

# The Scottish Genealogist

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE SCOTTISH GENEALOGY SOCIETY

## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Editorial ... ..	1
Some Scottish Banking Families By Ian M. Kennedy, B.Com. ... ..	2
The Dundas Family : Old Cadet Branches of West Lothian (V) By Donald Whyte, F.S.A.(Scot.) ... ..	12
Notes on The MacNeils of Barra By Sir Iain Moncreiffe of Moncreiffe, Bt., Ph.D. ...	14
Burns' Excise Associates By J. F. Mitchell, C.I.E. ... ..	15
Queries ... ..	20

By the constitution, the Scottish Genealogy Society exists "to promote research into Scottish Family History," and "to undertake the collection, exchange and publication of information and material relating to Scottish Genealogy by means of meetings, lectures, etc." By the expressed desire of the Original Members, the Society was to remain an academic and consultative body; and was not to engage itself professionally in record searching. Arrangements will be made by which the Society can supply a list of those members who are professional searchers but any commissions of this kind must be carried out independently of the Society.

Monthly meetings of the Society are held from September to April in the St. Andrew Society Rooms, 24 Hill Street (Castle Street end), Edinburgh, at 7 p.m. on 15th of the month. (In the event of the 15th falling on Saturday or Sunday, the meeting is held on the following Monday.)

Membership of the Scottish Genealogy Society is by election at an annual subscription of £1 10s. 0d. (\$4.50) (inclusive of *The Scottish Genealogist*). This subscription which is payable on 1st October entitles members to receive the Magazine during the following year beginning with the January issue. Inquiries may be made to the Hon. Secretary, 28 Pitbauchlie Bank, Dunfermline, and subscriptions paid to the Hon. Treasurer, 74 Brunstane Road, Joppa, Midlothian.

*The Scottish Genealogist* will be published quarterly. Subscription is 11/- (\$1.75) per annum (post free). Single copies are available from the Hon. Editor at 2/9 (\$0.50) post free.

All material for publication must be sent to the Hon. Editor, c/o Messrs. Shepherd & Wedderburn, W.S., 16 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, 2, in a form ready for immediate use. MSS. must be fully referenced, signed and previously unpublished.

Publication in *The Scottish Genealogist* does not imply that all views therein are accepted or admitted by The Scottish Genealogy Society. Authors, and not the Society, are to be held responsible for errors of fact.

All communications submitted should be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope (or other means of return). Published matter will not be returned; but will become the property of the Society and filed for reference in the Library.

Reproduction from *The Scottish Genealogist*, in part or in whole, may not be made without permission.

## THE SCOTTISH GENEALOGY SOCIETY

At a General Meeting of the Scottish Genealogy Society, the following Constitution was adopted on Saturday, 4th July, 1953 :—

1. The objects of the Scottish Genealogy Society are :—

To promote research into Scottish Family History.

To undertake the collection, exchange and publication of information and material relating to Scottish Genealogy, by means of meetings, lectures, etc., etc.

2. The Society will consist of all duly elected Members whose subscriptions are paid. A President and one or more Vice-Presidents may be elected at the Annual General Meeting.
3. The affairs of the Society shall be managed by a Council consisting of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Editor, and not more than twelve other Members. A non-Council Member of the Society shall be appointed to audit the accounts annually.
4. Office-Bearers shall be elected annually. Four Ordinary Members of Council shall retire annually in rotation, but shall be eligible for re-election. At meetings of the Council, a quorum shall consist of not less than one-third of the members.
5. An Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held at or about the end of October, on a date to be determined by the Council, at which reports will be submitted.
6. Members shall receive one copy of each publication issued by, or on behalf of the Society, but these shall not be supplied to any Members who are in arrears.
7. No alteration of this Constitution shall be made except at the Annual General Meeting of the Society, when a two-thirds majority will be required.

## THE SCOTTISH GENEALOGY SOCIETY

<i>Hon. President</i>	The Right Hon. The Earl of Dundee, LL.D., Royal Banner Bearer of Scotland.
<i>Hon. Vice-Presidents</i>	Sir Thomas Innes of Learney, K.C.V.O., LL.D., Lord Lyon King of Arms. The Right Hon. The Countess of Erroll, Hereditary Lord High Constable of Scotland. The Right Hon. The Lord Lovat, D.S.O., M.C. The Right Hon. The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, K.T., G.B.E., LL.D.
<i>Chairman of Council</i>	Sir Iain Moncreiffe of that Ilk, Bart., LL.B., Ph.D., Unicorn Pursuivant of Arms.
<i>Hon. Secretary</i>	Duncan McNaughton, M.A., F.S.A.(Scot.), 28 Pitbauchlie Bank, Dunfermline, Fife.
<i>Hon. Treasurer</i>	J. H. C. Milligen, 74 Brunstane Road, Joppa, Midlothian.
<i>Hon. Editor</i>	Ivor R. Guild, W.S., c/o Messrs. Shepherd & Wedder- burn, W.S., 16 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, 2.
<i>Council</i>	Ivor R. Guild, W.S. ( <i>Deputy Chairman</i> ). Mrs. B. T. Bailey. Miss E. M. E. Berry. Mrs. M. N. Browne, M.A. Miss I. F. Grant, LL.D. Donald J. Macdonald. J. M. McGill, F.S.A.(Scot.). J. F. Mitchell, C.I.E. Miss M. F. Moore, M.A., Ph.D. Donald Whyte, F.S.A.(Scot.). Miss H. M. Woodford.

## EDITORIAL

**I**N its sixth year, the *Scottish Genealogist* will be under the care of a new Hon. Editor, Mr. Ivor Guild, who has also agreed to become Deputy Chairman of Council. The Society has lost the services of Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Munro on the appointment of Mr. Munro as Editor in Chief of the Northern Newspapers at Inverness. Mr. Munro has served the Society well since its foundation and has guided its youthful steps with a sure hand. While we regret his departure, we offer him our sincere congratulations and best wishes in his new post. Mrs. Munro, as Dr. Jean Dunlop, has been our Editor almost from the beginning of publication, and it is mainly due to her unstinted enthusiasm that this magazine has flourished and prospered. The Council are deeply appreciative of the work of Mr. and Mrs. Munro for the Society.

The magazine is now established and is exchanged with many similar bodies in Europe, Australia, Canada and America, but the work of providing material tends to fall on a few. But for the monthly lectures, lack of available material would be serious. There must be a great deal of unprinted genealogy within the knowledge of our members and subscribers which would be of interest and assistance to researchers in Scottish family history. The *Scottish Genealogist* exists to print such records, and the Hon. Editor will welcome contributions on matters relating to Scottish families, emigrants and allied subjects.

## SOME SCOTTISH BANKING FAMILIES

ON first thoughts it may seem strange to you that Scotland, for a long time the home of banking traditions, has not brought forth a family of such international financial repute as the Rothschilds. I would suggest that the reasons for this are firstly economic and secondly the manner in which Scottish Banking has developed. Scotland, as you are aware, was always a very poor country. The economists of the "Mercantile" school, amongst whom we must include our own Adam Smith, considered that the National Wealth of a country was the amount of bullion it possessed. Though nowadays we know that this is not a sufficient definition, it was for many years the accepted belief. Scotland was by these standards poor, and in addition was torn by internal strife amongst her own countrymen and bled by the pirates from the seaboard of Europe, not to mention the activities of our fellow islanders from the South, though in all fairness, these were not always one sided.

1695 is always accepted as the beginning of Scottish banking but banking services as we know them, or to be more correct, some banking services were provided before that. In the early days the richer sections of the population carried their wealth about on their persons in the form of jewellery and fine clothing. Later on as personal and household possessions became more highly valued, these were displayed in the home on the cupboard, a word which is still with us to-day though its meaning is less opulent.

In due course the rich found it desirable to put some at least of their fine things in a safe place and here they turned first to those with such facilities. These were the monasteries and the goldsmiths and jewellers. The Reformation removed the former and in the latter we had the sources from which might have sprung the hereditary financial leaders of the country.

In the days before the Union of the Crowns, one such goldsmith and jeweller was George Heriot. The commonly accepted pedigree of Heriot shows him as being descended from the ancient and not very opulent family of that name of the estate of Trabroun, near Haddington. One authority, however, Professor D'Arcy Thompson, has suggested that the name Heriot is a corruption of Herwart, the name of a continental family of merchant bankers who originated in Augsburg and carried on business in Antwerp. I have been unable to prove either of these, but I suggest to you that the latter theory would explain Heriot's great interest in the money lending side of the business, and also the fabulous wealth of Jingling Geordie in his later years. If anyone present to-night could provide some definite information, I should be very interested to hear it and I know so would the Secretary of George Heriot's Trust. We do know that his father, who bore the same name, was born in Edinburgh and was a goldsmith to trade. He was a public spirited man, being five times Deacon of the Incorporated Trades in the City as well as one of Edinburgh's representatives in the Scottish Parliament—obviously a man of considerable means. His eldest son, George, was born in 1563 when Mary Queen of Scots still reigned in Holyrood and John Knox preached in St. Giles. George set up in business as a dealer in precious metals and

jewellery, but he was also a member of the Society of Brewers and was concerned in the manufacture of broad cloth. Heriot was too a dealer in Bills of Exchange and his position as Court Jeweller placed him in touch with the nobility, who, besides making purchases, also borrowed money from him. He seems also to have lent to the King and the Queen. In fact, it may be said that his business flourished not because the Court and populace were rich but because they were poor. Heriot was married twice, first to Christian Marjoribanks, daughter of the then deceased Simon Marjoribanks, a merchant of the City, and five years after her death to Alison Primrose, then aged 16, daughter of James Primrose, the Clerk to the Privy Council. It is probable that the first marriage was one of policy rather than affection, for little appears to have been written about Christian Heriot, whereas his second wife is described as a woman richly endowed with all good gifts of mind and body and of a pious disposition. There is no record of any children of the first marriage save two sons who are supposed to have been lost at sea on their way to London. His second wife died some four years after the marriage, in childbirth, leaving no issue. George lived to the age of 60, when after taking great pains to ensure that none of his property passed to the children of his deceased brother, Patrick, and making provision for two illegitimate daughters born in his later years, he left the bulk of his fortune to the Provost, Bailies, Ministers (of the Established Church) and Town Council of Edinburgh for the founding and erecting of a Hospital in that City. Thus was born George Heriot's School at present standing in Laurieston Place, Edinburgh. Heriot lived before the days of Banks, yet he rendered the services expected from a banker; his caution was, of course, proverbial but his fortune testifies to the success of his methods.

It would not be right to omit the family of Law of Laurieston, who had for many years carried on the reputable and prosperous business as goldsmiths and bankers in the City of Edinburgh. The activities of John Law were so fantastic that it is impossible to omit him from among the pioneers of our Banking System. John was born in Edinburgh in 1671 but left the City at an early age to take up residence in London where he soon established himself as a man of fashion and a reckless gambler. The inevitable debts forced him to sell his patrimony. Later, whilst awaiting trial in connection with the death of another young man in a duel, he fled the country. During his stay in Amsterdam, then the financial centre of the world, he came into contact with the credit system as carried out by the Bank of Amsterdam. At home all business transactions were settled by the giving or receiving of cash, but in Amsterdam this was not so. In John Law's own words, "In the matter of making payments the Dutch are far ahead of the English so far as convenience is concerned. They do not hold back bank notes and do not forward the former in exchange for the latter. They have printed orders which they fill up and by means of which they assign to the Bank the sums of money to be paid in and in the same way payments may be received." In a word, John Law had discovered the cheque. Early in the 18th Century John returned to Scotland and published a pamphlet advocating that the currency should be based not on the precious metals of a country but rather on its productive capacity. He even went further and suggested the establishment of a State Bank which would issue notes

on the security of land. This scheme had its opponents, amongst whom was William Paterson, and it was rejected as unfit for the nation. Law returned to Europe where his gambling for a period proved more lucrative, and he became friendly with the Regent of France, and although his ideas for a State Bank were rejected, he was allowed to found a private Bank. Conditions at that time in France were very unstable and the common medicine was the arbitrary depreciation of the currency by Royal decree. Law issued the notes of his Bank payable in coin at the value of the date of issue, thus showing his theory that a stable currency would assist in development of a prosperous economy. There is in fact very little in our present-day system of inconvertible currency and even in our Welfare State that could not be claimed by Law as a principle of his. Naturally the existence of this stable currency in a time and place where the official currency was liable to violent fluctuations did much to ensure the success of his Bank. It was not long before the notes were made legal currency for the payment of taxes. France at that time was building up an Empire in the new world, and Law promoted a Company to develop the resources of Louisiana which then included the entire Mississippi basin. This Company soon absorbed all its rivals and controlled the entire overseas trade of the kingdom. Law's Bank became the Banque Royale and its notes were guaranteed by the Crown. Law as Controller General now took over the financial management of the Country. The National Debt was reduced, taxes were repealed and the cost of living fell by about 40%. Unfortunately, Law was unable to control the demands of the Court, speculation became rife and eventually, realising that in attempting to stop the flood he would end up in the Bastille, he prohibited the export of gold and later the hoarding of this precious commodity, but the end was not long delayed. On 27th May, 1720, the Bank suspended payment in cash following a run on the Bank brought about by the devaluation of its notes. Law escaped penniless to England but shortly returned to his old haunts, the gaming tables of Venice where he made a frugal living until his death in 1729. Gambler and duellist though he was, he was faithful to his principles but he went down with the sinking ship of his Mississippi Scheme.

One of Law's contemporaries was William Paterson, who was born in Skipmyre Farm in the Parish of Tinwald, Dumfriesshire, about 1658. Forced by adverse circumstances, he left home at the age of 17 for London and later Amsterdam. He went to the West Indies where for some years he acted as an agent for the Dutch merchants. On his return to Europe, richer in wealth and experience, he tried unsuccessfully to obtain support for his plan to colonise Central America. Paterson eventually returned to London, joined the Company of Merchant Taylors, and became a man of considerable influence in the City. He made proposals to the Government for the formation of a National Bank but at first these were rejected. Paterson was not a man to give up easily, and after he had given evidence before a Parliamentary Committee and obtained the support of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the scheme was approved. The Bank of England came into being in 1694 with Paterson as a Director, but owing to a disagreement with the majority of his colleagues, he resigned the following year. Paterson, like Law, had long had his eyes on the New World, and some years earlier



he had conceived the idea of a Colony on the Isthmus of Darien to handle the trade between India and Europe which was then going round the Cape of Good Hope. The London Merchants had long been jealous of the monopoly of the East India Company, but England's Navigation Laws made any competition difficult, if not impossible. Many were, however, willing to participate in the project to obtain a share in the spoils of foreign trade which were so jealously guarded. Thus was initiated the Darien Scheme which was to become in due course entirely Scottish, ruin the country and eventually drive her into the surrender of her Parliament. In 1693, the year after the Massacre of Glencoe, the Scots Parliament had passed an Act for the Encouragement of Foreign Trade and in 1695, King William who was busy with a Continental War, was induced to give his consent to a Scots Act conveying the power to a Scottish East India Company to engage in an African, American and Indian trade, organised from Scotland, provision being made that foreigners (which, of course, included Englishmen) could take up half of the stock, Paterson being at that time in a position to guarantee that 50% of the Stock could be sold by him in London. Paterson must have been a very influential and busy man for, in addition to this scheme, he was at this time, as we have already heard, concerned with the formation of the Bank of England. He was also putting forward proposals for the Consolidation of the London Orphans Fund and was projecting the Hampstead Water Company. Paterson was not long in getting the Company together—the English half was immediately over subscribed—but the Scottish share took a little longer. Then the storm broke. The Lords and Commons protested that this Company would destroy England's commerce and the King, declaring he had been "ill served" by his Scottish Ministers, made it plain that he did not approve of the project. The English Shareholders withdrew and it became the patriotic duty in Scotland to prove that she could do without any English help, and eventually some six months later all the money had been subscribed. Of Paterson's integrity there has never been any doubt, but he found himself overruled by his colleagues who were often without his talents and certainly without his experience. In fact, when along with his wife he eventually sailed with the expedition, he was not one of the Council of Seven which was to control the new colony. This is not the place to recapitulate the melancholy story of the scheme which, though a brain-child of William Paterson's, was now out of his hands. In New Edinburgh, Paterson buried his wife and his son and lost most of his personal fortune. This failure, for which he rightly blamed the lack of English support, did not make Paterson abandon his scheme, rather he tried to revive it in a form likely to receive English support. Paterson was still kindly received in London where at the request of the dying William III he put his proposals in writing. He wanted, among other things, "a Union with Scotland for nothing can tend more to render this island great and considerable." He himself played a great part in the drawing up of the financial provisions of the Treaty of Union and was responsible for the calculation of the Equivalent—the payment made by the English Treasury on account of Scottish Revenues. By the last Act of the Scottish Parliament, £232,000 of this sum was allocated for the compensation of the Darien shareholders, and I will come back to this fund later. Paterson was

awarded the sum of £200 by the first Hanoverian Parliament in return for his services. After the Union, he took up residence in London, where he taught Mathematics and Navigation. He was one of the first to propose the formation of Public Libraries, and in 1703 had himself established a Library of Commerce and Finance. He was married twice, and among his more eminent descendants was Joseph Bell, who is generally regarded as the model upon whom Conan Doyle based his immortal Sherlock Holmes.

I said earlier that 1695 was the accepted date of the commencement of Scottish Banking, for in that year, in Edinburgh, on 17th July, an Act was passed which read, "Our Sovereign Lord, considering how useful a Public Bank may be in this Kingdom according to the Custom of other Kingdoms and States, and that the same can only best be set forth by Persons in Company with a Joint Stock sufficiently indued with these Powers and Authorities and Liberties necessary and usual in such cases, Hath therefore Allowed with the Advice and Consent of the Estates of Parliament a Joint Stock amounting to the Sum of Twelve Hundred Thousand Pounds money to be raised by the Company hereby Established for the Carrying and Managing of a Public Bank and further Statutes and Ordains That the Persons undernamed viz. Mr William Areskine, Son to the Lord Cardross, Sir John Swinton of that Ilk, Sir Robert Dickson of Sornebeg, Mr George Clerk Junior and Mr John Watson, Merchants in Edinburgh, Mr James Fowlis, Mr John Holland, Mr David Nairn, Mr Walter Stuart, Mr Hugh Fraser, Mr Thomas Coutts and Mr Thomas Deans, Merchants in London or any Three of them shall have Power to appoint a Book for Subscriptions of Persons either Natives or Foreigners who shall be willing to subscribe or pay in to the Joint Stock." This was the Act which incorporated the Bank of Scotland, or, to give it its full title, the Governor and Company of the Bank of Scotland. In this way, banking in Scotland passed into the hands of a joint stock company managed on behalf of the stockholders by a few experts. Not all Banks were joint stock ones. There came on the scene several firms, often referred to in Banking History as the private bankers, but they are no longer with us, having either given up business or amalgamated with the larger institutions. However, to get back to the Act of 1695, there are a few interesting points to note. First the Bank was given a monopoly of banking in Scotland for a period of twenty-one years to enable it to build up a stable business. The Bank was prohibited from taking part in any commercial activity whatsoever. No power was given to the Bank to issue notes, the reason being that such an act of issuing notes was regarded as the means whereby a Bank acquired its working capital. The Act ends, "And it is likewise hereby provided that all Foreigners who shall join as Partners of this Bank shall hereby be and become Naturalised Scotsmen to all Intents and purposes whatsoever." John Holland, the London Merchant and principal promoter, was elected Governor and Master William Erskine, deputy Governor. Not very much is known of Erskine save that he was brought up in Holland, where he probably learned of the methods of the Bank of Amsterdam. As he was at that time Governor of Blackness Castle, it is probable that he was a soldier. Sir John Swinton, the next name appearing in the Act, is probably the most interesting. His father,

Alexander de Swinton, had been deprived of the family estates of Swinton in Berwickshire on the pretext that he had been a traitor in serving Cromwell as a judge. In addition, the old man was a Quaker and, as such, was imprisoned for a time in Edinburgh Castle, before eventually taking refuge in Holland. His son, Sir John, became a prosperous merchant there, and returned to Edinburgh in 1696 when he presented a successful Petition to the Scots Parliament for the return of his estates on the grounds that they had been appropriated on a false accusation. He eventually married Miss Anne Sinclair, daughter of Sir Robert Sinclair of Longformacus. It was Margaret, the daughter of the marriage, who told Sir Walter Scott of an incident which provided the writer with the material for his story of the sliding panel in Peveril of the Peak. In brief, Sir John was sheltering a Mrs Macfarlane, the young and beautiful wife of John Macfarlane, W.S., who had been forced to kill a young man in defence of her honour. The lady eventually returned to her Edinburgh home after the affair had died down, but during her period in hiding must have been seen inadvertently by the young girl. Of the officials of Bank, the Treasurer was James Marjoribanks, who was one of a large family of prosperous merchants in Edinburgh and a descendant of Marjoribanks of Ratho. His brother, John, was a Director, and this family's connection with the Bank was maintained until 1894. Amongst their descendants were Sir John Marjoribanks of Lees, Berwickshire, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, 1713-18, and another of the same name who achieved the same honour 1813-17. The Bank's first Accountant was George Watson, whose people had been merchants in Edinburgh. George's father died, leaving a widow and orphaned children in dire poverty. The family had to be split up and George and his younger brother, John, were adopted by an aunt, Mrs Davidson of Curriehill, the wife of an Edinburgh Bailie. He was first apprenticed to an Edinburgh merchant, James Cleland, and then sent to Rotterdam to complete his education. He returned to Edinburgh in 1675 and took up the appointment of Accountant and Secretary to Sir James Dick of Prestonfield who became Lord Provost in 1679. George lived in the household for some twenty years and was allowed to engage in business on his own account. He soon built up a valuable connection as a Bill Broker, chiefly with the London market and his old friends in Holland. He took up the appointment of Accountant in 1696 but when the Directors in a fit of economy the following year proposed to reduce his salary, he emphatically declined to accept, whereupon the Directors instructed the Secretary "That he do acquaint Mr Watson that the Company has no more service for him as Chief Accountant." Not long afterwards, when the Board had been reconstituted, he returned to the service of the Bank in the capacity of Auditor, a post which he filled for many years. George Watson died unmarried and on his death his fortune was bequeathed for the provision of the two schools which now bear his name.

Earlier, I mentioned that part of the Equivalent Fund for which William Paterson had so arduously worked, was to be used to recompense the shareholders of the ill-fated Darien Company. The sum was not all paid in cash but in debentures on which little interest was paid until 1719, by which time most of the

original holders had sold out for what they could get. The Equivalent Company was thus in the position of receiving a payment from the Government and paying interest to its Stockholders. It tried unsuccessfully to amalgamate with the Bank of Scotland, and in 1727 it was granted a Charter in the name of the Royal Bank of Scotland, the second of Scotland's joint stock banks. The first Governor was Archibald, Lord Islay, brother of the Second Duke of Argyll, to which title he himself later succeeded. The first deputy Governor was Sir Hew Dalrymple, the Lord President of Session. Thanks possibly to the influence of Argyll, several of the Highland Chiefs had relations with the Royal Bank, the most conspicuous being Lord Breadalbane. In fact a kinsman of Sir John Campbell, son of Colin Campbell of Ardmaddy and the grandson of the first Earl of Breadalbane, became Cashier of the Bank in 1734. It was in 1777 that a grand nephew of the Bank's first Governor, Henry, Third Duke of Buccleuch and Fifth Duke of Queensberry, was elected to that office, and, except for the period from 1820-1838 during the minority of the Fifth Duke, successive Dukes of Buccleuch have filled that office.

During the 18th Century, the British Linen Company, with its agents throughout the country buying and selling yarn and cloth, was finding the need for a financial organisation and gradually developed its own to such purpose that soon it abandoned its linen interests to concentrate entirely on banking. In fact, it is probably to the British Linen Company that we owe the Scottish system of branches throughout the country.

The position then was that Banking was mainly in the hands of the three chartered banks, of which the British Linen was the very much junior partner. These banks, however, dealt mainly with the upper classes and the "popular" side of the business was left to the private bankers who were to a greater or less degree concerned in the mercantile life of the country. These merchants were often represented on the boards of the larger institutions, and they tended to act as middlemen between them and the public. This tended to make banking services expensive and sometimes risky, as they did not have sufficient resources, but the majority of them were well run and I shall look at some of them shortly. The coming of the Commercial Bank of Scotland in 1810, which actually prohibited a partner of any private banking concern from serving on the Board of Directors, brought a new spirit of competition which forced the older Banks to revise their policies. This "new look" in Banking meant the end of the private bankers which the not far distant principle of the Limited Liability Company would soon have brought about. In case anyone misunderstands me, I would like to make it clear that the three chartered Banks, that is, the Bank of Scotland, the Royal Bank of Scotland and the British Linen Company, enjoyed the privilege of limited liability under their respective charters. Banks which were founded later, including the Commercial Bank of Scotland, were incorporated, with their shareholders liability unlimited, and it was only the disastrous and tragic consequences of the City of Glasgow Bank's failure that eventually drew the public's attention to the dangers of this practice.

However, I would like to return for a moment to the era when the private banks

were at the height of their glory. The most famous of these banking houses was that which in 1838 amalgamated with the Union Bank of Scotland, and was known at that time as Sir William Forbes, James Hunter & Company. This firm was the oldest private bank in Scotland, being founded in 1723 by John Coutts, later to become a Lord Provost of Edinburgh. John's father, Patrick Coutts, a former Provost of Montrose, was the first of the family to take up residence in Edinburgh, but he died in 1704, leaving a very young family. It is not till 1723 that anything more was heard of the family, when, as I have said, he established the banking house then known as Coutts & Co. On his death in 1750, the business passed to his four sons, Patrick, John, James and Thomas. Patrick and Thomas, along with a cousin, Thomas Stephen, set off to London to open an Agency there. In London at this time, there was the private bank of Middleton and Campbell, which had developed from the goldsmith's business of George Middleton, which in the late 17th Century had received as a partner one, John Campbell, a descendant of the second son of the first Earl of Argyll. This firm carried on business at the sign of the three crowns in the Strand. The business was a thriving one, and amongst its many customers were Samuel Pepys and Alexander Pope. The bank's clientele was largely Whig, in fact the Earl of Islay, the first Governor of the Royal Bank of Scotland, received considerable help from George Middleton in the early years of the Royal Bank. On the death of John Campbell, who was by that time the sole partner, the business passed to his son, George, who remained a bachelor, though his two sisters both married—the elder to the fifth Earl of Stair. This lack of a direct male heir was to have tremendous consequences on Scottish Banking. As I have said earlier, Coutts and Co. of Edinburgh had opened an agency in London, and it was not unnatural that James Coutts, a partner of the firm, on a visit to his brothers, should pay a visit to that eminent banker and fellow countryman, John Campbell. John, as I have said, was a bachelor, but his household was looked after by the daughter of his younger sister, Mary Peagram. James Coutts fell in love and married her. He was then taken into partnership with John Campbell, and the name of the London firm was changed to Campbell and Coutts. On John Campbell's death in 1761, James was joined by his brother John, and the name again changed to Coutts & Co. And Coutts & Co. it has remained ever since, and still carried on business in the Strand under the sign of three crowns, banker to every sovereign since George III. It still has no place of business outside London, but its name is world famous. It has been the subject of cartoons in Punch, and has been bandied about on the stage. If I may quote Gilbert & Sullivan's "The Gondoliers"—

"The aristocrat who hunts and shoots,  
The Aristocrat who banks with Coutts."

Nowadays it is still a leading bank though not one of the big five, but does not appear to have had any further associations with Scotland.

Shortly after John ceased to be active in the affairs of the Edinburgh firm of Coutts & Co. In fact, in the same year his brother, Patrick, became hopelessly insane and Thomas died, leaving the business in the hands of Thomas Stephen, who has been described as of slender abilities.

The effective control of the business was now out of the hands of the Coutts family, and it was well that there was a capable successor in view. Born in Edinburgh in 1739, descended from the families of Forbes of Monymusk and Pitsligo, the man was William Forbes. William's grandfather, the fourth baronet of Monymusk, married the sister of Lord Forbes of Pitsligo. His father succeeded to this latter title and became the fifth baronet. As a result of the activities for the Jacobite cause, the family fortunes were rather low. The boy's grand uncle, Alexander, fourth Lord Forbes of Pitsligo, at the age of 67 had raised a regiment for Prince Charles. The banker's father became an advocate in Edinburgh, but died young, leaving a widow with two small boys. William, who had been brought up in Aberdeenshire after his father's death, was, at the age of 15, apprenticed for a period of five years to what was commonly known as Coutts Counting House. In Sir William's own words, "Their business was dealing in corn buying and selling goods on commission and the negotiation of bills of exchange on London, Holland, France, Italy, Spain and Portugal," thus showing the difference in the business transacted by the merchant or private bankers of the day and the three old established joint stock banks. When the firm passed into the control of Mr Stephen, Sir William took over the direction of the firm, taking into partnership a Mr James Hunter, who had been a fellow apprentice. The businesses in London and Edinburgh were still linked by an interchange of partners until 1773 when a difference of opinion resulted in a complete separation of the two firms, the Edinburgh one becoming known as Sir William Forbes, James Hunter & Co., whereas that in London retained the name of Coutts & Co., Sir William then showed his genius as a banker. He gradually cast aside the mercantile interests and concentrated on banking. He was thus able to weather the economic storms of the period which caused the ruin of many of his rivals, so that when the amalgamation with the Glasgow Union Bank took place in 1838, some thirty-two years after his death, that concern published a statement describing Sir William's firm as "a firm first in character and connections among the private banking companies in Scotland with a business about equal to our own." On his death, the control of the firm passed to his son, who bore the same name, and it was this Sir William Forbes who was of such great assistance to Sir Walter Scott at the time of his suggested sequestration, when Sir Walter and his business associates owed the firm no less than £25,146 14s. 6d., to say nothing of private debts paid by Sir William. The two were firm friends, even though in their youth they were rivals for the hand of the heroine of Scott's "Red Gauntlet" and though Scott was the loser. Sir William, the seventh Baronet, died in 1828, and his interest passed to his son, Sir John Forbes, who was still a partner in 1838, at which time the annual profits were £16,000. So high was its reputation that it retained its own name and functioned under its own partners for a further fifteen years, until the Glasgow Union Bank changed its title to Union Bank of Scotland. Even then it still retained its status as a Head Office, at which for a long period Directors' meetings still were held, and at which the Union Bank of Scotland notes were payable, as well as at the Head Office in Glasgow.

Mention has already been made of Sir William's fellow apprentice and later

partner, James Hunter, a grandson of James Hunter, seventh Laird of Abbotshill in Ayrshire, and second son of John Hunter of Mainholm and Anne Cunningham of Brownhill. In 1770 he married Jane Blair, daughter of John Blair of Dunskey in Wigtownshire, and changed his name to Hunter-Blair. Unlike his partner, he took an active interest in politics and represented Edinburgh in the House of Commons from 1781-84 and was Lord Provost of Edinburgh 1784-85. He was very active in promoting the development of the New Town of Edinburgh, and was largely responsible for the Act of Parliament in connection with the building of the South Bridge, the foundation stone of which, laid in 1785, bears his name. Sir James died at the age of 45, leaving his share to a son, John, then aged 15, who took no active part in the firm. In 1803, however, his fifth son, Forbes Hunter-Blair, who had entered the firm some three years previously, was accepted as a partner. He does not, however, appear to have been connected with the firm at the amalgamation with the Union Bank.

James Hunter was descended from an Ayrshire family, and his cousin of the same name, a descendant of the Hunters of Abbotshill and of Dogland, and a son of a Provost of Ayr was Cashier first of the Ayr Banking Co. (originally known as John MacAdam and Company) and later of Douglas, Heron & Co. Some time before the disastrous failure of the latter Company, he had been in correspondence with his cousin, pointing out the dangerous condition of that firm and asking assistance to form a new Company. His cousin and his partner must have been impressed with his capabilities, for although they dissuaded him from action as long as Douglas, Heron & Co. remained in business they had, within three months of the failure of that firm, with a total loss of £633,396 18s. 6d., agreed to act as agents for a completely new partnership known as Hunter & Co. James Hunter died in 1776, having given the firm a flying start. He was succeeded as Manager by his son-in-law, Mr. Wood. The business prospered, several branches were opened, and in 1802 they took over the Kilmarnock Banking Co. The then managing partner, a Mr William Cowan, who had entered the service of the Bank as an apprentice at the age of 18 and had become Provost of Ayr in 1816, 1820 and 1824, appointed his son-in-law, Mr C. D. Gairdner, to take over the Kilmarnock Office. It was this gentleman who, in 1841, carried through the negotiations which led to the eventual amalgamation with the Union Bank of Scotland, Ltd. It is interesting to note that the Kilmarnock Office of the Union Bank continued in the charge of a member of the Gairdner family until 1919. A son of Mr. C. D. Gairdner, Charles Gairdner, acted as General Manager of the Union Bank for thirty-three years from 1862 till 1895, and a grandson, Arthur C. D. Gairdner, acted in that capacity from 1910 to 1919, when he resigned to become Chairman of the British Overseas Bank. This did not sever the family connection, as, though the Union Bank is no longer in being, having amalgamated with the Bank of Scotland within the past few years, a member of that distinguished family still acts as manager of one of the offices in Perth.

We have now reached the present day, and many names have been omitted, such as the Dunlops, Houston, and Dennistouns of the West, Herries and Darlings of the South, and many, many others. As I have said, Scottish Banking was developing

along the lines of joint stock companies, strengthened by the adoption of limited liability, and the private bankers faded out, though the names of their descendants live in the board rooms and offices of to-day. Scottish Banking has had its failures, notably Douglas Heron & Co., The Western Bank of Scotland and the City of Glasgow Bank. The Scottish system of branches throughout the country, the note issue and many others have been copied all over the world if not in England. The tendency in recent years has been towards larger units by a process of amalgamations. There are now or within a few weeks will be only five banks left in Scotland, two of whom are now subsidiaries of English concerns, whilst one has subsidiaries down South.

IAN M. KENNEDY.

## THE DUNDAS FAMILY

### OLD CADET BRANCHES OF WEST LOTHIAN

#### 4. DUNDAS OF MORTON

**G**EORGE DUNDAS, third son of John Dundas of Newliston and of Margaret Creichton, was granted a charter under the Great Seal, on 30th May, 1592, of croft lands adjacent to the Church of Kirkliston.<sup>1</sup> On 5th September, 1617, he got a charter by John Mitchelson and Agnes Aikinheid, his spouse (widow of John Hamilton of Middleton of Strathbrock), of the lands of Morton, in the barony of Abercorn, which grant was confirmed by a charter under the Great Seal, on 21st December, 1620.<sup>2</sup> Morton was a small lairdship in the vicinity of Abercorn Schoolhouse.

In 1648 George Dundas was on the Linlithgowshire Committee for War.<sup>3</sup> His testament was registered in 1655.<sup>4</sup> He had commissions in 1661 (with other gentlemen) to try witches in South Queensferry;<sup>5</sup> another in 1662.<sup>6</sup> George married Susanna, daughter of Patrick Broun of Colstoun, with issue:—(1) James, his successor, of whom afterwards; (2) Alexander, who died without issue; (3) William, of whom presently; (4) Patrick, who died without issue; and (5) Agnes, who married George, son of Samuel Wilson,<sup>7</sup> a burghess of South Queensferry.

William Dundas, the third son, was the principal actor in the abduction of Lady Elizabeth Dundas of Newliston, in 1667. The abduction is thus noticed in a letter from Archibald, Earl of Argyle, to Lord Lauderdale:—

“ This morning I was at the examination [by the Privy Council of Scotland] of those that are suspected to be accessory to the design of the rapt of the Register's daughter-in-law [*sic*, but should be step-daughter], which doubtless you have heard of. I make no question Mr William Dundas, the advocate, in whose house she was, being upon the knowledge and contrivement of it; if the Register or some person who would have followed it so smartly had not been concerned, she had returned not quickly, and many would but laugh at it; but now I know the Register



will take it very kindly if you concern yourself in it, and that anything came from his Majesty to quicken the Council to look after it."<sup>8</sup>

A committee of the Council, including the Earl of Argyle, was appointed for trying this abduction of the fair Elizabeth; particularly to take trial of William Dundas's part in the affair; he in the meantime to continue a prisoner in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh. In the course of a week, the Council, "considering that a most violent and barbarous rapt was attempted on the tuelt of this moneth [September] be William Dundasse, brother to [James] Dundasse of Mortoun," and others named, issued an order for the apprehension of those persons. Some new circumstances arising as to the actors in the abduction, and the Council having received a letter from the King<sup>10</sup> that his Majesty had been informed of a great insolence committed by an officer of the Earl of Linlithgow's regiment, assisted by certain soldiers, in violently carrying away a gentlewoman called Dundas, they recommended to their committee "to call before them such persons as they shall think fit, and to examine them, upon oath, anent the said matter."

No further proceedings of consequence were taken in the affair. Lady Elizabeth Dundas married, in 1669, Sir John Dalrymple of Stair.

James Dundas of Morton, the eldest son, married, about 1656, Elizabeth, daughter of James Hamilton of Westport, Linlithgow. The laird of Morton was a Commissioner of Excise in 1661.<sup>11</sup> In 1663 he was admitted a Burgess and Guildbrother of Edinburgh, by right of his wife;<sup>12</sup> and the same year he was appointed a Justice of the Peace for Linlithgowshire.<sup>13</sup> He was a Commissioner of Supply in 1667.<sup>14</sup> James was appointed a Captain in the Militia of Linlithgowshire in 1668.<sup>15</sup> He was a Member of Parliament for the county in the years 1669, 1670, 1672, and 1673. On the death of his cousin David, he succeeded to the estate of Philpstoun. An account of his family is given in the article DUNDAS OF PHILPSTOUN.

DONALD WHYTE.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup>*Registrum Magni Sigilli*, 1580-1593, vol. v, No. 2087.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, 1620-1633, vol. viii, No. 115.

<sup>3</sup>*Acta Parl. Scot.*, vol. iv, part ii, p. 31.

<sup>4</sup>*Edinburgh Register of Testaments*, 1601-1700, p. 124, edited by F. J. Grant. Edin., 1898: Scottish Record Society.

<sup>5</sup>*Reg. Priv. Coun.*, 1661-1664, vol. i (3rd series), p. 34.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 141.

<sup>7</sup>This is probably Samuel Wilson, the Queensferry ship-owner who built Plewlands House, the 17th century mansion restored in 1955 by the National Trust for Scotland and the Pilgrim Trust, after a great deal of controversy. The lintel above the main doorway of the old house bears the initials of Samuel Wilson and Anna Ponton, his spouse, with the Latin motto *Spes Mea Christus*, and the date 1644.

<sup>8</sup>*Vide The Stair Annals*, vol. i, p. 117, by J. M. Graham, Edin., 1875. William Dundas is styled advocate in this letter, but he is not listed in *The Faculty of Advocates in Scotland*, by F. J. Grant, Edin., 1944. Possibly the Earl of Argyle confused him with William Dundas of Kingscavil, who was admitted an advocate in 1665. William, of Morton, however, in the records of his time, is usually styled "Mr" William Dundas. The prefix "Mr" was in those days an academic and not a courtesy title.

<sup>9</sup>*Reg. Priv. Coun.*, 1665-1669, vol. ii (3rd series), p. 259-260.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 261-262.

<sup>11</sup>*Acta Parl. Scot.*, vol. vii, p. 90.

<sup>12</sup>Boog Watson, C. B., *Roll of Edinburgh Burgesses and Guild Brethren*, 1406-1700, p. 165. Edin., 1929; Scottish Record Society.

<sup>13</sup>*Acta Parl. Scot.*, vol. vii, p. 506.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 543.

<sup>15</sup>*Reg. Priv. Coun.*, 1665-1669, vol. ii (3rd series), p. 531.

<sup>16</sup>*Acta Parl. Scot.*, vol. vii, p. 549, and vol. viii, pp. 4, 56, and 209.

## NOTES ON THE MACNEILS OF BARRA

**DONALD BUCHANAN**: "Reflections on the Isle of Barra" (Sands, 1942), pp. 27-29, cites Professor Eoin MacNeill as suggesting that the saint, after whom Barra was called, was not St. Fionn Bharr (the founder of Cork) but St. Barrfhionn (St. Barron) (son of Eatach son of Conall Gulban), Bishop of Drùmcallen and of Cill-Bairr-fhinn (Didhnat, daughter of Meather, was his mother) whose feast occurs on 21st May. Many of his travels "appear to be suspiciously similar to those associated with St. Brendan" and in earlier life he accompanied his cousin St. Columba and was one of his most favoured disciples. St. Barrfhionn's grandfather, King Conall Gulban (founder of Tir Conaill or Tyrconnell), was brother of King Eoghan (founder of Tir Eoghain or Tyrone) from whom the Macneils of Barra derive their descent in the direct male line. Eoghan and Conall Gulban were both sons of the high-king Niall of the Nine Hostages, who reigned at Tara c. 400.

The arms of Macneil of Barra are quarterly: (1) a lion, presumably that of the MacNeill, Lamont, MacIachlan, MacEwen, MacSorley, MacSwin (and, in the female line, probably Macmillan and Scrymgeour of Glassarie) group of families (in the Cowall and Knapdale area) whose descent was deduced by the Irish mediaeval genealogists to a son of Aedh Ua Neill, king of Ailech in the north of Ireland (who died 1033; and for whose ancestry see Professor James Hogan, "The Irish Law of Kingship, with Special Reference to Ailech and Conel Eoghain," *Proc. Royal Irish Academy*, vol. XI, Section C, No. 3, March 1932, pp. 166-255). Since this group appears to have acquired so large an area of former Scottish Dalriada as late as the eleventh century without any chronicle of conquest, it seems most probable that their ancestor (the eleventh century Irish prince) married a local heiress of the old royal house of Dalriada. The royal beast, the lion, could therefore symbolise either descent from the Northern Ui Neill in Ireland, or more probably descent in the female line from the Scottish royal house of Dalriada. (2) a castle, perhaps for the tenure of Kisimul itself. (3) the black galley, device of the great house of MacRuari who held Barra until the middle of the fourteenth century, and whose female-line heir Ranald, ancestor of Clanranald, still held the superiority of Barra in 1373. This house of MacRuari presumably had a daughter who brought Barra to a MacNeill (of the Gigha line)

towards the end of the fourteenth century. In 1409 Macneil bore the significant Christian name of Ruari, previously unknown in the family. His son received a charter of Barra and Boisdale in South Uist from Macdonald in 1427, though both are in the heart of the old MacRuari territory held by Clanranald; and there was a tradition that his ancestors had been "thirty-three Ruaris" in succession who had held the island before him: see "The Clan Macneil," page 183. (4) a red hand surrounded by nine fetterlocks, in obvious allusion to descent from Niall of the Nine Hostages, High King of Ireland c. 400, ancestor of the Northern Ui Neill.

Just as the group of families to which the Macneils belonged sprang from the ancient Blood Royal of Tara, so did the group of families to which the MacRuaris belonged spring from the Blood Royal of the Isles. In my thesis on "Origins and Background of the Law of Succession to Arms and Dignities in Scotland" (Edinburgh University) notes to Chapter II, I demonstrate that the black galley was the emblem of the Blood Royal of the Isles, of which the MacRuaris were an important branch; and I have no doubt that the Galley descended to the Macneils, together with the characteristic Christian name of Ruari and indeed the island of Barra itself, through marriage to a daughter of the House of MacRuari. Prince Schwarzenberg, D.Phil., tells me that the famous after-dinner ritual of Macneil of Barra (described at page 183 of "The Clan Macneil") is a very ancient sacral royal ritual of Oriental origin: and it is hardly necessary to point out the constant contacts of the Norsemen (from whose sea-kings the MacRuaris descended) with the East.

See also The Macneil of Barra, *The Clan Macneil* (1923); Niall D. Campbell (Duke of Argyll), *MacEwens & MacSweens, Celtic Review*, 1911-12, vol. vii, pp. 272-284; the same author, *The MacSuibhne (MacSween) Pedigree, Celtic Review*, 1913-14, vol. ix, pp. 348-349; Dr. William F. Skene, *Celtic Scotland* (1890), vol. iii, app. 8; *The Book of Barra* (1936), ed. John Lorne Campbell.

Sir IAIN MONCREIFFE OF MONCREIFFE, Bt., Ph.D.

## BURNS' EXCISE ASSOCIATES

"Our monarch's hindmost year but ane  
Was five and twenty days begun,  
'Twas then a blast o' Janwar' wind'  
Blew hansel in on Robin."

THE occasion may be opportune to give the results of some recent research concerning some of those who were colleagues of Burns when he was a member of the Scottish Excise Department from 1789 till his death in 1796.

The principal sources of information about service in that department are—(1) salary books and the establishment book (for Edinburgh staff) in the Historical Section of Register House, Edinburgh, from 1707, and (2) the annual reports (with names of widow annuitants and of all subscribers) of the Scottish Excise Incorporation from 1749 with Board minutes from 1799 and a register called *Ages and Capacities*,

1794 (or *A. & C.*, 1794 for short) in the Library of H.M. Customs and Excise, King's Beam House, Mark Lane, London, E.C.3. It is important for the purpose of identification that the excise careers of the many individuals with the same name should be correctly differentiated, misunderstanding having arisen in the past through this not having been done.

Burnsiana is a vast subject but it will be convenient for the purpose of this article if it is taken to mean only the standard works on the life or works of Burns edited or written by J. G. Lockhart (1828), Allan Cunningham (1840), Robert Chambers (1858), Charles Annandale (1888), Charles Rogers (1889), William Paterson (1891), Chambers revised by Wallace (1896), John Sinton (1897), W. E. Henley (1927), De Lancey Ferguson (1931), F. B. Snyder (1932), Hans Hecht (1936), and the annual *Burns Chronicle* up to 1951. *Who's Who in Burns*, by John D. Ross, LL.D. (1927), is a useful and compendious reference book.

Considerations of space preclude the repetition, except very briefly, of what is to be found in Burnsiana; such information is given below within brackets after each name. Then follow notes concerning new matters which have come to light or which have been found in publications outside a Burnsiana context. Finally, for each individual, again in brackets, are references.

Abbreviations used are:—*b.* for born, *m.* for married, *d.* for died, *Fasti* for *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae*, *DNB* for *Dictionary of National Biography*, and *BLG* for *Burke's Landed Gentry*.

It should also be explained that what is referred to above as *A. & C.*, 1794, is called *The Character Book* in an article in *Burns Chronicle*, 1937. It relates in most cases to a record made in 1792 for each individual on the executive side giving his age, number of years of service, number of family (which included the exciseman and his wife, if alive) and in a few words, his official character. In the case of Burns, this record was "Age 32, 3 years' service, 7 of family, the poet, does pretty well."

The members of the Board of Excise, *i.e.*, the Commissioners of Excise, in 1792, *viz.* Brown, Wharton, Stodart, Graham and Grieve, are first mentioned. These, the supreme excise authorities in Scotland at the time, are notable as having dealt leniently in 1792 with Burns' political aberrations. Then follow in descending order of rank, Collector Mitchell, General Supervisors Corbet and Leven, Supervisors Findlater and Nimmo, Accountant Edgar, and finally Burns' brother excise officers or gaugers in alphabetical order.

GEORGE BROWN of Elliston; (Commissioner, one of those who signed Burns' excise commission; mentioned in Burns' letter of 4/9/1790 to Robert Graham of Fintry). Cashier Excise 1759, Commissioner 1765 to 1804; *d.* at Edinburgh 1806 age 84; designated George Brown of Lindsaylands in *Kay's Edinburgh Portraits*, where is described as "a gentleman of amiable temper and serenity of manners"; was a brother of James Brown, the architect of George Square, Edinburgh, and belonged to an old Biggar family, descended from Rev. John Brown of Twynholm *circa* 1626; *m.* daughter of James Dundas of Dundas; his three daughters became the Viscountess Hampden, Lady Wedderburn of Bellenden and Lady Alexandra Hope. (*Kay's*

*Portraits, Scots Magazine* 1759, 1788, 1800, 1805, 1807 and 1810. *Edinburgh Marriages, Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, 1948.)

THOMAS WHARTON (Commissioner also mentioned in Burns, letter of 4/9/1790, signed Burns' commission). After 6 years' service in the Excise Office, London, Deputy Solicitor of Excise 1758, Solicitor 1765, Commissioner 1771 to 1811, *d.* 1816; of the family of Barons Wharton, the only Englishman on the Board; *m.* April 1757, when an attorney, "Miss Massey of Mile end old Town with £5000," a daughter of Captain Charles Massey; *m.* 1774 as third wife Lady Sophia Duff, fifth daughter of the first Earl of Fife; son Richard *b.* 1782 was excise clerk 1799 and Controller 1805 to 1832 and *d.* 1862—he took the name of Wharton-Duff in 1805; John Wharton in Excise from 1804 and Collector Dumfries and at Greenock from 1823 to 1837 may have been a relative, as also Robert Wharton, excise officer at Stewarton from August to November, 1791, when he died. (*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1757, *Old Edinburgh Club XVIII*—where his house facing the Meadows is mentioned and he is wrongly described as "Commissioner of Customs, a colleague of Adam Smith," *Scots Magazine*, 1791, 1811; *BLG* 1952, for Wharton Duff of Orton, *Hodson's Officers of the Bengal Army* for son, Thomas W.)

JAMES STODART (Commissioner, the third who signed Burns' commission). Commissioner 1781 till *d.* 1810; *b.* 1737 only son of Rev. Alexander Stoddart, minister of Falkland 1726 till *d.* 1745, and of Barbara, daughter of Hon. James Melville of Balgony; apprenticed merchant, Edinburgh, 1753, burgess merchant 1759, town councillor 1764, and Lord Provost, Edinburgh, 1774 and 1775 to 1776—Leith Walk formed and Calton Hill observatory started in his provostship; *m.* Jean, daughter of James Mitchell, goldsmith, 1764; owner of Bailie's Close, Cowgate; only son Alexander, HEICS, *d.* at Madras, 1807. (*Fasti V.* 153, *Edinburgh Apprentices, Edinburgh Burgesses, The Lord Provosts of Edinburgh, Edinburgh Marriages, Old Edinburgh Club XII*, and *Scots Magazine*, 1807.)

ROBERT GRAHAM (Commissioner, "one of the worthiest and most accomplished gentlemen, not only of this country but, I will dare to say it, of this age"—Burns to Mrs. Dunlop, August 1788; other references too numerous to mention, but see especially article, *Burns Chronicle*, 1931.) Little to add to the foregoing except that he was descended from King Robert III of Scotland, whose daughter Mary, *m.* 1406, was the mother of the first Graham of Fintry, and so an ancestor of the commissioner; Morton Carr, barrister, friend of Walter Scott and Solicitor of Excise *m.* his youngest daughter 1830. (*BLG* 1858, *Blackwood's Magazine* 1830.)

JOHN GRIEVE; commissioner 1789 till *d.* 1803; probably son of William Grieve, gardener, Preston, apprentice merchant, Edinburgh, 1740, and, while servant to Cochran and Hamilton, merchants, *m.* Isobel, daughter of William Pillans, merchant 1746, burgess of Edinburgh by right of wife, daughter of William Pillans, stabler, 1747; *m.*, when a bailie, Helen daughter of John Angus, merchant, 1776; town councillor 1765; Treasurer 1769; Dean of Guild 1778 to 1779; Lord Provost 1782 and 1786; *Kay's Edinburgh Portraits* says of him, "Possessed a great deal of natural sagacity to which he owed his success in business, as well as his rise in civic dignity, being almost

totally uneducated—so much so that on many occasions he displayed the most gross ignorance of his own language . . . He was nevertheless a most active and upright magistrate . . . His support of Sir Laurence Dundas in 1780 seems to have been the means of facilitating his future rise . . . he resided for many years in Strichen's Close, High Street . . . afterwards removed to a house in Princes Street, where he became instrumental in raising the Earthen Mound . . . the east side of which, where it was commenced, may be observed to be a little bit westward of the line of Hanover Street, and opposite Provost Grieve's door, being particularly included for the convenience of that gentleman"; he was buried on 23/4/1803 in Henry Anderson's lair in St. Cuthbert's churchyard, age 76, but there is no inscription; his widow, Helen Angus, *d.* 1808. (*Edinburgh Apprentices, Burgesses and Marriages, Kay's Edinburgh Portraits, The Lord Provosts of Edinburgh, Scots Magazine* 1803, 1808, *St. Cuthbert's Burials* 1803, and *Edinburgh Testaments*.)

COLLECTOR JOHN MITCHELL ("Friend of the Poet, tried and leal" in *Verses to Collector Mitchell*, 1795; not much known about him but generally regarded as a kindly and benevolent senior colleague of Burns; trained for the ministry; Burns sometimes sent him his poems for criticism; according to Chambers, a sheaf of Burns' poems was found at the Collector's death and was lost by the family; information lacking about origin and burial place; *Burns Chronicle*, 1936, mentions (a) son Hugh, student at Wallace Academy; (b) inscription on tombstone in St. Michael's churchyard, Dumfries, calls his wife Mrs. Jane Mitchell, while the obituary notice in the *Scots Magazine* of 1792 calls her Mrs. Anne; (c) eldest daughter "C." *d.* 1801; (d) daughter Helen *m.* William Inglis 1794; (e) the Collector *d.* at Woodbank Dalkeith, 12/3/1806 when Collector of Haddington; and (f) his son Francis was served heir to him in 1807; the original authority for these data—apart from the inscription—would be the *Scots Magazine* and *Return of Heirs*.) Supernumerary Aberdeen Collection, 1757; excise office, Fraserburgh, 1758, Turriff 1759, Montrose 1764; supervisor, Wigton 1772, Kilmarnock 1775, Wigton 1776, Montrose 1780, Wigton 1788; Collector, Dumfries 1788, Haddington 1802 till *d.* 1806. *A. & C.* 1794—age 61, 34 years' service, 10 of family, "but middling."

Collector Mitchell was of Aberdeenshire origin, son of John M. tenant (presumably farmer) in Colhay, afterwards in Insch, and Margaret Steven(s), daughter of George S., Glenniestoun, parish of Culsamond; baptised in Tullynestle parish 1/7/1731; John Anderson, clerk or doctor, St. Christophers (St. Kitts), cousin of Margaret Steven, bequeathed his property to the Royal Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, subject to the payment of annuities of £10 each to the four children of "his dear uncle Mr. George Stevens . . . and the heirs male of their bodies." Retours of 1781 in favour of John Mitchell; supervisor of excise, Montrose, and of 1861 in favour of his granddaughter Ann Mitchell or Hall of Rosebank, Edinburgh, together with the Tullynestle parish register give information without which it would have been practically impossible to establish the Collector's provenance.

He married Anne Lamb; a peculiar notice in the *Scots Magazine* quoted below shows that this marriage took place in 1755; that she was a sister of John Lamb,

supervisor of excise, later merchant in Fisherrow, is deducible from an Edinburgh sasine of 1807 mentioning Robert Mitchell, merchant in Fisher Row (son of the Collector) and his uncle John Lamb, merchant there, and another sasine of 1775 showing that John Lamb, merchant, Fisher Row, was previously supervisor of excise; I should further be inclined to deduce from the fact of this marriage in 1755 that John Mitchell was then himself an expectant officiating in the same station as John Lamb, but where this was I am unable to say as the records do not as a rule show where examiners, the rank held by John Lamb at the time, were located in Scotland. Anne Lamb's christian name is so given in the baptismal records of the four children whose names with mother's name appear in parish records and also in the death notification of her son Hugh in 1860. The "Jane" in the St. Michael's inscription seems to be a mistake, possibly originating when the monument was renovated by the Dumfries Burns Club in 1902. The references to this inscription in *Memorials of St. Michael's* by Wm. McDowell, 1876, and *Collection of Epitaphs . . . in Scotland* by D. MacVean, 1834, do not mention the Christian name. The inscription indicates 1734 to be the year of her birth.

Collector Mitchell's children—"C.", the eldest daughter, *d.* 1801; Turriff baptisms—Francis 25/4/1759, Mary Margaret 21/11/1761; Helen, *b.* about 1763(?) but birth not traced; Montrose births—Robert 22/10/1765, Alexander 19/1/1770, Anne 5/5/1772; Wigton births—daughter Thomson 13/10/1775, and Hugh, but in latter case place and date given by census 1851 of Portobello.

Curiously enough, the following entry in the *Scots Magazine* of 1767, evidently thought to be of general interest, can relate only to the Collector and his wife, though the occurrence is not traceable in the Montrose parish register:—

"7 May 1767 the wife of J. M. an officer of the excise at Montrose of three daughters at one birth—the mother formerly had twins and has at present ten children alive and has only been married twelve years."

None of these triplets has come to notice in later years.

The Inveresk parish register of burials has:—

"17 Mar 1806 Mitchel—Mr Mitchell from Dalkeith was burried in the east end of the churchyard in the middle of his own tomb."

At or near the spot indicated is an enclosed lair with an inscription quoted in *The History of the Regality of Musselburgh* by James Paterson—

"Sacred to the memory of Robert Mitchell, timber merchant, Fisher Row, his wife Margaret Livie; and his two sons John and Francis, all of them fell victims to that awful visitation of Heaven, the cholera morbis, during the first week of February, 1832."

That this Robert Mitchell was the Collector's son born in 1765 is shown by the minutes of the Scottish Board of Excise and Edinburgh sasines. It is doubtless in this plot that the Collector is buried but, as in the case of another excise benefactor of Burns buried in this churchyard, Adam Stobie mentioned later, there is no inscription on the spot to record the interment.

J. F. MITCHELL.

(To be continued)

## QUERIES

VI/1. BISSET.—Wanted date, place of birth and parentage of Alexander Bisset of Echt who married Janet ——. Their son Alexander, b. 1754, d. 1821, married Sarah Roberts, 1784.

R. A. P. H.

VI/2. GRANT.—Information required on movement of Highlanders specifically Grants, into Loudon at the end of the 18th century. In particular of John Grant, weaver, born c. 1799 there, who enlisted in the 71st Foot. (Described in Army Records as a weaver).

M. W. G.

VI/3. HARPER.—Two landscape paintings in my possession bear the printed stamps on the back of the gilt frames, of Alexander Harper, carver, gilder and artists colourman, of 8a Shandwick Place, Edinburgh. How long is it since he was in business?

D. W.

VI/4. BURNS OF YELWALL.—On the 20th September, 1838, Arthur Wyndham, Lieut., 2nd Madras Native Infantry, bachelor, married at Mysore by licence Ann Magdalene Louisa Burns of Yewall, spinster. (Register of Chaplain's Marriages, Madras.) Parents or residence not stated. Mrs. Wyndham died c. 1856. Information sought regarding the family of Burns of Yelwall and their location.

C. L. B.

VI/5. DAVIDSON.—Ancestry sought of Alexander Davidson, Teacher, born c. 1768, died in Dunfermline 19/11/1845, aged 77. Alexander Davidson married Mary Green, b. 1775, died Dunfermline 7/4/1850. Their son David was born in Dunfermline 1817.

W. M. B.