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**Captain James Little,
Saltcoats.**

Troon and Prestwick Times, 18th February 1927

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Cover illustration

The photo of James Little was published with his obituary. See ‘Captain James Little of Saltcoats’, page 4.

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Captain James Little of Saltcoats: On Saving Lives & A Life Fully Lived

by *Lianne Hackett*

Captain James Little (1851¹-1927) was born in Saltcoats, the son of Kennedy Little – merchant seaman - and Ann Robertson, also of a seafaring family. From an early age, his path was destined for the sea. He left a formidable legacy of seamanship from his early days running coal between Scotland and Ireland to the responsibility of captaining multinational crews for months at sea on voyages from the UK that included Chile, the West Indies and North America.

As a child, my mother often told the story of the daring rescue that her great-uncle – Captain James – had performed at sea, against all the odds. She had met him as a child and his commanding presence had made a huge impression on her. The story that she told was of Captain James on a return journey to Scotland coming across an Italian vessel that was in danger of sinking. The seas were mountainous, but Captain James decided to save the crew and did so at great risk to himself and his ship. Not only did he save the crew, but personally went back on board to save a statue of the Virgin Mary and – in so doing – also decided to rescue the ship's cat and her kitten. My mother then told how Captain James was carried shoulder high by the rescued sailors when the ship had docked in port (we later found the port was Falmouth) and was presented with a medal for his bravery. She knew the story, but not the detail. I became intrigued and, when I finally got down to some focused family research in 2004, I sought the help of the Local History Librarians in Ardrossan (now to be found at the North Ayrshire Heritage Centre, Saltcoats) and then Tom Barclay in the Carnegie Library, Ayr.

The key to finding the story was the *Ardrossan & Saltcoats Herald*. When I visited the Local History Library in Ardrossan, the Librarians had - by chance - recently posted in the Library an enlargement of an extract from the 3 July 1891 edition of the *Ardrossan & Saltcoats Herald*: the extract was a listing of Saltcoats Shipmasters. Captain James Little was listed as Captain of the *Mary Wilson*. Together with my mother, I researched further his work running coal between the Scottish and Irish coasts. We thought that the rescue must have happened somewhere in these waters, but could find nothing in accounts of sinkings off the British coast. It was Tom Barclay's patient researching of the *Ayr Advertiser*, inspired by our frequent visits to the Carnegie Library, that led to the discovery that the rescue had been effected not as part of a simple coal run but on a transatlantic voyage. The rescue took place on 23 November 1898 in the Azores: Latitude 28°18' north; Longitude, 37°37' west. Captain James was at the helm of the barque *Aretas* on the return leg of a voyage to St Lucia. The cargo was sugar; the destination, Greenock.

The account that Tom Barclay located in the 20 October 1899 edition of the *Ardrossan & Saltcoats Herald* of Captain James's saving of the captain and crew (a total of 12 men) of the Italian barque *Salvatore* from Palermo was a dream find: a contemporaneous

rendering of the day on 16 October 1899 when Captain James was presented with a medal by the Italian Government for his daring rescue at sea. As can be seen in the transcript, the reporter caught the atmosphere brilliantly; as he did the rescue itself. The story that my mother remembered so vividly from her childhood was more and not less than her remembered account. Her uncle was a true hero; other ships in the area had sailed close to the *Salvatore* but their captains had decided to leave the crew to their fate; Captain James risked his life – and that of his crew – in saving them. In a nice postscript to the story, the reporter notes that the kitten became a pet in Captain Little's household.

Further research was undertaken by family members at Guildhall Library consulting Lloyd's Captains Registers for the period. My mother, sister and I then visited Falmouth to see the quay where the *Aretas* docked and where the Italian seamen carried Captain James shoulder high. At the Bartlett Library, National Maritime Museum Cornwall, we researched the Harbourmaster records and those of the Italian Consul, a member of the Fox family. Sadly, much of the material for 1898 is missing, presumed lost.

Through online searches of the UK Board of Trade collection at the Maritime History Archive at the Memorial University of Newfoundland, we were able to download a facsimile of the Log Book of the voyage that Captain James made in the *Aretas* in the previous year, 1897, again to St Lucia. Sadly, the documents for the voyage in 1898 appear to be missing.

Following his retirement after over 50 years at sea, Captain James continued to live in Saltcoats in a villa on Caledonia Road. His obituary in the *Troon and Prestwick Times* (18th February 1927) notes that he was appointed as instructor of a training ship at Dundee and says that he later held a similar position on "the training ship which was a prominent feature in the Gareloch for many years." On retirement from his role on the training ships, Captain James is listed as a ship owner. In later life, Captain James gave over 10 years to public service in his local area, including as a Director of the Saltcoats Gas Company.

The obituary gives insight into this commitment to public life. It highlights the concern that Captain James had for those in need; describing him as a "public man" who was "zealous for the best interests of the community, and also for the alleviation of the hardship of the most unfortunate".

The obituary does not mention that one such "unfortunate" was Captain James. As a child of eight,² he lost his father. Captain Kennedy Little died at the early age of 36 from complications resulting from life at sea. His widow was left with six children to bring up; two elder children (one my great-grandmother) had already left home. From records found, we know that my great-grandmother is in service and her elder sister Ann is married. Less than a month after her husband passes away, Ann Little has to apply for Poor Relief; support that she needed to be given for the next 14 years. This early experience must have contributed to Captain Little's desire to help those in need; it must have shaped his decision to go into public life. He was first elected to Ardrossan Parish Council in 1917 and served up until his death, including as chairman in 1920. The obituary in the *Troon and Prestwick Times* notes that not only was he returned unopposed in 1919, and he topped the poll at the contested elections of 1922 and 1925.

Captain James married twice: first to Margaret Reside and then – as a widower – to Ann Proudfoot. He had four children – three boys and a girl, two of whom – Kennedy & James – followed in their father's footsteps. One son is listed as being on that fateful voyage with his father in 1898, but his name is not given. Kennedy went on to become a shipping clerk and James a marine engineer.

As a member of the South West Maritime History Society, I am continuing to research the voyage home that the Italian seamen took. I understand that their journey to Palermo probably involved a stay at the London's Seamen's Mission and am in touch with an academic whose specialist area this is. The possibility of photographing the wreck of the *Salvatore* was also explored with a dive company in the Azores, but the ship is lying in more than 1,000 metres depth. One for the future ...

Appendix

Article from *Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald*, Friday 20th October, 1899

SAVING Life AT SEA: GALLANTRY OF A SALTCOATS SKIPPER. On Monday afternoon, the Hon. Thomas Cochrane M.P.,³ sought brief relaxation from the pressing duties of the Colonial Office, for the purpose of running down to Saltcoats to present to Captain James Little, Caledonia Road, a medal which has been gifted to him by the Italian Government, in commemoration of a gallant act of rescue in the high seas on November of last year. The presentation was made in the Lesser Town Hall. Mr Alexander Guthrie, Italian Consul at the port of Ardrossan, presided, and he was supported by the Hon. Thomas Cochrane, M.P.; Captain Little; Mr R.L. Alpine; Mr Wm. Stevenson (Chief of H.M. Customs, Ardrossan); Bailie Miller, Saltcoats; and Messrs. Sutherland, Free Church, Saltcoats, and Spottiswood, North (Established) Church, Saltcoats; Mr Andrew Stirrat; Mr Bryden etc. Among the audience were a large number of representative ladies and gentlemen.

THE STORY OF THE RESCUE is a thrilling one. The barque *Aretas*, of London, sailed from St. Lucia, West Indies, on 29th October, 1898, bound for Falmouth – Captain Little in command. All went well until 9th November, when a severe gale sprang up from the north, accompanied by a heavy sea. Such, indeed, was the wildness of the weather that the ship's boats were washed from the chops and smashed, and every movable article was washed overboard. The decks were constantly flooded till the 13th, when the weather moderated; but on the 19th there was a renewal of the storm, with a succession of easterly gales running to hurricane force. The *Aretas* was practically AT THE MERCY OF WIND AND WEATHER, the only sail that held being the lee side of the lower main topsail. The sea was so dangerously high that bags filled with oil had to be kept constantly over the ship's side for the safety of human beings on board. This state of matters continued till midnight of the 23rd November when the storm abated in fury, and additional sail was set. At daylight, a barque was sighted flying signals of distress. The *Aretas* was steered for the disabled vessel, and, when she got close under her lee, the stranger was found to be in a sinking condition, the sea rolling over her amidships. Captain Little signalled those on board to send a boat, as those of the *Aretas* were useless.

After an hour's delay, a boat put out from the barque, on which signals had meantime been run up that she was sinking and must be abandoned. She proved to be the Italian barque *Salvatore*, from Bangor, America, to Palermo. The mate of the *Aretas* was disabled, and Capt. Little essayed the dangerous task of rescue himself. The sea was, of course, still running high and cross. With much difficulty Captain Little got into the boat along with the three Italian sailors, and pulled with them to the rescue of their shipmates. The crew numbered twelve hands. They had been fifteen days and nights without food or sleep, with a man continually aloft on the lookout, and they were in a terribly exhausted condition. Only four could do anything for themselves, Two of the twelve were father and son, the former well advanced in years, and the affectionate solicitude the son showed for his aged sire is described as very touching. The rescued men were swung on board the *Aretas* by means of ropes, and every attention was given them. Half an hour after they were in safety the masts of the *Salvatore* went by the board, and a few minutes later the ill-fated vessel disappeared. The position of the barque when the crew was rescued was: Latitude 28°18' north; Longitude, 37°37' west. The shipwrecked men were on board the *Aretas* twenty-three days, at the end of which period they were handed over to the Italian consul at Falmouth, in perfect health.

VARIOUS INCIDENTS connected with the occurrence are worth noting. For instance, a steamer passed the *Salvatore* on the 21st, and in response to the signalling of the *Salvatore* signalled back that the sea was too rough for a boat to live. On the morning of the rescue it was the mate's turn aloft. The poor fellow was in part delirious and he more than half doubted the evidence of his senses. His tongue clave to the roof of his mouth, and it was some time before he could appraise his shipmates of the welcome fact that a vessel was bearing down to their rescue. The most dangerous moment to those on board the small boat on the return from the sinking ship was when they got under lee of the *Aretas*. The crew of the latter vessel had been eager spectators of the boat's progress and when it came within hail they raised a rousing cheer. The poor fellows in the boat dropped their oars and attempted to return the cheer. The moment almost proved fatal. On the forecastle head of the *Salvatore* Captain Little found the ship's cat. The rats had left their watery quarters below and sought out the only dry spot on board, and Puss had followed them with charitable intent – to eat them, to wit. Aft, he found a box containing a kitten not many weeks old. Through a hole in the deck he saw hanging on the wall of the cabin a picture of the Virgin. The picture, the cat, and the kitten were all brought off. The picture was received with pious rapture by the poor fellows in the boat, the cat went back to Italy, and the kitten, now sleek and mature, and with never a hint of its early privations, is one of the pets in Captain Little's home in Saltcoats. The skipper had his son, a likely looking lad, with him on the voyage.

THE PRESENTATION. The Chairman said:-Ladies and gentlemen, the town of Saltcoats has always had a high reputation for the bravery and ability of her seamen. Quite a long roll might be given of natives who have already made their mark, and it is pleasing to know that while the times are changing, our seamen are still keeping well

to the front. At the present moment, when; the whole world is deeply interested in the great Yacht Race in America, we are especially concerned in it, as we have some of our townsmen in the *Shamrock*, and, of course, wish her to win.⁴ (Applause). That is sailing for the pleasure of sailing. Life, however, is not all sweets; and it is necessary in the battle of life that our captains and sailors follow the sea as their daily avocation. It is in connection with this branch of the service that we are called here together. Captain James Little of the *Aretas* has had an opportunity of shewing the stuff he is made of, and has given us an illustration of a noble deed, nobly done. (Applause). It is pleasing to know that the Italian Government have acknowledged his prowess, and we are met today to bear public testimony to it. (Applause) We have been specially fortunate in having the Hon. Thomas Cochrane to make the presentation. (Hear, hear) You must be all aware he is more than busy at present.⁵ Notwithstanding this he has shown his usual courtesy and kindness in coming here at considerable inconvenience: but this is just like him. He is the proper gentleman for a ceremony of this kind. He himself comes from a family of heroes. He can therefore appreciate and put in their true light the events connected with the saving of the crew of the Italian vessel *Salvatore*. I have therefore much pleasure in calling upon the Hon. Thomas Cochrane to make the presentation. (Sustained applause)

The Hon. Thomas Cochrane, M.P., who had a very hearty reception, alluded to the devotion to duty which he declared to be habitually displayed by Scotsmen all over the world. The gallant deeds performed by our sailors and soldiers by sea or land were indeed many. Whilst men admired the bravery displayed in the excitement of battle, surely a greater meed of praise was earned by those calm, quiet acts of heroism which were called devotion to duty, and which were performed almost every day by our countrymen, where the influence of strong feeling was entirely wanting. (Applause) Saltcoats was no stranger to courage of this kind: examples had occurred, in the immediate neighbourhood, of men acquitting themselves bravely in saving others in the flooding of mines or in explosions. He considered that the gallant deed performed by Captain Little in the execution of his duty would rank amongst the brightest examples of calm and resolute courage recorded in the interesting annals of the sea. It had been admirably designed, and bravely and skilfully carried out, and as such, it attracted the admiration of all his fellows. (Applause)

No wonder that the Italians, themselves a brave and gallant people, who had for many years been staunch friends of this country abroad and at home, recognised in Captain Little the bravery and the courage which they possess themselves, and had endeavoured, in a signal manner, to mark their appreciation of it. (Applause) The Italian authorities requested Mr Ritchie, president of the Board of Trade,⁶ to convey to Captain Little this mark of their appreciation, and Mr Ritchie, unable to release himself from his duties, wrote to him (Mr Cochrane) and specially invited him to make the presentation to Captain Little. He hoped – and in expressing the hope he was sure he expressed the sentiment of the gathering – that Captain Little would be long spared to pursue his calling as a brave and able seaman, that his example would be followed by many, and that his name would be respected amongst his friends and neighbours in

Saltcoats, and admired throughout the whole of Scotland. (Applause) The speaker concluded by handing the medal to Captain Little, gracing the act with an appropriate remark.

Captain Little, who was received with great heartiness, began by thanking all present for honouring him by attending this meeting. He did not know how much he had to thank the Hon. Thos. Cochrane for coming here amidst the many pressing duties he had at the present time. He was sure they would all agree with him that he did not have the words to express his sense of the honour of being presented with this medal at the hands of such a distinguished gentleman as the honourable member. (Applause) He wished to be understood that he only did his duty, and that he felt that he could do the same again, if the same need existed. (Applause)

The honourable member and the respected chairman had surely said enough – everything that could be said, indeed – so that there was no need for keeping them longer. He thanked them very kindly and asked that it should not be forgotten that "England expects every man to do his duty." (Applause)

Mr Alpine moved a vote of thanks to Mr Cochrane for his kindness in coming to Saltcoats that afternoon. He knew he had done so at some inconvenience to himself. A meeting in the evening would probably have been more successful, so far as numbers were concerned, but this would have made Mr Cochrane's attendance impossible. As secretary to Mr Chamberlain, his labours were manifold and arduous, in connection with the difficult and knotty question which was now, unfortunately, being settled by bloodshed. The vote of thanks was cordially awarded.

Mr Stevenson, called upon by the chairman, said he felt some diffidence in appearing before this gathering. He had almost rather be on the deck of the sinking *Salvatore* than here. (Laughter) When he was at sea, especially "when the stormy winds do blow," he was generally below. (Laughter) He was especially interested in the day's proceedings for two reasons. Captain Little was a stranger to him, but a chance remark he dropped the other day had touched his one fad - he would not call it a monomania - (Laughter) - the Captain said, "I always pay special attention to boys for the navy: we give them our best." Now, that was what they all should do: give the navy their best - (Hear, hear) - fit our boys to swim in the sea of glory or the sea of trouble, and then, whoever sink, British boys would swim. (Applause) It was nice to have a medal given to a Briton: a Scot was a Briton to him, although he was not sure what we called ourselves. (Laughter) Then we had a growing trade at Ardrossan Harbour with Italy. Acts of humanity facilitated commerce: acts of courtesy did so also. This was where the chairman came in. We had several consuls and vice-consuls at the harbour. They were all respected. The chairman was the right man in the right place always. He had much pleasure in asking them to give him a hearty vote of thanks. The response was cordial.

Mr Andrew Stirrat said he was very pleased to see in his friend Captain Little the saviour and rescuer of lives at the peril of his own. Captain Little sat before them as a noble example of the British tar. (Applause) There was another noble deed which they had to acknowledge: the Town Council had given the hall free. (Laughter, and

“hear, hear”) He had much pleasure in proposing a vote of thanks to Saltcoats Town Council. The Council, in turn, were cordially thanked.

The medal is a very handsome article. On one side is a likeness of King Humbert I,⁷ on the other Captain Little’s brave and humane deed is recorded in Italian.

- ¹ This date is taken from the 1861 census, although the application for Poor Relief made in 1859 suggests a birth date of 1844.
- ² Again, based on the information in the 1861, rather than the 1859 application for Poor Relief.
- ³ The Hon. Thomas Cochrane (later Lord Cochrane of Cults)(1857-1951) was M.P. for North Ayrshire, 1892-1910. Between 1995 and 1901 he was Parliamentary Private Secretary to Joseph Chamberlain.
- ⁴ *Shamrock I*, was the yacht commissioned by Sir Thomas Lipton to challenge for the America’s Cup. She was designed by William Fife III, and built in 1898 by J Thorneycroft & Co. in London. Launched in June 1899, she raced (and lost) three times against the holder, *Columbia*. Her skipper was Captain Archibald Hogarth.
- ⁵ Britain had declared war on the Boers on 11th October 1899.
- ⁶ Charles Thomson Ritchie, a Dundonian (1838-1906) was President of the Board of Trade from 1895 to 1900, and M.P. for Croydon. He served subsequently as Home Secretary (1900-1902) and Chancellor of the Exchequer (1902-1903)
- ⁷ Now usually known by his Italian name, Umberto I. Born in 1844, he reigned from 1878 and was assassinated at Monza in 1900.

The Mystery of “Peter Whannell alias Buchanan”

by Donald McWhannell

[Currently, the relevance of this note to Ayrshire is limited to a fleeting reference in 1778, as described in the first paragraph. Donald has sought valiantly to give more form to Peter Whannell alias Buchanan, and would appreciate any help that readers can provide. The succession of Peters, especially Peter Brunton Whannell, had an active life around the globe, and it would be good if a solid Ayrshire connection could be established. An earlier and shorter version of the mystery of Peter Whannell appeared as McWhannell, D.C., ‘The Mystery of Peter Whannell alias Buchanan’, in *West Highland Notes & Queries*, series 3, no.9, August 2007. *Eds.*]

Peter Whannell alias Buchanan registered his arms with Lyon Court on 8th August 1778.¹ He is stated to be “of the County of Air” and to be “descended in the male line from the antient family of Buchanan of Buchanan”. Presently no other facts about this man

appear to be easily recoverable from official records. No proven date of birth, marriage or death has so far been found either in the National Archives of Scotland or in the local archives for Ayrshire or indeed in the National Archives in London. No lands or other property relating to this person have yet been discovered.

It is a curious coincidence and probably no more than that, that a Patrick McIlhonell was a student at St. Andrews University in sessions 1775/6 1776/7 and 1777/8 but then disappears from the record).² During his time at university Patrick changed his forename to Peter but retained his surname unchanged. This Patrick/Peter may well have been the eldest legitimate son of Alexander McIlchonnell of the Littleport (St. Fillans, Perthshire) family. Patrick paid the tuition fees that matched his father being either a tradesman or tenant farmer. The Gaelic name Padraig Mac Gille Chonaill might conceivably have “morphed” into Peter Whannell amongst an Anglophone community. This particular Scottish surname is known to have changed over time from the original Gaelic form through McIlchonnell to McIlquhonnell to McIlwhannell to McWhannell and Whannell. It is the case that from at least 1482 onwards the Perthshire and Argyllshire Mac Gille Chonaills provided a baillie, servitors, a chaplain, a ground officer and boatbuilders to various significant Campbell families. The surname also existed in Dumfries, Galloway, Ayrshire and the Isle of Man. Although some members of the Clann Mhic Gille Chonaill were small landowners in Perthshire there is currently no evidence of their being armigerous³ and equally there is no demonstrable historical link with the surname Buchanan.

Might this “Peter Whannell alias Buchanan” have adopted the surname Whannell from his mother or some other female ancestress or relative due to particular family difficulties after the 1745 rebellion (or alternatively to obtain an inheritance)? It should be noted that the Arnprior Buchanan family estates were forfeited and managed by a Government agent for some years after “the ’45”. It is also the case that there is a rather distant Buchanan of Arnprior link, through marriages, to the six merkland of Skimieland and the 5 shilling land of Templelands of Dreghorn.

Conversely might this “Peter Whannell alias Buchanan” be a Whannell who had for political, social or other reasons such as inheritance chosen the alias “Buchanan”?

Accepting initially the proposition that this man is truly a male line Buchanan of Buchanan what can be made of him either from his unique armorial achievement or from published records of the various Buchanan families? His arms (page 12) certainly display the sable lion rampant and the double black tressure associated with the Buchanan of Buchanan arms. The particular features unique to this individual being the crest (a dove holding an olive branch in its beak) the motto *Nuntius Pacis* and the three crescents gules placed symmetrically on the shield.⁴ Following up leads on the various Buchanan families⁵ is facilitated by information listed on www.stirnet.com/html/genie/british/bb-fz/buchanan. The questions then remain “Why should an armigerous Buchanan use the surname Whannell ?” or conversely “Why should an armigerous Whannell use the alias Buchanan?” and “What is the true significance of the three crescents on this man’s arms ?”.

Moving now to another line of enquiry there are various mentions of a Peter Whannell (b “abroad” July 1778, d.1854 Madras) and a Peter Brunton Whannell (b.1816 Madras) in the National Archives of Scotland,⁶ while some sixteen entries for the Peter

Whannell (d.1854) who rose from Ensign (1803/4) to become a Colonel and later Auditor General in the British East India Company's Madras Army, are to be found via www.a2a.org.uk/search. This Peter Whannell had enlisted in the E.I.Co.'s European Infantry; he is listed on the passenger list of the *Henry Dundas*, which took him to India, as a 'labourer'.⁷ On 17th Aug. 1803 approval was given by the Court of Directors of the E.I.C. for his appointment as deputy accountant. He appears to have become "Deputy Accountant in the Office of the Military Auditor General" in Madras in 1805. He subsequently rose steadily in his chosen career to become ultimately Auditor General at Madras with the rank of Colonel. Whannell, served throughout his career in Madras and apparently without any opportunity to return to Great Britain.⁸



**Arms of Peter Whannell alias Buchanan
with kind permission of Claude Buchanan, New Zealand**

Colonel Whannell married a Mrs. Eliza Bulow (b.1786 d.1848) in 1814 and had three children, all born in Madras, Peter (b.1816), Eliza (b.1820, d.1836) and Mary (b.1826, d.1845). Whannell family papers, including wills and testaments are included within a bundle of some 700 individual items held at the British Library but have not provided any clues as to this Peter Whannell's ancestry.⁹ It does appear to be the case, based on a letter held in GD112, that his father may have been resident in Scotland. Unfortunately his name

and place of residence are not given. It appears that at some point in time he, the father, may have lived in London.

It seems also to be the case that Peter had a brother, Lieutenant-Colonel George Whannell of the 33rd Foot (Duke of Wellington's Regiment),¹⁰ born London 5th June 1798 and who died in 1861.¹¹ He had served during the Waterloo Campaign and was awarded the Waterloo Medal. He was promoted to be Lieutenant Colonel in 1843 while the regiment were serving in the West Indies, but later the same year they were posted to Halifax, Nova Scotia. He retired from the Army in 1848.

Peter appears to have had a second and elder brother, Lieutenant John Buchanan Whannell, who was commissioned in the 71st Foot on 19th June 1806, transferring to the 12th Foot in 1807, and who was stationed in India at a time when Col. Peter was in Madras (see correspondence in GD112). It is not known when or where Lt. John Buchanan Whannell died. We know, however, that his father was Peter Whannell, senior, who in 1801 was a Lieutenant in the 9th Veteran Battalion.¹² His death was announced in the 1826 Army List.

It appears that Colonel Peter Whannell's son, also Peter, born in 1816, is indeed that Peter Brunton Whannell who married Maria Jane Blake in London in 1840¹³. The same year he petitioned the Earl of Breadalbane, from an address in London, for a Commission in the Argyll and Bute Militia citing the alleged support of Argyll himself. He appears to be successful with his request as he writes thanking Breadalbane from a hotel in Campbelltown. However, he does not appear to have been enthused by his Militia commission as he reappears in 1845 as Postmaster at Trichinopoly in India. He next re-appears in California, having, according to a letter he wrote from San Bernardino in July 1864, sailed from Melbourne, Australia, in November 1856. We also find him acting as a Justice of the Peace and Magistrate (and claiming the rank of Captain) in the Canadian gold mining town of Yale.¹⁴ The last North American notice presently available for Peter B., in 1867, is in a voters roll for California.¹⁵ His final appearance in the records appears to be in 1872 where he is given as the father of a child born to a totally new wife (his wife's Christian names are given, but her surname is unknown) in a baptismal record from Agra, India.

In 1864, when he needed to prove his claim to his father's estate, Peter Brunton Whannell used a seal imprinted in the wax on legal correspondence, with the same heraldic details as the 1778 arms of "Peter Whannell alias Buchanan" of 1778, but with the motto rendered as *Nuncius Pacis* (see photo below, page 14). The use of this seal seems to imply that Peter Brunton Whannell, Colonel Peter Whannell (his father) his uncles George and John Buchanan Whannell and his grandfather Lieutenant Peter Whannell, were indeed descendants of that Peter Whannell who registered arms in 1778. Descendants of Peter Brunton Whannell are known to have lived in Australia but it has not yet been established whether any remain.¹⁶

Jewellers in the mid 1800's had available to them a book of family crests including the "Whannell alias Buchanan" crest with the motto given as *Nuncius Pacis*. These books of crests however did not show the full armorial achievements but only the crests and mottoes hence the particular interest in the seal with shield, crest and motto used by Peter Brunton Whannell in 1864. This has the full achievements, as granted in 1778, but the 19th Century spelling. Had he gone to the trouble, in far off California, of having a seal engraved

specifically for the purpose of proving he was his father's heir, and also heir to the Peter Whannell of c.1778?



Crest, with kind permission of James Morrow, Australia

Although seemingly much has been discovered about the descendants of “Peter Whannell alias Buchanan” and their quite colourful lives it is to be regretted that it is not possible to identify Peter Whannell of circa 1778 or his ancestors. Was he really a Buchanan or is this an alias in the sense only of “also known as Buchanan”? It is certainly the case that his probable descendants all used the surname Whannell rather than Buchanan and as indicated by extensive previous published research there is no reason yet apparent for considering “Whannells” - who in general can be shown to have been descendants of a Mac Gille Chonaill - to be in any sense “Buchanans”.

- ¹ See Lyon Register, vol. 1.
- ² R.N. Smart, *Biographical Register of the University of St. Andrews*, St. Andrews, 2004
- ³ Armigerous: entitled to bear (heraldic) arms.
- ⁴ see www.esd.co.nz/buchanan/body/peter.html It has been suggested that the crescents may be cadency marks for “the second son of a second son of a second son”. This possibility is not however likely to be valid in a Scottish context. It has also been suggested, perhaps more credibly, that these marks may represent an armigerous female ancestress possibly a Seton but much more probably an Edmonstone (see below). It has also been suggested that the motto and crest may allude to “Peter Whannell alias Buchanan” having been a clergyman although in a Scottish context this is not particularly likely. (private communications with Alastair Campbell of Airds

(Unicorn Pursuivant, 1986-2008), David Sellar (Bute Pursuivant, 2001-2008) and Steven Boardman, Dept of Scottish History, Edinburgh University). Presently it seems most probable that these three crescents gules are purely “decorative” and serve only to distinguish this particular coat or shield. Is there a possible comparison with the three mullets azure accompanying the black lion rampant on the MacMillan of MacMillan and Knap shield and .if so might this indeed be a “Whannell” armorial achievement rather than that of a Buchanan ?

- 5 The information given on this web site is claimed to be derived from published sources listed as J G Smith, *Strathendrick and its Inhabitants from Early Times*, Glasgow 1896 and J G Smith, *The Parish of Strathblane*, Glasgow 1896, together with the 1952 edition of Burke's *Landed Gentry*. Summarising what has been established to date gives the following picture.
 - (a) the “sable lion” form derived from the Royal Arms of Scotland seemingly came into use by the main line of Buchanan due to the second wife of Walter 12th of Buchanan having been Isobel daughter of Murdoch Stewart 2nd Duke of Albany.
 - (b) George 15th of Buchanan (d1561) was married to Margaret daughter of Sir Archibald Edmonstone 3rd of Duntreath (a possible source for the three crescent motif but why then were the arms not quartered in the usual manner ?)
 - (c) the main line of Buchanan of Buchanan ended with John 19th of Buchanan whose daughter Elizabeth married James Stewart of Ardvorlich sometime before 1680.
 - (d) the senior line of the Buchanans then became that of Arnprior through John 1st of Arnprior (d. 1547), the second son of Walter 14th of Buchanan.
 - (e) the possibility that the three crescents do indeed indicate “the second son of second son of a second son” might lead via John 1st of Arnprior to Walter Buchanan of Bochlyvie , the second son of Andrew 2nd of Arnprior. Unfortunately there are no male descendants of this Walter presently known to the author.
 - (f) a further area of confusion arises in the published sources since the believed younger brother of John 1st of Arnprior , Walter Buchanan 1st of Spittal may have been the son of Patrick the eldest son of Walter 14th of Buchanan rather than a younger brother of John 1st of Arnprior. If true this would make Walter a brother of George 15th of Buchanan and perhaps give him “2nd son “ status.
 - (g) looking at the male descendants of Walter 1st of Spittal we find Edward 5th of Spittal married to Helen daughter of Edmonstone of Balleum (a second Edmonstone link). It is also noticeable that Peter is used as a forename by the descendants of Walter 1st of Spittal but is generally not used by the other armigerous Buchanan families. Unfortunately once more the various Peters who might be considered as candidates for being “Peter Whannell alias Buchanan” do not appear to match up convincingly with the date for registration of his arms.
- 6 See www.nas.gov.uk, especially for GD112/52/612 and GD112/74/43 etc. Note also CS 271/29993, dated 1788, for a legal action “Ensign Peter Buchanan v James Aird jr. & another”; however this Peter, who never uses the surname “Whannell” appears to be a member of the Buchanan of Silverbanks family).

- 7 National Archives, L/Mil/9/36.
- 8 There is still a Whannell's Road in Madras (Chennai).
- 9 British Library, Mss EUR G107
- 10 Army List, 1847. The regimental archives at Halifax Museum have full career details.
- 11 *Illustrated London News*, 8th. June 1861, refers to his will and testament.
- 12 National Archives, W.O. 31/207. Peter Whannell, senior, was first commissioned on 3rd Sept. 1794 into a New Independent Company of Foot, commanded by a Henry Short, but disbanded in 1796. By 3rd Sept. 1801 he was in the 3rd. Independent Company of Invalids at Plymouth. On 18th April 1895 he was promoted Lieutenant in the 9th Veteran Battalion. He retired on full pay of the 12th Royal Veteran Battalion.
- 13 She was the daughter of the late Thomas Blake, of the Irish family of Blake of Menlo, co. Galway.
- 14 A colourful description of him emerges through his activities in relation to an incident known as "McGowan's War" of 1858, discussed on various web sites.
- 15 See web sites on "Foreign born Voters of California".
- 16 Records show that P.B. Whannell had at least two sons. One, Peter George Alexander Samuel Whannell, a butcher in Melbourne, died in January 1891, aged 46, leaving a brother (George Arthur) and a son (Arthur Henry Whannell, aged 21 in 1891). His death certificate describes Peter G.A.S. Whannell's father as a "Colonel in the U.S. Army"!

Newton upon Ayr: An Effective Democracy

by Ralph Stewart

In 1791, as a contribution to the first *Statistical Account of Scotland*, the Reverend William Peebles wrote an account of the parish of Newton upon Ayr, the community opposite Ayr and just north of the river (extracts of 1775 and 1818 maps will be found on pages 38 and 39). He describes its late medieval origins, and the pattern of agriculture and governance that still persisted. Initially all the householders were "Freemen of Newton", a title that went from father to son, and by 1600 the number was settled at 48. These elected a governing Council of nine, including two Baillies -- one of these was senior but there was no official Provost -- and a Treasurer. All Freemen had access to the Treasurer's accounts and as a body would frequently be consulted on important or difficult decisions. A separate Committee managed Kirk affairs, but was also responsible to the "Community" (Freemen).

Each Freeman had a lot of about four acres, originally re-distributed about every seven years but latterly much less frequently -- it was made 57 years in 1771 -- and access to the common grazing land of about 150 acres. Some were also fishermen. The town got income through two turnpikes, a mill, and the rent of land for rope-works, shipbuilding, and some other small-scale industries. (There was also, though Peebles does not mention it,

income through various “customs”, charges for many activities within the town, such as selling meal and slaughtering cattle. The person who “farmed” the custom - normally a freeman - paid the Town a set amount for the year and then collected the fees, obviously trying to make a profit on the difference. So the customs provided both Town income and an opportunity for individuals. They were roused off to the highest bidder each year.) Finally, a fairly large coal mine paid a substantial rent, annually or as a fee per ton.

Peebles has some reservations about how Newton operated. There were too many ale houses - 12, in addition to retailers of ale. Decision making could be slow: “of late, little or nothing has been done without taking the sense of the freemen ... [b]ut this is sometimes a hindrance to business.” He may well be thinking of delays in repairing the manse and raising the minister’s salary: such decisions were usually passed on to the Freemen, and they could be tight-fisted. And the salary itself, at £75 plus manse and glebe seemed to him small. Yet overall he gives a decidedly positive impression of the Town and its system of government. Even when one adds the important qualification that the families of the Freemen, still perhaps half the population in 1750, would have shrunk to a sixth or less by 1790 because of immigration, Newton still had a remarkably democratic system, rivalled by neighbouring Prestwick but otherwise most unusual for the 18th Century, in Scotland or anywhere else.

The Community minutes record that in October 1791 Peebles received a letter from the organiser of the *Statistical Account*, Sir John Sinclair, thanking him for his submission but asking some additional questions. Peebles’ account duly appeared in the *Statistical Account* but followed by a contrasting, negative appraisal, presumably by Sinclair. Newton has, he says: “in theory, the purest and best republican system, anywhere to be met with” based on “generous principles of equality and independence.” But this is an illusion and “the freemen were, in no respect, superior to the inhabitants of other little boroughs.” They are badly educated and some illiterate, they do not look after their poor, and their agriculture is “about a century behind other towns in point of improvement.” They hold a lot of land in common, it is unenclosed, and the arable land is “kept constantly in tillage”. Sinclair may be suggesting here that they do not practice rotation of crops.

A negative view of the government of Newton also appears in the standard twentieth-century *History of Ayr* by John Strawhorn (Edinburgh, 1989). “From all this it is obvious that business at Newton Council meetings was minimal, except when there were negotiations with coal, gas, shipbuilding, or railway companies. The Town Clerk is reputed to have prepared the minutes of most meetings”. And any decisions were made in Cuthbert’s tavern (p.166). This makes the Council meetings sound farcical, though one might question the exceptions listed (coal, gas etc.) which sound major. Strawhorn is admittedly dealing with a later period, after the Reform Act of 1832, and a check of his source, J.M. Ferguson’s *Auld Ayr* (1884) suggests it is the 1860s and he is focussing on the Kirk Committee; but there is no indication in either book that Newton’s administration has declined from the past. Ferguson’s account is dismissive of the Committee partly because of its members’ social positions: “shopkeepers, weavers, carters, and men possessed of properties - small properties of course” (p.19). Strawhorn seems to echo this view, and perhaps does not allow sufficiently for Ferguson’s humorous tone: for example, his claim

that ALL the twelve members of the Kirk Committee slept through each sermon is probably not meant to be taken literally.

So how effective were the Newton Town Council and Committee of Freemen? They lost many of their powers after the Reform Act of 1832, and may even have become as irrelevant as Ferguson suggests; but before then Newton was, or appeared to be, one of Scotland's very few part-democracies, run by "shopkeepers, weavers, carters" and indeed a large number of unskilled labourers and fishermen. Its operation deserves a closer look. I want here to focus on the decade before Peebles and Sinclair made their analyses, from about 1780, but will begin with a very brief history and explanation of how things stood in that year. A medieval citizen who came back from the dead would probably not have noted much change by the earlier 1700s: the Town still consisted of one broad street with a stream running down the centre, powering the mill which stood, inconveniently, in the middle of the street at the south end. The houses might be better built than four centuries earlier, but would still be mainly one-story cottages, each with a very long and narrow strip of ground behind them. However, very great changes were underway from about 1750, and the Town's population went from about 500 to about 1700 people by the time of Peebles' report.

The earliest records go back only to 1585, but make clear that Newton had then existed for some time, probably from the early 1300s. In 1469, a Crown decree forbade elections in the Scottish burghs and settled power on the wealthier merchants rather than the craftsmen, and this system was fairly successfully imposed on the larger burghs over the next century. But Newton was small enough to be under the radar - there were no well-off merchants there - and in 1595 the townspeople procured a charter from the King to reassert what they regarded as ancient rights and independence. However, this was not a successful manoeuvre, and throughout the seventeenth century they were largely under the sway of the local magnate, Wallace of Craigie, whose castle was on the border of the settlement. In the earlier 1700s, a Wallace appears less frequently at the Town Council and is less obviously influential, and after the 1740s they are almost absent. There is a very late claim by Sir Thomas Wallace to being the "superior" of Newton in 1773, but this seems to have been successfully seen off, with the aid of the charter of 1595. At least from the mid 18th Century, the Town was fairly independent.

The next main development of the 18th Century was the discovery of coal. There had been mines nearby as early as 1529 (in Alloway) and by at least 1729 there were colliers in St. Quivox, on Newton's eastern border (Strawhorn). By 1760 Newton Town Council had decided to initiate a search within the parish, by contracting out, and four years later they began raising subscriptions, planning to begin drilling when they reached 100 pounds. The search was to be "in any part" of the township - which was, at most, a mile by a mile and a half - and damages were to be paid if arable land was affected. In the event, it took some years to find coal and begin to cope with water flooding the mine; and a 19-year "tack" awarded in 1767 to a merchant from the Gorbals did not produce much, as he went bankrupt. There are no clear indications of mining operations till into the seventies, and then there were continuous problems. Meantime, population had more than trebled with

incomers, some of whom were indigent. Newton was changing fast, and the problems of administering it were considerable.

It is true, as Sinclair alleges, that many of these administrators, the Freemen of Newton, were illiterate. In August 1788, twelve male feuars, all probably Freemen, were required to sign their names. Two managed only an approximation of their initials, and five others wrote in shaky hands that suggest their names may be the only words they can manage (though this conclusion is, of course, arguable). Yet it does not follow that they were therefore incapable of making good decisions about running the Town: historically, many successful people have been unable to read or write. And there was a large number of literate people available, apparently including most of the Council, to deal with documents such as charters and contracts. Moreover, education did receive attention: a Town school is mentioned several times in the Council minutes - in 1787 the schoolmaster's income was raised - and there were other schools in Newton, in addition to those in nearby Ayr. Most of the next generation would be literate.

Sinclair says that "no funds were allotted for the maintenance of the poor brethren", but this is incorrect. By "brethren" he may mean Freemen and their families, but these were in fact provided for: a widow kept her late husband's "dale" - a portion of land with other rights attached, such as the common grazing - and worked this or rented it out; or else, in lieu of the dale, she could accept an annual payment for life from the Town. Other poor within the parish were supported from Church funds, as Peebles mentions. There was no specific fund for the poor, but this is a merely technical point, and was true of almost all parishes in Scotland. Certainly the numbers and needs of the poor were increasing -- there were some bad harvests in the decade and Peebles speaks of "the constant influx of beggars from Ireland" - and there are slightly later records of the Council arranging to hand out meal and coal directly.

The agricultural system was backward, "about a century behind other towns" Sinclair says. But being traditional does not necessarily mean being inefficient. It is almost a truism that the old system of rotating small pieces of land from one farmer to another, often every year, was very bad; because there was no incentive to improve what would not stay in one's possession. But this verdict might be queried in specific cases: a Freeman of Newton who neglected his land would be disapproved of by the others, many of whom would be relatives, and strong social pressures would probably be exerted on him; indeed, the Town had the power of revoking a Freeman's "rights" though this seldom or never happened. (They might, though, refuse to pass on a "Freedom" to an incumbent's son, if the son seemed unsuitable.) In any case, the period between rotations was never less than seven years, and became 57 in 1771 - about two working lifetimes. Sinclair also objects that "a considerable tract of ground, belonging to [the Freemen], remained in common", which was indeed the case, about 150 acres of grazing. Moreover, it was unenclosed until a boundary wall was erected in 1790.

Yet, again, one might question the conventional wisdom: unenclosed farming could be efficient. There were strict regulations about how many and what kind of animals each Freeman could allow to graze on the common, and also about tethering, to prevent overgrazing or straying animals. And the Town employed a herd. So even before the wall

was erected, there was probably no disadvantage in having agricultural land “open” (unenclosed). Sinclair also complains that it is “kept constantly in tillage”, which is significant if he means there was no rotation of crops. But Peebles account suggests that there was, and indeed that the Township made considerable improvements to the land: swamps had been drained, and an overall plan of the parish made “some time ago”. And the Town minutes suggest a lot of organised effort to spread dung and seaweed over arable land.

Newton’s farming methods seem potentially quite sound, then, and they did apparently work: the Town was relatively - for the period - prosperous, and had surplus resources which were allowing it to move into the industrial age. It should be acknowledged that, largely for this reason, Sinclair’s criticisms were applied to a dying system. The commons were being repeatedly encroached on to give each Freeman more private land, and the next redistribution of dales, in 1829, was effectively the final one - for 999 years.

The Town Council met, on average, about once a month, though there could be several meetings close together if business demanded it; the whole Community met in most months. There were various routine tasks to supervise, such as street cleaning and dredging the “drain” that powered the mill, the latter costing 19 pounds yearly in 1782. When a “freedom” became vacant, usually by death, its re-allotment had to be decided on. If there were a surviving son or son in law this was usually- not always - straightforward, but otherwise the Council had to choose who was suitable. From time to time the guiding rules were adjusted, and Freedoms were increasingly often auctioned off; the usual price (auction or otherwise) was about £90 by the end of this period, though a fisherman might earn only about £15 a year). The Customs had to be roused, from major ones where the office holder charged on all sales of meal, or beer, or cattle, to minor ones such as the right to crop grass from “roads and avenues”- for 7 shillings in 1783. Additionally various proposals to rent land for industrial purposes had to be negotiated and approved.

The Town laws were quite frequently challenged, as when the butchers were contumacious about accounting for all the cattle slaughtered, on which they had to pay tax. But in general the laws seem to have been successfully enforced. “Liners”, who marked out property lines, were appointed each year, and were also “cess takers”, involved in assessments for taxes. There were property regulations which, for example, in 1790 stopped James Todd building a house “illegally”, which encroached three feet on the Commons, and blocked the footpath to the shore. There is the same sense of town planning when the Council - often calling in the opinion of the Community - decided whether to rent Town land for industry, such as rope-works, iron works, and shipbuilding, and if so on what terms. They not only bargained for a good financial deal, but also considered the possible effects on neighbours and the Town generally. A blacksmith’s yard had to be sited to minimize fire damage; a new “wagonway” for coal must not intrude on an existing rope-works (Council Minutes, May 1788).

It was an era of new public works and buildings. The Commons were enclosed by a wall (though they were soon to be divided up) and the Town roads were being gradually paved. A church was built in the mid 1770s and a manse in the late 1780s. (There were intermittent negotiations with the minister on how much the Town would pay for additions to the manse that were not in the original plan.) Plans were made to remove and rebuild the

mill, which inconveniently blocked the main street: there was some years delay because of unfulfilled hopes that Ayr would pay for this, as part of the new road system entailed by the new bridge, but tenders were finally received in 1793. And a new “steeple, Town House, and market house”, necessary because the old one was ruinous, was some time in the planning but completed in 1794. While it was being built, the Town decided to raise the height of the steeple, at extra cost, and afterwards, in 1795, to add a bell and clock: these are presumably signs of increasing affluence.

Council and Community seem to have handled these tasks capably. Projects were normally put out to tender (though latterly there was a strong preference for the local stonemason responsible for earlier projects, James Neill) and proposals were examined in detail, especially after an offer had been conditionally accepted, to make sure there was agreement on exactly what was to be done. Final payment was not made without thorough inspection, and financial arrangements could be somewhat complex. James Neill was to be paid half the cost of the additional steeple when it was three feet high, and the balance six months after he completed the full eight feet. In the event, he offered to pay six months interest if paid immediately, and that was accepted. Inspections of completed work seem to have been thorough. For example, when the wall round the Commons was checked in May 1790 by a committee of three, they found it deficient in height, as a sinkage of 6 inches should be expected, and slightly deficient in thickness. The Council ordered the wall to be heightened, the committee's estimate being that it would take two men eight day's work, and “will consider” if the thickness needs attention. There is an impression of competence here. It was actually to the Council's advantage that their community included workmen with hands-on knowledge of stonemasonry and most other trades.

The most serious issues of the decade before Peebles' report, in terms of time, worry and finance, concerned coal mining. In 1780 John Campbell, by then sole tack holder, wanted to renew: the Town were prepared to agree if he paid half the rent owed and gave security for the other half (Community Book). But Campbell then had a dispute with the colliers, production ceased, and he failed to pay the coal rents due - and went bankrupt. Some of the miners tried several times to destroy the mine machinery, which the Town had paid for, and by June 1782 its finances “were in very considerable distress” (Community Book). It was also being sued by Campbell's creditors' for the value of the machinery, but in 1784 the Town won the legal case, establishing that the machinery belonged to it and not Campbell. It then made strenuous efforts to bring in a new consortium to work the pits, and in 1786 production resumed. But even after this, there were some serious differences with the new tacksmen, Beaumont and Taylor. In 1790 the Town were concerned that coal output was decreasing sharply and “very much without satisfactory reasons” (Council Book, 30 April) and they must inspect the mine. There were also disputes over late payment of the coal rent, and the amount to be paid: in August 1791 (Council Book) the Town got a legal judgment preventing the Coal Company from unilaterally paying less. On the other hand, it sometimes found itself having to defend the Company against charges that they had mined on land outside the parish.

However, with some partial exceptions which will be considered shortly, none of these difficulties were self-inflicted: in general, the Council's negotiations seem to be

sensibly conducted and its decisions rational. Faced with legal battles, it tried, and frequently succeeded, in settling out of court, and had a fairly good record on what it did defend. The terms of the coal agreements were worked out in detail, including - for example - the arrangements for compensating Freemen whose arable land was affected by the mining. Each year, a committee reporting to the Council and Community, assessed damages, and these were almost invariably accepted.

The constitutional procedure was that all important decisions by the Council, such as who would be awarded a vacant Freedom and the long-term leases for various small industrial sites, had to be ratified by the Community. This was far from automatic or unanimous. The records often note if motions passed by a "majority" or a "great majority" and sometimes give numbers: in Sep 1781 a request for an acre of land to set up salt pans, for £20 down and £1 yearly, was passed by 12 votes. Perhaps oddly, an analogy with the British House of Lords suggests itself, but the Community of Freemen was probably a more effective second chamber of judgment than the peers. When the Council narrowly voted against the terms of a "tack" for land for a rope-works, 19 years at £12 a year, the Community voted to accept it if the Tacksman paid an additional £10 up front. This was probably a reasonable compromise decision, acceptable to the majority of both Council and Community.

Exceptions test the rules, and the infrequent cases where the two committees seriously disagreed are worth considering. The pursuit of coal involved a great deal of spending and, understandably, the Council seems to have acquired the habit of approving comparatively large outlays without checking with the other Freemen. In Nov 1775 a petition that no more than £3 could be spent without formal approval by the Community was passed by "a very considerable number of votes". Ten years later, three of the Council failed to attend several meetings, despite being "legally warned" and were fined 1s sterling twice, the second time with the threat of taking away their Freedoms if they remain "contumacious". There is obviously an underlying dispute here. One of the men, William Hunter, was described as the Collector of the Seat Rents of the Kirk, and there seemed to be some disagreement about his accounts, and about how far the Kirk Committee -- of which Hunter was automatically a member -- could operate independent of the Council: this came to the boil again a decade later. It was an important issue as the Kirk Committee handled a great deal of business.

The third dispute arose from a legal case. In June 1782, when coal mining had ceased and the Town was financially distressed, William Muir offered to take the pumps and "wood" out of the mine (presumably for safe-keeping; perhaps, in extremis, for resale) for £20, and the Council minutes say that this was agreed. Either for this work, or some done later, he was unpaid and sued the Town: the total bill, with interest and expenses, had reached over £77 by April 1789. This came as an unpleasant surprise to the Community and apparently the majority of the Council, who were emphatic that the Town had never employed Muir; they may mean that he was to have been paid by the coal company. It emerged that Muir had received letters from Robert Alexander, a Bailie, and also responsible for collecting the coal rent of 6d a ton, and the Town Clerk (James Ferguson, a

writer from Ayr, and an ancestor of the later James Ferguson who wrote on Newton) and these indicated that he was working for the Town.

Most Freemen were angry about this, arguing that Alexander and Ferguson had acted without Town approval and should be liable for the consequences of what they had done, and should therefore be sued for the expenses - though this threat was not carried out. There were, however, disagreements about Ferguson's bills, some probably connected with this case: a "most enormous account" of £104 19s. A year later the Town were able to conclude an agreement via his son for £45. The immediate effect of the affair was constitutional change, made in April 1789. "The Community having taken into their serious consideration that hitherto the Magistrates of the Borough have been left too long in office and that the consequences are dangerous" required annual (instead of bi-annual) elections, and limited the terms of bailies and treasurer to two years, though someone might be junior and then senior bailie for a total of four years.

In at least two of these three cases, then, and perhaps the third, the Community were reining in the Council and requiring them to act in accordance with the majority of Freemen's wishes. This is democracy at work, which might be seen as a major virtue in itself, and it also seem to impose fiscal responsibility. When the governing system of Council and Community is challenged by difficult situations, it generally copes well, and where there are deficiencies the Freemen are capable of making suitable adjustments.

Six Ayrshire Agricultural Medals

by G Michael Hitchon

Recently six 19th Century silver medals have come to our attention. The oldest is 1½" (34 mm) in diameter, in a silver mount with a suspension ring in order for it to be worn from a watch chain. It is engraved as follows: *Presented by Alexander Watt Esq. Glenleitch for Senior Ploughmen. Gained by Mr. Peter Gemmell High Todhill March 1858.* The reverse bears the engraving *Same Day for Junior Ploughmen 3rd Prize and Best Break.* This seemed unusual and stimulated a research visit to the Carnegie Library, Ayr, where a full explanation was found in the *Ayr Advertiser*, Thursday 25th March 1858, page 5:

"PLOUGHING MATCH AT FENWICK. A number of the well-wishers of Mr Alexander Watt,¹ Glenleitch, having resolved on giving him a day's ploughing, met for the above purpose, on Thursday the 18th. The weather was rather unfavourable in the morning, but ultimately the day was fine, and the different lots when finished really reflected great credit on the ploughmen, and the progress of agriculture in the parish. Altogether, there were fourteen ploughs in the field. Some of the prizes not having been competed for at the Parish General Competition,² judges were appointed on the present occasion, and the prizes distributed.

The following gentlemen were judges:- Robert Hay, Midbuiston; David Muir, Busitonhead; Robert Cuthbertson, Toponthank. The prizes were awarded as follows:-

For the best Ploughman above 50 years of age, Silver medal by Alexander Watt - to Peter Gemmell, Todhill.

For the best Ploughed Lot - 1st, David Dunlop, ploughman to Mr Gemmell, Todhill; 2^d, John Calderwood, ploughman to Hugh Calderwood, Blackbyre; 3^d, Peter Gemmell, Todhill; 4th, William Smith, servant to W. Wallace, Oldhall; 5th, Andrew Fulton, servant to Robert Young, Mossie; 6th, David Boyd, servant to David Dickie, Gainhill; 7th, Robert Watt, ploughman to Alexander Watt, Glenleitch.

Best Break - Peter Gemmell

Best Finish - David Dunlop, ploughman to P. Gemmell, Todhill.

Abundant refreshments were served during the day by Mrs Watt, to all who chose to partake of her kind hospitality. In the evening a number of gentlemen - Mr Watt's well-wishers - sat down to tea, and enjoyed a few hours of uninterrupted harmony and enjoyment. Mr Alexander Watt ably performed the duties of the chair, Mr Peter Gemmell those of croupier.³ A vote of thanks to the chairman, Mr Watt, for his uniform kindness and hospitality during the whole proceedings. Replied to by Mr Watt, in a few lines of extempore poetry:-

*Beneath a lowly roof of straw,
Did I the vital air first draw,
Sae neither gossiping nor mirth
Attended on my humble birth.
I've met wi' mony hairbreadth 'scapes
In mony strange and fearful shapes.
Ah! Me, but mortals little think
How aft they're near the fatal brink.
Ance in a pond my harns⁴ were soaked;
By a brither schoolboy nearly choked -
A vicious horse me sairly kicked,
A surly bull me nearly sticked;
But Providence aye brought relief,
To work some guid, or mair mischief.*

Extra prize given by Mr John Arrol - a Hymn Book for the use of the U.P. Church, gained by Mr George Dunlop, Midland, as being well ploughed, and first finished. The meeting separated at an early hour, much delighted with the whole proceedings, "happy to meet, sorry to part, and happy to meet again." Donors - Mr John Sinclair, Fenwick; Mr McClean, coach-builder; Mr Stewart, hardware merchant; Mr Carstairs, Kilmarnock."

The second silver medal was also won by Peter Gemmell, and must have been highly treasured by him. It has a diameter of 2" (50 mm), and is in a double-reeded silver mount with suspension ring. The inscription reads; Presented by the President to the Members of the Stewarton &c. Cattle Show for the Best AYRSHIRE DAIRY COW. Bred and Reared by the Exhibitor. To be Gained Three Successive Years by the same Competitor. Meikle Corsehill 6th May 1852. Gained by Mr Peter Gemmell April 1860.

Local cattle shows were, like ploughing matches, an important element in the drive for agricultural improvement through the 19th Century. During two weeks in mid-May 1860 the *Ayr Advertiser* covered cattle shows in Beith, Carrick, Coylton, Dalry, Dalrymple, Dundonald, Dunlop, Fenwick, Galston, Kilbirnie, Kilmarnock, Kilwinning, Ochiltree and Stair as well as that at Stewarton, which was reported in the paper for Thursday, 10th May 1860, page 3:

“STEWARTON CATTLE SHOW. The annual show of stock, open to the parishes of Stewarton, Dunlop, Fenwick, Kilmaurs and Dreghorn, took place at Stewarton on Thursday the 26th ultimo. There was a good display of milk stock, while some of the other classes were not so numerously represented as on some previous occasions. The judges - Messrs Aiton, Craigend; Parker, Broomlands, and Pollock, Muirhouse -

Class 1. A Silver Medal given by the late Mr Mackie for the best Ayrshire dairy Cow bred and reared by the exhibitor, to be gained three successive years by the same competitor - Peter Gemmell, Todhill, Fenwick. There were 23 classes and Peter Gemmell went on to win a total of six more prizes: Class 2, Aged Cow, in Milk, 1st; Class 5, Aged Cow, in calf, 3d; Class 7, Aged Cow, in Calf or milk, bred and reared by exhibitor, 3d; Class 10, Three best Cows, of any age, bred and reared by exhibitor, 1st; Class 13, Aged Bull, 2d; Class 23, 5s by Mr Dunlop, Magbiehill, for the best Mare or Gelding, fit for saddle or harness.”

In the 1851 Census, Peter Gemmell, aged 54, was living at High Todhill, a farm of 135 acres, with his wife, Janet Orr, 61. Also at High Todhill were David Dunlop, 25, described as son or son-in-law, who may have been Janet Orr’s son by a previous marriage, and Janet’s sister Mary, aged 54, and recorded as deaf. Peter Gemmell died on 29th October 1882, aged 79, and was buried in Fenwick Kirkyard, alongside Janet, who had died on 20th May 1872⁵. He was clearly a very fine ploughman, and was often called upon to act as judge: additionally he must have been an excellent breeder of Ayrshire dairy stock⁶.

The next three medals were all won by a ploughman, James Seton, and the story of each success is recorded in the *Ayr Advertiser*.

In the paper for Thursday, 24th January 1878, we learn that “[t]he Monkton Annual Ploughing Match was held on the farm of Brocket, possessed by Mr Sloan, on Saturday last. The morning being fine, 15 ploughs turned out to compete for the various prizes. Mr & Mrs Sloan’s liberality were bountifully extended to judges, committee, ploughmen and visitors. The judges, Messrs Bone, Sanquhar, St Quivox; Neill, Doura, Tarbolton, and James Torrance, Jeanfield, Symington, after a careful examination, awarded the prizes as follows: - Senior Ploughmen - 1, £1, the Messrs Crawford’s medal and the Highland Society’s medal - James Seton, ploughman to Mr Howie, Orangefield Mains.” The medal presented by the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland is 1.2” (30 mm) in diameter, and engraved *To James Seton Orangefield Mains For Ploughing 1878* (Photo 1, page 26). Seton also won, for the best break, a shirt presented by William Campbell, draper in Ayr.

The *Ayr Advertiser* of Thursday, 2nd February 1888 reported that “[t]he annual ploughing match, under the auspices of the Kilmarnock Farmers’ Society, came off on Friday on the farm of Struthers, kindly granted by Mrs Sturrock. Forty ploughmen turned

out, and the ground being in capital condition the ploughing was of a very high order. The first prize in both the junior⁷ and senior classes was won by James Ferguson, Clune, Tarbolton. The following gentlemen acted as judges, and their decisions gave general satisfaction - for ploughing Messrs David Dunlop, Grassmillside, Kilmaurs; James Chalmers, Peasehill, Kilwinning; Robert Smith, Shields, St Quivox.” James Seton, ploughing for Thomas Donald, Fardalehill, Kilmarnock, came 9th in the senior class, winning 5s, but in the class restricted to the parish of Kilmarnock, came first, and won a silver medal. This is a finely engraved medal showing a pair of horses ploughing with the legend Kilmarnock Farmers Society above and 1888 below (Photo 2, page 27). On the obverse it has *Parish Medal for Ploughing Won by James Seaton Fardlehill Kilmarnock*. It is 2” (50 mm) in diameter, in a finely detailed mount with lion rampant holding a sword, with suspension ring and bearing the mark (J.C.) of J. Cameron & Son, of Kilmarnock, a top class firm of jewellers.



Photo 1: The Highland Society’s medal for ploughing, 1878.

Seton’s third medal was won in 1890, again at the annual ploughing match of the Kilmarnock Farmers’ Society, reported in the *Ayr Advertiser* of Thursday, 30th January 1890: “The annual ploughing match under the auspices of the Kilmarnock Farmers’ Club took place on Friday in a field on the farm of Holmes, tenanted by Mr James Morton. There were 33 competitors, as compared with 36 last year, and 40 in 1888. The frost which set in on Thursday morning, though only of brief duration, no doubt militated to some extent against the turnout at the match. The ground, however, was in very good condition, and the ploughing as a whole was satisfactory” This year Seton, then at East Raws, finished 8th, but again came first in the competition confined to the parish, winning 5s and a silver medal. Thus is a very handsome cased silver medal, again by J Cameron & Son. It is inscribed *Awarded to James Seton, East Raws for Best Ploughing in Kilmarnock Parish 1890 Kilmarnock Farmers Society*. In relief are the coat of arms of Kilmarnock with its flanking pair of rampant squirrels, two thistles and the words *J Cameron Confido Kilmarnock*. The obverse bears a rural scene in high relief showing a horse, bull, cow, sheep, pig, cock, hen and goose (or duck), with a thatched cottage, its garden and a church spire in the background

(Photo 3, page 28). It is 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (48mm) in diameter, and housed in a velvet and silk-lined case.



Photo 2; Kilmarnock Parish Medal for Ploughing, 1888

James Seton was clearly a ploughman who moved regularly between employers, and his ploughing skills would have made him a sought-after employee. He never, as far as can be ascertained, made the leap from employee to employer.

The final medal proved harder to trace, as it is a Highland Society medal similar to No.3, and engraved *To Robert Brown Jun' Dalgain For Ploughing 1882*. On this occasion the *Ayr Advertiser* of Thursday, 26th January 1882, provided the answer, with a report of the annual ploughing match on the Sorn and Dalgain estates. This took place on 18th January at Hillhead farm, Sorn, tenanted by Mr. Retson. There were 20 ploughs entered for the various competitions; Robert Brown won three classes (Best ploughed lot; Best over the crown; Best working plough) and was second in two other classes (Straightest ploughing; Straightest ploughing - seniors). "The ploughing was good. The day was fine, and every one and every thing went to make the whole affair pleasant to competitors and spectators, who took a keen interest in the day's proceedings. After the labours of the day and the prizes had been distributed to the various successful ploughmen, Mr Retson entertained the judges and some friends to a sumptuous tea, which was much enjoyed by all present, notwithstanding the talk about agricultural depression throughout the country."



Photo 3: Best ploughing in Kilmarnock Parish 1890

Kilmarnock Farmers' Society

The coda to that report from the *Advertiser* indicates that these competitions were not merely about ploughing, but were also an opportunity for the rural community to come together, providing a real service to bust people. The history of the tradition is touched on in an article in the *Advertiser* in early 1887:⁸

“With regard to ploughing matches Ayrshire seems to have been amongst the foremost counties, during the past century, in attempting by district and open competitions to stimulate and encourage a better system of ploughing. Amongst local Agricultural Associations none deserve more praise than the Kilmarnock Farmers’ Society for its laudable exertions in this direction. The Kilmarnock Farmers’ Society had been inaugurated and already (1800) the good effect of its ploughing matches and other competitions had been felt. As early as 1796 we find this society offering a premium to the ploughwrights of the district, and all expenses paid, ‘for the model of a mouldboard for a plow-reest’, as the minute book expresses it.” The following year, it was the turn of the Society itself to come under the paper’s scrutiny:

“Besides being the oldest local Farmers’ Society in Scotland, the Kilmarnock Farmers’ Society can also justly lay claim to be one of the most successful agricultural associations in the United Kingdom. Instituted nearly a century ago, its career has been one devoted to the best interest of the farming community. It is only within the last decade, however, that the society has come to the front rank with its cattle and horse show, usually held in April. Various reasons have been suggested for the remarkable success of the Kilmarnock show, among others that it comes opportunely as a test show, enabling exhibitors to gauge the merits of their stock in time for the other important shows at Glasgow, Ayr, &c. But we venture to think that there are other and quite as cogent reasons for the unprecedented strides the show has taken of late years. In the first place, the directors have shown commendable enterprise in offering substantial prizes; in short, they have year after year been doubling their

efforts in this direction until now the premiums offered are not far behind those of any of the larger shows. Another secret of the society's success has been the admirable way in which the society's affairs, financial and otherwise, have been managed. The hon. secretary, Mr Wilson, banker, and his assistant, Mr Tannahill, have been untiring in their efforts in this connection. Not a stone has been left unturned in their endeavours to raise the stature of the society, and to put its annual exhibition on an equality with other large shows.

"Those who took a walk around the show grounds at last Cattle Show, and saw the admirable arrangements - the gala appearance of the crowds, the erections and indeed everything connected with the exhibition - must have felt like a second Rip van Winkle, and wondered if he was really attending a Cattle Show in Kilmarnock, or in some other larger centre of population. In 1873 the whole revenue of the society was only £70 6s 6d, as compared with £421 7s 8d in 1887; in 1872 the whole entry money for stock at Cattle Show was only £14 0s 1d, as compared with £62 19s in 1887; in 1873 the whole amount collected at gate for admission to Cattle Show was £21 3s 4d, as against £151 17s 11d in 1887; in 1873 the whole amount given in prizes at Cattle Show was only £31 2s 6d, as compared with £239 7s in 1887; in 1873 the whole entries at Cattle Show only amounted to 170, with 29 classes, as against 716 entries in 1887, with 50 classes. We also note that during the same period, the revenue from members' subscriptions has been tripled."

Prizes at Ploughing Matches

Cash prizes were given for ploughing and for specific aspects of the skill; medals were awarded annually, as we have seen, for the best ploughing, and, again, for specific elements. These could, in some cases, as with Peter Gemmell (No.2), be won outright. Additional prizes were contributed by local businessmen, especially to the parish matches, and these were of a wide, and bewildering, variety. Some examples from matches in the late 1880s included bottles of brandy and whisky¹⁰, a scarf pin, a briar pipe, a silk handkerchief, a pocket knife, a silver Albert, a dandie brush, a pair of leggings, a pound of tobacco, a set of plough reins, a horse rug, a pair of braces, a clothes basket, a spade, an umbrella, a pair of slippers, one dozen cups and saucers, and a copy of Byron's poems. At Stewarton, the senior and junior winners received cloth, and at Fenwick, the overall winner's prizes included cloth for a pair of trousers.

Prizes were not always solely for ploughing ability; at Dundonald, as at Ochiltree, the man with the largest family received a piece of beef, but at Kirkmichael the man in the same position received a bag of potatoes, at Stewarton a cow's tongue and at Coylton, a pound of tea. Also at Coylton, the youngest married ploughman received a bottle of whisky, and a similar prize was on offer to the man who finished first (a strong incentive to speedy working), though the man who had been a total abstainer the longest received a pound of tea. Elsewhere prizes were given to the oldest bachelor, the longest in present employment and the easiest-going (Beith), and for the tidiest turn-out of horse and harness (a volume of Burns at Dreghorn; a Tam o' Shanter at Stewarton. At Prestwick there were four prizes for

the junior competitors - 1st, 7s and a currant bun; 2nd, 5s and a hairbrush; 3rd, 3s and a concertina; 4th, 1s and a hat.

The Glasgow Ayrshire Society

by Pamela McIntyre

The Glasgow Ayrshire Society was established in 1761. The aim of the Society was to bring together in a social capacity, natives of Ayrshire, or those with some form of connection, for charitable and benevolent purposes. Initially, the Society helped impoverished members of the Society or their widows. With the help of a £250 donation from Dr Walter Brechin of Glasgow, an Education Fund was founded in 1838. Its aims were to provide education to Ayrshire children in need of financial assistance. By 1868, this fund was supplemented by the Bursary Fund set up by William Brown, junior, Saltcoats, together with entry money and donations from members.

With increased funds and growing demands in 1871, the Society revised its constitution, formalised membership requirements, set up a Board of Directors to manage finances, and outlined duties of office bearers and meeting arrangements. A further Bursary system developed in the late 1870s to help Ayrshire students attend Glasgow University.

The introduction of free school education led to the merging of the Education and Bursary Funds in 1897. As the 20th century unfolded the qualification rules for aid were extended beyond members and by the 1980s projects supported by the Society expanded to include recreational, cultural or character-building activities. The constitution was revised accordingly in 1988. The present objectives of the Society continue to be to assist Ayrshire people, particularly the elderly and infirm, as well as providing support to Ayrshire students and charities.

Artefacts belonging to the Society include their 'Charter Chest' decorated with their beautiful crest which incorporates views of both Ayrshire coast and Glasgow, within which the "books, accounts and cash had to be kept". This chest must be credited for the survival and preservation of the Society's records, which were transferred to Ayrshire Archives in 2011.

The records are a fascinating record of Ayrshire people supporting those now living in Glasgow. They include petitions detailing the various reasons for hardship, for example, a John McLean, Cabinet Maker from Irvine, who had moved to Glasgow to find work, but had now fallen on hard times through "dullness of business". Those suffering ill health; those with large families; and the elderly were all considered and assisted. The Society was also a source of strength for other causes, and the archive includes a petition dated 1799 signed by its members petitioning for the foundation of Glasgow Royal Infirmary. The names include David Dale, Robert Tannahill, John Burns, Charles Tennant – indicating that the society attracted influential members, but also acting as a reminder as to how many Ayrshire people became a success due to the industrialisation centred around Glasgow.



Membership certificate 4th November 1761

The catalogue and records are available to view (reference: AA/DC/212) at the Burns Monument Centre, Kay Park, Kilmarnock. For further information, please contact Ayrshire Archives telephone 01292 521819 or email: archives@south-ayrshire.gov.uk

Membership of the Glasgow Ayrshire Society is open to all Ayrshire residents, for a one-off nominal fee. Please apply in writing to: The Secretary, 1 Bentinck Crescent, TROON KA10 6JN

- ¹ In 1858 Alexander Watt was 72 and his wife, Helen, 52. According to the Census of 1851, they lived at Glenleith with four children - William 16, Andrew 15, Helen 13 and Matthew 11, a house servant, and two general servants. The farm was 114 acres.
- ² It is possible that the Parish Ploughing Match was impeded by poor weather. While neither Ploughing Matches, nor the gift of a day's ploughing are unusual, the presentation of prizes at a day's ploughing is. A day's ploughing was usually given by his neighbours to an incoming tenant, as a means of extending a welcome: it is not clear why Watt was granted this honour. In view of his age, it seems possible that he was relinquishing the tenancy, and the day arranged in valediction.
- ³ Master of ceremonies
- ⁴ Brains

- 5 Her age is given as 75, which doesn't tally with that given in the 1851 Census.
- 6 His successes predate the origin, in 1877, of the Ayrshire Cattle Society Herd book.
- 7 It is not always clear what the distinction between junior and senior was, and it presumably varied from competition to competition
- 8 'A Century's Ploughing in Ayrshire', *Ayr Advertiser*, 3rd February 1887
- 9 'A Successful Farmers' Society', *Ayr Advertiser*, 26th January 1888
- 10 Unsurprisingly, at a time when the temperance movement was at one of its times of strongest influence, such prizes could cause controversy, so indicated by this letter to the *Ayr Advertiser* of 26th January 1888: Sir, I have read with interest and general approval the remarks of one of your correspondents on the unnecessary, and sometimes frivolous, multiplication of prizes at ploughing matches. I should like to enter a protest against one kind of prize which is almost uniformly included, and to engage against it, if possible, the sympathies of the agricultural community. I refer to the bottle of whisky or bottle of brandy that figures in your reports. Surely the temptations in the way of young ploughmen are sufficiently numerous without this additional one being presented in the character of a *prize*, and one does not need to adopt a teetotal position to say that the less they have to do with bottles of whisky and brandy the better for their ploughing and themselves. I am, sir, your obedt Servt., A FARMER'S SON.
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Rob's Book Club

Dane Love has contributed the following review:

A new book on the Covenanters has just been published by the National Museums of Scotland as part of their 'Scottie Books' series for children. Simply entitled *The Covenanters*, the book explains the complex topic for children of ages ten plus. The book is well-illustrated throughout with photographs, reproductions of paintings and engravings. At the back, there is an eight-page activity section, which has a word search, crossword, quiz, poets' corner, and activity where children are invited to design a Covenanter flag. Each double-page spread features one important aspect of Covenanting history, starting with a simplified account on 'Who were the Covenanters?' Some general history is given on seventeenth century religion in Scotland, and how it was governed, as well as details on Charles I's interference. There follows a series of short accounts of Covenanting history, including The Solemn League and Covenant, Montrose's campaign, Conventicles, Pentland Rising, etc. The book is described by the publishers as being suitable for home, school or Sunday school use. The book is a very attractive introduction to the story of the Covenanters. Even for adults who would like a very simple account of the period, it is concise and reliable. The author, Claire Watts, lives in Dumfries and Galloway and has already written many children's books.

The Covenanters is available from NMS Enterprises, Chambers Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1JF, or from www.nms.ac.uk/books The cost is £5.99 and it extends to 48 pages, paperback. ISBN—978 1 905267 38 5

A Lot o Genuine Folk and a Wheen o Rogues is the title of a new book from Stenlake Publishing which is based on transcriptions gathered during the 2009 Catrine Memories Project, as the subtitle - *True Stories of Catrine lives as told by the people who were there* - makes clear. Stenlake are, of course, well-known for their extension catalogue of illustrated local history books: they are based in Catrine, and this book, edited by Richard Stenlake himself, breaks new ground for them. It was the subject of a lengthy and welcoming review by Douglas Lockhart in the Summer 2012 edition of *Scottish Local History*. I think I can do little more than quote the final paragraph of Lockhart's review:

"There is little doubt that Richard Stenlake and the people of Catrine have created a very original book that is generously illustrated. The historical images of those involved in developing the cotton industry and the old black-and-white photographs of the community have been reproduced to a very high standard. A number5 of images are outstanding, such as a worker with her Singer sewing machine, the working environment in the New Mill, and many of the street views. The commentary is lively and informative and everyone involved in the compilation of the book deserves to be congratulated on their success. The text, unusually in white and yellow script on a blue background, may not be to everyone's liking but it is certainly distinctive.

A Lot o Genuine Folks and a Wheen o Rogues, Catrine, Stenlake Publishing, 2011. The cover price is £16.00, and it extends to 128 pages in the company's larger format. ISBN - 978 1840335 34 7.

The colourful professional darts player John Thomas (Jocky) Wilson (1950-2012), world champion in 1982 and 1989, was a Fifer, raised in Kirkcaldy. However, his paternal roots are amongst Ayrshire coal miners, and say something of both the transient nature of a collier's life, and the relationship between the Ayrshire and Fife coalfields.

Jocky's great great grandfather, John Wilson, was born about 1847. At the time of his marriage in 1869, to Margaret Harper, he was living at Craigmark, Dalmellington, and by 1880, he was living at Taiglum, Drongan. His wife, Margaret, died in 1887, by which time the family were living in Annbank. I have not yet traced John Wilson's death, though he was still alive in 1901.

John's son, James King Wilson (Jocky's great grandfather), was born at Taiglum in 1880. He was married, at Muirkirk, in 1901, to Annie Templeton, whose family lived in Linkyburn Square, Muirkirk. During the 1920s he seems to have moved to Fife, where new coal fields were being opened up, and he died at Methil in 1958.

James King Wilson's son (Jocky's grandfather) was born in Kames No. 2 Row, Muirkirk in 1903, but the family had migrated to Fife by the time of his marriage in 1927, and he died in 1951.

Diary of Meetings of Historical Societies

- AA Arran Antiquarians. Meetings in Brodick Public Hall, Brodick, at 2 p.m.
- AANHS Ayrshire Archaeological and Natural History Society. www.aanhs.org.uk
Meetings in Town Hall, Ayr, at 7.45 p.m.
- AMC National Trust for Scotland, Ayrshire Members Centre. Meetings in Education
Pavilion, Burns Cottage, Alloway at 7.30 p.m.
- ASA Alloway & Southern Ayrshire Family History Society. www.asafhs.co.uk Meetings
in Alloway Church Halls, Alloway, at 7.45 p.m.
- BHS Beith Historical Society. Meetings in Our Lady's Hall, Crummock Street, Beith at
8.00 p.m. (* 7.30 p.m.)
- CHS Cumbrae Historical Society. Meetings in Newton Lounge, Newton Bar, Millport at
7 p.m.
- DHS Dundonald Historical Society. Meetings in Dundonald Castle Visitors Centre,
Dundonald, at 7.30 p.m.
- EAFHS East Ayrshire Family History Society. www.eastayrshirefhs.org.uk Meetings in
Gateway Centre, Foregate Square, Kilmarnock, at 7.30 p.m.
- FBC Friends of Brodick Castle. Meetings at Brodick Castle, Brodick, at 2.30 p.m.
- FHS Joint Joint Meeting of Ayrshire Family History Societies. Gateway Centre,
Kilmarnock, at 7.30 p.m.
- KCCS Kyle and Carrick Civic Society. Meetings in Loudoun Hall, Ayr, at 7.30 p.m.
- KDHG Kilmarnock & District History Group. www.kilmarnockhistory.co.uk Meetings in
Kilmarnock College at 7.30 p.m.
- Largs HH LDHS Hakon Hakonsson Lecture. In Vikingar!, Largs at 8 p.m.
- Largs Jt Joint meeting of LDHS and LNAFHS. In St Columba's Session House, Largs at
7.30 p.m.
- LDHS Largs and District Historical Society. www.largsmuseum.org.uk Meetings in Largs
Museum at 7.30 p.m.
- L(MS) LDHS, Marine Section. Meetings in Largs Museum at 7.30 p.m.
- LNAFHS Largs & North Ayrshire Family History Society. www.largsnafhs.org.uk
Meetings in Largs Library, Allanpark Street, Largs at 7.30 p.m.
- PHG Prestwick History Group. Meetings in 65 Club, Main Street, Prestwick KA9 1JN, at
7.30 p.m.
- SHS Stewarton & District Historical Society. www.stewarton.org Meetings in John
Knox Church Hall, Stewarton, at 7.30 p.m.
- SWT Scottish Wildlife Trust: Ayrshire Members' Centre. Meetings in The Horizon Hotel,
Esplanade, Ayr KA7 1DT, at 7.30 p.m.
- TAFHS Troon @ Ayrshire Family History Society. www.troonayrshirefhs.org.uk
Meetings in Portland Church Hall, South Beach, Troon, at 7.30 p.m.
- WKCS West Kilbride Civic Society. Meetings in Community Centre, Corse Street, West
Kilbride, at 7.30 p.m.

August 2012

Mon 20 th	AA	Tom Rees	The Archaeology of Kilwinning Abbey
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September 2012

Mon 3 rd	SHS	Nigel Willis	Glasgow Necropolis
Mon 17 th	AA	Sue Furness and Fiona Jackson	The Lost Village of Morlaggan
Tues 18 th	TAFHS	Robert Faulkes	Census - Past and Present
Tues 18 th	ASA	Alan Sorenson	Addicted to Ancestors
Tues 18 th	SWT	Eric Scott	Land of Ice and Fire
Thurs 27 th	BHS	Robert Ferguson	Dalgarnen Mill

October 2012

Mon 1 st	SHS	Ian Matheson	The Scottish and Ayrshire Home Front in the Great War
Mon 1 st	KCCS	James Brown	Pilgrims' Way
Tues 2 nd	KDHG	Alex Lochrie	Never Too Old: The French Foreign Legion
Thurs 4 th	PHG	Tom F Cunningham	Buffalo Bill's Wild West in Scotland 1891-92 and 1904
Mon 8 th	CHS	Alex Hunter	The Greenock Blitz
Thurs 11 th	AANHS	Gordon Riddle	Cape Verde Islands - In Search of Kestrels
Thurs 11 th	EAFHS	John Hall	Personal Treasures
Mon 15 th	AA	Ian Marshall	The Battle of Langside
Tues 16 th	ASA	Chris Paton	Tracing Your Irish Ancestors on the Internet
Tues 16 th	KDHG	Jim Steel	Laigh Kirk Session 1643 to 1900
Tues 16 th	SWT	Jonny Hughes	Beyond Boundaries: The Future of Nature Conservation in Scotland
Thurs 25 th	BHS	Ian MacCrorie	Calmac
Thurs 25 th	AANHS	Derek Alexander	St Kilda
Tues 30 th	KDHG	Ian MacDonald	Belgian Refugees in Ayrshire during World War 1

November 2012

Thurs 1 st	PHG	Jean Lockley and Graham Humphreys	The Man who Made Glasgow
Mon 5 th	KCCS	Tom Barclay	Kilmarnock Troon Railway
Mon 5 th	SHS	Bill Fitzpatrick	The Beloved, The Damned and the The Forgotten - The Titanic, the Olympic and the Britannic
Thurs 8 th	EAFHS	Frank Donnelly	Sir Alexander Fleming
Thurs 8 th	AANHS	Fiona Watson	Taking Sides in the Wars of Independence
Mon 12 th	CHS	Iain Wilkie	Lichens and Industry

Tues 13 th	KDHG	Paula Williams	Putting Kilmarnock on the Map
Mon 19 th	AA	John Inglis	Arran - Heritage and Identity
Tues 20 th	ASA	Alastair Wham	Railway Ramblings
Tues 20 th	SWT	Andrew Jarrott	The Habitats and Wildlife of Galloway Forest Park
Tues 20 th	TAFHS	Irene O'Brien	Poor Law Archives from 1845
Thurs 22 nd	AANHS	Nat Edwards	The Darien Expedition
Tues 27 th	KDHG	Duncan Close	Sanquhar Post Office - The Oldest in the World

December 2012

Mon 3 rd	SHS	Stuart Wilson	Kilmarnock's Industries During World War 2
Mon 3 rd	KCCS	Amy Miller	Amaz'd and Curious - New Discoveries from Robert Burns Birthplace Museum
Thurs 6 th	PHG	David Rowan and Alisdair Cochrane	Sights and Sounds of Prestwick
Mon 10 th	CHS	Brian Boyd	History of Kilwinning Archers
Tues 11 th	KDHG	Allan Richardson	History of Beith Furniture

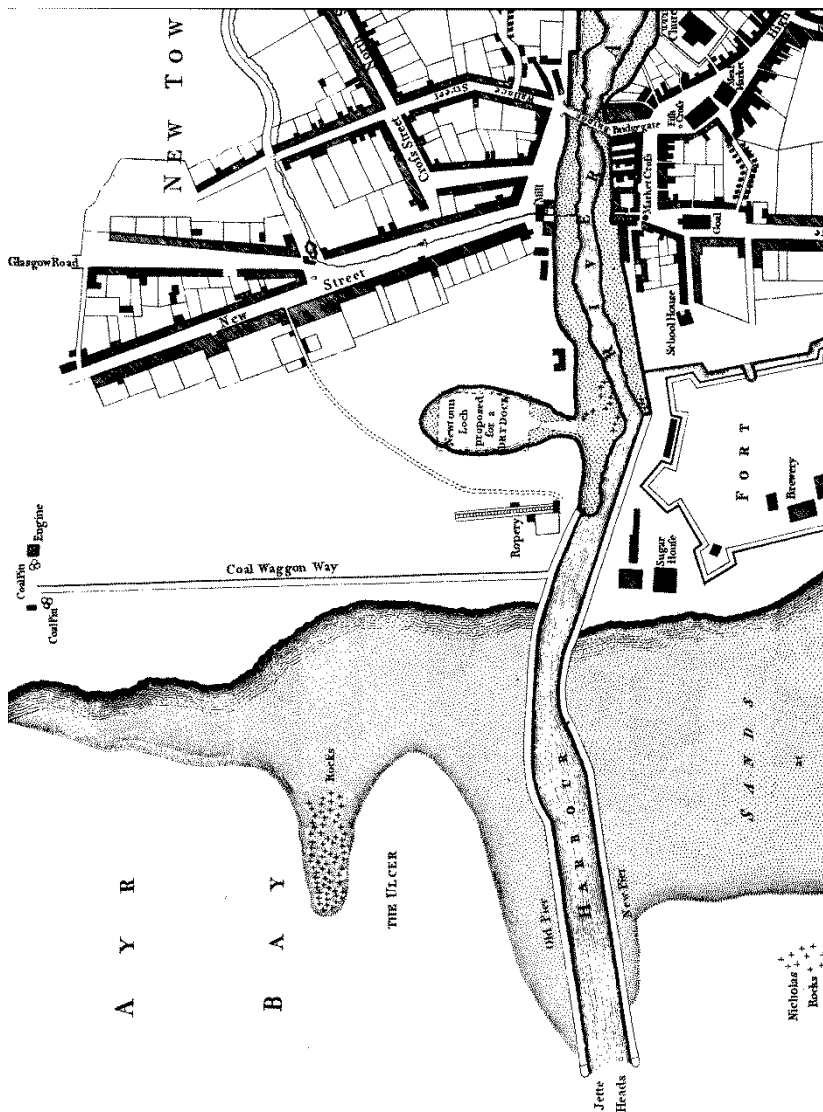
January 2013

Mon 7 th	KCCS	Irene McMillan	Dundonald Castle
Mon 7 th	SHS	Barbara Graham	Marie Curie: Her Life and Legacy
Tues 8 th	KDHG	Lawrence Wyper	Make it Kilmarnock
Thurs 10 th	EAFHS	Max Flemmich	Darvel Telegraph Museum
Mon 14 th	CHS	Alastair Chisholm	The Bicentenary of the Comet Paddle Steamer
Tues 15 th	ASA	Edwin Lawrence	All the Fun of the Fair
Tues 15 th	SWT	Ian Cornforth	Bats and Windfarms - Sorting the Facts from the Turbulence
Thurs 17 th	TAFHS	Chris Paton	Genealogy and Newspapers
Tues 22 nd	KDHG	Annie McLauchlan	Portencross Castle
Thurs 24 th	AANHS	Stephen J Reid	James VI
Thurs 31 st	BHS	George Kerr	The Lure of Steam

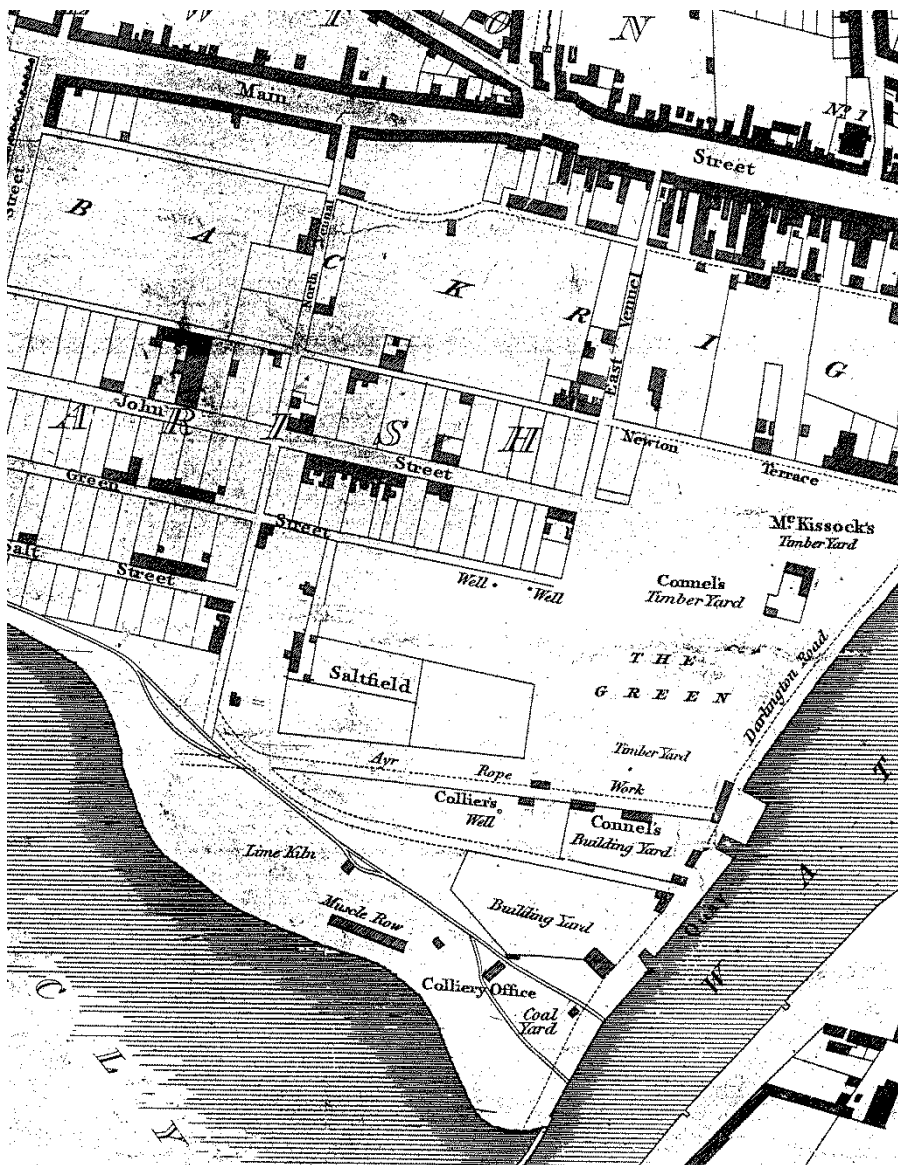
February 2013

Mon 4 th	SHS	Morag Smith	Womens' History and Heritage at the Glasgow Womens' Library
Mon 4 th	KCCS	John Rattenbury	Clyde Lighthouses
Tues 5 th	KDHG	Ian Matheson	In Search of El Dorado - the Spanish Conquistadors of the 16 th Century
Thurs 7 th	PHG	Alasdair J. Malcolm	Ayrshire Coastal Walk
Thurs 7 th	AANHS	Karen Bowie	Ayrshire and the Making of Union, 1707
Mon 11 th	CHS	Jean Leader	Lacemaking and Textiles
Tues 19 th	ASA	Gordon Thomson	Ayrshire's Railway Heritage
Tues 19 th	KDHG	Jim Boyle	A History of the Royal College

Tues 19 th	SWT	Roger Griffith	Galls; the Weird, the Wonderful and the Downright Peculiar
Thurs 21 st	AANHS	Cjris Rollie	Robert Burns in England
Thurs 21 st	TAFHS	Ian Kennedy	A Kirkcudbright Campbell in America
Thurs 28 th	BHS	Hugh Kerr	Diasporama
March 2013			
Mon 4 th	KCCS	Euan Terras	Rights of Way
Tues 5 th	KDHG	Jim Penman	The Genius of James Clark Maxwell
Thurs 7 th	AANHS	Philip Robertson	Marine Archaeology
Thurs 7 th	PHG	Members	Pot Pourri
Mon 11 th	CHS	Jim Grant	Scottish Maritime Museum
Thurs 14 th	FHS	Margo Graham	100 Years of Lace
	Joint		
Tues 19 th	KDHG	Norman Deeley	The Goatfell Murder
Tues 19 th	SWT	Carol Crawford and Natalie Fleming	t.b.c.
Thurs 21 st	TAFHS	Tom Barclay	The Franco-Scottish Wine Trade and Ayrshire Involvement
Thurs 28 th	BHS	Elaine McFarland	John Boyd Orr: Ayrshire Man and World Citizen
April 2013			
Thurs 4 th	PHG	John Kellie	Ayrshire Miscellany, Part Two
Mon 8 th	SHS	John Stevenson & Dan MacKay	Strang's Foundry, Hurlford
Thurs 11 th	EAFHS	Irene Hopkins	Belgian Refugees 1914-1919
Mon 15 th	CHS	Robert Ferguson	The Museum of Ayrshire Country Life and Costume
Thurs 25 th	BHS	David Donaldson	The Taiwan Aborigines
May 2013			
Thurs 2 nd	PHG	Members	Blether of 2013
Mon 13 th	SHS	Joyce Brown	Hamilton Palace



Part of 'New Town' from 'Plan of the Town of Ayr',
inset on Armstrong's *Map of Ayrshire*, 1775



Part of Newton upon Ayr from Wood's Map of the Towns Part of the Parishes of Ayr, Newton upon Ayr & Saint Quivox, 1818.

AANHS Publications

Publications of the Ayrshire Archaeological & Natural History Society (AANHS) are available from Ronald W. Brash MA, Publications Distribution Manager, 10 Robsland Avenue, Ayr KA7 2RW. Further information about the AANHS and its publications will be found on the society's website: www.aanhs.org.uk

37	Excavations in Ayr 1984-1987 (Perry), 140 pages (A4)	
37	Historic Troon and its surroundings, 40 pages	£3.00
36	Burns & the Sugar Plantocracy of Ayrshire (Graham) 124 pages	£6.00
35	The Masters of Ballantrae (Hunter) 30 pages	£4.00
33	Dr John Taylor, Chartist: Ayrshire Revolutionary (Fraser) 112 pages	£4.00
31	Tattie Howkers: Irish Potato Workers in Ayrshire (Holmes) 192 pages	£4.50
30	The Early Transatlantic Trade of Ayr 1640-1730 (Barclay & Graham) 104 pp.	£4.50
28	Historic Prestwick and its surroundings, 64 pages	£2.50
24	Historic Alloway, Village and Countryside: A Guide for Visitors	£2.00
20	Historic Ayr: A Guide for Visitors, 2nd ed.	£2.50
15	The Port of Ayr 1727–1780 (Graham)	£2.00
13	Tolls and Tacksmen (McClure)	£1.50
11	Robert Adam in Ayrshire (Sanderson, revised 2010)	£4.00
	Antiquities of Ayrshire (Grose, ed. Strawhornm revised 2010)	£4.00
	Armstrong's Maps of Ayrshire (1775: reprint, 6 sheets)	£12.00