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## The Journal

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# Welcome to Journal 125

**H**ave you had a go at telling your family history stories yet? It can sometimes feel a bit daunting, when you are faced with a quantity of information and are perhaps not too sure where to start.

This edition of the Journal is focusing on ways in which we can unlock our family history through storytelling. There are some family stories from our members, and articles outlining a number of methods and tools you might consider using, or perhaps have already tried, to tell your family's stories. If you have tried any of them out, please let us know what you think of them - have they been helpful, did you have any challenges? Or perhaps there are others you use which you could tell other members about.

I hope you might be inspired to write something for our forthcoming editions and, if you are, the closing dates for submission are below.

**Karen Hunter, Editor**

## Future Journals

### J126: March 2023

*Exploring our ancestors through DNA: who and what might we discover?*

Closing date for submitting articles:  
29 December 2022

### J127: June 2023

*Exploring our family links to Ireland*

Closing date for submitting articles:  
31 March 2023

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## Stories worth telling

There are definitely some stories worth telling and I think there's something to be said for telling your story.

*Susanna Hoffs*

## Chair's Blog

Greetings to members old and new. Summer in Scotland will be over by the time you read this. I hope you all managed to get in a bit of researching during the holidays. A few of the Council have represented the Society at some regional family history events, where they spread the word about our Society and recruited some new members.

In July Colin Campbell organised two tours of the High Kirk Burying Ground in Glasgow: he shared his extensive knowledge of the merchant families who travelled the world and were benefactors of the City, and ably explained the tangled web of religious disruptions following the Reformation.

In August we set up two sessions of informal Zoom meetings; one to discuss some research 'brick walls' submitted by members, and to demonstrate resources available to search; and a second to look at international resources in Canada. However, unfortunately we had to postpone both of these due to a lack of resources. We hope to expand sessions in future to learn something of the of resources from other countries and regions. The Council will be pleased to hear from members with suggestions for other sessions or special interest groups which would be of interest.

On the Website David Hart has made progress by adding datasets for monumental inscriptions from Dunoon Old and Rhu Churchyards. Although we had published transcripts on paper and PDF it takes a lot of work from David and volunteers to create and check indexes

in a format suitable for upload. Also on the Website shop you will see many publications are now available in PDF format thanks to John Wotherspoon and Murray Archer. Although many of us still like paper copies, the introduction of PDF versions is a more efficient way to see the lists we have transcribed, allowing the use of 'find' on your computer, and saving postage costs for those far afield.

The Research Centre opening times on Thursday and Saturday have been extended to 1-4pm, from September. We have some new volunteers to support the centre opening. They are becoming familiar with resources available to help our visitors, and with the extra support we hope that it will be possible to re-introduce Tuesday opening sometime soon. Any member with access to Partick is welcome to call in during these opening times; even if you only want to progress your own research you can share your knowledge, and may be able to schedule a regular day every few weeks to be a regular volunteer and help others.

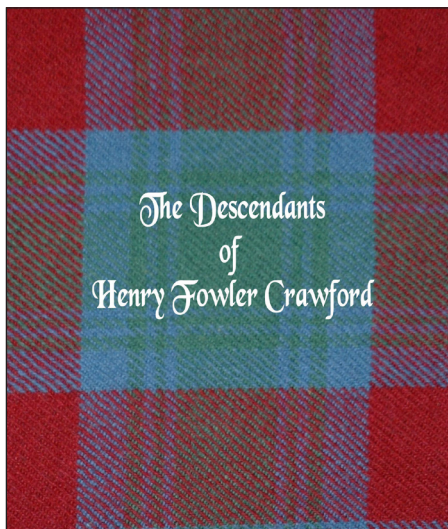
With the end of the long days in the northern hemisphere it's time to think of research again and perhaps how to help others by volunteering. You don't have to be hands-on at the Research Centre. Have a think about whether you could possibly contribute by doing some transcribing or indexing on your computer at home for the Projects group. If you are interested in helping out in some way have a look at the 'Projects' page in the members area of the website, and if you can offer some time to contribute to any of the open projects we will be delighted - just contact us via [projects@gwsfhs.org.uk](mailto:projects@gwsfhs.org.uk)

**Scott Fairie, Chair, 30**



# Documenting a Life Story

I began my foray into genealogy by writing a family history book. This book was a record of the descendants of my grandfather, Henry Fowler Crawford. He fathered 23 children, 21 of whom survived to adulthood. The book quickly became a family treasure for my mother's siblings and their families. I created the book in a way that each sibling could, if they so chose, pull their own segment out of the larger book. No one did. But by creating the book this way, it allowed me to create a format that can be used over and over for any life story I document. Since finishing the family book, I have made family books for several other people as well as other lines in my own family. I have documented and celebrated the lives of those who have left us, both for my own ancestors and for other people's ancestors. All of the books have become treasured items.



Creating a book out of your family history research can seem like a daunting task. But preserving the stories of your ancestors is something we, as family historians, are called to do. Documenting a life story for an individual ancestor is not only manageable but also very rewarding and allows you to have a tangible heirloom to pass to future generations. Several years ago, a friend asked me to create a family book for her uncle who was turning 80. I started at his grandparents and then worked my way down to his children and grandchildren. Since he only had one sibling, my friend's mum, I included her and her children and grandchildren as well. When I showed her the final product she said, "I can die peacefully now, knowing that my mum and dad's lives won't be forgotten." That statement has stayed with me through every book I have created since then.

Here are some essentials to help you document a life story for just one ancestor. Like research, it can become a bit of an obsession and you aren't likely to stop at just one!

## Gather your research

Get everything organized so you do not have to scurry around looking for a document or timeline while you are on a roll putting the story together. Consider photos, maps, newspaper articles, certificates, recipes and other items to round out your names, dates and pedigree charts. As you develop your book, include the social history of your ancestors so you can put context to your genealogical research.

## Define the scope

One ancestor, one branch, one line. One of the biggest mistakes people make is

thinking everything has to be included in the same book. It really does not. Thinking it does makes the task of putting a book together incredibly daunting. This is likely the number one reason people do not create a family history book. Look at how the genealogy television shows share a celebrity's story. One ancestor at a time; or one ancestral line at a time. Pick an ancestor and write his or her story. We all have that one person who has tugged at us more than the others; one we had a huge challenge uncovering or a brick wall perhaps. The ancestor who seemed to face a challenge at every turn. Or the ancestor who made it in spite of the challenges life threw at him or her. Start with that ancestor.

## Determine your audience

Who are you sharing the story with? A child? Grandchild? Uncle? Cousin? Do not let the idea of writing put you off. If you can come to a genealogy meeting and tell me what you uncovered in the last month, then you can definitely create a family history book. Write the information down just the way you would be telling me the story.

**Outline your idea** - this does not have to be terribly time consuming. Think about the key points you want others to know. Jot those down and use them as your outline for the story. This will help to keep you on track and make sure nothing gets left out.

## Decide on a format

Are you going to print the book? Will it primarily be a written text with photos to enhance the story? Or will it be a photobook (a digital scrapbook) with text to tell the story behind the photos? Are you going to print a largely text-based

book, with a few photos, or are you going to print the book in colour or leave it in black and white? Generally, colour prints cost more, but some feel that they are more robust and provide better images. The choice is entirely up to you. Cost may be a factor and it generally is. And the number of copies you decide to pay for may also make a difference in whether to print in colour or black and white.



**Start Chronologically** then work your way through your ancestor's life.

### Document the birth

- Who were the parents
- Birth date
- Place of birth
- Any siblings
- Include birth certificate, newspaper announcement and pics of any ephemera

### Outline your ancestor's early life

- Where did the person go to school?
- Where did they work?
- Did they or the family move?
- Include any memorable stories or events (hospitalisations, awards for sports, death of a parent)

### Share information about relationships

- Which siblings were they closest to?
- Were they close to a specific parent? Grandparent? Aunt? Uncle? Cousin?
- Where did they meet their spouse, if they have one?
- Include brief information about the spouse - date of birth, place of birth, names of parents, number of siblings

### Talk about work or hobbies

- What did they do for a living?
- For how long?
- Where did they work?
- Were they an athlete? A musician? A dancer?
- Who are their descendants?

You can be as minimalist or as detailed as you want. You can include simply names and dates of birth/death or you can go on to detail the children's education, work, interests, spouse, children.

## Content Considerations

### Scans of documents

Include scans of the documents. Let others see the things you have found



as you research. You do not have to share every document but share some. Let others have that “wow” moment when they see the handwriting of their ancestors. Let them see for themselves the conclusions you drew based on the documents you read. Who knows, you may even recruit a genealogy research buddy by doing so.

### Photos

This is a crucial one. Share, share, share photos of your ancestors and their ancestors. Let them look for resemblances. Let them be in awe at the sight of their relatives just as you were. Again, you can keep the originals but share in the book so everyone gets to have a copy, even if it is just a digital copy.

Remember, too, to include more recent photos. They will become treasured heirlooms and glimpses into the past for future generations. I edited and shared a quarterly family newsletter for 11 years. The first thing everyone did when their copy arrived was to flip through to the photos so they could see who they resembled. Your relatives and descendants will do the same thing with the photos in your family book.

### Maps

Maps orientate us in time and place. They show the area where our ancestors lived. We can see how rural or urban the place was. Sometimes we can see places where they might have been employed, how close they were to schools or churches, and how close they were to other family members.

### Stories

Sadly over the generations, we have moved away from the traditions of

oral history and handing down the family stories so they are not forgotten. Memories are the only things which outlive us. Share the fun times, the funny times. Share the heartache and show the resilience.

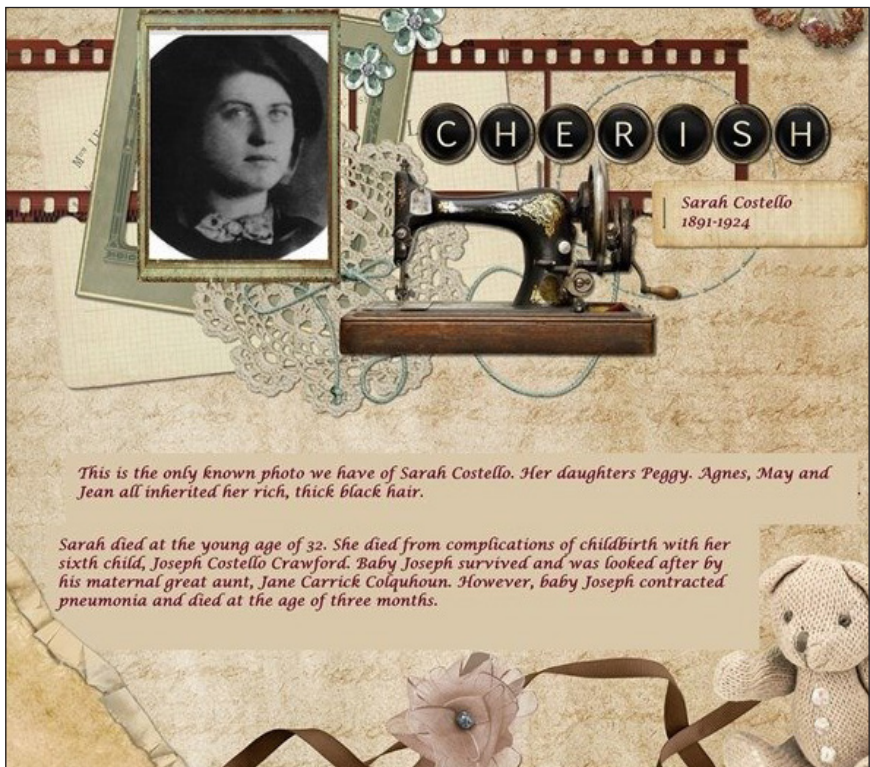
### Newspaper clippings

If the family or a member of the family made it to the newspaper, and the story is not proof of the skeleton, add the newspaper clippings. Your newspaper clippings do not need to be limited to obits, birth announcements or wedding announcements. You can add sports achievements, honours for volunteering, military service, accidents. Your kids may have been photographed at the Santa Claus parade, or an uncle might have been showing his car at a car show.

Whatever the occasion, showcase the clipping and allow others to see the story first-hand.

### Recipes

Food is often an integral piece of family life. We sit together to eat. We share our lives when we get together at the dinner table. The same foods show up on the table at each event, becoming part of our traditions. Recipes get handed down generation after generation. When we smell certain foods, we are transported back in time. Food evokes fond memories. Be sure to include family recipes in your family book. Foods that became a tradition. Share about why the food was important, whose job it was to make and serve it, how the recipe was handed down - did grandma teach her



*This is the only known photo we have of Sarah Costello. Her daughters Peggy, Agnes, May and Jean all inherited her rich, thick black hair.*

*Sarah died at the young age of 32. She died from complications of childbirth with her sixth child, Joseph Costello Crawford. Baby Joseph survived and was looked after by his maternal great aunt, Jane Carrick Colquhoun. However, baby Joseph contracted pneumonia and died at the age of three months.*



daughters and granddaughters? Did you have to wait until great aunt Jo passed before anyone could get her recipe? Include these stories in your family book.

There are a number of ways to preserve your history for future generations so that they, too, will know the stories. Try tackling one of them. You will be amazed at how easy it really is and you will feel an incredible sense of accomplishment as well.

### Dealing with the skeletons and scandals

Most of us manage to uncover “skeletons in the closet” when we embark on the journey of researching our family’s history. The question then becomes what to do with those stories. For the people who were part of the story or who were alive at the time and may have had knowledge of the skeleton, it has taken a lifetime of withholding the information - usually to protect the people involved. When you are putting a family book together, please be respectful. If the story is about someone who is still alive or whose children are still alive, ask their permission before you publish something that may embarrass them or alter the rest of the family’s perception of them. Creating family history books is about leaving a legacy. It is not about “outing” the transgressions of the past. Keep those private. You can have them in your notes, in your family tree software or somewhere else in your research folders, but for the sake of other people’s emotional wellbeing, refrain from publishing them. Yes, the future generations will want to know. That is why you should have the information recorded and stored. It just does not need to be made public.

## Write your OWN Story

Do your descendants a favour and write your own story before you become an ancestor. Follow the same steps we have just discussed. An old Chinese proverb says, “If someone shares something of value with you, and you have benefited from it, you have a moral obligation to share.” Nothing could be truer about family history. Although you may have been entrusted as the keeper of the family documents and family stories, they belong not to you but to your family and you really do have a moral obligation to share with the rest of the family. A family history book is a tremendous way to do just that.



### Additional Resources

FamilySearch: [https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Create\\_a\\_Family\\_History](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Create_a_Family_History)

Lisa Alzo: <https://www.researchwriteconnect.com/store>

Geneabloggers: <https://geneabloggers.com/>

Digital Scrapbooking: <https://www.forever.com/>

# Sharing the Stories

Most genealogy researchers will tell you that they are searching not only to find out about their history but also to keep their family's history alive for future generations. So, now that we have those research documents, bits of scrap paper, newspaper clippings, photos, e-mails and other assorted bits of "research", how do we preserve them for future generations? There are a number of options. Here are a few.

## Scrapbook

Take those precious old photographs and preserve them in an archival, acid free book. Remember to tell the story as you add the photos. While embellishments are aesthetically appealing, they are not necessary in a family history album. The story is what is important.

## Family Newsletter

If your family is large enough, you may want to consider sending out a newsletter. I promise you that you won't regret it. Especially if your family live apart from each other. The newsletter content can be whatever you want it to be. I started our family newsletter in December 2005—nearly two years after I put together our first family book. When I finished the family book, Harry had 394 descendants. I wanted a way to record and to share new babies that were added to our tree, a way to announce marriages, a way of acknowledging and honouring those who have passed away. I have also included facts and trivia about the area where the family grew up, Scottish traditions, recipes, new research that I have uncovered about past generations.

The newsletter started out being mailed to 20 of my aunts, uncles and cousins. The list quickly morphed to over 125 people over three branches of the family.

Others contributed stories, poems, recollections, old photographs and even funeral cards for our ancestors. They shared their pride in their children's accomplishments. The one thing looked for in each edition was the physical similarities that run through our family. I have cousins in Timmins who are the double of cousins in Edinburgh. The two have never met and yet anyone seeing the two of them would know they belong to the same family. These realisations provide a remarkable sense of belonging.



I even did a section once in a while where I ran two photographs together to show the rest of the family how much of a resemblance there is. The family were thrilled with the resemblances. As my uncle once said, "Joey looks more like Alex than Alex does!" We have dedicated some issues to family occupations and

were able to show the family that we are not just coal miners anymore, but also firemen, teachers, bus drivers, nurses and social workers.

The newsletter was a remarkable journey and one that I am so very glad I undertook. Know your intended audience (mine is always my older aunts and uncles). Be sure to add more than just birthdays and reunion news and you will be amazed at the gratitude you receive, and the sense of belonging you create.

## Blogging

If you use your computer to communicate with other family members, you may want to consider blogging your family research. Again, this is a great way to tell the story, to link to pictures or websites that might be of interest and to share what you have learned in your research. Others can always print the information and save it for future generations. And you can quickly create a family book by using Blog2Print to “slurp” your posts into book format. These make wonderful gifts and are really easy to do.

## Interviewing Older Relatives

As any beginning genealogist knows, our older relatives have a wealth of family history to share. It is vital to tap into this resource and knowing how to get the information is the key to unlocking this treasure trove of your family’s history. One of the best ways to evoke a memory is through photographs. The visual sparks a recollection of the event, the people, the joy, the laughter, and the surrounding details. If you can spend time with an older relative going through old photographs, you will unleash a torrent of memories. The opportunity will allow you to identify those in the photo, the reason the photo was taken and sometimes tidbits of information about some of the characters in the photo. One of the lovely things about the elderly is that their filters relax as they age. Things which were once taboo to speak of with others may now get shared quite freely (“*she was always such a tart, you know*”).

**A Word from the Woodcocks**

Wednesday, 16 March 2011

### It's Maple Syrup Time - a sure sign of spring!

This week is March break. Usually we go away for a couple of days and pretend we are in the Caribbean. However, still being in a state of recovery, I wasn't sure what I would have the energy to do. So, we ended up staying home. Yesterday, I took Christopher and five friends to laser tag. It was total chaos. As we arrived and paid, our names were put on a piece of paper - no rhyme or reason to the papers and they were shuffled frequently, so we were NEVER "next". Finally after an hour, I started to make noise, especially when one mom was asking how long to her second game and she arrived the same time we did! The boys had a great time, and that really is the important part - not the noise or the chaos or the lack of anywhere to sit.....

**My Other Blogs**

- [Rooted In Scotland](#)
- [Genealogy Tours of Scotland](#)
- [Brant County Genealogy Society](#)

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**Blog Archive**

- ▶ 2012 (1)
- ▼ 2011 (13)
  - ▶ October (1)
  - ▶ September (1)

As you are spending time with family over the holidays, at reunions, and family celebrations, take advantage of the opportunity to sit and speak with the elderly relatives. If photographs are not available, ask questions which will evoke memories for them. If you are at a wedding or christening, ask about weddings or christenings of long ago.

## Sample Interview Questions

- Where did you go to school? What was the school like?
- Where did you work after school? How old were you?
- Where did you meet your spouse?
- Where did you get married? Who attended your wedding?
- Where was your first home together? How long did you live there?
- What was it like to be a parent?
- What were your special holiday traditions?
- What would you like your children/grandchildren/great grandchildren to know about life?



*Editor: Many thanks to Christine Woodcock, one of the editorial team, who has written these three articles, sharing her extensive experience in capturing, telling and sharing her family stories.*



*For anyone interested in finding out more about these aspects of family history there is a 'Creating your Family Story' virtual workshop on Saturday 15 October. Please note this is not being organised by GWSFHS and there is a fee involved. Details can be found at <https://www.genealogyvic.com/YS2022-KILTLED-KULTURE-OCTOBER-WORKSHOP>*

## We Are [...]

**W**e Are [...] is a newly released free dedicated family history website builder in which you can lay out the stories behind all your research. It allows you to drop your GEDCOM on the page when prompted to create your own beautiful ready-made ancestral history site complete with sections for each Family and Individual, plus the ability to create sections for special Places, Occasions and Artefacts.

In each section you can upload photos, create albums and write articles with a very simple online editor. You can invite family members to register. When they log in, the site will make them the central focus of all the information displayed (e.g. trees). They are welcome to upload content, add memories and recollections and comment on each other's submissions.

More details can be found at <https://weare.xyz/about/>



# A Tale of Two Sisters

## Who was Alexander Waddell and when is a Wotherspoon not a Wotherspoon?

I have mostly been building my Family Tree since 2018, bringing earlier research into my main tree in Ancestry. I have known of the life of my paternal great grandmother, Mary Cowan Waddell (1832-1903) through the records for a few years and admire her character, to survive under difficult circumstances. She appears to have married, bore three children, been abandoned or widowed by the age of 28, then fell pregnant with a fourth child, my grandfather. She lived to the age of 70, having looked after her father and her children, seen them all (bar one) married and ended up in a hospital for incurables, not paupers! I have also been aware of her elder sister, Grace Waddell (1826-1900) and another family member, Alexander Waddell (1851-1889), but have never been very sure how he was related. Recently I found

another researcher interested in the Waddell family, who said that his son-in-law was descended from Alexander.

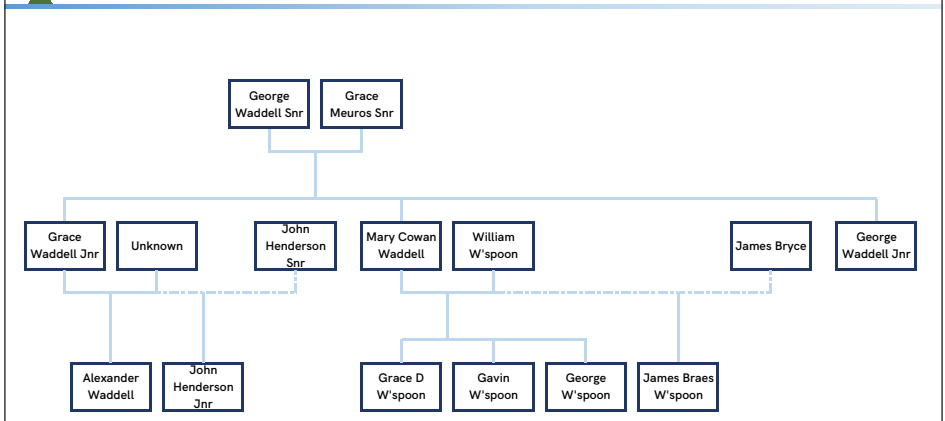
On 18 Sep 1825 George Cowan Waddell (1806-1878) - George Snr - marries Grace Douglas Meuros (1806-1841) [Grace Snr] and she gives birth to the following children:

- Grace Douglas Waddell (1826-?) [Grace Jnr]
- John Waddell (1828-?)
- Samuel Meuros Waddell (1830-?)
- Mary Cowan Waddell (1832-1903)
- Margaret Inglis Meuros Waddell (1834-?)
- George Cowan Waddell (1837-1915) [George Jnr]

By the 1841 Census, George Snr is living at High Street Airdrie with his children Grace Jnr, Samuel, Mary and George Jnr. I know that the census of 1841 rounded ages to nearest five, so there are slight discrepancies in birth years. There is no sign of Grace Snr and I can find no trace of her death between 1837 and 1841, so I assume that she had died. To set the scene for later, the Wotherspoon



## Waddell Family Tree

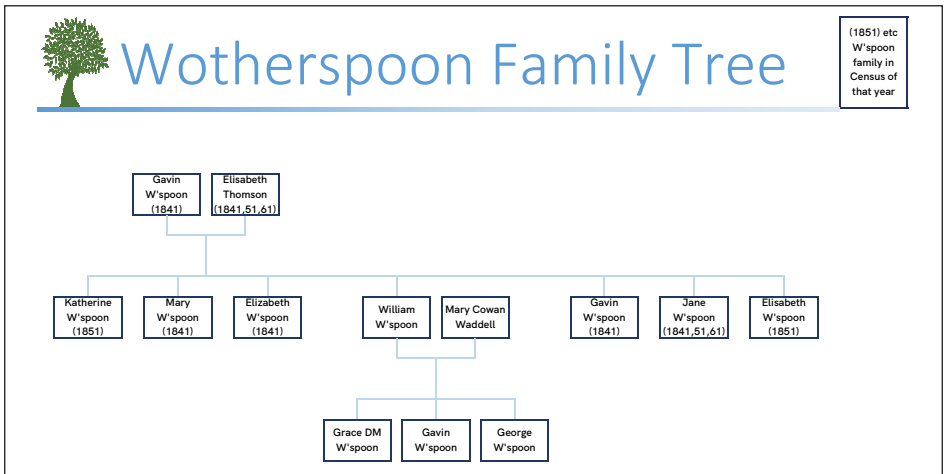


family, Gavin and Elisabeth, are living on Stirling Street, Airdrie with five of their eleven children.

By the 1851 Census, the Waddell family is scattered. I cannot find George Snr, although there are several 'George Waddell' in the right area. Grace Jnr is at 44 Stirling St, Airdrie with her Aunt Martha, who was Grace Snr's sister, Martha Bell Meuros. She (Martha) had married William Smith in 1838 and their son, William Menzies Smith, was born a year later. He is with Martha and Grace Jnr at 44 Stirling St in the 1851 Census. William Smith, the father, appears to have died before 1851. Martha is the Head of the household and a Grocer and Spirit Dealer. The address is interesting, as Mary is working as a General Servant for Alexander Bizzett, an Ironmonger, and his wife Bethea, who have two small children, William and Agness. They are all at 48 Stirling St, Airdrie. That makes sense, Martha and Alexander are fellow shopkeepers living a couple of doors apart. One sister comes to help her Aunt and the other comes to work for a neighbour. What is particularly interesting

is who is living at 53 Stirling St, Airdrie. Elisabeth Witherspoon [sic], a widow, and four of her children, Katherine, William, Jane and Elisabeth. It all seems to make sense, Elisabeth, William and Jane were OK, but two new names for daughters crop up. I think on the balance of probability, this is the right family, particularly as the mother and Jane are living two doors down on Stirling Street at the next Census. This seems such a likely way for Mary and William to meet, for they married at Coatbridge in 1854. Had Alexander Waddell been born by then, he is 10 in the 1861 Census, but who were his parents? What do we know of his birth? Very little, probably born in Airdrie, but I can find no trace.

In the 1861 Census, the Waddell family has regathered at Morrison's Land, Coatbridge. George Snr is Head of family, Grace Jnr is House Keeper, John, Mary, George Jnr. Mary has reverted to her M.S. of Waddell, either deliberately or due to confusion by the Census taker. Mary has, by now, been abandoned by William Wotherspoon (WW) with three small children, Grace DM, Gavin and



George, all Wotherspoon. The last record I have seen is George's birth certificate, 17 Jul 1859, his father being WW, a Baker (Master) and the Informant for George's birth. I can find no trace of WW after 1859, did he go overseas, get another job somewhere, or had he died? Mary was shown as a Widow in this Census, but this may not be true. Better a widow than abandoned? Finally, under George (Jnr) Waddell, is Alexander Waddell, clearly shown as Grandson, aged 10, a scholar. I'm going to go into wild speculation here and suggest that his mother was Grace Jnr, that he is living with his widowed Grandfather, who has his own daughter and the unmarried mother of Alexander acting as House Keeper. Based on the 1851 Census, it seemed to me that Grace Jnr would be more likely to be accepted in the household of her Aunt, Martha Smith, while pregnant, than if Mary, her sister, fell pregnant when acting as a General Servant in the Bizzett household? The other option would be that John or George (Jnr) Waddell might be the father, but is it more likely for a child to stay with his mother rather than his father? I have put Alexander in my family tree as the son of Grace with an unknown father? Who might the father be? A pattern could be seen of sisters falling pregnant to unsuitable fathers - perhaps they were married already - and naming the son after the father. Alexander was not a usual family name in our part of the Waddell family. Was another Alexander around? Yes, Alexander Bizzett, head of the household where Mary was in 1851 and two doors down from where Grace was in 1851. Perhaps a very unfair suggestion, that may be resolved by a DNA search by the

descendants of Alexander, finding a link to the Bizzett family?

Now we come to the birth certificate for James Bryce, born to Mary Bryce, married to James Bryce, a saddler, on 30 Jun 1865. Mary signed her mark as mother, with a M.S. of Waddell, claiming to have married James Bryce in 1855 at Airdrie. She called her son James, born in Rosebank, Dunipace. I suspect that most of the information she gave to the Registrar was a pack of lies! She was claiming a bigamous marriage to James Bryce or a purely invented marriage for the sake of her other children, perhaps? I am sure that Mary Bryce was in fact Mary Cowan Wotherspoon, M.S. Waddell. More evidence of this emerges from subsequent records.

On 8 March 1867, Grace Jnr, at 40, marries the widowed John Henderson in Dunipace, Stirling, who was 63 at the time. This is beginning to link together, the two sisters now both have links to Dunipace. John Henderson's previous wife had died later in 1861: she was still showing as 'wife' in the Census of that year. Which came first, Mary going to Dunipace to give birth to James, perhaps supported by her big sister, or Grace already knew John Henderson, so found somewhere local to John for her sister to give birth? Whichever way, Grace and Mary got to know Dunipace, Grace married John there and gave birth to John Henderson Jnr in March 1868. By then Alex, perhaps her first son, would be about 16 at the time of the marriage and would be working.

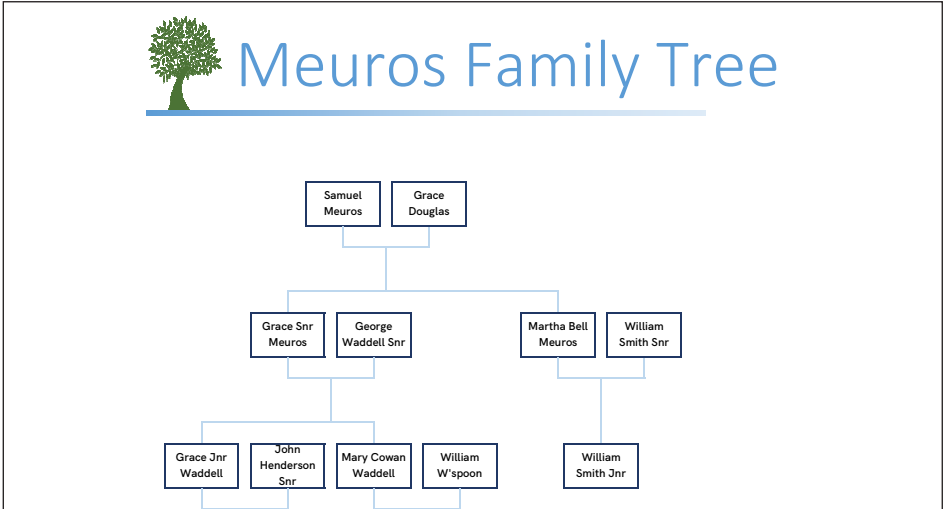
By the 1871 Census, the Waddell family is in Airdrie, George Snr is Head of the family, Mary Wotherspoon is

Housekeeper. She has three children, Grace, Gavin and James. George had died, aged three (nearly four) in 1863. James, I'm sure, is James Bryce, now known as Wotherspoon. At the bottom of the list is another record, Alex Waddell, again a grandson when looking at the original record, though wrongly transcribed in Ancestry as Ann, a granddaughter. He is a Clerk, born in Lanarkshire. Again, in the 1871 Census, looking at the Henderson family, they are in Dunipace, John is Head of the household, a Mineral Borer, Grace is his wife and John, his son. See how close in age James and John are (4 and 3), clearly first cousins, compared with the other siblings (20, 15 and 14). This shows up in a later record, James's marriage in 1892.

Alexander married Maggie Turner Calder in 1876: the wedding certificate is on ScotlandsPeople. Regarding his parents, I suspect this is another tissue of lies. He claims his father as George Waddell, Pitheadman (Deceased). This would appear to be George Snr, who claims Alex as his grandson in censuses. Also, George

Snr was still alive in 1876, he did not die until two years later. Alex then claims his mother as Grace Waddell M.S. Douglas. This is perhaps a reference to George Snr's wife, Grace Douglas Waddell M.S. Meuros, but she is believed to have died before the 1841 Census, so could not be Alex's mother in 1851. Is this a hint towards Alex's true mother, Grace Douglas Waddell, as I suggest? Could this be a hint to an incestuous relationship between father and daughter? Alex left the family home in the 1870s, had he discovered his true parentage and to him, his grandfather (or father) was dead to him? Pure speculation, we will never know!

The Waddell family has spread apart again by the 1881 Census, George Snr had died in July 1878. Mary Wotherspoon was at 4 Millerbank St in Springburn, with her brother, George Waddell Jnr and her son James. James' half-sister, Grace Jnr was a separate household at the same address, with her husband, William Paxton, and two small children. James' half-brother, Gavin was





also married with two small children, still living nearby in Airdrie, but to move to the Northeast of England in the next ten years. Where was Alex? He was married with two small children, George Cowan and Christina. Alex and Maggie together have four children, Alexander and Maggie being born after about 1883 and 1889. Ten years later, in the 1891 Census, Mary, James and George Jnr were still a household, now at 12 New Keppochhill Rd, Springburn. Mary still used her married name of Wotherspoon, as does her son, now James B, he is clearly using the Bryce (or Braes) as his middle name. Alex had presumably died by the 1891 census, where Maggie Snr is a widow, living in Coatbridge with her four children.

A year later, James Braes Wotherspoon, my grandfather, married my grandmother, Christina Menzies Wood at 228 Cambridge Street. He still lived at Keppochhill Rd and she was at 43 Cowlairs Rd, 10 minutes' walk away. An interesting record of his name, James Braes Wotherspoon - "This is the name I always use, that being my uncle in law's name". His father is shown as James Braes, Saddler (Journeyman), deceased and his mother is Mary Braes, M.S. Waddell. This perpetuates the lie told by his mother in his Birth Certificate! Another interesting name spotted recently is John Henderson, a Witness. Could this be James' cousin, John, who was only a year younger than James? The other witness was Mary Wood, probably Christina's little sister. So the other witness being James' cousin seems very likely. No other information is given about the witnesses, so all we have is speculation.

As a result of my research, I was able to undertake a search in the death records at ScotlandsPeople and found Alex's death certificate and that of his mother, Grace Jnr. This has confirmed my suspicions as to Alex's birth, he was illegitimate, his mother is given as Grace Douglas Muris [sic] Waddell, Daughter of a Pitheadman. The mystery of his father remains, it could be either Alexander Bizzett or her father or someone else completely. Alex's age is given as 37 at his death on 24 Aug 1889, so his birth is perhaps about December 1851. At the time of the census, Grace Jnr had perhaps only just become pregnant, so it would not have been obvious to her Aunt. Alex died of phthisis pulmonalis (TB) after two years. His mother died eleven years later of a cerebral haemorrhage and exhaustion at Uddingston, Lanarkshire.

So, finishing with my original question, Alex, born before the 1855 Statutory records, remains a shadowy figure, perhaps born under scandalous circumstances, but who can tell now? When is a Wotherspoon not a Wotherspoon? When that is the name I always use, being the name of my great granduncle-in-law, who had vanished in 1859, six years before my grandfather was born! I grew up visiting my three maiden aunts in Glasgow, who always seemed most prim and proper people. Was this because they knew their father was really illegitimate too, but never recorded as such due to the lies to Registrars? I knew nothing of this until I began researching the ScotlandsPeople website - so if you start looking, be prepared to accept what you find out about your ancestors!

**John Wotherspoon, 8261**

# Catherine (McDougall) Connel

## Ancestors

**H**er name is Catherine (McDougall) Connel, born 200 years ago on 6 December 1810. She is my great-great-grandmother. This narrative is sketchy and fragmented but despite few records and little evidence, Catherine's story may still be told. I am recording what I have pieced together to explore, celebrate, preserve and validate her place in the family. The persuasive interest in Catherine is partially the attraction of her setting and certainly the family dynamics within that setting. Her birthplace and origins are Slaterich, a farm on the Island of Kerrera, part of the MacDougall of Dunollie Estate near Oban, Scotland.

Oban is that delightful town on the west coast of Scotland, with splendid views of Mull, Lismore and Morvern, depending upon where one is standing. The businesses are situated along the curve of the Esplanade, with its sea wall promenade, starting at the South Pier and heading past Oban Distillery, North Pier, holiday hotels, Corran Halls, and nearly to the property and castle of Clan MacDougall of Dunollie; the castle is now a small but impressive ruin. The residences of Oban have often been described as terraced from the harbour, rising within a natural wooded amphitheatre and crowned with a folly called McCaig's Tower.

It was from the viewpoint of McCaig's Tower that I first saw Kerrera. I had arrived in Oban the night before and woke to a

blustery dark December day - misty and grey, with rain clouds touching the sea. I tightened my scarf and turned into the wind. For an instant there was the island; the winter brown bulk of it was hunched against the weather blowing in from the Firth of Lorn, beating its western shore. It was full of mystery. It crouched in the harbour below: distinct then indistinct in the shifting fog. I would have to wait another year before visiting it.

Geographically, Kerrera is positioned in the harbour of Ohan, Argyll, parish of Kilmore & Kilbride. Its northern tip reaches to within a kilometre of Dunollie Castle, thus forming a narrow channel, which separates Kerrera Sound on the east from the Forth of Lorn to the west. Kerrera is estimated to be about five miles long and about one and a half miles wide. It is a five-minute ferry run across Kerrera Sound from the mainland to Port Kerrera at its mid-point. At the end of the eighteenth century Kerrera was divided into townships with a population fluctuating from a high point of 600 (for the whole parish of Kilbride) in 1794, to its present population of thirty to thirty-five people. As the population diminished, townships became farms but retained the township names.

*"Until the nineteenth century the farms were shared by two to six or even nine tenants."*

Further research revealed that Catherine McDougall's father, John, and her grandfather, John McDougall Sr., had lived and farmed at Slaterich since the middle of the eighteenth century. I wondered about John senior's parents; were they Kerrera people and for how many generations had this McDougall family lived on the island? Early records

mention John Oig McDougall of Slaters in 1646 and a rent roll of 1715 shows Alexander MacDougall and John McDougall in Slachterach. In 1747 three of the four shares of Slaterich were allotted to Hew McDougall, Allan McDougall Sr., and Allan McDougall Jr. Are these earlier ancestors of Catherine McDougall? Is there an even earlier connection to the MacDougalls of Dunollie? Or did these Slaterich McDougalls simply adopt the name as dwellers in Clan MacDougall territory?

## Origins

A partial answer to those questions comes from a brief summary of events on the west coast of Scotland and the islands in the early 1100s. Clan MacDougall can trace its genealogy to a common ancestor, the Gaelic hero, Somerled, through his son Dougall.

Somerled is described as a twelfth century military and political leader of the Scottish isles who is credited with driving the Vikings out of western Scotland.

In 1140, Somerled married the daughter of the king of the Isle of Man. Then, through a series of offensive moves against both Scotland and Man, Somerled captured the latter, forcing the king to flee to Norway. Thus Somerled took control of the western coast and islands from the Isle of Man to the Butt of Lewis. He founded a dynasty that later became the Lords of the Isles. At his death in 1164, Somerled's kingdom was divided by his three sons; Dougall is the ancestor of Clan MacDougall and they have owned Kerrera, as part of their lands since that time.

The website <https://www.scotsman.com/news/dna-shows-celtic-hero-somerleds-viking-roots-2511349> gives titillating DNA information:

*"Byran Sykes, an Oxford professor of human genetics...has discovered that Somerled's Y-chromosome - which is inherited through the male line, is of Norse origin".*

Professor Sykes states that 25%-45% of Clan MacDougall males carry this Y-chromosome and that some 500,000 people alive today descend from Somerled.

With no vital records to bring his life into focus it might seem that the grandfather of Catherine, John McDougall Sr., would simply be a name on the family tree. However, with the help of *Island of Kerrera: Mirror of History* by H. MacDougall of MacDougall, (1979), the eighteenth-century setting (Kerrera) is not merely a shadow but is painted in brilliant tones.



*Slaterich, Kerrera*  
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## Slaterich

It is probable that John McDougall Sr., my four times great-grandfather, was born on the Island of Kerrera, at Slaterich, in the 1750s-possibly the son of one of the three previously mentioned

McDougall shareholders listed in 1747, or of the 1715 Alexander MacDougall, or John McDougall. Whatever his origin, he lived in a time of recovery.

The forfeiture of the Clan MacDougall lands and the banishment and eventual pardon of Chief Iain Ciar for his part in the 1715 Jacobite Rebellion were now in the past. The new chief, Alexander, did not join the 1745 Rising. Instead he devoted himself to the recovery and improvement of his family estate.

It was also a time of recovery of farm lands that had suffered neglect during the wars of the previous century: a recovery for families who, in many cases, had become destitute and a recovery of the economy. In the second half of the eighteenth century, activities on Kerrera reflect this growth and improvement.

Conditions during the youth of John McDougall Sr. may have seemed difficult and complicated because of the landlord's regulations:

- how many animals to graze,
- what crops to produce,
- how to fertilize with various mixes of shell, sand, seaweeds and dung,
- labour (man and beast alike) with no carts,
- what produce to pay as rent (butter, fowls, eggs, sheep, barley meal, corn, oatmeal, straw, blankets, linen).

But these regulations reflect the new knowledge of agricultural practices and higher yields. In addition, Slaterich had to pay its portion of services to the mill; other services to be carried out at Dunollie were prescribed: planting potatoes, stacking peats, cutting wood, and sheering.

The economic expansion was symbolized by the fact that Kerrera was an important staging location in the cattle trade from Mull. Slaterich possessed a mill built in 1732. There was a fishing industry and there were working quarries. Employment opportunities existed in the tasks of draining and ditching and in the herding of cattle before the enclosing by stone walls and the dyke.

These activities all helped to drive the commerce of the island but the most important was the cattle trade. In 1750 Barr nam boc, Slaterich, and Ardmore were landing places for the black-cattle ferried from Auchnacraig on Mull. Haldane describes the shipping of beasts by boat or ferry "*a rough but familiar art*". Kerrera was the closest stop from the island of Mull to the mainland and the beginning of the cattle drive to the markets at Dumbarton and elsewhere. Upon arriving at one of the Kerrera ports, the cattle were driven to the northern tip of the island then forced to swim the channel to land below Dunollie Castle.

In those very waters near Slaterich, this 1759 report must surely have caused a 'frisson' in the McDougall family:

*...Lieut. Dalton with a party of soldiers had pressed eight persons in the neighbourhood of Auchnacraig - two young men employed in the Ferry had been carried to Leith and put on board by Captain Fergusson - the inhabitants are now in such terror of being pressed that it is almost impossible to find men to work the ferry - a great number of cattle required to be ferried - the Petitioners ask that the Commissioners use their influence to secure protection.*



This is the rich island culture that nurtured the young John McDougall Sr.

## Meet the Family

It may be that John Sr. married in the 1770s and that he was Ground Officer at that time. As Ground Officer (or Groundsman) his main task was as go-between with landlord and tenant. His

*"variety of duties included dividing the riggs, the peat mosses, and the other communal rights; settling the seaware boundaries; controlling the heather burning; and distributing whisky on Old New Year's day".*

If the Slaterich farmhouse was constructed before the turn of the eighteenth century, it was built without the benefit of a farm cart. The highland ponies carried loads in two willow creels placed across their backs. Women and men also carried loads: one creel hoisted upon their shoulder. The first farm carts came to Kerrera in 1793.

Natural building materials were available in the quarries and beaches which yielded slate, lava and sandstone. Perhaps the Slaterich lintels were locally quarried slates. The traditional farm home of 1795 had a thatched roof and a hard-beaten earth floor with a covering layer of fresh sand. This treasured detail describes the fireplace at Slaterich:

*"a small crane of geared wheels allowed a hanging chain and hook near the fireplace to be wound up or down, allowing a kettle or pot to be raised or lowered or swung aside from the heat".*

There is ample evidence of a son, John, born to John McDougall Sr., but whether there were more children is uncertain.

By the end of the eighteenth century this John McDougall Jr. has married Elizabeth McMillan (my three times great-grandmother) and two daughters have been born: Lucy (1795) and Janet (12 Mar 1797). To put these vital statistics into the context of their time, in 1798 there was no road to Oban from "outside" so mail was carried to Oban. If there was mail for Kerrera or Mull, it was carried by "post runner" to Kerrera and then taken on to Mull by ferry.

In 1812 *"a new agreement was drawn up between Dunolly and the three tenants of Slatrigh, by which the land was divided into three parts..."*. Each tenant was to build a house, a barn (for threshing and storage), and a byre (for animals); each was to enclose his portion. The term of the lease was to be twelve years and was awarded in equal parts to John McDougall Sr., John McDougall Jr., and Lachlan McKinnon. The enclosure regulation involved building a stone wall three and a half feet high around each lot. The tenants also had to add turf to the dyke (a sort of wall or embankment) to help direct the route of the landed cattle from Mull, on their way to the north end of Kerrera and their swim to the mainland.

## Meet Catherine

John McDougall Jr. and Lachlan McKinnon had two years to complete their buildings and to report the completion to John Sr., Ground Officer. In the meantime, three more children were born to John and Elizabeth: Annabella (1802), Allan (1806), and Catherine (6 Dec 1810). Was the home of John McDougall Jr. ready for the birth of the last two daughters, Maxwell (13 Feb 1813) and Marjory (11 Jan 1815)? Of Maxwell there is only the

birth record so one is left to wonder if she died young or if she married and moved away before the 1841 census.

This account is written primarily to describe the life and family of Catherine McDougall, the fifth child of John and Elizabeth. By the time she was six years old, her older sister, Janet, had married John McColl of Lismore (10 Dec 1816). Catherine was probably too young to know Janet very well. Her immediate family at Slaterich included Lucy, now 19, Annabella 14, Allan 10, Maxwell 3, and baby Marjory 1 year old. It was right at this time that two events of great impact took place at Slaterich. Firstly, Lachlan McKinnon (the third shareholder) died and his young son Angus took the share (in about 1817). Secondly, Malcolm MacIntyre came to Slaterich to board at the home of John McDougall Jr. Mr. Malcolm MacIntyre had been appointed schoolmaster of the Kerrera school in 1811. Since there was no dwelling house for him, he was obliged to lodge with local families, and in 1817 he became part of John Jr.'s household.

This must have been a time of close cooperation and congenial relationships among the three farm families. In the McKinnon household there was Angus (now 22 years old) and his widowed mother Isabella (Campbell) McKinnon. In the household of John McDougall Sr., the lack of records makes it impossible to know who the occupants may have been. However, in the household of John Jr. there are now young adults Lucy, Annabella, Allan, and their boarder Malcolm MacIntyre. Thus the two important events culminated in the establishment of two new families as Annabella married Malcolm MacIntyre

(14 Dec 1824) and Lucy married Angus McKinnon (2 Feb 1826).

Catherine's grandfather John McDougall Sr. died between the years 1817 and 1825. Upon his death, it appears that Archibald McDougall became the third share holder and John Jr. became Ground Officer, and when John Jr. died around 1834, his son Allan became, in his turn, Ground Officer, thus fulfilling a three-generation family tradition.

### Catherine and Donald

How and when Catherine MacDougall met and married Donald Connel remains unknown. Donald's paternal grandparents, Charles Connel and Janet (Watson) Connel, were from Irvine, Ayrshire. Donald's father, Alexander, was born (21 Dec 1781) in Irvine. On his mother's side are Muckairn, Argyll, ancestors. His mother, Mary MacCallum, was born (27 May 1787) to Gilbert and Christian (Macvean) Maccallum in Muckairn. Further research may inform this story about when, but probably not why, Alexander Connel left Irvine for the Highlands and settled in Ardchattan, where he and Mary married and had their family.

The first child born to Alexander and Mary Connel was Donald's oldest brother John, (5 Jan 1808), a month before his parents' marriage; they wed on 11 Feb 1808.

Donald was born three years later (13 Jan 1811). The family was still in Ardchattan when more children were born: Neil, (21 Jun 1812), Duncan, (10 Feb 1819), Catherine, (15 Feb 1823), and Alexander, (22 Oct 1825).

The 1841 census provides the first insight into Catherine's and Donald's life together. They are living in Oban on Black Lyn Street, now named Airds Crescent. Both are listed as 25, which doesn't quite agree with their birth dates.

This 1841 census also describes the changes in Catherine's family on Kerrera. Her widowed mother Elizabeth (McMillan) McDougall, 65, is head of the household. Living at home with her are Catherine's brother and sister, Allan 35 and Mayzie 25. Allan is listed as a farmer (with no mention of Ground Officer). Familiar names of two other Slaterich families are Archibald McDougall and Angus and Lucy McKinnon, Catherine's sister. Angus McKinnon's widowed mother "Widow McKinnon" 70, is included in his household with his children Elizabeth 14, Catharine 12, Isabella 10, Lachlain 8, Flora 7, Colin 5, and Allan 3.

Over at the Kerrera schoolhouse, Catherine's other sister, Annabella 35, is listed with her husband, Malcolm MacIntyre 50, Parochial Schoolmaster of Kerrera School; Malcolm was enumerator for this 1841 Kerrera Census. Children at home are Jean 15, Peter 13, Donald 10, Malcolm 6, Catherine 3, and Allan 1.



Old School, Kerrera  
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News of Catherine's sister Janet, who married John McColl of Lismore, is revealed on the 1841 census of Lismore.

Recorded are: Janet McColl 40; Ranold 12; Hugh 10; Alexander 7; Janet 70.

It is good news to see that Janet (McDougall) McColl 40 is alive in 1841 with three children at home, but it is sad to note the absence of John. Is he deceased? Perhaps so, (some time between 1834 and 1841) as Janet is head of the household. The 70 year old Janet is probably John's widowed mother.

## Life in Glasgow

While the daily acts of domestic life must join the arcana of the early years of their lives, the 1851 census provides a conflicted view of Donald and Catherine Connel's family. Now, home is Soroba MacKoul (another farm of the MacDougall of Dunollie estate, situated one kilometre northeast of Oban town centre), and living at home are Donald 39, farm labourer, Catherine 38, and three children: John 7, scholar, Elizabeth 2, and Mary 1.

At Slaterich, Catherine's mother Elizabeth has died and her brother Allan 42, has become the head of household and "*Farmer of 16 acres of arable land...*". Living with him is his sister Marion 32, "*farmer's sister*" and their nephew (Catherine and Donald Connel's son) Alexander Connel 8, scholar. Further searching of this census revealed two more of Donald and Catherine's sons living in the households of Catherine's two married sisters. Allan Connel 6, scholar, is listed with Angus and Lucy McKinnon, along with their own children: Lachlan 18, Colin 15, scholar, and Allan 13, scholar. Catherine's youngest son, Duncan Connel 4, scholar, is living with Annabella MacIntyre 48, "*annuitant*" who is the head of household: her husband

Malcolm died in 1846. The MacIntyre home is still the Schoolmaster's house as Peter (Malcolm and Annabella's son) was appointed schoolmaster at his father's demise. He is now "*Parochial Schoolmaster*". Annabella's younger children at home are Malcolm 16, scholar, Catherine 13, scholar, and Allan 11, scholar.

When I discovered that three of Donald and Catherine's children were at home and three were on the Island of Kerrera, I felt both puzzled and concerned. Was this separation due to poverty or to illness? Did Catherine need help from her sisters and brother for the care of her children? I soon realized the reason lay in the Kerrera School. It needed pupils! The Schoolmaster's salary was partly financed by the tenants of Kerrera. He was encouraged to see that the school was "*...properly attended, and the greater numbers of scholars the better, both for the tenants and for the schoolmaster, himself...*". Perhaps this explains the three Connel "scholars" attending school in Kerrera. After all, the schoolmaster is their cousin and his mother is Catherine's sister.

Speculatively, 1853 seems a significant year for the Connel family. I had noticed on the 1861 Census of Glasgow that the whole family was together on the High Street and that there was a seventh child, a daughter, Marion 8. Her place of birth is listed as Oban, consistent with her siblings. But looking even further ahead, at the 1871 Census, Marion's birthplace is listed as Luing (Island of Luing in Argyll). These discrepancies may be due to mistakes at the time of recording the census but one is left to wonder which listing is correct. If Luing is the correct

birthplace, then 1853 may well have been the time of the move to Glasgow.

I have more questions than answers about 1853 since I have not been able to locate a birth record for Marion (my great grandmother). If she was indeed born in the year her parents left the bucolic life of Soroba MacKoul for the frenetic tension of the working world of Glasgow, and if she was born "en route", Luing may have been the logical location.

Curiosity prompts me to hypothesize about the means of transportation the family used for the move from Oban to Glasgow (1853). Trains did not serve Oban until 1880. However, the first boat powered by steam was seen in the Sound of Mull in 1818. If Marion Connel was born on the Island of Luing, was this a stopping point during a boat voyage to Glasgow? And did the family's trip take them through the Crinan Canal?

While the date, method and route of the move of the Connel family is conjecture, the 1861 Census, City of Glasgow, provides a snapshot view of the whole family together at 148 High Street, in the Parish of Blackfriars or College. Donald (48) has found employment as a packer; Catherine (46) is listed as "wife" so is not employed out of the home. Their four sons are employed as: Alexander (19) carter; John (17) packing box maker; Allan (16) leather warehouse boy; Duncan (14) calender boy; which reflects the industrial fervour of Glasgow in the 1860s. Back on the Island of Kerrera, Peter MacIntyre continues as schoolmaster. The MacIntyre and the McKinnon cousins are still scholars at 13, 15 and 16 years of age. But in Glasgow, only the three Connel daughters,

Elizabeth 12, Mary 11, and Marion 8 are listed as scholars. Duncan at 14 is already working, as is his 16 year old brother, Allan.

For reasons unknown, during the 39 days after the 1861 Glasgow Census was taken on April 8, Allan Connel traces the journey back to Slaterich where he dies on May 17. He was just 16. His Uncle Allan McDougall of Slaterich is informant. No cause of death is recorded.

After young Allan Connel's death in 1861, the family moved from 148 High Street to 49 Dean Street, Glasgow. This is the address where Alexander, 24, was stricken with typhus fever. After a 13-day struggle he succumbed to the fever in the Royal Infirmary (4 Aug 1866). The informant to his death was his Kerrera schoolhouse cousin, Malcolm MacIntyre 31 who lived at 49 Stirling Road, Glasgow. Then four months later the father, Donald Connel, died on 24 December 1866, of a "*fatty tumour of the spleen and pancreas*". He was 54 and had worked as a calendar packer; his son John was the informant.

Then news came from Slaterich of the death of Catherine's sister Lucy (McDougall) McKinnon (9 Nov 1871). She died at Barr-nam-boc, a former ferry landing spot in the cattle trade, and the farm neighbouring the family farm of Slaterich. (Lucy's husband, Angus, carried on as farmer of Barr-nam-boc for many more years.)

By the 1871 Census Catherine's family at home consists of Mary 21, a china/pottery painter, and Marion 18, a sewing machine worker. Catherine's son John is the head of household. Missing from 49 Dean Street are Duncan and Elizabeth.

It must have been around this time that Marion became a member of the Wellpark Institute as a Sunday School teacher or monitor. An indication of their respect and esteem for Marion comes in the form of an engraved plaque presented to her at the time of her marriage to Peter Samson, baker, journeyman. The plaque is now a family treasure. It reads "*Miss Marian Connel from the S.S. Teachers and Monitors in the Wellpark Institute, with other articles as a Marriage Gift. 15th March 1873*".

I like to picture a family celebration on the 28th day of February 1873 when Marion married Peter "after Banns according to the Forms of the Free Church". Their witnesses were John Connel and Elizabeth Connel, Marion's brother and sister. Were the two other siblings, Duncan and Mary not able to come home to 49 Dean Street to attend? At the end of that year Marion and Peter's first child was born (11 Nov 1873) at 112 West Street, Glasgow, and named Catherine Elizabeth after Marion's mother, Catherine, and her grandmother Elizabeth (McMillan) McDougall of Slaterich. Their next child, Mary Love Samson, (my grandmother) was born (27 Jun 1875) at 151 Castle Street, Glasgow, and named for Peter's mother, Mary Love.

Catherine (McDougall) Connel died (27 Mar 1877) at her home at 49 Dean Street. She was 64. She had suffered hepatitis and general debility for 3 months. Her son John was informant as he had been for his father, Donald, in 1866. Catherine's life ends here: although her life is over this modest celebration attempts to keep her memory alive through her descendants.

**Muren Schachter, 4233**



# Elizabeth Lochhead and a Family Heirloom

Elizabeth Lochhead was my paternal great great aunt, the younger sister of Alexander Lochhead, my great great grandfather. They were born and lived in Salsburgh, Parish of Shotts, Lanarkshire.

I inherited a family heirloom which had belonged to Elisabeth Lochhead. It was a very old book, dated 1783 and called *The Afflicted Man's Companion or A Directory for families and persons afflicted with sickness and any other distress*. The book was written by the Rev John Willison, late minister of the gospel at Dundee and was printed and sold by J Wilson, bookseller, Kilmarnock. Inside the book were two very old, folded pieces of paper. The paper was yellow with age and the ink which had been used was faded. The writing was still legible, and dated from 1840 to 1848. Elisabeth had written a type of journal on the pieces of paper, giving details of life on the farm at Newhouse where she and her husband worked, and also the texts preached by the ministers in Kirk O' Shotts. In 1840, she frequently mentions the texts preached by the Reverend Mr Colvin, who was the minister at Kirk o' Shotts from 1836 to 1843.

## The Rev. Walter Colvin and the Statistical Account of Scotland

I have always been interested in the fact that, although Elisabeth lived in a rural area and worked on a farm, she was literate

in 1840. In carrying out further research into her story, I found information on *The New or Second Statistical Account of Scotland*, published under the Auspices of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland between 1834 and 1845. The Statistical Account was descriptive rather than financial and had a chapter devoted to each parish compiled by the local minister. The Account offers a record of a wide variety of topics: wealth, class and poverty; climate, agriculture, fishing and wildlife; population, schools and the moral health of the people.

The section of the Account titled *Parish of Bertram Shotts*, was written by the Rev. Walter Colvin. He wrote in the section headed Education:

*"The total number of schools in the parish is 6. Of these, 3 are endowed, and 3 are unendowed. There are none supported by societies, but one by individual subscription. The branches of education which are taught are, Greek, Latin, English, geography, writing, and arithmetic. The salary of the parochial schoolmaster is L.34, 4s.4d.; his fees may amount to L.23: and his other emoluments L.18".*

*"I am not aware that there are any of the young between six and fifteen years of age who cannot read or write, although there are a few adults in that unfortunate state of ignorance."*

Under Literature, he wrote :

*"There are two circulating libraries in the parish. In the library belonging to the Shotts Iron-works, there is a large and excellent assortment of books".*

## The Shotts Death Records

I obtained further information about education in Shotts, in the Shotts Death Records, published by Lanarkshire Family History Society. An entry dated 4 December 1837 and the name Samuel Meuros was of considerable interest:

*"To Mr Samuel Meuros, who died on the third of November in the 68th year of his age and 43rd of his official duty, as schoolmaster and session clerk of the Parish of Shotts - exceedingly lamented by his family, to whom he had been a most affectionate father - by the parish at large - whom he had long and faithfully served, and by a numerous circle of acquaintances. To whom he had endeared himself, by the frankness and amiability of his manners. 'Sic Transit Gloria Mundi'."*

Mr Meuros was the schoolmaster in Shotts from 1794 until his death in 1837 and it is very likely that he taught Elisabeth who was born in 1814.

Samuel Meuros taught in the school which opened in 1799, built across the road from the Kirk o' Shotts. The earliest recorded schoolmaster was Thomas Dechmont in 1654, as Shotts was a parish with a public school, a concept encouraged by the Scottish Parliament, after the Reformation in 1560. In 1696, the Act of Setting for Schools made it mandatory for each parish to have a school funded by Church funds and other local taxes. Rural lowland Scotland was central to the Parochial Education System which continued until the Education Act of 1872 transferred the responsibility for education from the Church to local government.

In researching Elisabeth's life, I obtained her birth certificate, dated 23 June 1814 and her marriage certificate for 19 June 1836 to James Reid. Unfortunately, her name is also in the Shotts Death Records of 13 March 1851: *"To Elisabeth Lochhead, wife of James Reid, labourer, Woodhall, aged 36 years"*. Sadly, I have no idea why she died so young and left a husband and six children.

I feel privileged to have been the guardian of Elisabeth's book and the journal she wrote almost two hundred years ago. In the words of the poem The Census Taker (Anon)

*"I have heard her voice in my heart".*

## Further Research

The 1841 Census, as found on the Ancestry website, records that Elisabeth Reid [née Lochhead] had two sons, James and Alexander Reid, age three and one. To date, I have not been able to trace them in the 1851 Census, but will continue my research. I will also look at Valuation Rolls, in order to trace more information about the two farms which the family were involved with in the Shotts area, Newhouse and Fernieshaw Farms.

## Christine Ferguson, 10832

*Editor: It always surprises me that articles submitted for publication often have potential links, even though the authors are perhaps unknown to each other. I will leave it to Christine and John Wotherspoon to decide if they want to explore any links with the Meuros families! Hopefully if they do they will share their findings with us all.*

# A Family Affair

## Identifying Rites of Passage in Old Photos

Ever since the inception of the camera, we have been using photos to record family events. Today we can record our lives from pre-natal foetal development to granny's 100th birthday party (unlike our ancestors, we are a bit squeamish about peri-mortem pictures). Thanks to sophisticated modern cameras, we can do most of the recording ourselves but we do have a tradition of calling in the professionals for certain occasions, particularly graduations and weddings, and for formal portraits. Our ancestors visited the photographic studios to record a range of events, some of which we would not even recognise, dressed in their best clothes or outfits most appropriate to the occasion.

Dating the photos is an essential part of identifying the events in old albums and connecting them with what you know about your ancestors. Costume is of great importance and a number of helpful books have been published on the subject. Another useful tool is the various directories of photographers giving their operational dates and the addresses from which they worked, for comparison with the details on the reverse of the images.

### A new baby in the family

The arrival of a baby is always a family event worth recording. The Victorians and Edwardians used the opportunity to dress the child in long white christening robes, often heirlooms handed down through the family - the robes made no concession to gender.

The photo below is unlikely to have been taken on the day of the christening - the baby was dressed for a visit to the photographer's studio, to make a record of the event specifically for the album.



Photo 1 - Neil Murdoch and family

Very young children were initially dressed in androgynous frocks (which probably made toileting arrangements easier) but between the ages of three and six, a boy transitioned into trousers, in an event called 'breeching'. Although this was a rite of passage many parents thought worth recording, it is not one that is easy for people today to identify, the photo simply showing a small boy in short trousers. Easier to identify are the miniature adult suits that were adopted in the later 1870s.

Girls had a parallel event when, around mid to late teens, they put up their hair and

adopted full adult dress, demonstrating that they had come of age. Again, these are not readily identifiable unless the girl's age is written on the reverse of the photo.

## A family wedding

In a family calendar, the engagement was the next big event. Either as a couple or with the young woman on her own, the picture would include a demurely extended hand displaying the ring. And of course the natural follow-on to the engagement was the wedding.



*Photo 2 - Chambers family wedding at Folly Villas, St Albans (1910)*

The idea of the white wedding was introduced by Queen Victoria and from the mid nineteenth century onwards, all the paraphernalia of flowers, bridesmaids, veils etc became the norm, at least for wealthy families. Ordinary folk got married in their best outfits, perhaps with a floral corsage for the woman and buttonhole for the man. For family historians, photos of big family weddings can be very helpful. The line-up of relatives, often with marked family resemblances, shows the respective parents, siblings of the bride and groom acting as bridesmaids or best man, and other relations who may never appear anywhere else.

## A death in the family

Until recently, the idea of a professional photographer at a funeral might have caused a raised eyebrow. Attitudes are now relaxing but it is still a practice treated with great caution. Ancestral albums reflect a similar restraint but there were practical considerations involved. Where someone died abroad and relatives could not attend a funeral, the family had to demonstrate that all the decencies had been observed and the person had been interred with respect. This was especially important where the deceased was a soldier, and at least one studio advertised itself as the Black Watch photographer. Unequivocal evidence of a burial could also be essential to the payment of insurance or the release of a widow to remarry.



*Photo 3 - headstone of Sgt Major Francis Wilkin*

## Mourning

But beyond the familiar 'rites of passage' photos there is a category of images recording events specific to an individual family. These are often related to loss, and the photographer stages tableaux to re-create the stories. Leafing through a number of albums reveals the props most often used. Sometimes those props are simply objects to give focus to a portrait - a basket of flowers, a book or a pair of

gloves. But often they are there to convey a meaning. A hand holding a photograph or, more often, a photo album on the table can signify a bereavement in the family. An opened letter signifies news (good or bad), and it is worth checking if the sitter is in mourning. Occasionally the photographer might introduce a globe of the world to emphasise geographical distance from the event.



Photo 4 - Unknown woman

This photo shows a young woman in mourning attire with an open letter in her lap, a sad but faraway expression on her face, an engagement ring discreetly displayed. The presence of the letter suggests bad news about a person outside her household and although possibly referring to someone in Britain, I think it is more likely the letter symbolises an

event overseas, most probably the death of her lover.



Photo 5 - Catherine Mitchell (née Gray)

Although this sitter has been identified, the nature of her loss is not known. She holds a handkerchief (another symbol of grief) and wears images of the departed on both wrists. (A digital microscope might reveal the face.) In this example above, the photographer has resorted to make-up, with a theatrical tear track painted on his subject's face.

From the same album comes a more cheerful picture. Victorian sartorial protocols required a widow to go through a series of diminishing depths of mourning. This woman is certainly not in deep mourning although we cannot know the colour of her dress, and she may well be passing into a stage when she could be thinking about Mr Right mark 2. The photographer suggests this by a discreetly discarded handkerchief symbolising an end to tears.





Photo 6 - Unknown Mitchell

## Funerals

Because close-up photos at a funeral were uncommon, the following picture is a mystery. It appears in the album of the Abrahams, a wealthy Liverpool family of chemists. The identity of the older woman at the centre is not known but she and her family have chosen to have the moment of raw grief captured by a professional photographer.



Photo 7 - Unknown Abraham

A funeral photo, the origins of which have never been uncovered may be seen at <https://photo-sleuth.blogspot.com/2011/09/sepia-saturday-91-black-horse-black.html>. It shows a child's

funeral outside what are probably agricultural buildings somewhere in Scotland. The coffin is uncovered and a little girl holds a silver candlestick. (As they say, answers on a postcard!)

Whether you have been lucky enough to inherit your family's album or have bought one at an antique fair, it is the beginning of a fascinating journey. Even if you never fathom who the individuals were, there is so much that can be read about the history of the family portrayed in the pictures.

**Diana Burns 7039**

All images ©Diana Burns

The following website and book may prove helpful in your photo-sleuthing: Glasgow's Victorian Photographers: <http://www.thelows.madasafish.com/> **Richard D Torrance** *Photographers in Western Scotland to 1914*

Edinburgh, Scottish Genealogy Society 2002

ISBN 1904060064

available to view at the Research Centre <https://www.gwsfhs.org.uk/collection/photographers-in-western-scotland-to-1914/>

*Editor: This is a fascinating article and subject. I wonder how many of us might be going back to our family albums to see what else we might be able to learn. We might even be able to work out the connections in those images that our families didn't quite get round to labelling!*

*Diana has also written a number of articles on photo-sleuthing which can be found on the GWSFHS website. A search for 'Photo' or 'Photo-sleuthing' should provide the links.*

# James and Richard Oswald: Brothers with Contrasting Lives

This article was meant to be about a beneficent Glasgow clergyman, the Rev. James Oswald, however as I researched his family it became clear that the broader family history was perhaps more interesting. His brother was Richard Oswald, who became a merchant in London and also helped establish the treaty between the United States and Great Britain which ended the American War of Independence.

Richard Oswald married into a rich family which brought him property in the Caribbean and the American colonies, included in which were plantations which used African slave labour. He dealt in sugar, tobacco and other commodities and helped provision the British army during the Austrian War of Succession and the Seven Years War. He was also responsible for the shipment of around 13,000 African slaves from Bance/Bunce Island, in the Sierra Leone river estuary, to the British colonies in America and the Caribbean.

He had lots of skills and business acumen, however it was all underpinned by his activity as a major slave trader which involved him setting up a 'slave trading post' off the West African coast. Hopefully, therefore, these notes will help, even in a small way, dispel the myth that trading in African slavery was predominately an English activity, carried out from English ports, and that we Scots were above doing anything like that. It has

become clear in recent years that Scots were at the heart of the machinery that made slave trading work and profitable. They were also responsible for some of the most appalling treatment of their 'cargo' as 'it' was shipped across the Atlantic.

In 1795 Robert Burns wrote A Man's a Man for A' That, a sentiment that Oswald appears not to have shared. As it happens Burns also wrote a poem about Oswald's wife Mary Ramsey, but more of that later.

The brothers' great grandfather was James Oswald of Kirkwall, Orkney. He had a son, also James, who at some point crossed over to Wick in Caithness where he became a bailie of the town. What his occupation was has not been established. He married Barbara Coghill and had two sons, James and George who both became clergymen, each marrying daughters of Richard Murray of Pennyland.

James was born in 1654 and attended King's College Aberdeen graduating as M.A. in 1674. Initially he was a session clerk and teacher in Thurso, however that was to change when he was admitted to the ministry in the parish of Watten in Caithness, an Episcopalian charge, in 1683. He remained at Watten until his death in 1698. He married Mary Murray in the year he became minister there and had two sons, Richard, born in 1687 and Alexander, born in 1694, and two daughters. Both sons became very successful merchants in Glasgow. In 1751 they purchased the Scotstoun estate from the Crawford family and by 1759 they jointly owned Balshagray. Notably they were also influential in their cousin Richard, son of George Oswald,

becoming a merchant, he serving an apprenticeship with them.

George was born in 1664 and graduated M.A. from Edinburgh University in 1692. He became minister of Dunnet parish church, also in Caithness, in 1697, his charge being a Presbyterian one. He married his sister-in-law Margaret Murray and had five children of whom two were boys: James, (the beneficent clergyman) and Richard (the slave trader). He died in 1725. One unusual episode he had to deal with during his ministry occurred in 1699 when two parishioners were accused of witchcraft. Having sought advice from the Presbytery he was advised to confront the accused with witnesses and report back. Nothing seems to have come of it as there is no further record of it in the Presbytery Records. This case also appears to have been the last recorded incident of witchcraft in Caithness.

## James Oswald: the Beneficent Clergyman

George's eldest son James was born in 1703. His early education is unclear with a suggestion that he attended King's College, Aberdeen. It seems he did attend the divinity class given by William Hamilton at Edinburgh University in 1723. For how long and to what extent is not known.

He must however have attained a reasonable divinity education as when his father died the Caithness Presbytery began the process of George succeeding his father at Dunnet in March 1726, ending with his ordination in August of the same year.

He remained at Dunnet, preaching in English and Gaelic, until December 1750 at which time he transferred to the parish at Methven in Perthshire. His move there was not without some difficulty. He was proposed by the parish patron for the position in 1748 however the Perth Presbytery was against the appointment, not necessarily on a personal basis but because they were against patronage and would have preferred the parish lay elders to have decided their next incumbent. It took two years and various rebukes from the church hierarchy, including civil charges of intimidation, before a General Assembly committee 'made it happen'. This led to a number of the congregation seceding from the church.

From about that time, and for the rest of his life, he began to write about the church, its purpose, methodology and potential for schism, gaining a reputation as an 'ecclesiastical politician'. His first publication was in 1753 relating to church authority and obedience, however it was in the mid-1760s that he began to make his name as an author. In that decade he was an unsuccessful candidate for the chair of ecclesiastical history at Glasgow University. In 1765 he wrote 'Scripture Catechism, for the Use of Families' and a year later he wrote perhaps his most important work 'An Appeal to Common Sense in Behalf of Religion', which was well received at home and abroad, and went to a second edition in 1768 and a second volume in 1772.

During this period, he became moderator of the General Assembly in 1765 and was awarded the degree D.D. (Doctor of Divinity) by Glasgow University in the same year.

He married Elizabeth Murray of Clairdon in 1728 and had seven children, four of whom were boys. Two of the sons, George and Alexander, became noted merchants in Glasgow, George inheriting the Scotstoun estate circa 1766 from his second cousins Richard and Alexander who both died without issue, and brother Alexander buying the Shieldhall estate in 1781. It's also perhaps worth mentioning that brother Alexander had a son, another James born in 1779, who, like his father, was a merchant and became one of two MPs for Glasgow in 1832, following the Reform Act of that year. His statue is in the north east corner of George Square in line with the Cenotaph; Oswald Street in the city centre is named after him.



*James Fillans, Public domain  
Wikimedia Commons*

Elizabeth died in 1746, not long after the youngest son Andrew was born in 1745. In 1749 James married Margaret Dunbar, there being no children of this second marriage.

James continued at Methven until 1783 at which time he left his charge to go and live with his son George at Scotstoun.

He had continued to write, having more time to do so from the early 1770s due to ill health resulting in his pastoral duties being carried out by others. For most of his life he and his brother Richard had exchanged letters, some of which dealt with his writings, particularly concerning a follow up to 'Appeal'. His brother also helped him financially at Methven when his stipend was reduced as a result of the patron and one other heritor being in financial difficulties.

He died in 1793 and left £100 to the Glasgow Society for the Sons of Clergymen (still in existence and now known as the Glasgow Society for the Sons and Daughters of Clergymen), and a similar amount to its Edinburgh counterpart. He also donated £20 to the Glasgow Merchants House. Small amounts it would seem but in today's terms these sums equate to £16,113.53 and £3,222.71 respectively.

### **Richard Oswald: Merchant, Diplomat, Slave Trader**

James' brother Richard was born circa 1705. Where he began his education is not known however around 1725, shortly after his father died, he became apprenticed to his cousins Richard and Alexander who, as previously stated, were successful merchants in Glasgow trading in tobacco, sugar and wine. He became their factor in the British colonies in America and the Caribbean travelling as required to satisfy the needs of the business, supplying planters and collecting payment and chasing debts. On his return to Glasgow in 1741 he became a partner in his cousins' company.

During the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748) Oswald had

made large profits, presumably for his cousins' company and himself, resulting in him moving to Philpot Lane in London in 1746 where he continued to deal in tobacco and sugar and eventually, horses and slaves. Between 1756 and 1758, helped by a family member who was on the government Treasury board, and other influential London based Scottish merchants, he began provisioning the British army with bread, wagons and so on, which led to him supplying the army in Germany with bread during the Seven Years War (1756-1763). His contracts and commissions during this war netted him a remarkable £125,000, worth £24,937,598.71 today.

His business activity had clearly grown in size and scope between these two wars. He was making lots of money but where did his working capital come from? No doubt some of it would come from the usual sources of the day and his profits, however two events during this period I believe, significantly changed the level of capital he was able to apply to his business.

Firstly, he began shipping African slaves to the American and Caribbean colonies around 1748 and then he married an extremely rich heiress in 1750.

Looking at his marriage first; he married Mary Ramsay in St Martin-in-the-Fields, London on the 17 November 1750. She was the daughter of Alexander Ramsay of Jamaica and Jean Ferguson, whom he had met in Jamaica whilst working for his cousins. Alexander was an extremely wealthy plantation, and hence, slave owner living in Kingston. He had died in 1738, his will being probated in Jamaica in that year and referring to him owning

one hundred and one slaves, fifty one adult males and fifty adult females, all valued at £3727. Mary as an only child inherited her father's estate on his death which included properties in the West Indies and the Americas. Through his wife therefore Oswald had access to a significant fortune. As it turned out there were no children of their marriage.

By the time of his marriage he had already got involved in the trading of slaves. In 1748 he and other London based Scottish merchants, the partnership being known as Grant, Sargent and Oswald, purchased Bance Island from the Royal African Company of England which had built a fort there around 1672.

The fort was rebuilt, and the infrastructure put in place to obtain slaves from the mainland. They did not venture into the interior themselves but imported guns, alcohol, and cloth which they exchanged with local chieftains for native captives they brought to the island, these captives resulting from local 'induced' wars.

Oswald was the lead partner in the venture whose main customers were the rice planters of Charlestown, South Carolina. By 1756 he had established a close business and personal relationship with Henry Laurens, a very rich rice planter and slave dealer there. From Bance island the slave ships would carry around three hundred slaves per ship plus ivory and camwood. Laurens sold the slaves locally and from his commission on the sale, would purchase rice to send to London along with the ivory and camwood. By this process both men increased their wealth exponentially. Between 1748 and 1784 around thirteen thousand men, women and children



were shipped from Bance Island to the Americas.

However, the American War of Independence was to change the relationship between Oswald and Laurens, both becoming active participants in ending it.

In the meantime, following the end of the Seven Years War in 1763 Oswald began putting by now his vast fortune to more use by acquiring land for both business and personal use. He purchased four plantations in the Caribbean amounting to 1,566 acres, and 30,000 acres of land in Florida. Over the next twenty years he also purchased the Auchincruive estate in Ayrshire (7,000 acres) and the similarly sized Cavens estate in Kirkcudbright and Dumfriesshire. His main residence became Auchincruive House which was built in 1767 to a design provided to the previous owner James Murray by Robert Adam.



*Oswald Hall, Auchincruive*  
cc-by-sa/2.0 ©Dan  
[geograph.org.uk/p/1149418](http://geograph.org.uk/p/1149418)

His business activities however began to suffer following the rebellion of the British colonists in America which resulted in the American War of Independence beginning in 1775. As a direct consequence he reduced his overseas activities and also divested himself of his property in Virginia and Florida. He always had been to some extent politically active, but not

in any formal way, simply through friends in Whitehall. The war changed that as he began writing papers on a variety of subjects, including military, using his business background and experience of the Colonies and their businessmen to inform his writing. One particular memorandum written in 1781 was entitled 'The Folly of Invading Virginia, The Strategic Importance of Portsmouth and the need for Civil Control of the Military' from which we may be able to assume where his sympathies lay.

It was at this time that his friendship with Henry Laurens came to the forefront of settling the Independence War. Laurens had become President of the Continental Congress (the provisional government of the rebellious colonies) during the war and had then been appointed American envoy to Holland. On his way there c.1780/81 he was captured by the British Navy, imprisoned in the Tower of London and charged with high treason. In 1781 Oswald paid bail of £50,000 to release him from the Tower, Laurens remaining in London until he was exchanged for the British Commander in America, c.1782.

Probably because of his American contacts, in April 1782 Oswald was appointed by the Prime Minister Lord Shelburne as his diplomatic agent to 'treat for peace' with the American delegation in Paris which consisted of Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, John Jay and subsequently Henry Laurens. Oswald was the main negotiator for the British side but was considered by some to be too lenient towards the Americans and too ready to concede issues. However, by November 1782 a provisional treaty was agreed and signed by the four Americans and Oswald. The formal treaty (Treaty

of Paris) was signed on 3 September 1783, being essentially the same as the provisional one signed the year before.

*“At least in part, United States Independence was negotiated between a British slave trader and his agent for rice growing slaves in South Carolina”*

Oswald returned to London, sharing his time between his town house at 9 Great George Street and Auchincruive, relinquishing the management of his business to other family members.

A year after the treaty was signed he died at Auchincruive on 6 November 1784. His wife had life rent of the estate until her death in 1788 at which time his nephew George Oswald of Scotstoun was left one part of it, the other going to Richard Oswald’s great-nephew Richard Alexander Oswald.

Richard and Mary were buried in the Oswald vault at St. Quivox parish church, however she had died in her London home and it was the last part of her journey home to Ayrshire that prompted Robert Burns to write a poem about her which he called ‘Ode, Sacred to the Memory of Mrs. Oswald of Auchincruive’.

Some of the sentiments expressed in the poem came from Burns’ previous knowledge of Mary when he lived in her neighbourhood where her tenants and servants detested her with a passion. However, it was the arrival of her funeral cortege at Sanquhar Inn, depriving him of lodgings there for the night thereby forcing him to ride on a further twelve miles on a tiring horse, himself fatigued and the weather stormy and snowing, which pushed him to write a scathing

account of her life. The lines below illustrate his feelings about her as he wrote the poem after his arduous journey.

*‘Laden with unhonoured years  
Noosing with care a bursting purse  
Baited with Many a deadly cure.’*

and

*‘Pity’s flood there never rose  
See these hands, ne’er stretch to save  
Hands that took but never gave  
Keeper of Mammon’s iron chest  
Lo, there she goes, unpitied and  
unblest  
She goes, but not to realms of  
everlasting rest!’*

The rest of the poem suggests she is destined for hell, along with her husband.

When slavery was abolished in Britain in 1833, Richard Alexander Oswald, the grandson of James Oswald, the beneficent clergyman, was awarded compensation of £5,645 18s 6d for the loss of the 297 slaves he owned jointly with his wife in Jamaica.

Today this would be worth somewhere around £746,969.

**George Manzor, 7736**

## Tell your own story

If you don’t recount your family history, it will be lost. Honor your own stories and tell them too. The tales may not seem very important, but they are what binds families and makes each of us who we are.

*Madeleine L’Engle*

# Memoranda of the Osborne Clan

As family historians we are passionate about telling the stories of our families. However, it is also really exciting to find that some of our ancestors did the same!

About 30 years ago my father-in-law, George HUNTER, discovered a *Memoranda of the Osborne Clan*, written in 1919 by John Cochran OSBORNE (1850-1936) who was a first cousin of George's grandmother and the grandfather of his second wife. He set about transcribing it and produced a full typescript which was then 'published' for the family and he incorporated the information into the family tree. I have since updated this branch of the tree, building on his work in the late 1980s/early 1990s.

John OSBORNE's 'Prefactory' explains his reasons for writing it:

*It has seemed good to me to set down some memoranda of the Osborne Clan particularly of the descendants of the late Robert Osborne, at one time blacksmith at Braehead, Thorntonhall, and latterly of Caldcoats Farm in the parish of Newton Mearns and of whom my father, James Osborne, was the third son.*

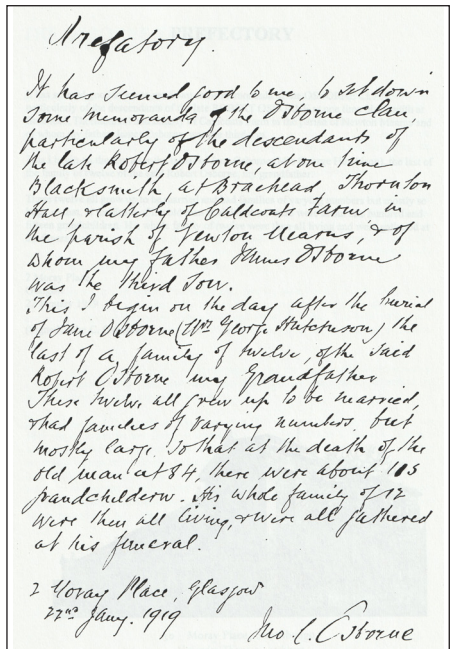
*This I begin on the day after the burial of Jane Osborne (Mrs George Hutchison), the last of the family of twelve of the said Robert Osborne, my grandfather.*

*These twelve all grew up to be married and had families of varying*

*numbers but mostly so large so that, at the death of the old man at eighty four, there were about one hundred and fifteen grandchildren his whole family of twelve were then all living and were gathered at his funeral.*

Given that the original work was based on personal recollection there are some 'errors' in the details but it has provided a rich source of information on which it has been possible to build. The Family Tree is now quite extensive, as you might imagine with another century of family growth, and if anyone is interested in finding out more about the OSBORNE family [Robert OSBORNE 1786-1870 and his wife Jane STRACHAN 1789-1871] and their descendants please get in touch. I also hope to get a copy into the Library at some point.

[Karen Hunter, 10206, editor@gwsfhs.org.uk](mailto:karen.hunter@gwsfhs.org.uk)



# The Hospice Biographers

The idea for *The Hospice Biographers* was conceived by TV reporter and executive, Barbara Altounyan, after she learned that her father was terminally ill. She approached her father with the idea that together they would audio record his whole life story, a project that was completed just two weeks before he died.

Barbara went on to found the charity which trains specialist volunteers to record on audio the life stories of patients in hospices across the UK, enabling families to hear the voices and memories of their relatives long after their passing. The audio interviews are conducted by journalists who have been recruited, checked out and specially trained by the charity, and the recordings are given, free of charge, to the patients. The organisation is therefore donation dependent to survive.

The style and format of the interviews are unique to each patient and determined by them. Some prefer to be interviewed by their biographer, others want to

record a direct message to their families. Some want to record their entire lives while others just want to recall special moments. As the charity's website recounts

*Though many patients start by claiming they have nothing interesting to say, we know there's no such thing as an ordinary life, or an ordinary person - it's our privilege to help tell those stories.*

The Hospice Biographers website is <https://www.thehospicebiographers.com/> and the charity can be contacted at [info@thehospicebiographers.com](mailto:info@thehospicebiographers.com)

They have now expanded their service to introduce a bespoke service open to anyone who would like to have their life story recorded. Taking place over several hours the founder of the service will record your story and tailor it to your request, decade by decade for a commercial fee, all of which goes directly to the charity, helping them in their aim to record those in the last chapter of their life. Details of this additional 'paid for' service can be found at <https://www.storiesforlife.co.uk/>

**Diana Burns, 7039**



# GWSFHS Library

## Family Stories

Family history is not just about births, marriages and deaths and census returns - it's about how our ancestors lived, the decisions they made, the communities they lived in, where they worked, their character, culture and more. Scotland's Year of Stories 2022 has given impetus to this aspect of family history.

The Library has a collection of family histories, donated mainly, but not exclusively, by Society members. They come in a variety of shapes and forms from word processed booklets to self published books. You can easily browse the collection for ideas on how to write your own family history. Contact your local family history society to find out more.

**ALLEN, James D** *Genealogical memoirs of the Allen family in America. 2nd edition.* 712 pages.

Published by the author, 2021.

Shelf location: F/ALL/ALL

This is a lifetime's work and not everyone can produce a book on this scale. [See Journal issue 120, page 48 for the background to the author's research and his thoughts on producing a book.]

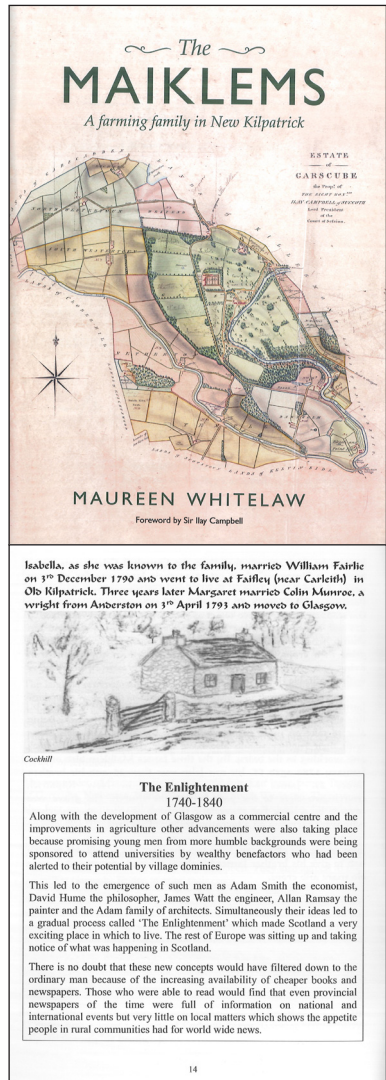
**WHITELAW, Maureen** *The Maiklems: a farming family in New Kilpatrick.* 79 pages.

Published by the author, 1999

Shelf location: F/MAI/WHI

This is a fascinating story of the Maiklems with drawings, photos, maps, family information and includes local and national events which shaped their lives.

Although not written by a family member the author has done extensive research into the lives of the family and who did supply material for the book.



**WATT, Robert D** *Watts and related families in Dunfermline Parish: some descendants of David Brand Watt and Janet Watson Turner. 3rd edition.* 79 pages.





Watts and Related families in Dunfermline Parish

Some Descendants of David Brand Watt and Janet Watson Turner



Watt family Murrayville c. 1890/1900. Row 1 to R: Brand, Isabel, Jamie, Nettie, Willie, Centre L to R: George, Margaret, David, Jean, Archie. From John T.

70

Privately published, 2012.

Shelf location: F/WAT/WAT

The author describes this book as “*pictorial stories of the Watt family*” using photographs, maps and documents with added notes to create a family history. If you are lucky enough to have collections of photographs this is a very effective method of sharing your family story.

**MCGARRILL, Annette** *Seek and ye shall find me*. 81 pages.

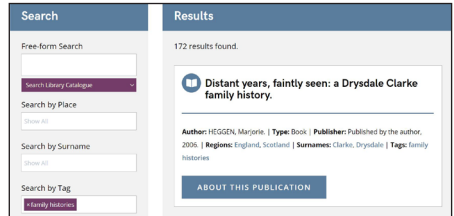
Albion Publications, 2021.

Shelf location: S/-/MCG

The author has written a novel based on her own family history research about orphans, Quarriers Homes and British Home Children in Canada. [See Book Reviews Journal issue 123, page 39]

## Family Histories on GWSFHS Website

Use the Library catalogue on the Society website to find out if someone in your family has written a family history. Either search by tag using “*family histories*” and/or by Surname.



The Society Journal regularly features family stories written by members. You can browse every issue online from our website.

- Login to your account.
- Click on ‘Journals’
- Select the issue that you want to read and click ‘Read More’
- The Journal will then be downloaded to your device.

## Electronic sources

There are many tools and platforms available to help you write your family history, including:

Ancestry - go to an ancestor’s profile and select LifeStory which will generate a story.

Family Tree Maker (FTM) - uses the plugin Family Book Creator.

Family Historian 7 - create Books and Booklets.

FamilySearch - Memories.

MyHeritage - Charts and books.

RootsMagic - Publish, Print and Share.

There are many family history options on social media where you can ask questions and get advice. Try “*The Organized Genealogist*” on Facebook. A simple Google search for guidance on how to write your family history is also worth exploring.

If you have already written your family history story then please consider sharing with others - contact [librarian@gwsfhs.org.uk](mailto:librarian@gwsfhs.org.uk) to discuss it further.

Linda Emery, Librarian

## Book Review

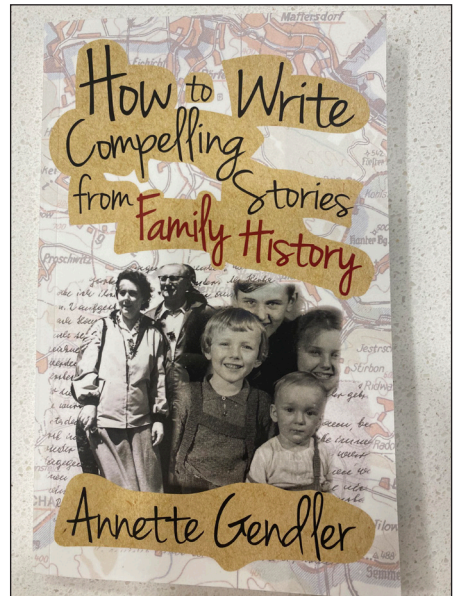
**Gendler, Annette** *How to Write Compelling Stories from Family History*  
Self published (Nana’s Books), 2019  
138 pages

This book is one of very few available on the subject and actually quite a good little resource. Each chapter is short and offers context as to why writing down our family history is important. Each chapter works in tandem and with previous chapters in providing a “how-to” on turning family history research into stories that others will want to read. At the end of each chapter, Gendler provides a “prompt” to help make use of the information provided in the chapter in creating your own story. While some of these were not relevant to me, I do like the idea that these were included. In many ways, it made the book not only a reference, but an interactive resource. At the end of the book, Gendler provides further reading and bibliography, which she refers to as ‘works cited’.

Not having heard of Gendler before, I did some research on her and discovered that

she is an author and instructor who runs workshops and courses on writing. She lives in Chicago. Certainly this experience has helped her in writing a book that is easy to read, easy to follow and that will be quite helpful for any family historian wishing to turn their research into stories that can be enjoyed by other family members or left as a legacy for future generations. I definitely recommend it as an addition to your family history library.

Christine Woodcock, 10008



## Family Stories

'Stories in families are colossally important. Every family has stories: some funny, some proud, some embarrassing, some shameful. Knowing them is proof of belonging to the family.'

Salman Rushdie

# Creating Family Stories Using Family History Software

I remember many moons ago attending a talk on using FamilyTree Maker and the speaker showed us how to use the software to create a family history book. Since then, I have been trying to find a software program that will provide what I want in a book, but so far no luck. That said, I like flexibility. I use a scrapbooking software, created by a company that also allows “instant” books. I show others how to use the instant book feature on a regular basis. The books are quick and easy and if nothing else get the photos and bits of information into a shareable format. For me, those ready-made templates just aren’t flexible enough. So, I use their scrapbooking software that allows me to personalize each book.

I am a stickler for journaling. As young as 11 or 12, I was making scrapbooks without knowing it. I would stick the photos into those ‘*magnetic albums*’ then write a few sentences on the page. For me, I wanted people to be able to enjoy the photo album without me sitting next to them. And in order to do that, they needed to know the story behind the photo. The ready-made templates rarely afford the room for journaling that I would like to have in my books.

And that is part of why I haven’t yet found the ideal family history software for making books. Not enough of the story is captured. That said, I do use them as a starting point, and then I elaborate. Let me also say, I know my own family really well. I have been immersed in

it for over six decades. I have created books for people whose families I don’t know as well and so there isn’t as much to elaborate on and the information garnered from the family history software becomes the basis of those books. It’s really a matter of taste or preference.

Right, enough yammering. Let’s see what various programs will give you if you use their book creator.

## FamilyTree Maker and Family Historian

These two programs, though unrelated are placed together because they provide the same rudimentary book. These are created using the “reports” button so are not really intended to be a book. However, you can add things like a pedigree chart, completed family record reports, and notes. You essentially get Generation I, Generation II, Generation III etc. I have used similar reports many times as a springboard for writing a family history book. It gives me the basics without having to go to every single individual in the tree. It shows dates that I will need, marriages and children and I use this to expand and add the stories that I have uncovered to make it a more readable book.

## Family Tree Builder – MyHeritage

This one is incredibly simple. Click “Reports” Click “Book” choose the person, click “Create” and there you have it. I tried this for my mum. It created a 433 page PDF report with 430 pages of irrelevant information. How she was related directly or indirectly to every individual in my tree. Let me just say she isn’t. Not to my husband’s aunts,

uncles or grandparents. Not to my dad's cousin's husband's family. All irrelevant. I have never been a name collector. I want the stories. I want to preserve those stories. I want to know the relationships. This doesn't do it for me.

Next tack was to limit what was created. This time I used my dad as the subject. I whittled out most of what I thought was irrelevant and came up with a 70 page report. This one was the ticket! All relevant information. I chose to include Direct Relations, Family Tree, Notes, Sources and Index of Places. This gave me really good information and incorporated all of the notes I had entered into my tree. This one allowed me to capture the stories. The format is a bit clunky for me but other than that, it's a winner.

The software is a free download. If you happen to have a tree on MyHeritage, you can download it into the program. I don't currently have a subscription to MyHeritage, although I have in the past. It was dead easy to get my tree from the cloud into the program. Simply one click. I did get an error message at one point about not enough space but ignored it and was good to go. I think the free program only allows a certain number of people in the tree and I apparently have more than whatever that capacity is in terms of the free account. No bother - the people closest to me are all there and those are the ones whose stories and relationships I want to know and share.

## RootsMagic/Personal Historian

RootsMagic has its own separate software for creating your family history book. Personal Historian takes a bit to learn but it really is not difficult and there is a

great tutorial on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yLDJg1CWw3s>

This program has some really cool features. You can "create a story" which opens into a word processor. You literally write down a memory or start to write about an event in your life. Each memory can be done in a separate "story". In the word processor, you can add a title and a date. If you add the date, Personal Historian will then use the dates to organize your memories/stories into chronological order.

The program allows you to add photos to enhance your stories. So, if you are writing about your engagement, you can add a photo that was taken at the time. If you are writing about graduation, add a photo of your graduation.

The software has "LifeCapsules" These are Historic events timelines and you can filter to British History, Canadian History, American History and Australian History. You can include more than one country in the event that the person you are writing about emigrated. This will automatically be included in your book if you so choose. These also act as terrific prompts - thinking about or asking about the event affected you or the person you are writing about. There are also memory triggers included in the software and I have to admit that these are fantastic. The prompts include things like: early education, hospital stays, mental health, others living with your family. There are dozens of triggers but I love that some of them are not the standard things we generally think of when we think of interviewing older relatives or writing about our own lives.

You can create multiple books all from the one set of stories. You can include absolutely everything for your own copy, weed out some personal stuff if you want to give a copy to a family member, or leave out a whole lot of stories if you are sharing publicly (donating to a FHS for example). No need to recreate the wheel in order to satisfy different audiences. Simply 'add' or 'remove' the stories. This program has a free version which is incredibly robust but in order to print the book you need to purchase the software. It is quite inexpensive at about £25. Just let me say, I think I may actually have finally found the program I have been looking for.

**Christine Woodcock, 10008**

## Maud Mary and the Titanic

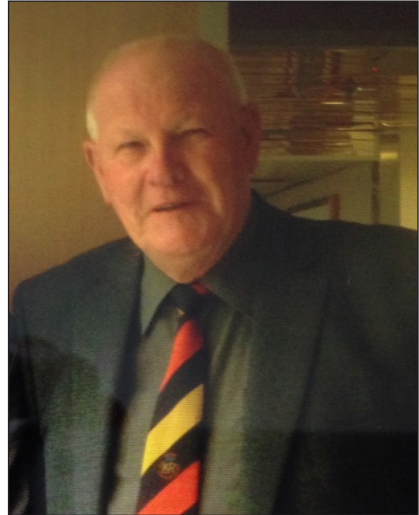
**D**uring the conversation after the 'Titanic Love Story' presentation back in February Iain Stewart, one of our members, made mention of a short video one of his relatives had created. This video explores the story of a woman who missed boarding the *Titanic* and it can be viewed through YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dsQyBNgAnsM>

It is a great example of another way in which your family story could be presented. The specific techniques required to make such a video might be beyond some of us but there are a number of ways in which such an idea could be adapted to tell your story.

**Karen Hunter, Editor**

## Obituary

**Dr. William Duncan, 5393**



We were saddened to learn of the death of Bill on the 27th July 2022.

Many of us have worked with Bill since he joined our Society in 2002.

Bill was a Volunteer at the Research Centre, former Member of Council, Research Coordinator and also did a year as Vice Chairman.

He was a valuable member of our team and will be greatly missed.

Sadly Bill was predeceased by his wife. The Society Members send their condolences to his family and friends.

**Edward Nairn, 195**

## Letters and Queries

*The Editor welcomes letters and queries from members for inclusion in the Journal. They can be emailed to [editor@gwsfhs.org.uk](mailto:editor@gwsfhs.org.uk) or sent by post to the address on the back page.*



# From the Editor

## Research tools

I came across a helpful thread on Twitter the other day about using research logs [<https://twitter.com/easygenie/status/1562113113608052738>] in which the author describes them as '*an under-appreciated tool in the genealogist's toolbox*' and suggests '*they are critical to tracking research and conserving our most valuable resource: Time*'. They also highlight that they are there to '*organise your research targets*'.

I found myself nodding in agreement at the principles, and then reflected on my own approach which I must admit is rather more scatter-gun in style.

So, what sort of family historian/genealogist researcher are you? Do you set research targets, and keep to them? Do you keep a detailed research log to keep track of all your searches and the results? Or are they a bit like my new year resolutions which keep me on track for a few days after I've recovered from our Hogmanay and Ne'er Day celebrations but then, as usual, I get distracted or pulled down into the next intriguing rabbit hole!

I wonder if using the Internet for research into our family history has the tendency to pull us down those various rabbit holes rather more easily than when we did most of our research by visiting archives and other repositories for documents and information. We certainly couldn't spend half the night following 'interesting' links to a particular ancestor or taking ourselves down distant branches of our family tree to goodness knows where!

Perhaps you have particular tools that help you to keep your research 'on track' and that might be helpful to other members. If so, I would love to hear from you so we can share them.

## Local archives

During the pandemic the Internet became an essential tool in supporting our family history research while we were confined to our homes and Archives were closed, at least to the visiting public. However, as we recover from that time, the Internet might still be a 'convenient' way to conduct our research if we don't also make use of our Archives where we can we are missing out. They are a rich source of documents and information that is just not available online.

We are exploring how we can best inform our members of the various Archives in and around Glasgow and the West of Scotland which can perhaps offer that golden nugget of information to enrich and expand your family history stories. So, if you know of any 'jewels' that perhaps don't get the publicity of some of the larger establishments please let us know.

[Karen Hunter, Editor, editor@gwsfhs.org.uk](mailto:editor@gwsfhs.org.uk)

## Jackanory

I'll tell you a story  
About Jack a Nory,  
And now my story's begun;  
I'll tell you another  
Of Jack and his brother,  
And now my story is done  
*An old English nursery rhyme*

## Session 2022-2023

Programme of Meetings		
17 October	<b><i>Overcoming Brick Walls</i></b>	Emma Maxwell
Emma runs the website <i>Scottish Indexes</i> with her husband, Graham. She will talk about how to use Indexes for more effective family history research.		
21 November	<b><i>Glasgow Museums' Ship Model Collection - An Introduction with a Family History Connection</i></b>	Emily Malcolm
Find out more about Glasgow Museums' superb ship model collection and how genealogical resources have been used to research the making and use of models in Glasgow.		
12 December	<b><i>Going Down to the Farm - Researching your Farming Ancestry</i></b>	Ken Nisbet
16 January 2023	<b><i>Genetics, Succession and Family Law - The Baronetcy of Stichill</i></b>	Prof. Gillian Black
20 February	<b><i>Jewish Roots in Scotland and Where to Find Them</i></b>	Harvey Kaplan
20 March	<b><i>The Scottish Printing Industry and its Workers</i></b>	Dr Helen Williams
17 April	<b><i>Creating an Ancestor's Life Story Book</i></b>	Christine Woodcock
15 May	<b><i>The Paddle Steamer Pegasus and her People 1835-1843</i></b>	Jane Bowen

These meetings will all be held in the evening, (7.30pm BST/GMT) via Zoom. Further details about the later presentations will be included in subsequent editions of the Journal and will also be published on the website, alongside the links to register for each session.

Dont forget we are 'extending' the monthly meetings for a while after the presentation/ Q&A session to give people a chance for more of an informal conversation and we look forward to some of our members joining us.

As Annette has taken over as Secretary for the Society Christine Woodcck has taken up the mantle of Syllabus Secretary so if anyone has any suggestions for future talks please let her know at [syllabus@gwsfhs.org.uk](mailto:syllabus@gwsfhs.org.uk)

Please remember if you miss one of the talks when it is first 'broadcast', there is a link to the recordings through our website, providing the presenters give us permission.

## Contact Us

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Twitter: [twitter.com/gwsfhs](https://twitter.com/gwsfhs)

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## Research Centre

The Research Centre is open on Thursdays and Saturdays from 1-4pm. There is no need to book unless you want to ensure access to one of the computers. It is hoped in due course we will also be able to open on Tuesdays - keep an eye on the website for more information.

## e-News - monthly newsletter

The Society sends out an email newsletter open to both members and non-members. To receive it, you have to sign up because the software operates with extra security and permits people to unsubscribe. The sign-up is in the footer of each page on the website.

Previous issues can be seen at: [gwsfhs.org.uk/services/e-news-archive/](http://gwsfhs.org.uk/services/e-news-archive/)

The e-News editor welcomes contributions which can be sent via the email above.

## Editorial Team

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Christine Woodcock	10008		

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