

# The McPhersons of Portsoy, 1752-1926

## The Life, Times and Descendants of William McPherson and Elspet Duff

Reynold Macpherson, 25 January 2012



The earliest known artefact of the Portsoy McPhersons

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### Introduction

William McPherson and his wife Elspet née Duff are the earliest confirmed ancestors of the Sinclair Macphersons. William was probably born in 1752 in the nearby town of Banff and settled in Portsoy (see right, today). It is certain that he married Elspet Duff in 1800 and ended their days in Portsoy. He was a ‘flesher’ (butcher) and provided for a large family. At least four generations of their descendants lived in Portsoy, the last known to be alive in 1926. Many scattered. There are no McPhersons, Macphersons or MacPhersons living in Portsoy today, according to the White Pages. This chapter describes the life, times and known descendants of the Portsoy McPhersons, with the help of those listed below.



### A Brief History of Portsoy

The four generations of McPhersons lived in a context very different from today. Portsoy has long been the port at the outlet of the Soy River between Banff and Buckie on the Moray (pronounced Murray) Firth Coast. It is about 50 miles northwest of Aberdeen, and about the same distance east of Inverness. While its fortunes have fluctuated over time (SHO, 2010), the hinterland’s rich soils and ample rain have always guaranteed the growth of oats and other crops and animals.

Portsoy was created a ‘burgh of barony’ in 1550, about 250 years before the first McPherson arrived. A Scottish burgh is a town where land titles were held by a tenant-in-chief on behalf of the Crown. These burghs were different than the ‘burghs of regality’ where title was granted to ‘lords of regality’, leading noblemen, who had wider civil and criminal law powers. Tenants-in-chief were given trading rights to hold weekly markets and trade overseas to encourage their burghs of barony to become market towns (Wikipedia, 2008).

An early decision was by the tenant-in-chief was to develop one of the safest harbours in the north east of Scotland and export Portsoy’s agricultural, mineral and maritime produce to England and the Continent. The ‘old harbour’ seen above was completed in 1693 by Sir Patrick Oglivie, the 8th Earl of Boyndie, who borrowed heavily from the 1st Earl of Seafield and eventually had to sell out to him in 1709 (Cooper, 2001, p. 37). From about 1700, Sir Patrick promoted ‘Portsoy marble’ which is actually green and red serpentine mined from the hillsides to the west of the harbour. King Louis XIV of France ordered Portsoy marble to make chimneys at his Palace of Versailles (p. 39). Most of the McPhersons in Portsoy were therefore agricultural labourers or domestic servants, some quarrymen, fishermen or fisher girls.

The ‘new harbour’ was built by the 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Seafield between 1825 and 1829 for £13,700 to exploit the boom in herring stocks (p. 41). Deep sea salmon were also taken until the stocks ran out. A storm destroyed half of



<sup>1</sup> Kind assistance is warmly acknowledged from Roy McPherson, Flagstaff, Arizona, USA, Catherine Baillie and Pat Paterson of Aberdeen, and Elaine Tennant, Illinois, USA. Any other contributions to this illustrated history will also be acknowledged.

the new harbour in 1839. It was rebuilt by 1844.

The fleet grew to reach a peak of 57 boats. Fishing was done by drift, seine and line fishing. Herring drifters were the main vessels used with some using Zulu sailing boats. A drifter had a crew of up to 9 or 10 that were paid from the net earnings of the catch (see boat bins right). The herring netted by the fishermen on the North Sea were brought ashore, gutted, cleaned and packed in salt in wooden barrels by the fisher girls. The coopers then fixed airtight lids and the barrels were shipped to Europe through the Baltic ports.



A railway line was constructed down to the old harbour to assist trade, coal in particular. By the end of the 19th century most of the herring boats had been attracted away to larger harbours at Macduff and Buckie, leaving behind the creel boats taking lobster and crab. Pleasure boats started to arrive.

The railway line to the old harbour closed in 1885 with regional rail services contracting even further in the late 1920s when passengers switched to buses. It was probably during this period that the surviving McPhersons left Portsoy as economic migrants, possibly leaving behind relatives married into local families. Anyone descended from the McPhersons of Portsoy are invited to email me at [reynold@reynoldmacpherson.ac.nz](mailto:reynold@reynoldmacpherson.ac.nz)

The long departed McPhersons missed the restoration of Portsoy in the 1960s and the agricultural boom in the 2000s. Portsoy presents itself today as a reconstructed traditional fishing village. Its main tourist attraction is the Scottish Traditional Boats Festival held over a weekend in late June or early July. The Festival brings in up to 20,000 visitors. Tourists enrol in Portsoy's sailing school, enjoy the countryside and coastal walks, and visit the antique shops in the main thoroughfare, Seafield Street, which has changed its facade little in centuries (see right). Portsoy has a permanent population today of about 2,000.



### The Arrival of McPhersons in Portsoy

Oral and genealogical history suggest that William McPherson's ancestors came to Portsoy from the Highlands, probably via the neighbouring port of Banff in Banffshire. The evidence is provisional. It is also likely, given the historical context, that these ancestors were persons displaced by The Highland Clearances after the Battle of Culloden. If so they came with crofting skills and looked to survive as agricultural workers, or by learning to quarry rock or catch fish, with their wives and daughters often finding work as domestic servants or fisher girls.

The *Scotlandspeople* genealogy website was searched online.<sup>2</sup> The search covered the voluntary Old Parish Records (OPRs) of births, marriages and deaths from 1538 to 1854. It also reviewed the Statutory Registers (SRs) of births, marriages and deaths from 1854 to 2006 made mandatory by Civil Registration in Scotland Act in 1855, and the information gathered by Census in 1841, 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901, and 1881 (Latter Day Saints).

These sources suggest that William McPherson may have been baptized 13<sup>th</sup> December, 1752 in the Banff Parish Church, Banff, Banffshire, (see right). The OPR (1752a) notes, with grammar and spelling faithfully



<sup>2</sup> <http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk>

replicated, that “William lawful son of Donald McPherson, workman, was baptized named after William Grabner, Shoemaker, and William Bruce, Workman, and William McPherson, the Grandfather, by the father. Witnesses John Marshall and William Abernethy”. What is known with certainty is that by the time a William McPherson married Elspet Duff on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February 1800, in the Portsoy Parish Church of Fordyce (OPR, 1800e), the groom had been settled there long enough to be considered to be a member of the Parish of Fordyce.

It is unfortunate that William’s mother is not mentioned. She may have been one of two Jean Grants, although the chances are, again, slim. Six months before William’s baptism, in the nearby Inveravon Parish of Banff, “Donald Macpherson of the parish of Kingussie and Jean Grant in this parish were contracted 1<sup>st</sup> June 1752 and orderly proclaimed and no objection being made were married” (OPR, 1752c). Less likely was the event five months before William’s birth, in the Parish of Kingussie and Insh, when “Donald McPherson in Therquevie was matrimonially contracted to Jean Grant in Ma Dewsidgine [?] and married July 1, 1752” (OPR, 1752b).

The Donald McPherson involved may also have had an earlier son christened at the Banff Parish Church on 19<sup>th</sup> May 1749. The entry under a margin heading of ‘Macpherson’ reads “Duncan lawful son of Donald Mackpherson Workman was baptized and named after Duncan Macpherson resident in Banff and Duncan Macpherson resident in Banff. Witnesses Rob and John Warraxes.”(OPR, 1749) In addition to record keeping being voluntary, and literacy uneven, events in Banffshire around that time contributed to the OPRs being incomplete. The presence of William’s father Donald and his grandfather William in the Parish of Banff in Banffshire in 1752 coincided with a period of intense pressure on Clan Macpherson and extreme turbulence in Scottish society.

Six years earlier, on 16 April 1746, some 500 men of the Macpherson Regiment had been only hours away and force marching towards Culloden Moor under the leadership of their Chief, Col. Ewen Macpherson of Cluny, when the rest of the Clan Chattan (a confederation of clans to which the Macphersons belonged) started the Battle of Culloden without waiting for them. About 500 of the Clan Chattan (pronounced ‘Hattan’), led by the giant MacGillivray of Dunmaglass (see right from McIan, 1983, p. 111), were so enraged by devastating cannon fire at short range from the English Army that they led the charge of the Jacobite Army; to its swift destruction from disciplined volleys of musket fire and bayonets.



Faced with fleeing survivors being pursued by the English Army intent on murder, the Macpherson Regiment acted as an effective rear guard and retired in good order to Badenoch. This enabled the lowland remnants of the Jacobite Army to gather at Ruthven Barracks, about a kilometre from Kingussie in Badenoch. The demoralised Bonnie Prince Charlie then directed the Jacobite Army to disband; each man to “shift for himself as best he could”. The Macpherson Regiment surrendered on 17 May 1746 with officers and men dispersing to their towns and crofts. Their Chief Cluny went into hiding, and although a reward of £1,000 was offered by the English, he evaded capture for nine years before leaving for France in 1755.

During this period, the Macphersons, as an undamaged, coherent and potentially significant military force, would have been a primary target of the harsh military persecution ordered by the English General, ‘Butcher’ Cumberland. The Macpherson Chief’s castle was plundered and burnt to the ground. Many of the Clan’s best lands in Badenoch were confiscated. Gaelic, gatherings, weapons, kilts and bagpipes were banned. Many starved or scattered in search of food and a new life.

Sixteen years after Culloden, and ten years after William McPherson was born, the land tenure reforms in 1762 led to the Highland Clearances (see right). Family ownership by clansmen, who raised mixed crops and black cattle, gave way to private ownership by absentee gentry, who used managers known as ‘factors’ to employ a few shepherds to run vastly



more profitable flocks of sheep.

A general emigration from the Highlands followed to the coastal towns of Scotland, and then to England, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Fishing villages like Banff and Portsoy expanded significantly in the latter half of the 1700s to provide homes for inland crofting families supplanted by sheep (Ritchie, 2007).

Given these turbulent conditions, a search was conducted of all recorded births and baptisms in Scotland for 20-30 years before William was born in 1752. The search was made for any Donald McPherson or like surname whose father was also a William. Eight qualifying candidates were found. There may well be other unrecorded candidates. Three from the distant counties of Caithness and Ross and Cromarty were set aside, leaving five sets of potential paternal grandparents to the first confirmed ancestor;

1. In the Auldearn Parish of Nairn, “Donald son of William McPherson and Mary Fraser in Milton of Maynes [Sp?] was born 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1725 and baptized. Witnesses Donald Cathy, Donald Border and Mary Harwood.” (OPR, 1725).
2. In the Parish of Kingussie and Insh, “Donald, son to William McPherson in Balladbeg and Margaret McKintosh of this parish his wife born February 11<sup>th</sup> was baptized February 26<sup>th</sup> 1726” (OPR, 1726).
3. In the Kingussie and Insh Parish, Inverness county, “Donald son to William McPherson in Belliphries and Jean Woran his wife was born January 7<sup>th</sup> and baptized 8<sup>th</sup> 1727” (OPR, 1727).
4. On 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1729, in Inverness Parish, “William McPherson in Eseck [Sp?] and Elspet Kennidy his spouse had a child baptized by Mr Alexander McBean called Donald. John Mcpherson Ewan McKenzie Peter McPherson witnesses.” (OPR, 1729).
5. In the Parish of Kingussie and Insh, Inverness county, on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 1732; “That day William McPherson in Comah [Sp?] had a child baptized called Donald” (OPR, 1732).

Without further evidence it is not possible to determine if any of these candidates was the ‘Donald MackPherson’ who was also son of William McPherson and father of the William baptized 13<sup>th</sup> December 1752 in the Banff Parish Church. In sum, the search prior to the founding couple was confounded by the Clearances trough in the data.

### **William McPherson and Elspet Duff**

“William McPherson and Elspet Duff both of this parish were contracted and were married” (OPR, 1800e). They were married in the Portsoy Parish Church of Fordyce, formerly known as the West Church and ‘The Free Church’ (see right) (Cooper, 2001, p. 38). Despite the 26-year difference in their ages, their marriage was evidently successful and established at least four generations of McPhersons in Portsoy.



William and Elspet McPherson had nine children, all born and baptized in Portsoy although their residential address is not known with certainty because the first Census was not taken until 1841. Their children were:

- James, born 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 1800 (OPR, 1800b), died 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1875 (SR, 1875b);
- William, born 17<sup>th</sup> October 1802 (OPR, 1802a), died 10<sup>th</sup> June 1886 in Leslie, Fife (SR, 1866d);
- John, born 30<sup>th</sup> March 1804 (OPR, 1804a);
- Alexander, born 12<sup>th</sup> May 1807 (OPR, 1807) died in 1891 in Canada (Macpherson, 2004);
- George, born 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1809 (OPR, 1809b);
- Elizabeth, born 21<sup>st</sup> November 1811 (OPR, 1811c) and also died in Canada;
- Elspet, born 12<sup>th</sup> January 1814 (OPR, 1814);
- Adam, born 18<sup>th</sup> June 1815 (OPR, 1815a); and
- Forbes Watson, born 8<sup>th</sup> March 1817 (OPR, 1817a).

Figure 1: William McPherson and Elspet Duff's Family



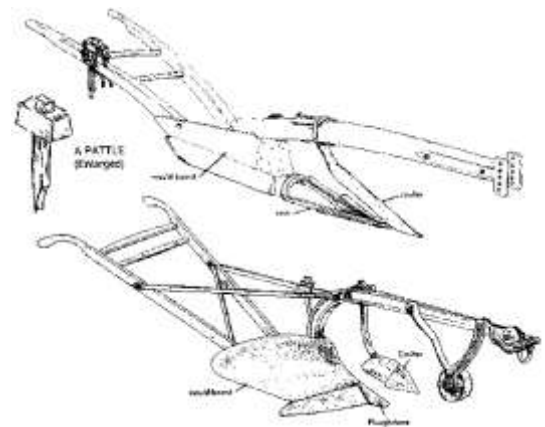
The OPRs of these nine baptisms show that the witnesses almost always included Elspet's father James, suggesting a close relationship between the McPhersons and the Duffs. James Duff was born about 1747 (OPR, 1779), about five years before William McPherson, and died 5<sup>th</sup> July 1828 (OPR, 1828c). He was a blacksmith, a highly respected profession in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and essential to horse-powered agricultural technology. The new all-metal horse plough (Clilverd, 2003) was gradually replacing the Old Scots plough (World Burns Club, 2008) (see right and below), boosting the productivity of Scottish agriculture.



James Duff married Elspet Henry (sometimes written as Hendy, Hendry or Hindrey) on 27 November 1773 (OPR, 1773). They had seven children:

1. John born 1 September 1776 (OPR, 1776) died 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1849 (OPR, 1849);
2. Elspet born 5 April 1778 (OPR, 1778) who married William McPherson;
3. James born 18 August 1779 (OPR, 1779);
4. Helen born 8 May 1781 (OPR, 1781);
5. Alexander born 5 October 1783 (OPR, 1783);
6. Margaret born 28 December 1785 (OPR, 1785);
7. William born 2 March 1788 (OPR, 1788a).

They had many grandchildren. For example, their eldest son, John Duff, lived at Little Dytach, a farm east of the village of Fordyce, five kilometres south west of Portsoy. He married Margaret Inglis 26<sup>th</sup> January 1800 (OPR,



1800d) and they had ten children:

1. John Duff, born 7<sup>th</sup> June 1800 (OPR, 1800a) and died 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1849 (OPR, 1849),
2. Elspet Duff, born 12<sup>th</sup> January 1803 (OPR, 1803a),
3. William Duff, born 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1804 (OPR, 1804b),
4. Isabel Duff, born 29<sup>th</sup> November 1806 (OPR, 1806),
5. James Duff, born 15<sup>th</sup> August 1809 (OPR, 1809a),
6. Alexander Duff, born 29<sup>th</sup> May 1811 (OPR, 1811b),
7. George Duff, born 12<sup>th</sup> May, 1813 (OPR, 1813),
8. Margaret Duff, born 19<sup>th</sup> October 1815 (OPR, 1815b),
9. another Alexander Duff, born 26<sup>th</sup> September 1817 (OPR, 1817b), and
10. Ann Duff, born 7<sup>th</sup> January 1821 (OPR, 1821).

As noted above, James Duff and Elspet Henry's second child, Elspet Duff, who married William McPherson 23 February 1800 (OPR, 1800e), had nine children. The witnesses to the baptisms indicated that William and Elspet's associates included labourers, tradespersons, merchants and their wives associated with the agricultural economy. The witnesses listed also indicated affiliations based on William's part-time service in the 7th Company of the 1st Banffshire Corps of Volunteers that first mustered in 1798 (see right) in response to the threat of Napoleon invading Britain (Pirie, 2010).

The young couple would have been confident that William's business, social and military links would sustain their coming family through inevitable setbacks. Censuses confirmed that they lived beside their butchery in Burnside Street, Portsoy, therefore always ate well, unlike many at the time. There was no effective birth control and children arrived regularly with most surviving.

The baptisms indicated their affiliations. William and Elspet's first child, James, born 23 October 1800 (OPR, 1800b) and died 2 October 1875 (SR, 1875b), was probably named after Elspet's father, James Duff, a blacksmith, signalling the importance of horse technology. Their second child, William who became a Flaxdresser, was born 17 October 1802 (OPR, 1802a) and died 10 June 1886 in Leslie, Fife (SR, 1866d). He was probably named after William's father and grandfather. Their third child, John, born 30 March 1804 (OPR, 1804a), was probably named after John Brodie who soldiered with William in the Volunteers. Their fourth child Alexander, born 12 May 1807 (OPR, 1807) died in 1891 in Canada (Macpherson, 2004), was probably named after Alexander Cowie, an associate of James Brodie, brother to John, all three of them Volunteers. Their fifth child, George, born 22 May 1809 (OPR, 1809b) was probably named after George Scot, another fellow soldier of his father. Their sixth child, Elizabeth McPherson, born 21 November 1811 (OPR, 1811c) and who also died in Canada, was probably named after Elizabeth Baxter and Elizabeth Brodie, the latter possibly married to or a sister to two Volunteers. Their seventh child, Elspet, born 12 January 1814 (OPR, 1814) was probably named after her mother Elspet Duff and her maternal grandmother, Elspet Henry. Their eighth child, Adam, born 18 June 1815 (OPR, 1815a) was probably named after Adam Wilson, his father's Sergeant in the Volunteers. Similarly, their ninth and final child, Forbes Watson McPherson, born 8 March 1817 (OPR, 1817a), was probably named after Forbes Watson, another of his father's sergeants.

Finally, it appears that William McPherson and his father-in-law James Duff were as close in death as they were in life. William McPherson died 2 July 1828, aged 75 (OPR, 1828b) and was buried three days before James Duff who died on 5 July aged 81 (OPR, 1828c).

We now turn to the nine children and many grandchildren of William McPherson and Elspet Duff.



## William McPherson and Elspet Duff's eldest child, James McPherson

Recall, James McPherson was born 23 October 1800 and died 2 October 1875. He worked first as an agricultural labourer and later as a stone quarrier (see a vein of 'Portsoy Marble' right in the local breakwater). He married Elizabeth 'Betsy' Stewart (sometimes spelled Stuart) on 21 March 1829 (OPR, 1829c). She was born 19 February 1811 (OPR, 1811a), the daughter of James Stewart and Elizabeth McDonald of Cullen.

James and Betsy had twelve children. They were all baptized in Portsoy, many with distinctively Jacobite names, :



1. James Stuart McPherson, born 28 March 1829 (OPR, 1829b), an agricultural labourer;
2. Charles Stuart Macpherson, born 2 July 1831 (OPR, 1831b), died 13<sup>th</sup> January 1906 (SR, 1906);
3. Ann McPherson, born 22 April 1833 (OPR, 1833);
4. Alexander McPherson, born 17 July 1835 (OPR, 1835a);
5. Cameron Stuart McPherson, born 10 August 1839 (OPR, 1839a) and died 9 January 1894 in Aberdeen (SR, 1894 );
6. Daniel McPherson, born 5 September 1841 (OPR, 1841), later referred to as Donald William McPherson (Census, 1851b);
7. twin Jane McPherson born 1843.
8. twin Elizabeth McPherson also born 1843 and died 12 January 1902 (SR, 1902);
9. Joan/ Johan McPherson born about 1848, died 8 August 1917 in Aberdeen (SR, 1917);
10. William McPherson, born 21 April 1850 (McPherson, 2010);
11. George McPherson born about 1852 and died 3 years old 19 April 1855 (SR, 1855b) and
12. Christina Helen McPherson, born 4 December 1854 (OPR, 1854a).

This family was quite very mobile. The Census records from 1841 show that James McPherson and Betsy Stewart's family moved around Portsoy as it grew and then contracted with departures. Their eldest son James was often recorded as being younger than he really was, and from 1851, as having being born in Moy or Moyhall, Invernesshire, although baptized in Portsoy. All other children's ages recorded by Census cohere with known birth dates from OPRs and SRs.

The first Census in 1841 found James McPherson and Betsy Stewart's family in Old Kirk Road (1841c). James McPherson was the head of household, an agricultural labourer aged 30 (therefore born about 1811!). He was residing with his wife 'Elisa' aged 30, and five children; a son James aged 12, a son Charles aged 10, a daughter Ann aged 8, a son Alexander aged 6, and a son Cameron aged 2, all born in Portsoy.

Ten years later, they were living in Coinland Street, Portsoy (Census, 1851c). James McPherson was present, a labourer aged 44, therefore born about 1807! He was living with his wife Elizabeth, born in Cullen, aged 40, and their seven children: daughter Ann aged 18; 'daughter' Cameron, a scholar aged 12; son Donald William (?) a scholar aged 10; twin daughter Jane aged 7; twin daughter Elizabeth aged 7; daughter Susan (difficult to read, probably Joan/ Johan) aged 3 (born about 1848); and son William aged 11 months. Their two eldest sons James Stuart McPherson (aged 22) and Charles Stuart McPherson (aged 20) had apparently left home and subsequently had five and eight children respectively, from 1863 and 1851. I am indebted to Patricia (Pat) Paterson from Aberdeen for providing the descendants of Joan/ Johan McPherson who was first recorded by the 1841 Census as 'Susan'.



By 1861 James McPherson had moved to Burnside Street (Census, 1861b) (see right).<sup>3</sup> He was by then aged 56, an agricultural labourer. His wife Elizabeth, from Cullen, was aged 52. They were living with seven of their children: ‘James S.’ aged 32, an agricultural labourer; Cameron aged 22 (see below), an agricultural labourer; a twin daughter Jane aged 18; the other twin daughter Elizabeth aged 18; Joan aged 13 and a scholar; William aged 11, also a scholar; and Christina aged 6.

Anne, Alexander, and Daniel/ Donald McPherson had apparently left home after the 1851 Census. Daniel/ Donald returned by the 1881 Census (Census, 1891b) and remained unmarried for the following two Census (1891b) (1901c). Anne, a domestic servant aged 23 of Portsoy, had married William Smith on 28 April 1857 (SR, 1857c). William Smith was a ‘farm servant’ aged 19, son of John Smith and Jane Duncan of Keith. Their descendants proved untraceable despite the fact that there were 111 Smith children born in Fordyce in the 15 years after 1857!

Ten years on, the Census (1871c) found that the household head at Burnside Street was the same James McPherson, now aged 64 and a quarry labourer. The ‘Portsoy marble’ quarry was a short walk away. James was living with his wife Elizabeth (aged 60 from Cullen), and four children and four grandchildren: their daughter Elizabeth, a domestic servant aged 24; their daughter Joan/ Johan, a domestic servant aged 22; their son William, a seaman aged 20; their daughter Christina, a domestic servant aged 17; their granddaughter Jemima, a scholar aged 10 (born about 1861); their granddaughter Jane, a scholar aged 7 (born about 1864); their granddaughter Margaret aged 4 (born about 1867); and their granddaughter Mary aged 9 months (born about 1870).

Cameron Stuart McPherson left home after 1861 and reappeared in 1891 at 69 Commerce Street, St Nicholas Parish, Aberdeen, aged 55 and married to Anne from Dundee (Census, 1891e). This address in Aberdeen stayed in the family suggesting continuity of residence (see below).

The family remaining in Portsoy then moved to Droughty’s Close, probably after James had died in 1875. James’ widow, Elizabeth McPherson, aged 71, was the head of the household (Census, 1881c). She was supported by her unmarried son Donald, an agricultural labourer aged 38, her twin daughter Elizabeth aged 36, a single general domestic servant and her granddaughter Jemima Cameron McPherson, born 31 August 1861, a domestic servant. Also present was her granddaughter Margaret aged 14 (born about 1867), her granddaughter Mary, a scholar aged 10 (born about 1871), her granddaughter Mary J. aged 5 (born about 1876 in Aberdeen, possibly adopted), and her grandson William aged 3 months (born about 1881).



<sup>3</sup> These two photos were passed on to Ron McPherson from his father’s cousin, Leola Brown of Nelson, New Zealand. They were sent to her by Alfred McHattie, son of Christina McPherson, the youngest daughter of James McPherson and Elizabeth Stuart. The McPhersons lived in the end house shown in the second photograph; No. 1 Burnside Street, now demolished.

Elizabeth's five grandchildren were probably the illegitimate children of her daughter twin Elizabeth, including of Mary J. Simpson who was born in Aberdeen. To be clear, Twin Elizabeth gave birth to four illegitimate children at 2 Burnside Street; Jemima Cameron McPherson on 31 August 1861 (witnessed by aunt Jane McPherson) (SR, 1861b), Jane Brown McPherson on 9 December 1863 (witnessed by sister-in-law Margaret McPherson, 5 Culbert St., Portsoy), (SR, 1863b), Margaret McPherson on 22 August 1866 (witnessed by aunt Johan McPherson) (SR, 1866b), and Mary McPherson on 3 July 1870 (witnessed by uncle's wife Margaret McPherson) (SR, 1870). She then apparently moved to Aberdeen where she had two more; Mary J. Simpson, born about 1876, and William born about 1881. She then returned to Portsoy and died 12 January 1902 of heart disease, resident at 7 Burnside (SR, 1902).

In the meantime, the 1891 Census (1891c) showed that Elizabeth 'Betsy' Macpherson aged 82 continued living in Burnside as the head of household. She lived with her unmarried son Donald Macpherson aged 50, an agricultural labourer, her daughter Elizabeth Macpherson, aged 40, a general domestic servant, her granddaughter Mary. J. Simpson aged 15, a domestic servant born in Aberdeen about 1876, and granddaughter Lizzie Wilson aged 9, a scholar born about 1882. Recall, all but Mary J. and William were born in Portsoy. The matriarch Elizabeth 'Betsy', widow of James, then died on 10 May 1891. In 1901 her son Donald McPherson was recorded as the head of household at Burnside. He was then aged 55, living with his sister Elizabeth, aged 52, and his niece Lizzie, a general servant domestic aged 19 (Census, 1901c).

Elizabeth's twin sister Jane gave birth to an illegitimate girl Williamina McPherson on 28 August 1869 (witnessed by aunt Elizabeth McPherson) (SR, 1869a). Their destinations and descendants are not known.

The twins' younger sister, Joan/ Johan McPherson, also had an illegitimate child on 9 June 1877, a boy named James (SR, 1877a) who died two months later on 26 August (SR, 1877b). Joan then moved to Aberdeen and married Andrew Murray in 1878 (SR, 1878b), the widower of Isabella Pirie,. Andrew and Isabella had married in Aberdeen 22 August 1869 and had David Pirie Murray (SR, 1870a) and Georgina Milne Murray (SR, 1873a). Isabella died of typhoid aged 31 on 6 March 1878 (SR, 1878a).

Pat Paterson explained that Andrew Murray and Joan née McPherson then raised David and Georgina and had two more children of their own; Christina and another Joan who was always known as Lilly Joan/ Johan to avoid confusion. She also reported that Christina Murray married Micheal Tremain, son of Micheal Tremain, a seaman from Cornwall and Anne Ross, a local girl. Lilly Joan Murray's family, descended from Joan/ Johan McPherson, is currently being mapped by Pat Paterson.

A number of mistakes were found in the records. For example, when Joan married Andrew Murray 9 November 1878, her marriage certificate incorrectly recorded her parents as being James McPherson and Margaret McPherson née Watson. Joan McPherson's own death record dated 8 August 1917 noted her parents accurately as James and Elizabeth McPherson née Stewart (SR, 1917).

Despite the moves to Aberdeen by some in this family, it is also clear that they tried to stay close. Cameron and Joan are a case in point. The 1881 census showed that Andrew and Joan Murray were living at 4 Canal Lane, Aberdeen, along with Georgina Murray aged 8 and their own first daughter Christina Murray aged 1 (Census, 1881e). Their second daughter Lilly Joan was born three years later at 54 Walker Road, Aberdeen on 11 October 1883 (SR, 1883).

By the 1891 census (Census, 1891f), however, Andrew and Joan had moved again to 70 Commerce Street, St Nicholas, Aberdeen, along with their children David (20) a sail maker, Georgina (18) a cotton weaver, Christina (11) a scholar, and Joan (8) a scholar. Joan's brother Cameron, and his wife Ann Lyon née Scott from Dundee, were living next door at 69 Commerce Street.

Joan helped Cameron even in death. When Cameron married Ann on 3 July 1886 (SR, 1878b), he gave his parents as Cameron and Jane McPherson née Stewart. This was corrected on his death certificate dated 9 January 1894, when his parents were given more accurately by the informant, Joan Murray, as James and Elizabeth McPherson née Stewart (SR, 1894).

Joan moved again after Cameron's death. When she died in 1917 she was resident again at 54 Walker Road, Aberdeen, and her death was registered by her youngest daughter, Lilly Joan Murray (Pat Paterson's grandmother). A preliminary summary of James and Betsy's family is presented overleaf before greater detail about their descendants.

Figure 2: James McPherson and Elizabeth ‘Betsy’ Stewart’s Family



James and Betsy’s heart-shaped stone in the Portsoy Graveyard on the front cover of this chapter is the earliest known artefact of the Porstoy McPhersons. It was reputedly carved by their son-in-law Alexander McHattie.

In the following pages I offer greater detail of the descendants of their children, starting with one of the most complex issues unravelled in recent years.

## James McPherson and Betsy Stewart's eldest child, James Stuart Macpherson

James Stuart Macpherson (the spelling he used on all his children's birth certificates) was born 28 March 1829. He died in the East Poorhouse, St Nicholas, Aberdeen on 5 March 1901, aged 71 (SR, 1901). His death certificate gave his age as 72, and curiously defined him as "the widower of Eliza Anne Lorimer" while confirming that his parents were James McPherson and Elizabeth McPherson née Stuart. The informant was David Russell, his son-in-law, otherwise known as Daniel or 'Dannie'.

Ron McPherson and I came to the view that his death certificate is wrong and that his wife was not Eliza Anne Lorimer but actually Margaret Lorimer. Margaret McPherson (née Lorimer) died in Burnside Street, Portsoy, in 1888 aged 54 years (SR, 1888), the year before James Stuart Macpherson died, and was therefore born around 1834. Her death certificate also makes it clear that she had been married to a William Murphy, a shoemaker, before James McPherson. I will come back to the shoemaker and Margaret Lorimer below.

James Stuart Macpherson's death certificate also had another mistake that has been hugely distracting. The informant, David/ Daniel/ Dannie Russell, who was married to Elizabeth Ann Fraser McPherson, James and Margaret's daughter, gave his mother-in-law's birth surname as Turner, not Lorimer. This mistake gave rise to the possibility that a 'Margaret Turner' linked the McPhersons of Portsoy to the McPhersons of Auchmillie, once from Inveravon or Glenlivet. Two separate pieces of research have shown that this is not the case.

We can begin with the real Margaret Turner. Many conversations with Catherine Baillie of Aberdeen (Baillie, 2011) and research online into the Old Parish Records (OPRs) or Statutory Records (SRs) available in ScotlandsPeople online database have established that Margaret Turner was actually the second wife of James McPherson of Tomnalienan in the Civil Parish of Inveravon and *Quoad Sacra* Parish of Glenlivet who moved to Auchmillie Farm near Portsoy in the 1880s.

This James' first wife was Janet Gordon of Ballaknochcan. They married 5 October 1826 (OPR, 1826) and had five children. Jenny was born 9 August 1828 and was baptized two days later, as listed in the Register of Protestant Children in the District of Tomintaul (OPR, 1828a). John was baptised 14 February 1831 in Inveravon (OPR, 1831c). Margaret was born 20 December 1834 in Glenlivet and baptised two days later (OPR, 1834a). William was born 18 December 1836 and also baptised two days later (OPR, 1836a). Finally, George McPherson was born 30 November and christened on 3 December 1840, as witnessed by John Grant and William Smith (OPR, 1840). The regular appearance of John Gordon from Ballaknochcan, Janet's home, as a witness, suggests that he might have been Janet's father or a brother.

Janet Gordon presumably died because James McPherson of Tomnalienan married again to Margaret Turner from Croftbain on 8 July 1845 (OPR, 1845). James and Janet's eldest Jenny would have been 16, John 15, Margaret 11, William 9 and George 4. James (Snr.) and Margaret Turner's first child James (Jnr.) was born eleven months later, on 1 June 1846 (OPR, 1846). Seventeen months later, James and Margaret had another boy, Robert, born 27 December 1847 (OPR, 1847). Their next child, Ann, was also born in Inveravon, on 9 October 1850 (OPR, 1850). Their fourth child was Alexander McPherson, born 21 May 1852, also in Inveravon (OPR, 1852).

Nine years after Alexander's birth, the Census held on 7 May 1861 (1861d) found James McPherson and Margaret née Turner's blended family living at Tomnalienan. James (Snr.) was now 50 and farming 120 acres. He and his wife Margaret (aged 53) still had James (Jnr.) 14, Robert 12, Ann 10 and Alexander 8 at home. Also listed was James (Snr.s') son William 23 (therefore born about 1838, probably 1836 and from his first marriage) and George McPherson aged 2 (born about 1859), who was probably the son of William. They also had a servant and three ploughmen. There were two other small families living on the estate, one an ex-agricultural worker and the other a "pauper formerly domestic servant," neither McPhersons.

The Census (1871e) held ten years later recorded that James (Snr.) was now 70, farming the same 120 acres of arable land and employing two men and a girl. Also resident were his wife, Margaret McPherson, now 62, James (Jnr) 24, Robert 23, a surgeon and physician, Ann 18, and Alexander 18, a student of medicine at the University of Aberdeen. Neither William (now about 33) nor George (now about 12) were at home. Also present were a servant aged 24, a farm servant aged 24, a domestic servant aged 18, and a shepherd aged 16. There were two other families also resident on Tomnalienan, implying the presence of other longstanding,

elderly and one-time agricultural labourers and domestic servants. It is also shown below that James (Snr.) and Margaret had the means to record their families standing and accomplishments on impressive gravestones.

James and Margaret's family at Tomnalienan is not to be confused with other McPherson families living together on an adjacent property. The same Census (1871e) recorded two other possibly related families headed by William and John McPherson farming Tomnarau (spelling not clear) alongside Tomnalienan.

The first family headed by William McPherson 58 (born about 1813) was farming eight acres of arable land. He was living with his wife Margaret 53 (born about 1818) and their son Alexander, a scholar aged 13 (born about 1858), and a grandson Frazer (name unclear) aged 3 (born about 1868).

The second family was headed by John McPherson, a crofter living on the same property and farming 12 acres of arable land. He was 47 (born about 1824) and married to Elspet McPherson, aged 50. They had a son Peter 12 (born about 1859) and a daughter Jessie aged 9 (born about 1862), both scholars. This again suggests a wider McPherson network living in Glenlivet although the relationships between them are not clear.

Ten years on, the Census conducted on the 3rd of April 1881 recorded the remnants of James and Margaret McPherson's family at Tomnalienan (1881d). James (Snr.) was 75 and now farming 254 acres of which 140 were arable, employing three men, one boy and one girl. Margaret his wife was 73 (born about 1808) and they were living in a substantial house that had five rooms that had at least one window. However, only one of their children was at home; James (Jnr.) aged 34. They had three agricultural servants and a domestic servant.

Sometime between the Census in 1881 and 1884, James (Snr.) and Margaret moved the remnants of their family to Auchmillie Farm, about 3 kilometres south of Portsoy (see right). It is about 36 miles from Inveravon Primary School to Auchmillie, that is, about two days horse ride or three days by bullock cart or on foot. But the family did not forget their Highland origins; they continued to commemorate their departed through monumental inscriptions in the Downan Cemetery in Inveravon for many decades.



James Macpherson (Snr.) died at Auchmillie Farm, at 10.00 pm on the 19th of September in 1884 (SR, 1884c). He was confirmed as a retired farmer married to Margaret Turner and as previously married to Janet Gordon. He was 82, therefore born about 1802. He was also confirmed as the son of William Macpherson, farmer (deceased), and Jane Macpherson née Smith (deceased). Alex Robb MD certified that he died of congestion of the lungs after two days, with many prior years of asthma and rheumatism. The informant was Annie Macpherson, his daughter. The death was registered by James Grant at Fordyce on 22 September.

James Macpherson's second wife, Margaret Macpherson née Turner, died at 7.50 am on 16 December 1885 (SR, 1885b). She was 78, therefore born about 1807. She was confirmed as the daughter of William Turner, farmer (deceased) and Isabella Turner née McGovan (deceased). Her cause of death was certified as "cardiac weakness and irregularity for 1 1/2 years, congestion of lungs 1 1/2 years and anasarca<sup>4</sup> for 6 months" by Alex Robb, MD. The informant was James McPherson, her son, and her death was registered 22 December 1885 at Fordyce by James Grant, Registrar.

James (Snr.) and Margaret are both commemorated in the Downan Cemetery, Lair 158; "In loving remembrance of James Macpherson, late farmer, Tomnalienan, Glenlivet, who died at Auchmillie near Portsoy 19 Sep 1884 aged 82. Also his wife Margaret Turner who died at Auchmillie near Portsoy 16 Dec 1885 aged 78 (Mitchell, Mitchell, & Bishop, 2007, p. 30).

Their going left James (Jnr.) and Ann to farm Auchmillie in Fordyce. Ann had apparently nursed her parents into their old age and remained unmarried. The Census conducted on 5 April 1891 (Census, 1891a) found that

<sup>4</sup> Anasarca is also known as 'extreme generalized edema' and is evident as widespread swelling of the skin due to effusion of fluid into the extracellular space. It is usually caused by liver failure (cirrhosis of the liver) or renal failure/disease and severe malnutrition/ protein deficiency.

James (Jnr.) McPherson was 44, also unmarried and head of the household. Ann, 39, was his housekeeper. They had three farm servants, two domestic servants and a visitor, Lizzie Crass, 32.

Ten years on, James (Jnr.) and Ann were, respectively, still farming and housekeeping at Auchmillie (Census, 1901a). “Annie Macpherson” died on the 24th of December 1908(SR, 1908b). She was 58 and died of cerebra apoplexy, as certified by James Reid MB. Her parents were confirmed as James McPherson and Margaret McPherson née Turner. Her brother James McPherson (Jnr.) was present.

“James Macpherson” (Jnr.) died at 8.00 pm on 18 August 1914, at Auchmillie, Fordyce (SR, 1914). He was described as a single farmer, aged 68, verifying that he was born about 1846. James Jnr. was also confirmed as the son of James Macpherson, farmer (deceased) and Margaret Macpherson, née Turner (deceased). He died of heart disease over two years as certified by James Read MB. The informant was Robert William Macpherson, James’ nephew, whose address was given as the Town Hall, Chester. His death was registered by William Thompson, Fordyce.

Annie and James (Jnr.) were also commemorated in the Downan Cemetery by a Celtic cross on double plinth within an enclosure, Lair 156-158; “In loving memory of Annie Macpherson, daughter of James Macpherson, farmer in Tomalienan, who died at Auchmillie, Portsoy 24 Dec 1908 aged 58. Also James Macpherson, farmer, son of James Macpherson, Tomalienan, Glenlivet, died at Auchmillie, Portsoy, 18 Aug 1914 aged 68 (Mitchell, et al., 2007, p. 29).

James (Snr.) and Margaret’s second son Robert had a distinguished family that was also commemorated in Downan Cemetery, Lair 126, with a Celtic Cross on triple plinth. On the east face, it reads; “In loving memory of Robert Macpherson MD, son of James Macpherson, late of Tomalienan, Glenlivet, who died at Stalybridge, Cheshire 11 Feb 1895 aged 47 [b. abt. 1848]. Also in loving memory of his wife Isabella M. Smith Macpherson d. 22 Jul 1924 aged 77 [b. abt. 1847]. RIP.” On the north face the plinth commemorates two of their children; “James Macpherson MD d. 28 Dec 1907 aged 32 [b. abt. 1875]. John Gordon Smith Macpherson, MD d. 14 Jun 1917 aged 40 [b. abt. 1877].” On the south face it commemorates “Their son Geo. Smith Macpherson CE d. 23 Jul 1941 aged 61 [b. abt. 1880]. Also their dau Margt. Isabella Macpherson d. 17 Jul 1951 aged 73” [therefore born about 1878] (Mitchell, et al., 2007, p. 25).

James (Snr.) and Margaret’s youngest natural son, Alexander, is also commemorated in the Downan Cemetery, Lair 157, by a pillar with an urn on top. The inscription read “In loving memory of Alexander Macpherson, MD, youngest son of the late James Macpherson, Tomanlienan, Glenlivet, who died at Inveravon House, Haslingden, Lancashire, 23 May 1890 aged 38 [b abt 1852]. Deeply loved and deeply regretted” (Mitchell, et al., 2007, p. 30).

In sum, James McPherson (Snr.) of Tomnalienan married twice, had five children by his first wife Janet Gordon, four by his second wife Margaret Turner, invested heavily in higher education for many of his children and moved to Auchmillie a few years before he died. Two of his children from his second marriage, Ann and James (Jnr.), farmed Auchmillie until they died, unmarried, three kilometres from Portsoy. Curiously, all of James McPherson (Snr.) and Margaret Turner’s children and grandchildren that qualified as doctors died in the 30s or 40s, perhaps indicating the hazardous nature of their profession or a genetic weakness in the family. What is also clear from the extensively cited OPRs, SRs and gravestones is that there are no known blood links between these McPhersons of Auchmillie ex-Tomnalienan and the McPhersons of Portsoy.

It is now appropriate to turn back to William Murphy, the shoemaker, and especially his wife Margaret Lorimer whose second husband was James Stuart Macpherson of Portsoy. Ron McPherson has established that Margaret Lorimer was the daughter of James Lorimer and Ann Fraser, baptised 15 May 1831 in Deskford, Banff (OPR, 1831a). As noted above, Margaret married first to William Murphy on 1 July 1854 (OPR, 1854b) and had two children; Margaret Murphy on 4 May 1855 (SR, 1855a) and William Murphy, born 17 November 1857 in Strait Path, Portsoy (SR, 1857b). The father William Murphy then died on 13 February 1858 of consumption (tuberculosis) aged 33 (SR, 1858c). Baby William died the following year on 9 April 1859 (SR, 1859b) of marasmus, a form of severe protein-energy malnutrition characterized by energy deficiency. Catherine Baille (2011) reported oral history in her family that mother Margaret Murphy (née Lorimer) was left in poverty to fend for herself and her daughter, Margaret Murphy, as best she could.

Ron McPherson found that Margaret Murphy (née Lorimer) then had a child William McKay Lorimer on 20 September 1860 (SR, 1860), the father’s surname probably McKay. Margaret Murphy (née Lorimer) then

married James Stuart McPherson on 29 January 1863 in Portsoy (SR, 1863c). He was 33 and she 30. The three children of this marriage were Elizabeth Ann Fraser McPherson born 1 May 1863 (SR, 1863a) five months after they married, Georgina McPherson, born 9 July 1866 (SR, 1866a), and finally, Mary Macpherson, born 8 November 1869 (SR, 1869b) and who died on 5 April 1911 aged 42.

The 1871 and 1881 Census recorded this family resident in 14 Schoolhendry Street, Portsoy (Census, 1871b). Between these two Censuses Margaret's eldest daughter from her marriage to William Murphy, the master shoemaker, Margaret Murphy, died on 7 March 1879 of pneumonia, asthma and curvature of the spine. James McPherson was the informant but barely literate (SR, 1879b).

Her mother, Margaret McPherson (ex Murphy née Lorimer), then died nine years later on 1 September 1888 aged 54 in Burnside Street, Portsoy, having suffered from uremia (kidney failure) for eight months and scrofula (tuberculous cervical lymphadenitis) for a year (SR, 1888). Her husband James Stuart McPherson was present, but again, could barely sign his name.

In 1891, James Stuart Macpherson was recorded as resident in Burnside aged 62 with his youngest daughter May (almost certainly Mary) Macpherson aged 21 (Census, 1891d). Catherine Baille (2011) explained that Margaret McPherson, ex Murphy neé Lorimer, was "my Great Great Grandmother .... [and that]

My Grandmother used to visit the above lady, her grandmother in Portsoy, and knew James MacPherson as of Highland descent with second sight. You are right about the misnaming by Dannie Russell who recorded the death of James—he was his son in law. I actually have the wedding ring of my Great Great Grandmother, which is a mere thread, worn away by years of hard, hard work. She died of a horrific neck type tumour for which there was no treatment at the time.

She went on

Georgina Macpherson was my Great Grandmother who had moved into Aberdeen, presumably searching for work, with her sister Elizabeth (Eliza married to Dannie Russell). I vaguely remember that the other daughter [Mary] did die young. My grandmother Catherine was one of five children that Georgina had. She married twice. Her first husband George Henderson who died aged approximately 27 of a brain haemorrhage. Her second husband was Tom Murray.

The Lorimers were a mixed family of intelligent, educated and successful people but also farm labourers, weavers etc. I notice you mention Little Dytach—this farm was owned by William Lorimer who was Factor to the Earl of Seafield—his brother John Lorimer was the Earl's Scribe (Lawyer). Another John Lorimer seems to have organised the weaver/crofter Lorimers into a cooperative of sorts and traded with companies in London for woven cloth. There were teachers and ministers also.

I also remember my Grandmother telling us that her Grandmother—Margaret ... [McPherson, ex Murphy née Lorimer] ... had done something really bad and that her family had cast her aside—but as a child and even as an adult she did not know what that thing had been, obviously, George McKay Lorimer.

At the time Georgina moved into Aberdeen the Agricultural Revolution was underway, and many thousands were forced to leave the land and search in the cities for work.

It was noted above that Elizabeth/ Eliza McPherson married David/ Daniel Russell on 7 November 1884 (SR, 1884d), who was otherwise known as 'Dannie,' an agricultural labourer from Portsoy. Elizabeth's younger sister Mary McPherson then married David/ Daniel's possible relative James Russell in Jarrow on Tyne, near Newcastle, England, on 15 December 1891, where they had possibly followed the herring fleet to find work. James and Mary Russell then came home to Portsoy to have their children and run a shoe and boot making business, while Eliza and Dannie settled in Aberdeen.

James and Mary's first child was William Russell, born 22 January 1894 in Bridge Street, Portsoy (SR, 1894). Second born was Elizabeth Russell, born 31 July 1898 at Seafield Street, Portsoy (SR, 1898a). Third born was Mary Russell, born 26 June 1904, at 9 Seafield Street, Portsoy (SR, 1904). Fourth born was John Pryde Russell, on 6 May 1907, also at 9 Seafield Street (SR, 1908a) (see over, courtesy Elaine Tennant).

Recent research by Elaine Tennant in northern Illinois, USA (Tennant, 2012), reports that James and Mary Russell's second child Elizabeth married Herbert Samuel Galloway Laird (born 15 August 1899 in Scotland and son of Samuel John Laird and Louise Cochrane) on 17 September 1922 in Aberdeen (SR, 1922). Elaine also reported that Elizabeth Laird née Russell and Herbert Samuel Galloway Laird had a son and a daughter with another possible child born that died either in infancy or childbirth. She also reported that Elizabeth Laird née Russell died 16 January 1990 in Banff, Banffshire while her husband Herbert died about 1968 also in Banff, Banffshire.



A quadruple tragedy struck Mary McPherson's family between 1911 and 1916. A photo of a monumental inscription in Portsoy New Graveyard held by Catherine Baillie indicates that "Mary, beloved wife of James Russell, bootmaker, Portsoy, died 2 April 1911 aged 41. Willie, only son killed in action, 16 September 1916, aged 21, in France." Mary's death certificate confirmed that she died of parturition (childbirth), phlebitis (inflammation of leg or arm veins) and a cerebral embolism (SR, 1911). Presumably the unborn child was lost. The same certificate recorded that William was 17, Elizabeth was 13, Mary was 7 and John was 4. For Willie to be the 'only son' by 1916, when he died, John Pryde must have died before he was nine.

Elaine also confirmed that when Mary McPherson (born 1869) married James Russell (son of John Russell and Elizabeth Horne) it possibly meant that sisters married brothers, perhaps relatives. Family oral traditions she heard held that James Russell owned a bootmaking/shoemaking business in Portsoy and that he took his son-in-law Herbert Laird in as a partner after Herbert married his daughter Elizabeth. John Russell was probably the founder of the business which was located at 9 Seafield Street, the main street in Portsoy, where Elizabeth, Mary and John Pryde were born. Finally, Elaine understands that after Mary Russell née McPherson died in 1911, James Russell married again to Mary Ann Findley on 18 June 1912 at the Regal Hotel in Aberdeen (Tennant, 2012).

In the meantime, Eliza Ann McPherson's marriage to Daniel (Daniel/ Dannie) Russell on 7 November 1884 seemed to flourish after they had moved to Aberdeen. In 1901, when Daniel Russell was informant at his father-in-laws death in Aberdeen, he was resident at 11 Summer Street, Woodside, Aberdeen. It was then confirmed (Census, 1901d) that he was a 'fireman stationary' aged 42, and that his wife Eliza Ann (39) and he were the guardians of at least five children at 11 Summer Street.

The eldest child was Minnie Buie McPherson, Eliza Ann's daughter, a single woollsmith worker aged 17. Minnie's birth certificate confirmed that she was the illegitimate child of Eliza Ann McPherson, a domestic servant, born 20 February 1884 in Burnside Street, Portsoy (SR, 1884a). Minnie moved to 24 Marquis Road, Woodside, Aberdeen, and on 26 November 1904, when 22, she married Charles Geddes, a 26 year old general labourer from 12 Brown Street, Woodside. The marriage certificate recorded Minnie's reputed father as being James Buie, Land Surveyor (SR, 1905).

The second child at 11 Summer Street was John Russell, Eliza and Daniel's son, a baker van boy aged 16 who had been born 28 December 1886 (SR, 1886a). Third was Maggie Jane Russell, their daughter and scholar aged 13, who had been born 21 April 1889 (SR, 1889). Fourth was Daniel, their son and scholar aged 8 [b. abt. 1893] and Eliza Ann, their daughter aged 3 [b. abt 1898] who may have instead been their fifth child and sixth ward that missed the Census—Elizabeth Horn Russell born 7 November 1885 (SR, 1885a).

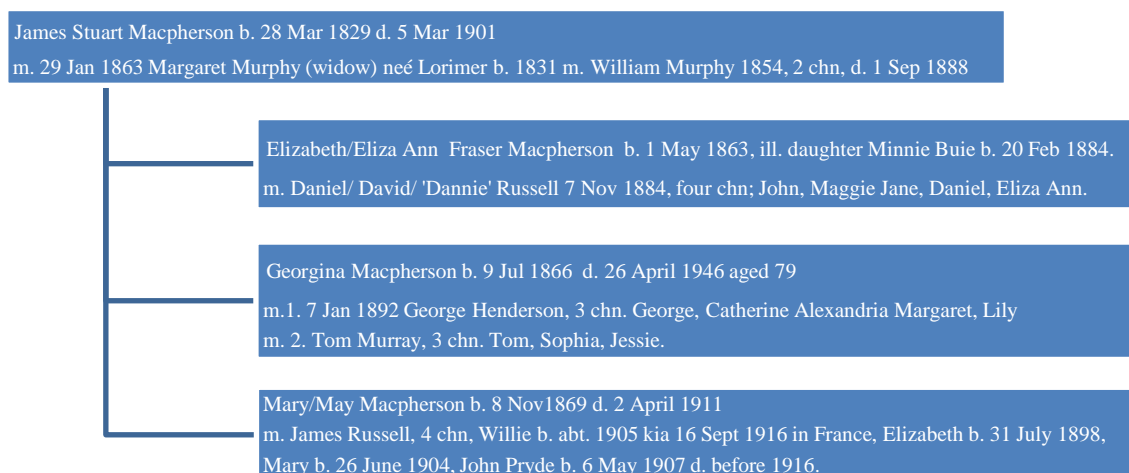
Since only the two youngest children had been born in Woodside, and the rest in Portsoy, it appears that the Eliza and Daniel's family had moved south to Aberdeen between 1893 and 1898. There they probably linked up with the Lorimers who had a shoemaking business in Aberdeen with a large shop on Union Street. Catherine Baillie recalled her great great grandmother Georgina Murray saying that the Union Street shoe shop owner was her cousin and that his factory workers once went on strike because he would not pay the going pay rise.

Eliza Ann Russell outlived Daniel and died 4 June 1933 of diabetes and a septic foot aged 70 in the Aberdeen Infirmary, last resident at 4 Western Road, Woodside (SR, 1933). Eliza Ann and Mary's middle sister,



Georgina McPherson, who was born 9 July 1866 (SR, 1866a), outlived both of her sisters. Family oral history (Baillie, 2012) has it that she married twice; first to George Henderson, a merchant seaman, and then to Thomas Murray, a marine stoker. Although George Henderson was lost at sea, and his death went unrecorded, Georgina received a very small pension from the service. She died aged 79 at 15 Fish Street, Aberdeen, of cardio vascular degeneration on 26 April 1946 (SR, 1946).

Figure 3 overleaf summarises James Stuart Macpherson and Margaret Murphy née Lorimer's family.  
 Figure 3: James Stuart Macpherson and Margaret Murphy née Lorimer's Family



### James and Betsy's second child, Charles Stuart McPherson

Charles married Elspet Smith on 7 July 1851 (OPR, 1851a). Elspet signed her name on her children's birth certificates with an 'X'. They had eight children.

The eldest was Charles McPherson, born about 1851, who moved to New Zealand with his uncle William (as noted above, see Figure 2) to build roads and bridges, mine gold and then become Dredgemaster at Greymouth (McPherson, 2010). A separate chapter has been written about these two sons of Portsoy.

Second born was Isabella McPherson, born about 1855. Third was James McPherson born on 27 April 1857 (SR, 1857a).

The fourth child born, a twin, was William Smith McPherson born 20 November 1858 (SR, 1858a). He died aged three months on 14 February 1859 (SR, 1859a). His twin Elizabeth McPherson was born 20 November 1858 (SR, 1858b) and died aged 8 on 13 July 1867 in Portsoy (SR, 1867a).

The sixth child was another William McPherson, born 26 June 1861 (SR, 1861a), but who died of mesenteric disease (rickets) when three years old, on 7 January 1865 (SR, 1865). Rickets is a disease associated with poverty.

The seventh child was Helen McPherson born 3 February 1864 (SR, 1864). The eighth and final child was Elsie McPherson born 18 November 1866 (SR, 1866c) and died 31 July 1867 (SR, 1867b), aged 8 months.

Additional and tragic evidence about this family came from the Census records. In 1861, Charles Stuart McPherson, aged 29, and Elspet Smith, aged 32 (born about 1829), were living with their family in the Hill of Cowhythe (Census, 1861c). Listed as resident were four children; Charles aged 10 (born about 1851), Isabella aged 6 (born about 1856), James aged three and Elizabeth aged two. They had lost a baby William Smith when he was three months old.

By 1871, they had moved to 61 Shillinghill Street (Census, 1871a), a street that runs down the ridge on the east of the port. The parents were listed as Charles McPherson, a quarryman/stoner aged 41, and his wife Elspet aged 40. With them were James, a scholar aged 14, and a daughter Helen, a scholar aged 7. Elizabeth 'Betsy' and the second William had both died.

By 1881, Charles Stuart McPherson was recorded (Census, 1881a) as being a stone miner aged 50 and the head of household still at 61 Shillinghill Street, Portsoy. He was living with his wife Elspet (née Smith) aged 52

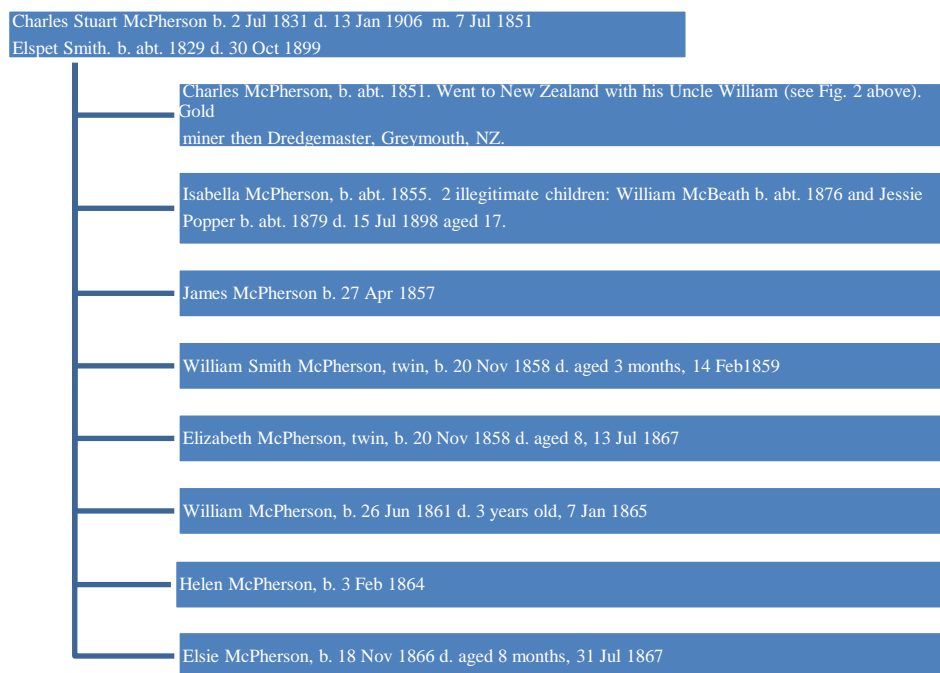
(born about 1829), his unmarried daughter Isabella who was a domestic servant aged 26 (born about 1855), and his grandson William McBeath aged 5 (born about 1876) and granddaughter Jessie Popper aged 2 (born about 1879) (Census, 1881b).

The next Census showed that Charles aged 59 and Elspet aged 60 were the only McPhersons still living at Shillinghill (Census, 1891d). By 1901 Charles aged 70 was living alone in Shillinghill (Census, 1901c), his wife Elspet having died 30<sup>th</sup> October 1899 (SR, 1899). Charles Stuart's death certificate (SR, 1906) indicated that he died 13th January 1906 as a pauper aged 75 at 1 or 7 Burnside Court and confirmed that he was the son of James and Betsy McPherson (neé Stewart).

Jessie had a brief and sad life. Her death certificate dated 15 July 1898 (SR, 1898b) records that she died aged 17 having suffered two years from scrofula (a skin disease that can be a form of tuberculosis affecting the lymph nodes) and two years of dropsy (the swelling of soft tissues due to the accumulation of excess water, today referred to as oedema, possibly due to congestive heart failure). It also notes that she was born illegitimate, reputed to be the daughter of Alexander Popper, a general merchant in Portsoy, and that her mother was known as Isabella Bremner (neé McPherson). Her grandfather Charles Stuart McPherson was present at her death. Her story illustrates the poor medical support services available in the late 1800s, and the importance of 'lawful' marriages which bestowed legitimacy and moral force on a child's claims for parental support.

Figure 4 below summarises what is known of Charles and Elspet McPherson's family.

Figure 4: Charles Stuart McPherson and Elspet Smith's Family



### James and Betsy's third child, Ann McPherson

Ann was born on 22 April 1833 (OPR, 1833) and married William Smith from Keith, Banffshire. As noted above, she was 23, employed as a domestic servant in Portsoy and the daughter of James McPherson and Elizabeth Stuart. William Smith was 19 and a son of John Smith and Jane Duncan. The marriage was held in Portsoy on 28 April 1857 (SR, 1857c). Nothing further is known about this couple.

### James and Betsy's fourth and fifth children, Alexander and Cameron Stuart McPherson

Alexander was born 17 July 1835 (OPR, 1835a). He left home between 1851 and 1861 and nothing else is known of his fate.

Cameron Stuart McPherson was born 10 August 1839 (OPR, 1839a). Sometime between 1851 and 1861 (aged 12-22) he moved to Aberdeen, probably in search of work. He married when he was 45, a carter. He married the widow Ann Lyon née Scott in Aberdeen, aged 48 and originally from Dundee, on 3 July 1886, at St Nicholas. As noted above, he gave his parents as Cameron and Jane McPherson née Stewart (SR, 1886b). This was corrected on his death certificate when he died 9 January 1894 and Joan Murray acted as informant. His parents were confirmed as James and Elizabeth McPherson née Stewart (SR, 1894 ). Cameron died of 'natural causes' and 'syncope' or fainting, which can have many causes. Give their late marriage it is unlikely that Cameron and Ann had any children.

In 1891, the Census recorded Cameron and Ann as resident at 69 Commerce Street, Aberdeen. They were neighbours to Joan and Andrew Murray who were resident in 70 Commerce Street with their children David (20), Georgina (18), Christina (11) and Lilly Joan/ Johan (8) (Census, 1891g).

### **James and Betsy's sixth child, Daniel/ Donald William McPherson**

Daniel/ Donald was born 5 September 1841, left home between 1851 and 1861 and later returned home to live with his widowed mother Betsy at Droughty's Close, Portsoy, for the next Census (1881c), and then at Burnside Street in 1891 (Census, 1891c) and 1901 (Census, 1901c).

### **James and Betsy's seventh and eighth children, twins Elizabeth and Jane McPherson**

Elizabeth was born about 1843 and died 12 January 1902 (SR, 1902). Combining the information provided by the 1881 Census of 70 Droughty's Close (Census, 1881c) and birth records suggests that Elizabeth, a general domestic servant, had either five or six illegitimate children; Jemima Cameron born 31 August 1861 (SR, 1861b); Jane Brown born 19 December 1863 (SR, 1863b); Margaret born 22 August 1866 (SR, 1866b); Mary born 3 July 1870 (SR, 1870b)/ Mary J. born about 1876 and William Brown born about 1878. Nothing else is known of the fate of Elizabeth or her children.

Jane was born about 1843. Little is known of her. She had an illegitimate daughter Williamina McPherson born about 28 August 1869 (SR, 1869a) but who died aged 10 on 6 October 1879 (SR, 1879a).

### **James and Betsy's ninth, Joan/ Johan McPherson**

The descendants of Joan/ Johan McPherson were introduced above and are being researched. Current findings should be regarded as provisional. Patricia Paterson of Aberdeen (2011) explained:

I have been researching my mother's family and have discovered a direct link back to James and Elizabeth (Betsy) McPherson. Their daughter Joan (Johan) was my Great Grandmother and died at my Grandmother's home in Aberdeen in 1917. My findings are that I doubt if there was a daughter 'Susan' as the child aged 3 in the 1851 census [although it] is the age Joan would have been at that time. Joan is shown aged 13 years in the 1861 census along with brothers James (can't read age) brother Cameron age 22, twin sisters Jane and Elizabeth aged 18 years, brother William 11 years and sister Christina age 6 years. On the 1871 census, Joan is still at home, age given as 22, with sister Elizabeth, brother William and sister Christina, with grandchildren also listed. My findings are that it was her elder twin sister Jane that had several illegitimate children and Joan only a boy James who died aged 2 months. Joan married my great grandfather Andrew Murray in Aberdeen in 1878, her occupation given as domestic servant and her address is the local lodging house. Andrew had two children by a previous wife who had died young and he and Joan went on to have daughters Christina and Lilly Joan (my grandmother).

She added (Paterson, 2012)

On 1881 Census, Joan (Johan) McPherson and husband Andrew Murray are shown at 4 Canal Lane, Aberdeen, with his daughter Georgina (8) and their first daughter Christina (1). It was at this address my Grandmother Lilly Joan was born 11.10.83. Joan Murray died on 8.8.1917 at 42 Walker Road, which was the home of her daughter Lilly Joan and her husband William Main (my Grandparents).

A provisional summary follows including additional research. Joan McPherson's birth record has not been found. However, according to her record of death (SR, 1917), Joan Murray née McPherson died 8 August 1917, aged 68, which meant that she was born about 1849.

As Pat Paterson noted, it is almost certain that she was mistakenly recorded by the 1851 Census as Susan, aged 3, along with her parents James (44) and Elizabeth McPherson (40), and her siblings Anne (18), Cameron (12), Donald William (10), twin Jane (7), twin Elizabeth (7), and William (11 months) (Census, 1851e). She was correctly recorded as Joan in the following Census.

Joan had an illegitimate child in Portsoy; James McPherson born 9 June 1877 (SR, 1877a) but who died two months later on 26 August 1877 (SR, 1877b) when his eustachion tube failed to close. She moved to Aberdeen and married Andrew Murray, a seaman and widower of Isabella Pirie, in the Old Machar District of Aberdeen, on 9 November 1878 (SR, 1878b). Oddly, her parents were given as James McPherson, a granite quarrier, and Margaret McPherson née Watson. This account was largely corrected on her death record where her parents were given as James McPherson, crofter, Elizabeth McPherson, née Stuart (SR, 1917).

### **James and Betsy's tenth child William McPherson**

William was born 21 April 1850. He was a seaman who rose to the position of Captain, Harbourmaster (McPherson, 2010) (see right). William arrived at Hokitika in New Zealand in 1874 along with his brother Charles McPherson's son of about the same age, also named Charles. As noted above, this Charles Jnr. was born in Portsoy about 1851, his mother Elspeth Smith.

After a period road making, gold mining and bridge building, they both settled in Greymouth, married and had families. They both worked for the Harbour Board, William initially as a pilot, then qualifying in Wellington (*Wanganui Chronicle*, 1897) to become Harbourmaster in Greymouth (*Grey River Argus*, 1914). William is a great grandfather of Roy McPherson in Flagstaff, Arizona USA (McPherson, 2010).

Charles became Dredgemaster in Greymouth. Both William and Charles have descendants in New Zealand.

A separate chapter of the McPhersons of the West Coast of New Zealand has been written with Ron, Peter and Lori McPherson.



### **James and Betsy's eleventh child, George McPherson**

George was born about 1852 and died when 3 years old on 19 April 1855 (SR, 1855b).

### **James and Betsy's twelfth child, Christina Helen McPherson**

Christina was born 4 December 1854 (OPR, 1854a) and married Alexander McHattie 1 July 1871 (SR, 1871b). Their first child James was born a month later on the 5th of August 1871 (SR, 1871a). They had six other children in the Old Machar District of Aberdeen:

- Alexander McHattie, born 23 May 1873 (SR, 1873b);
- John McHattie, born 21 September 1875 (SR, 1875a);
- Christina, born 20 December 1882 (SR, 1882);

- William Christopher McHattie, born 27 May 1884 (SR, 1884b) and died 12 April 1918 in France, WW1 (CGWC, 1918); and
- Alfred, born 12 March 1891 (SR, 1891).

The photograph to the right (McPherson, 2010) was taken in 1926. It shows left to right Alfred McHattie's wife (first name unknown), Christina (Tina) McHattie, daughter to Christina, Christina aged about 72 (né McPherson), and her son Alfred McHattie Snr. holding Alfred McHattie Jnr. Christina died 11 December 1937 in Aberdeen aged 82 (SR, 1937).



It is also known (McPherson, 2010) that Alfred McHattie Snr. died in 1973 at Derby, England, as did his son Alfred McHattie Jnr. in 1995. Alfred McHattie Snr.'s other son, Charles McHattie, died 26 June 1959 in Los Angeles, USA.

An appropriate ending to this section about William McPherson and Elspet Duff's first child James' (and Betsy Stewart's) children, was provided by Roy McPherson (2010);

In the cemetery at Portsoy where James McPherson and wife Elizabeth Stuart are buried there is a very small heart shaped headstone, with James and Elizabeth's names inscribed on it. This was made by Alexander McHattie, a stone mason who married James and Elizabeth's youngest daughter Christina.

### **William McPherson and Elspet Duff's second child, William**

William was born 17 October 1802 (OPR, 1802a). He may have been trained in Portsoy as a flax dresser for the linen industry but moved to Aberdeen for work. A flax dresser 'breaks' and 'swingles' flax by steeping it in bicarbonate of soda and acids to prepare it for bleaching and spinning like cotton.

William's move was well timed; it coincided with Scotland changing its economic base from agriculture to textile manufacturing. The linen industry was central to the industrialisation of Scotland (Durie, 1979). When the American War of Independence ended in 1781, the huge profits gained from the tobacco trade between Scotland and the American colonies were switched into the production of linen, leading Scotland's exports for a century.

The linen industry in Scotland was encouraged because it complemented the English wool industry (see right, the British Linen Bank in Glasgow built in 1747). The water-powered linen industry in Scotland paved the way for an even more profitable industry, cotton manufacturing, until the American Civil War in the 1860s ended slavery. Investment switched into heavy industry. By 1900, Scotland's shipbuilding and engineering industrialisation, based on coal, iron and steel, had outstripped textiles.



William McPherson married Catherine Alexander Sinclair on 3 May 1829 (OPR, 1829d) in the Leslie Church, Fife (see right). It was her home town where she had been born about 1801. They returned to Aberdeen after the marriage, had their first two children there, the boys, but later returned to Leslie to have two more, both girls.



One reason for returning to Leslie was that it was a prosperous centre of the linen industry. Another was that Catherine rejoined her wide family network. She was the third child of Alexander Sinclair and Agnes Davidson who had married 21 December 1788 (OPR, 1788b) and 12 years later started having their seven children. Their eldest was a possible twin, George Sinclair (OPR, 1800c), who married Mary Temple 26 February 1826 and emigrated to Dunedin, New Zealand, and had two children (Alexander and Charles). George married again, to Margery Heron, and had four more children (Alexander, Mary, Agnes and John).

The other children of Alexander Sinclair and Agnes Davidson were: the other possible twin Agnes Sinclair; Catherine Alexander Sinclair, wife to William McPherson; David Sinclair (OPR, 1802b) who married Elizabeth Donaldson 1 June 1828 in Leslie and had at least two children (Alexander Sinclair (OPR, 1804c) and Janet Sinclair born about 1805); and James Sinclair (OPR, 1810), who appears to have married Agnes Adamson and had four children (Alexander, Janet, Agnes and Isabella).

As noted above, William McPherson and Catherine Sinclair returned to Aberdeen to work after their marriage. They christened two sons in the 'Old Machar', that is, St Machar's Cathedral (see right); John McPherson on 14 December 1832 (OPR, 1832) and Alexander Sinclair McPherson on 8 December 1834 (OPR, 1834b). Sometime between 1835 and 1837 William McPherson and Catherine Alexander Sinclair moved back to Leslie in Fife and then had two more children; Alison/ Elizabeth McPherson born 8 November 1837 (OPR, 1837) and Agnes McPherson born 8 November 1839 (OPR, 1839b). They will now be introduced in turn, although what is known varies hugely.



**William and Catherine Sinclair's eldest son, John**, married Martha Coutts on 12 December 1851 (OPR, 1851b) at East Church, Aberdeen. Martha was born 18 October 1836 (OPR, 1836b) in Ellon. John and Martha had two children; Anne McPherson and George

McPherson, born about 1877. John and Martha seemed to have stayed on in Aberdeen until about 1871. The records are then confusing.

When the Census was held on 30 March 1851 (Census, 1851d), John McPherson, a coal carter aged 30, his wife Martha, aged 40 (therefore born about 1811), and their daughter Anne aged 4 (born about 1847) were recorded as resident at Causewayend (see right) in the Old Machar Parish of Aberdeen. By the next Census, held 7 April 1861 (Census, 1861e), John and Martha were still in Causewayend with their daughter Anne absent and their son George aged 4 (born about 1857) present. None of John and Martha's family were recorded as being resident in Scotland between 1871 and 1901 and may have migrated.



**William and Catherine's second son, Alexander Sinclair McPherson**, was born 8 December 1834, moved to Leeds, England, possibly via Dundee and completed an apprenticeship as an engineering draughtsman with John Fairburn. He anglicised the spelling of his surname to Macpherson and became a textile machinery and tool manufacturer. He married Sarah Brown Walker probably between 1862 and 1866. She was born about 1843 and died 18 November 1910 aged 86 (FreeBMD, England & Wales, 1910).

Another chapter, the Macphersons of Leeds, focuses on the many descendants of Alexander Sinclair Macpherson and his wife Sarah Brown Walker. In brief, they had four children. First was Mary Barras Macpherson (born 1867, married the Rev. William Yeadon Potter 13 July 1893, had one daughter - Dr Kathleen Mary Potter born 5 January 1898 and died 12 May 1941). Second was 'Major' William Walker Macpherson (born December 1867, married Eliza 'Tye' Sarah Stanford 14 August 1895, and had two daughters Phylis Mary, born 1899 and Jean Sinclair, born 1901). Third was Henry Macpherson, known as 'Harry'. He was born 17 July

1869, married Lily Hallowell 5 June 1894, had eight children, and died 19 March 1942. Fourth was Arthur Herbert Macpherson who was born 1 July 1871 and died six weeks later, 24 August 1871.

*William and Catherine's daughters, Alison/ Elizabeth and Agnes McPherson* worked for a period in domestic service, migrated to the South Island of New Zealand and married successfully.

The revised edition of William Downie Stewart's *Journal of George Hepburn* (Hutton, 2010) reprints George's letter home to his sister in 18 July 1879 in which he states that he is (p. 140) "Glad to say that Agnes McPherson is now married to an elderly man in good circumstances, but have not seen her yet. She was a very nice young person. Her sister [Alison] is also well married, but out of town a good distance. They are both independent of their brother now." George later (p. 142) confirmed that Agnes McPherson had married a John McDermid, a retired blacksmith able to live on his rents; "a very steady man, I have known him long." He added (p. 151) that "they live in Dunedin in a fine house and garden of their own ... and they live on their money, very happy, and he is a respectable man, very quiet in his habits, she has fallen on her feet." His last word (p. 153), after another meeting with her, was that Agnes was "looking well, and they are well off in worldly circumstances, and happy I think."

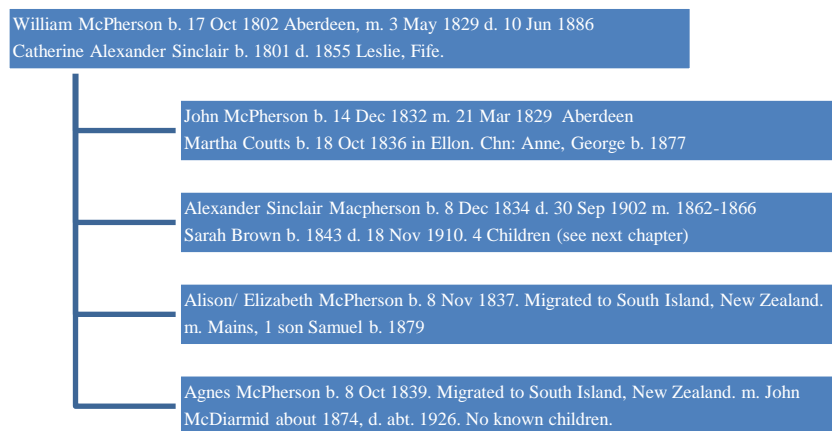
Alison apparently married Mr Mayne in 1874 (Hutton, 2010, p. 140), may have also been known as Elizabeth and had a son Samuel in 1879. Nothing else is known of Alison and Agnes at this time.

William McPherson outlived his wife Catherine Alexander Sinclair in Leslie by 11 years. She died in 1855. Five years later the Census found in "65 Back Street, Leslie, Fife, William McPherson, Head [of household], widower 59, Flaxdresser, born Banffshire, Portsoy, 2 rooms with one or more windows" (Census, 1861f).

Five years later, when he died on the 10<sup>th</sup> June 1866, it was confirmed by his brother-in-law, Ian Sinclair, that William's father had been "a flesher, mother was Elspeth McPherson, maiden surname Duff."

Figure 5 summarises the descendants of William McPherson and Catherine Sinclair.

Figure 5: William McPherson and Catherine Alexander Sinclair's Family



### William McPherson and Elspet Duff's third child, John McPherson

John was born 30th March 1804. There is no record of marriage, children or residence recorded in Banff or his death in Scotland.

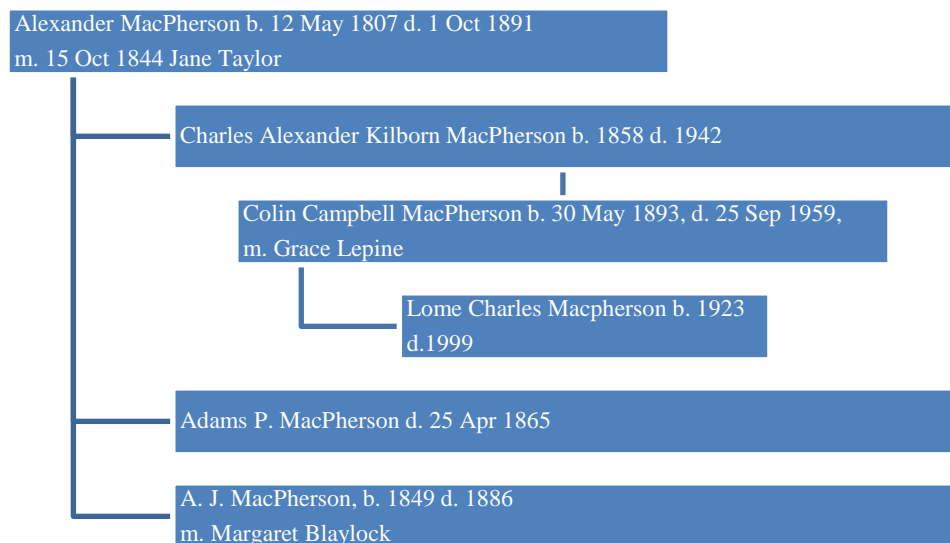
### William and Elspet's fourth and sixth children, Alexander MacPherson and Elizabeth MacPherson

These two are grouped because they emigrated together in 1836 to Canada. Baie (Bay) Macpherson on Lake Memphremagog in Quebec Province is named after them (McPherson, 2010). A fuller description in *Creag Dhubh* (the Clan Macpherson journal) (Macpherson, 2004, p. 23) suggests that Alexander and Elizabeth flourished:

*Baie MacPherson* [45°07'N; 72°15'W], Stanstead Municipality, a bay on the eastern shore of Lake Memphremagog, twelve miles south of Magog and two miles south of Georgeville, and originally known as Limestone Bay. Named after the family of Alexander MacPherson (1811-1891) who emigrated in 1836 from Portsoy, Banffshire, Scotland, with his sister, Elizabeth; their parents were William MacPherson (1778-1819) and Elspet Duff (1778-1862) of Portsoy; he was born 12 May 1811. He came as a farm manager, recommended by the Agricultural College of Scotland, at the behest of Col. Alexander Kilborn of Stanstead, but settled Lot 27, Range 11, on the north side and northeast corner of the bay in 1843. He married Jane Taylor, 15 October 1844 (Baptist Church register, Hatley, Stanstead Co.). The farm was carried on by his son Charles Alexander Kilborn MacPherson (1858-1942), and retained by his grandson Colin Campbell MacPherson (1893-1959), and his greatgrandson Lome Charles Macpherson (1923-1999). Colin moved to Magog at the head of the lake and established a logging enterprise that expanded in Georgeville and Magog. All generations were prominent in community affairs; Lorne served in the RCAF in the Second World War, was a local historian of some renown in the Stanstead Historical Society, and was the author of *Damn Tight Places*, about the Indian Mutiny of 1857. The municipal wharf in Magog is also named after the family. [Putnam & Gray's "Map of the District of St Francis", 1863; *Eastern Townships Directory*, 1892: 335; *Répertoire Toponymique du Québec*, 1978: 668; *Stanstead Historical Society, Journal*, 2001: 5-7)

There are likely to have been many descendants of William McPherson and Elspet Duff in Quebec. A survey of the MacPherson Cemetery in Georgeville, Stanstead County, Quebec compiled 485 entries (Nutbrown, 2007). Figure 6 below was assembled by linking the *Creag Dubh* information with the entries with a MacPherson surname. A chapter on the Quebec MacPhersons may be warranted.

Figure 6: Alexander MacPherson and Jane Taylor's Family (Preliminary Only)





### **William McPherson and Elspet Duff's fifth child George McPherson**

George was born on 22 May 1809 (OPR, 1809b). It appears that he was living in Charleston in the Aberlour Parish of Banffshire when he married Penuel McKenzie from Inveravon in Aberlour on 16 of February 1828 (OPR, 1828d). She was born 1 Oct 1803 (OPR, 1803b). As Catherine Baillie observed (2012), they also had their marriage recorded in Penuel's church in Greenmoss in the Aberlour Parish (OPR, 1828e). This couple were living in Charleston the following year when they had their only child recorded in Banff; a daughter Jean born 16 March (OPR, 1829a). Nothing more is known of this family.

### **William McPherson and Elspet Duff's seventh child, Elspet McPherson**

Elspet was born 12 January 1814. She is only known only to have married George Fraser on 29 November 1835 (OPR, 1835b) at Aberlour.

### **William and Elspet's eighth and ninth children, Adam and Forbes Watson McPherson**

Adam and Forbes Watson have no record of marriage, children or residence recorded in Banff or death in Scotland.

### **Summary**

That concludes the known descendent of William McPherson and Elspet Duff of Portsoy. There were other McPhersons (or alternative spellings) found by Census to be resident in the Parish of Fordyce but do not appear to be related to their offspring:

- In 1841 a Daniel McPherson was resident in Seatown, probably a fisherman's hostel, aged 70 (born about 1771) (Census, 1841b)
- In 1841 William McPherson, a student born in Fordyce, was living in Fordyce Village aged 15 (born about 1826) (Census, 1841a)
- In 1851, a police officer Joseph McPherson aged 28 born in Aberdeen was living in South Street, Portsoy with his wife Margaret aged 30 and two daughters, Jane aged 4 and Margaret aged 2 (Census, 1851a)
- In 1861, James McPherson, an agricultural labourer aged 64 (born about 1797), was boarding with George and Isabella Gordon at 21 Old Cullen Road, Portsoy (Census, 1861a)
- In 1871, James McPherson, an unmarried farm servant to Hugh Allan, JP and his wife Janet, was aged 33 (born about 1838) and born in Lochaber, Morayshire (Census, 1871d).
- In 1891, Alexander Macpherson, a married farm servant aged 54 (born about 1837 in Cullen Banffshire) was working at Buttery Tack Farm, Cornhill, 5 kilometres south of Portsoy (Census, 1891b). He may have been the same person as the Alexander McPherson (Census, 1901b), a married cattleman aged 60 (born about 1841 in Cullen, Banffshire) who was employed in 1901 by James Smith, farmer of Williamston, Cornhill, 5 kilometres south of Portsoy.
- The Isabella McPherson buried at Portsoy, and married to Thomas McLean, has proved untraceable.

### **Conclusions**

Three tentative conclusions can be drawn from the information above.

First, the McPhersons known to have been born in Portsoy are likely to have many other unknown descendants, especially from those who 'married out' into other families and those who emigrated in search of better opportunities. I look forward to hearing about them and adding them to this account. To assist I have added a summary of the Census data by address overleaf as Figure 2, with family groups highlighted in different colours.

Second, it is inevitable that I have made some errors in tracing the descendants of William McPherson and Elspet Duff of Portsoy. I welcome corrections along with supportive evidence.

Third, the data above often indicates a poor quality of life in Portsoy. Many died young. Many died of diseases associated with poverty. Few had primary education or any technical training. Few lived over 60. Many moved from Portsoy in search of opportunities and kept the surname alive.

In sum, it appears that life in Portsoy proved for many McPhersons to be short, painful, fearful and destructive of family coherence, possibly reflecting the effects of the Battle of Culloden, the Highland Clearances and the limited development and availability of health, welfare and educational services.

Figure 7: Summary of the Census data by McPherson Family in Portsoy and by address

McPhersons in Fordyce by Census	Date Born	Date Died	1841		1851		1861		1871		1881		1891		1901	
			Address	Age	Address	Age	Address	Age	Address	Age	Address	Age	Address	Age	Address	Age
Daniel	abt 1771		Seatrim	70												
James (Father)	23 Oct 1800	2 Oct 1875	Old Kirk Rd	30	Coinland Rd	44	Burnside St	56	Burnside St	64						
Eliza/ Elizabeth (M)	1809	10 May 1891	Old Kirk Rd	30	Coinland Rd	40	Burnside St	52	Burnside St	60	Droughty's Close	71	Burnside St	82		
James Stuart (S)	28 Mar 1829		Old Kirk Rd	12			Burnside St	32	See family below							
Charles Stuart (S)	2 Jul 1831	13 Jan 1906	Old Kirk Rd	10			See family below									
Ann (D)	22 Apr 1833		Old Kirk Rd	8	Coinland Rd	18										
Alexander (S)	17 Jul 1835		Old Kirk Rd	6												
Cameron Stuart (S)	10Aug1839		Old Kirk Rd	2	Coinland Rd	12	Burnside St	22								
Daniel/ Donald (S)	5 Sep 1841				Coinland Rd	10					Droughty's Close	38	Burnside St	50	Burnside St	55
Elizabeth (D)	1843	12 Jan 1902			Coinland Rd	7	Burnside St	18	Burnside St	27	Droughty's Close	36	Burnside St	48	Burnside St	52
Jane/ Joan/ Johan (D)	1843	12 Jan 1902			Coinland Rd	7	Burnside St	18	Burnside St	22						
Susan/ (D) b.	abt 1848	after 1871			Coinland Rd	3	Burnside St	13								
William (S)	21 Apr 1850				Coinland Rd	11m	Burnside St	11	Burnside St	20						
George (S)	abt. 1852	19 Apr 1855														
Christina Helen (D)	4 Dec 1854						Burnside St	6	Burnside St	17						
Jemima (GD)	31 Aug 1861								Burnside St	10	Droughty's Close	19				
Jane (GD)									Burnside St	7						
Margaret (GD)	1867								Burnside St	4	Droughty's Close	14				
Mary (GD)	1871								Burnside St	9m	Droughty's Close	10				
Mary J. Simpson (GD)	1876										Droughty's Close	5	Burnside St	15		
William (GS)	1881										Droughty's Close	3 m				
Lizzie Wilson (GD)	1882												Burnside St	9	Burnside St	19
James Stuart (Father)	28 Mar 1829								Schoolhendry St	42	Schoolhendry St	52	Burnside St	62		
Margaret Murphy (M)	abt. 1832	1 Sep 1888							Schoolhendry St	39	Schoolhendry St	49				
Margaret Murphy (SD)	abt. 1856															
William McKay (SS)	abt. 1861															
Eliza Ann Fraser (D)	1May1863								Schoolhendry St	7	Schoolhendry St	17				
Georgina S (D)	9 Jul 1866								Schoolhendry St	4	Schoolhendry St	14				
Mary (D)	8 Nov 1869	5Apr1911							Schoolhendry St	1	Schoolhendry St	10	Burnside St	21		
Charles Stuart (F)	2 Jul 1831						Hill of Cowhythe	29	Shillinghill St	41	Shillinghill St	50	Shillinghill St	59	Shillinghill St	70
Elspeit Smith (M)	1929						Hill of Cowhythe	32	Shillinghill St	40	Shillinghill St	49	Shillinghill St	59		
Charles (S)	1851						Hill of Cowhythe	10								
Isabella Bremner (D)	1855						Hill of Cowhythe	6			Shillinghill St	26				
James (S)	27 Apr 1857						Hill of Cowhythe	3	Shillinghill St	14						
William Smith (S)	20 Nov 1858	14 Feb 1859														
Elizabeth 'Betsy' (D)	20 Nov 1858	13 Jul 1867					Hill of Cowhythe	2								
William (S)	26 Jun 1861	7 Jan 1865														
Helen (D)	3 Feb 1864								Shillinghill St	7						
Elsie (D)	18 Nov 1866	31 Jul 1867														
William McBeath(GS)	abt. 1876										Shillinghill St	5				
Jessie Popper (GD)	abt. 1879	15 Jul 1898									Shillinghill St	2				
William			Fordyce Vill	15												
Joseph, policeman					South St	26										
Margaret					South St	30										
Jane					South St	4			Kindrough	24						
Margaret					South St	2										
James							22 Old Cullen Rd	64								
James	abt 1848										Mains of Glassough	33				
Alexander b. Lochaber	1852												Buttertack	54		
Alexander b. Cullen															Williamston	60

## References

- Baillie, C. (2011). Personal communication, emails 20, 25, 26 June, 19 July, workshop 6-7 August, Aberdeen, editing 7-12 August.
- Baillie, C. (2012). Personal communication, emails, 18, 25 January.
- Census (1841a). 153/00 003/00 017 William McPherson, Village of Fordyce, born in Fordyce.
- Census (1841b). 153/00 007/00 007 Daniel McPherson, Seatown, Portsoy, born in Portsoy.
- Census (1841c). 153/00 007/00 015 James McPherson, Old Kirk Road, aged 30, with wife Eliza 30, James 12, Charles 10, Ann 8, Alexander 6, Cameron 2, all born in Portsoy.
- Census (1851a). 153/00 008/00 008 Joseph McPherson, a Police Officer born in Aberdeen, aged 26, wife Margaret aged 30, daughter Jane aged 4, and daughter Margaret aged 2. .
- Census (1851b). 153/00 008/00 040 Donald James? McPherson, Coinland Road, Portsoy, son of James McPherson and Elizabeth Stuart.
- Census (1851c). 153/00 008/00 040 James McPherson, Coinland Road, Portsoy, born in Moy aged 44, wife Eliza 40, Ann 18, Cameron 18, Donald 10, Jane 7, Elizabeth 7, Susan 3, William 11 months, all born in Portsoy.
- Census (1851d). 168/0B 030/0B 011 Old Machar, Aberdeen, John, Martha and Anne McPherson.
- Census (1851e). Susan McPherson, 153/00 008/00 040, aged 3, parents James (44) and Elizabeth McPherson (40), siblings Anne (18), Cameron (12), Donald William (10), Jane (7), Elizabeth (7), William (11 months).
- Census (1861a). 153/00 008/00 015, James McPherson, boarding with George and Isabella Goron, 21 Old Cullen Road, Portsoy.
- Census (1861b). 153/00 008/00 033 James and Elizabeth McPherson, 1 Burnside, Portsoy.
- Census (1861c). 153/00 009/00 008 Charles McPherson, Hill of Cowwhythe, born in Portsoy.
- Census (1861d). 157/02 004/00 0131 7 May, James McPherson , farmer of Tomlianon, Inveravon, aged 50 and farmer of 120 acres, wife Margaret McPherson aged 53, son William 23, son George aged 2, son James aged 14, son Robert aged 12, daughter Anne aged 10, son Alexander aged 8, servant Elsie Grant aged 22, ploughman James Murray aged 20 and ploughman name? aged 18.
- Census (1861e). 168/01 049/01 015, Aberdeen, John, Martha and George McPherson.
- Census (1861f). 444/00 004/00 012 65 Back Street, Leslie, Fyfe, Scotland.
- Census (1871a). 153/00 007/00 018 Charles McPherson, Shillinghill Street, born in Portsoy.
- Census (1871b). 153/00 007/00 032 James McPherson, Shillinghill Street, Portsoy, born in Portsoy. Head of household, aged 42 agricultural labourer. The rest of his family are on the next page, page 33.
- Census (1871c). 153/00 007/00 033 James McPherson, 1 Burnside Street, Portsoy, born in Moyhall, Invernesshire
- Census (1871d). 153/01 004/01 008 James McPherson, unmarried farm servant to Hugh Allan JP, Portsoy, born in Lochaber, Morayshire.
- Census (1871e). 1871 157/02 006/00 007 James McPherson, Tomnalienan, Inveravon, aged 70, farmer of 120 acres arable employing 2 men and 1 girl, Margaret McPherson, wife aged 62, James his son aged 24, Robert his son aged 23, MB physician, Ann his daughter aged 18, Alexander his son aged 18, a student of mechanics at te University of Aberdeen, with Charles McLarue, servant 24, James Murray, farm servant 24, Jessie McGovern domestic servant 18, and Alex Middleton, a shepherd 16.
- Census (1881a). 153/02 003/02 011 Charles McPherson.
- Census (1881b). 153/02 003/02 011 Charles McPherson, stone miner, aged 50, 1 Shillinghill St., born in Portsoy, with Elpeth McPherson , stone miner's wife aged 52, unmarried daughter Isobella aged 26 and domestic servant, grandchild William McBeath aged 5, and grandchild Jessie Peper aged 2, all born in Portsoy.
- Census (1881c). 153/ 02 003 02 013 Elizabeth McPherson, head of Droughty's Close, aged 71 (born about 1810) agricultural labourer's widow, son Donald, daughter Elizabeth, 4 granddaughters and a grandson.
- Census (1881d). 157/02 006/00 005 James McPherson, aged 75, farming 254 acres of which 140 were arable, employing three men, one boy and one girl. His wife Margaret, 73 and he were living in five rooms that had at least one window. One child still at home; James aged 34. Three agricultural servants; John McIntosh aged 22, James Murray, 38, and Peter, 14, and Margaret McGillvray, 18.
- Census (1881e). Andrew and Joan Murray, 4 Canal Lane, Aberdeen, with his child Georgina Murray (8) and their first daughter Christina Murray (1).

- Census (1891a). 153/01 005/00 003 James McPherson aged 44, unmarried head of Auchmillie Farm in Fordyce. His sister Annie aged 39, was his housekeeper. Three farm servants; Alexander Clarke 18, Robert Bain 17 and Peter Metcalf 14. Two domestic servants; Mary Mackay 32 and Jane McLean 22. They had a visitor, Lizzie Crass, 32.
- Census (1891b). 153/02 003/02 013 Donald Macpherson, unmarried general labourer aged 38, Droughty's Close, Portsoy, with mother Elizabeth aged 71, his sister Elizabeth general domestic servant aged 36, and her children, Jemma aged 19, Margaret aged 14, Mary aged 10, Mary J. aged 5, and William aged 3 months, all born in Portsoy.
- Census (1891c). 153/02 003/02 027 Elizabeth Macpherson, head, Burnside St., aged 82, general labourer's widow, with her unmarried son Donald Macpherson aged 50, an agricultural labourer, her daughter Elizabeth Macpherson, aged 40, a general domestic servant, her granddaughter Mary. J. Simpson aged 15, a domestic servant born in Aberdeen, and granddaughter Lizzie Wilson aged 9, a scholar. All but Mary J. born in Portsoy.
- Census (1891d). 153/02 003/02 030 Charles McPherson, general labourer, aged 58, Shillinghill St., born in Portsoy, with Elpeth McPherson, wife aged 60, both born in Portsoy.
- Census (1891e). 168/01 037/01 015 Cameron McPherson, labourer aged 55 born in Portsoy, resident in Commerce Street, St Nicholas, Aberdeen, married to Ann aged 50 from Dundee.
- Census (1891f). Andrew and Joan Murray, 168/01 037/00 015, St Nicholas, Aberdeen, children David (20) sailmaker, Georgina (18) cotton weaver, Christina (11) scholar, and Joan (8) scholar. .
- Census (1891g). Cameron and Ann McPherson, 168/01 037/00 015, St Nicolas, Aberdeen, 69 Commerce Street, he born in Portsoy, she born in Dundee.
- Census (1901a). 153/01 005/01 001 James McPherson aged 54, sister Annie Macpherson aged 49, at Auchmilly Farm, 3 miles south of Portsoy, both born in Inveravon, Banffshire.
- Census (1901b). 153/01 006/01 002 Alexander Macpherson married cattleman aged 60 (born about 1841, Cullen, Banffshire) employed by James Smith, farmer of Williamston, Portsoy.
- Census (1901c). 153/02 004/02 025 Donald McPherson head, Burnside, aged 55, sister Elizabeth general servant domestic aged 52, and niece Lizzie, a general servant domestic aged 19, all born in Portsoy.
- Census (1901d). 168/03 003/0B 035 Daniel Russell, 42, Woodside, Aberdeen, with wife Eliza Ann (39), Minnie McPherson (daughter of wife), a single woollsmith worker aged 17, John Russell, their son, a baker van boy aged 16, Maggie Jane Russell, their daughter and scholar aged 13, Daniel, their son and scholar aged 8 and Eliza Ann, their daughter aged 3.
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- OPR (1725). Births 121/ 0010 0161 Auldearn, Nairn, Donald McPherson, 2 January.
- OPR (1726). Births 102/0010 010, Kingussie and Insh.

OPR (1727). Births 102/0010 012, Kingussie and Insh.  
 OPR (1729). Births 098/ 0030 0354 Donald, 2 November.  
 OPR (1732). Births 102/0010 0027 Kingussie and Insh.  
 OPR (1749). Births 147/ 0020 0501 Banff, Banff, Duncan Macpherson, 19 May.  
 OPR (1752a). Births 147/ 0030 0011 Banff Parish, Banff, William McPherson, 13 December.  
 OPR (1752b). Marriages 102/0010 0189 Kingussie and Insh.  
 OPR (1752c). Marriages 157/ 0010 0365 Aberlour, Banff, Donald Macpherson and Jean Grant, 1 June.  
 OPR (1773). Marriage 153/ 0040 0360 John Duff and Elspet Henry, 27/11/1773 Fordyce.  
 OPR (1776). Births 153/ 0030 0015 John Duff, 01/09/1776, son of James Duff and Elspet Henry, Portsoy. Witnesses John Henry in Breaugh and John Duff in Garronhead.  
 OPR (1778). Births 153/ 0030 0027 Elspet Duff, 05/04/1778, daughter of James Duff and Elspet Henry, Portsoy. Witnesses James Low, Jaemes Stuart, Elspet Henry in Portsoy and John Henry in Breaugh.  
 OPR (1779). Births 153/ 0030 0044 James Duff, 14/08/1779, son of James Duff blacksmith and Elspet Henry, Portsoy. Witnesses James Stuart in Fordyce, James Henry in Portsoy.  
 OPR (1781). Births 153/ 0030 0055 Helen Duff, 08/05/1781, daughter of James Duff blacksmith and Elspet Henry, Portsoy. Witnesses Johnsons Junn and Archibald Dunbar, students in Portsoy.  
 OPR (1783). Births 153/ 0030 0072 Alexander Duff, 05/10/1783, son of James Duff blacksmith and Elspet Henry, Portsoy. Witnesses Mr. H. Guthrie, Writer Edinburgh and Mr. H. Gray, Schoolmaster in Fordyce.  
 OPR (1785). Births 153/ 0030 0082 Margaret Duff, 28/12/1785, daughter of James Duff and Elspet Henry, Portsoy. Witnesses James Duncan and George Cowie, students at Fordyce.  
 OPR (1788a). Births 153/ 0030 0103 William Duff, 02/03/1788, son of James Duff and Elspet Henry, Portsoy. Witnesses William Inges in Brachauhand and William Cowie in Bogtown.  
 OPR (1788b). Marriages 428/ 0020 0396 Alexander Sinclair and Agness Davidson, 021/12/1788. Parish of Falkland, Fife.  
 OPR (1800a). Births 153/ 0030 0194 Fordyce 07/06/1800 John Duff, daughter of John Duff and Margaret Inglis, witnesses John Inglis in Brachaugh and and John Duff in Little Dylach.  
 OPR (1800b). Births 153/ 0030 0197 Fordyce 23/10/1800 James McPherson, son of William McPherson and Elspet Duff, witnesses James Duff and James Smith bith in Portsoy.  
 OPR (1800c). Births 444/ 0020 0195 George Sinclair 01/01/1800, Alexander Sinclair Weaver of Formanhills, and his wife Agnes Davidson had a son George born January 1st 1800 baptized by the Rev. Mr Browning an Antiburgher, Minister Auchtermuchty.  
 OPR (1800d). Marriages 153/ 0040 0473 John Duff with Margaret Inglis 26/01/1800, Fordyce.  
 OPR (1800e). Marriages 153/ 0040 0473 William McPherson and Elspet Duff, 23/02/1800 Parish of Fordyce.  
 OPR (1802a). Births 153/ 0030 0211 Fordyce 17/10/1802 William McPherson, son of William McPherson and Elspet Duff, witnesses James Duff and James Smith both in Portsoy.  
 OPR (1802b). Births 444/ 0020 0195 David Sinclair 08/04/1802, Alexander Sinclair Weaver of Formanhills, and his wife Agnes Davidson had a son David baptized by the Rev. Mr Melles an Antiburgher, Minister in Leslie.  
 OPR (1803a). Births 153/ 0030 0216 Fordyce 12/01/1803 Elspet Duff, son of John Duff and Margaret Inglis, Portsoy, witnesses Thomas Sirin (?) and James Raffan.  
 OPR (1803b). Births 157/ 0010 0493 Inveravon 01/10/1803 Penuel McKenzie, daughter of Roderick McKenzi and Elizabeth Grant in Upper Drummon, witnesses Donald Caulder and John McKenzie in Corlach.  
 OPR (1804a). Births 153/ 0030 0226 Fordyce 30/03/1804 McPherson, John, father William, mother Elspet Duff, witnesses James Duff and John Brodie, both in Portsoy. Retrieved 14 March 2010:  
 OPR (1804b). Births 153/ 0030 0229 Fordyce 23/11/1804 William Duff, son of John Duff and Margaret Inglis, witnesses William Currie and William Inglis.  
 OPR (1804c). Births 444/ 0020 0195 Alexander Sinclair 04/10/1804, Alexander Sinclair Weaver of Formanhills, and his wife Agnes Davidson had a son Alexander baptized by the Rev. Mr Lowrie an Antiburgher, Minister in Abernethy.  
 OPR (1806). Births 153/ 0030 0246 Fordyce 29/11/1806 Isabel Duff, daughter of John Duff and Margaret Inglis, witnesses James Raffan and William Inglis.  
 OPR (1807). Births 153/ 0030 0253 Fordyce 12/05/1807 McPherson, Alexander, father William mother Elspet, witnesses Alexander Cowie and James Brodie, both in Portsoy. Retrieved 14 March 2010:

OPR (1809a). Births 153/ 0030 0277 Fordyce 15/08/1809 James Duff, daughter of John Duff and Margaret Inglis, witnesses Alexander North and James Raffan.

OPR (1809b). Births 153/ 0030 0280 Fordyce 153/ 0030 0280 McPherson, George, father William, mother Elspet Duff, witnesses James Duff and George Scot, both in Portsoy. Retrieved 14 March 2010:

OPR (1810). Births 444/ 0020 0195 James Sinclair 02/09/1810, Alexander Sinclair Weaver of Formanhills, and his wife Agnes Davidson had a son James baptized by the Rev. Mr William Gray Minister in Perthhead(?).

OPR (1811a). Births 150/ 0040 0211 Cullen, 18/02/1811, Elizabeth Stewart, father James Stewart, mother Eizabeth McDonald, witnesses Rev. W. George Innes, John Hables, Elizabeth Wright and Elizabeth Davidson. Retrieved 19 March 2010:

OPR (1811b). Births 153/ 0030 0294 Fordyce 29/05/1811 Alexander Duff, son of John Duff of Little Dylach and Margaret Inglis, Portsoy, witnesses James Raffan and Donal Bain.

OPR (1811c). Births 153/ 0030 0297 Fordyce, 21/11/1811, McPherson, Elizabeth, father William, mother Elspet Duff, witnesses Elizabeth Baxter and Elizabeth Brodie, both in Portsoy. Retrieved 14 March 2010:

OPR (1813). Births 153/ 0030 0324 Fordyce 12/05/1813 George Duff, son of John Duff and Margaret Inglis, Portsoy, witnesses James Raffan and John Inglis.

OPR (1814). Births 153/ 0030 0333 Fordyce, 12/01/1814, McPherson, Elspet, father William, mother Elspet Duff, witnesses James Duff and James Minty, both in Portsoy. Retrieved 14 March 2010:

OPR (1815a). Births 153/ 0030 0344 Fordyce, 18/06/1815, McPherson, Adam, father William, mother Elspet Duff, witnesses James Duff and Adam Wilson, both in Portsoy. Retrieved 14 March 2010:

OPR (1815b). Births 153/ 0030 0345 Fordyce 19/10/1815 Margaret Duff, daughter of John Duff and Margaret Inglis.

OPR (1817a). Births 153/ 0030 0360 Fordyce, 08/03/1817, McPherson, Forbes Watson, father William, mother Elspet Duff, witnesses William Forbes Watson and James Brodie, both in Portsoy. Retrieved 14 March 2010:

OPR (1817b). Births 153/ 0030 0362 Fordyce 16/09/1817 Alexander Duff, son of John Duff and Margaret Inglis, Portsoy, witness James Inglis.

OPR (1821). Births 153/ 0050 0006 Fordyce 07/01/1821 Ann Duff, son of John Duff in Little Dylach farm, and Margaret Inglis, Portsoy, witnesses Robert Marquis of Birkemby (?) and John Duncan at Brom (?).

OPR (1826). Marriages 157/00 0020 0278 Inveravon, 5 October, "James McPherson in Tomalanan and Janet Gordon in Belochnochkan, were married".

OPR (1828a). Births 160/00 0020 0154 Jenny McPherson, 11 August 1828, Kirkmichael and Tomintoul, Register of Protestant Children in the District of Tomintaul, 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830, born 9 August and baptised 11 August 1828, parents James McPherson and - Gordon, Tomalianen, Glenlivet.

OPR (1828b). Death William McPherson 147/ 00 0090 0204, Banff, 2 July, aged 75.

OPR (1828c). Deaths James Duff 147/ 00 0204 Fordyce, Banff, 5 July, aged 81.

OPR (1828d). Marriages 145/ 0030 0181 Aberlour 16/02/1828, George McPherson married Penuel McKenzie.

OPR (1828e). Marriages 157/ 0020 0281 Inveravon 16/02/1828, George McPherson of Charleston of Aberlour, married Penuel McKenzie of Greenmoss.

OPR (1829a). Births 145/ 0030 0045 Aberlour, 16/03/1829, McPherson, Jean, father George, mother Penuel McKenzie, witnesses Penuel Grant, Janet McKenzie and John Garrow, all in Charleston. Retrieved 14 March 2010:

OPR (1829b). Births 153/ 0030 0197 Fordyce 23 October.

OPR (1829c). Marriages 153/ 0050 0400 Fordyce 21 March.

OPR (1829d). Marriages 444/ 0050 0076 Leslie, Fife 03/05/1829, William McPherson married Catherine Sinclair.

OPR (1831a). Births 151/00 0030 0027 Margaret Lorimer baptized Deskford, Banff, 15 May, daughter of James Lorimer and Ann Fraser.

OPR (1831b). Births 153/ 0050 0149 Charles Stuart McPherson, Fordyce, 23 October.

OPR (1831c). Births 157/00 0020 0089 Inveravon, John McPherson, 14 February 1831, "John, lawful son of James McPherson and Janet Gordon was born, and baptised on the Fourteenth of February, Current. Witnesses John Gordon in Balaknochhan and Donald Cameron in Tomaleanen".

OPR (1832). Births 168/A00 0230 0030 John McPherson 14/12/1832, St Machars, Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, witnesses John Ogilvie, Flax Dresser, and John Burness, Merchant.

OPR (1833). Births 153/ 0050 0171 Fordyce 22/04/1833, Ann McPherson, witnesses John Murray Merchant and Ann McBain.

OPR (1834a). Births 157/00 0020 0115 Glenlivet, Margaret McPherson, 22 December 1834, "Margaret, lawful daughter of James McPherson and Janet Gordon in Tomnalianen, was born the Twentieth of December and baptized the Twenty Second

- day current, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Thirty Four. Donald Cameron Here and John Gordon in Ballaknochcan witnesses".
- OPR (1834b). Births 168/A00 0230 0128 Alexander Sinclair McPherson, 08/12/1834, St Machars, Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, witnesses Robert Makow and Alexander Cheyne, Flax Dressers.
- OPR (1835a). Births 153/ 0050 0193 Fordyce 17/07/1835, Alexander McPherson, witnesses Alexander Wilson, Merchant and Alexander Stuart, Shipwright in Portsoy.
- OPR (1835b). Marriages 145/ 0030 0193 Aberlour 29/11/1835, George Fraser from the Parish of Rothes married Elspet McPherson of Aberlour Parish.
- OPR (1836a). Births 157/00 0020 0127 Inveravon, 20 December 1836. "William, lawful son of James McPherson and Janet Gordon in Tomalienan was born the Eighteenth day of December and baptised on the Twentieth current, One Thousand and Eight Hundred and Thirty Six, John Gordon in Ballachanockhan and William Smith in Tomaleinan, witnesses."
- OPR (1836b). Births 168/A00 0230 0219 Martha Coutts, Aberdeen City, Aberdeen, 19 October.
- OPR (1837). Births 444/ 0040 0308 Alison McPherson, 08/11/1837, father William McPherson, Flax Dresser, mother Catherine Alexander Sinclair, and daughter Agnes born 08/10/1839.
- OPR (1839a). Births 153/ 0050 0231 Fordyce 10/08/1839, Cameron Stuart McPherson, witnesses James Stuart Shoemaker, and Alexander Barron, Labourert in Portsoy.
- OPR (1839b). Births 444/ 0040 0308 Agnes born 08/10/1839, father William McPherson, Flax Dresser, mother Catherine Alexander Sinclair, and daughter Alison McPherson, 08/11/1837.
- OPR (1840). Births 157/00 0020 0154 George McPherson 30 November 1840, "George, lawful son of James McPherson and Janet Gordon in Tomalienan was born the Thirtieth of November and christened on the Third of December One Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty. John Grant and William Smith there witnesses".
- OPR (1841). Births 153/ 0050 0248 Daniel McPherson, 05/09/1841, son of James McPherson, labourer in Portsoy, and wife Elizabeth Stuart, baptized 11/09/1841.
- OPR (1845). Marriage 157/00 0020 0304 James McPherson and Margaret Turner were married 8 July 1845 in Inveravon, Glen Livet. "James McPherson in Tomnalianan and Margaret Turner in Croftbain were married the 8th day of July One Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty Five".
- OPR (1846). Birth James McPherson 157/00 0020 0183 Inveravon, 3 June 1846, "James, lawful son to James McPherson and Margaret Turner in Tomalinan born on the first iof June, and baptised on the third, Eighteen hundred and forty six, witnesses William McPherson in Tomalinan, and Ann Turner in Croftbain".
- OPR (1847). Birth Robert McPherson 157/00 0020 0197 Inveravon, 29 December 1847 "Robert, lawful son to James McPherson and Margaret Turner in Tomalinan, was born on the Twenty seventh and baptised on the Twenty ninth day of December in the year One Thousand Eight hundred and Forty seven. John McHardy and Charles Wyllie were witnesses of the baptism.
- OPR (1849). Death 153/00 0494 Fordyce 02/10/1849. John Duff.
- OPR (1850). Birth Ann McPherson 157/00 0020 0215 Inveravon, 9 October 1850. "Ann, lawful daughter of James McPherson and Margaret Turner in Tomalenan was born on the 9th day of October 1850 and was baptised on the 11th day of October. Witnesses William McPherson and Ann Turner".
- OPR (1851a). Marriages 153/ 0050 0452 Fordyce, 06/07/1851, Charles Stuart McPherson married Elspet Smith, both parishioners.
- OPR (1851b). Marriages 168/N00 0470 John McPherson and Martha Coutts, 12/12/1851, North Church Aberdeen.
- OPR (1852). Birth Alexander McPherson 157/00 0020 0223 Inveravon. "Alexander, lawful son of James McPherson Tomnalianan and of Margaret Turner his wife, was born on the Twenty First day of May Eighteen Hundred and Fifty Two, and was baptised on the Twenty Third of the same month - Witnesses William Turner, Croftbain and Peter Grant, Loalen(?).
- OPR (1854a). Births 153/ 0050 0340 Fordyce born 04/12/1854, Christina Helen McPherson, father James McPherson Day Labourer, mother Elizabeth Stuart, christened 21/01/1855, witnesses Rev Peter Murray, Minister of Portsoy and James McPherson.
- OPR (1854b). Marriages 153/00 0050 0460 William Murphy and Margaret Lorimer, 1 July, Fordyce Parish Church.
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SR (1855a). Births 153/00 0042 Margaret Murphy, 4 May, Church Street, Portsoy.:

SR (1855b). Death 153/00 0039 George McPherson, 19/04/1855, aged 3 years, Burnside of Portsoy, father James McPherson, agricultural labourer, mother Elizabeth Stuart, disease of the upper jaw 3 weeks, buried in the churchyard of Portsoy.:

SR (1857a). Births 153/00 0105 Fordyce 27/04/1857, James McPherson, father Charles Stuart McPherson and Elspet Smith, Burnside, Portsoy.:

SR (1857b). Births 153/00 0110 Peter Murray Murphy, 17 November, Strait Path, Portsoy.:

SR (1857c). Marriage 153/00 0012 Fordyce 28/04/1857, Anne McPherson domestic servant aged 23 of Portsoy, daughter of James McPherson and Elizabeth Stuart, and William Smith aged 19 farm servant of Keith, son of John Smith and Jane Duncan, witnesses Peter Murray Minister of Portsoy, Alexander McLennan and Alexander McDonald.:

SR (1858a). Birth 153/00 0106 Fordyce 20/11/1858, William Smith McPherson, father Charles McPherson at Cowhythe, mother Elspet Smith, Burnside, Portsoy.:

SR (1858b). Births 153/00 0105 Fordyce 20/11/1858, Elizabeth McPherson, father Charles Stuart McPherson at Cowhythe and Elspet Smith, Burnside, Portsoy.:

SR (1858c). Deaths 153/00 0013 William Murphy, 13 February, pulmonary consumption, aged 33, High Street, Portsoy.

SR (1859a). Deaths 153/00 0015 Fordyce 14/02/1859, William Smith McPherson, father Charles McPherson, mother Elspet Smith, Burnside, Portsoy.:

SR (1859b). Deaths 153/00 0033 William Murphy, 9 April, aged 1, died of marasmus, a form of severe protein-energy malnutrition characterized by energy deficiency.

SR (1860). Births 153/00 0116 William MacKay Lorimer, 20 September 1860, illegitimate, mother Margaret Lorimer domestic servant.

SR (1861a). Births 153/00 0067 Fordyce, 26/06/1861, William McPherson, father Charles McPherson and Elspet Smith, 19 Strait Path, Portsoy.

SR (1861b). Births 153/00 0094 Fordyce, 31/08/1861, Jemima Cameron McPherson, illegitimate, mother Elizabeth McPherson, Domestic Servant, Burnside, Portsoy.:

SR (1863a). Births 153/00 0064 Fordyce, 01/05/1863, Eliza Ann Fraser Macpherson, father James Stewart Macpherson and Margaret Murphy née Lorimer, 5 Cullentrig, Portsoy.

SR (1863b). Births 153/00 0078 Fordyce, 19/12/1863, Jane Brown McPherson, illegitimate, mother Elizabeth McPherson, Domestic Servant, 2 Burnside Street, Portsoy, Margaret Macpherson sister-in-law attending from 5 Cullen Street.

SR (1863c). Marriages 153/00 0003 Fordyce, 29/01/1863, James Stewart Macpherson married Margaret Murphy widow née Lorimer, 5 Cullentrig, Portsoy.

SR (1864). Births 153/00 0026 Fordyce, 03/02/1864, Helen McPherson, father Charles McPherson and Elspet Smith, 19 Strait Path, Portsoy.

SR (1865). Deaths 153/00 0001 Fordyce 07/01/1865, William McPherson, 3 years old, died of mesenteric disease [rickets], father Charles Stuart McPherson and Elspet Smith, Burnside Street, Portsoy.

SR (1866a). Births 153/00 0078 Fordyce, 09/07/1866, Georgina Macpherson, father James Stewart McPherson and Margaret Murphy née Lorimer, 9 Old Cullen Road, Portsoy.

SR (1866b). Births 153/00 0093 Fordyce, 22/08/1866, Margaret McPherson, illegitimate, mother Elizabeth McPherson, Domestic Servant, 2 Burnside Street, Portsoy.

SR (1866c). Births 153/00 0127 Fordyce 18/11/1866, Elsie McPherson, father Charles Stuart McPherson Railway carter, and mother Elspet Smith, 16 Church Street, Portsoy.

SR (1866d). Deaths 444/00 0049, William McPherson, 10/06/1866, widow of Catherine Sinclair, found dead in bed, 10.00 am, Back Street, Leslie. Aged 67 years (born about 1799). Father was a flesher, mother was Elspet McPherson, maiden surname Duff. No medical attendant. Informant was Ian Sinclair, brother in law. Death registered 13 June 1866.

SR (1867a). Deaths 153/00 0042 Fordyce 13/07/1867, Elizabeth 'Betsy' McPherson, father Charles Stuart McPherson mother Elspet Smith, Burnside, Portsoy. Uncle H. Smith in attendance, from 4 Burnside Street, Portsoy.

SR (1867b). Deaths 153/00 0049 Fordyce 31/07/1867, Elsie McPherson, 8 months, died after 14 days of scantalonina, father Charles Stuart McPherson mother Elspet Smith, Burnside, Portsoy.:

SR (1869a). Births 153/00 0103 Fordyce, 28/08/1869, Williamina McPherson, illegitimate, mother Jane McPherson, Domestic Servant, 67 Seafield, Portsoy, grandmother Elizabeth Macpherson attending.

SR (1869b). Births 153/00 0128 Fordyce, 08/11/1869, Mary Macpherson, father James Macpherson and Margaret Macpherson née Lorimer, Schoolhendrick Street, Portsoy.

SR (1870a). Birth 168/02 1076 David Pirie Murray, 23 September, Old Machar, Aberdeen, parents Andrew Murray and Isabella Pirie.

SR (1870b). Births 153/00 0069 Fordyce, 03/07/1870, Mary McPherson, illegitimate, mother Elizabeth McPherson, Domestic Servant, 2 Burnside Street, Portsoy, Margaret Macpherson uncle's wife attending from Schoolhendry Street, Portsoy.

SR (1871a). Births 153/00 0088 Fordyce, 05/08/1871, James McHattie born to Alexander McHattie, mason, and Christina McPherson.

SR (1871b). Marriages 153/00 0013 Parish of Fordyce 01/07/1871 Alexander McHattie, mason journeymen, married Christina McPherson, domestic servant, witnesses John McHattie father, agricultural labourer, James McPherson, Quarryman.

SR (1873a). Birth 168/02 0029 Georgina Milne Murray, 8 December, Old Machar, Aberdeen, parents Andrew Murray and Isabella Pirie.

SR (1873b). Birth 168/02 0598 Alexander McHattie, 23 May 1873, Old Machar, Aberdeen, father Alexander McHattie mason journeyman, mother Christina McHattie nee McPherson married in Portsoy 1st July 1871.

SR (1875a). Births 168/02 1165 John McHattie, Old Machar, Aberdeen, 21 September 1875, father Alexander McHattie mason journeyman, mother Christina McHattie nee McPherson married in Portsoy 1st July 1871.

SR (1875b). Death Certificate 153/02 0037 Portsoy 02/10/1875. James McPherson, stone quarrier, married to Betsy Stewart, father James McPherson, cartwright master deceased.

SR (1877a). Births 153/02 0033 Fordyce, 09/06/1877, James Macpherson illegitimate son of Joan McPherson of Burnside, Portsoy.

SR (1877b). Death 153/02 0020 Fordyce, 26/08/1877, James Macpherson illegitimate son of Joan McPherson domestic servant of Burnside, Portsoy, aged 2 months, nonclosure of eustachion tube from birth.

SR (1878a). Death 168/02 0198 Isabell Murray nee Pirie. 6 March, typhoid, married to Andrew Murray

SR (1878b). Marriage 168/02 0265 Andrew Murray (28) and Joan McPherson (27), 9 November, Old Machar, Aberdeen, her parents James and Margaret McPherson nee Watson.

SR (1879a). Death 153/02 0037 Portsoy 06/10/1879. Williamina McPherson, illegitimate, 14 months old, mother Jane McPherson, granddaughter of James McPherson and Elizabeth 'Betsy' Stuart, Portsoy.

SR (1879b). Death 153/ 02 0012 Margaret Murphy, 7 March 1879, aged 23, father William Murphy master shoemaker, mother Margaret McPherson, previously Murphy, née Lorimer, died of pneumonia, asthma and curvature of the spine, Schoolhendry Street, informant Jas. McPherson (barely literate).

SR (1882). Births 168/02 1849 Christina McHattie, Old Machar, Aberdeen, 20 December 1882, 26 Richmon Street, father Alexander McHattie mason journeyman, mother Christina McHattie nee McPherson married in Portsoy 1st July 1871.

SR (1883). Birth 168/01 1576 Lillt Joan Murray, 11 November, parents Andrew and Joan Murray nee McPherson.

SR (1884a). Births 153/ 02 0018 Minnie Buie McPherson, illegitimate, 20 February 1884, mother Eliza Ann McPherson, domestic servant.

SR (1884b). Births 168/02 0856 William Christopher McHattie, Old Machar, Aberdeen, 27 May 1884, father Alexander McHattie mason journeyman, mother Christina McHattie nee McPherson married in Portsoy 1st July 1871.

SR (1884c). Deaths 153/0100013, James Macpherson, retired farmer, married to Margaret Turner, previously to Janet Gordon, died 10.00 pm 19 September at Auchmillie, Fordyce, aged 82, son of William Macpherson, farmer (deceased), and Jane Macpherson nee Smith (deceased). Alex Robb MD certified that he died of congestion of the lungs after two days, with many years of asthma and rheumatism. The informant was Annie Macpherson, his daughter. The death was registered by James Grant at Fordyce on 22 September.

SR (1884d). Marriages 153/02 0014 Daniel Russell (25) and Eliza Ann McPherson (21), 7 November 1884, of Church Street and Burnside Street, Portsoy, agricultural labourer and domestic servant, parents John (shoemaker) and Elizabeth Russell nee Horn, and James (ag. lab.) and Margaret McPherson nee Lorimer, Georgina McPherson witness.

SR (1885a). Births 153/ 02 0088 Elizabeth Horn Russell, 11 November 1885, parents Daniel Russell and Eliza Anne Russell née McPherson, 14 North High Street.

SR (1885b). Death 153/ 01 0025 Margaret McPherson, widow of James McPherson, farmer, at 7.50 am on 16 December 1885, aged 78, daughter of William Turner farmer (deceased) and Isabella Turner nee McGovan (deceased). Cause of death was cardiac weakness and irregularity for 1 1/2 years, congestion of lungs 1 1/2 years and anasarca for 6 months [also known as 'extreme generalized edema' and evident as widespread swelling of the skin due to effusion of fluid into the

- extracellular space, usually caused by liver failure (cirrhosis of the liver) or renal failure/disease and severe malnutrition/protein deficiency], certified by Alex Robb MD. The informant was James McPherson, her son. Registered 22 December 1885 at Fordyce by James Grant, Registrar.
- SR (1886a). Births 153/ 02 0010 John Russell, 28 December 1886, parents Daniel Russell and Eliza Anne Russell née McPherson, Burnside Street, Portsoy.
- SR (1886b). Marriage 168/01 0249 Cameron McPherson and Ann Scott, at St Nicholas, Aberdeen, 3 July, son of Cameron and Jane McPherson née Stewart and daughter of Willian and Margaret Scott née Roberts.
- SR (1888). Deaths 153/02 0025, Margaret McPherson, widow of William Murphy Shoemaker (deceased) and married to James McPherson General Labourer, née Lorimer, 01/09/1888 10.00 am, Burnside Street, Portsoy, 54 years, Urdemia 8 months, scrofula 1 year, husband James McPherson present.
- SR (1889). Births 153/ 02 0027 Maggie Jane Russell 21 April 1889, Church Street, Portsoy, parents Daniel Russell and Eliza Ann Russell née McPherson.
- SR (1891). Births 168/02 0423 Alfred McHattie, Old Machar, Aberdeen, 12 March 1891, father Alexander McHattie mason journeyman, mother Christina McHattie née McPherson married in Portsoy 1st July 1871.
- SR (1894). Births 153/02 0007 William Russell, 22 January 1894, Bridge Street, Portsoy, father James Russell, master shoemaker, mother Mary Russell née McPherson (married 15 December 1891, Jarrow on Tyne.).
- SR (1894 ). Death 168/01 0031 Cameron McPherson, 9 January, widow Ann Scoot or Lyon, parents James and Elizabeth McPherson née Stewart, informant Joan Murray
- SR (1898a). Births 153/ 02 0048 Elizabeth Russell, born 31 July 1898 at Seafield Street, Portsoy. Father James Russell, master shoemaker, mother Mary Russell, née McPherson.
- SR (1898b). Death 153/02 0026 Jessie McPherson, 15/7/1898 single, pauper, illegitimate, aged 17, Shillinghill, Portsoy, suffered two years from scrofula and two years of dropsy, illegitimate, reputed to be the daughter of Alexander Popper, a general merchant in Portsoy, mother was known as Isabella Bremner (née McPherson). Grandfather Charles Stuart McPherson was present at her death. .
- SR (1899). Death 153/02 0041 Elspet McPherson, 30 October 1899, wife of Charles McPherson, after 8 months cancer of the stomach, aged 68, daughter of James and Isabella Smith nee Scott, Shillinghill, Portsoy.
- SR (1901). Deaths 168/01 0245 James McPherson, East Poorhouse, St Nicholas, Aberdeen, 5 March 1901, aged 72, widower of Eliza Anne Lorimer, his parents James and Elizabeth McPherson nee Stuart, and his son-in-law David Russell.
- SR (1902). Deaths 153/02 0002 Elizabeth McPherson 12/01/1902 58 years, father James McPherson stone quarrier, mother Elizabeth Stewart, heart disease 2 years, 7 Burnside Court, Portsoy.
- SR (1904). Births 153/ 02 0032 Mary Russell, born 26 June 1904, at 9 Seafield Street, Portsoy. Father James Russell, master shoemaker, mother Mary Russell, née McPherson.
- SR (1905). Marriages 168/ 04 001 Charles Geddes and Minnie Buie McPherson, 29 December 1905, The Manse, Old Aberdeen, Minnie 22 lived at 24 Marquis Road, Woodside, Aberdeen. Charles Geddes, a 26 year old general labourer from 12 Brown Street, Woodside. The marriage certificate recorded Minnie's reputed father as James Buie, Land Surveyor.
- SR (1906). Death 153/02 000, Charles Stuart McPherson, 13/01/1906, aged 75, pauper at 7 Burnside Court, son of James and Betsy McPherson (née Stewart).
- SR (1908a). Births 153/ 02 0022 John Pryde Russell, on 6 May 1907, also at 9 Seafield Street, father James Russell master shoemaker and mother Mary Russell née McPherson.
- SR (1908b). Deaths 153/01 0020 Annie McPherson aged 58 single housekeeper at Auchmillie, Fordyce, father James McPherson, mother Margaret McPherson nee Turner, cerebra apoplexy, James McPherson brother present.
- SR (1911). Deaths 153/02 0011 Mary Russell, née McPherson, aged 41, died 2 April of parturition, phlebitis and a cerebral embolism, James Russell, shoemaker, present.
- SR (1914). Deaths 153/010015 James Macpherson, single farmer, at 8.00 pm on 18 August 1914, at Auchmillie, Fordyce, aged 68, son of James Macpherson, farmer (deceased) and Margaret Macpherson, nee Turner (deceased), of heart disease over two years as certified by James Read MB. The informant was Robert William Macpherson, nephew, Town Hall, Chester, death registered by William Thompson, Fordyce.
- SR (1917). Death 266/00 0077 Joan Murray nee McPherson, 8 August, aged 68, 42 Walker Road, Nigg, Kincardine, widow of Andrew Murray, harbour bridge man, parents James McPherson, crofter, Elizabeth McPherson, nee Stuart.
- SR (1922). Marriage 168/01 0586 27 September 1922, Herbert Galloway Laird and Elizabeth Russell, St Nicholas Church, Aberdeen.

- SR (1933). Deaths 168/01 0602 Eliza Ann Russell widow of Daniel Russell, died 4 June 1933 of diabetes and a septic foot aged 70 in the Aberdeen Infirmary, last residence 4 Western Road, Woodside.
- SR (1937). Death 168/01 1223 Aberdeen Northern District, Aberdeen, Christina McHattie, 11 December 1937, aged 82, widow of Alexander McHattie a mason, daughter of James McPherson, crofter, and Elizabeth McPherson née Stuart, witnessed by son Alexander McHattie, 37 Wallfield Cres., Aberdeen.
- SR (1946). Deaths 168/03 0199 Georgina Murray, ex Henderson, nee McPherson, 26 April 1946, 79, widow of George Henderson, fisherman, and Thomas Murray, marine stoker, 15 Fish Street, Aberdeen, of cardio vascular degeneration. Informant was George Henderson Jnr.
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