie Easter at the date of the 1841 census²³. Funds from Donald Murray's Estate valued at £700 would have been used for the benefit of his sons. The 1851 census records David was a millwright at Christy Munro's mill at Lealty in Alness parish²⁴ (Lealty once a small community but now reduced to one family.²⁵) At the same date his brother Donald was an apprentice tailor to William Fowler, Kilmuir parish²⁶. William Fowler had married June, daughter of John MacDonald in December 1847¹¹ which may have helped to secure an apprenticeship for Donald. No record can be found of the eldest Murray boy Samuel and the assumption is made that he died young. Sometime after 1851 David Murray moved from Alness to Tain where he married Janet (Jessie) Campbell, daughter of James Campbell and Janet Munro in December 1853¹¹. The 1851 census of Tarbat²⁷ records Janet as a servant living with her uncle William Munro at Seafield. David Murray remained at Kincardine until his death in 1908.

Their son Donald was born to David and Janet (Jessie) Murray at Kincardine in July 1856²⁸ but died a year later and was buried in the parish churchyard at Nigg.¹⁰ Two daughters were born later, Elizabeth in October 1858 and Janet in September 1860.²⁸ At Kincardine, David Murray was employed by Dr Gordon presumably to replace William Boyd. The mill was primitive and in poor condition. When the grain was husked it was taken to a hill near the mill dam where it was winnowed then brought to the mill and

ground into meal. The wheels (cogs) were wooden, repairs were made and operations carried on for a few years.²⁹ David Murray obtained a 19 year lease of Kincardine mill. From 1860 to 1871 rent for the mill was £32 per annum. He also paid £5 per annum for the mill croft and house. From 1861 to 1871 he paid rent for crops at £5.5/- per annum, 5/- per annum for road upkeep and a proportion of widow Ross croft of £3.1.6d per annum. From 1872 onwards rent was £28 per annum for the mill which probably reflected the declining economy of the area.⁹ David replaced the old wooden wheels with more up to date machinery (such as it was at that time) at his expense and generally renovated the building.²⁹ David was a millwright.



Kincardine Mill 1951 © Author.

The 1861 census¹⁷ records David and Janet Murray together with their three daughters living in the second house at Kincardine Mains. The household included Margaret McKenzie (age 16) a domestic servant and Alexander McLeod (age 50) a widower from Rosskeen, a meal miller. On the Dornoch Firth side of his house was Robert McIntyre the parish school master, (with wife and five children, servant, father in law and nephew). Residents on the inland side of the Murray family house were John Cameron a ploughman, (with wife and three children); Dr William Gordon a surgeon and farmer, (with wife and five children, three domestic servants and a herd boy). The manse, a large house of 12 rooms containing more than one window, was occupied by Donald McIntyre the Minister for Kincardine, (with wife and five children, and three domestic servants).

The railway from Tain to Bonar Bridge (11 miles) ("The Highland Railway") was opened in 1864.³⁰ A railway station opened at Ardgay (named Bonar Bridge but changed to Ardgay in May 1977³¹) in October 1864 boosted commercial activity there probably at the expense of Kincardine which did not expand. During this period David Murray built a small shop at the end of his house to take advantage of the extra workers in the district building the railway line.²⁹

About this date David Murray commenced a saw mill which used the first circular saw in the district.²⁹ This seems to have been a substantial business as depicted in the photograph. Boards were sawn and sold to local residents. A letter (1869) held by Balnagown Estates, David asked the Factor of Balnagown to pay an account sent to a Mr

Powrie for timber supplied to the Fishing Station at Bonar.⁹ Ross of Balnagowan was the largest inheritor in the parish and as such was responsible for the salaries and houses for the schoolmaster and Minister. The half-yearly salary of £9.7.6d for the schoolmaster and the half yearly-stipend of £49.17.2 for the Minister were paid in May 1869.⁹

In 1871¹⁷ David and Janet with their three daughters were still at Kincardine Mains. The youngest two girls were school children. Jane Dingwall (age 18) was a general servant and Roderick Ross (age 19 of Fearn) a miller's lad. Some house improvements may have been made as the house now had 6 rooms with more than one window compared to four rooms a decade previous. Robert McIntyre the parish schoolmaster continued to occupy the house on the northern side of Murray's home (with wife, six children, father in law and nephew). On the inland side was Walter Duff a new ploughman, (with wife and six children) and Dr Gordon (with wife and three children and two servants) were still there but no mention of any farm. The number of rooms with more than one window had increased in all houses compared to 1861 and indicated an improvement in house conditions. The manse was not inhabited.

Valuation Rolls for 1874 and 1875 record David Murray as the tenant and occupier of land and mill at Kincardine and land in Oldtown (presumably his residence). Rental value of the mill appears to be £25 and the home £5 or £9 but the record is really illegible. Lease of the house land appears to be for a period in excess of 19 years.¹⁸



House at Kincardine Mill 1951 © Author.

An Ordnance Survey Map 1875 clearly shows the Kincardine Mill as "corn and saw". The stream which passes the mill is named Kincardine Burn.⁸ The sappers conducting the survey determined that Kincardine Burn commenced at the Mill and was that part of Allt na h-Eiteig which flowed from the mills to the sea.³² A revised edition of the Ordnance Survey map 1896 named the upper reaches of the stream Allt na h-Eiteig.⁸ British War Office Ordnance Survey Popular and New Popular Edition 1916-1941 (Google) named the stream Allt Eiteachan. Mackenzie says the name of the stream on which William and Duncan Boyd's mill was situated was called Allt Eideagan.² James C Murray who lived alongside the stream wrote the name as Allt Eiteachan.² In later years (probably up to mid-

1900's) it became known locally as "The Miller's Burn"³, then "Pirie's Burn"⁶ named for the residents James Pirie and his wife Elizabeth Munro who were among the last people to live in the old houses in Kincardine Mains before the buildings were demolished in late 1960 or early 1961.⁶

Water was diverted from the Kincardine Burn into a holding dam. When the mill machinery was required to operate, the sluice gate would be opened to allow water to flow down a channel to drive a water wheel which in turn engaged the machinery in the mill. Size of the dam is not known but was significant enough to appear on various survey maps of Kincardine. If the maps were drawn to scale the dam appeared to be about 40 yards from the mill and was 40 x 50 yards in extent which would contain a considerable reservoir of water.

Several events took place in the Murray family during 1880s. Daughters Catherine and Elizabeth had left home to seek work in England. The 1881 census of England records the two sisters working for Charles and Sarah Hobbs in Great Crosby (north of Liverpool). Hobbs was a member of the Stock Exchange. Four of his children lived at home. Four servants worked in the home, nurse Catherine Murray (26) born Scotland, cook Jane Ward (26) born Isle of Man, waitress Elizabeth Com? (24) born in Cheshire and housemaid Elizabeth Murray (22) born Scotland.³³ How long the Murray sisters remained in England is not known but Elizabeth (Miss Murray of Petley) was reported in the *Ross shire Journal*⁴ as being present at a meeting of the Chapelhill (Nigg) United Presbyterian Church in April 1879 and was back in Scotland in November 1882 living with her uncle William Munro a farmer of Petley, (probably caring for him in his old age) who died in March 1889 age 93.³⁴ His will directed Elizabeth was to inherit his furniture and effects, the residue of the estate to be distributed equally to Janet Murray and her three daughters Catherine, Elizabeth and Janet.³⁴ David Murray (meal miller) and his wife Janet (miller's wife) continued to resided in Kincardine Mains with their 20 year old daughter Janet (servant), Sophia Frazer (age 22) a general servant and William Munro (age 18 of Kincardine) a mill servant. New neighbours on the Dornoch Firth side of the house were John and Jane Mackenzie a farm griever (with nine children); on the inland side were new residents Donald and Margaret Barclay a master shoemaker (with two adult children and a relative), a shop (owner not recorded), Hector McLean a game keeper (with wife and two young children), Sarah Gordon, an annuitant together with an aunt and servant and Rev Alex and Margaret McLeod the new resident minister in the manse.¹⁷ In December 1883 a son James Campbell Murray (James Campbell was the name of the child's maternal grandfather) was born to 23 year old Janet Murray.²⁸ Janet died in October 1889¹⁰ and consequently the child was brought up by grandparents David and Janet Murray. Ten days after Janet's death Elizabeth Murray married Charles Ross³⁵, a farmer at Petley farm, at the Free Church of Scotland about a mile past Ardgay. Although the church in Kincardine was not far from the Murray residence and the minister lived nearby the family were adherents of the Free Church of Scotland at Ardgay.²⁹

[Continued in next issue]

MY STORY OF OUR MACPHERSONS c.1800 to 1984

by Douglas C. Holt

Our Macphersons came from Badenoch (drowned land) in Inverness-shire. Badenoch is watered by the River Spey which, because the fall is small, floods frequently. The river is usually about 10-20 yards wide, but it can widen to more than half a mile. 'Drowned land' is a good name for the district that is also known as Strathspey – the wide valley of the Spey. Between Kingussie and Aviemore the valley is punctuated by a string of kettle-lake lochs (e.g. Loch Insh and Loch Alvie) and watery flats prone to winter flooding.

There is no doubt that our ancestors lived a hard life trying to survive by growing their food during the short summers followed by the long, dark, cold winters. As you will see they often had to take other jobs to support themselves leaving only their 'spare time' to grow food or tend sheep and cattle. Every member of the family had to work almost as soon as they could walk! Judging by the ages some of them reached they did survive but it must have been a constant battle.

But who were these people – our 'long lost' ancestors? Please remember that in the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century the people mentioned probably had to build their own houses, provide their own medicines, didn't know shops as we know them and – they spoke Gaelic as their first language; probably only learning English when they were able to get some schooling.

The earliest Macphersons I can be sure of are Allan Macpherson and his wife Hellen Robertson. The Old Parish Register (OPR) for the parish of Kingussie and Insh has the following entry – "Allan, son to Duncan McPherson Bridge End of Spey and Ann Macpherson his spouse, was baptized 5th May 1803." I have not found any record of his birth but the usual custom seems to have been that children were baptised soon after birth, sometimes the same day. I don't know when or where Duncan and Ann were born or married. I have the following OPR entry for Kingussie and Insh – "Duncan MacPherson Bridge of Spey and Ann McPherson In Gaskmore were matrimonially contracted 21st and married 26th Dec. 1782". I am not satisfied that these are the correct couple – even if Allan was the youngest child of a large family the gap from 1782 to 1803 appears too large and the entry suggests that Ann's maiden name was Macpherson. 1803 fits in with Allan's age as shown on the census returns and also on his death certificate. The latter document, for which Allan and Hellen's son John provided the information, states that Allan's parents were Duncan Macpherson and Ann McCulloch. I have not been able to find any information on Ann McCulloch.

The census entries show that Hellen was born in Alvie but I have not found any record of her birth or baptism. The census entries, showing Hellens' age, give a range of dates for her birth so I have put this at 1808 which is based on her age as shown on her death certificate. The information for Hellens' death certificate was provided by Allan and states that her parents were James Robertson, Farmer and Ann Grant. The OPR for the parish of Kingussie and Insh tells us that "Alan Macpherson servant Dalwhinnie and Hellen Robertson were married 16 May 1836." The OPR for the same parish records that they

had a son, Duncan, born of the 16th July 1836 and baptised on the 6th November 1836. I have not been able to find any further trace of Duncan and it is therefore probable that he died in infancy. By 1838 Allan and Hellen had moved to the parish of Laggan where their son John was born on the 21st February 1838 and their daughter Ann was born on the 20th May 1840.

The Census taken on the 7th June 1841 was the first one to record names and ages. This Census shows Allan, an 'Ag Lab.' (agricultural Labourer) and Hellen living at Nessentully with John and Ann. Nessentully, or Nessintullich, is mentioned in Dr. Ian Richardson's book on Laggan as one of "over eighty settlements, most of them abandoned long ago (which) have been identified in Laggan parish." There is a map on the wall in the Clan Macpherson Museum in Newtonmore that shows some of these settlements. The 1841 Census states that "Nessentully is part of the parish of Laggan south of the Spey River Truim to the west of Drinagask." In the book *Laggan's Legacy* there is a chapter on Glentruim and it states that it was originally known as Neas an Tulaich – 'the point of the green hill'. I have the census entry for the whole of Nessentully in 1841 and it shows a total of 22 adults and children. I have spoken to Dr. Richardson on the telephone and understand that the site of Nessentully is at grid reference NN682941 – just across the road from Mains of Glentruim. This area is now Forestry Commission land with groups of stones amongst the trees, which may or may not be remnants of Nessentully. The Glen Truim road originally went from Catlodge to Ruthven. It is not now important enough to have a road number and, due to the construction of the new A9, it now joins that road just after the bridge over the River Truim – the road is signposted off the A9, on the left travelling north. On the left of this road, travelling from Catlodge, is the Macpherson Memorial erected in 1996. This spot not only provides a useful parking place on a narrow road but also lovely views over the River Spey. Nessentully is not far from the ruined site of Cluny Castle, the former home of the Chief of Clan Macpherson. In his book Ian Richardson mentions that Nessintullich was one of several hideouts constructed by Peter and James Leslie for Ewen Macpherson of Cluny after the battle of Culloden in 1746. It does not appear on the 1851 Census for Laggan and Ian Richardson thinks that it was probably 'cleared' in the 1840's by the Clan Chief as his new home, Glentruim House, was built about 1840 – perhaps it spoilt the view! Highland landowners had their problems after Culloden and the destruction of the clan system, but there were many who believed they still had a duty and responsibility to their tenants. Having crofts scattered over large areas of uplands did not fit in with the need to have sheep on the land, which brought in a higher income. Some landowners therefore were prepared to offer their tenants land within areas already tenanted.

Before leaving Laggan Allan and Hellen had two more daughters – Maria was born on the 16th October 1843 and Janet (Jessie) was born on the 23rd January 1846, The IGI tends to show birth dates as baptisms but the following extract from the 1846 OPR for Laggan clearly gives the birth dates and implies that all four children were baptised on the 29th April 1846 at 'Sheanvall' (or Seannbhaile, meaning 'old town') – "Allan Macpherson Sheanvall and his wife Helen Robertson had a daughter born on the 23rd day of January last and was this day baptised Janet....had a son born upon the 21st February 1838 and

baptised John...had a daughter born on the 20th May 1840 and baptised called Ann...had a daughter born upon the 16th October 1843 and was baptised called Maria.” I understand from “Laggan’s Legacy” that the present house (shown as Shanvall on the OS map) “is the survivor of a settlement which has occupied the site for several hundred years. William Roy’s map of 1750 shows a cluster of seven houses and barns. The outlines can still be traced amongst the trees beside the burn, a hundred yards or so west of the house. At the time of the first Ordnance Survey in 1870, two of these older ruins still had roofs....In 1841 there were three families at Shanvall”. It would appear that our Macphersons moved to Sheanvall from nearby Nessentully before moving to Newtonmore sometime before 1851. The modern village of Laggan has a well-stocked Village Store, owned by the Village Community.

In addition to the four Macphersons mentioned above, the 1841 Census shows that they had living with them a James McIntosh age 10. The census does not show ‘relation to head of family’ so I have tried to find out whether he was related or not. I have found the following entry in the Births and Baptisms OPR for Alvie – “James Natural son to John McIntosh Coulchoich of Cromdale and Helen Robertson Delfour was born on the 11th January and baptised 6th April 1829.” (Delfour is just west of Alvie.) This makes James McIntosh Hellens’ illegitimate son. Jumping ahead to the 1871 Census we have, living with the Macphersons, a “John McIntosh Grandson age13 born in Laggan.” I have a birth certificate for a John McIntosh son of James McIntosh and Peggy Campbell born at Gergash, Laggan on the 7th.October 1856. James and Peggy (Margaret) were married at Laggan on the 10th January 1856 and, if further proof of James’ parentage is required, the certificate shows that his father was “John McIntosh, Agricultural Labourer” and his mother was “Helen McPherson Maiden Name Robertson”. The 1861 Census for Laggan has James (29) with his wife Margaret (Peggy), son John (4) and another son (2). In 1871 the family are still in Laggan and also in 1881, but by that time James has died. In 1881 John has married Jane Gordon and they have two children. They are living in Dalwhinnie and with them is Betsy Gordon, John’s sister in law. James and Margaret’s daughter, Helen, is working for a Macpherson family in Laggan. I also have the 1891 and 1901 census returns for John and Jane.

I have wondered why our family left Laggan – perhaps the answer is in the following quotation. “In 1846, the year the potato blight struck, a Badenoch minister wrote: ‘Potatoes and milk may be said to constitute the principal food of the peasantry. In Badenoch most people could only grow enough oats for about half the year, so their dependence on potatoes was even greater than in places with a better climate and soil. In 1847 the potato crop was a total failure – the distress and disruption was appalling. Many died, while many struggled to move elsewhere...there were years of terrible hardship.’ Alternatively it may have been due to ‘clearances’ carried out by the Clan Chief, as mentioned above.

Whatever the reason the Census taken on the 30th March 1851 shows that the Macphersons had moved to the village of Newtonmore and were living on the Military Road (A86). I haven’t yet discovered where Allan was in 1851 but the following members of the family are listed – Nelly (Hellen), Agricultural Labourer’s wife; John, Ann and Maria, Scholars; Jess age 4 and Hellens sister, Margaret Robertson age 49 and described as

“Farmers wife in Lochaber”, born in Alvie. As she is shown as a married woman she must have married a Robertson.

We next find our family on the 1861 Census, taken on the 8th. April – Hellen, Labourer’s wife; Maria age 17, Jess age 14, a Scholar. They are now living in the village of Insh but Allan is not with his family. There is, however, an Allan Macpherson, age 55, shown as an Ag Lab visiting a Ross family at Leochel-Cushnie, Aberdeen. John is a Ploughman on a farm working for a John Hobb in Kingussie. On the same Census Ann age 20 is also in the parish of Kingussie and Insh but is living in as a Domestic Servant with Thomas Steward, Innkeeper and Farmer, his wife Mary and three children. Living at the same address, the Boat House Inn, is Thomas’ sister-in-law, Margaret Macpherson age 35 and described as a ‘Fund Holder’. It is not clear whether Margaret and Mary were sisters but in any case I don’t know of any connection with our family.

I have read that, “In 1861 the Session of the Parish of Insh wrote to Sir George Macpherson- Grant, on the occasion of his coming of age, complaining that Insh Church was four miles from their crofts, in Insh village, where ‘clearances had established some ten crofts for those folk removed from Glen Feshie’. This letter was signed by Shaw of Tolvah and 38 others. It may be that our family were cleared from Glen Truim about 1850 and at the time of the 1851 Census were ‘camping out’ in Newtonmore on their way to one of the above crofts in Insh.

A very important event took place in Insh on the 25th June 1869 – Ann gave birth to a son whom she christened William – did she name him after his father? We shall hear a lot more about William. The birth certificate shows that she is still a Domestic Servant but there is not record of the fathers’ name. (His fathers’ name is not given on either his marriage or death certificates.) This was the beginning of a very eventful decade for our Macphersons.

The 1871 Census (3rd April) shows the family still living in Insh village and we have Allan (a Labourer) and Hellen – now the same age! Also Ann (a Domestic Servant), John McIntosh, Grandson referred to above, William, age one, and Isabella McDugall, Granddaughter. The Chief Registrar at Inverness was not able to find the birth of Isabella McDugall but did send me the birth certificate for Isabella Macpherson born in Insh on the 9th July 1868. The certificate shows that the birth was illegitimate and that the mother was Jess Macpherson, Domestic Servant. This would appear to be the Bella Macpherson who appears on the 1881 Census, although no father’s name is given on the certificate. There is a John Macpherson, age 32, born in Kingussie working as a farm servant at ‘Blair Athole’. In 1871 Jessie was a Cook at the Kingussie Hotel, which at that time was run by a widow, Eliza Hobb (nee Cruikshank) from Aberdeen. Maria was also a Cook, with a family in St. Andrews. She took a bit of finding as her age is shown as 25 whereas she was actually 27.

According to the birth certificate for John Macpherson’s son, Allan (8th April 1875 at 33 Cameron Street, Kelvin, Glasgow). John was married on the 13th. July 1871 at Blythswood, Glasgow to Margaret Bremner. I subsequently obtained a copy of the

marriage certificate confirming this event which took place at Hope Street Free Church, Glasgow – Maria was a witness. Margaret was born at Can(n)isbay in Caithness c.1844 and her parents were Donald Bremner and Ann Thomson. John and Margaret had the following five children, all born in the District of Barony, Lanark:- Alexena (Alexina?) (1873), Helen (1874), Allan (1875), Donald (1877) and John (1880).

It would appear that Jess managed to get Mr. McDougall out of her mind as, on the 18th June 1875, she was married to Donald McIntyre at his parent's home in Dundee. Donald was born on the 16th December 1841 at Strachur in Argyll and his parents were John McIntyre, Gamekeeper, and Mary Ann McKellar. On the marriage certificate Allan is described as a Crofter. Jess and Donald had four children, all born in Dundee - Hellen (1877), John A (1878), Alexander M. (1880) and Maggie (1882).

On the 14th December 1875 in Insh, Ann had her second child – Jane, usually referred to as Jean or Jeannie. Again there is no mention of the father's name.

Maria, age 28 – a Domestic Servant, was married on the 30th June 1876 to George Affleck, age 32, at his parents' home, 31 Rintoul Place, Edinburgh. Maria's address is shown as 11 Hill Street, Edinburgh. George was born at Linkheads in the village of Oldhamstocks, Haddingtonshire (now East Lothian) and he is a Printer-Compositor. In 1883 Maria and George had their only child, Mary S, born in Kinghorn, Fife.

We have had births and marriages and now, alas, we have to have death – at 11.00 a.m. on the 14th January, 1879 Hellen MacPherson (nee Robertson) married to Allan MacPherson, Agricultural Labourer, died in the village of Insh aged 71 years. Cause of death is shown as 'Old Age' and her parents are recorded as James Robertson, Farmer and Ann Grant. Allan registered the death. She must have had a hard life but if we judge her by those she left behind she did a good job – she gave birth to six children and we know of 13 grand-children. She would have been greatly missed, particularly by Allan and Ann.

The 1881 Census (4th April) shows Allan aged 79, Ann age 39, William and Bella age 11, and Jeannie age 5. Allan is shown as a pauper, but I understand this term can also mean a pensioner. Ann is described as 'Formally Domestic Servant' – presumably she had enough to do at home without going out to work. They are shown as living in the village of Insh at "No 8 or No P Ho" and they all speak Gaelic. On the 1881 Census the Insh house entries are in the following order –'Old Teachers Arms', School House, Numbers 1 to 7, No. 8 or P Ho, Numbers 9 to 17, Soillerie, Glack House. I have tried to sort out the houses in Insh village but none of them appear to be numbered. I am told that there has not been anyone left in Insh who has any knowledge of the past for many years – the last native family left, or died, in the 1930's and the houses are now owned by the English as second homes! The 1899 revision of the six-inch O.S. map shows 'Soillerie' at the north end of the village (this property was still in existence in Oct 2001) and the School at the southern end. The School and School House are still in existence and used for residential purposes.

On the 1881 Census for Barony in Lanark, John, Margaret and their five children are still living at 33 Cameron Street. (Prior to 1855 the district number for Barony was 622. After 1855 the district of Barony split into three districts – 622/1 Maryhill, 622/2 Shettleston and 622/3 Springburn. After 1906 these three districts split into district 644 (County of Glasgow) which has 33 districts – all illustrating the spread of the City of Glasgow). John is shown as a 'Friendly Society Collector'.

In 1881 Maria and George Affleck are living next door to where they were married in 1876 – 32 Rintoul Place, St. Cuthberts, Edinburgh. George is a Printer Compositor Master employing 11 man and 1 boy.

Also in 1881 Jessie and Donald McIntyre are living at 32 Mains Road, Dundee with their three children. Donald is an Insurance Agent and both he and Jessie are shown as Gaelic speakers. Unfortunately tragedy was soon to come to this family and their relations and friends. At 11.30 p.m. on the 1st May 1886 Donald died at the Royal Infirmary, Dundee (86 Bell Street). This was bad enough but at 3.00 p.m. on the 27th. October 1887 Jessie died, also at the Dundee Royal Infirmary. She had been suffering from Pneumonia for 14 days. Ann took the children. Her sister, Maria Affleck, who was then living at 7 Dewar Place, Edinburgh gives the information on the death certificate. Allan died at 7.00 a.m. on the 3rd May 1887 at Glaik, Insh age 83 years. The cause of death for Allan is given as 'Retention of Urine' and he is described as 'Agricultural Labourer and Pauper'. His son, John, registered the death. One can imagine the grief there must have been among the whole family, particularly Ann.

We now come to the Census returns for 1891 (6th April) which obviously show the changes which have occurred since 1881. Ann, now age 50 (49 on the census!) is at Glack in Insh and is described as a Washerwoman. I assume this means that she took in washing as well as looking after the four McIntyre children.

Jean is still in the same area working as a General Domestic Servant for an Ann Macpherson, a widow aged 67, who was born in Rothiemurchus. There is no indication that they were related.

William, age 21 is a Sewing Machine Operative boarding with a George and Mary Martin at 3 Roseberry Place, Old Kilpatrick, Dumbarton (now Clydebank). I wasn't sure I had found the right William until I discovered that his Uncle John and his family were living in the same area, at 6 East Selbourne Terrace, Old Kilpatrick. John is a Sewing Machine Packer, Alexina is a Sewing Machinist, Allan is an Apprentice Sewing Machine Fitter, Donald is a Grocery Message Boy and John is still at school. Ellen appears to be unemployed but was probably kept busy helping her mother. I remember Aunt Lett telling me that William did secretarial work when he left school, but that would have been about 1883/4 and would have been in the Insh/Kingussie area. There is every indication that he would not have been particularly suited to manual labour – later in life he suffered with bronchial problems which may have originated with his early years near the Insh marshes.

In 1891 Maria and George Affleck are living at 9 Keir Street, Edinburgh – near the Royal Infirmary and George Square. Their daughter, Mary, who was born at Kinghorn in Fife about 1883 is age 8. George's brother, Robert age 41, is living with them. He is described as a Joiner (unemployed). The 1891 Census recorded disabilities and it appears that Robert was 'Deaf and Dumb from Childhood'. A widow by the name of Agnes Fraser, age 75, of 'Private Means' is lodging with them.

Also in 1891 Jessie's illegitimate daughter, Bella Macpherson is a servant in Johnstone, Dumfries. She is living in a large house, possibly a farm. She is shown as having been born in Dumbartonshire, but the next name on the list, a Mary Hart, is shown as having been born in Insh! I checked back with the 1881 Census for Mary and find that she was in fact born in Old Kilpatrick ("Old Kilprick") Dunbarton.

It is not known when William "became concerned about his soul and came to the knowledge of the way of life through a Saviour." This could have been while he was working in Old Kilpatrick. When he went to work with the Scottish East Coast Mission it must have been good to get back into more rural surroundings and presumably it was then he visited the Black Isle in Easter Ross and met his wife to be, Isabella Ann Grigor of Carse of Raddery, Rosemarkie. Bella was a farmers' daughter and I have a Christmas card William gave her in 1894.

William became assistant Minister (or Missionary) to the Rev. George Herbert Morrison in Thurso sometime between 1894 and 1898. We don't know exactly when he took up this post but, according to "The Fasti of the U.F. Church of Scotland", George Morrison (born in Glasgow 2nd. October 1866) was ordained and inducted to Thurso First U.F. Church on the 15th August 1894 and moved to Dundee on the 7th July 1898. I have a letter to William from George Morrison dated 23rd January 1918 in which he writes, "What very happy memories it revived to hear from you again. As the years go on I look back with an ever increasing pleasure to those days we spent together in Thurso, when you with your loyalty and gracious wisdom did so much to smooth for me a path that was far from easy. I suppose there is never a day in which I do not think of those years at Thurso with their triumphs and failures, their tragedies and comedies, and their innumerable tokens of His guidance. I am delighted to learn how things have prospered with you, and I can say with all sincerity that if it were my lot to be a layman, it is under such a ministry as yours that I should like to sit."

The history of the Church in Scotland is quite complicated. One of the most important events in the 19th century was The Great Disruption in 1843, when 470 ministers from the evangelical wing of the Church of Scotland broke away to form the Free Church of Scotland. In the next decade, feverish activity took place all over Scotland as churches and manses were built for those who, at great sacrifice to themselves and their families, had taken a huge step on high principle. In 1900, the majority of congregations in the Free Church of Scotland joined with the United Presbyterian Church, to form the United Free Church of Scotland. It was in this church that William spent the whole of his ministry. In 1929, most of the U.F. Church merged with the Church of Scotland. Much of Scotland was now again in the national church. The Free Church, which had consisted of almost a third of the country in 1843, was now reduced to a small number mainly in the Highlands and

Islands – hence the name ‘Wee Frees’. It would seem, however, that some U.F. Ministers and their congregations continued on their own as I have read “In 1930 he (Duncan Campbell) was ordained as the missionary to the newly formed United Free Church in Balintore.”

William and Bella were married on the 23rd December 1897 at 52 Church Street, Inverness after Banns at the Congregational Church. I have taken photos of this property but don’t know whether in 1897 it was a hotel or a private residence. On the marriage certificate William is described as a ‘Missionary Free Church, age 27, Bachelor, living at 3 George Street, Thurso.’

Their first daughter, Catherine Ann Corbett Macpherson (known as ‘Carrie’) – my Mother - was born at George Street at ‘9h.0m’ on the 4th December 1899. The birth certificate (ref.129) is endorsed on the back ‘Baptised in the First Free Church, Thurso this 4th day of February 1900 by me, Alex Soutar, Minister.” Presumably William was now assistant to Rev. Soutar. On the 31st March 1899 John Macpherson’s son Allan was married to Maggie Robertson, born in Glasgow, in Old Kilpatrick.

We now come to the Census returns for 1901. These show Willie and Bella (both aged 30) and Catherine in George Street, Thurso and also include their niece, Margaret Isabella Grigor Young (known as Mabel) age 6 born on the 5th March 1894 at Edderton in Ross-shire – on the Dornoch Firth. Mabel was the fourth child of Janet Grigor, Bella’s sister, and William Young, a farm worker from Easter Ross. I am told that William Young ill-treated his wife, who died in 1901. Mary Ann Young and her brother Robert were brought up by Bella’s parents at the Carse of Raddery on the Black Isle, which means that only Catherine and Jessie stayed at home to look after their father. I don’t know when Mabel went to live with Willie and Bella but she spent the rest of her childhood with them.

In 1901 John Macpherson and his family are still at 6 East Selbourne Terrace, Radnor Park, Old Kilpatrick. This area became part of Clydebank in 1907 but, around 1905/6 a whole new housing scheme was built there (known locally as ‘The Holy City’). The whole of Radnor Park was destroyed in 1941 during the Clydebank Blitz. In 1901 John is age 62 and a sewing machine packer; Margaret is 59; Donald age 24 and John, age 21 are both single and described as ‘Machine Worker’. They have two female boarders (apparently unrelated to the Macphersons) aged 13 and 6 – both born in Glasgow. I have not yet discovered where Alexena and Helen were in 1901.

Allan Macpherson, age 25, and Margaret, age 27, have an 8 month old daughter called Barbara. They live at 16 Churchill Place, Radnor Park and Allan is an ‘Iron Moulder’ (?).

[Continued in next issue]



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