West Stormont's Auld Times

August 2022

AND . . . WE'RE BACK!

Autumn Talks are a go . . .

Monday 12 September, 7.30pm:

PlaidSong present –

"The Dew on her Plaid"– songs and history about, written by or for Scottish women from the past.

Monday 24 October, 7.30 pm:

Steam Fever & Madness – The Making of Murthly by Paul McLennan

(Preceded by the Society's AGM.)

Monday 14 November, 7.30 pm:

Perthshire, A County of Architectural Delights by Simon Green, Historic Environment Scotland

Each talk will be given in Bankfoot Church Centre.

The talks are free, and open to both members and non-members.

AGM: **Monday 24 October at 7.30pm in the Bankfoot Church Centre.**

www.wshs.org.uk

Auld Times

is the journal of the West Stormont Historical Society.

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Auld Times

Contents

2 **Broxy Hillfort**

Jennifer McKay

3 **Whipping the Cat**

Michael Lawrence

6 **Typhoid in Harrietfield**

Jennifer McKay

8 **Chapelhill Church**

Ros Pearson

11 **And Then there Were None**

Paul McLennan

BROXY HILL FORT

JENNIFER MCKAY

Members of West Stormont History Society enjoyed visits to the excavations at Broxy Kennels hillfort in April and May. The site lies close the west carriageway of the A9 between Inveralmond and Luncarty and affords views along the Tay both north and south and to a much wider area; we could see East Lomond in Fife and the Ochils to the south of Strathearn.

In 1966, crop marks showing 4 concentric circles on the low hill above Broxy Kennels were recorded for the first time, via aerial photography. Over the years since, fourteen more sets of photos have been taken. These circles were evidence of ditches which indicated the existence of a hillfort. The material excavated to create ditches would have been used to build ramparts. The interior of the fort, at the top of the hill, measured 95 metres by 50 metres.

Recut ditch. Different colours show different fills. Photo: J Andrews

Most of the hill, which is a glacial dump of sand and gravel, will be removed to accommodate line of the road to the new bridge across the Tay. Developer-funded excavation has been on-going throughout the year to capture as much information as possible before the hillfort is destroyed.

Post excavation analyses may provide good dating evidence but at the moment we can only go with approximate dating; the fort was constructed sometime between 500 BC and 250 AD. It is likely that the fort was abandoned and re-occupied as some of the ditches show clear evidence of having been recut. Over time, rampart material would have slipped down the slope and filled the ditches. Ploughing eventually obliterated all surface signs of ramparts and ditches.

A feature of particular interest is a souterrain which was first was spotted on aerial photographs taken in 1989. The term souterrain derives from the French for "under the ground". A souterrain is a subterranean passage which may have been used for food storage. The method of construction was to dig a trench, very often curved, pave and line it with big stones and then cover it over, with branches which were then covered with earth. Without a stone inner skin, the souterrain at Broxy would have collapsed in no time. The Broxy example is unusual in that it was constructed in one of the defensive ditches. Some burnt cereal grains were found in the souterrain and they may provide dates.

Souterrain showing curved construction. Entrance steps to the right. Photo: J. Andrews

We were shown finds: pieces of pottery, a small oil lamp and small chunks of metal-working slag. There were also some microliths - very small flint blades - which suggests the site was in use before the hillfort was constructed in the Iron Age. These microliths belong to Mesolithic, the era between the Palaeolithic and the Neolithic, around 10,000 years ago.

Some of us felt that the souterrain should be preserved, not in situ, as the site will be destroyed but perhaps taken apart and reconstructed elsewhere. Meanwhile we look forward to seeing a full report from the team which carried out the excavation.

Taking soil samples for lab analysis. Photo: Jennifer McKay

WHIPPING THE CAT

MICHAEL LAWRENCE

The whip-the-cat's aff fae hoose tae hoose,
Wi' his oxtered lap-buird lampin',
An' hard ahint, wi' shears an' goose,
His wee, pechin' 'prentice trampin'.
Charles Murray

It was just after dawn in Bankfoot on Monday 10th November 1851 when John Murray crossed the Garry Burn by the foot bridge at Prieston on his way to whip the cat at Tullybelton. On his back, in a strong canvas bag, were the tools of his trade – shears, pins, needles, thimbles, thread, tape, chalk, goose, yard stick, and sleeve board.

John lived with his wife, Janet McLeish, on the Dunkeld Road in Bankfoot and for most of the year worked in the back room of their cottage, usually making or repairing suits, waistcoats, shirts and trousers. The growing village provided a steady trade for an experienced knight of the thimble but in late autumn and early spring, as he had done since starting as an apprentice to his father, James Murray, in 1836, he would be on the road, whipping the cat for the farmers and their servants in the farms and cottages towards the Obney Hills.

John was often asked why he was called a whip the cat. He was honest enough to admit he had no definitive answer except that for centuries tailors across the country had "aye been" known as "whip the cats". His own thoughts were that whip was an old word for sew or stitch and that cat was a simple corruption of coat. Hence, he believed that whip the cat was just another way of saying "sew the coat". He had also heard that cat was a corruption of the French word "quart". So, some tailors held the theory that "whipping the cat" was another way of saying the tailor was going from house to house, whipping up trade in the "quart" or district. The truth, he confessed, was lost in the mists of time.

John Murray was the best known, and probably best liked, of eight master tailors in the parish of Auchtergaven. Together they employed eighteen journeymen and four apprentices and all were expected to take their turn, once or twice each year, in making, altering, turning, patching and renovating the clothes of far-flung customers.

It was accepted by all his rivals that the John Murray's sartorial boundaries stretched from Pitsundry and Balmacolly, past Logiebride and the clachan of Tullybelton, and on to Corrielea, Berryhill and Tullybeagles. He was also the favoured tailor to make or mend clothes in the hamlets of Gibbieston, Glack, and Balquharn, at the three holdings at Belstane – Duff's, Dow's, and Paton's – and on the farms of Farkhill, Speediehill, and Over Blelock. And woe betide anyone who tried to muscle in on his territory.

Our guidman's breeks were riven sair,
The tailor cam' tae mak' a pair.
James Stewart

On each whip the cat trip, John stayed as long as was necessary at each place to create or repair all the clothes required in the household. Typically, each stop was for two or three days and he would lodge overnight. A suit or coat could be made in a day, a pair of trousers or a shirt in a morning or afternoon.

Visits to the scattered communities were booked well in advance and John's diary was full for the couple of months he was on the road. Some jobs would demand two or three seamsters to "cloot the claes" in the bigger farmsteads. Occasionally he and his team would spend a week or more at Tullybelton House kitting out the kitchen and house maids and making or repairing the clothes of the gardeners, grooms, and other estate workers.

When John was whipping the cat, he was not paid by the type of garment ordered but by the amount of time spent in the household. His rate on the road was 2/6 per day with bed and board in addition. His journeymen tailors were paid 1/6 per day plus their B&B. This meant that the length of the working day was a serious consideration. Eight o'clock in the morning to six o'clock in the evening was the norm but working on until eight o'clock at night to complete a job was not unusual.

And John was handsomely lodged for the night. A barn or outhouse floor was out of the question for him. It had to be a proper bed inside the house or, at worse, a shakedown in front of the fire. There was much competition in each neighbourhood about who would accommodate John Murray and he was always treated as an honoured guest.

John usually worked in the kitchen, the biggest space in the house, or "ben the hoose" in the best room. Candles were provided and he also worked by the light of the fire. And he sat cross-legged on a table like a buddha set up for worship. This was his most comfortable position and years of practice had made him as agile as a chimpanzee.

Makin' the auld claes look maist as weel as new.

At the bigger farms, John was also often engaged for a week at a time. Making suits, re-lining waistcoats, mending frayed and holed trousers, putting new collars and cuffs on shirts, transforming the coat of the father into a jacket for the son were all routine jobs. For the women of the house, he would make capes, mantles, skirts and aprons. He would also fashion wall hangings, curtains and bedspreads and repair carpets. His whip the cat territory was exclusively agricultural so he would also make and repair nose bags for the horses, and knock up nickie-tams for the men from a variety of materials such as leather, canvas, wool or linen.

John's customers would have the material for any new garments waiting for him. The cloth could be homespun on the farm and woven by a weaver in Bankfoot or bought from a haberdasher in Perth. Sometimes a suit length of material would be obtained by bartering with a travelling chapman. Wool cloth was the most popular for suits and coats, usually blue or hodden grey, and came in a range of qualities from coarse tweed to fine worsted. Wool, corduroy and moleskin were typical materials for breeches and trousers. Shirts were usually made from

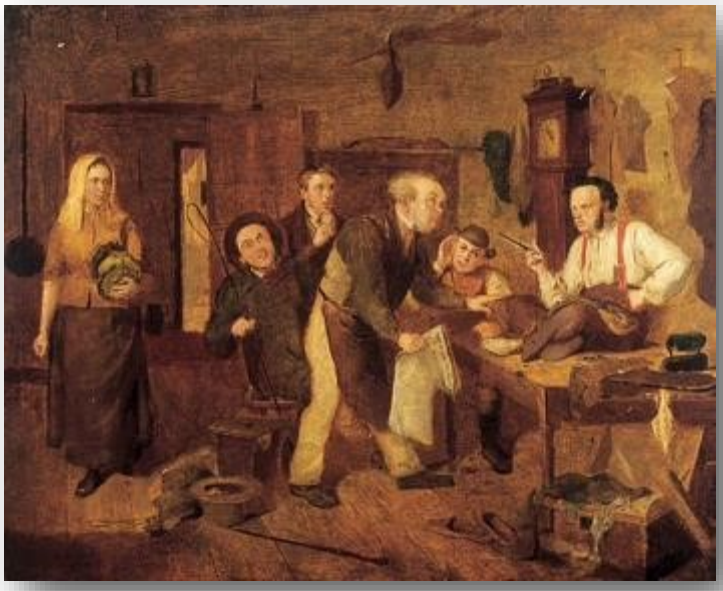
flannel or linen but John was increasingly given cotton, imported from India or the Americas, to work up.

Farm servants had a couple of sets of work clothes and a suit which was expected to last many years, for the church and other Sunday best occasions such as weddings or funerals. The basic working clothes were shirt, jacket, waistcoat, breeches or trousers, a muffler on the neck, and a cloth bunnet. In winter, the men would wear a thick plaid wrap for extra warmth. A carsackie, which was a light but sleeved waistcoat, made of light sackcloth, replaced the jacket in summer.

Farmers dressed in a similar style to their servants for work but their wardrobes would have a selection of church and social suits of finer materials and they would wear an overcoat in colder weather. Women wore simple dresses and skirts. Aprons were universal inside and the heads of married women were covered at all times outside the house.

All these clothes could not be had without the work of a whip the cat tailor going from house to house. John could turn out any garment and all sizing was done by the estimation of his eyes only. The customer would be asked to walk before him for a few minutes and he was ready to put the shears to the cloth. If the farmer or his team were too busy in the fields then John would walk out to the fence, take a good look at the man and come back in to the house and cut the garment to the appropriate length and width.

John's work was directed towards durability and efficient stitching rather than elegant cutting and fitting. The country folk preferred comfort over fashion and an inch or two of surplus material was quite acceptable. Any cloth left over was regarded as the tailor's perk that could be worked into children's clothes or used to pull together pieces where it would not be noticed such as behind the fly front or on the trouser waistband.



John was a jovial character with a fund of stories which he told in his pithy and earthy Bankfoot dialect. He was well versed in current affairs and always ready to debate on a wide range of political matters. As the whip the cat doing the rounds of each community, no one was better placed than him to pass on family news and gather knowledge of the local goings on and rumours.

While he worked, the farmer, his wife, their children, maids, ploughmen, and farm servants all dropped by to watch the tailoring work and listen to his tales and local gossip. At around 30 stitches each minute, his fingers were nimble and fast. The speed and skill of his work fascinated the rough farmhands and they enjoyed his bawdy humour and sharp tongue.

During his stay at any house, John ate like a prize fighter. His host always wanted to impress so he would sit down to a cooked breakfast such as oatmeal porridge, bacon and eggs, freshly baked bread and several cups of tea. He also needed to stretch his legs so tea, biscuits and cakes were served up mid-morning and mid-afternoon. Lunch was often soup with bannocks and cheese and, after a hard day's work, he would be served a meat supper with lots of potatoes and vegetables and maybe a cream pudding to follow.

He would then join the family around the fire with a clay pipe of flaked tobacco and a jug of ale, and they were soon joined by neighbours for "a fire nicht wi' the tailor". John would share the local news and gossip, tell some jokes, sing a few songs and the evening was not complete without one of his recitations.

His favourite was a parody of "Lord Ullin's Daughter" by Thomas Campbell. John altered the verses of the famous ballad to include local characters and place names. The ode started:

A wabster lad tae Stanley bound,
Cries, "Coachman, do not tarry,
And I will gi'e ye half a crown,
Me on the road to carry."

Now who be ye tae travel at night
And cross the moor and water?
"Oh, I'm Rab White fae Airleywight
And this James Baxter's daughter."

And on and on went the ode to hoots of laughter from all. John would tell a few more tales and maybe give his opinion on the parish politics but by the small hours it was time to call a reluctant close to the evening and end the party. As John closed his eyes, he usually reflected on how much he enjoyed these evenings and thought of the many years of whipping the cat that lay ahead.

Meanwhile, across the Atlantic in Boston, Isaac Singer had just obtained his first patent earlier in the year and was planning to ramp up production of his prototype sewing machine. He had a few rivals but his machine was the first to work in a practical way. It could sew around 900 stitches each minute which was at least thirty times faster than the hand speed of most tailors. A shirt could now be made in little more than an hour while a suit or frock coat was fully fashioned in a couple of hours.

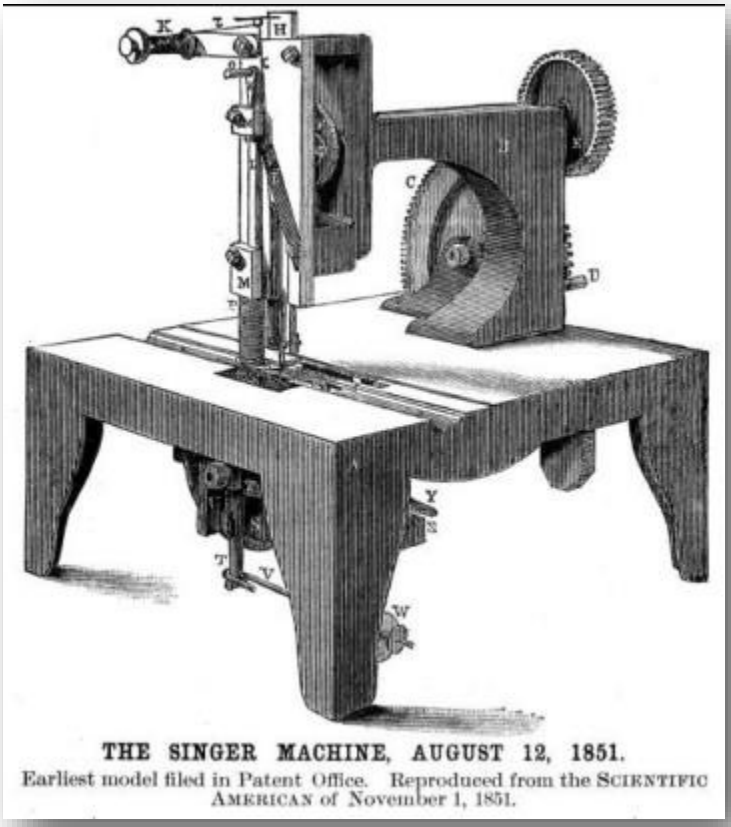
In 1856, Singer joined other US sewing machine manufacturers, such as Grove & Baker, Wheeler & Wilson, and Elias Howe, in accusing each other of patent infringement. The compromise solution was the world's first patent pool which enabled production by the individual manufacturers without expensive legal battles over licensing issues for minor modifications. The outcome was that sewing machines could now be mass produced for both industrial and domestic use.

Singer opened huge factories in New York and New Jersey and, with increasing demand for sewing machines across the world, Glasgow was chosen as the site for its first European operations due to its status as a city with a skilled workforce, iron foundries, steelworks and abundant labour.

A large factory, employing over 2,000 people, was opened in

1873 on James Street in the Bridgeton area of Glasgow but demand was growing so quickly that by 1885 the Singer Company was operating a new state of the art facility at Kilbowie near Clydebank. With over one million square feet of factory space and over 7,000 employees, the Kilbowie plant was soon producing over 13,000 machines each week, making it the largest sewing machine factory in the world.

By the 1880s, almost all suits, trousers, shirts, skirts and dresses were being manufactured in factories using sewing machines and sold as ready-made at highly affordable prices in department stores, off the peg retailers, and through mail order catalogues. The sewing machine created a new school of tailoring techniques and, under the factory system, work was sub-divided into simple and easily learned cutting and stitching processes that wiped out the hard-earned skills of the old tailor.



THE SINGER MACHINE, AUGUST 12, 1851.
Earliest model filed in Patent Office. Reproduced from the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN of November 1, 1851.

Singer sewing machines were also being bought for home use across the country and a flourishing trade developed for patterns and diagrams so that housewives could cut and sew their own skirts, dresses, aprons and coats. They could also make, mend and repair the clothes of their husbands and children as the need arose without the need to call in the local tailor.

John Murray continued to whip the cat around Tullybelton and Tullybeagles until the 1870s but his time on the road around the local farms and cottages was reducing as each year passed. The paths and tracks he used to trudge were replaced by good roads which linked to the Perth - Dunkeld turnpike. John's customers could now travel easily to his shop in Bankfoot to order new clothes or ask him to carry out a more complex repair or adjustment.

Janet Murray died of cancer on 3rd January 1878. She was 54 years of age. Within two years, John had moved with their family of three daughters and three sons to 146 West Graham Street in the Garnethill area of Glasgow. John now described himself as a Master Clothier and all the family were employed. Christina was a housekeeper, Euphemia worked in a fruit shop, and Margaret was in the family business with her father as a dressmaker. Peter was also in the clothing trade as a cutter, and Thomas was a journeyman tailor. James, the youngest son, was a trainee pharmacist.

John Murray died of cardiac disease on the 27th February 1900, aged 76 years. At the time of his death, he was living at 11 Yorkhill Street in the affluent Kelvingrove area of Glasgow. The death certificate records his occupation as Master Tailor.

By the outbreak of the First World War, whipping the cat was a lost memory. Village tailors were also more or less extinct. The Singer Company at Clydebank continued to boom and shipped a total of 1,301,851 sewing machines in 1913 to manufacturing customers and households around the world.

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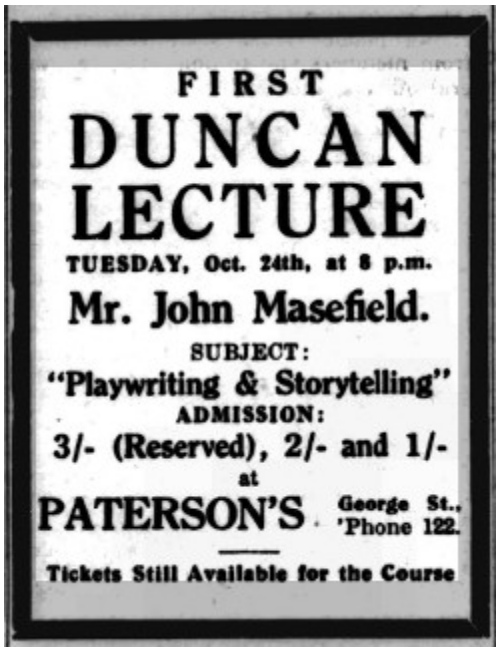

HARRIETFIELD MAN DIES OF TYPHOID

JENNIFER MCKAY

Outbreaks were common in dry summers

It is unlikely that there was ever a newspaper headline in Victorian times reporting the death of a Harrietfield man from typhoid; such deaths were a commonplace. On the other hand, epidemics and detailed stories about high profile victims, such as Prince Albert, were regularly reported.

Typhoid is caused by a salmonella bacterium which is spread by the consumption of food or drink contaminated by faeces of an infected carrier. It is still endemic in under-developed countries; millions of people contract the disease every year.

Prince Albert may have caught typhoid from lunch, possibly a pie, eaten in Stonehaven in October, 1861, as the royal party travelled south from Balmoral. At the time of his death, it was assumed the infection came from sewer gas escaping from Windsor Castle's bad drains.

The illness runs its course in about three weeks. Initial symptoms are fever, headache, cough and abdominal pain and progress to extreme fatigue and delirium. Death is usually from peritonitis, following perforation of intestinal ulcers.

The Harrietfield man was my great grandfather's brother, 35-year-old stone mason, John Gorrie Taylor. (Below, standing on the left.) His death certificate gives cause of death as typhoid fever nine days; acute nephritis; acute peritonitis. It must have been a miserable end.

Before it was understood that typhoid is waterborne, people believed that sewer gas was the source of infection. After a Bristol doctor reported that 13 of his 34 typhoid patients were drinking water from the same well, opinion began to change, although it took over 30 years before it was accepted that contaminated water was the problem.

The Dundee Courier ran a bizarre story in 1871, based on Cullen's "Practice of Physic", published a century earlier, with the headline "Typhoid is caused by Fear". Cullen believed that fevers were caused by "effluvia, intemperance, cold and fear". This recycling of outdated speculation reflected the confusion and ignorance then prevalent.

Our local press carried reports of outbreaks at home and abroad. A notorious case was in Winchester in 1902 when nine guests and a waiter at a Lord Mayor's dinner in the Guildhall fell ill. The Dean of Winchester Cathedral and the waiter died. Careful sleuthing by a medical officer revealed that the cause was contaminated oysters from Emsworth but not before Emsworth oysters had been consumed at a civic dinner in Southampton, with unfortunate consequences.

There was great interest in the illness, among the public and the medical profession, which generated lectures, pamphlets, newspaper articles, editorials and letters to the press.

In 1882, Dr Kirkwood of Largs was so frustrated by the lack of action on typhoid by the local authorities in Ayr, that he published a pamphlet. In 1879, he had been called to a farm where there had been repeated outbreaks of typhoid fever, some with fatal outcomes. Dr Kirkwood informed the authorities and, although an inspector was dispatched to the farm, no report was forthcoming. Consequently, Dr Kirkwood wrote his own report: the patient was in a box bed in a passage which joined the kitchen, milkhouse and byre; a "drain from the wc emptied itself, at a distance of 30 yards into an old iron boiler which serves as a drinking trough for cattle"; the dung heap and black putrid sludge lay against the walls of the milkhouse. Eventually, his report was acknowledged with the response that the case was "not a clamant one". Dr Kirkwood revisited the farm in August 1881 because he was seeing typhoid patients at his practice and was suspicious of milk from the farm, which was on sale in Largs. Nothing had changed. Dr Kirkwood "at last lost temper" and went public. He insisted that the sale of milk from contaminated dairies should be suspended until their water supply was proved safe and that penalties should be applied to dairies which sold poisoned milk. He concluded, "In no other way you will succeed in overcoming the indifference in the bucolic mind to sickness."

Although a law had been passed in 1860 banning adulteration of milk, infected milk was a perennial problem. If pails and cans were washed with

contaminated water, the bacillus got into the milk. Furthermore, it was common practice among dairies to water down their milk. Doctors had difficulty persuading the authorities and dairy owners to take the issue seriously. Even when the water supply was identified as the source of infection, there was no mechanism for compelling dairies to suspend sales.

Glasgow Philosophical Society invited Dr Ebenezer Duncan to read a paper on typhoid. He strongly advocated the prevention of pollution in wells. He presented a case study of recent epidemics in Kilwinning which originated at a farm where the farmer was spreading manure, which came from Glasgow, near a well. Half the population of Glasgow, he asserted, had no water closets and excreta was sent to farmers without being disinfected. "The same returned to Glasgow in the milk from the farm. Even to infirmaries!" Dr Duncan advocated penalties for applying organic manure within 200 yards of any well or watercourse used for dairy or domestic purposes. In his view the practice was as criminal as unintended poisoning by arsenic or strychnine.

Nearer home, Dr Thomas McLagan was appointed medical superintendent of Dundee Royal Infirmary in 1864, after the superintendent, two other doctors and the matron died of typhoid, in short order. A panicked board of trustees offered Dr McLagan the job, on the grounds that he had already survived the illness. The new superintendent improved ventilation and reformed sanitation arrangements: water closets in cubicles were installed. Previous sanitation arrangements had been the "cottage type" of toilet: a bucket, which was emptied when full.

Where was this bucket emptied? In the countryside and villages, the contents were usually dumped on the midden or in a water course. The anonymous contributor to the Old Statistical Account for Kinclaven parish, wrote of the chief village, Airntully, that the inhabitants persisted in the "abominable practice of having a dunghill (midden-hole, vulgarly) at the door". Airntully would have been no different from any other rural settlement of the time.

Outbreaks were common in dry summers. In July 1864 there were 720 cases in Perth, which equated to I in 35 of the town's population. An editorial in the Perthshire Constitutional declared that typhoid was the "scourge of our smaller villages without sanitation". The writer claimed that Crieff, Auchterarder and Blairgowrie would inevitably have outbreaks as organic matter would ooze into wells from surface drainage and cess pools. He concluded that the disease was preventable and if drainage wasn't improved "fatal disease is self-inflicted and social suicide".

The public thirsted for information. In 1882, Dr Robert Trotter, a Perth GP, gave a lecture entitled, "Epidemics" to an audience of several hundred at St Stephens church hall. He suggested that the Lade could be used to flush out the sewers twice daily. The doctor was appalled by the insanitary living conditions in some parts of Perth; in his opinion, Fleshmarket Close was unfit for human habitation. He complained about the "abominable smell' which came from the jaw-boxes (sinks) in kitchens in the town's slums. He had lived, he said, among the "dirtiest races in the world but had seen few to parallel Perth".

The Police were responsible for taking measures to mitigate infectious diseases. In Perth in mid 1885 a typhoid epidemic threatened; the origin of the disease was identified as contaminated milk and action was promptly taken. The usual mitigations were hosing down and scrubbing closes and common stairs. Fumigating houses and washing or burning patients' clothes and bedclothes were also common practice.

Perth Infirmary reported that, during 1882 it had treated 83 cases of fever, of which 73 had been typhoid. The following year, there were 22 fever patients of whom 15 had typhoid. Doctors could not explain why some summers saw more cases than others and in "better" years they could only hope that the downward trend would continue.

Two years later, the sanitary inspector informed the town council that there had been an outbreak of four typhoid cases and three of them were using water from the same well. The landlord had since connected the premises to the town's water supply and was about to have the well filled in. Dr Trotter intervened to comment that there had been an interesting article in the Scots Magazine about the Fair Maid's House. To laughter, the Provost ruled him out of order. Dr Trotter disagreed. He pointed out that the article was likely to attract visitors to the town over the summer and continued, "I suggest that the handsome little midden the local authority has placed beside the Fair Maid's House be removed before the summer."

Dr Trotter kept campaigning: in 1888 he addressed a well-attended meeting, at the West Church Hall. He criticised the "reprehensible" practice, he had seen near Perth, of tossing household refuse into the nearest river or stream, as disease could be carried downstream to unsuspecting victims; some people believed that typhoid was brought to Perth from villages on the banks of the Almond.

John Taylor, who died in August 1889, lived in just such a village.

The Medical Officer's report for June mentioned one case of typhoid in Perth and there was another case in September. It would seem that John Taylor had been unlucky but he and his neighbours lived in constant danger of contracting waterborne infectious illnesses. They drew their water from wells which were close to middens. In summer the springs that fed their wells tended to run dry. The 'cottage type" of toilet was standard and was often kept in the kitchen. Indeed, buckets were still the norm in Harrietfield within living memory, with flush toilets a rarity until the 1960s. The house where he lived with his widowed mother and younger brother and sister was only a few steps away from the village's open common drain which trickled down to the Almond. It's surprising that he was the only member of the family to succumb to typhoid.

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REWILDING DENMARKFIELD

There is a rewilding project being developed on the land around Denmarkfield House, Redgorton. One action to be undertaken soon (dates to be confirmed) involves locating and resurrecting a standing stone buried . . . somewhere. Said action has been sanctioned by Historic Environment Scotland and Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust.

The organiser, Ellie Corsie, has approached WSHS to see if we would be interested in helping. She is particularly keen to hear from anyone with in depth knowledge (unintentional pun) of the area and its history.

If you would like to know more please contact Ellie at:

ellie@denmarkfield.co.uk

CHAPELHILL CHURCH

ROS PEARSON

Logiealmond had three active churches.

The site was 'chosen with an artist's eye' as David Forrester puts in in his local history of Logiealmond' (1). The approach is from the old through road to the north and beyond the neatly walled graveyard the slope drops away very steeply to the west and south, giving long views up the valley of the Almond, and to East and West Lomond in Fife. Now the old gravestones and a small derelict building surround a head high rectangular platform that was once the church.

Below: looking west

Churches were built here in the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries, but was there an earlier pre-Reformation building? David Forrester found no evidence of one in his research but thought it possible, and there is no local tradition. Pont's map of 1580 marks a church so there was one in the late sixteenth century but how long had one been on this site, was it pre or post Reformation?

Logiealmond did not become a civil parish until the 1890s. Most of the area was in Monzie, about five miles to the west, until 1702 and then in Moneydie, about three miles east, a slightly shorter walk to services. Mullion or the Little Glenshee area was in Redgorton, about four miles east, and the western part in Fowlis Wester, about four miles south. The area had been recognised as distinctive from as early as 1260 when it was first held by Malise of Logie and thence his descendants, becoming the Barony of Logiealmond in the fifteenth century (2).

The place name element 'Logie' has been understood by Forrester and others to derive from old Gaelic 'logaigh' meaning hollow, or place in the hollow. But Prof Clancy's research found that many 'logies' in eastern Scotland are associated with church sites and are derived from 'login'. This evolved from the Latin word 'locus' meaning place, and became a 'loan word' in local languages for a holy place making it more likely that this was an early church site (3).

The estate passed from the Logie family through marriage to the Hays, the family of the Earls of Errol, around 1500, and then by sale to the Earl of Tullibardine in 1638. Earl Patrick built a church at Chapelhill in 1643. There was no stipend for a Minister so it became a chaplaincy of Monzie and had a service every third Sabbath. The estate was sold again in 1670, this time to the Drummonds, a branch of the family of the Duke of Perth, and they held it for almost two hundred years (1).

The new church of 1834

The area had supported the Secession from an early date and petitioned for a preacher in 1744. Their first kirk was at Kindrum and a replacement was built in 1811 in what became a few years later the small planned village of Harrietfield. Some members of the Church of Scotland were said to go to the Secession or United Presbyterian church in Harrietfield as it was so much nearer than the parish churches for the parts of Logiealmond.

The parish Minister of Moneydie and the Logiealmond members of his congregation worked to get the long derelict church at Chapelhill re-built. The Drummond laird was supportive, although most of the family were Episcopalians, but there was no stipend for a Minister. The new church was said to have incorporated part of its smaller predecessor as well as its date stone, and the local people did most of the work. Thomas Wylie recounted that his great grandmother and other women carried earth from Moneydie in their aprons to the new site (4). The church was a simple rectangle, rubble built with a slate roof. It had two doors and two large windows on the south side, and a bell-cote and an outside stair to a gallery at the west end.

Chapelhill Church 1890s: post card, A K Bell Library collection.

Clifton Johnson, early 1890s, 'An old kirkbedril' (beadle) ringing the bell at Chapelhill Church. Digital Amhurst.

Schisms and Unions

Controversy continued in the Church of Scotland. At the Disruption in 1843 the current preacher at Chapelhill, the Rev. Hiram Watson, severed his connection with the Established Church, as did his congregation. But they continued to worship in Chapelhill church without interruption until the Minister moved to a new charge. In the meantime, the estate had passed through the female line to the Drummond Stewarts of Murthly and in the 1840s Sir William sold it to reduce the family debts. The new laird, the Earl of Mansfield, locked the congregation out of the church in 1854, and installed a Church of Scotland minister. He endowed it with the farms of Fostens and Bankhead –

the former became the Manse, and the latter had recently ceased to be needed for the school.

The evicted congregation continued by holding meetings in barns, and eventually managed to buy the remaining years of the long lease of the northwest plot in Harrietfield, and built there a new church and a manse. For the next sixty years Logiealmond had three active churches.

In the new century the protestant churches in Scotland gradually came together again. The United Presbyterians of the South Kirk in Harrietfield joined with the Free Church of the North Kirk to become the United Free Church and used the newer North Kirk. (The South kirk was demolished in 1911 aged 100.) In 1934 the United Frees and the established Church of Scotland were joined and held services in both buildings for some years, but Chapelhill was in poor condition so no longer needed.

'Chapelhill Church 1975-6, List C Survey, HES,CANMORE'

After the Second World War Chapelhill was among the buildings listed as Category C, local importance, but listing did not prevent alteration or demolition. It became derelict and dangerous. The Church of Scotland was given planning permission for partial demolition in 1981and a completion certificate in 1984 (5).

The building was left on its footings with the walls knocked inwards to form a solid block five foot high. The stone stairs that led to the gallery at the west end now give access to the level top and fine views. The bell had been removed from its belfry in 1960 (6). The little watch house was demolished at the same time as the church, but the mausoleum remains though its slate roof has gone, replaced with concrete over the tunnel vaulting. A Manpower Services scheme tidied up the graveyard and its surrounding wall in 1985.

Post Script

J F and S Mitchell recorded the pre-1855 monumental inscriptions at Chapelhill in the early 1970s and Betty Willsher photographed and recorded notable stones in the 1980s. The West Stormont Historical Society published a new survey in 2005 that included the cemetery that had been in use for a hundred years by then as well as the old burial ground round the church.

The remaining church in Harrietfield was linked first with Almondbank in the 1960s, then with Methven, and in 1996 the building was sold and incorporated into the adjoining house, formerly the manse. After so many centuries there was no longer a church in Logiealmond, The Chapelhill graveyard is now unkempt but still has the fine position that attracted people to this site so many centuries ago.

References

1 David Forrester, Logiealmond, 1944

2 John M Rogers, the Formation of the Parish and Community in Perthshire, unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Edinburgh

3 Prof Thomas Clancy, University of Glasgow, Journal of Scottish Place Name Studies, vol. 10

4 Thomas Wylie, Recollections and Traditions chiefly of Logiealmond, First and Second Series, begun 1884, finished 1932

5 Planning Applications Perth Area, vol 1981-1986, A K Bell Archives

6 Logiealmond Old Parish Church, Places of Worship

Chapelhill Church, 1964,

J. Maxwell, scottishchurches.org.uk

AND THEN THERE WERE NONE

PAUL MCLENNAN

Perhaps I should have paid them more attention. They were, after all, the most exotic of Murthly's residents.

I'm speaking here of the two "Red Indians", Native Americans brought back by Sir William Drummond Stewart in 1839 to look after the buffalo (American bison) he had also imported. Some say they lived in the summer house at the bottom of the castle garden, although others contend they were quartered out in the Buffalo Park, in the stone built, rather Ruritanian bothy that you can still visit. Perhaps it was a seasonal thing? No one is sure how long they lived here or what became of them. Fanciful stories exist to this day they found favour among some of the local girls. I have been nudged when walking in Dunkeld and told, "There's one." Someone supposedly descended from the by-blow of an unlikely coupling; someone who has "the look".

William Drummond Stewart (1795 – 1871) was Sir George and Lady Catherine's second son. After an Army career, which peaked at Waterloo and then found its nadir at Peterloo[1], he spent most of the 1830s in North America. On several long hunting expeditions with the Mountain Men, fur trappers such as Kit Carson, William Sublette and Jim Bridger, he crossed the great plains and the Rocky Mountains and had a series of wild adventures. Much of it documented pictorially by a young artist, Alfred Jacob Miller. He was still there in 1838 when news came that his elder brother, John, had died, childless. Suddenly the 7th baronet, laird of four estates across 35,000 acres, Sir William made arrangements to return home. With souvenirs. As you do.

He landed in Liverpool in early June 1839 (as noted in the passenger list of the *Sheridan*, a fast steam packet out of New York), with his close companion on those expeditions, Antoine Clement, a French Canadian-Cree Indian, whom he would present to the great and good of Perthshire as his valet. Sir William had also arranged for Miller to follow with his field sketches and several finished paintings. Various contractors were tasked to find and ship over the bison, antelope, seeds and saplings from which he would try to recreate his Western idyll on Murthly estate. So, why not add some natives to the collection; and a grizzly bear . . .

I was contacted as archivist at Murthly Castle by Tom Cunningham who runs the Scottish National Buffalo Bill Archive. This documents the two enormously popular tours Buffalo Bill Cody made in Scotland with his Wild West Show and Congress of Rough Riders in 1891, and 1904. Tom has made an extensive study of Native American history with particular emphasis on connections with Scotland. He is the author of *The Diamond's Ace—Scotland and the Native Americans*, and *Your Fathers the Ghosts—Buffalo Bill's Wild West in Scotland*. Tom's website www.snbba.co.uk is respectfully dedicated to the memories of the Lakota men, women and children from Pine Ridge Agency and elsewhere who took part in those tours.

Did I know the names of Sir William's buffalo keepers? Which tribe did they belong to? Well, not offhand. I explained that my particular interest was in developing a social history of the village, that I had consciously steered away from Sir William and his American adventures. However, it quickly became apparent the archive held no documentary evidence of them. Which proves nothing, particularly as the archive is split between Murthly Castle and the National Records of Scotland in Edinburgh, where the holdings are known as the Grandtully Muniments. However, I knew the latter were searched by William Benemann for *Men in Eden* (University of Nebraska Press, 2012) the most recent and comprehensive Stewart biography. He found no evidence in Stewart's correspondence of Native Americans in Murthly. (And makes no effort to argue for their existence. Like a good biographer and historian, he remains agnostic.)

The story of local quines getting close and personal with these visitors did not surprise Tom. "Such casual racism is nothing new. Buffalo Bill's Indians are supposed to have got girls pregnant right, left and centre. Actual records of any illegitimate births are, of course, somewhat harder to come by." Between us, we ticked off all the occasions when the 'Red Indians' could have been mentioned. Tom checked passenger lists and census data[2]. Nothing. Owing to his colourful past, Sir William was good copy; his movements to and from America were generally covered across a range of newspapers in Scotland and England. (Searchable through the British Newspaper Archive.) Likewise the arrival of the buffalo and antelope destined for his Deer Chase. I'll take the Leicester Mercury of 13 July 1839 as an example, one of several English newspapers to pick up from a "Perth paper" that a fortnight earlier two buffalo and four "moozedeer" had passed through Perth enroute to Murthly Castle. Later shipments of Western flora and fauna were just as widely reported.

Both Tom and I (and Benemann for that matter) know absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. However, we now suspect the story of full-blood Native Americans living in Murthly only began to spread after 1963. *After* the publication of *Scotsman in Buckskin* by Mae Reed Porter and Odessa Davenport (Hastings House, New York, 1963). This first full-length account of Sir William's time in America is . . . frustrating. Richly coloured, it reads at times

like romantic fiction (their take on his supposed happy marriage to a humble, but beautiful, washerwoman that turned the family against him would give a Mills & Boon editor the dry boak). It is a Gobi Desert for footnotes, and offers only the sketchiest of sources, mostly anecdotal. A gap, any gap in the historical record prompts the authors into an assumption, or to embroider what they know, semi-creatively.

We would argue that the first the world heard of "Red Indians" and a grizzly bear heading for Murthly is on page 178. Otherwise, the combined Fourth Estate of Scotland and England, as vested in sensation as much then as now, completely missed the most exotic cargo. Too hypnotised by "moozedeer" to notice a caged bear, perhaps.

Porter and Davenport's research was not all at long distance. Porter visited Murthly, read letters and other documents at the castle . . . crucially (fatally?) listened avidly to friends of the family and locals. As a result, the book has character studies of William's brothers, and anecdotes, family stories handed down the generations. Yet it is important to note how often these are factually wrong, even while maintaining a coherent and, indeed, enjoyable narrative. A big picture item like Queen Victoria's triumphant Scottish tour in 1842 is written up as: Two. Separate. Visits. Yet the story hangs together; if you don't know the history. (And, let's face it, there is room for casual confusion – Vicky in later life had the equivalent of frequent flyer miles to Dunkeld.) They assume Sir William introduced Antoine and the Indians to Scotland much more directly in 1839, by taking ship from New York to Glasgow. Some incidental details are thrown in about the natives, such as "the three-point Hudson Bay blankets in which they impassively wrapped themselves against the chill Scottish air." (The overall effect irresistibly reminded me of the wooden dime store Indian Doris Day bumps into on the streets of 'Chicaggy' in *Calamity Jane*.) From Glasgow the party took a train to Perth and another on to Birnam. Except there was no such link; no rail connection between the cities until 1845. (And, ironically, Sir William blocked the idea of a Perth to Dunkeld railway throughout the 1840s, on the grounds it would spoil his Deer Chase.)

Davenport, who did most of the writing, excels at building a cosy intimate picture of Sir William's prodigal-son-returned-home event. Richard Ryder has previously been introduced as William's boyhood servant who went to war with him (p17). Which is tosh. (They met for the first time in France, as Hussars, just before the Battle of Orthez.) And there he is, when Sir William's carriage draws up: "old now and so feeble he was allowed to do only the lightest tasks." Tosh squared. Ryder by then had just turned 50. Still actively employed as a groom, he had another career change in the offing – as publican of the Murthly Inn at Kingswood. (For more about William and Richard's soldiering see The Dandy Fechters.) There is also a second appearance for Little Jamie, first introduced as the castle jester, the Fool of Murthly. (p22) On seeing Sir William," Jamie the dwarf jumped about on his great straddle feet."(p178) Which would have been something of a Second Coming as he died in 1833. And Christina, the beautiful washerwoman who caused a family rift? Dear Reader, he did not marry her. Not in the Porter/Davenport sense. Wishing to legitimise their son as heir to the entailed estates, Sir William and Christina went through some sort of ceremony to generate the appropriate paperwork, around 1846.

Whenever one can interrogate the historical facts in the book there are many such inaccuracies. Any undocumented references to the Native Americans drafted into Sir William's homecoming posse can really only be treated as part of the myth-making around the buckskinned Scotsman.

Tom Cunningham believes that following publication of *A Scotsman in Buckskin* feature writers subsequently let their imaginations run wild. All mentions of the "Red Indians" (and the grizzly bear) are post 1963.

Coincidentally, John Ford's *The Man Who Shot Liberty Vallance* came out at about the same time as *Scotsman in Buckskin*. Towards the end, when it is revealed that Ranse Stoddard's (James Stewart) hugely successful political career was built on a myth-making lie, a newspaper reporter is asked if he will reveal the truth. No, he says. "When the legend becomes fact, print the legend." The historian in me was already raging, even as the credits rolled. Yet we see it happen so often. For example, in 1884 Lewis Edson Waterman brought out his famous 'improved' fountain pen. Legend has it he was driven to perfect it having lost an important insurance contract with a client when his pen leaked, dropping a large inkblot over the document. So it says in the citation for Waterman's formal induction into the US National Inventors Hall of Fame in 2006. Except this version was concocted in 1921 (twenty years after his demise) by the company's advertising department. (*Adventures in Stationery* by James Ward, Profile 2014, p33.)

Some legends grow in the telling. None more so than with those Indians. Douglas Sutherland wrote *Rohallion: Wild Life in a Scottish Home* (Heinemann, 1978, p 26) a memoir of his time in that beautiful hunting lodge on the edge of the Buffalo Park. According to him, Sir William had several dozen Native Americans from assorted tribes, camped in tepees across the slopes of Birnam Hill.

Now that would have got my attention.

Mrs Porter genuinely deserves our thanks for recognising the importance of Alfred Jacob Miller's on the spot sketches and then buying the complete collection of them in 1935. And for dogged persistence, as she spent decades researching the story of why a Scotsman was more often than not at the centre of the action they portray. During this time she collaborated with Bernard DeVoto who was working on *Across the Wide Missouri*, an account of the Rocky Mountain fur trade. He had already recognised

Miller's importance and saw that his patron, Captain William Drummond Stewart could be the unifying force of a story on a continental scale. *Across the Wide Missouri (*Houghton Mifflin, New York) was published in 1947 with 'An Account of the Discovery of the Miller Collection by Mae Reed Porter,' and illustrated with the largest collection of Miller's work then presented to the reading public. It remains a *tour de force* of narrative history and a major work of American Literature.

Endnotes

1. For more about Stewart's possible involvement in the Peterloo Massacre see The Dandy Fechters Pt.2

2. The 1841 Census listing for Murthly Castle has Sir William, Antoine Clement and Alfred *John* Miller other guests and servants, but no Indians at the bottom of the garden. (A remarkably male household, though.)

Main Image: The Greeting by Alfred Jacob Miller

Crow Indian Scout by Alfred Jacob Miller

(Or how Mae Reed Porter imagined an Indian on Birnam Hill.)