

*Paton and Milne Families
in Perth and Angus*

A Rural Scottish Heritage

Pam Griffiths

June 2022

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Disclaimers

All birth, baptism, marriage and death information comes from the *ScotlandsPeople* website at <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/> Any mistakes in this document are mine. Please check original sources rather than assuming my research is correct.

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Susan Yeaman Boath Paton – Forfar, Edinburgh, Darlington

My husband's grandmother, Susan Yeaman Boath Paton, was given a name to conjure with. Her younger sister was named Maggie Johnstone – presumably after her maternal aunt - and her brother was simply named John. None of the three first names are reflected anywhere in her family, but neither Yeaman or Boath are run of the mill Christian names, so I surmised that they perhaps belonged to a family friend. Following this train of thought, I discovered that Susan Yeaman married Charles Booth or Boath in Forfar in 1874, and gave birth to a daughter, Susan Boath, only to die three years after her marriage at Priory Road in Forfar, a mere five minute walk from where Susie Paton was born.



Susan Paton

Susan Paton was born nineteen years after her namesake's death. The birth entry reads:

Susan Yeaman Boath Paton; 1896 November 6th 1 h 0m. p.m.;
Robert St. North, Forfar; F;
William Paton Railway Porter; Mary Weir Paton m s Milne,
1896 January 17th Glamis; William Paton Father present;
Reg. 1896 November 17th at Forfar

As the above shows, she was the daughter of William Paton and Mary Weir Milne, and it was their marriage which eventually solved the mystery. Banns were issued on 12th January, the wedding took place on 17th January 1896:

On the seventeenth day of January at Village of Glamis
After banns according to the forms of the Established Church of Scotland
William Paton (signed) Railway Porter (Bachelor); 28; Whitehills Forfar;
William Paton Shepherd Margaret Paton MS McLaren (deceased)
Mary Milne (signed) Powerloom Weaver (Spinster) 29, Village of Glamis;
James Milne Forester's Carter Jessie Milne MS Watt

The name of the first witness looks like David W Bairie, but the second is Susan Boath, now aged around 20, who must have been a friend of one of the couple, possibly William, as he was living in Forfar at the time of the wedding.

Virtually nothing is known about Susan's childhood. Her sister, Maggie Johnstone, was born in Forfar in 1898, but by 1901, Susan was living with her parents in Edinburgh, at 16, Wardlaw Street, where her father was enumerated as a Tramway Pointsman. The property was a mile or so out of the city centre, to the south-west. A brother, John, was born in Canongate on 9th September 1893. The address on his birth certificate was 4, Salmond Place, which was to be Susan's home until she married. This was on the other side of Edinburgh, in the Abbeyhill area, a small house tucked away at one end of a no-through road. Steps at the end led up onto what is now the A1 road into Edinburgh.



John, Meg and Susie Paton

A charming if somewhat sentimental photo, taken when Susie was probably around 9, shows her holding the reins of a donkey while her younger siblings sit in the donkey cart. The photographer, Philip E Low, regularly used one of the Portobello sea-side donkeys as a prop when photographing children. This is the only known photo of John. At the age of 15 he was working as a laboratory attendant when he fell victim to the Spanish Flu pandemic. The death certificate shows him to have had flu for nine days, bronchial catarrh for eight days and bronchial pneumonia for seven. He died at home on 19th December 1918.

Other photos, taken when Susan was a teenager or young woman, show a pretty girl with an abundance of brown, wavy hair. She was always well-turned out in the photos, several of which also feature her sister Maggie, to whom she seemed close. An earlier photo, taken by the company which took her daughters' school photos a generation later, may well show Susie with her primary school class. However, which schools she attended is unknown.

Her neatness no doubt helped her get the job as Post Office Assistant, which she gave as her occupation when she married Hugh McKay Bonallo at Smith's Rooms in Leith on 1st December 1922:

Hugh McKay Bonallo; Brewer; bachelor: 17 Chambers St,
Susan Yeaman Boath Paton; Post Office Asst.; Spinster: 4, Salmond Place:
Thos Bonallo, Brewer dec; Isabella Bonallo MS MacKay:
Wm Paton tramway Inspector, Mary Paton MS Milne;
signed Archibald Morrison Minister of Abbey Church

Banns had been called the previous month at Old Greyfriars Church, Edinburgh:

At Edinburgh the nineteenth day of November 1922. It is hereby certified that Hugh MacKay Bonallo 17 Chambers St and Susan Yeaman Boath Paton 4 Salmon Place have been daily proclaimed in order to marriage, in the parish church of Abbey and that no objections have been offered. John Banks, Session Clerk

Within two months of the wedding, and already pregnant with her first child, Susan joined:

The Supreme Grand Chapter of Scotland
Order of the Eastern Star

an organisation affiliated to the Masons. Women who joined had to have a relationship with someone already a mason and she qualified as Hugh had joined in October 1922. According to the order's website¹:

... the Order of the Eastern Star is and should always be non-denominational, and non-sectarian in both its doctrine and its beliefs. The first and only factor

1

<http://www.supremegrandchapterofscotland.co.uk/?pageId=32343033g039ae87591c38e9895af1e644dc47228>



The Supreme Grand Chapter of Scotland.
Order of the Eastern Star.

Having Jurisdiction
Over the British Dominions except on
the Continent of North America.

To the Members of the Order
wheresoever dispersed, Greeting :-

Whereas, Chapter *hewington, no. 126,*
on our Roll, and under our jurisdiction, hath
craved us to issue a Diploma in Testimony of
legal admission into the Order in favour of
the Person herein after mentioned. -

These are to witness that *Susan Bonallo,*
whose signature is adhibited on the side hereof
was regularly admitted a Member of said
Chapter upon the *nineteenth day of*
February 1923, and is duly enrolled in our books.

As such we commend her to the
fraternal regard of all Members of the Order.

Hannah M. Miller Most Worthy
Grand Matron.
William Whyte Most Worthy
Grand Patron.
William Bryce Worthy
Grand Secy.



Register N^o *56,961*

The order of the Eastern Star

for those wishing to enter its realms is an unequivocal belief in the existence of a Supreme Being.

Its aims and purpose is to promote the welfare and wellbeing of others, particularly those of the Widow and Orphan, and those less fortunate than ourselves. It is not, despite a popular misconception, a secret society.

The certificate received on entry to the order reads as follows:

Whereas Chapter Newington, no 126 on our Roll, and under our jurisdiction, hath craved us to issue a Diploma in Testimony of legal admission into the order in favour of the Person herein after mentioned –
a member of said chapter upon the nineteenth day of February 1923,
and is duly enrolled in our books.
As such we commend her to the fraternal regard of all members of the order.

What charitable works Susie undertook as a member of the order are unknown, but clearly she took community duty seriously, as the only two surviving diaries – for 1959 and 1960 - have frequent references to Guild meetings, church coffee mornings, the Old People's Welfare Council, church attendance, the Hostel Committee Meeting, and so on. The diaries also reflect an enjoyment of theatre, with *Babes in the Wood* at the Empire on New Year's Day 1959 and *Dancing Years* (noted as a 'very good show') at the same theatre on New Year's Day 1960. That year also saw poor health for both Susie and Hugh. He had bouts of bronchitis, while she was afflicted with gallstones, which were finally removed.

By the time of these diaries, she was in the last phase of her life, but much of her life as a young woman would have been concerned with her children. Her first child, Maisie – named Mary Milne after her maternal grandmother – born in 1923, died of pneumonia at 9 months old. The two younger children, Sheila Margaret and Moira McKay were brought up from the home at 17, Chambers Street, part of the *Campbell, Hope and King* brewery complex, and sent to school at James Gillespie's High School. They stayed in the family home until sometime early in World War II, when Susan was busy nursing her ailing mother who died in 1941.

Her sister Maggie had pipped her at the post in terms of matrimony, marrying Andrew Crichton Sprunt at 11 Hillside Crescent in Edinburgh on 6th September 1922, with the same Abbey Church minister officiating as at Susie's wedding. At this juncture he was a seedsman and she a tailoress. Originally they may have settled in Glasgow, as it was an address in West Princes Street there that the couple gave when they sailed from London on 22nd January 1926 for Mombassa in Kenya. Andrew gave his occupation as Forrester. He had taken up a job with the Forest Department in Nairobi, according to the 'with compliments' card from their wedding, so they may have spent some time there before 1926. Their only child, Andrew, known as Anwil, was born in Kenya in 1927. At some point, the family moved to South Africa, where they ultimately settled, with Andrew now a civil



Susan Yeaman Boath Paton

**Hugh and Susie outside
19, Alnwickhill Road**





Susie and Meg



Susan Paton

servant. There were trips back to Scotland, one in 1935, where the address for their destination was Salmond Street, Meg's parents' home. And another in 1939, when they gave Chambers Street as their ultimate destination.

They must have returned to Kenya at some point, as the ship's manifest for Andrew and Meg's voyage from London in 1947 gives Mombassa as destination once again. Meg and Susie kept up correspondence over the years, exchanging photographs of the growing grandchildren until Meg's death in 1966. (Anwil had died in a plane crash in the 1950s). Andrew kept in contact with his sister-in-law, writing her a letter from South Africa in 1968, shortly before her own death.

I suspect Susie spent much of the early 1960s looking after Hugh, who had repeated bouts of bronchitis. One of the stories my husband told me was of smuggling the odd bottle of whiskey in at the request of his ill grandfather. The doctors had forbidden alcohol, but although Susie was doing her best to comply with orders, Hugh was keen to subvert them.

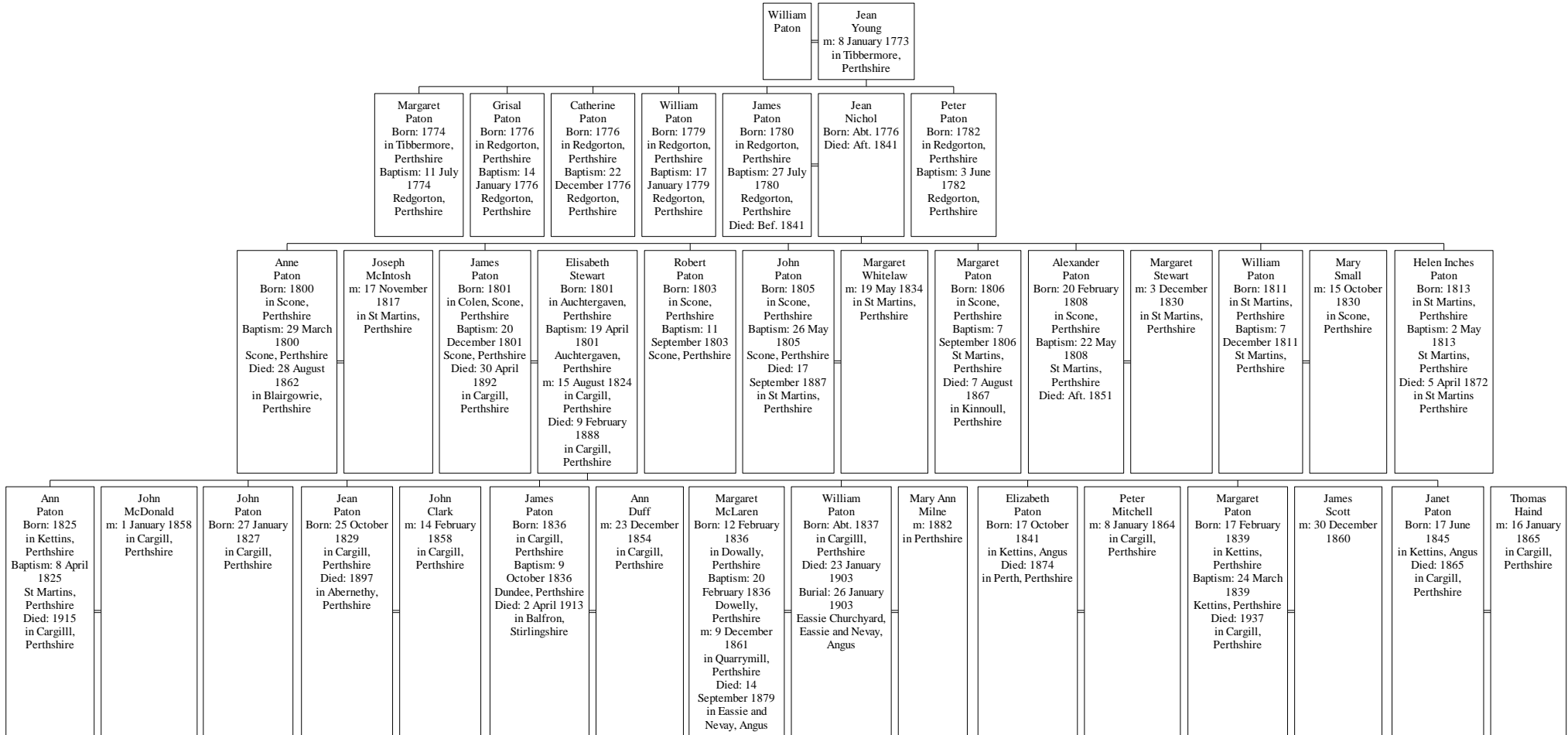
Hugh died early in 1965, shortly after he and Susie had left their tied house in Alnwickhill Road, Liberton for 100, Neville Road Darlington. Susie survived him by three years but died on 24th October 1968. The certificate stated the cause of death to have been cerebral thrombosis and arterio sclerosis. She was cremated at Darlington Crematorium. Her daughter Sheila, who had been close to her, was devastated, as was her grandson, my husband. I hadn't met him at that point but remember him telling me a few months later that the college authorities refused permission for him to go home after his grandmother died, but that he went anyway.

Susan Bonallo wrote her will shortly after her husband Hugh died. It was very simple. She made Sheila her executrix and bequeathed £100 each to her three grandchildren - my husband used his to buy me an engagement ring. The house at Neville Road was left to Sheila, and the rest of the estate was to be divided between Sheila and Moira.

The earliest Patons - Perthshire

The Paton family can be traced back for certain for four more generations. Beyond that, gaps in the records and the fact that the name is a common one in Perthshire make research somewhat speculative. The earliest proven Paton ancestor is one James Paton, who married Jane or Jean Nichol or Nuckle, sometime at the end of the 18th century. He seems to have spent most of his early adult life in Scone. However, it is possible that he was born in 1780 in the neighbouring parish of Redgorton, to William Paton and Jean Young. A baptism took place there on 27th July 1780, which would make our James a fairly young father in 1800.

Tree 1 - Descendants of William Paton and Jean Young



First generation speculative.

Despite lack of concrete evidence, it is perhaps worth recording that William Paton married Jean Young at Tibbermore on 8th January 1773, with the bride having paid 2/- to the kirk at Redgorton on 27th December 1772. They baptised a daughter Margaret at Tibbermore on 11th July 1774, and then baptised the rest of their family at Redgorton, namely Grisal and Catherine, baptised on 14th January and 22nd December 1776 respectively, William – 17th January 1779, James in 1780 and Peter on 3rd June 1782. As the crow flies, both Tibbermore and Redgorton parishes are close to where the next generation of Patons lived. However, the River Tay flows between these two and Scone and I don't know what means of crossing it locally were available at that time.

Nothing is known for certain then of when James Paton and Jean Nichol were born, married or died. However, they baptised eight children, the first four in Scone and the second four in St Martins, both Perthshire parishes. Anne, the eldest, was baptised on 29th March 1800, married Joseph McIntosh at St Martins on 17th November 1817 and died at Blairgowrie in 1862. James, Susan Paton's great-grandfather came next, followed by Robert, baptised on 11th September 1803. The next child, John, was baptised on 26th May 1805, married Margaret Whitelaw, also at St Martins, on 19th May 1834 and died in the same parish in on 17th September 1887. His sister Margaret was the first of the family to be baptised at St Martins, on 7th September 1806, but her brother Alexander, although baptised there on 22nd May 1808, was born at Scone on 22nd February that year, suggesting that the family had a foot still in both parishes. The last two children were William – baptised 7th December 1811 and Helen Inches – 2nd May 1813.

Baptism and death records suggest that James Paton was primarily a weaver, although son John's death certificate calls him a farm labourer; it's possible he was both. He appears to have died before the 1841 census was taken, but his wife Jane, aged 65, was enumerated at St Martins² with daughters Margaret and Helen. Their ages are wildly wrong, but given that these two never married, it seems likely they would be living with their mother at this time. Their address in St Martins is given as Floors. Presumably Jane died sometime in the next decade as there is no sign of her in the 1851 census, although her daughters are also elusive. The only other thing known about James and Jane is that at one time they lived at Colen in Scone. This fact is mentioned on James junior's baptism entry. Colen today is listed on the British Listed Buildings website³ as a farmsteading and horse-gin house, but I suspect the area surrounding the farm bore the same name. It is situated beside a bend in the River Tay between Luncarty – to the south-west and on the other side of the river – and Guildtown to the north-east. Although in the parish of Scone, the church at St Martins was probably slightly nearer, so the family may not have moved.

² *ScotlandsPeople*, 393/6/3, 1841 census St Martins

³ <https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/200352426-farmsteading-and-horse-gin-house-colen-scone#.YQbTAI5KiUk>

The next person in this story was also named James Paton. He was born in 1801 in the parish of Scone and was baptised there. The register entry reads:

Paton: December 20 James Paton weaver at Colen and Jean Nichol had a child baptised named James.

Aged 23, James married at Cargill, the next parish north from St Martins. The register only records the date, 22nd August 1824 and the couple's names:

James Patton and Elizabeth Stewart

No other parish is mentioned, so presumably both were resident in Cargill at the time. However, their first daughter, Ann, born the following year, gave Kettins as her place of birth in the 1851 census⁴ although she was baptised on 8th April at St Martins – as Ann Patton. John and Jean, the next two children, were baptised at Cargill; the former on 27th January 1827 and the latter two years later on 25th October.



River Tay near Cargill

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At some point in the next few years, James and Elizabeth moved their family to Dundee and it was here that their son James was baptised on 9th October 1836. They may have been peripatetic for a while, as the baptism of their next son, William (the next in this line) is missing. According to the 1851 census⁵ he was born at Cargill around 1837. The final three children were all baptised at Kettins: Margaret – 24th March 1839, Elizabeth – 17th October 1841, and Janet – 1st July 1845.

⁴ *ScotlandsPeople*, 394A/1/4, 1851 census, Kettins

⁵ *ScotlandsPeople*, 394A/1/4, 1851 census, Kettins

James seems to have tried his hand at a number of occupations in order to provide for his family. In 1841⁶ he was a Linen hand loom weaver, enumerated at Greenmyers in Scone along with Elizabeth (both aged 35), Ann, John, Jean, James, William and Margaret. The children's ages range from 15 to 2. All are listed as born in county. In 1851⁷ the family was still at Green Mires, but it was listed as Kettins, Scone. Aged 49 and head of the household, his occupation was now recorded as General Labourer, born Scone. Elizabeth, also 49, gave her place of birth as Auchtergaven in Perthshire, a parish due west of St Martins and Cargill on the other side of the River Tay. Ann, 26, was a Hand Loom Weaver and Jean, 21, a House Servant. William, Margaret and Elizabeth were all scholars, while Jannet, at 5, had not started school. Finally, there was Jean Rattray, a three-year-old granddaughter. No other information has been found about this child; maybe she was Ann's illegitimate daughter.

James makes two appearances in the Valuation Rolls⁸, the first in 1855 when the entry shows him as a tenant:

Cargill		
House in Burrelton		
Proprietor	Tenant	Yearly rent or value
John West, Woodside	James Paton residing at Burrelton	£4 12/-

Six years later, the family is living apart. James was enumerated in 1861⁹ at Pitskelly Bothy, working as a shepherd. With him are two other shepherds, both born in Aberdeenshire, and a young local lad, who is a ploughman. All are designated servants. A bothy was a temporary shelter, used for seasonal workers, so perhaps James had hired himself out for lambing time. Meanwhile, Elizabeth was based at North Street in Cargill¹⁰. She gave her name as Elizabeth Stewart, following the custom whereby Scots women retain their maiden as well as their married names. She was now 60, and designated Shepherd's wife, born Auchtergaven. Daughter Jannet, 16, was a scholar, and there is a four-year-old grandson John, son of Jane or Jean. Margaret, aged 22, was had married Cargill-born James Scott, a mason, on 30th November 1860.

Three other members of the family had married since the last census: Ann married John McDonald in Cargill on 1st January 1858 and lived there until her death in 1915. Also in Cargill, Jean married John Clark on 14th February the same year; they moved around a fair deal, and Jean died in Abernethy in 1897. James married Ann Duff on 23rd December 1854; eventually they moved to Balfroon in Stirlingshire, where James, a plumber, died in 1913. William would marry later in 1861. The last

⁶ *ScotlandsPeople*, 394A/9/1, 1841 census, Scone

⁷ *ScotlandsPeople*, 394A/1/4, 1851 census, Kettins

⁸ www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/, Valuation Rolls

⁹ *ScotlandsPeople*, 393/3/8, 1861 census, St Martins

¹⁰ *ScotlandsPeople*, 338/5/15, 1861 census, Cargill

member of the family to marry was Elizabeth, who married Peter Mitchell on 8th January 1864 in Cargill. She died in 1874 in Perth.

In 1871¹¹ James and Elizabeth were living on Cargill High Street. Both gave their ages as 68 and were consistent in naming their places of birth. James was working as a shepherd, and yet another grandson completed the household, James, aged 8, born Cargill. This was the son of James Paton and Ann Duff. By 1881¹², back on North Street, James and Ann were alone, but he was calling himself an Agricultural Labourer. He may have still been shepherding, but more likely he was doing more general work on the land.

Elizabeth Paton or Stewart died in 1888. The certificate reads as follows, slightly inflating her age:

Elizabeth Paton, married to James Paton, Shepherd, 1888 February 9th at 9 hrs a.m. Burrelltown, Cargill, f 88 yrs; John Stewart, labourer, deceased, Catharine Stewart m.s. Strachan deceased... William Scott, grandson (not present)

Three years earlier, James made a second appearance in the Valuation Rolls¹³. In 1885, the entry read:

Cargill, Burrelton: North Street West side			
Proprietor	Occupier	Yearly rent or value	Feu duty
House and garden	Peter Scott merchant	James Paton butcher	£1 10/-

Once more, James had changed occupation, or more likely this was a long-term sideline. That this is accurate is reflected in the 1891 census¹⁴ which places him in a private house in North Street Cargill, and records him as an 89 year-old retired butcher, born in Scone.

He died on 30th April 1892 at Cargill and his death certificate gives his occupation as shepherd:

James Paton Shepherd (Widower of Elisabeth Stewart) 1892 April thirtieth at 9 h a.m., Burrelltown, Cargill; M, 90 yrs; John Paton Labourer deceased; old age

The informant's name is illegible but doesn't appear to be a member of the family, so perhaps it's not surprising that his mother's name is missing and his father's wrong. When his son William married in 1864, he referred to his father as a Flesher – a Scots

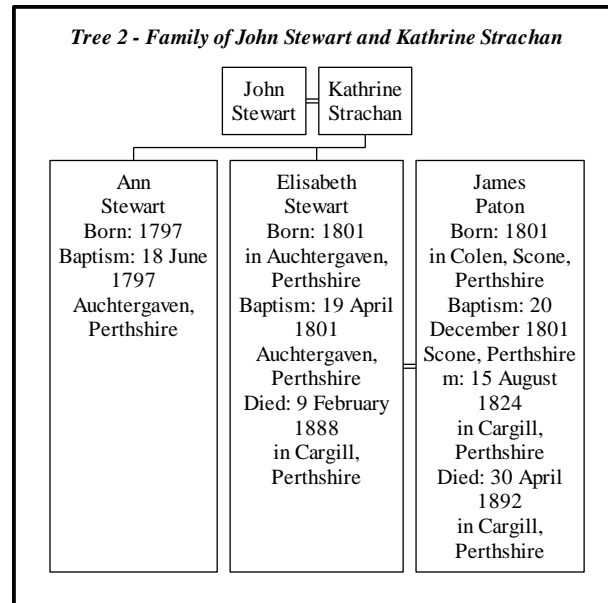
¹¹ *ScotlandsPeople*, 338/5/6, 1871 census, Cargill

¹² *ScotlandsPeople*, 338/5/9, 1881 census, Cargill

¹³ *ScotlandsPeople*, Valuation Rolls

¹⁴ *ScotlandsPeople*, 338/5/9, 1891 census, Cargill

term for a butcher. Maybe part of his job as a shepherd was to butcher the animals for market.



Elizabeth Stewart gave her place of birth as Auchtergaven on the census returns. This Strathtay village, whose name means ‘upland of the yearling cattle’ in Gaelic, also goes by the more prosaic name of Bankfoot, and is about 10 miles from Cargill, on the west bank of the Tay. The entry for her baptism in the register in 1801 reads:

April 19th. John Stewart Nether Obney had a child by his wife baptised named Elizabeth

Fortunately, the entry for her sister Ann on 18th June 1797 names John’s wife as Kathrine Strachan. The address is Nether Obney again, a small hamlet a couple of miles out of the main village. No other information about this line has been found.

William Paton senior - Perthshire and Angus

For some reason, there is no baptism record for William Paton, although he must have been born around 1837 as he appears as a four-year-old in his parents’ household at Greenmyers in Scone in 1841¹⁵. Subsequent censuses all give his place of birth as Cargill in Perthshire, but given that his next older sibling was born in Dundee, I wonder whether William was also born elsewhere, somewhere where registers have not survived.

¹⁵ *ScotlandsPeople*, 394A/9/1, 1841 census, Scone

In 1851¹⁶ he was still at home at Green Mires (now identified as Kettins rather than just Scone), a fourteen-year-old scholar with two elder and three younger sisters, as well as his mother and a niece. His father was the only other male in the household. Ten years later¹⁷, he had left home and was working as a ploughman at the Cupar Road Bothy in Longforgan, Perthshire. The head of the household there was a shepherd named Donald Keir, and as well as his family there were several other workers listed.



Longforgan Mercat Cross - 17th c
[cc-by-sa/2.0 - © kim traynor - geograph.org.uk/p/3680878](https://www.geograph.org.uk/p/3680878)

Later in 1861, on 9th December, William married:

William Paton aged 24, Lockton Longforgan, Margaret McLaren aged 24, Seaside Erroll; James Paton, Flesher and Elizabeth Stewart; Daniel McLaren, Mason and Ann Conacher. Witnessed John McLaren, William Patton

The date on the certificate is clearly 9th December, and yet on two of the children's birth certificates at least, the date of the wedding is recorded as 6th December. Location also veers between Quarry Mill, Scone (on the original certificate) and New Scone (on Mary Ann's birth certificate), but these names may have been interchangeable. Also interchangeable in this part of Scotland, where Highlands

¹⁶ *ScotlandsPeople*, 394A/1/4, 1851 census, Kettins

¹⁷ *ScotlandsPeople*, 377/5/3, 1861 census, Longforgan

meet Lowlands, are the names Donald and Daniel, which explains the disparity between Margaret's father's name on her marriage and death certificates.

The couple's first four children were all born in different places, suggesting that William was an itinerant worker at this time. Elizabeth was born on 21st September 1862 at Longforgan; John was born on 20th May 1864 back in St Martins. Ann was born at Kilspindie, about half-way between Longforgan and St Martins, on 22nd April 1866, while Susan's father William was born on 17th January 1868 at Erroll.

In 1871¹⁸ the family was enumerated at Lochee Road, Ritchiel Land, Dundee, and William was described as a labourer at Fawhill. Subsequent children were all born at Eassie and Neavay, further north towards Glamis. Catherine McLaren Paton was born on 12th December 1872, Mary Ann or Agnes was born on 5th April 1875 and the last of Margaret McLaren's children, Jemima Fowler, was born on 4th May 1878. Her mother, though, was already ill and died at Eassie on 14th September 1879:

Margaret Paton m to William Paton, shepherd, 1879 September 14th, 4.50 a.m., Castleton, Eassie and Neavay, F, 44 years. Donald McLaren, master mason deceased, Agnes Ann McLaren, m s Conacher. Malignant abdominal tumour 2 years. William Paton, husband, present. Reg. 16.9.1879, Eassie

With a number of young children and an occupation which often took him from home, it is unsurprising that William soon remarried, though Margaret's sister Catherine and her husband Robert Anderson lightened the burden somewhat by adopting the penultimate child, Mary, and she appears with them on the 1881 census¹⁹. In 1881²⁰ William was working at Parkhead Farm Bothie Blairdowrie, in the household of one David Fyfe. He was a shepherd there. Meanwhile, his oldest daughter Elizabeth was holding the fort at Castleton Cottages, Eassie and Neavay²¹:

Elizabeth Paton	H	U	18	Housekeeper	Longforgan
William Paton	Brother		13	Scholar	Errol
Margaret Paton	Sister		11	Scholar	Errol
Catherine Paton	Sister		8		Eassie and Neavay
Jemima Paton	Sister		2		Eassie and Neavay

On 1st December 1882, William married again in Perth:

William Paton Shepherd (Widower), 45, Castleton Eassie & Neavay,
James Paton Shepherd Elizabeth Paton MS Stewart
Mary Ann Milne Domestic Servant (spinster), 28, Castleton Eassie &
Neavay, George Milne Farm Servant Jane Milne MS Drew

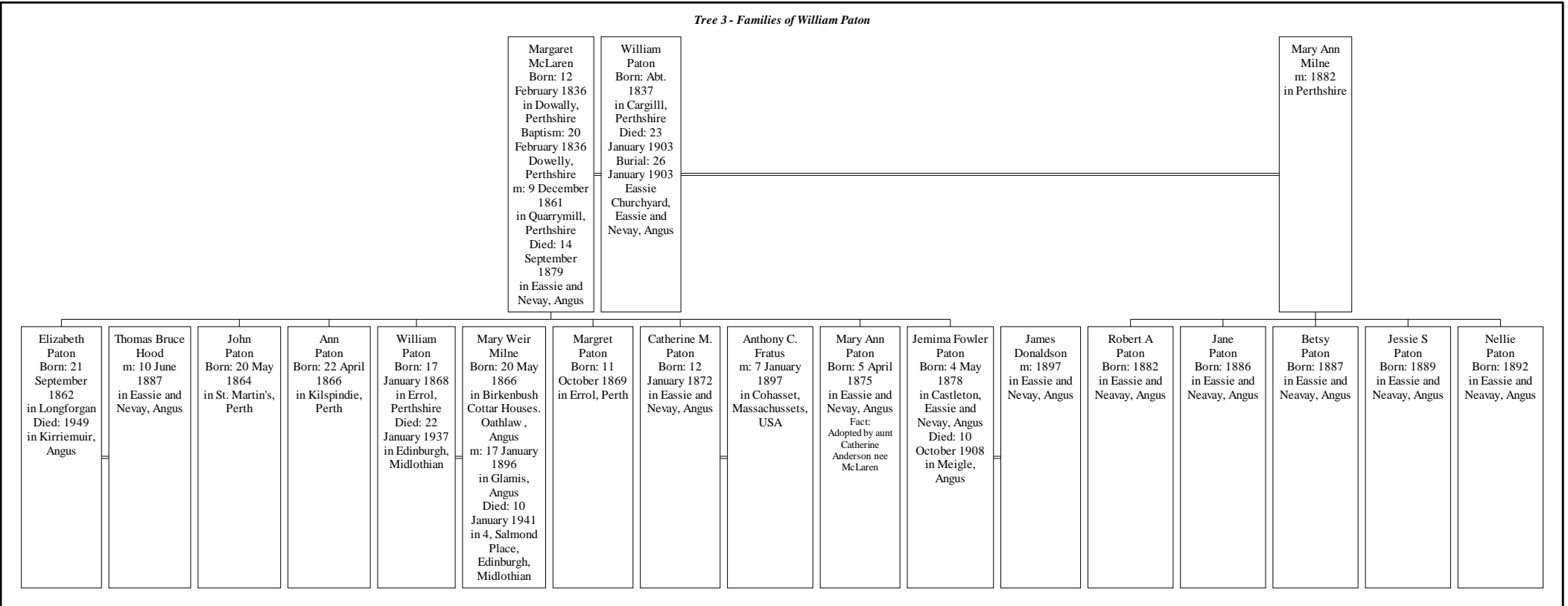
¹⁸ *ScotlandsPeople*, 387/18/8, 1871 census, Dundee

¹⁹ *ScotlandsPeople*, 282/4 17/26, 1881 census, Angus

²⁰ *ScotlandsPeople*, 335/7/20, 1881 census, Blairgowrie

²¹ *ScotlandsPeople*, 284/2/5, 1881 census, Eassie and Neavay

Tree 3 - Families of William Paton



Over the next ten years, Mary Ann gave him five more children: Robert Anderson in 1884, Jane in 1886, Betsy in 1887, Jessie Smith in 1888 and Nellie Bett in 1892, all registered in Eassie and Nevay.

When the following census was taken²², William's three younger children by his first marriage, Katherine, Agnes (born Mary Ann and missing from the previous census) and Jemima were living with their father and stepmother and four half-siblings. William, now 54, was still working as a shepherd, though he was enumerated at the family home at Strathmore Road, Eassie and Nevay. By 1901²³, his first family had all flown the nest but he and Mary Ann were to be found with their three youngest children at Castleton Farm Cottage, still in Eassie and Nevay.

Two years later, William died:

William Paton Shepherd (married to Mary Milne and previously to Margaret McLaren); January 23rd 9 h 0 m A.M. Castleton; M; 65 years;
James Paton Shepherd (Deceased) Louisa [sic] Paton MS Stuart (Deceased);
Pneumonia of Right lung. 6 days; John Paton Son 12 St Stephens Place
Edinburgh

His youngest child, of the thirteen born over nearly 30 years, would have been around ten years old. Mary Ann didn't remarry and seems to have died around 1919.

Of William and Margaret's children, Elizabeth married Thomas Bruce Hood, a farm servant, at Eassie and Nevay in 1887. Her sister Margaret witnessed the wedding. The couple raised a family of sons, and Elizabeth died in 1949, at Kirriemuir in Angus. Catherine emigrated to America, where she married Anthony Clinton Fratus in Massachusetts in 1897, and had two daughters in the next two years. She died of septicaemia at Quincy, Massachusetts in 1904. Jemima, the only other child who seems to have survived to marry, also died young. She married a shepherd, James Donaldson, at Eassie and Nevay in 1897, and bore two daughters, but died of an abscess on the appendix on 10th October 1908 at Meigle.

McLaren - mainly Perthshire

The family of William Paton's first wife, Margaret McLaren, has been easier to trace. She was born on 12th February 1836 at Ballincray, which lies in the parish of Dowally where she was baptised eight days later:

Donald McLaren in Ballincray and Agnes Conachcar his lawful spouse had a daughter born 12th Feb 1836 and baptised 20th current, name Margaret

²² *ScotlandsPeople*, 284/2/5, 1891 census, Eassie and Nevay

²³ *ScotlandsPeople*, 284/2/9, 1901 census, Eassie and Nevay

She was the firstborn child of this couple, who had married at Dowally fifteen months earlier:

Dowally: Donald McLaren and Ann Conacher parish of Cargill gave up their names in order for marriage 29th Nov 1834

Although the proclamation doesn't give the prospective spouses' ages, Donald had been born in 1811 and Ann three years earlier in 1808.

Having spent her early childhood in Dowally, Margaret was recorded helping out at the home of her maternal grandparents in Caputh in 1851²⁴. Whether she had ever followed the rest of the family to Kinnoull or been brought up by her grandparents as her own family expanded is unclear. However, it was no doubt good preparation for her as by 1861 she had moved to Erroll, close to the mouth of the River Tay, and was employed as a servant at Seaside House, in the household of one James Constable. This was presumably a wealthy household as Constable was farmer of 660 acres, employing 26 men and 48 women, and as well as his wife and son, there were a tutor and three other servants in the house on census night. The house now advertises luxury home stays in a property built in the 17th and refurbished in the 18th century. It is a grade 1 listed building in Georgian style²⁵.



Seaside House

Donald and Agnes or Ann's second child was born around 1838 and named Isabelle. However, as the *Statistical Accounts*²⁶ point out:

²⁴ *ScotlandsPeople*, 337/1/4, 1851 census, Caputh

²⁵ <https://seasydehouse.co.uk/seasyde-house/>

²⁶ *The Statistical Accounts of Scotland 1845*,

https://stataccscot.edina.ac.uk/static/statacc/dist/viewer/nsa-vol10-Parish_record_for_Dunkeld_in_the_county_of_Perth_in_volume_10_of_account_2/nsa-vol10-p958-parish-perth-dunkeld?search=Dowally

The inhabitants ... are not very strict in recording their families' births and baptisms.

The author attributes this to part of Dowally being in Caputh parish. It does seem to be a parish of little influence, as the same *Statistical Accounts* entry lumps Dowally together with neighbouring Dunkeld, and pays little attention to the former individually. Even the population is a joint one, 2032 in 1831 but only 1,752 in 1841.

Three more children were born at Dowally, John on 26th July 1840, Anne, who later married Robert Craig, on 4th September 1842 and Catherine – married Robert Anderson – in May 1845. By this time, the 1841 census²⁷ had occurred, recording the family at Balnacraig – presumably the same as Ballincray – in Dowally where 30 year-old Donald was a labourer. His wife, also 30 and listed as Agnes, was joined by five-year-old Margaret, three-year-old Isabella and 10-month-old John. All were born in county.

By the time Janet was born, on 24th September 1847, the family was living in Kinnoull, just outside Perth, and this is where she was baptised. Three boys followed, Donald, born on 23rd December 1849 and baptised on 13th January the following year, Peter, born 25th October and baptised 21st November 1852, and Robert, baptised on 21st May 1855. *Ancestry* suggests a final child, Isabella, born to these parents at Dowally in 1858, but there is no record of her in the 1861 census, and no sign of her at all in the indexes at *ScotlandsPeople*.

In 1851²⁸ the family was living at an address listed on the census as Provost Dewer's L^d on Isla Street, Bridgend, Kinnoull. I'm guessing that the abbreviation stands for Land, as in Gladstone's Land, a tenement building on Edinburgh's Royal Mile. The census stated that Donald McLaren, aged 39, was a journeyman mason, and had been born in Dull in Perthshire. His occupation would fit perhaps with the fact that in 1861²⁹ the family was living on Isla Road, at Quarry Mill, Perth Burgh. Donald's wife was listed as Ann rather than Agnes, aged 42 and born at Caputh. John was 10, Ann 8, Catherine 5 and Donald one year old. Isabella had presumably died by this time as there is no further record of her. Margaret was with her grandparents, John and Margaret Conacher, recorded as a granddaughter engaged in domestic duties³⁰.

In 1861³¹ the McLaren's address was given as B of Isla Road, Quarry Mill, with no indication as to what the B stands for. On this occasion, aged 49, born at Dull, Donald gave labourer as his occupation, though all other documentation calls him a mason. Wife Agnes – not Ann – 51, was born at Caputh. The only children

²⁷ *ScotlandsPeople* 344/3/3, 1841 census, Dowally

²⁸ *ScotlandsPeople*, 387/5/12, 1851 census, Kinoull, Perth Burgh

²⁹ *ScotlandsPeople*, 371/1 41/43, 1861, Quarry Mill, Perth Burgh

³⁰ *ScotlandsPeople*, 337/1/4, 1851 census, Caputh, Perthshire

³¹ *ScotlandsPeople*, 371/1 41/43, 1861 census, Quarry Mill, Perth Burgh

left at home were John – age 20, journeyman carpenter, born Dowally, and Peter, born Kinnoull – age 8 and a scholar.

Four years after the census, Donald died of bronchitis, possibly exacerbated by working as a mason and inhaling stone dust. He was only 53 years old:

Donald McLaren, Mason (jour), Married to Ann Connacher; 1865, March 10th, 4 hours a.m., Quarrymill Perth(shire); M; 53 years; Laurence M,Laren, General Labourer (deceased); Isabella M,Laren, M.S. Crerar (deceased); bronchitis etc. 7 days; as certified by Dav. Fleming, surgeon. John McLaren, son, present.

Agnes or Ann McLaren, or Conacher, outlived her husband by nearly 30 years. In the 1871³² census she was to be found at Whinniemoor Cottages in Scone, a 60 year-old widow, living with her 17-year-old son Peter, a bottler, and six-year-old grandchild Agnes Ann McLaren, born in Perth in 1864, and the illegitimate daughter of her own daughter Anne, a domestic servant at the time of her daughter's birth. It seems unlikely that Anne's future husband was the father, as by the time of the next census in 1881³³, Agnes Ann was boarding with her aunt, Catherine Anderson. Her widowed grandmother and namesake was living alone in Kinnoull at 6, Strathmore Street, where she gave her occupation as former agricultural labourer.

In 1891³⁴ the Andersons were enumerated with and Agnes Ann McLaren senior, aged 87 who gave her occupation as a former housekeeper, but there was no sign of her namesake. The household was at 38, Victoria Street, in Wallacetown parish in Dundee. Robert was a harbour porter while all others but his mother-in-law worked as dressmakers.

Although Agnes was still living with her daughter when she died in 1893, at the ripe old age of 84, and just shy of her 85th birthday, it was her son Peter who registered the death. The certificate severely underestimated her age:

Agnes Ann M,Laren, widow of Donald M,Laren, Mason (jour); 1893, January 19th, 10 h 20 m A.M., 38 Victoria Street Dundee; F; 77 years; John Conacher, Forester (deceased), Margaret Conacher, M.S. Bury (deceased); Paralysis Agitans; As cert. by J Miller M.B.; Peter McLaren, Son, 6 Union Road Perth.

Paralysis agitans is an old term for Parkinson's Disease.

Apart from registering their parents' deaths – John for Donald in 1865 and Peter for Ann in 1893, nothing more is known of these brothers. McLaren was a very common name in Perth and Angus, and there were numerous Johns and Peters.

³² *ScotlandsPeople*, 394/A 3/7, 1871 census, Scone

³³ *ScotlandsPeople*, 2824/17/26, 1881 census, Angus

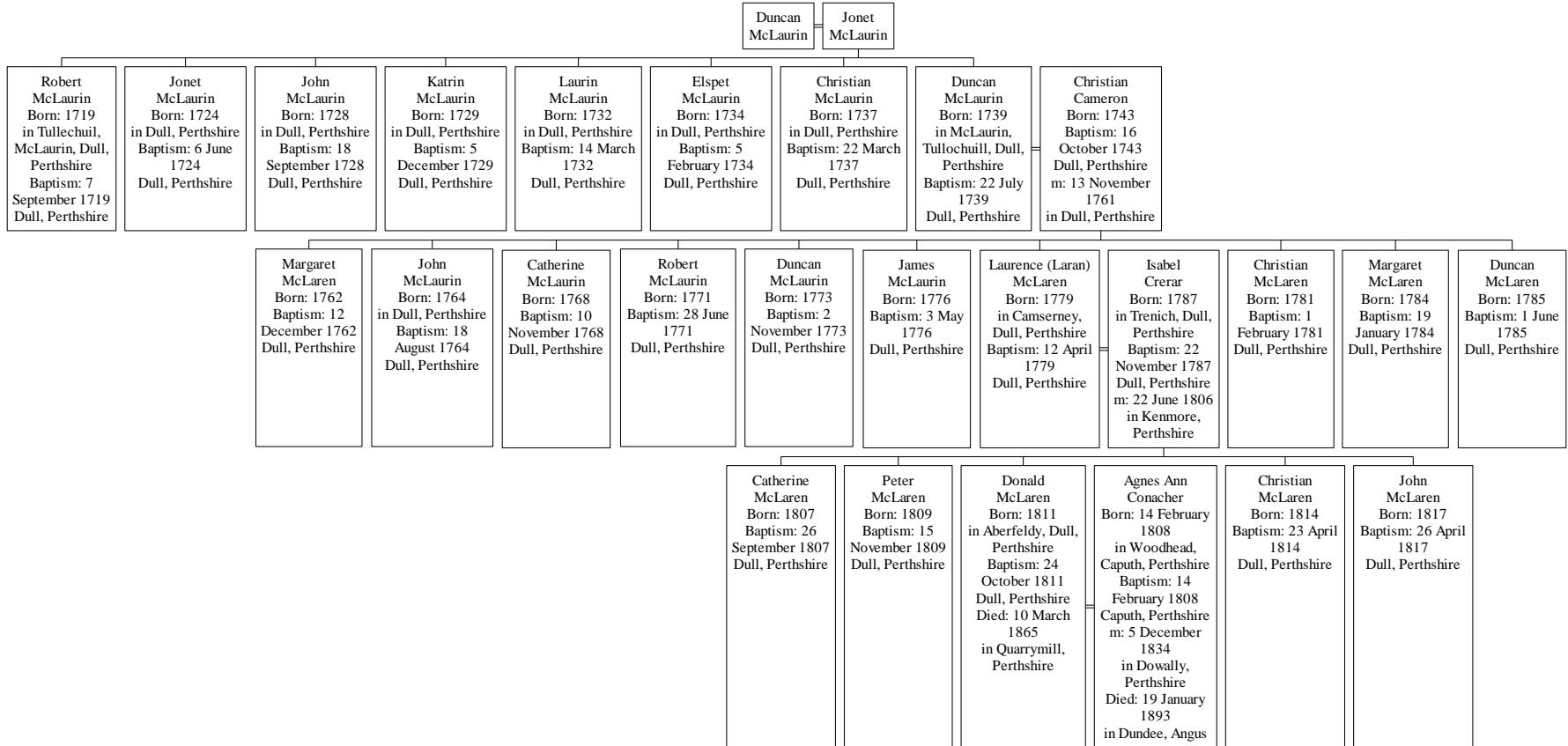
³⁴ *ScotlandsPeople*, 282/4 20/20, 1891 census, Dundee

Tree 4 - Family of Donald McLaren and Ann Conacher

<p>Donald McLaren Born: 1811 in Aberfeldy, Dull, Perthshire Baptism: 24 October 1811 Dull, Perthshire Died: 10 March 1865 in Quarrymill, Perthshire</p>	<p>Agnes Ann Conacher Born: 14 February 1808 in Woodhead, Caputh, Perthshire Baptism: 14 February 1808 Caputh, Perthshire m: 5 December 1834 in Dowally, Perthshire Died: 19 January 1893 in Dundee, Angus</p>
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<p>Margaret McLaren Born: 12 February 1836 in Dowally, Perthshire Baptism: 20 February 1836 Dowally, Perthshire Died: 14 September 1879 in Eassie and Nevay, Angus</p>	<p>William Paton Born: Abt. 1837 in Cargill, Perthshire m: 9 December 1861 in Quarrymill, Perthshire Died: 23 January 1903 Burial: 26 January 1903 Eassie Churchyard, Eassie and Nevay, Angus</p>	<p>Isabella McLaren Born: 1838 in Dowally, Perthshire</p>	<p>John McLaren Born: 1840 Baptism: 26 July 1840 Dowally, Perthshire</p>	<p>Anne McLaren Born: 1842 Baptism: 4 September 1842 Dowally, Perthshire</p>	<p>Robert Craig m: 26 November 1866 in Perth, Perthshire</p>	<p>Catherine McLaren Born: 1845 Baptism: May 1845 Dowally, Perthshire</p>	<p>Robert Anderson m: 1867 in Scone, Perthshire</p>	<p>Janet McLaren Born: 24 September 1847 in Kinnoull, Perthshire</p>	<p>Donald McLaren Born: 23 December 1849 Baptism: 13 January 1850 Kinnoull, Perthshire</p>	<p>Peter McLaren Born: 25 October 1852 Baptism: 21 November 1852 Kinnoull, Perthshire</p>	<p>Robert McLaren Born: 1855 Baptism: 21 May 1855 Kinnoull, Perthshire</p>
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Tree 5 - Descendants of Duncan McLaurin and Jonet McLaurin



Donald, or occasionally Daniel, McLaren (the surname also appears in several guises, often, seemingly, without the 'c' gave his place of birth as Dull in Perthshire on the census returns. Sure enough the register records his baptism in that parish on 24th October 1811:

Donald son to Laren McLaren and Isabel Crerar in Aberfeldy was bapt^d

Once again, the Christian name is slippery. Laren appears with this spelling on all five of his children's baptisms while his own baptism records him as Lauren at the time of his own baptism at Dull on 12th April 1779:

Lauren son to Duncan McLaren and Christian Cameron in Comeserney [Camserney] was bapt^d

However, the censuses write his name as Laurence. This is perhaps not surprising, as the name McLaren comes from the Gaelic Mac Labhruinn, which means son of Lawrence. The county of Perth was where the Highlands, often Gaelic-speaking, and the Lowlands met. According to the *Statistical Accounts of Scotland*³⁵, Gaelic was uniformly spoken in Dull in 1793. It would be interesting to know whether the family preferred the English or Gaelic version.

When Laren/Lauren proclaimed his intention to marry at Kenmore yet another variant was recorded - on 22nd June 1806:

Laurence McLaren in the parish of Dull and Isabel Crerar in this parish gave up their names for proclamation.

As this proclamation was the equivalent of banns, it was also recorded at Dull, and here the groom was recorded as Laren again.

All Laurence and Isabel's children were baptised in Dull: Catherine on 26th September 1807, Peter on 15th November 1809, Donald on 24th October 1811, Christian on 23rd April 1814 and finally John on 26th April 1817. Presumably the family stayed in Aberfeldy for some time, as a Lawrence McLaren, labourer, was noted as the head of a family living there in the Rolls of Male Heads of Families³⁶ in 1834, and also in 1835 when there is an unexplained x next to the name.

By the time of the 1841 census³⁷, only Catherine and John were living at South Side Dunkeld Street in Dull. Laurence was recorded as 60, rounded down from his actual 62, Catherine, in reality 33 was recorded as 25 and John - around 24 - as 20. The two men were working as agricultural labourers, and there is no sign of Isabel,

³⁵ https://stataccscot.edina.ac.uk/static/statacc/dist/viewer/osa-vol6-Parish_record_for_Dull_in_the_county_of_Perth_in_volume_6_of_account_1/osa-vol6-p149-parish-perth-dull?search=Dull , Dull County of Perth, OSA, vol VI, 1793

³⁶ <https://www.oldscottish.com/dull.html>

³⁷ *ScotlandsPeople*, 346/6/17, 1841 census, Dull

who was presumably dead. Ten years later, Laurence was on his own at Carse in Dull, aged 73, a garden labourer born in Dull.

The likelihood is that Laurence died sometime between the taking of the 1851 census and the introduction of general registration in Scotland four years later. There seems to be no record of a death for him under various variants after 1855.

Duncan McLaren and Christian Camron were married at Dull – the register gives 13th November 1761 as the date of the proclamation:

Duncan McLaren and Christian Camron both of this parish gave up their names to be proclaimed in order to marriage.

Duncan and Christian baptised ten children at Dull, but as is clear from the name repetitions, at least two of them died young. Margaret was baptised on 12th December 1762. John was baptised on 18th August 1764, Catherine on 10th November 1768, Robert on 28th June 1771, Duncan on 2nd November 1773 and James on 3rd May 1776. These six all had their surnames written as McLaurin. Our Lauren, Larin or Lawrence followed. Then came Christian – 1st February 1781, Margaret – 19th January 1784 and Duncan – 1st June 1785.



Dull church

[cc-by-sa/2.0 - © Iain Macaulay - geograph.org.uk/p/80647](https://www.geograph.org.uk/p/80647)

There are three possible baptisms at Dull for Duncan McLaren senior – all spelling the name McLaurin. Two of them are a little early for a man who married in 1761 and fathered ten children: Duncan son of John McLaurin and Jonet Stewart was born in 1732 and Duncan son of John McLaurin and Margaret Camron in 1733. So my money was already on Duncan son of Duncan McLaurin and Jonet McLaurin, baptised on 20th July 1739, before corroborating clues came to light.

Duncan's wife, Christian Cameron or Camron, was the daughter of John Camron and Margrat Menzies, baptised at Dull on 16th October 1743. The entry in the register maybe sheds light on her future husband's parentage:

Christian daughter to John Camron and Margrat Menzies in Tullochuil was baptised. Duncan McLaurin and Robert Livingstone witnesses.

Could the first witness be the father of the man she would one day marry? It seemed feasible. Looking at the baptism of Duncan and Jonet's son Duncan confirmed things further:

Duncan son to Duncan McLaurin and Jonet McLaurin in McLaurin Tullochuell was baptised. John Menzies and George Tyrie witnesses
July 22nd 1739

On Google maps, only Tullichuil Burn is marked, which is not surprising, as the 1867 map of Perth and Clackmannanshire, which centres on Dull³⁸ shows Tullichuil as little more than a farmstead with a few buildings, and on the far side of the River Tay from Dull itself. As the crow flies, Dull was only just over a mile away, but there were no roads nearby leading towards the river, and no obvious routes across the River Tay. In fact, Aberfeldy, at around four miles away, was probably more accessible. It seems unlikely that these two families both living at Tullinhuil weren't closely connected. Duncan's baptism begs the question as to whether the homestead was known by the family surname or the place was where the McLaurin family originated.

Duncan and Jonet McLaurin baptised eight children at Dull, with at least the first and last giving Tullichuil as their place of residence. With only two exceptions, the names were repeated in the next generation. Robert was baptised on 7th September 1719, with his father described as:

Duncan McLaren in Tullichuil McLaren

Jonet was baptised on 6th June 1724, John on 18th September 1728 and Katrin on 5th December 1729. Next came Lauren, one of only six children in Dull over a hundred year span to be given that name or a variant thereof; he was baptised on 14th May 1732. The final two before our Duncan in 1739 were girls: Elspet – 5th February 1734 - and Christian – 22nd March 1737.

There the McLaren/McLaurin trail ends. There are plenty of births and marriages in the Perth parishes around Dull in the 18th century, but names re repeated so often it is impossible to tease the various lines out.

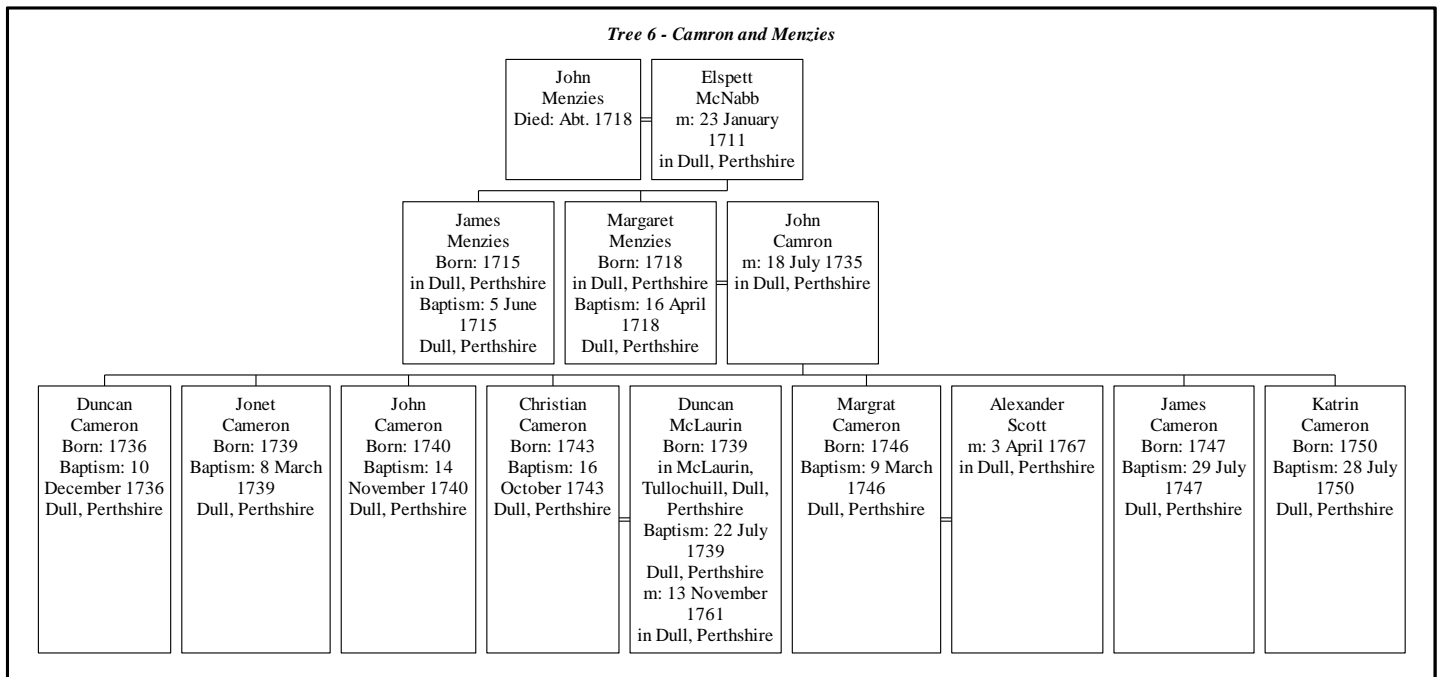
³⁸ <https://maps.nls.uk/view/74957328> , Perth and Clackmannanshire XLV111. 16 Dull

McLaren distaff lines 1 - Camron, Menzies, Crerar, McMartin

Almost all that is known about Christian Camron has already been told; she was baptised at Dull in 1743 to John Camron and Margrat Menzies, married Duncan McLaren in the same parish in 1761, and gave birth to ten children. Her parents also married at Dull, on 18th July 1735:

John Camron in the parish of Dull and Marg^t Menzies in the parish of Weem were married. John Camron and James Menzies witnesses

The witnesses were almost certainly related in some way, but no definitive baptisms for these two have come to light. Again, the names were very common ones.



However, their children are known: Duncan, baptised on 10th December 1736, Jonet on 8th March 1739 and John - 14th November 1740. Christian was the middle child and was followed by Margrat - 9th March 1746, James - 29th July 1747 and finally Katrin - 28th July 1750.

Margat Menzies was the daughter of John Menzies and Elspet McNabb. However, her baptism shows that her father was already dead at the time of her birth:

Marg^t daughter to John Menzies (deceased) and Elspet McNabb in ?Bolinachuich was baptized being presented by John Stewart there. Archibald McPhadan and Duncan Menzies witnesses.

John and Elspet had married only seven years previously:

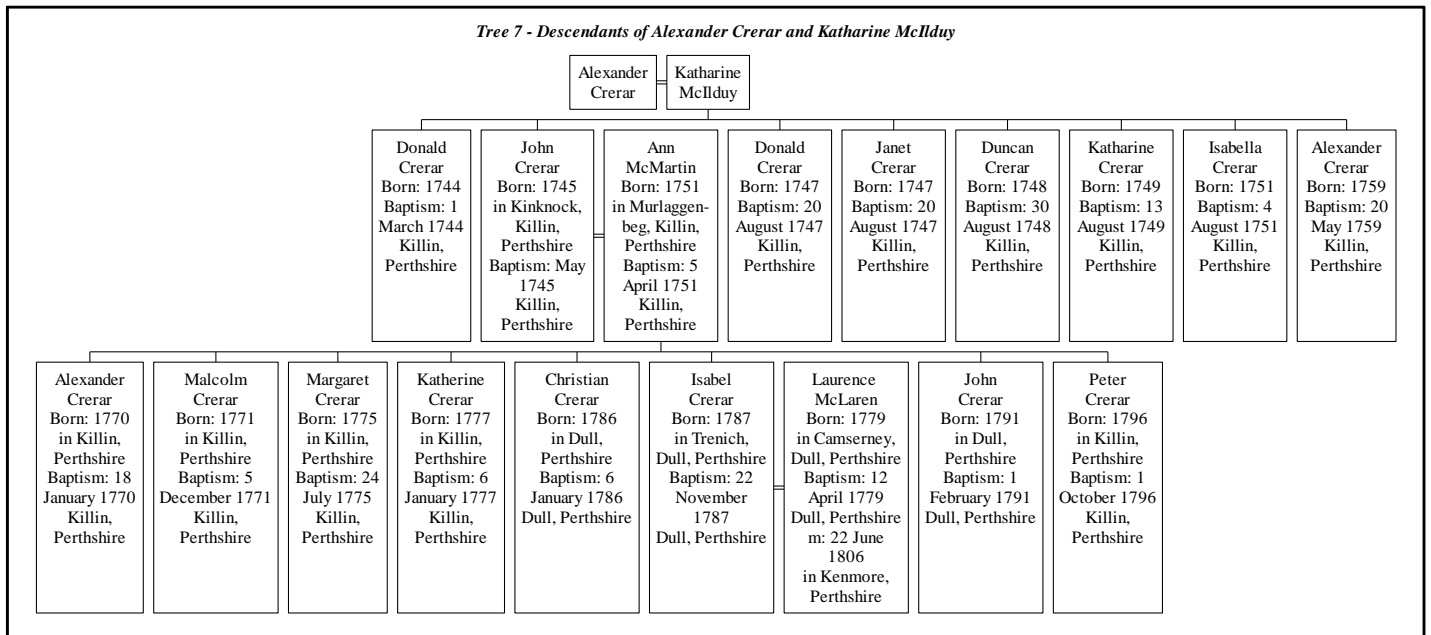
Jan^y ye 7th John Menzies and Elspett NcNabb both in this parish were

booked. James Stewart in Balnabrough ?laur for the bridegroom and Neil Stewart in ?Donyphuil ?laur for the bride. Married January ye 23^d 1711

One son, James, baptised on 5th June, had been born to the couple in 1715, so Elspet was presumably left with two young children to care for when she was widowed. The name Stewart appears three times in the above register extracts. Maybe the Stewarts were kin to either Elspet or John, but the Dull register only begins in 1703, so it is impossible to trace the family further in this parish.

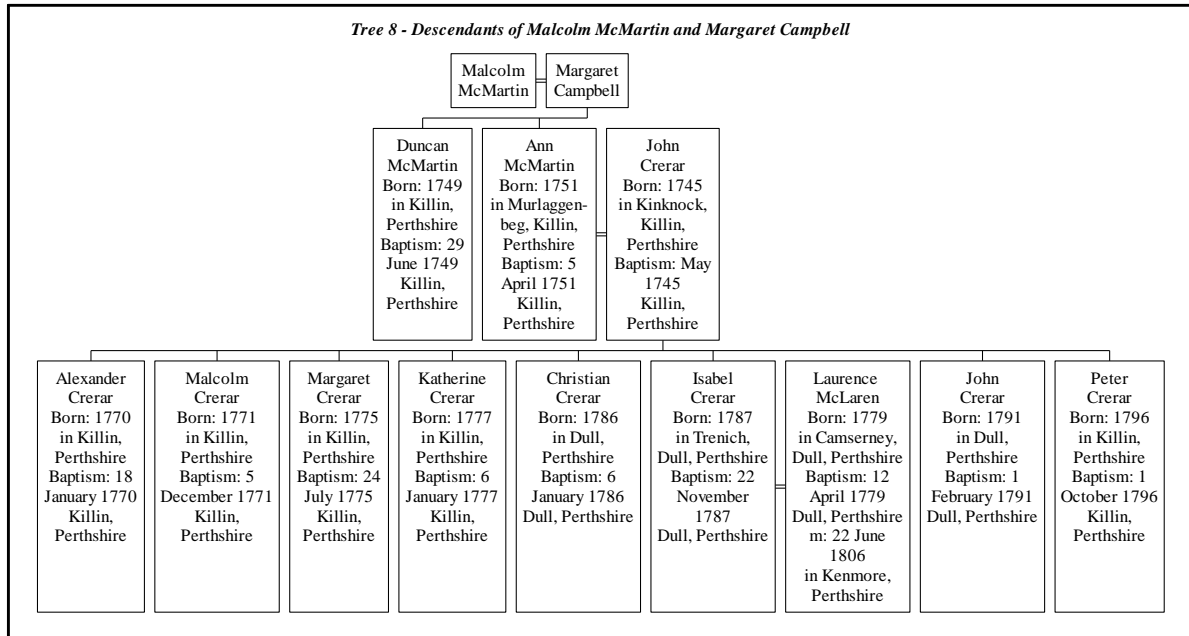
Laurence McLaren's wife, Isabel or Isabella Crerar, was the daughter of John Crerar and Ann McMartin. Crerar, or Crearer as it sometimes appears, is an almost entirely local name. Of the 728 birth and baptism entries on *Scotlandspeople* between 1700 and 1800 only 17 are outside Perthshire. Even within the county, the name is largely confined to a cluster of parishes in the middle.

Isabel was baptised at Dull, apparently as the second child of John Crerar and Ann McMartin on 22nd November 1787 with the family address being given as Trenich - a location which has eluded me. Two years earlier, the couple baptised Christian on 6th January 1687, and just over three years later, John was baptised on 1st February 1791. Both these events were recorded in the Dull parish register. Initially, I assumed that this was the complete family, and then a run of baptisms appeared at Killin, the parish at the other end of Loch Tay, with the same pair of parents, and even with Crerar being such a common name, it seemed feasible that this was the same family. The first child was Alexander, baptised at Killin on 18th January 1770. Malcolm followed, with a baptism on 5th December 1771. Then there were two girls - Margaret - 24th July 1775, and Katherine - 6th January 1777.



There are exactly nine years between this last baptism at Killin and Christian's at Dull. Did the family live elsewhere in the interim, somewhere where baptisms were missed or the records lost? Was there a miscarriage, or even two? Or did the

move to Dull delay Christian's baptism? There would still be some doubt were it not for the fact that a final child was born to John and Ann and baptised at Killin on 1st October 1796. So it would seem that, after maybe 10 years at the far end of the loch, John and his family returned to their roots in Killin. Interestingly, Kenmore – where Isabel married Duncan McLaren – is the parish between Killin and Dull.



In looking for Ann McMartin's baptism, I discovered that in the appropriate timeframe, all McMartin births but two were recorded at Killin. Fortunately, there was only one Anne, born in April 1751, making her just 18 when her first child, Alexander, was born:

Day 5th Malcolm McMartine and Margaret Campbell in Murlaggan-beg had their lawful daughter baptised called Anne

There is no sign of a Murlaggan-beg on any maps I have found. However, both old and modern maps show Murlagganmore on the south side of the River Lochay and just below the Falls of Lochay, about 2.7 miles north-west of the town of Killin. In Gaelic, which was predominantly spoken in the area, 'mor' means big and 'beg' means little, so presumably there were both a Great Murlaggan and a Little Murlaggan at one time. The parents' names are significant, as, in Scots naming practices, it was customary to name the second son after the wife's father and the first daughter after the wife's mother, and Malcolm and Margaret appear in the run of children right on cue. Unless this family was also peripatetic, Ann only had one sibling, a brother named Duncan, baptised at Killin on 29th June 1749.

As has already been pointed out, Crerar was a localised and very common surname, and there are around 14 Johns born in Dull, Killin or Kenmore in the right timeframe. However, my money, somewhat speculatively, is on the John baptised to Alexander Crerar and Katherine McIlduy at Killin in May 1745:

Alexander Crerar and Kat. McIlduy in Kinknock had their lawful son

baptised named John

A quick glance at John's subsequent children shows that his eldest boy shares his paternal grandfather's name and his second daughter her paternal grandmother's, meaning that all the first four follow traditional naming patterns.

Alexander and Katherine baptised eight children at Killin. John was the second. The first and third, baptised on 1st March 1744 and 20th August 1747, were both named Donald, which leads to a further speculation that of the Alexanders born about 20 - 30 years earlier, the most likely to belong to this family is the one born to Donald Crerare and Isobel Robertstone in 1715, but it is impossible to prove.

20th August 1747 was also the baptism date of a daughter named Janet, Donald's twin. Presumably both Donalds died, as a fourth son was named Duncan and baptised on 30th August 1748. Katherine's baptism was recorded on 13th August 1749, Isabella's on 4th August 1751 and finally, Alexander's on 20th May 1759.

It is perhaps worth noting that Katherine McIllduy - as she appears on John's baptism - had a very unstable name. It was also recorded variously on her children's baptisms as McIlldui, NcIlhuie (Nc being the female version of Mac) and McIlguy. The last spelling nods perhaps to the fact that the name is supposedly a variant of McGregor³⁹ although I can find no other verification of this.

Just as there is no record of a marriage for John Crerar and Ann McMartin, neither are there records for the marriages of Malcolm McMartine and Margaret Campbell, and Alexander Crerar and Katherine McIllduy.

McLaren distaff lines 2 - Conacher and Borrie

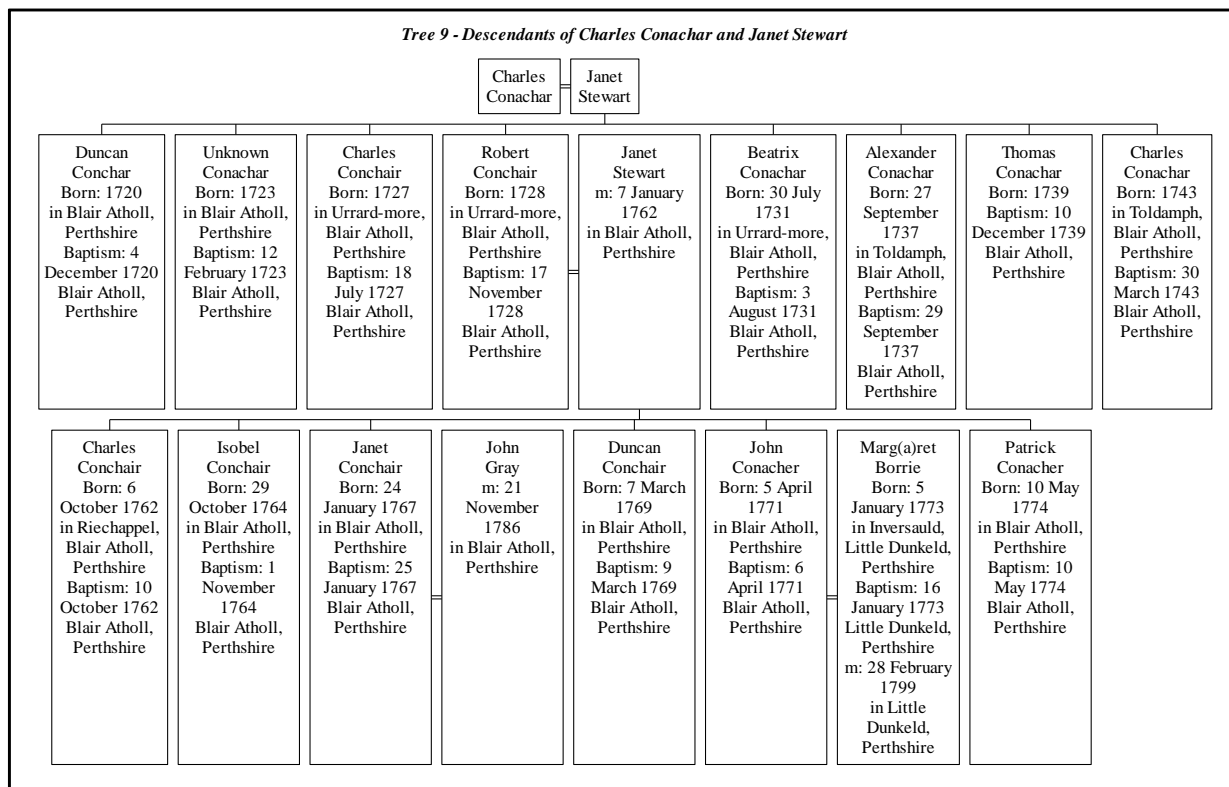
This next chapter deals with the family of Donald McLaren's wife, Ann Conacher who was born at Woodhead in the parish of Caputh on 14th February 1808:

John Conacher in Woodhead and his wife Margaret Borry had a child born 14th February and baptised called Agnes

However, before dealing with Ann's siblings and parents, let's skip back two generations to the earliest confirmed Conacher in this line, Ann's great-grandfather, Charles Conacher or Conchair (the name appears in other forms as well). At some time before 1720, Charles Conacher married Janet Stewart. Given how prevalent the Stewart surname was in Blair Atholl, I'm guessing she was a local girl. However, the Blair Atholl register only begins in 1718, and although there was a Charles Conacher born in nearby Logierait in the late 1600s, he seems to have married and raised a family in his home parish. So probably both Charles and Janet were born in Blair.

³⁹ <https://www.houseofnames.com/mcilduy-family-crest>

Tree 9 - Descendants of Charles Conachar and Janet Stewart



Blair Atholl parish was largely owned by the Dukes of Atholl. It lies in the north of the county of Perth. Beyond it are the Grampians. Gaelic was the language of its inhabitants in the period under scrutiny. The Conachers seem to have spent much of their time living in isolated homesteads with maybe just a small handful of families for neighbours.

For the couple's first three recorded children, the family address is Blair itself. The first of Charles and Janet's children to appear in the Blair register was Duncan, baptised on 4th December 1720. However, there may well have been older children who were born before the register was begun. This idea is slightly strengthened by the fact that Charles made the first of many appearances in the Blair Kirk Session minutes⁴⁰ on 10th September 1718:

John Robertson in Tomkindrochit and Margaret Robertson his wife, accused of prenuptial fornication. (Charles Conacher in Blair was cautioner for their fine).

A cautioner was someone willing to stand surety in the case, and it seems unlikely that a very young man, just married, would be in a position to do so. (Although I have looked at the original Kirk Session Minutes for the entries of Charles Conacher, [CH2/430/1 and CH2/430/2 at *Scotlandspeople*] I would not have found these entries without the help of the Borenich website, to which I am deeply indebted.) Charles

⁴⁰ http://www.borenich.co.uk/Session_Minutes_1718.html

appeared a second time before Duncan's birth, on 13th January 1720. This time, his occupation of merchant is given, although I suspect he was probably trading on a fairly small scale:

Complaint by Charles Connacher, merchant in Blair Atholl, upon Isabel Stewart, spouse to John Gow, smith, that she had accused him of burning her peats in his fire four days ago, but was in error.

In the following year, at the Session held on 25th June 1721, Charles Connacher in Blair was suggested as a possible elder; presumably he was deemed acceptable as he appeared on the list of elders on 6th August 1721, and was part of the Session held on 4th March 1722. Again, this does not seem to be the profile of someone just starting out in life. On 8th April:

Charles Conacher was given 15 shillings for iron for the sandglass case.



Blair Atholl church

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According to the transcriber:

It was common for a preacher to use an hour-glass to time his sermon. This did not restrict the sermon to one hour. A minister in full flow might tell the Congregation that they should take another glass, and just turn the sermon-glass over.

The year after, on 12th February, Charles and Janet baptised an unnamed child, maybe an infant who was still-born or didn't live long. On 27th April, he was noted once more as being part of the Kirk Session.

No Kirk Session records survive for the remainder of 1723 to late 1741, but during that period, Charles and Janet moved at least twice within the parish and

baptised another five children. Charles was baptised on 18th July 1727, Robert on 17th November 1728 and Beatrix on 3rd August 1731. On all of these, the residence was given as Urrard-more. According to a website devoted to family history in Blair Atholl⁴¹, Urrard-more was:

demolished by 1744 to form the grounds of Blair Castle

so no longer exists. Fortunately, the family had moved to Toldamph by then, a homestead which lay on a line between Old Blair and the Falls of Fender, but no longer appears on the map. Here were born Alexander – baptised on 29th September 1737, Thomas – 10th December 1739, and another Charles – 30th March 1743.

Presumably Charles was serving as an elder in the Kirk Session during this whole period, and as treasurer from 1727, but this is only evident in the surviving volume which begins in 1741. On 10th May that year he is once more listed as an elder, recorded usefully as:

Charles Conacher in Toldamp

On 22nd November he was ordered to meet the session on the following Friday (22nd) in his role as treasurer, when:

A Committee of Robert Stewart, John Cowan or any other two of the Elders, with the Minister, were instructed to clear the Session debts to Charles Conchair, their Treasurer

It seems that Charles hadn't received payment for the work he had done with the Kirk Session over a number of years:

Charles Conchair produced a discharge of debts for the Session dated 4th December 1727 signed by James Marray, their clerk, of all intromissions preceding that date, when he entered office. He also produced his commission from the Session dated 10th December 1727 signed by Mr Bisset, late Minister, empowering him to collect fines and allowing him the fifth part of what should be made effectual. The Committee asked for a list of these fines, but he could not give it because he could not write, but had trusted to the Session minutes of that time, which were now missing and could not be traced. He appealed to several members of the Committee to affirm that he had given in the fines, which had been disposed of, without his getting any share of them. The members affirmed this, so he asked that an estimate be taken of the fines during the ten years, and then he left.

Further entries show that there must have been considerable disquiet at the thought of finding Charles so much in the way of back payment. On 6th December:

The Session agreed to meet at the house of (Donald Robertson of) Pitagowan,

⁴¹ http://www.borenich.co.uk/Place_names.html

so that justice might be done to both the Treasurer and the poor

and at a subsequent meeting a week later:

It was argued that as Charles Conchair could not produce a list, he was not owed anything, but it was voted that the Session was owing him (something). It was carried by a vote that he should have £20 Scots and the annual interest. He was asked to continue in office, but refused the same and demitted office. John Cowans was selected to be his successor, under the same terms as Charles Conchair.

Despite his resignation as treasurer, Charles continued as an elder, being recorded as such at the meeting held on 25th September, and on 12th February 1744, with another elder, Robert Stewart, he was:

asked to witness the account for the Treasurer John Cowan

He was recorded simply as an elder on 11th March 1744 and 9th June 1745, and further evidence of the trust the Kirk placed in him is clear from an entry on 14th April 1744:

Alexander Gow in Blair appeared before the Congregation for his breach of the Fast Day, and was exhorted to forbare his undecent behaviour for the future. He acknowledged his guilt by musick and dancing in his house. He consigned a bill for £20 as a security of his future good behaviour, to be forfeit in case he be found guilty of any further breach of Civil or Ecclesiastical Fasts. The bill was lodged with Charles Conchair.

After 1745, Charles Conacher or Conchair disappears from the Kirk Session Minutes. Whether this signifies death or simply retirement from the role is unknown. Given that he had young children, it is to be hoped the latter.

*A Social History of the Atholl Estates*⁴² sheds a little more light on the society Charles was part of:

Only a small number of the elders of Blair Atholl have proven to be traceable. Some were on lands which did not belong to the Duke of Atholl. Others were on farm touns wadset or feued by the Duke and do not therefore appear on the Duke's rentals. Those from Atholl farm touns who do not appear on the rental must be presumed to be subtenants. The men who have been traced were without exception small tenants. Robert Steuart, elected an elder in 1721, had an eleven year tack of a ten shilling portion of Blair Wachter, sharing the 41 merkland with four other tenants and paying a, rent of £20 Sc. per annum. Malcolm Steuart and John Steuart were both tenants of the 3 merk land of East Tulloch; the former held one merkland and paid an annual rent of £20 Sc., and the latter held half a merkland and paid £15-6-9 Sc. Charles Conacher was the

⁴² <https://www.era.lib.ed.ac.uk/bitstream/1842/6850/1/330602.pdf> , *A Social History of the Atholl Estates 1685-1785*, Leah Leneman

possessor (i. e. tenant) of Alexander Richys Croft in Blair; he had no tack but paid yearly E3 Sc., a firloft of meal, a firloft of beer and six poultry.

A tack is a lease, a firloft a measure of grain and a merkland a piece of land assessed at a rent of 1 mark annually. Wadset implies a mortgage and feu land was held from the duke in perpetuity. As tenant of Richie's Croft, presumably Charles Conacher was a crofter, working a small, enclosed area, probably of arable land.

The next in this line is Robert Connacher. He was born in 1728 and baptised at Blair Atholl:

Charles Connacher in Urrard-more and Janet Stewart his wife had a child bap: Nov 17th called Robert



Glen Tilt

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Robert seems to have been fairly mobile. During his childhood he had lived at Urrard-more, Toldamph and Blair Atholl itself. He must have been very familiar with Glen Tilt described on the Highland Perthshire⁴³ website as:

a mighty glen on the outskirts of Blair Atholl which cuts through high mountains all the way to Deeside. Glen Tilt offers a delightful mixture of vistas ranging from woodland to open glen and hillsides

as many of the places he inhabited were in this area and surrounding glens north of Blair Atholl village.

At the time of his marriage in 1762 he was living in Ardkincael in Glen Tilt, just north of Blair:

⁴³ <https://www.highlandperthshire.org/bigfive/bigfive-nw/bigfive-nw-blair/3329-Glen-Tilt>

Robert Conchair in Ardkincael and Janet Stewart in Middle Blairuachdair
Janry 7th

Stobie's map of Perthshire⁴⁴ clearly shows the homesteads names. Both are in Glen Tilt, running north along the River Tilt from Blair Atholl. Ardkencall, as it is spelt on the map, appears just above the name Blair Atholl, while Blairuachker (another alternative spelling) lies a little further north, and can be seen on maps as Blairuachdar today. There is a baptism for a Janet Stewart born there in 1747, but this would make her an exceptionally young bride, with a husband nearly 20 years older, but of the numerous other Janet Stewarts baptised at Blair Atholl in the first half of the 18th century, none stands out. So the jury is still out. The fact that this Janet Stewart shares the same name as her mother-in-law shows just how common the surname was in the area.

When their first child Charles was baptised at Blair on 10th October 1762, the family was living at Riechappel in Glen Banvie. The Borenich website⁴⁵ describes Riechappel as:

...situated in Glen Banvie opposite the old Comyn's Road which linked [the]...forerunner of Blair Castle with the Comyn stronghold of Ruthven in Badenoch.

Until 1713 there was no permanent settlement, it was just a shealing, but by 1724 it had become a tenancy with a rent of £24 Scots and a castrated sheep per annum, and provision for grass for 25 of the Duke's sheep. Maybe Robert was briefly a tenant here. Pictures on the same website show a scattering of small, ruined buildings.

When Isobel was baptised on 1st November 1764, the family was back close to Janet's home, in Wester Blairuachdair. Janet's baptism on 21st January 1767 took place when they were domiciled at a place which looks like Glaielhluidheamh of Blair. Both Duncan, baptised on 9th March 1769 and John two years later were born at High Corner of Blair, while the birth of the last child, Patrick, on 10th May 1774, was evidently in Blair itself.

No doubt the search for work was an obvious reason for so much mobility. However, there is possibly a more sinister explanation. In 1774, the 3rd Duke of Atholl decided to clear all his tenants out of Glen Tilt to improve his deer stalking – one of the first instances of the notorious Highland Clearances. A blog on a website called *Random Scottish History*⁴⁶ gives a colourful account of what happened, but unfortunately doesn't cite either date or original author. Given its reference to the current duke's grandfather, I suspect it must have been written in the 19th century:

The present Duke of Atholl's Grandfather cleared Glen Tilt, in 1784. This beautiful valley was occupied in the same way as other Highland valleys;

⁴⁴ <https://maps.nls.uk/joins/664.html>, *The Counties of Perth and Clackmannan*, James Stobie, 1783

⁴⁵ http://www.borenich.co.uk/Homesteads/Riechappel_homestead.html

⁴⁶ <https://randomscottishhistory.com/2018/04/09/glen-tilt-and-the-emigrated-pp-161-172/>

each family possessing a piece of arable land, while the hill-pasture was held in common. The people held a right and full liberty to fish in the Tilt, and excellent salmon river, and the pleasure and profits of the chase, in common with their chief; but the then Duke acquired a great taste for deer. The people were for time immemorial accustomed to take their cattle in the summer seasons to a higher glen, which is watered by the River Tarfe; but the Duke appointed this Glen Tarfe for a deer forest, and built a high dyke at the head of Glen Tilt. The people submitted to this encroachment on their rights. The deer increased, and did not pay much regard to the march, people complained, and His Grace rejoiced: and to gratify the roving propensities of these light-footed animals, he added another splice of some of some thousand acres of the people's land to the grazing grounds of his favourite deer. Gradually the deer forest extended, and the marks of cultivation were effaced, till the last of the brave Glen Tilt men, who fought and often confronted and defeated the enemies of Scotland and her Kings upon many a bloody battle field, were routed off and bade a final farewell to the beautiful Glen Tilt, which they and their forefathers for ages considered their own healthy sweet home.

Perhaps this explains why the family was living in the village of Blair at the time of Patrick's birth. No more is known of Robert Conacher and his wife Janet Stewart, although it seems likely that their daughter Janet married John Gray in Blair Atholl in 1786.

Their son John, born in Blair in 1771:

Robert Conchair and Janet Stewart in High Corner of Blair had their law'll son born April 5th bap 6th named John

had moved to Auchtergaven by the time of his marriage, but his spouse, Margaret Borry or Borrie, was of Little Dunkeld, which is where they made their proclamation to marry in 1799:

John Conacher in the parish of Auchtergaven and Margret Borrie in this parish gave up their names for proclamation in order to marriage and were proclaimed without objections, 28.2.1799

The first two children in the family – Margaret and Alexander – were baptised at Auchtergaven, on 29th March 1801 and 26th March 1803 respectively (the homesteads at which the family were then living were Tully Button and Dumbreechie). The next child, John, was baptised at Moneydie about six miles south of Auchtergaven, on 11th February 1806 and it is clear that this family was still highly peripatetic, especially as the last two children were born in Caputh, another six miles further north, on the other side of the Tay.

Ann Conacher and her younger brother Robert (baptised on 19th August 1811) were born in Caputh, both at Woodhead, the whereabouts of which is a mystery. Caputh lies about 13 miles north of Perth. In all probability, John Conacher moved around looking for work, an idea borne out by the census returns, which show him to have

been an agricultural labourer. It may also be that the eviction from Glen Tilt, two generations earlier, was still depressing the family's prospects.

Of John and Margaret's children, Margaret, the eldest, married William Anderson in Rattray in 1822, and Alexander probably married Margaret Scott in Little Dunkeld in 1824. There is no clear sighting of the other two boys.

In 1841⁴⁷ John Conacher's address was recorded as Glack Maback in Caputh. He was 70 years old, and his wife Margaret 65. Also in the household was Janet Conacher, aged 20. She seems to have been the daughter of one Charles Conacher, who was possibly kin to John in some measure. Two 10-year-old girls were also in the household, Ann and Janet Anderson, granddaughters to John and Margaret, the children of Margaret Conacher and her husband William Anderson. In 1851⁴⁸ the address given in Caputh was Glack Loch Ordie. John's age was given as 80 and Margaret's more accurately than before as 78. John's place of birth was Blair Atholl and Margaret's Dunkeld. Living with them, and recorded as undertaking domestic duties, was their 15-year-old granddaughter, Margaret McLaren, nicely tying in the generations. The word 'glack' which appears in both census returns, is a Scots dialect word meaning a hollow or deep glen⁴⁹. It is also used:

for an open corner of a wood, a narrow road between woods or a gap in a hedge or dyke. Some senses seem to carry the notion of bifurcation: the fork of a tree, the fork of a chimney flue or a fork in the road.

Whichever way you look at it, the suggestion is that the Conachers were living in relative rural isolation. Both John and Margaret must have died between the 1851 census and 1855, as there is no sign of a death certificate for either of them.

So little is known about Margaret Borrie apart from her life with John Conacher, that it can be quickly dealt with. She was baptised at Little Dunkeld on 16th January 1773:

Donald Borrie and Marg^t Dickson Inversauld had a daughter born 5th
& baptised 16th named Margret

The homestead name is hard to read and may not be quite correctly transcribed as it has not been found. However, in describing the parish, the *Statistical Accounts of Scotland*⁵⁰ say:

Nature has divided it [the parish] into three parts, each of which would make a parish of ordinary magnitude

⁴⁷ *ScotlandsPeople*, 337/1/7, 1841 census, Caputh

⁴⁸ *ScotlandsPeople*, 337/1/4, 1851 census, Caputh

⁴⁹ <https://www.scotslanguage.com/articles/view/id/1606>

⁵⁰ <https://stataccscot.edina.ac.uk/> *Statistical Accounts of Scotland*, vol VI, 1793

Despite its size, around the time of Margret's birth, the population was only just over 3,000.



Little Dunkeld church

Margaret was the youngest of her siblings, all of whom were born in Little Dunkeld. The eldest was John, baptised 24th October 1762. Agnes was recorded on 10th March 1765 and James on 7th June 1767. There is no record extant of the marriage between Donald Borrie or Borry and Margaret Dickson or Dickyson, probably because the Little Dunkeld register only begins in 1759. There are other Borrie and Dickson families there in the second half of the 18th century, so I suspect Donald and Margaret were both born in the parish. It is just possible that Margaret Borrie or Dickson died just after her namesake was born as a marriage is recorded between Donald Borrie and Giles Dickson on 17th January 1773. Could this possibly be Margaret's sister, stepping in to bring up the orphaned family? If so, Margaret junior had four half-siblings born between 1773 and 1780.

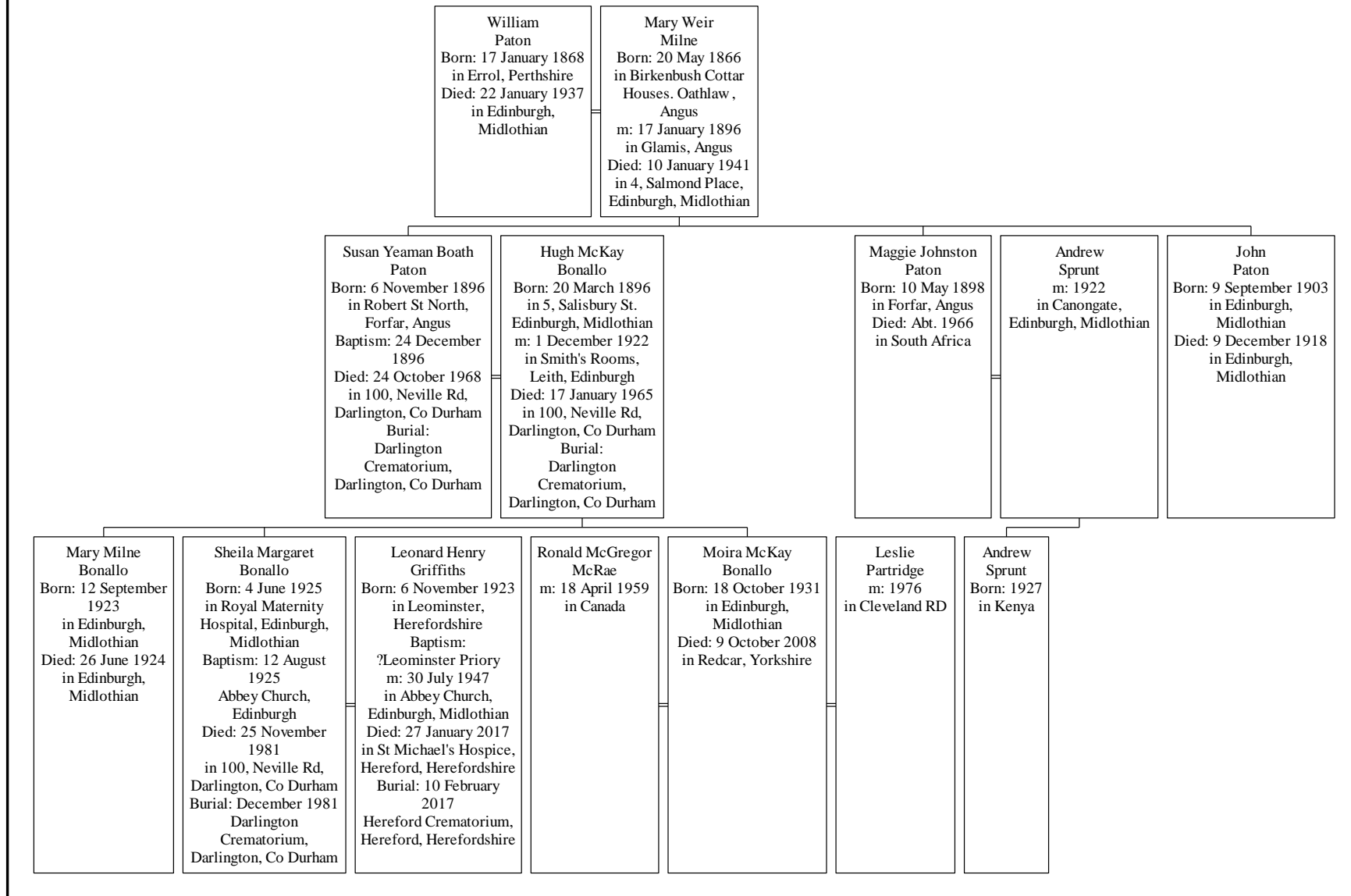
William Paton junior - Errol, Forfar and Edinburgh

Susan Paton's father, William Paton, was born in Errol in Perthshire, though he didn't live there for long, by all accounts, but moved around as his shepherd father's work decreed. His birth certificate is full of detail:

William Paton, b 17.1.1868, 1 hr p.m., Mains of Murie, Errol, M, William Paton, Shepherd, Margaret Paton m s McLaren, m 6.12.1862, Scone.
Informant, William Paton, father, present. Reg. 31.1.1868. Errol

The Mains of Murie is a farm, less than a mile from the estuary of the River Tay and about a mile and a half from the village of Errol.

Tree 10 - Descendants of William Paton and Mary Weir Milne



William's older siblings, Elizabeth, John and Ann, had been born at Longforgan, St Martins and Kilspindie respectively, but although his next sister, Margaret, was born at Errol in 1869, by 1871⁵¹ the family was at Lochee Road, Ritchiel Land in Dundee, and the last three children of William and Margaret were born at Eassie and Nevay between 1872 and 1878.

The death of William junior's mother Margaret McLaren in 1879 seems to have split the family up, or maybe it was just William senior's need to go where work took him that dictated the fact that he was enumerated at Parkhead Farm Bothie, Blairgowrie in 1881⁵² where he was one of a number of workers on the farm. In the meantime, eighteen-year-old Elizabeth Paton was looking after her younger siblings, William – now 13 and a scholar – Margaret, Catherine and Jemima, at Castleton Cottages in Eassie and Nevay⁵³. This parish seems to be a collection of small hamlets: Eassie, Hatton of Eassie, Eassie Mill, Eassie Farm, North, West and East Nevay and Kirkton of Nevay all appear on a modern O.S. map, about three miles to the west of Glamis. Also marked on the map, beside the A94 is Castleton Hotel, with Castleton Cottages nearby.

According to a website⁵⁴ Castleton of Eassie is a large earthwork surrounded by a broad ditch and was probably the site of a 12th or 13th century castle. The cottages are a terrace of single storey dwellings along the main road, now beautifully modernised inside.

Unlike his forbears, William decided that he would be a town dweller rather than work on the land. By 1891⁵⁵ he had moved to Robert Street North in Forfar, where the census found him as a boarder with the Fraser family. Unmarried, and aged 22, he was making a living as a railway porter. It was obviously a railway household; his fellow boarder was also a porter, while head of the household Robert Fraser was a Railway Gatekeeper.

Ten years later⁵⁶ he was settled in Edinburgh, at 16, Wardlaw Street supporting his wife and two daughters by working as a Tramway Pointsman. The move was obviously recent, as both daughters, aged four and two, had been born in Forfar. Streetview shows Wardlaw Street to be made up of the substantial kind of four storey stone houses which typify Edinburgh, although I suspect the family only occupied an apartment within the whole.

No doubt being a pointsman, a responsible job ensuring that trams were directed onto the right set of rails at junctions, was a step up from being a porter. He was still engaged in this work when the family moved to no. 4 Salmond Street, as the

⁵¹ *ScotlandsPeople*, 387/18/8, 1871 census, Dundee

⁵² *ScotlandsPeople*, 335/7/20, 1881 census, Blairgowrie

⁵³ *ScotlandsPeople*, 284/2/5, 1881 census, Eassie and Nevay

⁵⁴ <http://www.stravaiging.com/history/castle/castleton-of-eassie/>

⁵⁵ *ScotlandsPeople*, 288/21/33, 1891 census, Forfar

⁵⁶ *ScotlandsPeople*, 685/01 144/01/006, 1901 census, Edinburgh

1911 census⁵⁷ still calls him a Tramway Pointsman. By this time, he is 43, Mary 44, Susan 14, Maggie 12 and John 7. The census notes that their accommodation has two rooms with two or more windows, that Mary and William have been married for 15 years and that all three of their children are living.

A reference site for historians⁵⁸ gives a fascinating insight into the Edinburgh and District Tramways system:

History

The Edinburgh and District Tramways Company had a unique place in Scottish tramway history, operating horse, cable and overhead electric trams, though not all at the same time. It began its life in 1894, when it was granted the lease to operate a number of Edinburgh Corporation-owned horse tram lines that had previously been worked by the Edinburgh Street Tramways Company, and ended it in 1919 following the corporation's decision to operate the system itself.

Uniforms

...In the 1900s, the style of the jackets changed subtly; they were still single-breasted, but now had high, fold-over collars (bearing the usual 'E D T' initials), and a square cut at the bottom rather than the rounded one used previously. Large nickel cap badges were also introduced, probably around 1904, to reflect the new era of cable-hauled traction, and appear to have been issued to staff working all services, including those on the horse trams.

Staff working the initial cable-hauled services – taken over from the Edinburgh Northern Tramways Company in 1897 – appear to have worn the same style of uniforms as those worn by the horse tram crews. However, at some point following the introduction of the newly constructed cable lines, drivers and conductors were issued with double-breasted, 'lancer-style' tunics with two rows of five buttons and upright collars; the latter carried an employee number in individual metal numerals on the bearer's right-hand side only. Caps were initially soft-topped, but were eventually superseded by a military style with a glossy peak; both types carried an elaborate new cap badge. At some point, probably just prior to the Great War, the nickel cap badges were replaced by a new design – in brass – which comprised the company title and bearer's grade (within brass ribbons inlaid with blue enamel). In the centre were the arms of Edinburgh above an oval, within which was either a vertical bar, a crescent or a diamond, the symbols denoting the class of the bearer (i.e., 1, 2, or 3).

From 1910 onwards, the E&DT Co also operated an overhead electric line from Ardmillan Terrace to Slateford – staff working these services wore the same uniforms as their colleagues on the cable-hauled trams.

Inspectors were initially issued with long single-breasted overcoats

⁵⁷ *ScotlandsPeople*, 685/3 8/7, 1911 census, Edinburgh

⁵⁸ <http://www.tramwaybadgesandbuttons.com/page148/page149/page366/page366.html>

with lapels, the upper parts of which (i.e., the collars) bore the grade – *Inspector* – in embroidered script lettering. Caps were identical to those worn by tramcar staff, i.e., kepis with piping of a lighter colour around the circumference (approximately two-thirds of the way up), but with no badge. It is unclear what uniforms were worn from the Edwardian era through to the take-over of the E&DT Co in 1919.

William's son John's birth certificate describes his father as a cable car pointsman, so although the uniforms seen in surviving photos of William Paton don't fully match the descriptions above, there are enough similarities to suggest they show him in his work clothes. The embroidered word on the collar is clearly visible.



William Paton – probably in Inspector's uniform

Eventually, William rose to be a tramway inspector, as this is the occupation given on his death certificate when he died in 1937:

William Paton, Tramway Traffic Inspector (retired), m to Mary Milne, d. 22nd Jan 1837, 11.50 a.m., at 4, Salmond Place, Edinburgh, M, 69 years. William Paton, deceased, Shepherd, Margaret Paton m s McLaren, deceased. Cerebral Haemorrhage, 4 days. Certified DMF Barker. Informant, S Bonallo, daughter, 17, Chambers St, Edinburgh, present.



William Paton
Possibly in Tram pointsman's uniform

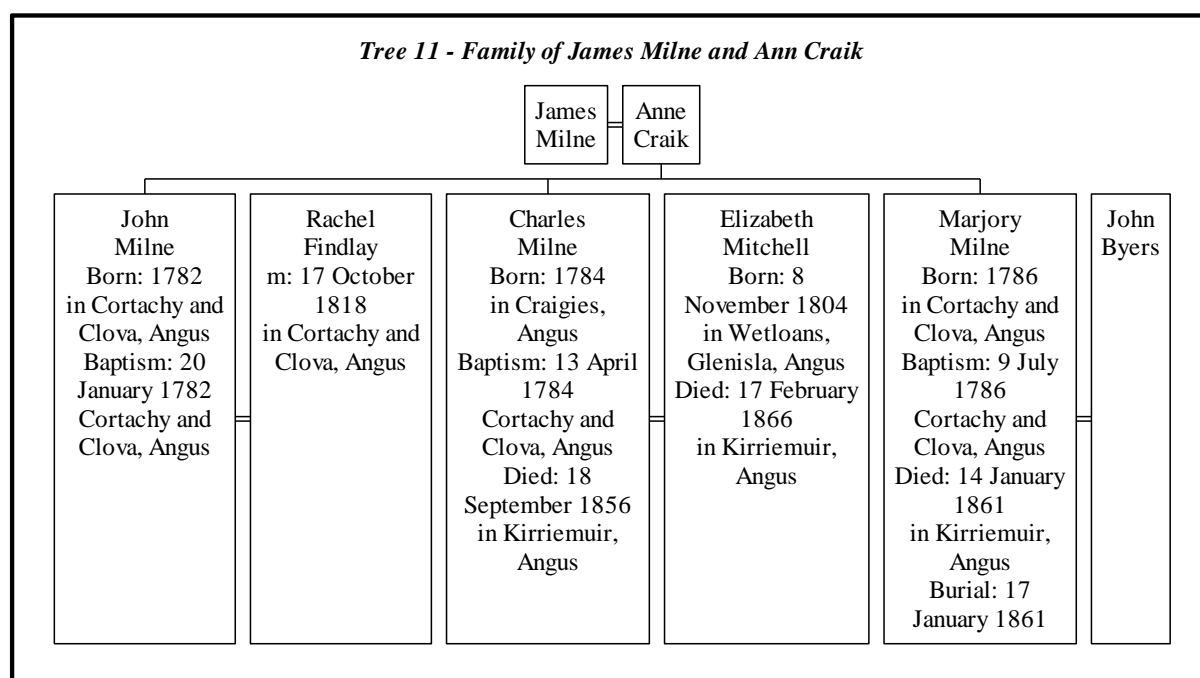


**Clockwise from top:
William Paton
with granddaughter Sheila or Maisie
with Mary Weir Milne
with granddaughter and son-in-law Hugh**



The earliest Milnes - Angus

The story now turns to the family of Susan Paton's mother, the Milnes. This is another instance of Scottish names being unstable, as various members of this line have appeared in the records as Milne, Millne, Mill and Miller. The few generations I have managed to trace came from Angus, where, according to *Wikipedia*⁵⁹, Milne is the ninth most common surname. It is, of course, a Scots version of Miller, but the predominance of the surname has made this line hard to follow.



The earliest branch on the tree is occupied by James Milne and Anne Craik, Mary Weir Milne's great-grandparents. There is no extant marriage record for this couple, but they baptised three children at Cortachy and Clova in Angus. This parish lies about four miles north of Kirriemuir, with the village of Clova in the heart of the glen of that name and Cortachy some way to the south. It was not a large community, just over 1,000 souls when James and Anne were living there. The statistical accounts⁶⁰ describe poor soil with land mainly cultivated as pasture. In terms of climate, it records:

The air is sharp and piercing, particularly on the high grounds. That part of the united parishes, which is situated among the Grampian hills, is, in winter, generally covered with snow to a great depth, which often is not all dissolved before the months of June and July.

⁵⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angus_Scotland#Surnames

⁶⁰ *The Statistical Accounts of Scotland 1791-1845*,

https://stataccscot.edina.ac.uk/static/statacc/dist/viewer/osa-vol10-Parish_record_for_Cortachy_and_Clova_in_the_county_of_Forfar_in_volume_10_of_account_1/osa-vol10-p568-parish-forfar-cortachy_and_clova?search=cortachy%20and%20Clova

In spite of this, the author says it is a healthy spot with many living to 70 or 80 years of age.



Glen Clova

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Whether James and Anne lived that long is not known. They baptised three children at Cortachy – John on 20th January 1782, Charles on 13th April 1784 and Marjorie on 9th July 1786. They lived in Tannadice parish but my guess is that the Cortachy church was closer than the Tannadice one to their home at Craigies. The later statistical accounts⁶¹ for Tannadice suggest that a proportion of the parishioners used Cortachy church:

The communicants are about 570, besides about 100 who annually communicate at Cortachy

Like Cortachy, Tannadice was a mountainous area with a sharp climate. The soil was more fertile but much of the land was used to raise sheep and cattle.

It seems likely that James Milne tenanted a farm named Craigies, a little way east of the South Esk River and around a mile from Cortachy. The 1861 map⁶² seems

⁶¹ *The Statistical Accounts of Scotland 1791-1845*,
https://stataccscot.edina.ac.uk/static/statacc/dist/viewer/nsa-vol11-Parish_record_for_Tannadice_in_the_county_of_Forfar_in_volume_11_of_account_2/nsa-vol11-p198-parish-forfar-tannadice?search=Tannadice

⁶² <https://maps.nls.uk/view/74947102>

to show a house and some outbuildings surrounded by fields which were probably arable. It also seems likely that James and Anne's elder son John inherited the tenancy, as, in 1880, when John's eldest son James died, the certificate placed the death at Craigies in Tannadice. It was this detail that allowed me to link the family together, as Charles' birth entry in the register gives Craigies as his parents' abode.

John, born 1782, married Rachel Findlay at Cortachy on 17th October 1818. They baptised seven children at Cortachy and Clova: Margaret in 1820, Martha in 1821, James - who married Margaret Mitchell in 1856 - in 1823, Janet in 1825, Alexander - 1827, David - 1829 and John - 1831. I haven't followed this line further.

Nor have I followed the line of James and Anne's daughter Marjorie far. She married John Byers, Byres or Birse (date and place unknown) and had several children. The first five - Ann, Jean, May, James and John, were baptised at Tannadice at two-year intervals between 1810 and 1816, with their mother's name occasionally recorded as Jean. Charles - 1820 - and the rest of his siblings were presumably born in Kirriemuir: John in 1822, Barbra and Elizabeth in 1827 and 1829. The 1841 census⁶³ shows John as a stone dyker, but the rest of the family still at home, including Marjory - now recorded as Mary, were all hand-loom weavers. In 1851⁶⁴, John and May (as Marjory appeared this time) were still in Kirriemuir with Jean, May and John. Marjory died at Mary Well in Kirriemuir on 14th January 1861 and was buried three days later. Her death certificate recorded her mother's name as Craig rather than Craik.

The next in line in this story is Charles Milne. His baptism was recorded in the Cortachy and Clova register on 13th April 1784, but probably took place at Cortachy:

James Millne at Craigies and Ann Craik his spouse had a law^l son baptized named Charles

He seems to have left marriage rather late, unless there was an earlier spouse who has gone undetected. Somewhere around 1823 he must have married Elizabeth Mitchell, as their first child, James (Mary Weir Milne's father) was baptised on 28th June 1824 at Tannadice. The entry is brief:

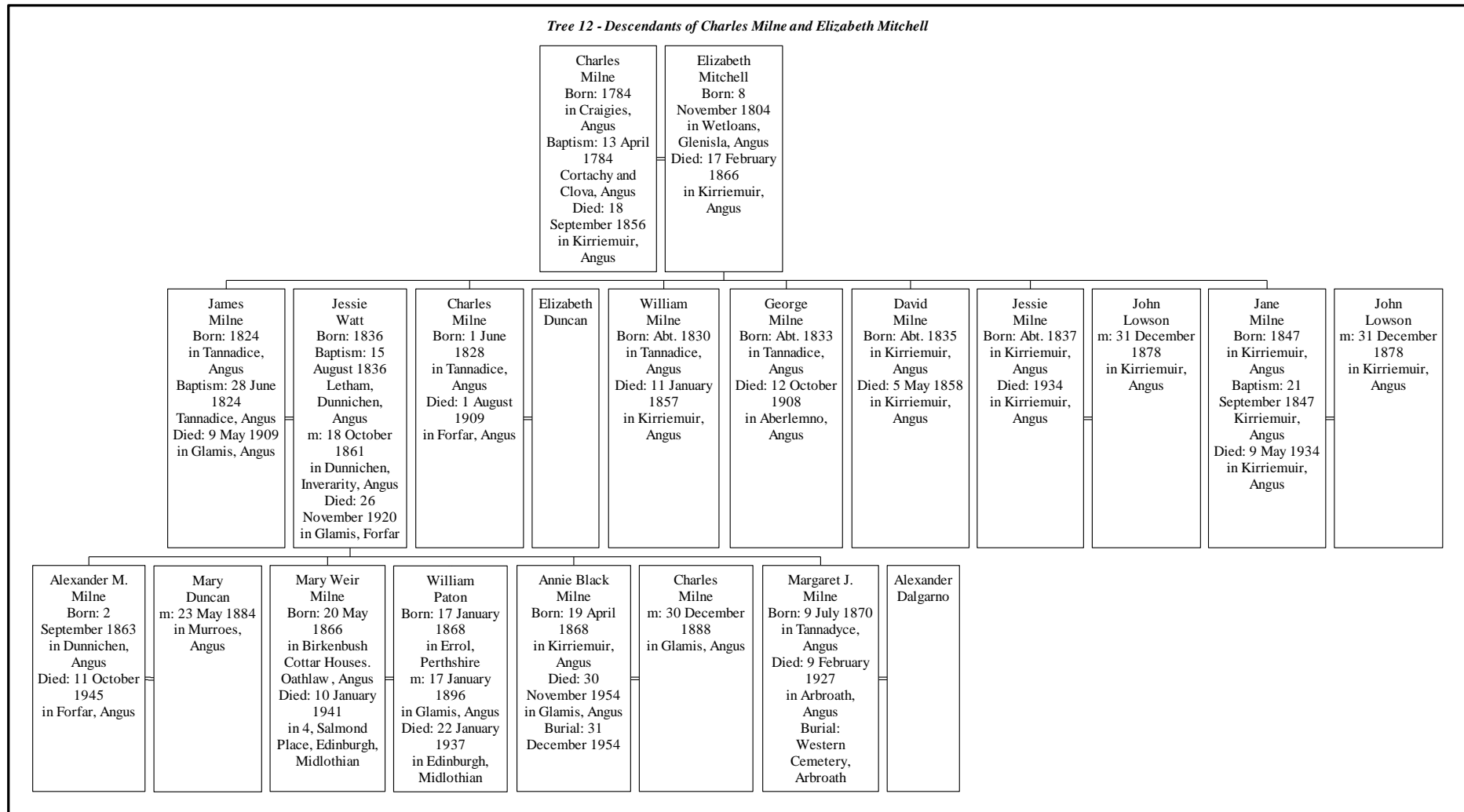
Milne Charles Auchliesh by Betty Mitchell, James

His story is followed later. Auchliesh seems to be somewhere near Memus, more in the heart of Tannadice parish. Presumably, if Charles' brother John took on Craigies after his father's death, Charles would have had to look elsewhere for a living, which may also explain his late marriage.

⁶³ *ScotlandsPeople*, 299/5/7, 1841 census, Kirriemuir

⁶⁴ 299/6/12, 1851 census, Kirriemuir

Tree 12 - Descendants of Charles Milne and Elizabeth Mitchell



The next baptism, that of son Charles on 10th June 1828, is marginally more informative, as, as well as the details given on James' baptism, it gives Charles' senior's occupation as farmer. Charles junior had left home by the time of the 1841 census and his whereabouts are uncertain. However, he seems to have married Elizabeth Duncan of Cortachy and later settled to farm in Inverarity where they raised a large family. James, Charles, James again, Jessie, Elizabeth, Mary, Jean, Isabella, William, Agnes and Robert George were all born between 1850 and 1870. The first at Menmuir, the next three at Oathlaw, two in Forfar and the last five in Inverarity. In old age Charles moved to Forfar, where his death was registered on 1st August 1909. His daughter Elizabeth correctly identified his father as Charles Milne, farmer deceased, but named his mother as Elizabeth Milne née Young rather than Mitchell. Young was the name of Charles' mother-in-law, which could explain the confusion.



Oathlaw and Tannadice church

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There is no baptism recorded for the next two children, William, born Tannadice about 1830 and George, also born Tannadice around 1833. After that, Charles Milne and Betty Mitchell moved the family to Kirriemuir, and it was here that William's death was recorded on 11th January 1857. He was unmarried, living at Herdhill, Kirriemuir, the son of Charles Milne, ploughman, deceased and Betsy Milne, née Mitchell. The cause of death was consumption over four years. His brother George registered the death, giving the churchyard at Cortachy as the place of burial. Another sibling died a year later; David, a farm servant living in Kirriemuir, died of blood-poisoning on 5th May 1858. His sister Jessie registered the death and he, too, was buried at Cortachy.

It seems Charles and Betty were equally negligent over baptisms when they moved to Kirriemuir, where David was born in 1835 and Jess in 1837. A final child, Jean, was baptised at Kirriemuir (address West Herdhill) on 21st September 1847. Given the ten-year gap, there may well have been others who died young and went unrecorded.

George outlived the brothers either side of him by half a century, dying in nearby Aberlemno, unmarried, on 12th October 1908. He had been a corn miller and died of heart disease. His death was recorded by an ‘intimate friend’ Peter Taylor.

To return to their parents, Charles Milne and Betty Mitchell, the family was living at Herd-hill in Kirriemuir in 1841⁶⁵:

Charles Milne	55	Farmer	Y
Betty Milne	35		Y
William Milne	10		Y
George Milne	8		Y
David Milne	6		Y
Janet Milne	4		Y
John Mitchell	10	M.S.	Y

John Mitchell, the servant, may or may not have been kin to Betty. Herdhill appears on an 1861 map⁶⁶ as a homestead not dissimilar to Craigies, a little way to the south-west of the main part of Kirriemuir.

By 1851⁶⁷ there were two further additions to the household, Jess and Jane – or Janet and Jean. The age gap between husband and wife was clear, with Charles at 68 and Betty at 46, born at Glenisla. Charles’ farm was 16 acres. The three boys were listed as farmer’s sons, but William was also a servant and George and David were weavers of brown linen. The two girls were recorded as farmer’s daughters, at home. Although William’s death certificate refers to his father as a ploughman, all other records call him a farmer, though it clearly wasn’t a large concern.

Charles Milne died from Diabetes on 18th September 1856. The certificate records the following:

Milne, Charles, Farmer, (married), 18.9.1856, Herdhill, Kirriemuir, M, 72 yrs,
James Milne, farmer (deceased), Ann Milne, maiden name Craik (deceased),
Diabetes, George Milne, son, present

The two daughters still at home stayed with their mother, at least until 1861⁶⁸. At some point after that, Jessie went into service, rising to be housekeeper in Tealing and Dunnichen before returning to a similar role in Cortachy and Clova. She died there on 4th April 1916. Her sister Jane married John Lawson at Kirriemuir on 31st December 1878 and they had a daughter named Betsy after her grandmother. Jane died in Kirriemuir in 1934.

⁶⁵ *ScotlandsPeople*, 299/31/5, 1841 census, Kirriemuir

⁶⁶ <https://maps.nls.uk/view/74946700>

⁶⁷ *ScotlandsPeople*, 299/27/1, 1851 census, Kirriemuir

⁶⁸ *ScotlandsPeople*, 299/7/12, 1861 census, Kirriemuir

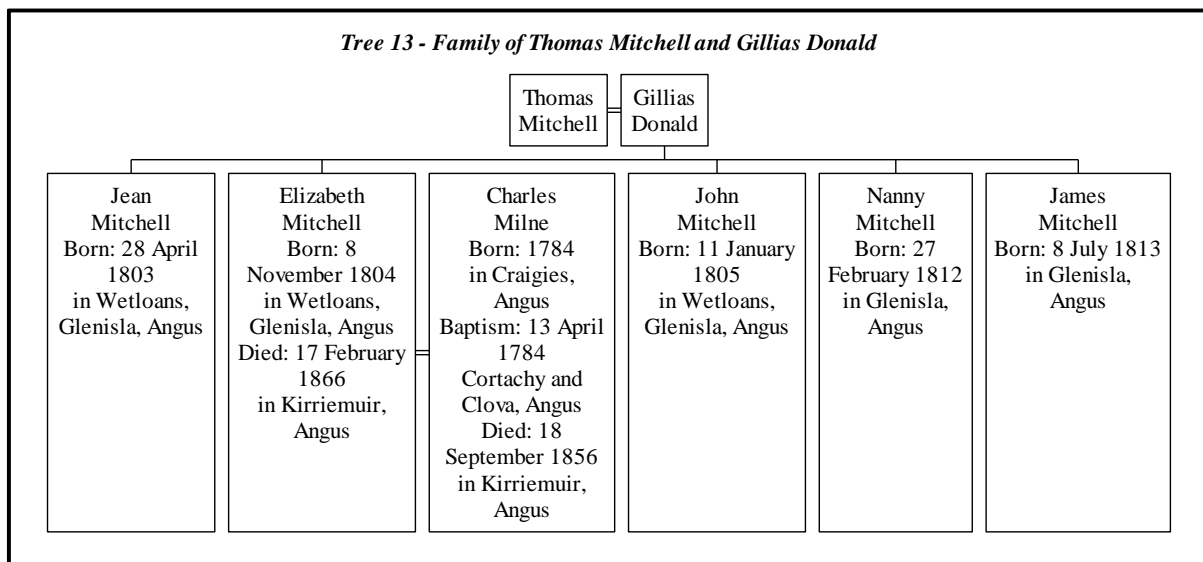
Mitchell - Glenisla

Glenisla parish shares boundaries with both Kirriemuir and Cortachy and Clova, although from the central settlement to Tannadice village is around 19 miles by road. Very little is known about Betty Mitchell's family, and some confusion surrounds what is known. In the 1851 census⁶⁹, Betty gives her age as 46 – suggesting a date of birth around 1804-5 – and her place of birth as Glenisla.

There is no baptism for a Betty or Betsy Mitchell, but there is an entry for an Elizabeth Mitchell. It's on a page with the date 1807 at the top, but was obviously entered retrospectively as it reads:

Account of Tho^s Mitchells children in Wetloans and Gillias Donald his spouse

Jean Born 28th April 1803 }
 Elizabeth Born 8th Nov^r 1804 } Mitchell
 John Born 11th Jan^y 1805 [sic] }



Subsequent entries show two further children: Nanny – 27th February 1812 and James – 8th July 1813.

The *Ordnance Survey Name Books for Angus*⁷⁰ gives a description of Wetloans, though at a later date:

A dwelling house and offices having a small croft or pendicle attached to the property

⁶⁹ *ScotlandsPeople*, 299/27/1, 1851 census, Kirriemuir

⁷⁰ <https://scotlandspplaces.gov.uk/digital-volumes/ordnance-survey-name-books/forfarshire-angus-os-name-books-1857-1861/forfar-angus-volume-46/121OS1/14/46/117>, OS Name Books, 1857-1861, Forfar (Angus) volume 46

Thomas and Gillias married at Glenisla around 5th December 1802:

Thomas Mitchell and Gills Donal both in this parish gave up their names for proclamation for marriage

After her husband's death Betty or Betsy moved to East Roods in Kirriemuir and was living there with her two daughters, Jessie and Jane in 1861⁷¹. Her age was recorded as 50, which is a little low, and her place of birth as Lintrathen (next to Glenisla) which suggests that maybe it was 23-year-old Jessie who gave the information rather than Betsy herself. Betsy was a linen winder and Jessie a linen weaver. Thirteen-year-old Jane was a scholar.

Elizabeth, Betty, or Betsy died in 1866, and this is where the confusion starts to creep in. Scots death certificates are a great resource because they give parents' names. However, the informant didn't always know these names for sure, and errors do creep in. On Elizabeth's certificate, the informant's name is illegible, but it doesn't look like either of her daughter's names, which may explain why the parents' names don't fit:

Elizabeth Milne, widow of Charles Milne, farmer, 1866 February 17th, 4.30 p.m. Roods, Kirriemuir, F, 59 years. John Mitchell, Agricultural Labourer deceased, Margaret Mitchell, m s Thompson, deceased. Gastric fever, 6 weeks.



Town House Kirriemuir

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There is no baptism to a John Mitchell and Margaret Thompson in the Glenisla register, but that is not conclusive. However, Betty's brother John, who married Catherine McDonald and died at Glenisla on 12th November 1873, does have more correct information on his death certificate, which names his parents as

⁷¹ *ScotlandsPeople*, 299/7/12, 1861 census, Kirriemuir

Thomas Mitchell and Julia Donald, both deceased. A search on Wikipedia⁷² shows the Gaelic version of Julia to be Sileas. Given that a G followed by I is soft, I can imagine that Sileas might well end up in a register as Gilleas.

The later Milnes - Angus

James Milne, Susie's grandfather, was, as has been said, the son of Charles Milne and Betty Mitchell, baptised at Tannadice on 28th June 1824. The names of his parents match those on his death certificate, but the age is considerably out, as are the ages on several of the census returns.

It seems likely that as the son of a small farmer, he would be sent as a teenager to work on another farm, so it seems probable that the 1841⁷³ entry for James Miln at Ladenford, just south of Forfar, refers to our James. He was enumerated as a farm servant, aged 17, in the household of John Gow, farmer. The 1851⁷⁴ census is more problematical, as the only feasible entry is at Plover Park in Tannadice, and shows a James Milne, 25-year-old farm labourer, born in Forfar, with a wife Helen and two children, John aged 2 and one-year-old Catherine. There is no further sign of either a John or Helen Milne in the subsequent census, although there is an 11-year-old Catherine Milne in domestic service with the Howe family in Tannadice in 1861⁷⁵, but she then also disappears. There is no further reference in the census returns to a James Milne, born Tannadice around 1824.

However, the 1861 census⁷⁶ at Inverarity – 12 miles from Tannadice, about 4 miles south of Forfar – records a 25-year-old James Milne, born at Tannadice, Head, unmarried and a ploughman. The address is Inverarity Mill Bothy and there are three other ploughmen, all under 20 and listed as servants. James would have been 35 rather than 25. Did it just get recorded wrongly; was he trying to be one of the boys; or was he trying to reinvent himself? Bereavement is a strong push factor, if indeed it was our James married to Helen. He may also have been courting Jessie Watt by this time. She was only 24 so maybe he was trying to show himself of a similar age. Whatever the truth, James consistently gave his age as younger than he was for the rest of his life.

Later that year, James married Jessie Watt in the parish of Inverarity:

18th October 1861 at Dunnichen, Parish of Inverarity, James Milne, Ploughman, bachelor, aged 25; Jessie Watt, Linen Weaver, Spinster, aged 24. Usual residence, Letham, Dunnichen. Son of Charles Milne, farmer and

⁷² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Scottish_Gaelic_given_names

⁷³ *ScotlandsPeople*, 288/3/15, 1841 census, Ladenford

⁷⁴ *ScotlandsPeople*, 321/5/5, 1851 census, Tannadice

⁷⁵ *ScotlandsPeople*, 321/8/4, 1861 census, Tannadice

⁷⁶ *ScotlandsPeople*, 292/1/9, 1861 census Inverarity

Elizabeth Mitchell; daughter of Robert Watt, Quarrier, deceased and Margaret Watt, m s Robertson.



Alexander Maxwell Milne and unknown child

Their first child was Alexander Maxwell, born at Dunnichen on 2nd April 1863. Mary Weir – Susie’s mother – was born at Oathlaw in 1866. A third child, Ann Black, was born at Kirriemuir on 19th April 1868. By the time the last child, Margaret Johnstone, was born on 9th July 1870, the family was back in James’ home village, Tannadice.

However, they weren’t there for long, as the 1871 census⁷⁷ shows them at Muirouses in Glamis or Glamis. James now only admits to being 36 rather than 46:

James Milne	H	M	36	Ag Lab	Tannadice, Forfar
Jessie Milne	W	M	35		Dunnichen, Forfar
Alexander Milne	S		8	Scholar	Dunnichen, Forfar
Mary Milne	Dau		4		Oathlaw, Forfar
Ann Milne	Dau		3		Kirriemuir, Forfar
Margaret Milne	Dau		7m		Tannadice, Forfar

Ten years later⁷⁸, James and Jessie were at Charleston to the southwest of Glamis town with their two younger daughters, both scholars. James owned to being 44 and

⁷⁷ *ScotlandsPeople*, 289/3/10, 1871 census, Glamis

⁷⁸ *ScotlandsPeople*, 289/2/6, 1881 census, Glamis

was a farm servant. In 1891⁷⁹, still in Glamis, James, aged 53, was a carter and the only daughter left at home with him and Jessie was Margaret, now 29 and a general servant domestic. James was still working in 1901⁸⁰ although he must have been 76 rather than the 64 on the enumeration sheet. He was working as a Forester's Labourer. Jessie was 60 and their grandson Walter Milne, aged seven, was living with them.

Given that both his father and grandfather had called themselves farmer, and James was the oldest son of the family, he seems to have had quite a chequered career, moving from place to place, it seems, in search of work. Maybe the agricultural depression of the last quarter of the 19th century made it difficult for him to establish a career. Maybe his early bereavement – if such it was – unsettled him. He died at Glamis in 1909:

James Milne, labourer, (married to Jessie Watt); 1909 May 9th, 9h 15 a.m.
M, 70; Charles Milne, farmer, deceased, Elizabeth Mitchell, deceased;
Carcinoma Nutriculae Haematemesis; Charles Milne, son-in-law, present



Alexander Maxwell Milne and Mary Duncan?

⁷⁹ *ScotlandsPeople*, 289/1/57, 1891 census, Glamis

⁸⁰ *ScotlandsPeople*, 289/1/4, 1901 census, Glamis.

James and Jessie's children all married. Alexander Maxwell, born in 1863, married Mary Duncan on 23rd May 1884 at Murroes. The certificate shows him to have been a ploughman like his father, whose occupation at that time is given as wood carter. The ceremony was witness by Mary Milne, presumably his sister. The couple produced 11 children between 1883 and 1899: Helen, John, Margaret, Isabella, Jessie, Jamima, Alexander, James, Anne, Robert and Mary - born on the day her mother died. The third child, Margaret Johnstone, shared her name with her first cousin. Both were presumably named after their aunt. Alexander died in Forfar in 1945.

Ann Black Milne, born in 1868, married namesake Charles Milne on 30th December 1888 at Glamis. Together they had three children - Mary, Charles and William. Ann died at Glamis in 1954. Margaret married Alexander Dalgarno at Glamis in 1902. The couple settled in St Vigeans on the outskirts of Arbroath and had five children: Mary, James, Alice, James and Alexander. Margaret died in 1927.

Finally we come to Mary Weir Milne, Susan's mother, born in Oathlaw on 20th May 1866, though I have not discovered who she owes her middle name to. The certificate of her birth is the oldest piece of original documentary evidence I have for this family. A now faded and foxed piece of paper declares that:

I hereby certify that I have this day registered the birth of Mary Milne daughter of James Milne, ploughman, and Jessie Watt his wife, which took place at Birkenbush Cottar houses, on the 20th day of May 1866. George Stuart, Registrar for the Parish of Oathlaw. 6th June 1866 in the county of Forfar. Born 20.5.1866 at 8.00 a.m., Birkenbush Cottar Houses Oathlaw, dau of James Milne, Ploughman, and Jessie Milne, m s Watt (m. 18.10.1861 Dunnichen)

Many older documents make reference to the county of Forfar, which was what it was called until the name change in 1928 turned it into Angus. Now Forfar simply refers to the county town. A cottar⁸¹ was:

a peasant occupying a cottage and land of not more than half an acre at a rent of not more than five pounds a year

and:

cottar houses [were] used in the past by land workers on the estate

so the inference is that James Milne and Jessie Watt were probably living in a tied cottage on a farm, possibly the one which still exists just north of Oathlaw and called Birkenbush.

⁸¹ <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/cottar>

Sometime before Mary was four years old, the family moved to Glamis, where she was enumerated with her family in 1871⁸². However, by the time she was in her mid-teens she was boarding with the Kennedy family at 37 North Street Forfar and earning her keep as a linen weaver⁸³.

Alexander Kennedy	H	M	44	Tea Hawker	Oathlaw, Forfar
Margaret Kennedy	W	M	46	Laundress	Guthrie, Forfar
Maria Kennedy	Dau	U	26	Laundress	St. Vigans, Forfar
Agnes Kennedy	Dau	U	16	Linen Weaver	Aberlemo, Forfar
Mary Milne	Boarder	U	15	Linen Weaver	Oathlaw, Forfar

I assume it is the same Mary Milne who was enumerated ten years later, this time at 39 South Street in Forfar⁸⁴, boarding with retired linen weaver Helen Addison. Her place of birth is given as Forfar, but her 77-year-old landlady may not have known better. Times had changed as her occupation was now:

Power L Weaver Flax & Jute

suggesting a more mechanised process maybe.

Aged nearly 30, she married William Paton on 12th January 1896 at Glamis. Once again, the original certificate of banns, or proclamation, has come down through the family with confirmation that the marriage took place at the bottom of the page. It sets out the information in a slightly different format to that used by the Register Office:

William Paton of this parish and Mary Weir Milne of the parish of Glamis have been Three Times proclaimed in order to Marriage, in the parish church of Forfar, and that no objections have been offered. John Knox, Session Clerk at Glamis

That the above named parties were Married by me this day, is attested by Wm Steventon LLD, Minister of Glamis

Within a short time Mary was pregnant with her first child, and Susan was born eleven months after the wedding on 6th November 1896. Maggie followed two years later on 10th May 1898 but by the time John was born on 9th September 1903, the family had moved to Canongate in Edinburgh. In 1901⁸⁵, William, Mary and the two girls were enumerated at Wardlaw Street but by 1911⁸⁶ they were at 4 Salmond Street, which was to be Mary's home until her death in 1941. The census noted that there were two rooms with two or more windows, that Mary had been married for 15 years and had three children, all currently living.

⁸² *ScotlandsPeople*, 289/3/10, 1871 census, Glamis

⁸³ *ScotlandsPeople*, 288/20/7, 1881 census, Forfar

⁸⁴ *ScotlandsPeople*, 288/20/7, 1891 census, Forfar

⁸⁵ *ScotlandsPeople*, 685/01 144/1, 1901 census, Edinburgh

⁸⁶ *ScotlandsPeople*, 685/3 8/7, 1911 census, Edinburgh



Mary Weir Milne, with husband, daughter and granddaughter



Mary outlived her husband by almost exactly four years, dying at the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary on 10th January 1941. The main cause was bronchitis, a common cause of death before the clean air act of 1956. The registrar mis-recorded her name, giving her mother's maiden name as her middle name, and a correction exists in the register, instigated by Susie:

Mary Watt [sic] Paton widow of William Paton Tramway Inspector;
1941 January tenth 3h 5m A.M. Royal Infirmary Edinburgh
usual residence 4 Salmond Place Edinburgh; F; 74 years;
James Milne Estate Worker (deceased) Jessie Milne MS Watt (deceased);
Acute Bronchitis Cardiac Failure;
Susie Bonallo, Daughter, 17 Chambers Street Edinburgh

Watt - Angus and maybe back to Perthshire

The story now moves to Mary Weir Paton's mother - Jessie Watt. She was born in Dunnichen, a small village between Letham and Forfar, and baptised on 15th August 1836:

Robert Watt, Quarrier in Letham and Margaret Robertson his Spouse had a child baptised named Jessie born 23rd July 1836

She was the first of three children born to Robert and Margaret. William Robertson Watt was born on 16th August 1838 and baptised on 7th October; George Watt was born on 16th September 1840 and baptised on 7th October.

The 1841 census⁸⁷ is the only one in which this little family is seen all together. The address is Heyman Street; Robert is 32 and a quarrier; Margaret is 30; Jessie - recorded as Jannet - is 4, William is 2 and George 8 months. In subsequent censuses before her marriage, Jessie is recorded with her mother and a sister 9 years younger. There is no sign of her father or the two boys. In 1851⁸⁸ she is still living at the same address, though it is now recorded as Hyman rather than Heyman Street. Both Jess (as she is recorded) and her mother, who describes herself as a widow, are Hand loom weavers of linen. Ann Black, daughter aged 5, is a scholar. In 1861⁸⁹ the make-up of the household is the same, as is the address. However, Margaret is now recorded by her maiden name, and all three are now linen weavers. It was usual in Scotland for women to keep their maiden name, even after they were married. As a widow, maybe she felt this was more appropriate.

On 18th October, Jessie married James Milne, and most of her later life has already been recorded. She outlived her much older husband, living on at Glamis

⁸⁷ *ScotlandsPeople*, 283/4/5, 1841 census, Dunnichen

⁸⁸ *ScotlandsPeople*, 283/5/7, 1851 census, Dunnichen

⁸⁹ *ScotlandsPeople*, 283/1/3, 1861 census, Dunnichen

where she was enumerated in 1911⁹⁰ on the north side of the village, aged 73. Her grandson Walter was still living with her, aged 17 and a coachman. There was also a boarder, James Beattie, a postman with the GPO.

Like her daughter, she suffered from bronchitis, which was a contributory factor to her death:

Jessie Watt or Milne (widow of James Milne Wood Carter;
1920 November 26 2.45 a.m.; F; 84 years; Robert Watt Stone Breaker
(deceased), Margaret Watt, MS Robertson (deceased); Cardiac failure (1 day)
Senility, Chronic bronchitis some years, Arterio-sclerosis some years;
Alex Milne, son, Bogside near Forfar

The next part of the story is highly speculative. After 1841, Margaret Watt née Robertson always referred to herself as a widow in the census returns, and she may very well have been. There is no way of proving whether Robert Watt died some time shortly after George's birth or not as there are no burial records for Scotland at this time. The 1841 census⁹¹ says he was born in county, and that he was 32 years old – surprisingly precise in terms of age for 1841. This would suggest a birth around 1809. Of the two locals in the right time frame, one who died in 1878 can be eliminated. The other, Robert, son of James Watt and Jean Butchart, was born in Forfar on the 15th October 1807 and baptised three days later. However, it seems likely that this is the Robert who married Jane Crabb in Forfar in 1834, and whose last child was born in 1853, which puts him out of the frame too.

Of course, it may be that our Robert was indeed a local man whose parents didn't have him baptised. Being a quarrier would be a dangerous activity, so an early death would not be unlikely, and maybe we should take the evidence of face value and accept that he died sometime between 1841 and 1851 leaving Margaret a widow. However, there is no-one named Watt in the list of Communicants and Heads of Families⁹² taken at Dunnichen in 1835, suggesting perhaps that he was a recent incomer.

Margaret Watt née Robertson also turns up some intriguing clues. Sometime in 1836 she gave birth to a daughter Ann Black. The Scottish kirk was obsessed with sexual misdemeanours, and a series of entries in the Dunnichen Kirk Session minutes⁹³ make reference to Margaret. The first is dated 22nd February 1846:

Also compeared Margaret Robertson alias Widow Watt who stated that she
was with child to James Black a labourer at Foundry Dundee

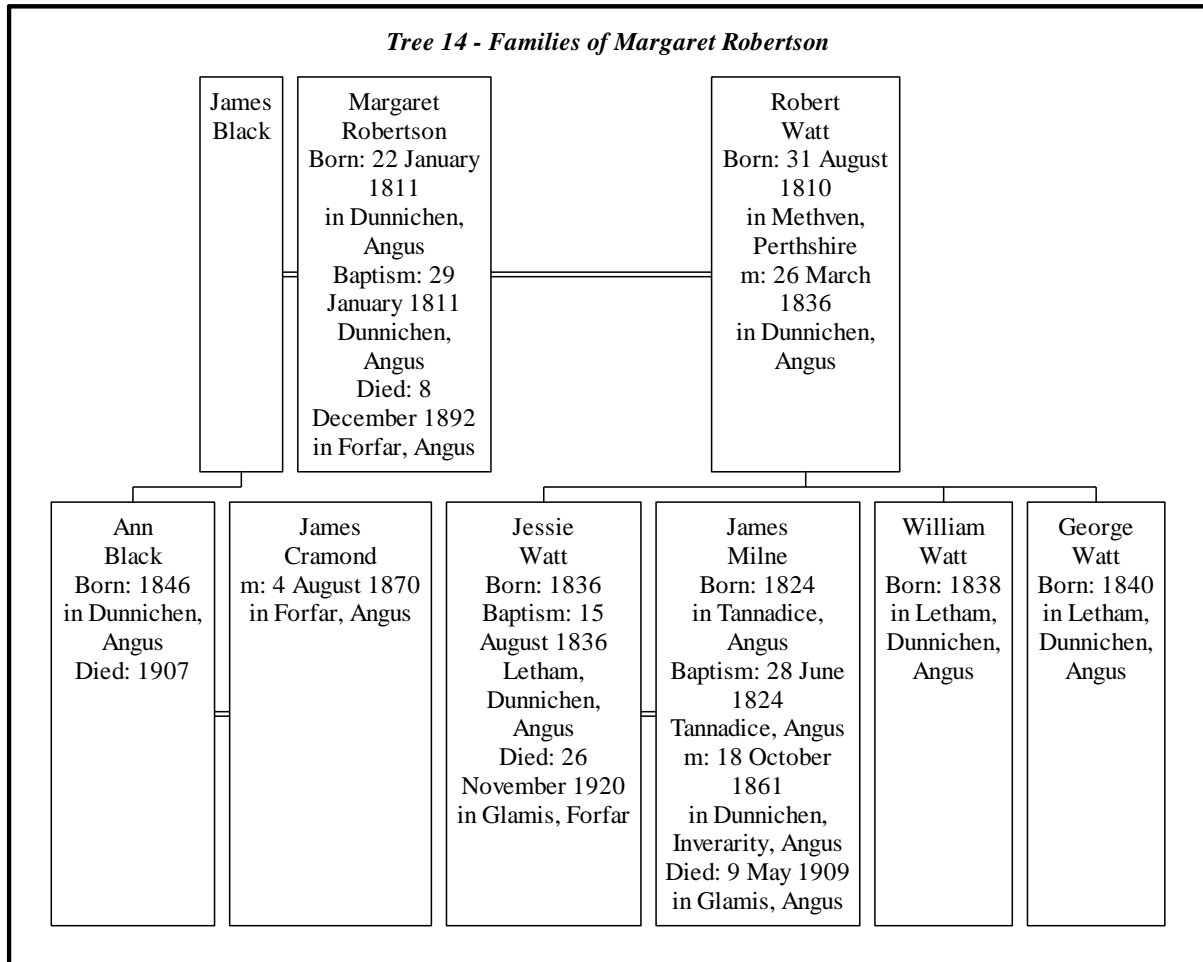
⁹⁰ *ScotlandsPeople*, 289/1/2, 1911 census, Glamis

⁹¹ *ScotlandsPeople*, 283/4/5, 1841 census, Dunnichen

⁹² *ScotlandsPeople*, CH2/108/1, Dunnichen Kirk Session Records

⁹³ *ScotlandsPeople*, CH2/108/1, Dunnichen Kirk Session Records

Tree 14 - Families of Margaret Robertson



The use of the term alias is interesting to begin with. It may just mean an alternative name, but it can also have overtones of something false or designed to mislead. On 12th April, there is another reference to her, this time using her maiden name:

Compeared Margaret Robertson residing in Letham referred to in former minutes. After investigating her case the Session (the session) [sic] have remitted it to the Presbytery in Forfar.

Why did the kirk feel the need to refer her case to a higher authority? Kirk session records are full of references to 'fornication', i.e. having sex with someone you are not married to, and the majority were dealt with in house. Maybe it was because she was actually pregnant rather than just 'sinning'. Whatever the reason, Margaret did indeed attend the Forfar Presbytery on 17th June 1846⁹⁴. The writing is harder to read than that of the Dunnichen minutes:

Mrs Watt, Ann and Isabella Cant the two former guilty of fornication the latter guilty of adultery compeared on a from the Kirk Session of Dunnichen and having been solemnly admonished by the Moderator now remitted

⁹⁴ *ScotlandsPeople*, CH2/159/9, Forfar Presbytery Minutes

The Forfar Presbytery clearly believes her guilty of fornication, which would tally with her status as a widow. However, when she returned to the Dunnichen Kirk on 19th July the session minutes recorded her as an adulteress:

Appeared also Margaret Robertson or Watt referred to in former minutes for the sin of adultery with James Black Dundee who seriously repents of her sin. The session ordered her to get some person to stand sponsor for her child in order to Baptism and that she return here at some future period to be absolved.

Accusing her of adultery assumes she was married. Is this an oversight on the part of the elders, or did they doubt that she was a widow? Whatever the answer, the church magnanimously brought her back into its bosom on 13th September that year!

Also compeared Widow Watt who appeared penitent for her former sin with James Black Dundee. She had appeared before the Presbytery of Forfar and was rebuked and remitted back to this Session to be restored to the privileges of the church but not before the first Communion. She has now been solemnly rebuked by the Moderator and restored to the free communion of this church.

James Black, as far as I can tell, got away Scot free.



Dunnichen church and churchyard

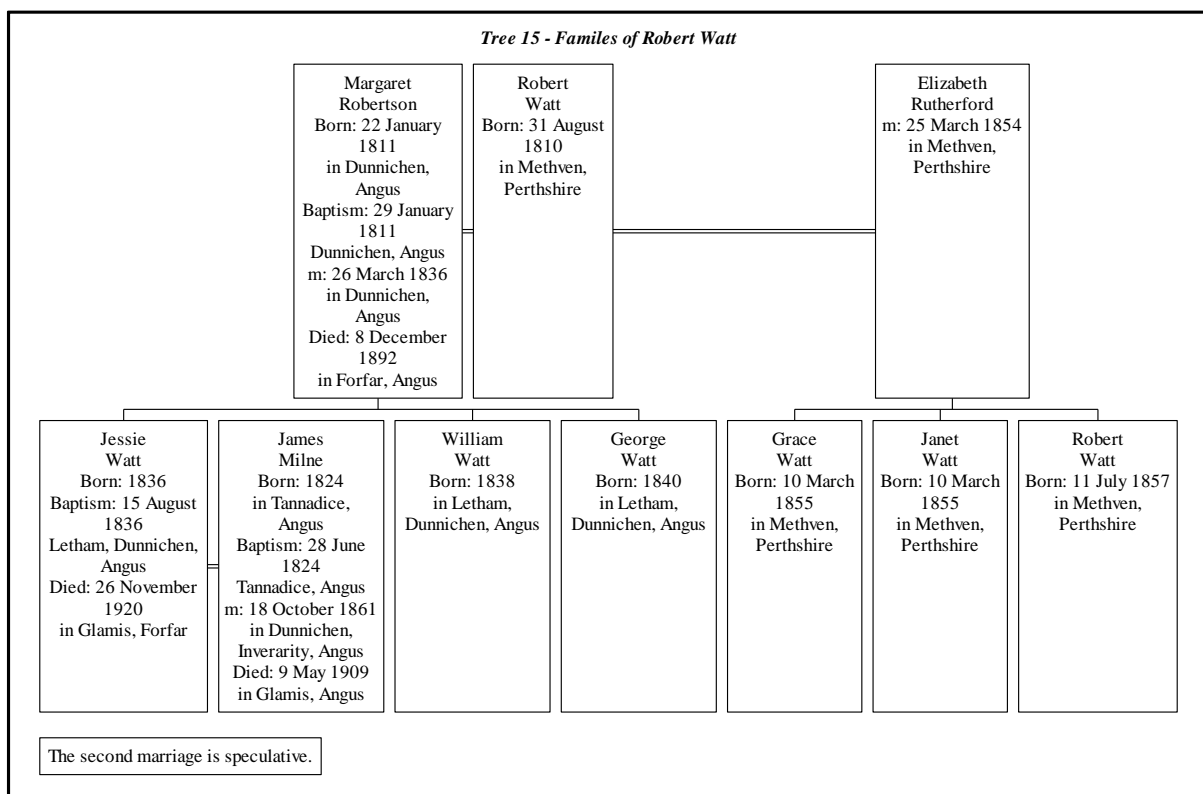
[cc-by-sa/2.0](https://www.geograph.org.uk/p/6574974) - © [Mary Rodgers](https://www.geograph.org.uk/p/6574974) - [geograph.org.uk/p/6574974](https://www.geograph.org.uk/p/6574974)

Robert Watt and Margaret Robertson had married at the end of March 1836 and Jessie was born on 23rd July, so her mother was already 5 months pregnant, a fact that the kirk, unusually, seems to have been unaware of. Otherwise, the couple would have been pulled up for pre-nuptial fornication. It was not unusual for brides to be pregnant, but the later into the pregnancy the wedding took place, the more reluctant the groom often was assumed to be. By 1845, when Margaret had her fling

with James Black it seems not impossible that the marriage had broken down, either because of Margaret's affair or because it was unhappy.

Searching further afield for a Robert Watt who would have been around 32 in 1841, I discovered a birth in Methven, Perthshire. Initially I dismissed this as being too far from Dunnichen, although this Robert was born on 31st August 1810 and baptised on 2nd September, making him closer to our Robert's avowed age in 1841. It was a slim enough chance to be ignored, had it not been for the fact that this Robert is absent from Methven in 1841 but reappears in at Pittencrievie in Methven in 1851⁹⁵ in the household of his brother, giving his occupation as 'lab (quarry)'. He gives his age as 40, which would fit reasonably well and states that he is unmarried. He is the only person on two consecutive pages to be listed as a quarrier.

Three years later, this man – if it was indeed our Robert – married Elizabeth Rutherford in March 1854 at Methven. This couple appear in the 1861⁹⁶ census at Mireside, Methven, where Robert, aged 50, is now a house porter. There are three children, six-year-old Grace, four-year-old Janet and two-year old Robert. By 1871 he was an ag lab with 3 acres of land, so a crofter, and aged 59. His wife, daughter Janet and an aunt complete the household.



A final, tiny clue that this may be the right man comes from his death certificate:

⁹⁵ *ScotlandsPeople*, 380/8/6, 1851 census, Methven

⁹⁶ *ScotlandsPeople*, 380/7/8, 1861 census, Methven

Robert Watt, Penciler, married to Elizabeth Rutherford; 1875 April 29th 8 p.m.,
Mireside, Methven; M, 64 yrs; Andrew Watt, Ag Lab (deceased), Grace Watt MS
Soutar (deceased); Chronic bronchitis 3 yrs; Robert Watt, son, not present

Bronchitis is not a hereditary disease, but it is possible to have a genetic predisposition towards it. No doubt it was rife where the living conditions were poor, but it is striking that three generations all have the same disease mentioned on their death certificates. A penciler is someone who rents an appendage or croft, an inferior tenant.

If this Robert Watt was Jessie's father, then her grandparents were Andrew Watt and Grissel, Girzel or Grace Soutar. Andrew had married twice, firstly to Helen Soutar on 4th June 1786, and then to Girzel Soutar—banns were published on 2nd January 1803 at Methven. Helen gave him seven children – Robert, Helen, Catherine, Janet, Andrew, Margaret and Mary, while Girzel (who was the daughter of James Soutar) born 1762 in Methven, gave him just two: William born 6th November 1803 and Robert in 1810.

Nearly ten years after her elder daughter Jessie had married James Milne, Margaret Robertson's younger daughter, Ann Black, married joiner James Cramond on 4th August 1870 at Forfar. James and Ann had no children and it seems likely that Margaret was always part of the Cramond household. She was recorded with them at 15, Dundee Loan in Forfar in 1871⁹⁷. They were just down the road at no. 55 Dundee Loan in 1881⁹⁸, and in Wyllie Street in 1891⁹⁹.

Margaret died the following year:

Margaret Watt (Widow of Robert Watt Quarrier); 1892 December 8th, 4.30 a.m.;
F; 78 years; William Robertson Quarrier (deceased), Mary Robertson
MS Ramsay (deceased); Senile decay; James Cramond son-in-law,
Occupier (present)

According to Findagrave¹⁰⁰ she was buried at Dunnichen Church cemetery, which seems feasible, although the date of burial is the same as date of death, which seems unlikely. Ann Black or Cramond died in 1907.

The Robertson distaff line: Kinnettles and Dunnichen

In being buried in Dunnichen churchyard, Margaret Robertson was probably joining her parents and maybe her grandparents too. Her line can be taken back to her great-grandfather David Robertson, who, with an unrecorded wife, baptised

⁹⁷ *ScotlandsPeople*, 288/5/10, 1871 census, Forfar

⁹⁸ *ScotlandsPeople*, 288/5/6, 1881 census, Forfar

⁹⁹ *ScotlandsPeople*, 288/21/7, 1891 census, Forfar

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/129919844/margaret-watt>

several children at Kinnettles, a parish to the west and south-west of Forfar. According to the *Statistical Accounts*¹⁰¹ there were considerable numbers of horses and cattle in the parish, but of sheep:

...but a few...kept principally for the use of gentlemens families

Presumably the upper classes had a taste for mutton! In 1755 the population as recorded in the account was 616, and the author also states that there is no town in the parish, only one village, and that amongst the parishioners it hasn't been the custom:

to confine the burying of their dead to the churchyard of the parish

I suspect this may have been the case in other rural parishes where the church may have been some way away.

The first three of David's children were Elizabeth, Agnis and Andrew, who were born in 1732, 1735 and 1737. No proven further trace has been found of them. The last two were twins, named James and Thomas, baptised on 2nd October 1739. Thomas, like his siblings, disappears from view, but his brother James, Margaret's grandfather, married Margaret Milne in Forfar on 10th July 1774. With the marriage taking place in the county town, it would be impossible to know where James originated, had the register not recorded the fact:

James Robertson in Parish of Kinnettles and Margaret Milne in this Parish were contracted in order to Marriage

Given the small size of Kinnettles, it seems a reasonable bet that this is David's son, marrying fairly late in life. Margaret's surname appears variously as Milner, Mill and Milne, but there is no obvious baptism for her under any guise.

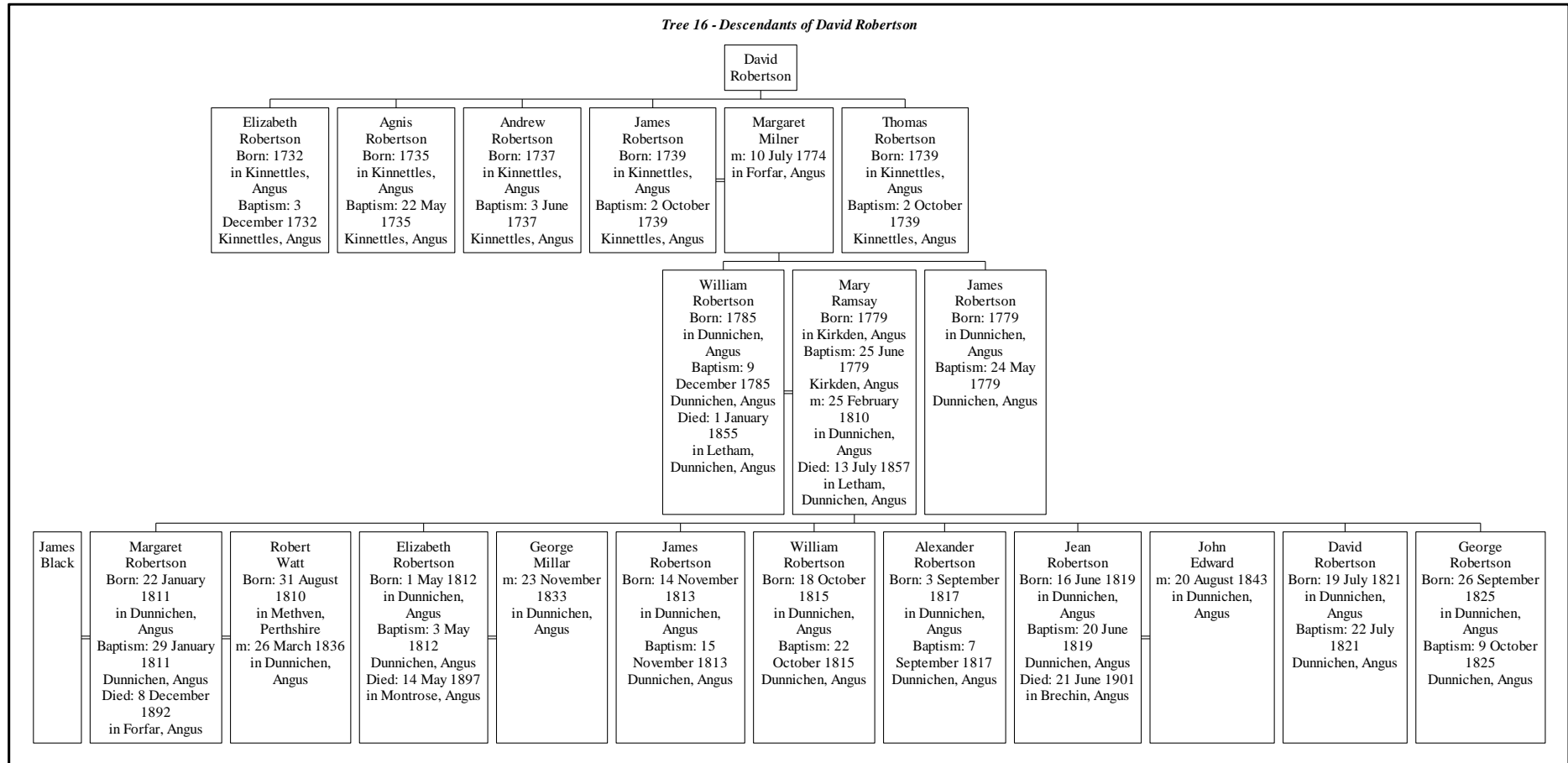
James and Margaret settled in Dunnichen, but only two children appear in the register. The first of these was James, baptised on 24th May 1779, nearly five years after the marriage. Were other children not recorded; did the couple have difficulty conceiving, or did Margaret have difficulty carrying a baby to term? Whatever the answer, it was another six years before their second child (Margaret Robertson's father) was baptised on 9th December 1785. Nothing further is known about this couple, or their elder son James.

William Robertson leaves a more useful paper trail. His baptism shows his family to be living at Dunbarron in Dunnichen, though the exact place can't be identified:

James Robertson in Dunbarron and Margaret Mill his spouse had a child baptised named William.

¹⁰¹ <https://stataccscot.edina.ac.uk/> *The Statistical Accounts of Scotland*, vol IX, 1793

Tree 16 - Descendants of David Robertson



Aged 24 he married Mary Ramsay in his home parish:

William Robertson and Mary Ramsay both in this parish

He appears in an 1835 record in the Kirk Session¹⁰²:

A list of male communicants, Heads of Families in the parish of Dunnichen in the year eighteen hundred and thirty-five.

William Robertson Labourer Letham

By this time, the family he was head of was quite extensive. Margaret was the first-born, on 22nd January 1811, eleven months after William and Mary's wedding. Elizabeth was born on 1st May 18 and baptised two days later. In 1833 she married George Millar in her home parish, but they ultimately moved to Montrose where she died in 1907. Then came James, born on 14th November 1813 and baptised the following day and William, born on 15th October 1815 and baptised a week later. James predeceased his father. As he doesn't come to light anywhere in 1841, I'm guessing he died young. Another son, Alexander, was born on 3rd, baptised 7th September 1817. Jean was born on 16th and baptised on 20th June 1819. For some reason, the girls have been easier to trace in later life. She married John Edward in Dunnichen in 1843, but like Elizabeth, moved away and died in Brechin in 1901. David was born 19th, baptised 22nd July 1821, but had died by 1855 when he is recorded as deceased on his father's death certificate. The last child was George – born 26th September and baptised on 9th October 1825.

William lived long enough to appear in two census returns, although in 1841¹⁰³ his and Mary's ages don't tally at all. I suspect somewhere along the line two 5s were transcribed as 3s. The family was living in Blair Street in Dunnichen. William was recorded as a Linen Hand Loom Weaver aged 35! Mary's age was listed as 37. The children still at home had their ages more aptly recorded. William Robertson jnr was 26; Alexander was 24, Jane 22 and George 15. All apart from Mary were working as hand loom weavers.

By 1851¹⁰⁴, William and Mary were living alone, presumably at the same place, though it was now called Blair's Road. William is credited with a more plausible 65 years and Mary with 69. Still a Hand Loom Weaver of Linen, he gave his place of birth as Dunnichen while Mary gave hers as nearby Kirkden.

Of the sons recorded as living in 1855, William married a girl named Elizabeth and was recorded in Farnell, where he died five years later, in 1851¹⁰⁵. Alexander was a lodger in the household of Peter Rodger at Monifieth in 1851¹⁰⁶.

¹⁰² *ScotlandsPeople*, Dunnichen Kirk Session Records, CH2/108/1

¹⁰³ *ScotlandsPeople*, 283/4/7, 1841 census, Dunnichen

¹⁰⁴ *ScotlandsPeople*, 283/5/19, 1851 census, Dunnichen

¹⁰⁵ *ScotlandsPeople*, 286/1/11, 1851 census, Farnell

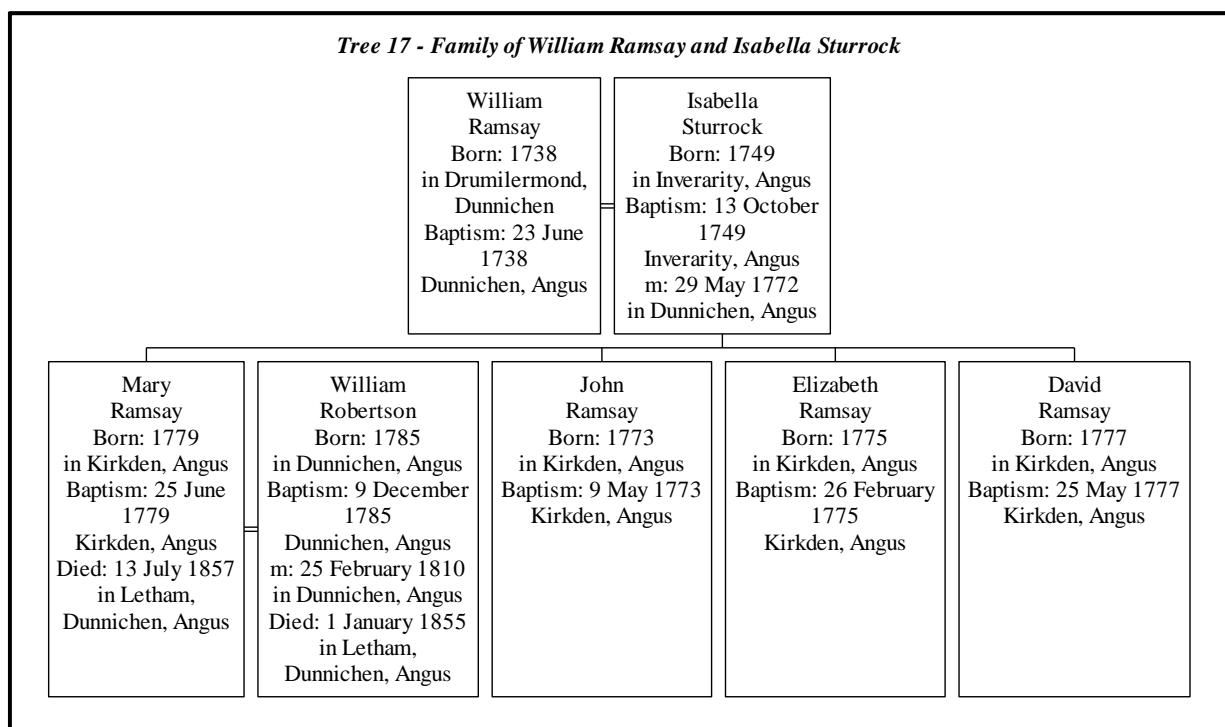
¹⁰⁶ *ScotlandsPeople*, 310/7/15, 1851 census, Monifieth

His place of birth is given as Dunnichen, which *Ancestry* transcribed as Darnick! Four years later he married Ann Kidd, but I have found no children from this union. Alexander died in the Dundee Poor House in 1892, a pauper, former carter. Interestingly, his father's occupation is given as quarrier, a clue, maybe as to how Robert Watt and Margaret Robertson came to know each other. George, William and Mary's youngest child, has eluded detection. Perhaps he emigrated.

William Robertson's marriage entry was somewhat sparse, but he was considerate enough to his descendants to die in the 'annus mirabilis' of Scottish records, i.e. 1855 - the first year of general registration, when all sorts of useful information appears on the certificate including the names and ages of any children and the place of burial. Although the occasional word is illegible, William's death certificate is still a treasure trove. In addition, as he died on 1st January, his was the first entry in the new register:

William Robertson, Labourer, now Pauper; Male; 69 years, whole life;
 James Robertson, Labourer, Margaret Robertson, Maiden Name Milner;
 m to Mary Ramsay; children: Margaret 43, Elizabeth 41, James deceased,
 William 39, Alexander 37, Jane 33, David deceased, George 28;
 January first 8 hrs 30 mins a.m. 1855; Letham ... Dunnichen;
 Chronic Enteritis 13 weeks as certified by ... Edward ... who saw deceased
 on 30th December 1854;
 Burial Ground of Dunnichen... David Gourley neighbour & Inspector of Poor

The Ramsay distaff line - Dunnichen and Inverarity



Mary Robertson née Ramsay outlived her husband by two years. By the time of her death the powers that be in Scotland had realised that detailed death certificates such as William's were too much of a bureaucratic load. However, Mary's certificate is still usefully informative:

Robertson Mary, widow of a pauper; 1857 July 13th 7h a.m., Letham; F;
77 years; William Ramsay Weaver (Dec) (Linen), Isabella Ramsay
Maiden name Sturrock; Old Age and Exhaustion, No Medical Attendant;
Churchyard of Dunnichen, as certified by David Robertson Sexton;
X Margaret Robertson Her mark, Daughter, Present

So she also was laid to rest in Dunnichen churchyard.

The 1851 census¹⁰⁷ gave Mary's place of birth as Kirkden, and the record confirms her baptism there on 25th June 1779. The register says that:

William Ramsay.... had a daughter baptised Mary

Unfortunately, his abode is unclear; it looks like Midilderie, but nothing resembling this appears on any map. Mary was the youngest child of William Ramsay and Isabella Sturrock, both of Dunnichen, who:

...gave up their names to be proclaimed in order to marriage

on 29th May 1772. Although they married at Dunnichen, their children – John baptised on 9th May 1773, Elizabeth baptised 26th February 1775, David baptised 25th May 1777 and Mary – all appear in the Kirkden register. William Ramsay was probably born in 1738, when the register notes:

June 23 William Ramsay in Drumilermond and Margaret Farcherson his spouse had a child called William Baptised.

No other children have been found for this couple.

In contrast, William's wife Isabella came from a large family. Her parents, John Sturrock and Elspeth Watson married at Inverarity, south of Forfar and south-west of Dunnichen on 8th July 1725:

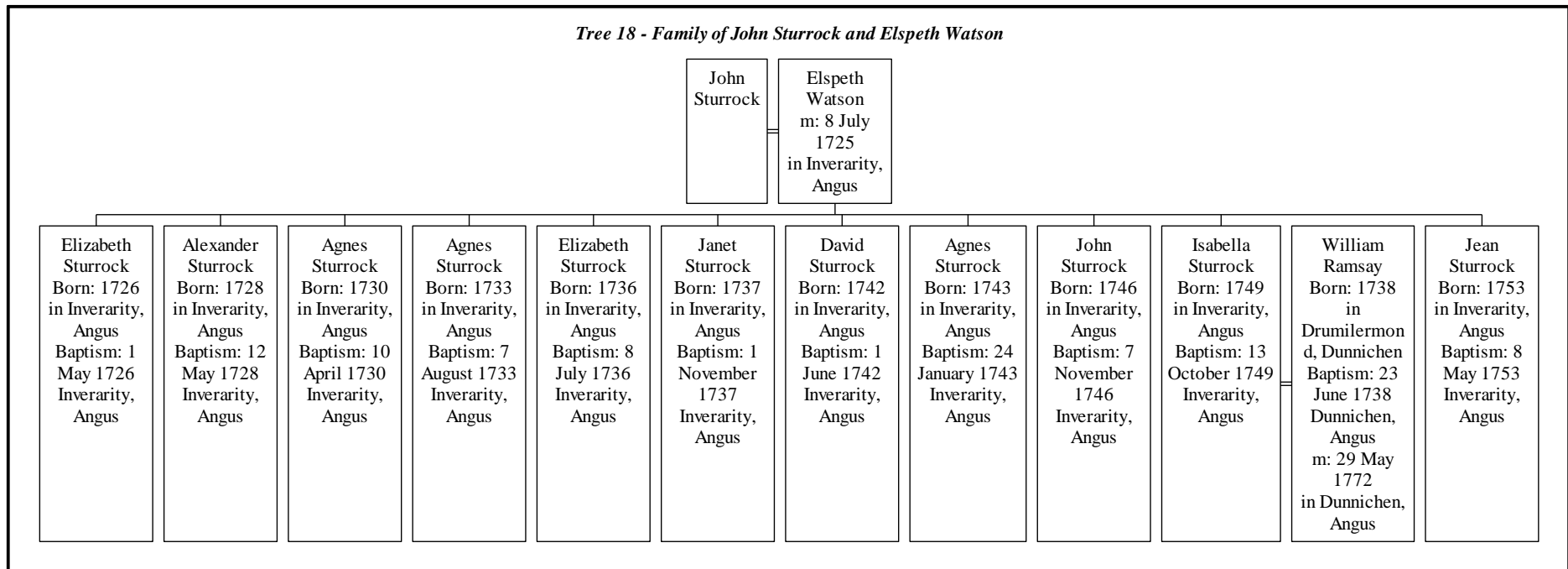
The said John Sturrok and Elspeth Watson were married.

Presumably, the bride came from Dundee, as an earlier entry in the register states:

John Sturrok in this parish and Elspeth Watson in Dundee having been contracted in Dundee in order to marriage were this day proclaimed here for the first time

¹⁰⁷ *ScotlandsPeople*, 283/5/19, 1851 census, Dunnichen

Tree 18 - Family of John Sturrock and Elspeth Watson





Inverarity Kirk

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The family comprised the following, all baptised at Inverarity. Elizabeth - 1st May 1726; Alexander - 12th May 1728; Agnes - 10th April 1730; Agnes again - 7th August 1733; Elizabeth again - 8th August 1736; Janet - 1st November 1737; David - 1st June 1742 - possibly a late baptism and another Agnes follows hot on his heels on 24th January 1743; John - 7th November 1746; Isabella was baptised on 13th October 1749 and finally Jean - 8th May 1753.

With this inventory of eleven children, the story of the Patons and their kin comes to an end, as the paper trail finally goes cold.