

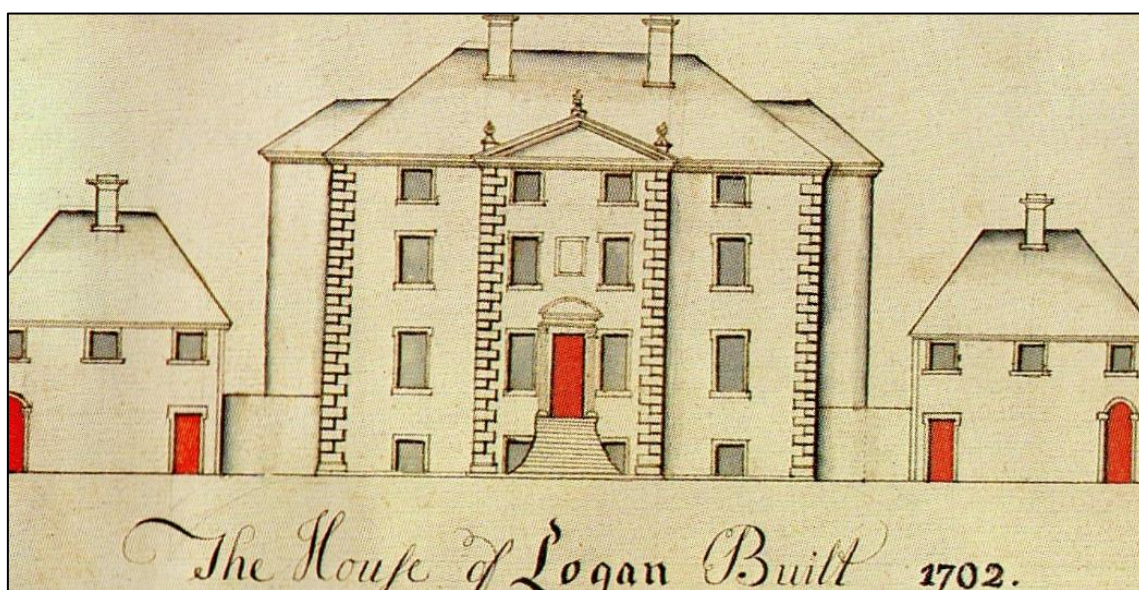
Researching the Country Houses of Galloway

The completion of their build was only the beginning of their story



Building Biographies:
A 2023 volunteer research project into the country houses
of Galloway

VOLUME 3: KIRKCUDBRIGHT TO KIRKMICHAEL



With contributions from:

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Robert Thorne

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GALLOWAY GLENS
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Introduction

The Building Biographies project recruited volunteers to undertake research into some of the large country houses within Galloway¹. These imposing buildings have borne witness to centuries of history, standing through changing eras and shifting social and economic climates. Their walls have enclosed the lives of many, their grounds the lives of many more and they have fulfilled a variety of needs from homes, hospitals and schools, to war rooms and tourist attractions.

The decision to focus on country houses stemmed from their longevity and assorted histories: their status and sheer size making them notable features in the landscape which inspire the imagination and curiosity of locals and visitors alike. These are buildings which appear frequently in our landscape but their histories often remain unknown to the public. Many have been demolished or stand as ruins: a resource that disappears a little more with each passing decade.

For the project, each volunteer was given their own specific house to research, piecing together timelines from their initial construction through to how they stand today. Initially, the selection of houses to research was driven by location, with the catchment area of the Galloway Glens being the focus. Second to this, the aim was to avoid any that had already been subject to a significant amount of research. The resulting selection included houses that were still in use, ruinous or even demolished, featuring a variety of functions dating back to the 19th century or earlier.

As more volunteers signed up, however, the study area expanded to include all of Galloway (and even a few from Dumfriesshire) and the biggest influence came from the preferences of the volunteers themselves; many had specific areas or even houses that had already piqued their interest and so the list grew to encompass a sporadic mix of country houses from across the region.

Each researcher was given a Guidance Note outlining the main resources available online. People could visit their local library or archive centre but the choice of online resources kept the project open to anyone who might face constraints in attending such places in person.

By the end of the project, 32 volunteers submitted their findings as summary reports, which covered 42 country houses across Galloway. The volunteers included people from Dumfries and Galloway, Ayrshire, Glasgow and America. Their results revealed stories of the people who designed, lived and worked within these houses, stories which reflect both local history and connections to far-flung places during times of peace and war.

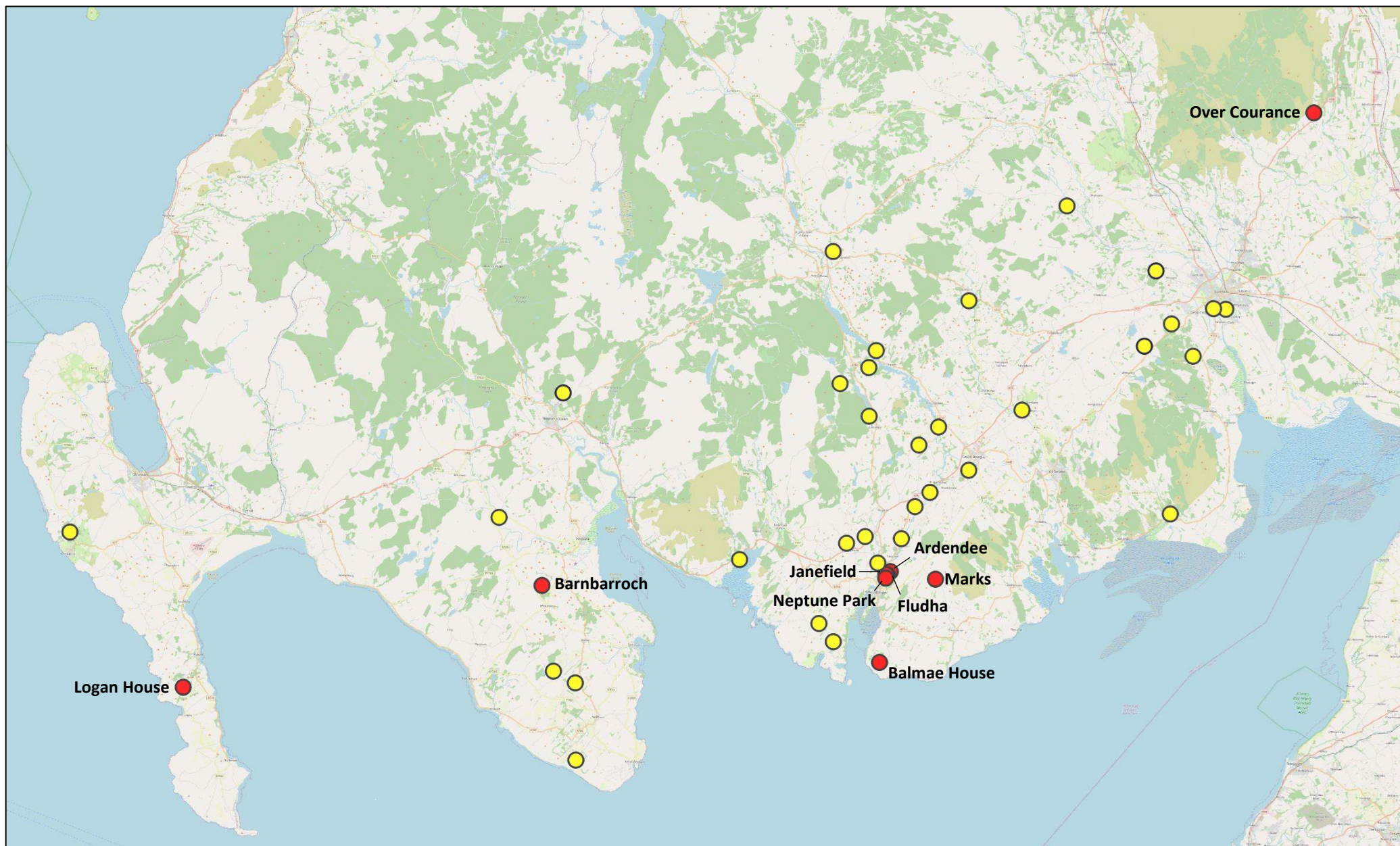
The volunteers' research has revealed the importance of recording these histories, and the origins of many bring to light a legacy that is not always acknowledged. After the abolition of slavery within the British Empire, the Slave Compensation Act of 1837 authorised a commission to manage the distribution of £20 million to compensate slave owners in the British colonies for the freeing of slaves.² Not all, but many of these country houses were initially funded with profits from slavery, with several connections to plantations in Jamaica.

It is important to record all aspects of our history and these houses seem able to reveal both the good and bad from our collective past. The passion and commitment shown by the volunteers in uncovering the stories of these houses has been inspiring, and they have created an impressive record which will be shared for many years to come.

Claire Williamson

¹ The Building Biographies project was undertaken in February to April 2023 as part of 'Can You Dig It', the community archaeology project of the Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership. Galloway Glens was a five-year initiative funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and 'Can You Dig It' was match funded by Historic Environment Scotland and delivered by Rathmell Archaeology.

² The Centre for the Study of the Legacies of British Slavery contains a database of their records - <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/project/details/>



Locations of houses researched during the Building Biographies Project – red marks the houses reported in this volume

Ardendee, Kirkcudbright

by Bruce Smith

This property was recently sold to new owners and the estate agent descriptions as to the current state were very helpful. For the majority of its life Ardendee has been a family home and one familiar with the sound of children and young people.

The particulars of the house and property did not require much creative license from the agents. Their, “beautifully matured gardens including greenhouses, a walled garden, fruit and vegetable patches and a wood shed. An equestrian arena, a stable and a private golf driving range. Extensive garden lawns surrounded by thinned woodland. Views over Kirkcudbright and the River Dee”, gives a very fair idea.

Originally built in the mid 19th century, it still retains many original or period features as well as over 13 acres of ground, making a small estate.



Front of main house

In 1872 we have the owner recorded by *The Return of Scotland's Landowners* as George Hamilton with 4 acres. Hamilton was the Sheriff Clerk, indicating that it was certainly as gentleman's residence. Sheriff Hamilton was a keen antiquarian and some of his collection of dirks and rapiers are in the Stewartry Museum in Kirkcudbright. He was a Chairman of the Antiquarian Society and was one of the principal founders of the Stewartry Museum and left his entire collection to them. The importance of this contribution to setting up the original Museum is recognised by a Plaque dedicated to his memory and to the official designation as 'The Hamilton Memorial Building'.

Maxwell's Guide Book to the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright from the Nith to the Cree [1878] described the property as,

"A little further on, to the east, on the rising ground, can be seen the mansion-house of Ardendee, the residence of George Hamilton, Esq., Sheriff-Clerk of the county. It is most beautifully situated, and commands one of the finest views of the river Dee and surrounding scenery which can be obtained in the district. **McLachlan Harper's "Rambles in Galloway"**, went further by describing Ardendee as the most prominent of the residences in the area and commanding one of the finest views in the south of Scotland in 1878.



George Hamilton, Portrait in Stewartry Museum, Kirkcudbright

The County Directory of Scotland informs us that **Mrs Julia Hamilton** stayed in Ardendee for some years after the death of Sheriff Hamilton. In fact, it was **1894** before the widow died.

It looks as though Ardendee passed into the hands of a **Dowager Countess, the Rt. Hon. Lydia Lucy Lifford** [nee Wingfield Digby] who lived there until her death in **1919 at the fine age of 91** according to the will presented before Kirkcudbright Sheriff Court. Lydia was the widow of James, 4th Viscount Lifford, an Irish Peer.

Just after the Second World War, **Miss Alice Clark Kennedy**, moved out of Knockgray and Carsphairn and moved in with a great friend, **Mrs Margaret Cathcart**, owner of Ardendee. This was to allow renovations to a Clark Kennedy property in the Glenkens area. Miss Alice was a daughter of Viscount Lifford. Mrs Cathcart is likely to have been the widow of **Major Frederick Adrian Cathcart**. Maj. Cathcart is recorded in *the Post Office Directory* for **1921** as resident at Ardendee. He had connections to the Carsphairn area that also housed the Clark Kennedys. In fact, the Valuation Rolls indicate that he was a major landowner, mostly around Carsphairn and Kells.



Major F A Cathcart out for a days' walking. [Carsphairn Archives]

Cathcart was a noted sportsman and also President of the Carsphairn Angling Club at Kendoon Reservoir. He was also instrumental in the formation of Carsphairn Golf Club. Major Cathcart is still listed as the owner of Ardendee in **1940**. Major Cathcart died in 1943 and his widow, Margaret [nee Elliot-Murray-Kynynmount] died in **1956**. Margaret's parents were the 3rd Earl and Countess of Minto.

We are informed by Burke's Peerage, that another military man resided at Ardendee for while around this time. **Major-Gen. John Archibald Henry Pollock** of the Indian Army died there in 1949. He fought in the Afghan Wars, Waziristan, the Boxer Rebellion and the North West Frontier. He also served as a JP for the Stewartry. Maj-Gen Pollock is likely to have known Cathcart from the Indian Army and from belonging to a similar social and military background.



Maj-Gen Pollock's Dress Uniform. Sold at auction with accoutrements in 2014

Their son, **Major Alan Reginald Cathcart** and his wife, Daphne [nee Pollock] are recorded in Burke's Peerage as living there during the **1960s** and beyond. Major Cathcart fought in the Second World War with the Indian Army. Their two children, Julia and Charles, are remembered as living at Ardendee by contemporaries in Kirkcudbright.

Most recently, probably from the **late 1970s**, the house was owned, and lived in, by **Edward and Margaret Shamash** with their children, Addi, Maurice, Ben and Joel. They were another family renowned for their sporting talents, particularly golf. With a nice sense of symmetry, Edward Shamash is credited with being the driving force behind the expansion of Kirkcudbright Golf Club into an 18-hole course in 1976. Edward was a golfer of some note, reaching the final of the British Boys' Championships in 1958. He represented both Scotland and Great Britain at Under 18 level and was runner up in the British Youths' Championships in 1959. Edward died in 2010 and Margaret remained at Ardendee for some years before relocating. One of the cottages on the property is available as a holiday let.

Balmae House, Kirkcudbright

by Bill Craig

Balmae House was built as a Dowager House by Lord Daer the 5th Earl of Selkirk for his recently widowed mother, Helen Hamilton, following the death of his father, Lord Dunbar Douglas the 4th Earl of Selkirk in 1799. Thought to have been built in or around 1800, it is not currently known exactly when the building was completed or if the Dowager ever occupied the mansion before her death in 1802.

The assumption is that Balmae was used as the Selkirks' Dowager House until 1920 when it was sold.



Balmae House continued to be used as a country mansion until 1943 when, as part of the acquisition of the Dundrennan military range during WW2 by the Ministry of War, it was used as the range commanding officer's quarters until the house became unusable. It was demolished completely around 1963 and nothing remains of the house itself other than the remains of the landscaped garden and lake, large walled garden and a few of the buildings in the policies.

Early history

Canmore shows early history (numerous cup and ring) both in the surrounding area and within the policies of Balmae House. A bronze age half-moon Gold Plate was discovered in the policies with a photograph held in Kirkcudbright Museum.

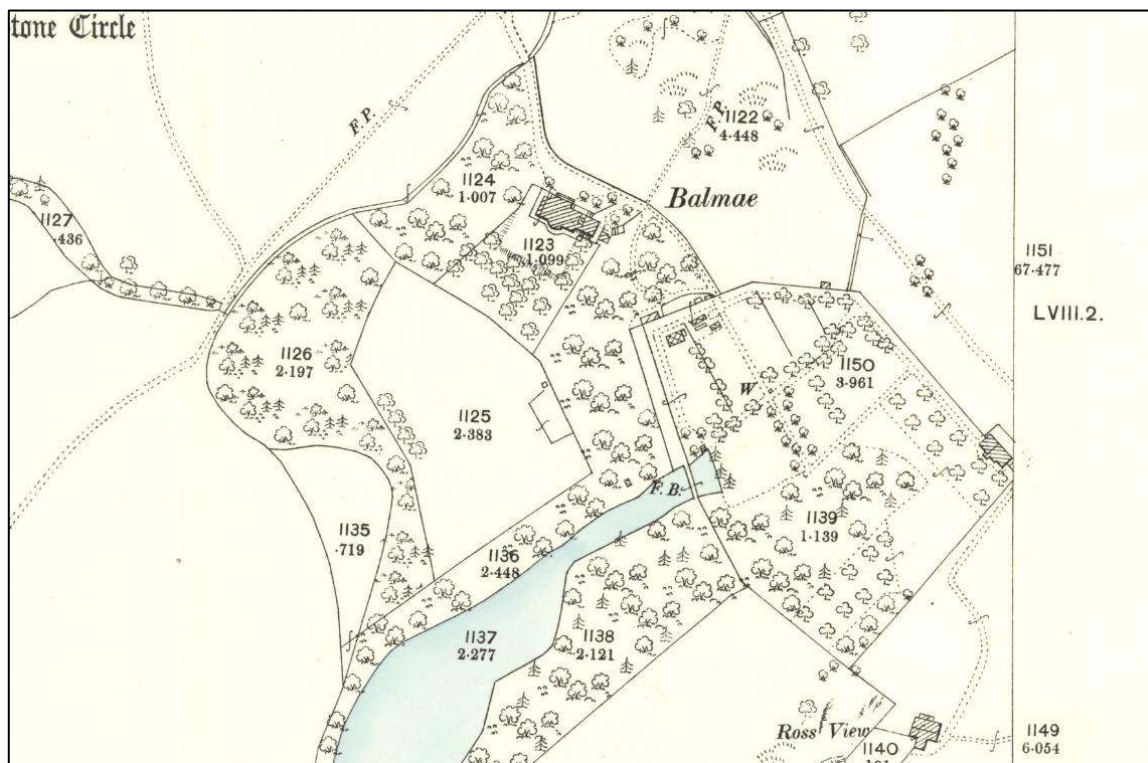
Balmae is shown on Blaeu's 1654 map of West Kirkcudbright and on Roy's Military Survey of Scotland 1747-55 but no houses are identifiable as on or near the location of Balmae House. It is a possibility that Balmae House was built on the site of an earlier building.

During the second half of the 18th century, the extensive lands of Balmae were either tenanted or owned by Alexander Birtwhistle from Craven, Yorkshire, who made his fortune as a cattle/sheep drover between Scotland and the North of England, and then his son William Birtwhistle, who subsequently became a landowner in the Stewartry, cotton mill owner in Gatehouse of Fleet, and merchant and Provost of Kirkcudbright. The Land Tax Rolls of the late 18th century show Balmae as having one of the highest taxes in the County of Kirkcudbright.

Balmae House

Balmae House, grid reference NX 68440 44923, occupied a small parcel of land of the larger estate of Balmae and was described in the O/S Name Books 1848-51 as:

"A handsome Mansion House partly of the Corinthian style of Architecture. It was built in 1800 by the late Lord Selkirk as the Sometime house of the Dowager Lady Selkirk. It is surrounded by a small demesne well ornamented with plantation."



Map of Balmae House and Gardens 1949 – reproduced with permission of the National Library of Scotland (<https://maps.nls.uk/>)

The entrance to Balmae House came from the looped road between Mutehill and Townhead using the current “west” entrance. At some point between 1850 and 1894 a second entrance was built about 100 yards to the East of this entrance giving a “Y” shaped route to the front of the house. Balmae House was positioned to the north of the demesne with the main entrance to the house facing northeast. The rear of the house had panoramic views to the southwest over Ross Island, the southern reaches of Kirkcudbright Bay and the Solway Firth. The Ross Island lighthouse, built in 1843 by Stevenson, still shone its light into Balmae’s bedrooms in the 1950’s.

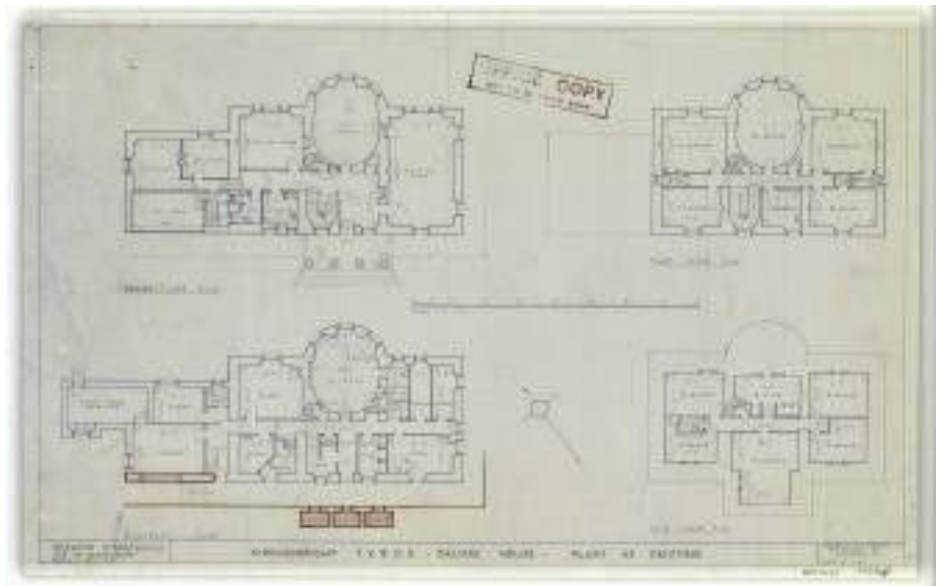
The desmesne of the House included a large walled garden with walls of at least 15 feet, still standing, dog kennel and a small lake at its southwest corner controlled by a sluice gate. The demesne contained three wells on its eastern side which may have fed the lake. The OS map of 1850 shows Balmae House, the walled garden, a Gardener’s Cottage built into the southeast walls of the garden, some buildings inside the northern parts of the gardens, and some other unidentified buildings to the northeast which may have been or become the coachman’s house and stables. The OS map of 1894 shows one additional building near the coachman’s house and the disappearance of the kennels and buildings inside the walled garden although it is a much more poorly drawn map with much less detail. The second entrance to the house is shown on this map. The 1946 OS map gives more detail again with a number of buildings/structures to the northeast of the house and buildings outside of the northwest wall of the garden.

The Mansion

Although there are some early photographs of the house, there are no original architect plans currently available and the architect is not known. It is not listed in the Dictionary of Scottish Architecture. However, there are broad similarities in design and layout with Arbigland House near Kirkbean, which was built in the 1750’s in the style of Adam. The Ministry of Works produced plans of Balmae House in 1961 as it was at that time. This may give an indication of the general layout of the house perhaps as it was when originally built although the usage of particular rooms may have changed over time.

The plans show a substantial rectangular building of four storeys including a basement and attic rooms with a 2-storey “extension” to the southeast side. The main part of the house has five bedrooms on the first floor.

The main entrance to Balmae House was framed by four corinthian-style pillars supporting a pediment.



The doorway led into a substantial hall with wood panelling and a “magnificent” inlaid wooden staircase. A particular feature of the House is a semi-circular bay on the first three floors which forms a large oval room on each. On the MoW plans these rooms are shown as the lounge on the ground floor and a bedroom, possibly the master bedroom, on the first floor, both presumably with views down to the coast.

The basement contained the kitchen, which is located in the oval room, two larders, a wine store, scullery, and various stores connected to the laundry and wash house in the extension. There were also three cellars to the northeast of the basement. A lift, possibly a dumb-waiter, connected the kitchens to the main floor with public rooms.

The second floor contained the servants’ quarters in the attic. The MoW plans show five rooms.

The Gardens

The large Walled Garden has an area of around 25000 sq yards and has unusually kept much of its internal contours with sizeable mounds. A culvert runs through the garden and supplies the lake, with the external wall separating a small pond inside the garden from the rest of the lake.

There is evidence that part of the garden area was planted at some point with beech hedges perhaps used as divisions.

Greenhouses were constructed in the northern part of the walled garden. The Head Gardener lived in the cottage built into the wall on the southeast of the garden. This cottage still stands and has been refurbished by the MoD. Before the Second World War, one of the gardeners lived in a small bothy, no longer standing, on the side of the gardener’s cottage with a third gardener living at Craikness Cottage on the road towards Dromore, northeast of Balmae House.

Other buildings

Just outside the southwest corner of the Walled Garden was a building named Ross View. This house no longer exists.

The stables and carriage house were situated to the northeast of the policies with a connecting roadway to the main house. The coachman in the early to mid 20th century was called Baynes and his residence was known as Baynes’ House during the mid 20th century. These buildings no longer exist.

Ownership

The accessed records do not show when the lands of Balmae came into the Earls of Selkirk's possession, or if the lands were actually owned by father and son Alexander and William Birtwhistle or just tenanted by them.

? - 1799	Dunbar Douglas, 4 th Earl of Selkirk (1722–1799)
1799 - 1820	Thomas Douglas, 5 th Earl of Selkirk (1771–1820)
1820 - 1885	Dunbar James Douglas, 6 th Earl of Selkirk (1809–1885)
1885 - 1886	Charles George Hamilton (1847–1886)
1886 - 1895	William Alexander Louis Stephen Douglas-Hamilton (1845–1895)
1895 - 1919(?)	Alfred Douglas Douglas-Hamilton (1862–1940)
1919(?) - ?	David Duncan
? - 1943	Mrs Duncan who moved to Ellenbank, Tongland Road, Kirkcudbright on the acquisition by the Ministry of War
1943 - current	Ministry of War/MoD

Occupiers

1800 - 1802	Helen Hamilton, Dowager of Dunbar Douglas the 4 th Earl of Selkirk who died 1802 at her lodgings in Bath. Not known if she resided at Balmae House
1802 - 1820	Unknown
1820 - 1871	Jean. Dowager of Thomas Douglas, the 5 th Earl of Selkirk
1871 - 1885	Unknown
1885 - 1920	Cicely Louisa Dowager of Dunbar James, 6 th Earl of Selkirk
1919(?) - ?	David Duncan
? - 1943	Mrs Duncan
1943 - 1957(?)	Commanding Officer quarters

Officers in residence 1944 - 1957

Col Dunne

Col Smith

Col O'Rourke

Col Fitzpatrick

Col Miller

The House was deemed unusable by the Ministry of War in about 1957 and stood empty until it was completely demolished in about 1963 by local builder George Watson with any items of value – wooden panelling and ornate staircase – removed by local residents Neil McWhirter and Joey Sassoon.

Recollections and Anecdotes of Balmae House

David Collin, Local resident and Architect

As a young boy, he stayed for a weekend in about 1952 in Balmae House with his friend, the son of Colonel O'Rourke. He describes the House as very attractive and in good condition, particularly remembering the large oval rooms and the large bedrooms that the light from Ross Island Lighthouse shone into at night, wooden panelling and the in-laid staircase which they used an old mattress to slide down. Some of the fireplaces had been restored with tiles from the Selkirks' main residence at St Mary's Isle. The family occupied the lower basement which opened on to the lawn from which Colonel O'Rourke flew petrol fuelled model planes.

David Picken, Local farmer

Recalls the grand columns framing the main door of the house which after demolition lay on the shore near Mutehill for some time. He also remembers the coach houses and harness rooms near the Walled Gardens which had a large glassed area for washing the carriages. Bayne (or Bain) was the coachman who lived in a house in the northeast of the grounds.

Alex Southen – MoD Archaeologist

Officers were housed in Balmae House until the building of the new accommodation at Townhead Camp in late 1943. It seems that in 1947 there was a requirement to extend the ranges and once again Balmae House was highlighted as an accommodation for the officers of the range staff. This seems to be only mentioned in minutes of a meeting, so I'm not sure if it happened.

Also, apparently, water was supplied to Balmae House through two underground concrete tanks, and fed through a 1 ½ inch pipe into the house.

Finally, a red sandstone sundial was relocated from Balmae House after the Ministry of War took over the land, and stood next to the road hub of the original Townhead Camp. However, in recent years it was re-located once more and it now stands next to the modern range buildings at Dundrennan Camp.

Galloway News - 25th November 1961

"After the death of the sixth Earl of Selkirk (Dunbar James) in 1885, his widow took up residence at Balmae, a lovely mansion overlooking the Solway Firth. There she remained until her death in 1921. She was a great horse-woman, and nothing gave her greater pleasure than driving her own carriage and pair. Later, during the 1914-18 war, in order to keep up the morale of the land-workers, she drove the horses in the reaper at Torrs Farm, with Jamie Smith "guiding" or tilting.

Many a Christmas tree did the Countess provide in her home for the children attending this little school. She always opened the proceedings by reciting the Selkirk Grace, as it was called after Burns had himself quoted it at St Mary's Isle in 1793. But we had to be respectful and remember to say "My Lady."

School memories from early 20th century Townhead School

Images from Canmore

1. SW facing frontage showing large Bay with Oval rooms
2. SW frontage
3. NE frontage showing main door framed by four corinthian columns supporting pediment
- 4 Sundial which was moved from Balmae House to Dundrennan Range HQ by MoD
5. Large sweeping staircase with inlaid treads
6. Interior columns beside staircase
7. Ornate fireplace



Fludha, Kirkcudbright

by Bruce Smith



A HOUSE WITH A HISTORY

Introduction

Welcome to this very brief history of the building. The address for most of its life was, Fludha, Tongland Road, Kirkcudbright, Kirkcudbrightshire, Scotland. *The New Statistical Account of Scotland*, Volume IV, listed Fludha as one of the five mansion houses of the parish of Kirkcudbright in 1845 [interestingly, Janefield on the opposite side of the main road was another]. Similarly we can locate the house in other prestigious Directories from the C.19th and early C. 20th, such as *The County Directory of Scotland* and *The Directory to Noblemen and Gentlemen's Seats* as far back as 1852.

Prior to 1839 Fludha was a simple two room dwelling, very similar to another, which was later rebuilt as Fludha Cottage, and stands just behind us to the north of the hotel. We can chart how a rude or simple dwelling became such an attractive dwelling and occupied such a prominent location.

Fludha has been a hotel or guest house since opening in 2005 when Steven and Christine Laycock bought the 2 acre property and the period house and sympathetically renovated the inside to achieve a 5 Star Tourist rated, six bedroom, hotel. In addition the gardens were landscaped to try to bring back some of the elegance of previous years.

Fludha has many links with some of the bigger houses in Kirkcudbrightshire, including Barcaple and Cumpston House, and with one of the most famous buildings in America. Many of the previous owners have also had close links with Canada. The house has generally passed into the hands of family members when death called for the existing owner. A large proportion of the previous owners have been women.

We are very grateful to such people as Margaret Torrance and other sources, such as the autobiography by Stuart Lauchlan, and oral contributions by some of our neighbours that have allowed us to put this brief history of the house and its links together.

So, as you will discover, Fludha is a house that has paid its way for much of its life, one that has helped to protect the dignity of elderly and younger ladies, that has known the joy of young children and their voices, that made its contribution to the wars against Hitler, and is a house that has been famous locally for its hospitality.

Fludha is Born

Our first mention of Fludha is of a small two room dwelling, rather than the current period mansion. The property that stood on the land was known as Fludha Cottage. We have a brief mention of it from Stuart Campbell Lauchlan. His mother and father, Mr and Mrs Joseph Campbell, owned or lived in Fludha from 1922 and he grew up there for at least some of his childhood. He has suggested that the property was rebuilt to its present shape and proportions in 1839. The two rooms became the dining room and a drawing room. Two acres of lawn and rough field were attached to the property, although it is not clear if this land was purchased at this time to add to the property. This land more or less corresponds to the existing footprint of the land today.

The new house was an impressive one and had been carefully chosen. Stonemasons, carpenters and builders produced the current shape of the house on classical lines, although we have no record of any architect yet. The average wage for a stonemason in Kirkcudbright in the 1840s was 2 shillings and 6 pence daily [12 ½ pence] and a house carpenter would expect to be paid 2 shillings [10 pence].

There seems to be a very strong American influence in the choice of the location for the new house and for the choice of name.

The first recorded occupants [through the 1841 Census] of Fludha were three ladies. They were Grace Maitland [nee Gordon] and her two step daughters, Elizabeth Agnes Maitland [Miss Betsy] and her sister, Susanna Poythress Maitland. Grace was the widow of David Maitland of Barcaple. There were many family links between Fludha and Barcaple, one of the more imposing mansion houses in the area. It had an estate of nearly 4 000 acres and a 21 acre park and was about 4 miles away across the rivers Dee and Tarff. In fact, one author described Fludha as a dower house for the Maitland women.

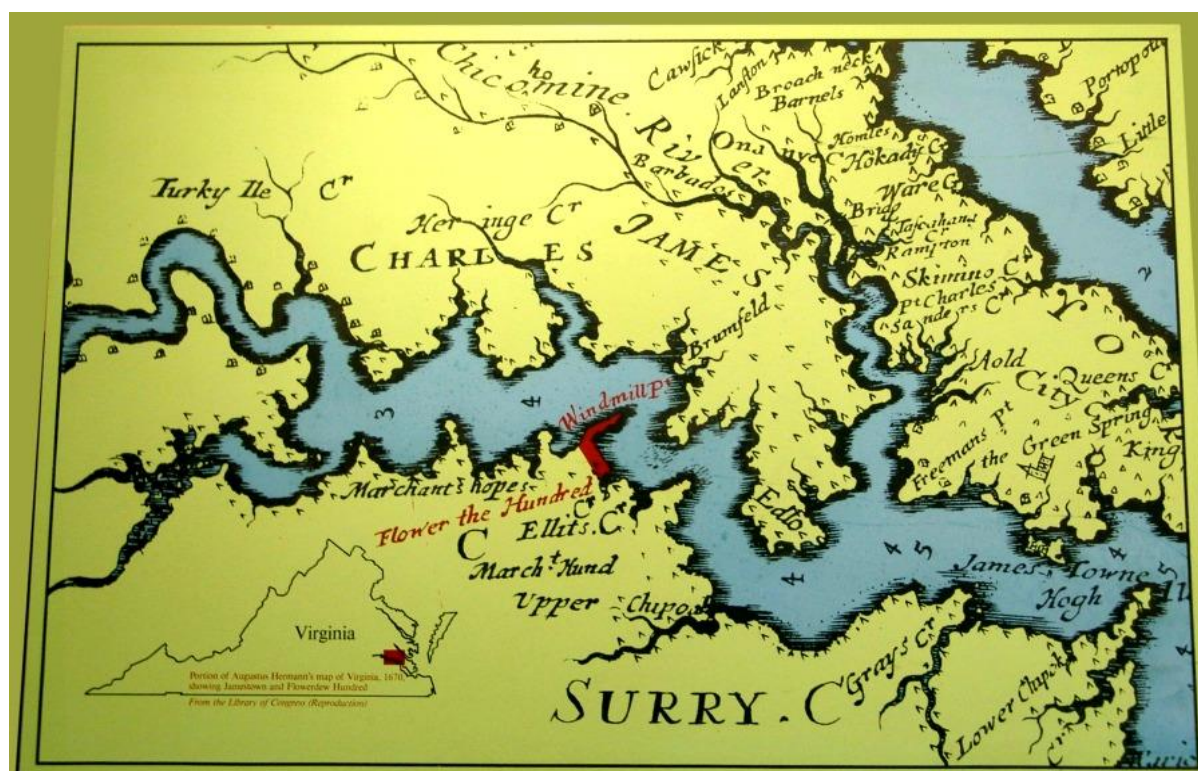
Miss Betsy was born in Virginia, USA in 1793. Her father, David Maitland, was a merchant and trader concerned largely with the eastern states. Tobacco was a very important, and lucrative, trade between the USA and Great Britain. Virginia was also a leading cotton producer and this was in high demand in Britain. Around 1820, nearly half of all American imports were cotton. Tobacco exports were about one-fifth of cotton totals.

David Maitland married Susanna Poythress, the daughter of Joshua Poythress in Prince George, Virginia in 1788. Joshua owned the tobacco plantation on the crook of the James River, on the south side, halfway between Richmond and Williamsburg. The name of the plantation was the Flowerdew Plantation.

The Flowerdew Plantation is a very famous and historical one in America today. Flowerdew Hundred was among the earliest English settlements in the New World, and its 1,400 acres contain some of the country's best preserved and most significant archaeological site. Flowerdew Hundred survived an Indian attack in 1622. Originally it was owned by Sir George Yeardley, the first Governor of Virginia. He was a very able and popular Governor and the economy of Virginia soon began to prosper.

The house, Flowerdew, was built in 1620 and the plantation was named after the Governor's wife, Temperence Flowerdew. However, it may have been already farmed by Temperence's brother and already named after him. The family originating from Norfolk, England. Temperence Flowerdew was one of the first Americans, arriving on the Falcon in 1609. For many years the Flowerdew Hundred [the name given to a

grant of land] was a famous historical museum. It is also a site of archaeological importance and the excavations there have helped to fill in some of the early history of America and Virginia.



Old map of the James River showing the location of the Flowerdeew Plantation and house on the south bank of the river as it crooks

Flowerdew Hundred changed hands over the years, usually within an extended network of families linked by marriage. The spellings of the plantation are various, from Fleur Dieu to Fludha. By 1725 the Poythress family were the owners. It was into this family that David Maitland married Susanna.

Susanna died in 1799 leaving David with 2 daughters to bring up. He soon returned to Scotland, having inherited the Barcaple estate on the death of his father. In 1804 he married Grace Gordon from nearby Campbelton, Twynholm and they lived at Barcaple until his death in 1838. Shortly after this the Fludha purchase was made and the three ladies moved out of Barcaple.

The location of Fludha, on the south of the river by the bend clearly reminded the ladies of their American roots. The River Dee standing in for the James River. The Dee itself had attractions. It was described in 1845 as,

“In summer, its margins are sweetly bedecked with wild flowers. To saunter here and listen to the mournful sound of the passing stream is to visit nature in her loveliest and most interesting form..... the river is picturesque from the rising ground at Boreland”



A glimpse of the view that captivated Miss Betsy and her sister.

Today's visitors to Fludha will still be able to appreciate the view that captivated Miss Betsy and, all too briefly Susanna Maitland, who died in 1840. Grace Maitland died in 1847 in Surrey but is commemorated in Tongland Kirkyard.

There have been suggestions that the origins of the house name was either a version of Flood Hall or a Gaelic sounding Flud Ha. However, the many links to America and the Plantation are a little more convincing. The house is, however, marked on the 1843 Ordnance Survey Map as Flud Ha.

Miss Betsy lived at Fludha until her death in 1879 aged 86. In addition there was usually a Cook/Housekeeper, a Housemaid and a Coachman/Footman who lived in the house. Miss Betsy was buried in Tongland Kirkyard. The 1841 Census listed Hugh Lamont, Margaret Shaw and a 15-year-old girl, Agnes Lamont, as servants. In the 1851 Census, Margaret Shaw was the Housekeeper/Cook. She was aged 51, unmarried and was born in Kirkcudbright. She was assisted by Grace Henry and Robert Murray. After the death of Betsy Maitland, the coachman, Alexander Clark, purchased some adjoining land from Kirkcudbright Town Council and built a house known as West View. This was, presumably a legacy for faithful service and/or his savings. Clark lived

there with his wife, Janet Hannay, the housemaid at Fludha until she died in 1909 and then until he died in December 1912, aged 73. Both are commemorated in Tongland Kirkyard.

One event that may have annoyed Miss Betsy was the opening of the railway into Kirkcudbright. It ran a few metres from the eastern boundary when it opened in 1865. Fortunately, trains were forced to slow down for the bridge over the lane between Fludha and West View going up to Low Boreland.

The estate was left to a cousin, David Campbell of Ayrshire but we do not have any record of him occupying Fludha. The property was purchased by a John Charters in the early 1880s. He was a coachman's son and worked as a draper in Whithorn, evidently successfully. He is recorded as having 4 employees. However, once again, there is a close connection to Barcaple. His parents, John and Grace, lived at Barcaple Cottage and John was the coachman there. Once again, the links to Maitland properties at Barcaple are evident. Their son bought Fludha and lived there until his death in 1886. Again, the owner of Fludha is buried in Tongland Kirkyard.

John Charters passed the house to his sister, Jane and she lived there with her niece, Grace Palmer until her death in 1910. She is commemorated in Tongland Kirkyard. The census records for 1891 and 1901 only record one or two servants living on the premises. The general servant in 1891 was Janet Dempster, aged 23 and born in Dalbeattie. It may be that the ladies were able to look after the many household tasks themselves or those servants and gardeners came up for the day. In 1901 Grace Palmer and Mary Dalziel were the servants. A local house, West View, was built by the Coachman to Miss Elizabeth bordering on to the Fludha property to the south. In the Census Alexander Clark is described as a jobbing gardener.

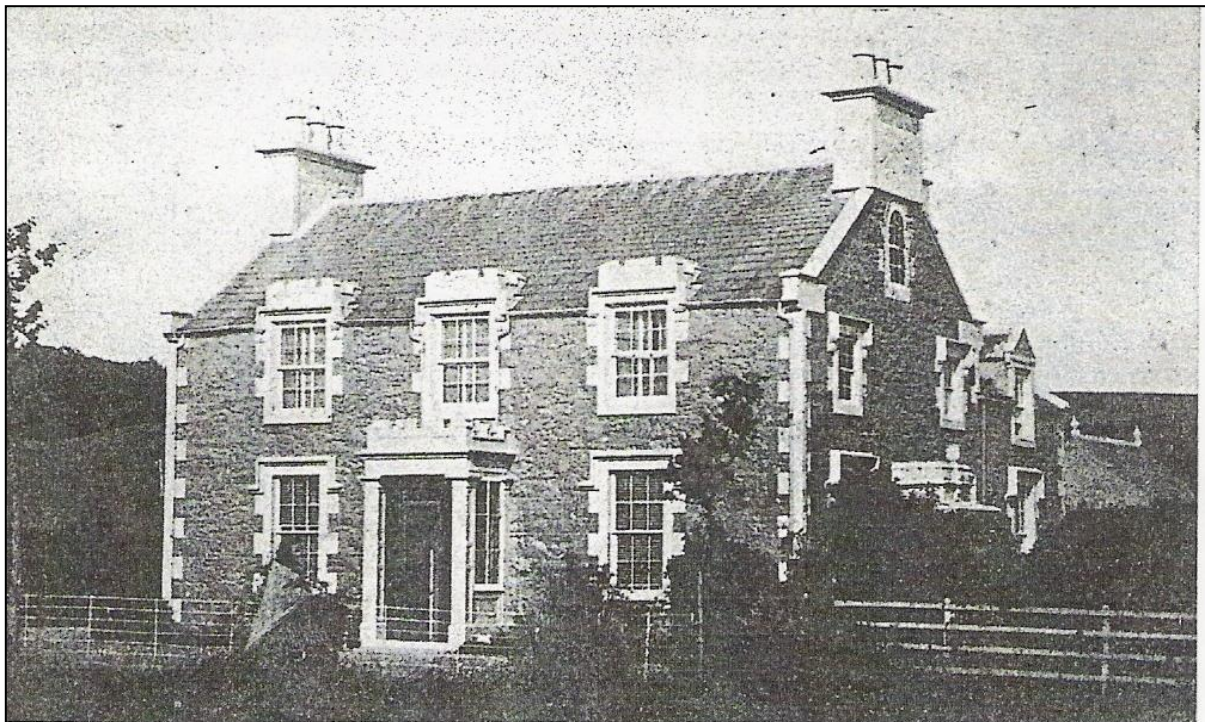


Figure 6. Fludha in the 1870s, with Miss Betsy Maitland in the foreground.
Photo courtesy of The Stewartry Museum, Kirkcudbright (Dumfries & Galloway Museum Service).



Fludha in 1907

Grace Palmer inherited Fludha in 1910 and seven months later married a Kirkcudbright GP, David Jackson McAdam and they made their home here, moving up from his bachelor accommodation in St Cuthberts Street in the town. They then went on a grand Honeymoon Tour to Canada. Unfortunately, Grace took ill in Montreal and died in June 1911. She is commemorated in Tongland Kirkyard.

David McAdam returned home to his practice and threw himself enthusiastically into the life of the community. He was a respected medical man and a very active supporter of many local groups. He was a Chairman of St Cuthberts Wanderers FC, a member of the Town Council, and a keen sailor. He particularly delighted in taking groups of young people aboard his yacht for a trip to sea. His memorial in the Dumfries Standard in 1922 recalled his hearty and infectious laughter and willingness to pay for medicines for the poor out of his own pocket.

His grave is located in Kirkcudbright cemetery.

Fludha was one of the very few properties in Kirkcudbright to have a telephone. The number in 1921 was Kirkcudbright 34.

Fludha appears to have been left to a niece of Dr McAdam, Esther Jackson Campbell [Essie] who lived here until sometime in the 1960s. Essie moved into the house with her parents, her three siblings and grandmother. In addition, she shortly married and brought her husband, Stuart Lauchlan, to Fludha too. He had been employed by the Nigerian Forestry Department and it is not clear if he travelled back to join them. The elder Stuart Lauchlan is remembered as a sociable and likeable neighbour. By 1929, Stuart and Essie had added a son to the inhabitants of Fludha.



Stuart Campbell Lauchlan whose mother and father owned Fludha in the 1920s. He grew up here and has many happy tales of living at Fludha. Stuart married Marian Bevan and later moved out to Warren, Rhode Island where both were doctors. Stuart died in Rhode Island in 2014.

Essie made some changes to Fludha in the 40 years or so that she lived there. The gardener's cottage in the grounds to the north of the main building was a two roomed and basic structure. Essie had it rebuilt into the two story building that exists today, called Fludha Cottage, and sold sometime in the early 1960s. It shared the old drive that was the main entrance until the existing drive was built in 2005. In addition, Essie changed some of the internal features of the house. It was Essie had intended to live in the newly converted gardeners' cottage but she changed her mind and sold it. She moved into the bottom flat and rented out the top floor to a retired couple. Unfortunately, we know little about them at the moment.

The grounds required a gardener and we know that a Mr Louden was there in the 1920s and a Mr Cole in the 1940s and into the 1950s. The latter is remembered as a rather typical hardworking man but rather taciturn, to say the least. David McKill worked some of the grounds as well in the 1960s and 70s.

Fludha in World War Two

Unusually the Great War of 1914-18 appears to have left the house and its inhabitants untouched. However, Fludha was to make a more vigorous and robust contribution to the defeat of Hitler and Nazi Germany. The house made its contribution in five main areas, looking after evacuees, billeting soldiers, collecting salvage, helping to make munitions and producing food for the war effort.

Firstly, the house took evacuees from Glasgow in 1939-40. There was a great fear of the bomber and the authorities were keen to get women and children out of a key target, with its shipyards and munitions factories.

After war was declared, people expected that the Luftwaffe would bomb Britain and that civilian casualties would be enormous.

Evacuation was voluntary. Some had made private arrangements but when the order came at 11.07 on 31 August 1939 to 'Evacuate Forthwith', nearly 176,000 children assembled: 120,000 leaving Glasgow within three days. By Christmas 1939, the feared German blitzkrieg hadn't happened and three-quarters of the evacuees had returned home. Sometimes children were sent on their own or whole families came down. Fludha put up a family from Glasgow under instruction from the government and the children would have been enrolled in the local schools. One school that has recorded its evacuation to Kirkcudbright was Greenfield School in Govan. Eventually they went back to Glasgow. Locals, including Stuart Lauchlan took the view that the quiet of Kirkcudbright was too hard to adjust to for city folk.

However, once the government sponsored family had returned, Fludha had others who came down privately during the bad bombing phases later in the war.

Kirkcudbright has an army training range and a large number of soldiers were trained there and billeted in the town and surrounding farms. Fludha took its share of soldiers, particularly when nearby farms were requisitioned as a tank range. Fludha had a number of soldiers, ranging from officers to enlisted men. Ronald Searle, the creator of the St Tinian's cartoons was one of the soldiers billeted in the town. He got the idea from talking to two young girls who had been evacuated to Kirkcudbright. His memories of the town are very warm and typical.

"[Those families in Kirkcudbright] opened their doors with a generosity that made life unbelievably tolerable for a bunch of miserable soldiers."

The Army Commando unit that was stationed there from 1943 onwards is particularly remembered for their fitness and for their sense of fun. They became almost part of the Lauchlan family. They were training for D Day and the family were relieved that they all survived, although one was badly wounded. It looks like the men were from either No 4 or No 6 Commando.

Fludha also made a contribution to the war effort by sacrificing their aluminium cookware to help build Spitfires and Hurricanes. Stuart Lachlan went out every Saturday morning with the Scouts, like thousands of others, to enthusiastically collect material that could be recycled for the war effort. Many accounts from residents during the war recall the Scout trek cart on a Saturday morning. The inhabitants of Fludha rather dreamed that one of their pans had shot down a German bomber or two.

Stuart Lauchlan had retired from his post with the Nigerian Forestry Commission. However he volunteered to work on munitions production for the war effort. He became a shift chemist and travelled to Dalbeattie on the train that ran about 20 metres from his boundary to make nitro-glycerine and cordite. This material was used to fill shells and as propellant for the shells and rifle bullets. He also practiced rifle shooting with his son just in case the German should make an appearance in Kirkcudbright's streets.

Due to the U boat menace, Britain was rather short of food. Fludha, having over 2 acres of land was well placed to become reasonably self-sufficient in such things as fruit and vegetables. The greenhouse on the south side of the house and the one to the rear were fully utilised and there was a walled vegetable and fruit garden. Apples were grown and carefully laid out in the fruit store at the rear. Soft fruits were made into jams and chutneys. Plums, loganberries, gooseberries, currants, and strawberries were carefully grown and stored. Brambles, crab apples and mushrooms were gathered for the surrounding area. Rosehips, a valuable source of Vitamin C were gathered as well.

Today the bramble bushes and crab apple trees along the Dee Walk continue to offer their bounty. Much of the vegetable garden would be laid out for the growing of potatoes during the war, with carrots and onions. In addition, Fludha kept a full supply of chickens, geese, ducks, rabbits, turkeys and bees. The average ration was meagre and country folk were luckier than city dwellers in that they could produce extra food.

At some point during the war Fludha played host to one of the Intelligence Agencies. They commandeered one of the annex rooms with the nautical round windows. This allowed them to keep Ellenbank, a neighbouring property, under surveillance. In the early days of the war Kirkcudbright was awash with rumours and stories of German spies and parachutists. Clearly an aggrieved or nervous resident had communicated their suspicions to the authorities.

However Fludha did not escape unscathed during World War Two. Possibly the Germans were aware of its many contributions to the war effort. A German bomber on its way back from Glasgow or Clydebank dropped its bombs on an abandoned farm nearby. The blast woke up Mr and Mrs Lauchlan and dislodged some plaster from the bedroom ceiling. In addition, the base of the water fountain was cracked and it never worked again.

Interestingly a new fountain was put in by Steven Laycock in 2010. As far as we know, this was the only bombing incident during WWII in Kirkcudbright. Possibly the story of the spy in Ellenbank had some truth to it, with Fludha to be bombed for its crucial contributions to the war effort.

Changes and more changes

For most of its life Fludha has been a family house. Generally changes to the inside and outside of the house and to the gardens were minimal.

The most obvious change has been the painting of the walls. In the 1870 photograph we can see that the stonework is intact with the sandstone windows, corners and balustrades painted white. In addition there is a window into the attic at the top of the south facing wall. This no longer exists and probably disappeared by the turn of the century.

The 1907 photograph shows that the Charters had opened up the gardens at the front of the house, giving a similar aspect to the present time. In addition the south facing part of the house had a greenhouse or conservatory attached to it. In here tomatoes and grapes were grown.

In the late 1920s or 30s the stonework was painted black. During the war supplies of oil based black paint disappeared and the walls were painted with a type of whitewash. This lasted until the 1960s when new owners after Essie had the paint removed and the original stonework restored. This would have been a fairly expensive and time consuming job then. Large trees at the front were removed and the front lawn was used for tennis, croquet and bowls parties. Today guests are still invited to try their hand at croquet on the front lawn.



Fludha, Kirkcudbright, Dumfries & Galloway, Scotland, photo taken in the 1960's.

We think that one of the Charters added the fairly extensive but graceful extension to the gable to the north of the property. We suspect that most of the rooms created were functional. Indoor toilets, airing cupboards, housemaid's new bedroom, storerooms and a new upstairs parlour or sitting room seem to have been the main uses.

The current dining room was the drawing room for most of the time, the two windows being perfect for the purpose. Fludha's large and well-appointed kitchen today was the family dining room, with its view over the river.

During the 1920s, 30s and 40s some of the rooms were partly lined with hardwood brought home from Nigeria by Stuart Lauchlan. We certainly know that the parlour or sitting room in the annex was laid out this way. In addition such African mementos and curios, such as fly swats were hanging from the walls.

Through the 1960s until around 1992 much of the ground was leased to a local commercial gardener, David McKill. His family had originally owned, and worked, Janefield opposite. David grew a variety of produce commercially and always said that the quality of the soil was excellent assisted by an employee, William Kennedy. David still has an excellent gardening business today about 30 metres across the road from the old entrance. David grew, and sold, mostly potatoes and early chrysanthemums on the rich soil.

Fludha was purchased from Essie when she finally gave in to the entreaties of her son and moved to Canada, and later Rhode Island in the USA. In 1984 Essie died and was cremated there. The new purchaser was a Mr James Beattie. He had been born in Carlisle is believed to have been a sheep farmer from Eskdalemuir. He had retired and moved in with his third wife. James appears to have made few changes to the property. He always insisted on being called Mr Beattie and is remembered as a man of slightly uncertain temper. The ladies who brought him Meals on Wheels in his latter years certainly recall his grumpy demeanour. Interestingly he had four children with Agnes, who died in 1972, none of them inherited the property. James Beattie appears to have married his third wife, Jean, and she moved into Fludha. James died in January 1994 at the age of 89 but we think Jean lived there alone for a number of years before it was sold again.

We have an aerial photograph of the house and part of the grounds taken in the 1960s and the basic shape of the grounds are still recognisable. This includes a slightly smaller copper beech than exists today. There have been a few gardeners who have contemplated how much easier their life would be if it got struck by lightning one night. In addition, the huge poultry shed is visible at the bottom of the picture standing on thick concrete bases. These were a terrible job to remove when the grounds were returned to grass. Essie sold eggs to the folk in the local community who did not fancy the long walk to get shop ones from Kirkcudbright.

We think that Mrs Beattie rented out the top flat to a number of people. It is a big house and it may well have been a lonely spot. We know a little about two of the tenants. Fludha was also proving hard to sell, possibly being a little dilapidated and the division into flats was perhaps unappealing to prospective purchasers. For example, the roof was in a very poor state and almost all of it had to be renewed, even though it was a January. A neighbour, David McKill, remembers the "hellish weather" and the poor, frozen roofers.

In the 1990s the top flat was lived by the Inghams. Sarah Ingham was the RE teacher at Kirkcudbright Academy in town. Her husband was also highly qualified with a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Divinity. In addition he had a qualification in music and Gaelic as well as being elected as a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in December 1997. The couple later moved north and Mrs Ingham is currently a Headteacher somewhere up in the Central Belt. One day, a few years ago, Steve Laycock received a visit from a pair of twins who once stayed in Fludha as a holiday let. Being in the area, they wanted to see the old place again.

Some time in the 1990s the property was bought by Mrs Amanda McQueen, who lived there with her teenage daughter Katy. Amanda was a local businesswoman with a string of enterprises in the area. She and her daughter were keen on horses and they put in modern fencing and turned the grounds into a paddock for their horses. Neighbours could hear the ghostly thunder of their hooves as they tore around the paddock at night. She also relocated the road to Fludha Cottage that ran within 6 inches of the back of the house. Amanda McQueen remarried and put the property up for sale, wanting more land for her horses, and so she went off to Crossmichael.

Fludha was bought by a Marianne Fraser. She had a house in Italy but put it on the market to come home and help her sister nurse her ailing husband. She moved in to Craigmullen in Dundrennan with the Kennedys. Tragically her husband soon died and within three weeks her sister died also. At this time Fludha was up for sale and it no doubt seemed a good idea to move from Dundrennan. Within two years of purchase and moving in, Marianne also passed away.

In 2006 Steven and Christine Laycock sold their bed and breakfast hotel in Castle Douglas and came here with an exciting vision. The couple originated from Yorkshire. Fludha was to be turned into the only 5 Star hotel in the region. Christine was a superb cook and her evening meals were a sight to behold, and even better to eat. The couple created 6 bedrooms, each with ensuite bathrooms. In addition, the stable block and some of the back outbuildings were integrated into the house.



Mr Stephen Laycock, owner from 2005 to the present.

A tremendous amount of time, effort and money had to be expended to realise the dream. One of the painters employed on the task described, with some wonder, how things were to be done.

"We were not allowed to take short cuts, even though the guests would never see that bit. Everything had to be done properly and it was all best quality stuff that went in from the builders through to the plumbers. It did look nice when it was all finished."

The grounds were reshaped. The grand drive through the trees was created and a safer entrance was build. A number of large trees were taken town in order to create a feeling of space.

Hospitality and Fludha

Although Fludha has extended a warm welcome and hospitality to guests from 2006, the house does have an honourable tradition of extending hospitality to others.

We have already mentioned the welcome given to various officers and soldiers during the Second World War. Another incident typifies the whole approach from Fludha's owners to other. Stuart Lauchlan remembers cycling down the old drive and finding a jeep full of soldiers parked there one hot day. Although perhaps only 13 years old at the time, he knew how to behave in such a situation. The hot and thirsty soldiers were invited up for tea. He cycled up to tell his mother, Essie, about the men just about to follow. What he had not realised was that the jeep was the lead vehicle for a slower lorry full of soldiers, for which they were waiting to catch up. Both vehicles turned up the drive and a lot of cups of tea were provided.

In a similar vein, Fludha was a tramp's favourite in the 1940s and 50s. As they walked up the drive they were always made welcome with hot soup or scones and cheese along with a huge mug of tea in the back courtyard or wood store. The 'Gentlemen Of The Road' were always full of tales, adventures and interesting patter. Generally they would be expected to chop kindling to maintain self-respect. Many were allowed to stay the night and to sleep in the woodshed. The only stipulation being that they would have to go outside to smoke.

Gypsy women were also frequent visitors, selling clothes pegs, dried flowers or lucky heather. They are remembered as polite but reserved. They never spent the night and the residents of Fludha often wondered where they went. Many had babies wrapped in brightly coloured shawls or blankets with them.

Stuart Lauchlan remembers trying to find the secret signs at the bottom of the driveway that informed fellow travellers that the people in the house were generous to their kind. Gypsies and tinkers were a regular feature of life in Kirkcudbright. The artist William Mouncey, who married one of E.A. Hornel's sisters, lived at Woodlea further along this road towards the town. His painting of the gypsy encampment is hanging in the Dick Institute, Kilmarnock.

	Nothing here.
	Gipsies not liked.
	Friendly.
	Friendly and Generous.
	Friendly and very generous.
	Beware dog.
	Fierce dog.
	Work here.
	Work and good pay.
	People will buy.
	This place has been robbed.

Typical gypsy/tramp signs on drives and gateposts

Fludha's large rooms were utilised for Kirkcudbright Academy social functions at times. In the late 1990s Sarah Ingram offered the imposing rooms to the staff for their end of term 'do'. No doubt Fludha coped with the clearly articulated requests for, 'just a little bit of cheese and plenty of wine'.

In 2023 Fludha is operating as a self-catering facility. The stable blocks and outbuildings have been rebuilt. With the death of Christine Laycock a few years after opening, it gradually became too much to operate as a 5 Star hotel. In 2023 it is run as a number of self-catering rooms.



Fludha 2020

Owners of Fludha

2006-present	Steven and Christine Laycock [died Oct 2011]
2002- 2005	Marianne Fraser
1998/9-2002?	Mrs Amanda McQueen
1960s-1998/9	Mr James Beattie and Mrs Beattie [Agnes and later Jean]
1922 -1960s	Esther [Essie] Jackson Campbell [daughter of Mr and Mrs Campbell and niece of Dr McAdam] and married to Mr Stuart Lauchlan
1911-1922	Dr David Jackson McAdam [husband of Grace Palmer]
1910- 1911	Grace Palmer [niece of Jane Charters]
1886-1910	Jane Charters [sister of John Charters]
1881 -1886	John Charters
1839-1879	Elizabeth Agnes Maitland [Betsy]

Janefield, Kirkcudbright

by Bruce Smith

Owner/Occupier History

1836	Mr Thomas Roy.
1851	Mr William Hyacinth Dunbar. 1851 Census. Also, <i>Post Office Directory of Noblemen and Gentlemen's Seats in Scotland</i> [1852].
1875	Mrs Catherine Chute Mackenzie. <i>The Post Office. County Directory of Scotland.</i>
1878	Miss Mackenzie, recorded in Maxwell's Maxwell's Guide Book to the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright from the Nith to the Cree. Eliza MacKenzie Pierce Chute Mackenzie
1891	Mr Atkinson Habbishaw. 1891 Census.
1913?	Mrs Annie Stewart Marshall. Widow. Valuation Rolls, 1915-30.
1930s	Dr Alexander Fraser, Medical Officer of Health for Stewartry.
1951	Mrs Fraser, widow of above.
1952	William McKill. A farmer from Biggar purchased the property from Mrs Fraser. It was used as a family home for Mr McKill, his wife and son and daughter.
1957	Mr Sinclair with his daughter and his son-in-law, Mr Fleck.
Early 1960s	Mr Sidney Alexander Lockhart and his wife, Jean. Lockhart was the Sheriff at Kirkcudbright and Wigton. When Mrs Lockhart was widowed in 1969 she continued to stay there for a short time before moving closer to town.
1987	The next owners were two ladies, one who had been a teacher. They are remembered locally as Mollie Abbott CBE and Dr. Jean Carroll. Eventually the ladies sold up and moved to the Grange over Sands in the Lake District.
2000	The current owners are Rod and Toni McAllister, who bought the property to raise their two young children, Matthew and Helen.

A Brief History

Apart from the above, Janefield, as a residence without details of owners or inhabitants, is mentioned in:

1. The 1837 estate map of Kirkcudbright by John Gillone [Jr].
2. The 1845 *New Statistical Account for Scotland*.
3. The 1845 edition of *A Topographical Dictionary of Scotland*. "*The houses of Balmae, Janefield, St. Cuthbert's Cottage, and Fludha, are handsome residences finely situated.*"
4. The 1857 *Post office Directory of Nobleman and Gentlemen's seats in Scotland*.
5. The 1868 *National Gazetteer of Great Britain and Ireland* as one of the four mansions in Kirkcudbright.

There does not appear to be a great deal of excitement around Janefield. Our first mention is the Sheriff Court case proceedings in **1836** against one William Sharpe McCaughie, a tailor from Kirkcudbright, who was caught trying to burgle the property. The residents listed as witnesses or complainants were **Thomas Roy**, Grace McMinn and Marion Ross. Marion Ross may well have been a servant as her address is listed as St Cuthbert's Cottage. On the other hand, she may well have been visiting when the theft took place.

In **1837** Thomas Roy is listed by the Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Royal Association for the Promotion of Fine Arts in Scotland as purchasing an Arcadian Shepherd sculpture by James Ritchie. Ritchie's son, Alexander Handyside Ritchie, was more famous as a sculptor. Both Ritchies, and possibly, Roy had contacts with David Octavius Hill, one of the more notable Scottish artist, painter and photographer.

William H. Dunbar who owned the property in the **1850s** was an Advocate and Steward Substitute. In the 1851 Census he is described as unmarried, 46 years old and having been born in Tueern, Ireland. The Valuation Roll of 1860 indicates that it was a leasehold property, the land having originally belonging to Andrew Coltart. The household included the Housekeeper/cook, Helen Hunter. She was aged 32, unmarried and born in Edinburgh. Margaret Johnston, an unmarried 24-year-old girl was the housemaid. She was born in Tongland. In addition there was Daniel Morgan, aged 30, who may well have been the coachman.

In **1861** the servants were Elizabeth Wilkinson, 53 and Sarah Thompson. Ten years later Elizabeth Angus and Elizabeth Wilson were the servants.

By **1875 Mrs Catherine C. Mackenzie** was using Janefield as a family home for her and her 7 children. It would appear that her husband, Basil William Mackenzie [b.1805], a man from Co. Cork, had died around 1847. Catherine Chute, her maiden name, was born in Tralee, Co. Kerry in 1812. After her death in **1877**, one of her daughters, Catherine, took over. In the **1881** Census **Mary Mackenzie** lived with her sister Eliza, her husband John Picken and 3 very small children. The 1885 Kirkcudbright Valuation Rolls has a Mr Pierce Chute Mackenzie as the Tenant/Occupier.

In **1886**, EA Hornel famously painted his, '*Distant View of Kirkcudbright from Janefield.*' [Figure 1]. Whether Hornel paid a visit to Janefield while he was preparing and sketching is a matter of supposition only.



Figure 1

In **1891** Janefield was owned by a Mr **Atkinson Habbishaw**. He was a retired banker from England, we think from Yorkshire, and he lived here with his sister **Helen**, aged 55. She is described as having Private Means. The household also included the servants, Elizabeth Cowan, aged 35 and born in Dumfriesshire and Elizabeth Johnstone, aged 20 and born in Fifeshire.

In the **1901** Census we have two local girls, Jessie Mackenzie, 22 and Mary Russell, 19 as servants. Helen Habbishaw died in **1911** and her brother in **1912**.

The owner **after WW1** was a widow, **Mrs Marshall**, and she rented out the field to a **Mr Archibald Martin**. This arrangement continued into **1935** when Martin was the tenant of **Dr Fraser**. Dr Fraser and, later his wife, kept the house until 1951. Judging by the Valuation Rolls, it looks as though Janefield also operated as a doctor's surgery while Dr Fraser was alive.

In **1952 William McKill** purchased Janefield partly with a view to utilising the attached field to the north of the property, known as Janefield Field, as a horticultural Nursery. Janefield Nursery still exists today and is run by his son **David**. Interestingly the field was still known locally to young boys seeking conkers in the 50s and 60s as 'Habbishaw's Field'.



Figure 2: Janefield House. South Elevation, early 1950s



Figure 3: Remains of Heating System for the Greenhouses

A number of impressive brick and glass greenhouses were erected. The remains of the coal fired heating system and, in particular, the chimney and the boiler house and coal store still remain today in Janefield Nursery.

In **1955** the property was flooded when the River Dee burst through the bank. There was another flood in the **1960s**. However Sheriff Lockhart had a word with Kirkcudbright Council and a few weeks later men and diggers turned up to increase the height of the bank. Details on the Lockharts are few but he is remembered today as keen on his cars and protective of the ducks in his garden.

One of the gardeners employed at Janefield House was a Mr Hannah, who lived in a cottage on St Mary's Isle. He worked for Sheriff Lockhart, Mrs Lockhart and also for the two ladies. Jimmy Hannah had earlier worked for Hope-Dunbar on St Mary's Isle.



Figure 4: Mr McKill studying the flood



Figure 5: Dorothy McKill boating in the flooded garden

The two owners were keen swimmers and in the late **1980s** they built the indoor swimming pool that still exists today and created a wetland area with a small bridge. The remains of these features can still just be seen today from the Dee footpath.

Both women made considerable contributions to opening up educational and career opportunities for women. Mollie Abbott had a very distinguished career as a female educator. She was Principal of Dunfermline College of Physical Education [now part of the University of Edinburgh] and on the Board of a host of educational organisations. She was awarded a CBE for her efforts and passed away in 2007. She is remembered locally as a pleasant and sociable lady and her partner, Jean was a little more forceful. Dr Carroll, who also had a very distinguished academic career in both England and Scotland, died in 2021. Both ladies received obituaries in the national press.



Figure 6: Dr Carroll in retirement, The Scotsman

One of the memorable occupants of Janefield in the early 2000s was a huge hound called Max. He looked rather fierce with a deep bark but was the softest and most gentle creature.

In **2014** Janefield flooded once again with a combination of a high tide and strong winds as a surge of water poured over the embankment. Mr and Mrs McAllister were on holiday and neighbours had to rally around to try to save some of the cars from a flooded garage area. Janefield House now boasts a new flood defence wall around the house.

Marks, Kirkcudbright

by Joyce Simpson

NGR: 273190, 551950

what3words: <https://w3w.co/evaporate.discount.casual>

Date	People		Source
1759 to 1773	William Bell	Marks Appears but No of windows not indicated	Scotlands places Window tax, volume 060 E326/1/60/6
8 October 1804	David McLellan Note David lived 1762 -1832. He married Catherine Hannay, daughter of William Hannay of Bargally	Purchase of the Lands of Marks, Bond by David McLellan now of Mark, repayment of the final instalment of the price of the lands of Marks in the parish of Kirkcudbright which he had purchased from John Culton, now of Auchnabony, Captain in the 8 th Regiment of Dragoons, and from his sisters, Mary, Helen, Margaret, Jane and Grizel Culton and his mother, Mary Cluden, widow of deceased John Culton, formerly of Auchnabony in the parish of Rerwick. (Writs of Marks and Kirkbride)	Dumgal Archives Call no GGD222/14 Title to the Lands of the McLellan of Auchlane
12 June 1809	David McLellan	Bond and Disposition under Reversion by David McLellan of Marks in favour of the trustees of deceased William Hannay of Bargally.	Dumgal Archives Call no GGD222/15 Title to the Lands of the McLellan of Auchlane
9 August 1809	David McLellan	Discharge by the Misses Culton to David McLellan now of Marks concerning his payment of the final instalment of the purchase price of the lands of Marks in the parish of Kirkcudbright. (Writs of Marks and Kirkbride)	Dumgal Archives Call no GGD222/17 Title to the Lands of the McLellan of Auchlane
18 July 1818	David McLellan	Instrument of Sasine in favour of Mrs Janet Morton spouse of John McClellan merchant in Kirkcudbright in the four merkland of Marks (except Kirkbride Farm) in the parish of Kirkcudbright upon a Heritable Bond to her by David McLellan of Marks enclosing the said Bond dated 1 July 1818. (Amongst the writs of Marks and Kirkbride) Note: John McLellan was David's brother	Dumgal Archives Call no GGD222/18 Title to the Lands of the McLellan of Auchlane
1821	Map	House appears on map as Mark	John Thomson's Atlas of Scotland, 1832

			NLS Maps Thomson, John, 1777- ca 1840, Johnson, William, fl. 1806-1840 Title: Kirkcudbrightshire. Bottom section
1868	William Hannay McLellan	Died in London.	
1872	Mrs Frances Sophia McLellan of Marks	Estimated Acreage of property 364 acres Gross annual value £463 10s	Scotlands Places Land Ownership Commission 1872-3 LIBRAR/GA149/560/119
1903	Thomas Rainsford McLellan	Died suddenly at Marks on the morning of 27 th August 1903 aged 63	Civil and Military Gazette Lahore 4 th September 1903 And Indian Daily News 24 Sep 1903
1919	Moyra Rainsford McLellan	Born at Marks 30 th September, daughter of Thomas Rainsford McLellan Captain 1 st Battalion Cameronians and Marie Bradbury Erskine McLellan ms McFarlane	Register of births
1921 census	Thomas R McLellan	Age 38 Head of house with wife Marie and daughter Moyra. Also landlord of Marks farm	Scotlands People census
1921	Joan Rainsford McLellan	Born at Marks 1 st November McLellan Captain 1 st Battalion Cameronians and Marie Bradbury Erskine McLellan ms McFarlane	Register of births
Pre 1924	Thomas R McLellan	Possibly sold to Gilbert H Williams	The McClellans in Galloway by D Richard Torrance
1929		McLellans moved to Largs House so possible sale	
1986	Mark D Caygill	Of Marks Farm married in Auchencairn	The Galloway news 20 th February 1986
1993	Alec Caygill	Cattle herd of Marks Farm slaughtered after cattle sent to auction found to have TB	The Galloway News January 21 st 1993
1993	Richard Caygill	of Marks Farm married in Kirgunzeon church	Dumfries and Galloway Standard 23 April 1993

History of the Lands and Their Owners in Galloway By PH McKerlie

P 209 Mark

We do not find the MacLellans mentioned as the owners, but it seems to us that this farm may have belonged to them. On the 19th September 1604, John, son of John Maxwell of Buittle and Munches had retour. He was followed, on the 13th July 1619, by his son Robert. We next find Mary Scott, Countess of Buccleuch, with a wadset over it on the 6th October 1653; followed by her sister Anne (who succeeded as countess) on the 17th October 1661. On the 6th April 1670, John, Viscount Nithsdale, had retour; and on the 26th May 1696, William, son of Robert, viscount. These latter named were only as regards the superiority. In 1682, Robert Maclellan of Barmagachen, parish of Borgue, was the owner. We next find it in the possession of Robert MacLellan of Barclye, but he evidently was the same who owned Barmagachen. His trustees sold Mark, with Gribdae and Kirkbride, to James Bell, second son of John Bell of Arkland, parish of Anwoth, an account of whom is given under Gribdae. We learn from the valuation roll of 1799 that the farm was owned by the Miss Cultons, but by the account from the Bells, James Bell sold it (see Gribdae).

In 1819 David McLellan was the owner. He was succeeded by William Hannay McLellan, who died in 186-³ and has been succeeded by his widow Mrs Frances Sophia McLellan who has issue. Their names, and other particulars, we are not in possession of. The late owner took much interest in the subjects we are dealing with, and in the History.

In the name Marks we have the Norse word mark for a march, a boundary.

The McLellans who owned Marks

David McLellan 1762-1832

David was a writer in Kirkcudbright, baptised 11 June 1763 and died 31 August 1832. He was admitted a burgess of Kirkcudbright on 16 February 1798. In 1796 he had a disposition of a tenement bounded on the South by the King's Highway, on the east by Corby Slap, by a stank (slow moving or stagnant pool) on the south and a house on the north. In 1825 he was mentioned in *Pigot's Directory* as writer, notary and town and Stewartry clerk, with a business address in Castle Street, Kirkcudbright.

He married Catherine Hannay the daughter of William Hannay of Bargally.

In 1822 there was a precognition against David of Marks McLellan (NRS reference AD14/22/200).

He is described here as a farmer.

The Crime was Assault with intent to rape.

He would have been 60.

Reference is also made in Dumfries & Galloway's Smuggling Story by Frances Wilkins of the collector of customs referring to contraband goods believed to be the property of Baillie David McLelland and Alexander Hesker, merchant in Kirkcudbright. He later states that 'McLelland was either gone out of town or kept himself out of the way so that I could not find him'.

³ note McKerlie doesn't give the full date but it was 1868

William Hannay McLellan 1805-1868

Of Marks and Old Bank House was a writer and agent for The Bank of Scotland in Kirkcudbright. He was admitted a burgess of Kirkcudbright on 28th February 1829 and was town clerk in 1852. He married Frances Sophia Rainsford (see below). He died in London on 25 July 1868.

Frances Sophia Rainsford McLellan 1805 - 1884

Wife of the above. She was born in France the daughter of Captain Thomas Rainsford, 2nd Life Guards and Jane Hannay daughter of Sir Samuel Hannay of Kirkdale. The Rainsfords can trace their line back to the time of Richard 1 and were probably descended from Danish royalty.

Captain Rainsford was a prisoner of war at the time of the Napoleonic wars when Frances was born. He was later sent to St Helena as part of the guard for the exiled Napoleon and died there. Frances left a fascinating account of her early life and return as an orphan from St Helena.

By the census of 1881 she was widowed and living in High Street Kirkcudbright with her unmarried daughter Sophia Mary.

Thomas Rainsford McLellan 1842 – 1903

Thomas seems to have inherited Marks although he was the third son.

David, his elder brother, had absconded to India in 1889 having embezzled a significant sum from his client's estate. He was tried and outlawed in his absence. The second son Samuel Hannay McLellan died in Argentina in 1868 before his mother died.

Thomas spent considerable time in India (Kurrachee, Sainde) and almost certainly knew where his errant brother was. In October 1879 he married Mary Ann Adelaide Hughes at Christ Church, Byculla, Bombay daughter of William Hughes of Bahia. They had one son named after his father. Mary Ann died at sea on board the SS Lalpoora near Aden in 1886 and is buried there.

Thomas secondly married Jane Caroline Edwards.

Thomas Rainsford McLellan - 1882-1941

Born 1882 in Karachi (Kurrachee) which was still part of India. He was educated at Fettes College and The Royal Military College. He Fought in The Anglo Boer War, in West Africa in 1913 and in Belgium and France during the First World War. He was on the army list till 1915 when he retired as Major. He married Marie Bradbury Erskine McFarlane in 1914.

Neptune Park, Kirkcudbright

by Bruce Smith

Neptune Cottage was built circa 1837. On June 30th 1837 the land Neptune Park was first mentioned in the Burgh Chartulary. It belonged to William Davidson. He was granted the land on the understanding that a house was built on the land within two years. Local legend has it that there is more than a hint of a ship's prow or bridge.

Through the years with different occupants, the house was altered and enlarged in many ways. It had, perhaps, one of the finest views of the Dee Estuary in the area. In 2021 the fine C.19th house was demolished and a modern bungalow put in its place.



Neptune Park before the tower addition, probably late C.19th

Captain William Davidson died at his residence at Neptune Park, as it was renamed after building work, in February 1848, aged 63 years. The Ordnance Survey Map for Kirkcudbrightshire still has the property as Neptune's Cottage. Captain Davidson's wife, Margaret [nee Bell] lived there until her death on 6th December 1854, aged 71 years. In the will, Margaret was left the house and an annual allowance of £100. Davidson had been a mariner and is recorded as the master of the *Augusta* of Dumfries, bound for Nova Scotia in 1817 ['Bell Family History' on *Rootschat* website⁴]. In 1852 Mrs Davidson is recorded as owning, or certainly living there as the occupant, in Neptune Park by the Scottish Post Office Directory.

⁴ <https://www.rootschat.com/>



Early C.20th, possibly 1923

For much of the C.19th the Neptune Park property also included the field to the south. After the death of Mrs Davidson there were a series of owners who often rented out the house and the field to tenants.

The Valuation Rolls give us a fair idea of who owned the property and who the occupiers were. In 1865 **Mr John Strong** owned Neptune Park and he appears to have sold it around 1876. Capt. Davidson's grandson had been a William Davidson Strong and it was likely that the property moved towards the Strong family through marriage to one of his two daughters. In 1865 the tenant is recorded as **Mr Robert Hetherington**. From 1875 the tenant was a **Mr Thomas Williamson** and he is recorded as the occupier in Maxwell's *Guide Book to the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright from the Nith to the Cree*⁵.

By 1885 **Mr Peter Johnstone Wallace** was the owner, with Mr Williamson as tenant for at least some of the time.

By 1905 Neptune Park was owned and occupied by a **Mr Martin L. Howman**, Procurator Fiscal, who bought Neptune Park around 1904. He lived there till 1915 when appointed Fiscal at Perth. We think that the tower was added to the property around this time. By 1915 **Evelyn Fullerton** was the tenant and then a more notable tenant moved there while painting in the area and preparing to build his own family property.

William Hanna Clark the landscape and figure artist is recorded as living at Neptune Park between 1918 and 1923 with his wife Betty. This is also recorded in the 1921 Stewartry Post Office Directory⁶. Clarke may have been better advised to have continued to live in Neptune, since he died in an accident during the construction of his new house.

⁵ Published 1878, available at: <http://www.old-kirkcudbright.net/extracts-articles/books/maxwell/> [accessed 24th April 2023]

⁶ [online] available at: <http://www.kirkcudbright.co/historyarticle.asp?ID=2&p=19> [accessed 24th April 2023]

Some of his paintings and of the Dee estuary and shore can still be recognised today. Clarke had a national reputation and the Kirkcudbright Galleries website⁷ has much more detail for him and for his work.



William Hanna Clarke

Mr James Williamson is recorded as the owner in the 1925-40 Valuation Rolls.

In the 1950s a local solicitor owned the house. **Mr Williamson** was part of the firm now known as Williamson and Henry in Kirkcudbright today. Mrs Williamson moved into a smaller neighbouring property when she sold Neptune Park to **Mrs Alice Malvina Coles** in 1963. Mrs Coles lived at Neptune from 1963 until selling in 1972.

⁷ Available at: <https://www.kirkcudbrightgalleries.org.uk/artists-footsteps/artist/william-hanna-clarke/> [accessed 24th April 2023]



The last owners were **Mr and Mrs Ronald White**, who had it from the very early 1970s. They, along with their children, Linda, Douglas, Barbara, Nicola and Hazel moved from Castle Douglas into Neptune Park early in 1973.

Phyllis was a nurse in the local hospital and died before Ronald. He was a retired Art teacher from Castle Douglas who later developed an interest in glass engraving. Their son, Douggie, still works and lives in the town in a house built on the old Neptune field.

In 2021 the whole house was demolished and the grounds and garden removed. The new owner of the site is a Mr Thewlis. All that is expected to remain is a section of the beautiful wall to the north of the property. Sam Kelly, a local photographer recorded its demolition and posted it on YouTube⁸. There is a local feeling that rather more of the features of house and garden could have been retained. The scale of the demolition rather lacked sensitivity. Now we have a brand new, modernist bungalow to admire and a lovely mansion to lament.

⁸ Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGeKrZuGt18> [accessed 24th April 2023]

Barnbarroch, Kirkinner

by Laura Anderson

Barnbarroch as it is now



Both images are from <https://www.buildingsatrisk.org.uk/details/892855> - (Top photo taken in 2014 and bottom photo taken in 1990)

The original Barnbarroch is now a ruinous mansion that lies 4.3km to the southwest of Wigtown. The building resides within an area of forestry to the southeast of a new farm that comprises modern metal buildings and farmsteads.

The mansion is predominantly still standing. Not a single window remains nor the front door. The entire roof has been removed, potentially for safety concerns. The building consists of three possible floors, a lower floor that is partly dug within the ground as a basement, a main 'ground' floor and an upper floor. The windows of each floor differ in size with the main 'ground' floor having the tallest windows.

At the front of the building, there are two tower style adornments as well as a roman style entrance way. The rear of the building reveals a SW tower with two larger windows and an area of the roof that may have been open for occupants to sit on the roof.

The building was constructed using granite and there is evidence of extensions to the building, particularly focusing on reworking the floor levels. Much of the building is collapsing or at threat of collapsing due to excessive tree growth.

A conditional planning permission was approved in December 2009 to convert the building into six flats. However, nothing has come of this.

Barnbarroch in the past:



A postcard of Barnbarroch House before 1941

Barnbarroch was the home of the Vans Agnew family, built around 1771 following the marriage of John Vans of Barnbarroch to his cousin the heiress Margaret Agnew of Sheuchan, until 1942 where the house was abandoned after a house fire destroyed the roof and sections of the house.

There is evidence for a 'Barnbarrow' on Robert Godern's map of 1654, a 'Barnbarraug Cast' on Joan Blaeu's map of 1654 (which is based on Timothy Pont's survey in the 1590s) and 'Barnbarraugh Cast' on Joan Blaeu's map of 1662. The maps detail a structure with one central tower and two smaller flanking towers in an area of green forestry. There is a possibility that the house contains aspects of the original castle.



Barnbarroch on Blaeu's - Gallovidia Pars Occidentior in 1662

Within the genealogical and historical account of the family of Vans written by Robert Vans Agnew in 1800, he notes that 'Robertus ... got a Charter confirming to him the Lands of Barglas and Barnbarrow ... dated Jan.26, 1451.'

Robert Vans Agnew quotes at the end of the account: 'The principal Residence of the Family is at Barnbarrow, (anciently Barnbarrache), four miles from the Town of Wigton. It was formerly an ancient Castle, from the Wall of which when it was demolished by the present Proprietor, was taken a Stone, upon which were the Arms as before described, with the Date 1433, and the Initials I.V & E.K being those of John Van's, the Proprietor when it was built, and of Elizabeth Kennedy, his wife'.

It is on John Ainslie's 1782 map of the count of Wigton, that Barnbarroch is first illustrated akin to the structure still visible today. The structure is surrounded to the south and the west by decorative forestry. The structure is called 'Barnbarrow' and notes that the owner is Vans Agnew's Esq (Robert Vans Agnew).



John Ainslie's 'A map of the county of Wigton' from 1782

In the early 1800s, John Claudius Loudon was employed to remodel Barnbarroch. He added a west wing, pediments to the main door and attic windows. More well known as a Landscape Gardener, it is no surprise that Loudon predominantly worked on the surrounding grounds of the house, adding in pathways, trees and small ponds. An ornamental pond was positioned to the front of the house on a canal that ran through the forestry.

The Vans Agnew's, and by association Barnbarroch, were noted within the New Statistical Account for the Parish of Kirkinner, County of Wigton in 1845. Barnbarroch house was noted as 'the only modern building in the parish' and the seat of Colonel Vans Agnew.

Barnbarroch is noted within the Wigtownshire Ordnance Survey Name Book, 1845 to 1849, as a 'large and handsome house of the modern style with attached suitable office houses and is surrounded by ornamental ground, woods, parks etc in all consisting of 310 acres and is the property and resident of Robert Vans Agnew, Esqr.'

On the 1850 Ordnance Survey map, a large building is depicted to the NW of Barnbarroch house. The new building has many enclosures and roads that run throughout the forestry area. Barnbarroch is depicted with a small enclosure attached to the west and roads leading out with the forestry area. In the 1896 OS map, the building and enclosure is still present, however, there is greater development at the larger building to the NW.



Six inch Ordnance Survey Map - Wigtownshire, Sheet 25 from 1850

In the early hours of the 23rd of October 1941, a blaze began in one of the many bedrooms of Barnbarroch House. Servants within the building woke first and managed to raise the alarm. Some of the occupants jumped from windows while others managed to descend via ropes. Unfortunately, in spite of the best efforts of local farmers, Mrs Ada Vans Agnew perished in the flames as she was sickly and unable to leave her room.

In the 1957 OS map, Barnbarroch house is depicted as an unroofed building consisting of a main L shaped building and two rectangular buildings attached to the west. There are two main paths that run away from the building, connecting it with the larger building to the north-west and the rest of the forestry area.

After the house fire, the building became derelict as detailed above.



National Grid Map - NX35SE - A - from 1957

History of the Vans Agnew

The Vans family has been in Scotland since the 10th century.

Sir Patrick Vans, Lord Barnbarroch is recorded as being born at Barnbarroch House in 1540 and died at Barnbarroch in 1597. 'In 1587, he was sent Ambassador to Denmark, where he conducted himself with much Ability, and on his Return proposed to the King a Marriage with Anne, the younger Danish Princess ... He afterwards attended the King when the Marriage was solemnised, and upon the Occasion received a Charter of Lands, and the Patronages of the Churches of Wigton, Kirkinne, Colmonel and Kirkowan, dated at Upsal, in Norway, Nove. 30th 1589"

In the New Statistical Account of Kirkinner (1845), it is noted that the family has given two bishops to Galloway. Alexander Vaux was consecrated Bishop of Galloway some time before the year 1426 and George Vaux, cousin to Alexander was also Bishop of Galloway. 'In 1429, he (Alexander Vaux) was appointed by James I ... one of the preservers of the peace on the borders of Scotland and he is said to have contributed much to the overthrow of then all-powerful family of Douglas.'

Alexander Vaux of Barwhannie, 'brother-german' to John Vaux of Barnbarroch and Margaret Maxwell, his lady (Who afterwards became Laird and Lady of Barnbarroch) '... from 1666 to 1689, the time of the 'late happy revolution' were harassed, processed and fined, though there was nothing could be laid to their charge, but that they would not comply with the times and did reset godly people and ministers.' The couple were 'sympathetic' to the punishment and actions towards the Covenanters, however, they were not as brutally tortured or deposed due to their standing and their titles.

Patrick Alexander Vans Agnew (1822-1848). He was born in Nagpur and was a civil servant of the East India Company. He was murdered in a fortified temple by adherents of Diwan Mulraji Chopra during the Siege of Multan. His murder led to the Second Sikh War and to the British Annexation of the Punjab region.

Ada Sarah Van Agnew (nee Bates) lost her life during a house fire at Barnbarroch in 1941. She was 83 years old. Her husband was John (Johnny) Vans Agnew who was born at Barnbarroch in 1859 and passed away at the home aged 84 in 1943.

Bibliography

Ordnance Survey Name Book - Wigtownshire- 1845 to 1849 - Volume 64

Sketch of a genealogical and historical account of the family of Vaux, Vans, or De Vallibus: now represented by that of Vans Agnew, of Barnbarrow, and c. In the County of Wigton, Scotland. - Robert Vans Agnew - 1800.
<https://archive.org/details/sketchofgenealog1800vans/mode/1up>

Building at Risk website - <https://www.buildingsatrisk.org.uk/details/892855>

Ruination Scotland - <https://ruination-scotland.com/the-ruins/ruin-of-the-month-reports/barnbarroch-house/>

Logan House, Kirkmaiden

by Gabrielle Reynolds

Logan House
Ardwell, DG9 9ND

Listed Building Status: A

13th Century

1295

McDouall family granted lands in Kirkmaiden by John Balliol, Lord of Galloway.

14th Century

1307

The McDoualls ambushed and routed the brothers of Robert the Bruce (Thomas and Alexander) as they attempted to land in Loch Ryan with a force of Irishmen. The brothers were sent to and executed in Carlisle.

15th century

Dougal McDougall surrendered Logan to his superior, the Earl of Douglas, who regranted the lands to Dougal's son, Thomas McDouall in 1414.

www.nrscotland.gov.uk

16th Century

By about 1500

Logan castle, known as Castle Balzieland is abandoned/ruined. Local lore has it that the castle was destroyed by a fire although this may not be accurate.

1504

"A new charter was procured by Patrick McDouall; the document stated that the McDuoalls had held these lands "beyond the memorie of man". Since then the ownership of the estate has passed invariably, from father to son."

Logan guide book, Sir Ninian Buchan Hepburn, 1982

1513

Ughted and Charles McDouall of Logan killed at the battle of Flodden.

www.nrscotland.gov.uk

1547

Patrick MacDowall of Logan killed at the Battle of Pinkie.

RBGE Medieval Report, Clark, A. & Wyeth, W. 2022.

17th Century

1636-52

Logan is shown on "A map of the coast from Loch Ryan to the head of the Solway", Gordon, Robert, 1580-1661.

www.maps.nls.uk

1682

Robert McDouall younger of Logan made a supplication to the Privy Council to build a pier in Nessock Bay.

1685

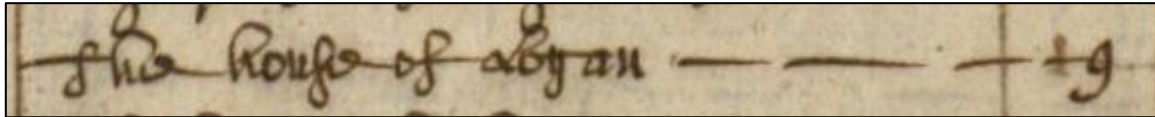
Birth of Andrew McDouall (second son of Robert McDouall). As an advocate Andrew became one of the senators of the College of Justice, under the style Lord Bankton. He was author of "An Institute of the Laws of Scotland in Civil Rights" (1751-1753).

www.nrscotland.gov.uk

1691-95

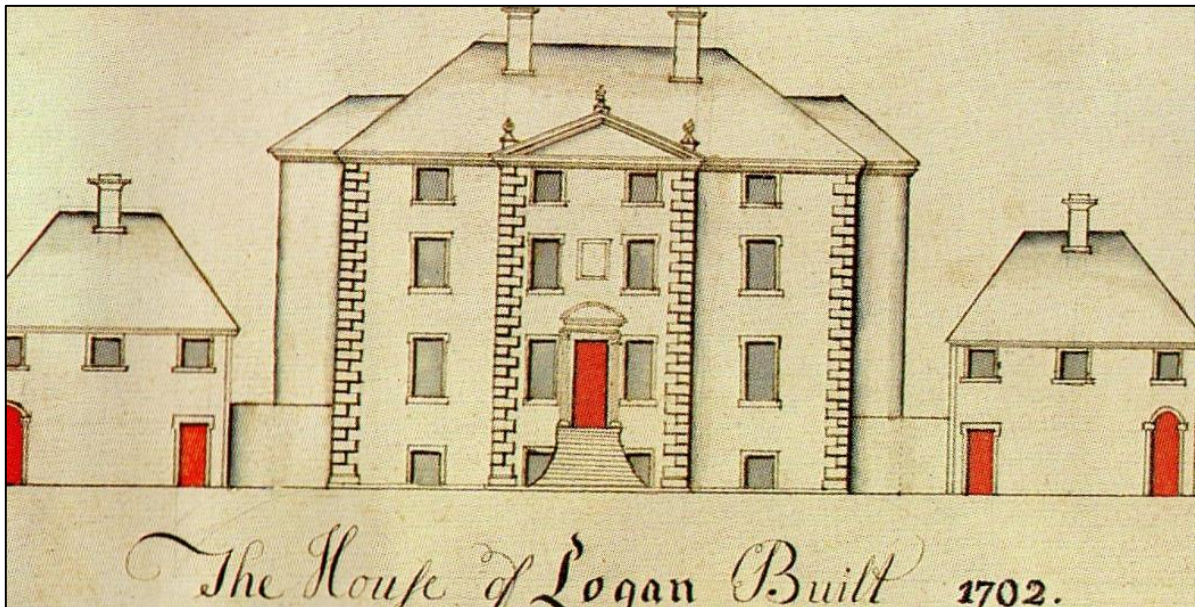
Hearth tax

"The house of Logan 9 (hearths)"



Hearth tax records, 1691-95, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

18th Century



Logan House. Illustration taken from Logan guidebook produced by Sir Ninian Buchan Hepburn in 1982

1702

Current Logan House built for Colonel Andrew McDowal on the site of previous houses. There is possible evidence for the foundations of these earlier buildings in the cellars of Logan House. (www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk)

1721

Land tax rolls

"Laird of Logane Ane thowsand thrie hundrethe fourscoir sex punds £1386.0.0"

Land tax rolls for Wigtownshire, vol 1. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1768

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDoual Esq Logan	39	£3.18.0
<i>Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)</i>		

1769

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDonald Esq Logan	39	£3.18.0
<i>Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)</i>		

1770

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowall Esq Logan	39	£3.18.0
<i>Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)</i>		

1771

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowal Esq Logan	39	£3.18.0
<i>Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)</i>		

1772

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDoual Esq Logan	39	£3.18.0
<i>Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)</i>		

1773

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDougal of Logan	39	£3.18.0
<i>Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)</i>		

1774

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDougal of Logan	39	£3.18.0
<i>Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)</i>		

1775

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDougal of Logan	39	£3.18.0

*Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)***1776**

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John Macdoulal of Logan Esq	39	£3.18.0

*Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)***1777**

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDougal of Logan	39	£3.18.0

*Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)***1778**

Male servant tax rolls

John MacDowal of Logan	John Maxwell – Footman James McBride – Groom James Sloan – Gardener
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*Male servant tax rolls, 1777-1798, vol 1, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)***1778**

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDoual of Logan	39	£3.18.0

*Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)***1779**

Male servant tax rolls

John MacDowal of Logan	John Maxwell – Footman James MacBride – Groom James Sloan – Gardener
------------------------	--

*Male servant tax rolls, 1777-1798, vol 3, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)***1779**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John Macdowal of Logan	39	£3.18.0

Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1779-1798

Inhabited house tax

<u>Name</u>	<u>At L 5 and under L 50</u>	<u>Duty at 6d per L</u>
John MacDowal of Logan	£10.0.0	£0.3.9

Inhabited house tax, 1778-1798, vol 61, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1780

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John Macdougall of Logan	39	£3.18.0

Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1781

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John Macdougall of Logan	39	£3.18.0

Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1782

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDougall of Logan	39	£3.18.0

Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1783

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowal of Logan	39	£3.18.0

Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1784

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowal of Logan	39	£3.18.0

Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1786

Carriage tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Carriages with 4 wheels</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDoual of Logan	1	£5.5.0

Carriage tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 1, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1786

Female servant tax rolls

John McDowal of Logan. Margaret Roll – Chamber maid
 Agness McKinal – Cook

Female servant tax rolls, 1785-1792, vol 2, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1786

Male servant tax rolls

John McDowal of Logan James Sloan – Gardener
 Alexander Murray – House servant
 James McBryd – Groom
 Alexander McBryd – Postillion

Male servant tax rolls, 1777-1798, vol 5, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1786

Horse tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowal of Logan	3	£0.15.0

Horse tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 2, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

7th September 1786

Carriage tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Carriages with 4 wheels</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDoual of Logan	1	£7.0.0

Carriage tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 3, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

13th September 1786

Male servant tax rolls

John McDoual of Logan James Sloan – Gardener
 Alexander Murray – Footman
 James Mcbread – Groom
 Andrew Mcbread – Postillion

Male servant tax rolls, 1777-1798, vol 7, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

14th September 1786

Horse tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDoual Esq. of Logan	3	£1.10.0

Horse tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 4, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

14th September 1786

Female servant tax rolls

John McDowal of Logan. Mrs. Gifford – House keeper
 Agnes McKenet – Cook
 Agnes ____ - House servant

Female servant tax rolls, 1785-1792, vol6, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1786

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDoual of Logan	39	£3.18.0

Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1787

Carriage tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Carriages with 4 wheels</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDoual Esq. of Logan	1	£7.0.0

Carriage tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 5, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

5th November 1787

Horse tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Carriage horses (10s each)</u>	<u>Saddle horses (10s each)</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowal Esq. of Logan	2	1	£1.10.0
Andrew McDowal Esq. of Logan		2	£1.0.0

Horse tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 7, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

5th November 1787

Female servant tax rolls

John McDowal Esqr. Of Logan.	Mrs Gifford – House keeper
	Agnes McKie – Cook
	Agnes Moubray – House servant

Female servant tax rolls, 1785-1792, vol 10, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

6th November 1787

Male servant tax rolls

John McDowal Esq. of Logan	James Sloan – Gardener
	Alexander Murray – Footman
	James McBride – Groom
	Andrew McBride – Postilion
Andrew McDowal Esq. of Logan	James Harrison – Valet
	John Sommers – Groom

Male servant tax rolls, 1777-1798, vol 9, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1787

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowal Esq of Logan	39	£3.18.0

Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1788

Female servant tax rolls

John McDowal Esq of Logan	Mrs Gifford – House keeper
	Agnes McKie – Cook
	Agnes Moubray – House servant

Female servant tax rolls, 1785-1792, vol 14, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

11th September 1788

Horse tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Carriage horses</u> <u>(10s each)</u>	<u>Saddle horses</u> <u>(10s each)</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowal Esq. of Logan	2	2	£1.10.0
Andrew McDowal Esq. Yr of Logan	2		£1.0.0

Horse tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 10, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

12th September 1788

Male servant tax rolls

John McDowal Esq. of Logan	John Cream – Gardener Alexander Murray – Footman & Gamekeeper James McBride – Groom Andrew McBride – Postilion
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Andrew McDowal Esq. Ynr of Logan	James Harrison – Valet
Batchr	John Sommers – Groom

Male servant tax rolls, 1777-178, vol 11, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1788

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25</u> <u>and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowall Esq of Logan	39	£3.18.0

Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1789

Carriage tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Carriages with 4 wheels</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDoual Esq. of Logan	1	£7.0.0
Andrew McDoual Esq. younger thereof	1	£7.0.0

Carriage tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 8, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

12th November 1789

Carriage tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>One carriage</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDoual Esq. of Logan	1	£0.15.0
Andrew McDoual yr. of Logan	1	£0.15.0

Carriage tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 9, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

13th November 1789

Female servant tax rolls

John McDowal Esq. of Logan	Mrs Quie – House keeper Helen Carson – Cook _____ - Chambermaid
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Female servant tax rolls, 1785-1792, vol 18, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

13th November 1789

Horse tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Carriage horses</u> <u>(10s each)</u>	<u>Saddle horses</u> <u>(10s each)</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowal Esq. of Logan	2	1	£1.10.0
Andrew McDowal Esq. Yr. of Logan		2	£1.0.0

Horse tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 13, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1789

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25</u> <u>and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowal Esq of Logan	39	£3.18.0

Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1790

Carriage tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Private 1 carriage</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDoual Esq, of Logan	1	£8.0.0
Andrew McDoual Esq. Jr of Logan	1	£8.0.0

Carriage tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 11, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

13th November 1790

Horse tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>1 horse</u> <u>(10s)</u>	<u>2 horses</u>	<u>3-5 horses</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowal Esq. of Logan	1		2	£2.5.0
Andrew McDowal Esq. yr. of Logan	1	1		£1.5.0

Horse tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 18, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1790

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25</u> <u>and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowal Esq of Logan	39	£3.18.0

Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1791

Carriage tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Private 1 carriage</u>	<u>Duty</u>	<u>10%</u>
John McDowal Esq. of Logan	1	£8.0.0	£0.16.0
Andrew McDowal Esq. Yo of Logan M.P	1	£8.0.0	£0.16.0

Carriage tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 13, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1791

Female servant tax rolls

John McDowal Esq. of Logan	Mrs McGiue – House keeper
	Joan McKantz – Cook
	Helen McDowal – Chambermaid

Female servant tax rolls, 1785-1792, vol 22, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1791

Male servant tax rolls

John McDowal Esq. of Logan	John Cram – Gardener Alexander Murray – Footman & Gamekeeper James McBride – Groom Andrew McBride – Postilion
Andrew McDowal Esq. Yr of Logan Batch	James Hastings – Valet John Somers – Groom

Male servant tax rolls, 1777-1798, vol 15, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

2 November 1791

John McDowal Esq. of Logan	Mrs McQuie – House keeper Elizabeth McCredie – Cook Helen McDowal – Chambermaid
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Female servant tax rolls, 1785-1792, vol 26, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

2nd November 1791

Male servant tax rolls

John McDowal Esq. of Logan	John Cram – Gardener Alexander Murray – House servant & Gamekeeper James McBride – Groom Andrew McBride – Postilion
Andrew McDowal Esq. Yr of Logan Batch	James Hastings – Valet John Somers – Groom

Male servant tax rolls, 1777-1798, vol 17, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

2nd November 1791

Horse tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>1 horse</u> <u>(10s)</u>	<u>2 horses</u>	<u>3-5 horses</u>	<u>Duty</u>	<u>10% per 31</u> <u>George III</u>
John McDowal Esq. of Logan	1		2	£2.5.0	£0.4.6
Andrew McDowal Esq. Yr of Logan	1	1		£1.5.0	£0.4.6

Horse tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 21, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1791

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25</u> <u>and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowal of Logan	39	£3.18.0

Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1792

Carriage tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Private 1 carriage</u>	<u>Duty</u>	<u>10%</u>
John McDowal Esq. of Logan	1	£8.0.0	£0.16.0
Andrew McDowal Esq. yo of Logan	1	£8.0.0	£0.16.0

Carriage tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 15, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

5th November 1792

Horse tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>1 horse</u> <u>(10s)</u>	<u>2 horses</u>	<u>3-5 horses</u>	<u>Duty</u>	<u>10% per 31</u> <u>George III</u>
John McDowal Esq. of Logan	1		2	£2.5.0	£0.4.6
Andrew McDowal Esq. Yr of Logan	1	1		£1.5.0	£0.2.6

Horse tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 24, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1792

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25</u> <u>and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowal Esq of Logan	39	£3.18.0

Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1793

Male servant tax rolls

John McDowall Esq. of Logan	John Cram – Gardener Alexander Murray – Footman & Gamekeeper James McBride – Groom Alexander Maxwell – Postilion
Andrew McDouall Esq. of Culgrot Batch	James Hairstones – Valet John Somers – Groom

Male servant tax rolls, 177-1798, vol 21, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1793

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25</u> <u>and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowall Esq of Logan	39	£3.18.0

Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1794

Carriage tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Private 1 carriage</u>	<u>Duty</u>	<u>10%</u>
John McDowal Esq. of Logan	1	£8.0.0	£0.16.0
Andrew McDowal Esq. Younr of Logan	1	£8.0.0	£0.16.0

Carriage tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 17, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

11th July 1794

Horse tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>1 horse</u> <u>(10s)</u>	<u>2 horses</u>	<u>3-5 horses</u>	<u>Duty</u>	<u>10% per 31</u> <u>George III</u>
John McDowal Esq. of Logan	1		2	£2.5.0	£0.4.6
Andrew McDowal Esq. Yr of Logan	1	1		£0.10.0	£0.1.0

Horse tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 27, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

11th July 1794

Male servant tax rolls

John McDowall of Logan	John Cram – Gardener Alexander Murray – Gardener & Footman James McBride – Groom Alexander Maxwell – Postilion
Andrew McDowall Esq. Yourn of Logan	John Simmons – Groom James Haistings – Valet

Male servant tax rolls, 1777-1798, vol 23, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1794

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25 and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowal Esq of Logan	39	£3.18.0

Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1797

Carriage tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Private 1 carriage</u>	<u>Duty</u>	<u>10% Per 31</u>	<u>10% 36</u>
John McDoual of Logan	1	£8.0.0	£0.16.0	£0.16.0
Col. Andrew McDowal Yr. of logan	1	£8.0.0	£0.16.0	£0.16.0

Carriage tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 19, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

13th October 1797

Male servant tax rolls

John McDowall Esq. of Logan	Alexander Murray – House servant & Gamekeeper James McBride – Groom John Cram – Gardener David McTeir – Coachman
Col. Andrew McDowal Yr of Logan	John Somers – Groom _____ - Valet

Male servant tax rolls, 1777-1798, vol 25, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

13th October 1797

Dog tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Dogs at 3s</u>	<u>Dogs at 5s</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowal of Logan		3	£0.15.0
Col. Andrew McDowal Younger of Logan		2	£0.10.0

Dog tax rolls, 1797 -1798, vol 2, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

13th October 1797

Farm horse tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Horses liable in duty</u>	<u>Horses not liable</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDowal of Logan	5	4	£0.10.0
Col. Andrew McDowal Younger of Logan	4	4	£0.8.0

Farm horse tax rolls, 1797-1798, vol 5, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

13th October 1797

Horse tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>1</u> <u>horse</u>	<u>2</u> <u>horses</u>	<u>3-5</u> <u>horses</u>	<u>Duty</u>	<u>10% per 31</u> <u>George III</u>	<u>10% per 36</u> <u>George III</u>
John McDowal of Logan	1		2	£2.5.0	£0.4.6.	£2.5.0

Horse tax rolls, 1785-1798, vol 30, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1797

Window tax rolls

<u>Name</u>	<u>Windows 25</u> <u>and upwards</u>	<u>Duty</u>
John McDoual Esq of Logan	39	£3.18.0

Window tax rolls, 1748-1798, vol 124, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

19th Century

1800

Construction of Logan Fish pond completed. At some point in the early 19th century the Fish Pond and the Walled Garden walls were enlarged and improved using labour provided by Napoleonic prisoners of war.

1802-1805

Andrew McDouall (1758-1834) serves as M.P for Wigtownshire.

www.nrscotland.gov.uk

1845-1849

“In the north side of the Parish of Kirkmaiden & about 1 ½ miles ENE of Mull of Logan. A large and handsome house of Modern construction, the main plan of the house is a plain rectangular building and attached is a plain wing on each side, the entrance to which is by covered passages from the nearby building, attached to this house is a large kitchen garden & surrounded by a large portion of ornamental growth & demesne well wooded some of which is full grown, the remainder consists of young plantations at a distance from the house, there is an extensive farm yard, the houses of which are in middling repair, there is a new farm yard now in progress a little farther from the house there is also a large tract of land attached for farming purposes. This building is the family residence of Col McDowall”

Authorities for spelling Col. McDowall
 David McCulloch – Auchness, Factor
 William Stewart

Ordnance Survey Name Books, 1845-1849, vol 81, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1845-1849

Logan Fish Pond

“4 chains East of Farie Rock. A Pond excavated out of solid rock at the North end of a small Narrow Gully or inlet of the Sea by which the pond is filled at high water, the superfluous water returns or discharges by a grating when the Tide ebbs. Adjacent to it is a neat Cottage for the fisherman & caretaker who preserves the fish and feeds them with limpets etc. in the pond. The fish of this pond are for the use of Col. McDowalls table & the fisherman is allowed a yearly salary for the supplying of Logan House with fish”

Authorities for spelling William Gibson
 John Milroy
 William McDowall

Ordnance Survey Name Books, 1845-1849, vol 81, Wigtownshire. (www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk)

1848-51

Extensions made to Logan House. (www.scottish-places.co.uk)

1862

The Auchness Embezzlement Case

"The High Court of Justiciary met yesterday at Edinburgh. The first case called was that of Wm. Davidson, formerly employed as managing clerk by Mr David McCulloch, farmer at Auchness, in the parish of Kirkmaiden, Wigtownshire and factor for Col. James McDouall, Logan House. He was placed at the bar under the indictment of 25 counts of embezzlement and appropriation of the funds of Colonel McDouall of Logan and his employer, Mr David McCulloch, factor."

Glasgow Morning Journal. Tuesday 15th July 1862. (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)

William Davidson was convicted and sentenced to eight years penal servitude.

1867

Theft of Money by Two Young Girls

"A very foolish, yet aggravated case of theft of money, occurred at Logan, Kirkmaiden, on Thursday last, by two young girls, named respectively Elizabeth Pearson, aged 18 years, and Agnes Bell, aged 16 years. The two girls it seems have made it up, unknown to their friends, to go to England. Before leaving, Pearson abstracted from the press in the dwelling house of Thos. Ferguson, coachman to Col. McDouall, with whom she was residing, £14 in bank notes and three sovereigns. She also carried off a carpet bag belonging to Mr. Thos. McClure, Logan, which happened to be in Ferguson's house."

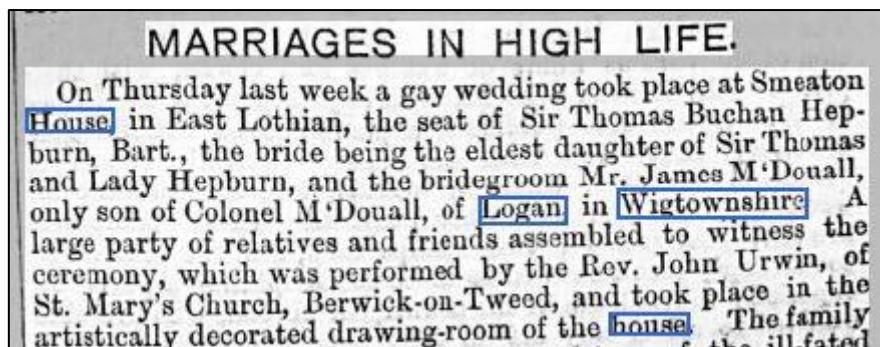
Glasgow Evening Post. Saturday 20th July 1867. (www.britishnewspaperarchives.co.uk)

The theft was discovered and the two girls arrested at Dumfries railway station.

1869

James McDouall (1840-1896) marries Agnes Buchan-Hepburn. Agnes was a keen gardener and started experimenting with exotic plants.

www.nrscotland.gov.uk



Lady's Own Paper. Saturday 2nd October 1869. (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)

1872

The Late Colonel McDouall of Logan

"Colonel James McDouall of Logan died at his residence, Logan House, Kirkmaiden, Wigtownshire, early on Saturday morning. He was descended from an ancient Galloway family which has been in possession of the lands of Logan for many centuries. The estates extend over three fourth of the entire parish of Kirkmaiden, and the family also own land in several other parishes in the Rhins of Galloway. Colonel McDouall was born in 1796, and was thus 76 years of age when he died. He entered the 2nd Life Guards in 1819, and he became Colonel of that regiment in 1845. On the death of his father, who was also a colonel in the army, and for some time M.P for Wigtownshire in 1834, Colonel McDouall succeeded to the estates. He left the army in 1854. The deceased was deputy-lieutenant of Wigtownshire and a Justice of the Peace. He was also a member of the Prison Board and the Police Committee. Until lately, when failing health incapacitated him for work of any kind, he was very attentive to his duties. He was a director and large shareholder in both the Portpatrick and Girvan and Portpatrick Junction Railways. He held several large farms

in his own hands, and there was scarcely a system of improvement or an improved agricultural implement but which received the first trial in the Rhins of Galloway, on his farms. Col McDouall was mainly instrumental in establishing the The Kirkmaiden Agricultural Society – an association which has been the means of advancing agriculture in the parish, and keeping its members abreast of the improvements of the age; and, by the judicious distribution of prizes for the best kept farm on his estates, encouraged an emulative spirit among the tenantry, which was productive of the best results. He took an active part in all the public business of the district; and was very popular among all classes. In politics the deceased was Conservative. He married Miss Barnet, daughter of Mr William Barnet, Apeton, who survives him, by whom he had two children, a son and a daughter. He is succeeded by his son, James, who married, in 1869, a daughter of Sir Thomas Buchan Hepburn, Bart. The remains will be interred in the family vault in Kirkmaiden Churchyard on Saturday first.”

Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald. Saturday 27th July 1872. (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)

1872

Port Logan Mutual Improvement Society

“A meeting was held in Port Logan School on Monday evening for the purposes of forming a Mutual Improvement Society. Mr McMeeking, gardener, Logan, being called to the chair, the meeting was addressed by Mr Roxburgh, teacher, Port Logan. A society was formed, and the following gentlemen were elected office bearers: James McDouall, Esq of Logan, hon. President; Mr Murray, Chapelrossan, President; Mr Jamieson, Logan Mains, vice-President; Mr Roxburgh, teacher, librarian; Mr James D Jamieson, Logan Mains, Secretary and Treasurer.”

Galloway Advertiser and Wigtownshire Free Press. Thursday 31st October 1872. (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)

1873-74

Baronial style extensions added to Logan House by David Bryce.

(www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk)

1882

Agricultural Notes

“Mr. John Ferguson, factor on Ardwell and Logan Estates, Wigtownshire, has been appointed inspector under the Drainage and Improvement Acts, for Ayrshire and Galloway, in room of the late Mr. Peter MacLean of Duchra.”

North British Agriculturist. Wednesday 13th December 1882. (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)

1886

Wigtownshire Pollution Case

“In the Bill Chamber of the Court of Session on Monday, Lord Fraser heard counsel upon an application for interdict against pollution at the instance of Mr James McDouall of Logan against the Creamery Company (Limited), Dunragit, Wigtownshire. Mr McDouall is proprietor of the estate of Genoch, which is partly bounded and partly intersected by the Pillanton Burn. He alleges that since the formation of the respondents company the water of the burn has been rendered unfit for primary and domestic purposes by the discharge of sewage from their butterine works and piggeries. In this action he seeks to have the respondents interdicted from continuing the pollution. The respondents resist the interdict on the ground that the stream has been polluted for more than forty years. His Lordship, after hearing counsel, passed the note for the trial of the case, but refused to grant interdict.”

Ayr Advertiser. Thursday 15th April 1886. (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)

1891

Rejoicings in Wigtownshire

“Rejoicings are also taking place today at Logan, Mull of Galloway, over the coming of age of Mr Kenneth McDouall, heir to the Logan estate. A ball takes place in the evening, at which the leading country people will be present.”

Glasgow Evening Post. Tuesday 24th November 1891. (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)

1896

James McDouall dies and is succeeded by his eldest son, Andrew Kenneth McDouall (1870-1945). Kenneth along with his brother Nigel Douglas McDouall, inherited a love of gardening from their mother.

www.nrscotland.gov.uk

“MCDOUALL – On the 30th ult., at Calais, James McDouall, of Logan, Wigtownshire.”

Morning Post. Tuesday 3rd November 1896. (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)



Plaque showing James McDouall on his monument in Kirkmaiden Churchard

20th Century

Early 20th century

Andrew Kenneth and Nigel Douglas McDouall subscribe to many plant collecting expeditions. Including those of Reginald Farrer, Ernest Wilson, Frank Kingdom Ward and George Forest. Seeds from these expeditions are grown at Logan and formed the foundations of the current gardens and Logan Botanic Garden.



Andrew Kenneth and Nigel Douglas McDouall with a specimen Rhododendron at Logan. Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh

1908

Robert Finlay became Head Gardener at Logan. Robert Finlay had a distinguished career. In 1915 he joined the Field Artillery and after four years of service, returned to become Head Gardener to the Earl of Stair at Castle Kennedy in 1919. Robert Finlay went on to become keeper of the Royal Horticultural Society's garden at Wisley. He died in 1963 aged 81.

Other house and garden staff from Logan May have served during WW1. If they did, then they returned home more or less in one piece and are therefore not recorded on the parish War Memorial. Julia MacDonald's excellent book 'The Faithful, the Fallen and the Forgotten' (ISBN; 978-0-9569331-0-2) gives biographies of Kirkmaiden's casualties, but none have a direct link to Logan House.

1913

Court Circular

"An announcement of marriage is made between Alma, daughter of Viscount and Viscountess Stepford, and Kenneth McDouall of Logan, Scotland."

Manchester Courier. Saturday 7th June 1913. (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)

"On Friday last it was announced that the marriage arranged between Mr. Kenneth McDouall and Miss Alma Stepford would not take place."

Evening news (London). Monday 29th September 1913. (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)

1917

RED CROSS

"A garden party fete in the grounds of Logan House, the seat of Mr Kenneth McDowall, was opened by Provost Roger, Stranraer, and the drawings amounted to £312 18s 6d. The sum drawn at the fete at Lochinch castle amounted to £219 4s 4d."

The Scotsman. Friday 3rd August 1917. (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)

1918

Scottish News

"Mr John Laughton, J.P, interim factor on the Duke of Hamilton's estate of Kinneil, West Lothian, has been appointed factor on the Logan estates, Wigtownshire, the property of Mr A. Kenneth McDouall of Logan."

The Scotsman. Friday 23rd of August 1918. (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)

1926

Death of Agnes McDouall (nee Buchan Hepburn).

1928

Kinneil Factor for Wigtownshire

"Mr John Bowie, who has for nine years been resident local factor on Kinneil estate, has been appointed factor to Mr A. K. McDouall of Logan, Wigtownshire, and takes up his new duties on 1st July."

The Scotsman. Friday 4th May 1928. (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)

1940's

Improvements made to Logan Fish Pond by German or Italian prisoners of war.

1943

Death of Nigel Douglas McDouall.

1945

Andrew Kenneth McDouall dies and Logan is inherited by his cousin Sir Ninian Buchan-Hepburn.

“ McDOUALL – At LOGAN, Wigtownshire, on 17th May 1945, in his 75th year. ANDREW KENNETH mcDOUALL, of Logan. Funeral (private) to Kirkmaiden Churchyard, on Monday 21st May, but any friends will be welcome to attend, meeting the cortege at the churchyard gate at 3.15pm.”

The Scotsman. Saturday 19th May 1945. (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)

1948

Owing to heavy death duties, Sir Ninian Buchan Hepburn is forced to give up Logan

1948

Country Properties

“Beautifully situated residence and gardens of Logan (13 miles south of Stranraer). This most substantially built house stands on a well chosen site, commanding magnificent views over well laid out policies to Luce Bay and the Galloway Highlands. Contains handsome suite of reception rooms, entrance hall, 20 bed and dressing rooms, 10 staff bedrooms, bathrooms and very complete offices; servants hall, and garage for 6-7 cars; man’s house; gardeners cottage; world famous gardens contain unique collection of exotic plants and rare rhododendrons; grounds, gardens and grass parks extend in all to 95 acres; eminently suitable for residence, school, home, or other similar purpose. Full particulars and orders to view from SIR THOMAS WHITE, Factor, Logan Estate Office, Chappel Rossan, Ardwell, Stranraer, or WALKER, FRASER & STEELE, Estate Agents, 58 Castle Street, Edinburgh.”

The Scotsman. Monday 26th April 1948. (www.britishnewspaperarchives.co.uk)

1949

Ronald Olaf Hambro buys Logan Estate.

1949

“Another Head Gardener in the programme is George Steadwood of Logan House, Wigtownshire. Here at port Logan flourishes a most interesting sub-tropical garden.”

Falkirk Herald, Wednesday 1st June 1949, Broadcasting News. (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)

1949

House and Garden with a History

“Logan House famous throughout the country for its “magic” three acre garden is to be largely demolished. About 50 rooms of the Wigtownshire mansion, finished in 1875, will be pulled down, leaving an older part consisting of about a dozen rooms.

The house and estate belong to Mr Ronald O. Hambro, chairman of Hambro’s Bank, Ltd, who also owns Glendoe, Fort Augustus. Two years ago he bought Logan from the McDouall family, who are direct descendants of Robert the Bruce.

The famous garden has a much shorter history. It was the result of 20 years hard work on the part of Mr. Andrew Kenneth McDouall, who died about four years ago. He was the brother of the Marchioness of Ailsa. Mr McDouall spent much of his youth abroad, particularly in Abyssinia, Kenya and Uganda. He studied plant life and methodically collected strange specimens. These found their way to Logan House. Gradually the new garden took shape. Bamboos, palms, magnolias, Chinese poppies, eucalyptus trees and hundreds of other foreign plants were put in.

Tropical birds of gorgeous plumagewere brought over to fill a large aviary. In a grotto tame codfish came up to the surface for food. Unfortunately, at the beginning of the war the birds had to be sent to a zoo owing to the shortage of feeding stuff.

Mr McDouall used to say “There is magic in the air of this garden. None of these plants would grow even a mile away from here.”

Whether botanical experts agreed about the magic or not, they came from all over the world to see the garden which was recognised as the finest tropical garden in the country.

Gardeners are still tending it carefully, and even at this late season of the year it is a riot of colour. The new owner intends to keep it in its present state.

The task of demolishing the mansion itself is being undertaken by Charles Brand, of Dundee, 45 Commercial Street. It contains some very fine oak panelling. Much of the stonework will be used to make terraces round the small part which is to remain. The demolition will take about six months."

Dundee Courier. Thursday 22nd September 1949. (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)

1952

19th century baronial style extensions to Logan House are removed with the exception of the service wing which is retained (www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk). The demolition rubble was used to create a raised terrace at the east front of the house.

1961

Death of Olaf Hambro. Logan is administered by a charitable trust until the funds became exhausted.

1969

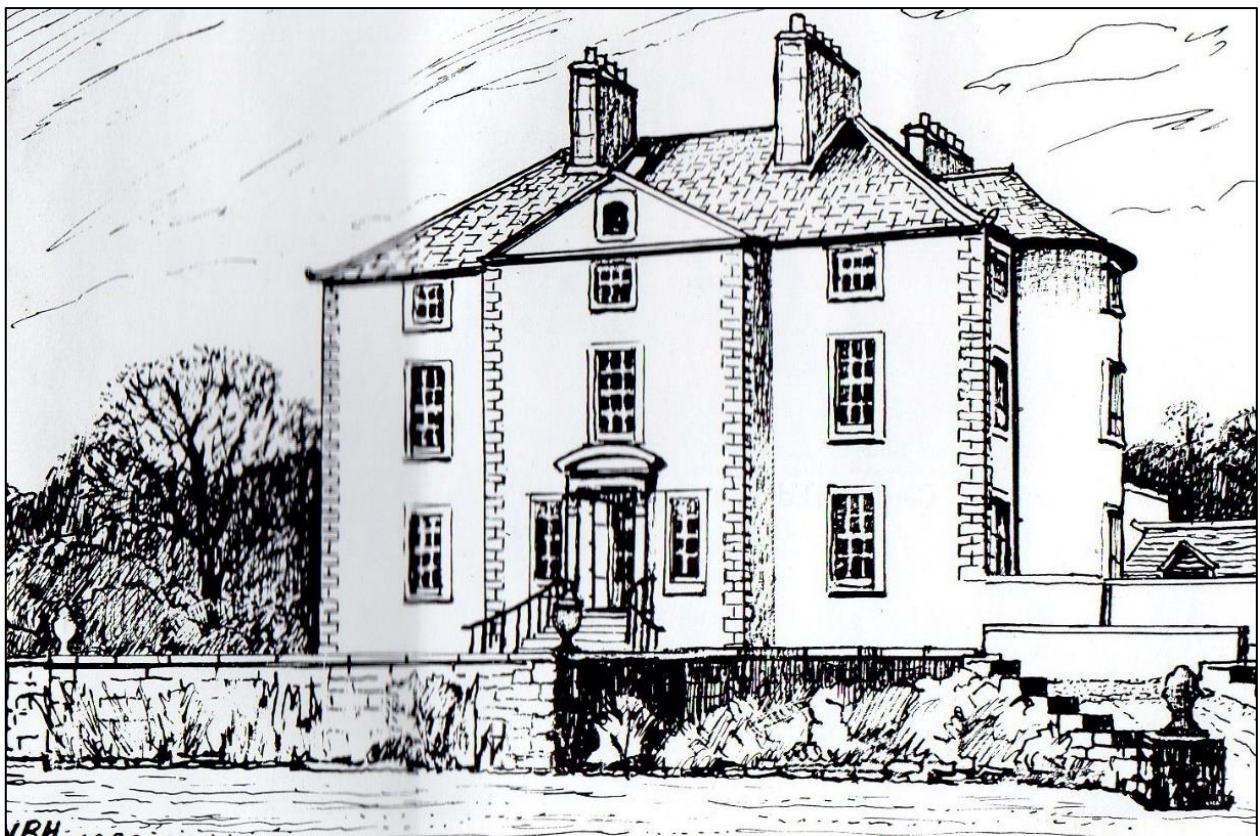
The walled garden along with some adjacent land and woodlands are gifted to the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh. These form Logan Botanic Garden.

1970

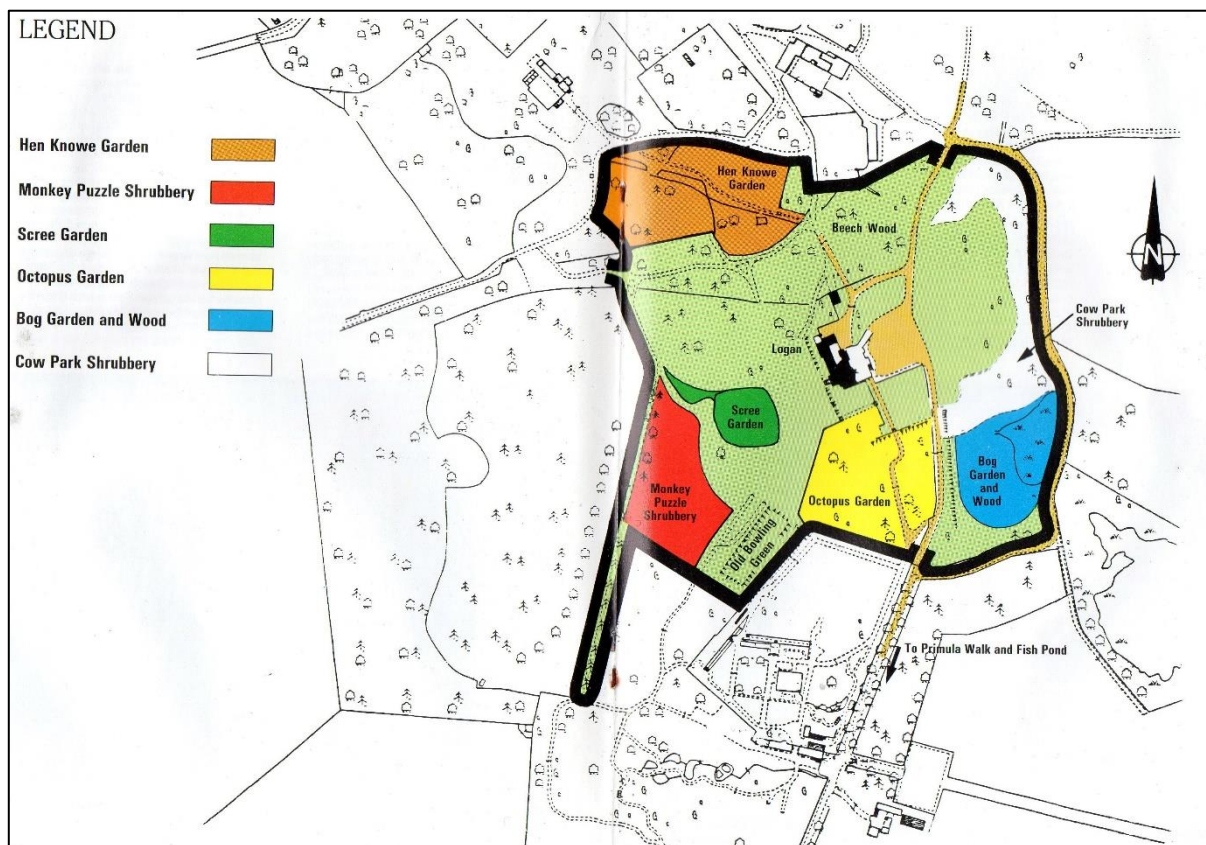
Sir Ninian Buchan-Hepburn buys back Logan House along with its gardens and surrounding policy woodlands.

1973

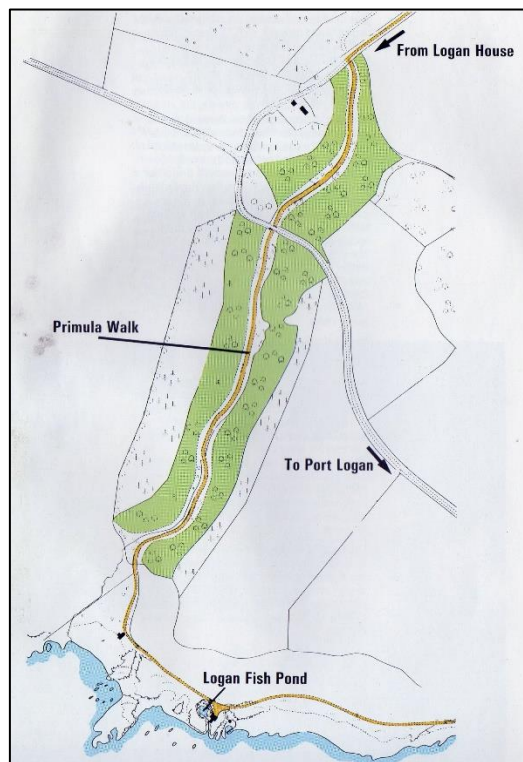
Logan is used in the filming of 'The Wicker Man'. The Head Gardener Martin Colledge and many other locals appear in the film.



Logan House in 1980. Drawing by Sir Ninian Buchan Hepburn used in his guidebook to Logan produced in 1982



Map of Logan and it garden. Logan guidebook, Sir Ninian Buchan Hepburn, 1982



Map showing the route from Logan House to Logan Fish Pond via the Primula Walk. Logan guidebook, Sir Ninian Buchan Hepburn, 1982



Front cover of Logan guidebook showing the Primula Walk. Sir Ninian Buchan Hepburn, 1982

1992

Death of Sir Ninian Buchan Hepburn. Logan is acquired by Mike and Sally Coburn who continue to repair and restore the house and gardens.

1997

CLUTTONS
DRY STONE WALLER
 Required
 For Estate at Port Logan, Wigtownshire
 Substantial experience and expertise in dyking essential. Full or part-time employment considered. Cottage available if required. References essential.
 Applications with CV in writing to:
Cluttons, 16 Alloway Place, Ayr KA7 2AA
440311-WB14.2

Galloway News and Kirkcudbrightshire Advertiser. Thursday 13th February 1997 (www.britishnewspaperarchives.co.uk)

21st Century

2000

Death of Mike Coburn.

2001

Logan House and estate bought by Andrew and Vicky Roberts for £1,232,000.

2022

Report 'Characterising the medieval heritage and associated stories of four RBGE properties: Inverleith (Edinburgh), Logan Dumfries & Galloway), Dawyck (Borders), Benmore (Argyll).' Produced for the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh by Alison Clark BA MRes & William Wyeth BA MSt PhD. 29th April 2022



Logan House in May 2023



Red sandstone armorial plaque showing the McDouall arms incorporated into the east front. This plaque may have come from the 19th century additions to Logan House or from an earlier building.



Carved faces are set on each corner of the roof. These may have come from the 19th century additions to Logan House or an earlier building.

2023

Logan House and estate are currently for sale. Guide price £9,500,000.

Over Courance, Kirkmichael

by Robert Thorne

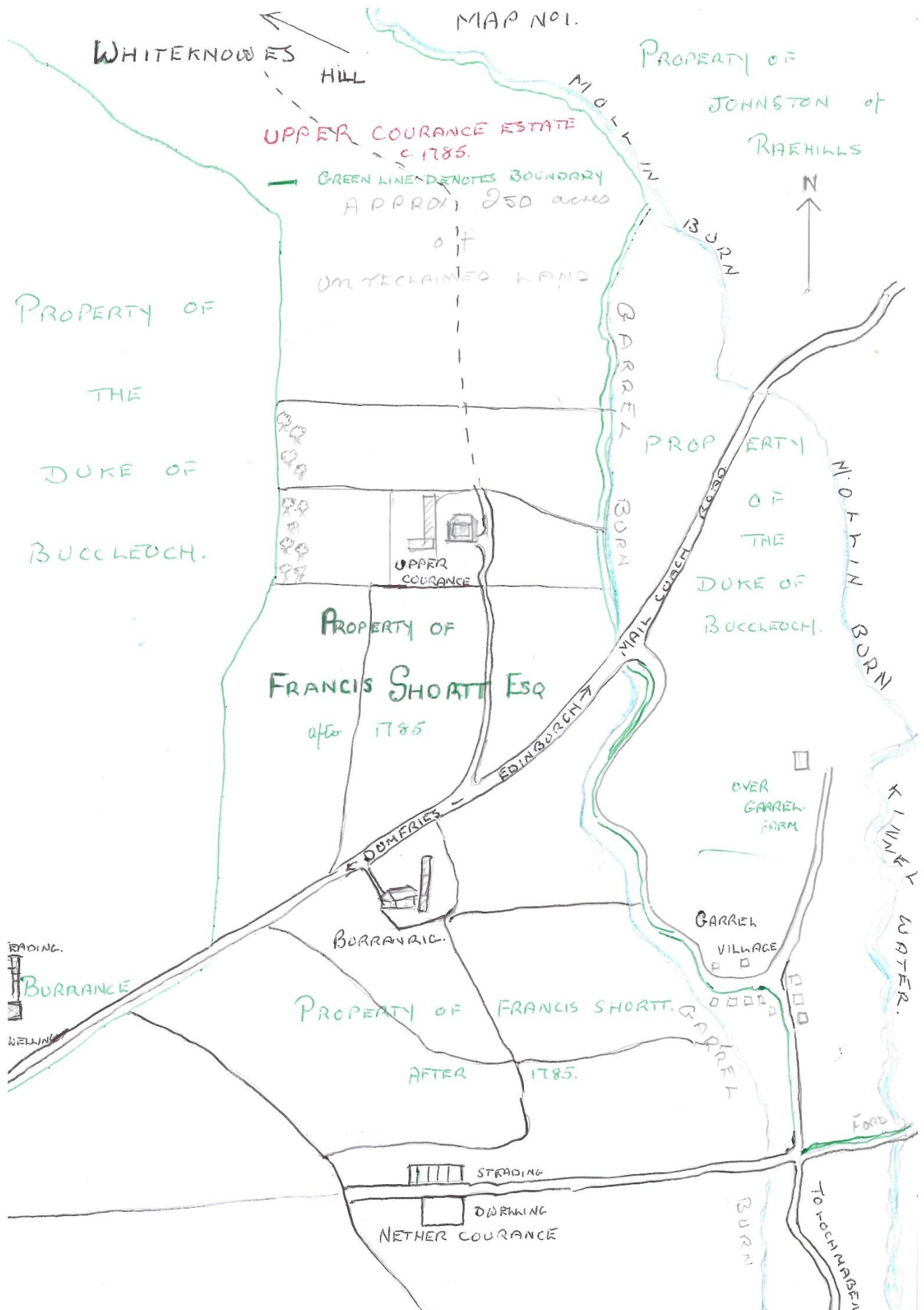
Part One

CHAPTER ONE

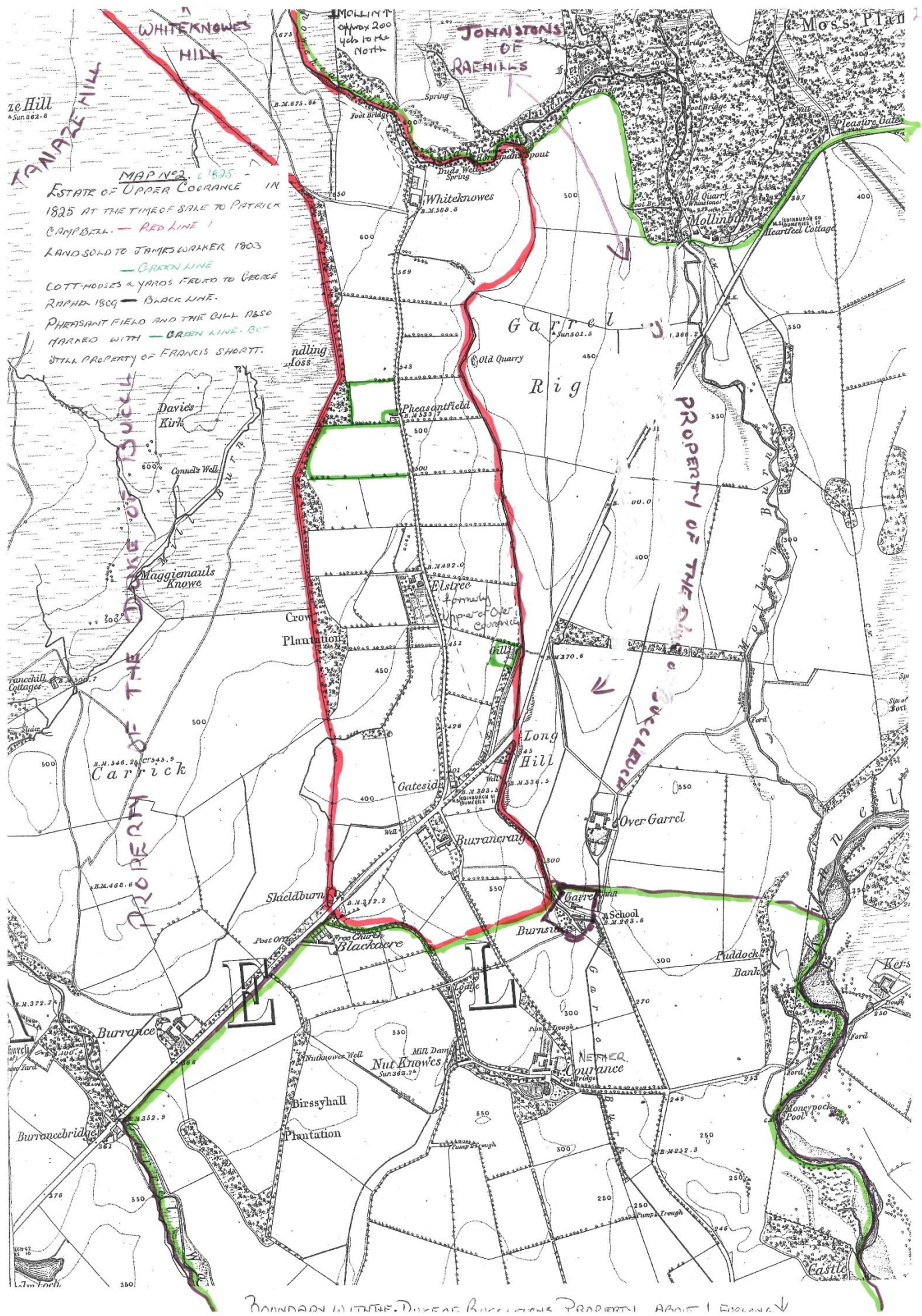
History and development of Over Courance 1555 - 1906

The first documentary evidence regarding the estate of Over Courance, to give it the name by which it was, and is, generally known, dates from the year 1555, when in the Buccleuch family papers it is described as the “Fortalice of Courinche”, and between then and the turn of the sixteenth century it is variously spelt as Courins, Courinshill and Courance. No documentary evidence of the site of this foralice is known to exist but there is good reason to suppose it stood on or near the site of the two later houses that were to succeed it. Built probably around the middle of the sixteenth century, it was no doubt a peel tower, on much the same plan as the scores of other defensive residences to be found throughout the Borders. More weight can be added to this argument by looking at the landscape from the site of the later houses. Standing on an eminence overlooking Annandale, it would have been ideally suited to observe the movements of any approaching force. In the mid fifteen hundreds the immediate surroundings were, to the east and south, guarded by boggy ground which ran down to the banks of the Kinnel Water which flows through a deep, steep-sided cutting through most of the estate. To the north and the north-east lay the lands owned by the Johnstons of Lochwood, kinsmen of the Johnstons of Courance, collectively one of the largest and most influential families, along with the Maxwells, in Dumfriesshire. The west and north-west, from Kirkmichael to Closeburn, an area now largely covered by the Forest of Ae, lay in the hands of the Kirkpatrick family, allies of the Johnstons.

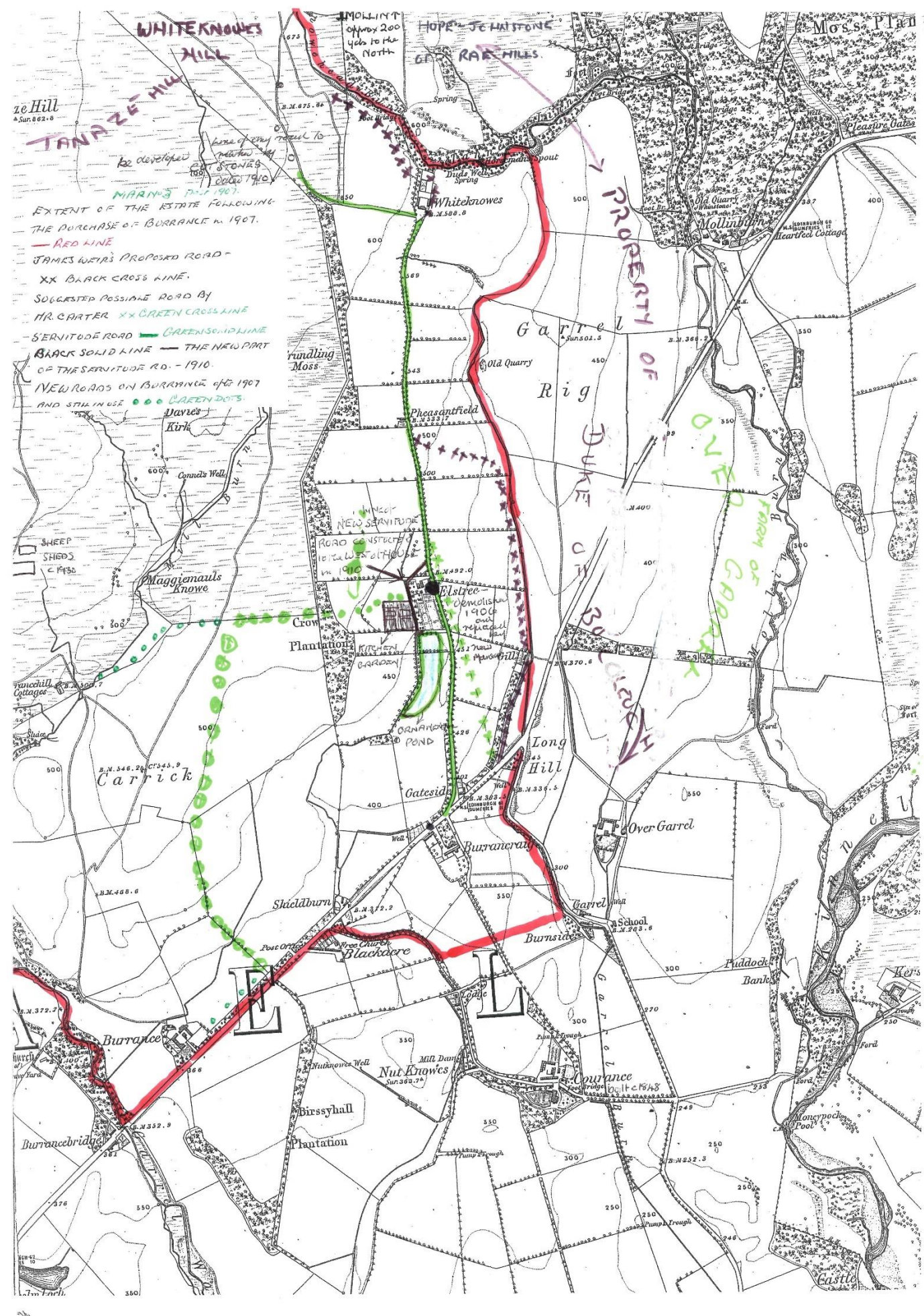
Following a degree of peace and tranquillity after the Union of the Crowns in 1603 and accelerated by the Union of Parliaments in 1707, fortified tower houses gradually gave way to more comfortable living accommodation, and during this period, perhaps about 1750, the dwelling-place at Over Courance had taken the form of a substantial stone-built two-storied farmhouse surrounded by a steading and a few cotthouses to accommodate the families of shepherds and ploughmen. This last description is probably as near as we can get to knowing what the various estate buildings looked like when in 1785 Robert Johnston sold the entire property to Francis Shortt. Robert Johnston is one of three Johnstons, the others, William and John, who had children baptised in Kirkmichael Church between 1765 and 1780. They were possibly brothers, but all are stated to be living at Upper Courance during these years.



Map No 2 - Over Courance 1825



Map No 3 - Over Courance Post-1907



Francis Shortt purchased the lands of “Upper or Over Courance on the 23rd of March 1785 on disposition of Robert Johnston of Upper Courance”, the extent of the estate being marked on map no. 1. The lands around the principal dwelling and at Burranrig, but marked on the map as Burrancraig, and Nether Courance had already undergone reclamation, drainage and enclosure at the hands of the Johnstons, and were therefore already yielding an income from the tenants who occupied them. However, with the exception of about fifty acres which immediately surrounded Upper Courance house and steading, the rest of the estate remained more or less in a state of nature, but land, when drained, reclaimed and enclosed was capable of producing grass and grain. Therefore it was doubtless this potential of substantially increasing the value of the estate as a whole that attracted Francis Shortt to invest in, develop and then sell it.

Francis Shortt was a well known and respected Dumfriesshire personality in his day. A wealthy lawyer by profession, he was on two occasions Joint Town Clerk of Dumfries Burgh, and at the time he purchased Over Courance lived and worked from his town house in Castle Street, Dumfries. He continued to own this property throughout his lifetime so must have divided his time between the two possessions.

The reclamation of land between about 1750 and 1820 occupied the heads and hands of landowners, great and small, throughout South West Scotland and further to the east in Roxburghshire and Berwickshire. Foremost in Dumfriesshire in this field were Patrick Miller of Dalswinton, Sir William Douglas of Kelhead and Major General Dirom of Mount Annan, to name but three of the pioneers in this undertaking. Their efforts produced the landscape much as we see it across the county today.

All this effort was, of course, driven by a need for profit from land, and in particular in the form of hard cash. Formerly tenants lived on these estates in utter poverty; existed on the runrig system for food production, and generally were only able to pay rents in kind, not money. To exist, the landowner had little choice but to borrow money, using his land, despite its low value, as security. It is interesting to see in the Register of Sasines that more often than not the persons who were in a position to lend money were merchants, army or navy officers, former employees of the East India Company or a member of one of the professions. It was this class of people that had enough surplus money to invest, not the owners of vast aceages.

It is against this background that Francis Shortt set out to develop his acquisition from a partly reclaimed estate to one fully reclaimed, thereby turning it into a highly desirable property. His plan of development followed a well tried and proven one of dividing the estate into holdings of varying acreages. The reason for this was that

different sizes of tenancies attracted a wider range of would-be tenants than just one or two tenancies each comprising a large acreage. It was calculated farms of sixty or more acres, together with a new well built house of stone with a slated roof, comprising several rooms, together with a range of buildings compatible with the farm's acreage, which included a barn, a byre, stables and a cart shed were intended to attract a tenant with sufficient capital to stock and run his holding as a full-time business, employing one or two ploughmen or stockmen. A second grouping of tenancies of fifteen to twenty acres, again with house and outbuildings, attracted tenants from the tradesmen and artisans: blacksmiths, wheelwrights, joiners, etc., who derived their principal income from their trade but were able to supplement it by sales of surpluses to their own need, produced with the help of their family as the labour force on their holding. A third division of land of not more than about eight acres, with a cottage, byre for a house cow, a pigs' cote and a well-tended garden found favour with labourers, stonedyers, mole and rabbit trappers, etc., who, with help from their wives and children, were able to supplement their weekly wages. In practice, Dirom's plan was soon seen to work, and to anyone researching land development in Dumfriesshire in the last quarter of the eighteenth century this system of land division recurs time after time.

Over Courance estate extended to about four hundred acres in 1785 at the time Shortt purchased it. The property is variously named Over Courance, Upper Courance, Courancehill and sometimes simply Courance. Attached to the principal house there appears to have been between fifty and sixty acres of reclaimed productive land, lying mainly to the north and west of the house and a smaller portion lying between the house and the mail coach road, now the A701, on the east and south-west sides. Beyond this lay the fully developed farm of Nether Courance spread around the hamlet of Garrel and extending to the boundaries of the Duke of Buccleuch's properties of Ross Mains and Nether Garrel. Having taken these acreages of developed land out of the total there remained upwards of two hundred and fifty acres to be reclaimed. This parcel of land Shortt divided into three units, Whiteknowes, consisting of about sixty acres of reclaimed and enclosed land and a further one hundred and twenty acres of muir land with the potential of improvement attached, together with two dwellings and a range of farm buildings formed the principal holding. Marching with Whiteknowes a cottage with about twenty acres was erected and named Pheasantfield. This parcel of land in turn marched with the land already reclaimed and attached to the principal dwelling, Courancehill, and beyond this and bordering the mail coach road a smallholding with eight acres named the Gill was developed. The ruins of Whiteknowes and Pheasantfield still remain but the Gill's position can only be traced by raised embankments.

Despite being a wealthy lawyer and enjoying income from two tenanted farms, Nether Courance and Burranrig, just eight years into his development plan in 1793 Francis Shortt, like many other land developers, needed an injection of capital. An

advertisement appeared in the *Dumfries Weekly Journal* under the heading 'Money Wanted' - see appendix 1 adv. no. 1.

By November 1797 the first advertisement appeared in the local newspaper for a tenant to occupy Whiteknowes, and from this we can see just how new the tenancy was. It states 'The land has not yet been accurately measured'. The fact that crops were nevertheless being produced here suggests it was being farmed in hand along with Upper Courance in 1797. (Ad. no. 2).

The probable need for another injection of capital arose in 1803 because Nether Courance was sold to James Walker. He was not long in possession of it as it passed into the hands of Adam Seton, a Glasgow merchant, soon after. It was these Setons who later through marriage became the Seton Wightmans who had the present-day mansion of Courance built during the 1840s. The family remained in possession until the 1930s.

As Francis Shortt would have been fully engaged with the duties of Town Clerk and other legal matters the day to day running of the farm land and overseeing of the ongoing work of reclamation seems to have been the responsibility of his 'topsmen', or, to give such a person a modern title, Farm Manager named George Raphael. Raphael was obviously a man of ability and business acumen. In 1809, whilst still employed by Francis Shortt, he was, the General Register of Sasines informs us, "seized in the possession in parts of land of Upper, Over or Courancehill, as cotthouses and yairds lying next the march of the farm of Over Garrel in Feu Charter by Francis Shortt, writer in Dumfries." Raphael let these properties, one to a family of wheelwrights and another to blacksmiths. The blacksmith's cottage and smithy are still intact and occupied; the remains of the other cotthouses can be traced nearby in woodland close to the roadside near Garrel School.

Throughout the first decade of the nineteenth century advertisements for a tenant for Whiteknowes appear frequently, giving the impression that making a profitable business was beyond the capabilities of a succession of tenants. No attempt was made to increase the acreage of productive land by reclaiming any part of Whiteknowes Hill and indeed only in recent years have attempts been made to improve the drainage here. By and large it still remains very much in a state of nature.

Following the end of hostilities with France in 1815 the demand for grain and other farm produce increased, giving rise to improved prices, and it appears that tenants in Upper Courance were doing much better in common with others throughout the county. In 1823 Francis Shortt made his first attempt to cash in on his investment and

a detailed advertisement appeared in the *Dumfries Weekly Journal* dated 17th June (Adv. no. 3).

Francis Shortt obviously failed to find a buyer in 1823, but following his advertisement in December 1825 the Sasines record that on the 19th January 1826 “Patrick Campbell, presently residing in Stafford Street, Edinburgh seized in the lands of Upper or Over Courance, but now called Lawers, on disposition by Francis Shortt, W.S.” Patrick Campbell decided to call his new acquisition Lawers on the strength of being the Chief of a cadet branch of the Campbells of Glen Lyon named Lawers. He was therefore entitled to style himself Patrick Campbell of Lawers. He probably divided his time between Edinburgh and Lawers but what his business interests were remains undiscovered. At Lawers he continued improvements with the assistance of George Raphael his overseer. Crop rotation was carefully applied and no doubt the estate was performing satisfactorily. Only one advertisement appears for a vacant tenancy during the period of his ownership, another sign of improved profitability (Adv. no. 4). However, in 1834 Patrick Campbell made the decision to sell the estate by roup, and details of the sale appeared in the *Dumfries Weekly Journal* dated 7th September. (Adv. no. 5).

Close examination of this Notice goes to show that Lawers was not only a substantial and successful agricultural investment but the list of household effects offered for sale now suggests a property taking on the proportions of a small mansion (see part plan of the 1835 Sale Particulars).

Patrick Campbell disposed of Lawers far more easily than had been the case when Francis Shortt was attempting the sale. It was bought by John Easton, MD of Regent Terrace, Edinburgh, of whom little is known except that he was a Doctor of Medicine. He died in 1850 or 1851, when the Register of Sasines records that the property was in the hands of his trustees. From the same source we learn they disposed the property, by now again referred to as Over Courance, to Robert Bruce Baird, another Edinburgh gentleman about whose life or business connections little has come to light.

In 1857 surveying of the County of Dumfries in preparation for the publication of the first edition of the OS map got under way. The responsibility for surveying and recording the place names in the parish of Kirkmichael fell to Captain Richard Stotherd of the Royal Engineers, and in correspondence dated 4th January 1858 with the Captain, Robert Baird requested the name of his property of Over Courance be changed to Beechwood, but before he received any reply to his request he wrote again, this time to Lt. Col. James, RE at the OS office on the 13th February, asking if

it was not too late to change his mind and have the name Elstree instead of Beechwood. His request was granted and, as can be seen from the copy of the first edition OS map, the name appears as Elstree. A copy of Robert Baird's correspondence can be found in the appendix.

Elstree remained the property of Robert Baird for the next forty-six years, but, as can be seen from a notice placed in *The Dumfries Standard* in 1882, an attempt was made to sell it by roup (Adv. no. 6). A second attempt was made in 1898, again without success (Adv. no. 7).

It was a case of third time lucky when again, following Notices of Roup, the house and estate was offered for sale on the 3rd July 1900 at Dowall's Rooms, Edinburgh, for an upset price of £7,000, and for this amount Messrs. Constable & Johnstone, acting as agents for Samuel Thomas Farish, farmer of Kirklands, Kirkmichael, secured the property in his name. Samuel Farish renamed the property, reverting yet again to Over Courance, and was proprietor of it until May 1906, when he sold it privately to James Weir, who, shortly after taking possession, demolished the old house and much of the former steading, erecting a brand new mansion built to his own designs and specifications.

Ad. N°1

MONEY WANTED.

WANTED to Borrow, upon undoubted heritable security, *Two Thousand Pounds Sterling.* — For particulars apply to Francis Shortt, writer in Dumfries. DEC 24 1793

NOVEMBER 1797

Ad. N°2

TO BE LET,

THE Farm of WHITEKNOW, part of the Lands of UPPER COURANCE, belonging to Francis Shortt, writer in Dumfries. This farm lies in the parish of Kirkmichael and shire of Dumfries, and may be entered to at Whitsunday first as to the houses and grafs, and the separation of the crop from the ground as to the arable lands; and every reasonable encouragement, as to houses and dykes, will be given to a good tenant. The farm has not all been measured, but it is supposed to contain about 200 acres, whereof about 60 are arable and meadow.

For particulars application may be made to the said Francis Shortt.

7th November, 1797.

Also deceased, are
October, to lodge
s, states of their
therways be eni-

1823. 12-6

A^d N^o 3

THE ESTATE of UPPER COURANCE, in the parish of Kirkmichael, containing about 300 acres, a great part of which has been subdivided with hedges and hedge-row trees. There are also some thriving plantations of from seven to thirty-five years old, and the houses are all substantial.

The post road from Dumfries to Edinburgh, by Moffat, goes through the lower part of the Estate, and the mail coach passes the gate daily.

The whole Property is under lease to substantial tenants, the oldest in date is in 1817, and the latest, which comprehends the most valuable parts of the property, in 1821, 1822, 1823; when the fiar prices of a Winchester bushel of Wheat, Barley, and Oats, and a stone of Oatmeal, were fixed upon the whole at 14s. 0½d., 14s. 2d. and 10s. 10½d., and the prices of these articles now, by the bushel and stone, are 18s. 6d.; or according to the Lothian Boll, the fiars were in 1821, 1822, 1823, £3 14s. 10d., £3 16s. 6d., and £2 18s. 9d., and the selling prices now are £5; which proves that the principal Farms have not been Let beyond their present worth.—The Purchaser has it in his power to enter to any of the Farms, on giving the tenants 12 months previous notice, and paying one half year's rent, and reasonable consideration for improvements of which the tenants have not reaped any or suitable returns.

Peat fuel, of the best quality, in great abundance, upon an unimproved part of the Estate, and at a short distance from any of the Farms; and there are advantageous situations for building or tening a village.

The principal house is commodious, and the offices attached thereto are extensive. There are also a large and productive Garden and an Orchard, planted a few years ago; and upon the whole a most desirable residence, being at an equal distance from Dumfries and Moffat.

The Property holds of a subject's superior for payment of a very small feu duty; and for the information of intending offerers, the Lands will be Set up at such a price as will yield to the Purchaser *more than* 4 per cent.; and the growing Wood and Plantation grounds will either be exposed at a specified sum, or the value thereof afterwards determined by arbitration, in the option of the offerers, at the commencement of the Sale. The Lands are rated in the Cess Books of the County at 100 marks, and the tenants were valued at an early period, and are exhausted.

The free rental is upwards of £259; the title deeds clear and unexceptionable, which, with the leases and Articles of sale, will be seen in the hands of Messrs Johnstone and Little, solicitors, 30, Northumberland Street; to whom, or to Messrs Youngs, Aytoun, and Rutherford W. S.; or to Frances Shortt, Castle Street, Dumfries, the Proprietor, application may be made for particulars.

TO LET,

Ad. N° 4

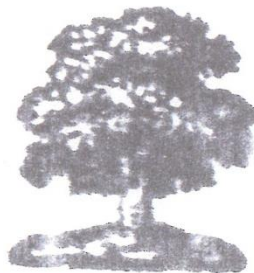
THE Farm of WHITEKNOW, part of the Estate of UPPER COURANCE, now called LAWERS, the parish of Kirkmichael, and county of Dumfries, as presently possessed, with some small alterations, by Alexander Aitken. The infield lands consist of about 70, and the outfield or pasture part of the Farm of about 120, acres, and they will be either separately or together, and for such period as may be agreed on.

The outfield part of the farm has already, including a small portion let on lease to a tenant, been surrounded by a substantial stone dyke on the east and north. On the west and south it is in progress of being surrounded by a similar fence, and the infield or arable part of the farm will be subdivided; and liberal encouragement will be given to a respectable and industrious tenant. There are two Dwelling Houses, and the Offices as suitable to the farm.

The outfield ground is peculiarly adapted to sheep pasture and the rearing of young cattle, and the infield to the present improved system of turnip husbandry. Entry at Candlemas and Whitsunday next, 1830.

For particulars, application may be made to PATRICK CAMPBELL, Esq. the Proprietor, or to Messrs. SHORTT and JOHNSTONE, Writers, Dumfries.

Lawers House, 28th Nov., 1829.



ROUP OF STOCK, FURNITURE, &c.

To be SOLD, by Public Roup, at LAWERS, formerly Courrance-hill of Kirkmichael, upon THURSDAY, the 11TH day of SEPTEMBER, 1834,

THE whole STOCK and CROP, belonging to P. CAM. BELL, Esq., consisting of Milk Cows, Calves, Swine, Carts, Ploughs, and other Utensils of Husbandry; an excellent Stanhope-Gig, London built, cost 96 guineas, almost as good as new, with set of harness; a quantity of Meadow and Ryegrass Hay of last and this year's growth; a small field of Oats in stool; about two acres of Potatoes, and about 100 cart load of Peats. Also, a variety of Articles of HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE, consisting of Mahogany, Dining, Breakfast, Tea, and Toilet Tables; Sideboard; Mahogany hair-cloth Sofa; Dining and Bed-room Chairs; several large Chimney Mirrors in gilt frames, one $47\frac{1}{2}$ by $57\frac{1}{2}$ inches; Bedstead and Bedding; Sofa; Bed and Curtains; Bason Stands; Carpets; Earthenware; China and Crystal; Mangle; and a variety of Kitchen Utensils. An excellent double-barreled percussion Gun, with a Mahogany case; and a single-barreled Gun, with a collection of historical and other popular Books.

The Roup to begin at 11 o'clock forenoon, and continue till all is sold off.

The usual credit given on bills with security.

Ad N^o 6

FEBRUARY 1882

There will be Exposed to Sale,

By Public Roup, in DOWELL'S ROOMS, 18 GEORGE STREET,
Edinburgh, on a day to be afterwards fixed,

THE LANDS of OVER-COURANCE, DUMFRIESSHIRE, extending to about 408 Acres, with MANSION HOUSE, OFFICES, &c, the Land being mostly in the Proprietor's hands. The Grouse and other Shooting is excellent, and is adjacent to the Preserved Lands of the Duke of Buccleuch and J. J. Hope Johnstone, Esq. of Annandale. A considerable part of the Price might remain unpaid for a term of years. Upset Price, £11,000.

Apply to Messrs GORDON & WHITELOW, Dumfries; or to Messrs TORRY & SYM, W.S., 13, Heriot Row, Edinburgh.

Ad. N^o 7

JUNE 1898

Property for Sale.

DUMFRIESSHIRE.

FOR SALE, BY PRIVATE BARGAIN.

THE Desirable RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY of OVER COURANCE, in the Parish of KIRK-MICHAEL, extending to about 408 Acres. The Mansion-House, which contains Three Public Rooms, Seven Bedrooms, and Servants' Accommodation, &c, is finely situated and commands extensive views. There is good Grouse and other Shooting, and Fishing is to be had in the neighbourhood. The Property is about 11 miles from Dumfries. The chief portion of it is Let in Two Farms. The amount of the Rental and Annual Value is about £340, and the Public Burdens are about £21.

Application may be made to Messrs GORDON & WHITELOW, Solicitors, Dumfries; or to Mr JOHN TORRY, Solicitor, 13 Heriot Row, Edinburgh, the latter of whom will exhibit the Title Deeds and receive Offers.

Edinburgh 17th June 1898

Locherby 4th January 1858

Capt. R. Stothard. Royal Engineers.

Dear Sir.

When your letter of the 1st arrived
was in Edinburgh otherwise I would have answered soon
I now beg to say that I still wish my house here named
on the Ordnance Survey Map. - Beechwood. As I fear my
hand-writing is not at all times very plain, I will, to
prevent a mistake write the name again as legibly as I
can on the next page

I beg to offer you every compliment of
the season, my dear Sir.

Ever sincerely yours.

R. B. Baird.

Beechwood

Courance 13th February 1858

Lt. Col James Royal Engineers.
O.S.O.

Sir.

I beg to bring to your recollection that it was lately determined to give this house the name of Beechwood on the Ordnance Map as as from particular circumstances I am now anxious, if it is not too late to take the name of Elstree instead of Beechwood. I take the liberty of asking you to oblige me by letting the former be substituted for the latter name, unless to do so would occasion too much trouble. In preferring this request, I am unsure that useful a course than that which I adopt would have been to have applied to Capt Stothard in Dumfries, but writing to that gentleman would occasion a day or two's delay which I was unwilling to incur on a case which I am afraid may already be too late and Capt Stothard may beside had so much trouble about the name of my house, that I was reluctant to ask him to write you again on the subject. I will write to him, or call on him in a few days to explain the course I have taken in taking the liberty of writing to you on this occasion.

In the meantime you may rest assured that "Elstree" is a name not borne, so far as I know by any house or property in the county. It is the name of a place a few miles from London, near Stanmore which belonged to the late Gen. R. Bruce of the East India Service.

and I ask the substitution of Elstree for Beechwood to gratify Mrs Baird's prediction for the former name which to prevent chance of mistake - in circumstances admit of my being allowed to - I will write below as plainly as I can.

I have the honour to be Sir,
Your most obedient servt.

R. B. Baird.

Elstree

Ordnance Survey Office. 16th February 1858.

Mr Baird has been informed that he will have the name of his house which he prefers on the Ordnance Survey Plan.

To :- Capt. Stothard. R.E.
at Dumfries.

Part Two

CHAPTER ONE

The cemetery at Gumerigg in the parish of Kirkmichael is dominated by a memorial to James Weir of Over Courance, his wife, and some of his family. The sheer size of the memorial compared with those that surround it leaves one with the impression that here was laid to rest members of a family who, by their own estimation at least, considered themselves of some importance and standing in the locality, and possibly farther afield. In modern parlance, James could be described as an industrialist, inventor and successful business entrepreneur, whose efforts, from humble beginnings, saw the birth and development of an engineering enterprise which eventually blossomed, about a century later, into what is today known as the Weir Group.

James Weir was born on a small farm near Airdrie, Lanarkshire, in 1842, the son of James Weir and his wife Jean Bishop. He was the third of four children. The family were by no means well off, and circumstances dictated that the farm would have to be given up when James senior died in 1850. The widowed mother removed, with her children, to No. 26 Scotland Road, Govan. From the Census of 1851 we learn that Jean, aged 39, had become a white seam worker and her family consisted of George, her 17 year old son, who was employed as a smith's apprentice, Elizabeth, aged 15, living at home, and James and Thomas, aged 8 and 6, who were scholars.

James received virtually all his academic education at the local school in Govan, but in 1857 at the age of 15 found work with the company of Hamilton and Grandison in Glasgow, where he performed a number of tasks relating to the various facets of the blacksmithing and engineering business. In 1860 he was taken on as an apprentice with Randolph, Elder & Co., engineers in Govan, and to raise the fee of 5/- per week required to train as an apprentice over a period of three years, his mother supplemented the family income by dressmaking and needlework. By this time George, the eldest son, now aged 26, had qualified as a ship's engineer, and was no doubt in a position to give some financial support to the family. Both James and his younger brother Thomas are described in the 1861 Census as Engine Smith Fitter Apprentice. The family home was now at 21 Cookson Street, Glasgow.

Whilst still serving his apprenticeship James Weir first showed his talent and skill as a future engineer when, aged 19, he invented and patented a marine governor. Arrangements were made between his Masters, Randolph, Elder & Co., and a more specialised company by the name of Smith, Bros. & Co. for James to oversee the construction of his invention in the latter's works, which, on completion and following trials, was first fitted to the SS Garland. The original prototype was exhibited by the Institute of Engineers and Shipbuilders in Scotland shortly afterwards.

Having qualified as an engineer, James Weir decided to go to sea, serving first in 1865 in the Sligo steamer "Liverpool" and then on the Bibby Line steamer "Arabian" that plied between Liverpool and the Eastern Mediterranean. In 1870 he was promoted to First Engineer and left the "Arabian" to join the "Oporto", whence he subsequently joined his brother George on the "Princess Royal", where George was already an engineer.

Late in 1870 George and James Weir decided to form a partnership as consulting engineers. The business, founded in 1871, was named G. and J. Weir Co. and based in Liverpool for the first two years. During this time a number of patents were taken out for "improvements to slide valves" and similar small engineering products. In 1873 the business was moved to Glasgow and in that year they developed and patented "Boiler feed auxiliaries for both land and marine service". By now the business had found its feet and was firmly established. 1874 saw the development of a piece of

equipment called a hydro-kineter, which used nozzle injectors to promote circulation in ships' engine boilers. This was followed between 1880 and 1886 by three major inventions.

The first was a device to use excess steam to heat the water-feed to the boilers and, at the same time, to remove air which contained various gaseous impurities, also minerals such as lime, and other mineral impurities which were minimised almost to extinction. This process reduced the constant need to descale boilers and pipe-work, and, in addition, having a pre-heated water supply reduced significantly the amount of coal a steamship used to produce boiling water.

The second invention was the development of an efficient pump for a hot-water feed, and the third was an evaporator for the distillation of sea-water.

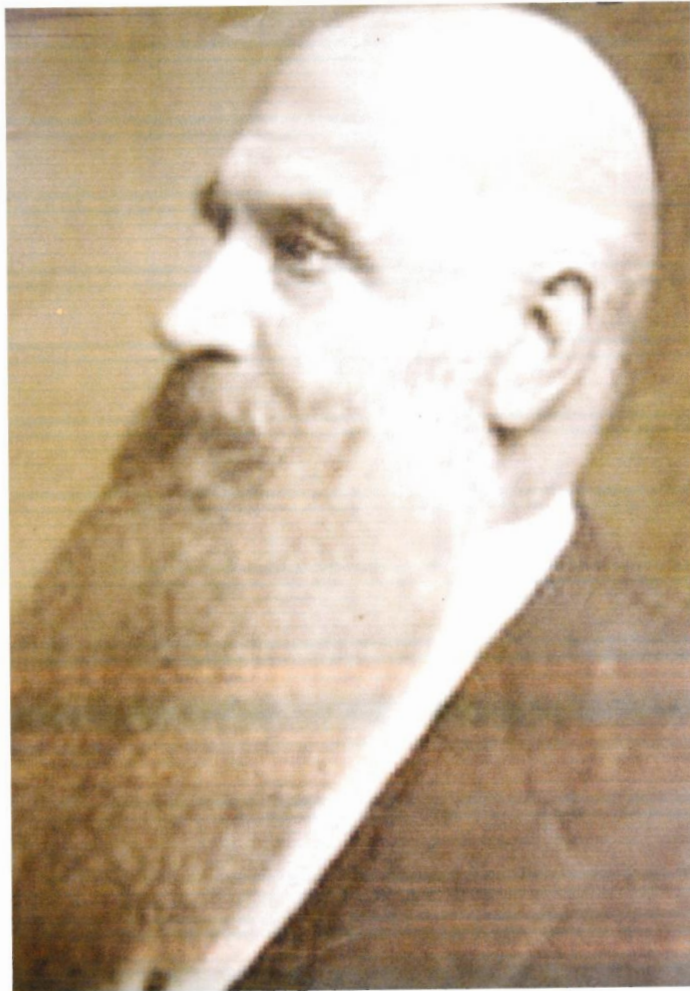
The success of these three inventions following closely one on another led to the brothers setting up the Holm Foundry at Cathcart. Initially the business operated from a single building employing about forty men, but then expanded to a series of large factories occupying nearly six acres, and by 1900 employing a workforce of about eight hundred men. From this point on the company went from strength to strength and continued to be highly profitable until the years of Depression which followed after the end of the Great War. The Weir brothers' inventions, however, remained in use until comparatively modern times.

In 1895 a serious disagreement arose between George and James, which led to the dissolution of the partnership with George selling his shares in the company. The original company of G. and J. Weir was replaced by the private company of G. and J. Weir Ltd. of Cathcart, Renfrewshire, with James, the major shareholder, being in absolute control of the organization. The new company had capital of £60,000 in £10 shares, and in the early years of the twentieth century James began to place responsibility for the day to day running of the business on his elder son William, who later became Lord Weir of Eastwood. In 1906 James semi-retired and purchased Over Courance, Kirkmichael, eventually handing over full control of his business affairs to his son in 1910.

With regard to the later history of the Weir company we learn that in 1904 they built three Darroq motor-cars to qualify as British-made in order to compete for the Gordon Bennet Cup. The company survived a few difficult years following the end of World War I but expanded again in the following decades. In 1970 G. and J. Weir was renamed Weir Pumps and included the Harland Engineering Co., Drysdale and Co. and Weir-Drysdale Services (London) which for a period of time was known as Weir Holdings. This then became the Weir Group, and within the last decade this Group has itself become part of an even larger consortium of businesses.

Before continuing with the story of James Weir as owner of Over Courance we turn the clock back to 1875 and follow his life's progress from fledgling industrialist to landed gentleman. On 3rd June 1875 James Weir married, at Crosshouse, Ayrshire, the 27 year old widow Mary Douglas Richmond (1848-1931). She was already the mother of a son, John Richie Richmond (1869-1943), and by her new husband she had two sons and two daughters. The elder son was born in 1877 and named William. He took over his father's interests in 1910 and was destined to rise to a position of power and responsibility, not only in business but also in politics. He was knighted in 1917 and created a baron in the same year. In 1938 he was advanced to Viscount Weir of Eastwood. His is a remarkable life story, although with few connections to Kirkmichael of great interest.

Mary Richmond, nee Douglas, was the daughter of William Douglas, Kilmaurs (1814-1874) and Janet Hopkins, born c. 1814. She was apparently well provided for financially. Of her first husband's status and financial position little has been discovered, but following his death his widow, Mary, was left in possession of considerable wealth. It is generally supposed that it was her money that, in 1895, when the private business of G. and J. Weir, Cathcart was founded immediately put the business on a sound financial footing.



JAMES WEIR ESQ.



THE NEW MANSION OF OVER COURANCE
c 1910.

that, in 1895, when the private business of G. and J. Weir, Cathcart was founded immediately put the business on a sound financial footing.

From the time of his marriage James Weir's life became one of ever improving circumstances. In 1891 we find him living in considerable comfort at Silverbank Villa, Wellshot Hill, Cambuslang. The household was made up of his wife, his twenty-two year old stepson, and children William aged 13, Janet 10, Mary 7 and James aged 3. They also employed one house servant.

Ten years later the family had moved to St. Andrew's Drive, Holmwod, where the number of servants in the house had increased to three. Following this upward trend in society it should not come as anything of a surprise to find James Weir contemplating the lifestyle of a landed country gentleman. That step, as we shall see, was not so easily accomplished as he had perhaps first envisaged. In Edwardian Scotland, as was the case with much of the rest of the country, society was still divided between those who came by land and property through inheritance and those who paid for it with the profits derived from trade.

CHAPTER TWO

In the closing months of 1905 James Weir made the decision to semi-retire as proprietor and chairman of G and J Weir, Ltd., Cathcart, handing over much of the responsibility to his eldest son William. Having overseen the development and success of his business, and having, during this time, amassed a considerable amount of wealth, his great desire now was to acquire an estate and live the life of a country gentleman. It was brought to his notice that the 408 acre property of Over Courance, Kirkmichael was shortly to be put on the market. In his typical way of doing business, he immediately opened private negotiations as to its purchase with the vendor, Samuel Farish. thereby preventing any inconvenience of having to go through the process of a Public Roup. On 31st May 1906 Over Courance became the property of James Weir.

The morning of July 6th 1906 was not unlike any other morning on the farm of Mollin, a property on the estate of Raehills owned by Mr. J. J. Hope Johnstone and marching with Over Courance, but the events that were about to unfold that day would culminate with a court case for assault and a further protracted series of court proceedings that took almost four years to settle. David Scott, the tenant farmer at Mollin, had as usual that morning instructed his men regarding their duties for the day. To Robert Anderson, a long-serving ploughman and general farm servant, he gave orders to take a reaping machine to the blacksmith at Garrel Smithy to carry out necessary repairs. Transport for this piece of machinery to be provided by one of Scot's several carts drawn by a single horse.

From Mollin Farm to Garrel Smithy there is a choice of routes. The longer way lies from the farm, following a track which includes a steep incline along the western edge of the Raehills Estate, emerging eventually on the Dumfries to Moffat road not far from St. Ann's Bridge. Turning right here and proceeding towards Dumfries for almost two miles, a fork to the left brings one to Garrel Smithy in about a quarter of a mile. Total distance: about two and a quarter miles.

The shorter way was to leave Mollin and cross two small fields to a gate in the march wall between the estates of Raehills and Over Courance. On passing through this gate and crossing an undeveloped stretch of moorland on Whiteknowes Hill a connection was made with a well-

maintained track which led past the Over Courance properties of Whiteknowes, Pheasantfield and Over Courance House itself, and so down the drive to the Dumfries – Moffat road, where, by turning left and travelling perhaps three hundred yards to a right turn, Garrel Smithy is reached in about a quarter of a mile. Total distance: about one and a half miles.

Not surprisingly, Robert Anderson took the shorter way and there was nothing unusual about his choice of route. As was later to be stated in court, inhabitants of that part of Raehills estate had used this roadway from time immemorial; therefore Anderson was simply using what he considered the normal and obviously most convenient route to the smithy.

Having delivered the reaping machine and, no doubt, gathered the latest news from the blacksmith, always a good source of local intelligence, Robert Anderson began his return journey to Mollin by the same route that he had used earlier, on;ly this time he was able to ride on the farm cart, driving his horse before him. As he approached the new, partly-built mansion house of Over Courance he encountered Mr. Weir, who refused to let him pass and told him to tell Mr. Scott, Anderson's employer, that the road was now stopped. Anderson politely asked Weir if he could "have a line" to that effect to give to Mr. Scott. Weir gave no direct answer to this request but said if he came any closer to the building he would "turn him". Anderson ignored the order and moved his horse and cart forward. "Either turn or go to jail" yelled Weir, and, catching hold of the offside rein, attempted to pull the horse and cart sharply to the right-hand side where a pile of bricks was lying. Anderson, fearing the cart was about to overturn, leapt from his seat and seized the other rein, i.e. the nearside one, in an effort to straighten up both horse and cart. Weir, now totally infuriated, grabbed Anderson by the waistcoat and pulled him about, pulling two buttons off it in the process. Letting go, Weir demanded the horse should be unyoked and Anderson should go on with it, but would not allow him to move the cart. Anderson refused. On having his orders refused Weir's fury knew no bounds, and, raising the walking stick he was carrying, aimed a blow at Anderson's head, but quick action by Anderson in raising his arm above his head took the blow between forefinger and thumb. Weir struck again, this time striking the back of Anderson's hand. Both these blow caused severe bruising and incapacity of the hand for some considerable time, it was later claimed in court.

By now two of Weir's employees, William Dallas, foreman joiner of Burranig and William Kirk, mason had arrived on the scene and Weir instructed them to go to the Whiteknowes/Mollin march and secure the gate between the properties, which they proceeded to do. In the meantime Anderson had no choice but to un-hitch his horse from the shafts and walk with it to Mollin, At the march gate he found Weir's men had got there first and nailed it to the gatepost. Leaving he horse in the care of a boy he continued his journey to Mollin across two small fields to report the matter to David Scott. Scott and Anderson then returned to the nailed-up gate with tools and opened it up again to bring the horse home.

Robert Anderson's next move was to report the incident to Constabl;e Johnstone, the policeman at Burrance Bridge. (At this time the Parish of Kirkmichael had a resident policeman who lived in a cottage there, taken by the County Police for their constable.)

Constable Johnstone took down Anderson's statement and submitted his report to his superiors in Dumfries, and from there it found its way to the office of the Procurator Fiscal. At this point it became apparent that some four months previous to this incident the Parish Council of Kirkmichael had submitted to the District Committee of the County Council a request as to whether or not there existed a right of driving livestock – a drove road in other words – from the Edinburgh road to various places on the hill and muirland beyond Mollin via Over Courance, Pheasantfield and Whiteknowes. There can be no doubt that this request by the Parish Council of Kirkmichael was

instigated by James Weir, who must have done so within days of securing the property, if close attention is paid to the dates stated in the Minutes of the Parish Council. As a responsible body, the Parish Council was simply fulfilling its duty by submitting the request to the District Committee. The upshot of this legal investigation resulted in an instruction from Sheriff Campion that the matter of the right of way was sub judice and consequently no reference to it could be made as part of the case of assault which Robert Anderson now wished to pursue in court. In addition, the Sheriff pointed out that there was another matter which was NOT sub judice, and that question was raised by David Scott, tenant of Mollin, which was not on the estate of Over Courance but on that of the adjoining estate of Raehills, property of Mr. Hope Johnstone, that being a question as to whether he (Scott) was not entitled to obtain access by the road to Mollin for VEHICULAR traffic.

This, then, was how the matter stood when the case came before the Court on October 15th 1906, Mr. John Hyslop, solicitor, acting on behalf of the Pursuer, Robert Anderson, and Mr. McDonald WS for the Defendant James Weir. The charge stated that Robert Anderson, ploughman, Mollin sued James Weir, proprietor of Over Courance for the sum of £5 as compensation for having assaulted him on July 6th last. This sounds a very small sum, but in 1906 it was equivalent to £ in today's value.

Mr. McDonald addressed the Court first, saying that since Mr. Weir purchased the property of Over Courance he had erected a new mansion-house right across the road, and in doing so had admittedly rendered it impossible for vehicles to get beyond the place where the house stood. The defence he would put forward on behalf of Mr. Weir was that although the damages claimed were altogether excessive he admitted that a technical assault was committed, but he justified it on the grounds of self-protection, he having countered a risk in defence of his property.

David Scott, tenant farmer at Mollin, was then called, and he stated that Anderson came home without either horse or cart in a very excited state, with his hand swollen and black and blue. They both went back to the gate in the march fence, and sent another man back to Over Courance to yoke the cart and bring it home, which he did without further interference. Mr. McDonald then proceeded with his cross-examination of Mr. Scott. When asked did he often use this track Scott replied there was a regular track to Mollin and he had used it constantly. Producing the OS map, Mr. McDonald asked "Can you explain why it is not shown on maps?" to which Scott replied "It is shown on maps. I could show you a map on which it is marked 'Road to Mollin' and also footpaths. I have used it and others have done so for a hundred years before me".

Asked about an interview Scott had with Weir on the afternoon of July 6th, Scott stated that he had indeed spoken with Weir on that occasion. "And did you apologise for the incident?" queried McDonald. "I did not", replied Scott, "I thought it was his place to apologise to me". McDonald then asked Scott "Had you your dinner?" to which he received the reply "Yes, Mr. Weir gave me my dinner and offered me the bottle of whisky too, but I wadna tak it."

Next Mr. Hyslop rose to state the case for the Pursuer Robert Anderson, and he repeated the events as has already been described. Cross-examined by Mr. McDonald, Anderson denied having driven the horse against Mr. Weir and said there was plenty of room for him to step aside. Asked now by Mr. Hyslop to continue his account of events, Anderson stated that a day after the incident Constable Johnstone contacted him and told him that Mr. Weir wanted to see him. He went down to Over Courance and Mr; Weir talked to him for about half an hour about the road but never gave him any chance to reply. Eventually Anderson said "We must come to business" to which Mr. Weir replied "Yes" and held out a sovereign saying "That's for yourself". Anderson replied "No, that won't do for me" to which Mr. Weir responded "Clear out of this then, you'll get nothing from me, and mind you will have to pay your own Court expenses." Asked if he knew what the sovereign

was for, Anderson said he thought it might be to get him to stop the Police proceeding with the case. Mr. McDonald:- “You were in no position to do that”.

Anderson:- “I did not know; he did not say what the sovereign was for or allow me any time to explain. If he had given a public apology in the paper at that time there might have been no more said about it.”

Mr. Hyslop then cross-examined James Weir, and, on being pressed, Weir had to admit that Anderson had no alternative but to go over the tramway beside the house to the east as the old road had now been built over, unless he deviated into the field on the other side of the house (the east side). Mr., Weir also admitted having received a letter from Mr. Hyslop dated 26th September 1906 on the subject and replying in these terms: “If the Anderson you refer to is the man who was on my property on July 6th and assaulted me I have nothing to do with his injured feelings.”

Sheriff Campion then summed up. “We are not concerned here with the right of way,” he began, “and although in my opinion the Pursuer was not very seriously injured the law does not permit of a man being assaulted and beaten with a stick with impunity by any Defender who happens to think he had a grievance and lose his temper. Therefore, under the circumstances there must be an amount of damages which marks the sense of disapproval of the conduct of the Defender. I therefore find for the Pursuer and award same £3 of damages and expenses amounting to £2 13s 3d.”

CHAPTER THREE

James Weir must have been incandescent at the findings of the Court and the judgment handed down by the Sheriff. With time to reflect on the decision he might well have seen this incident as the loss of an opening skirmish, but the real battle was about to commence. Here was a man who, probably for the first time in his adult life and certainly since becoming Chairman of the Board of Directors of the family business, had seen his orders disregarded and his authority questioned. Employing about eight hundred men in 1906, to be beaten in Court by a mere farm servant must indeed have been a bitter pill to swallow.

By his attitude and actions over the assault on Robert Anderson one is quickly brought to the conclusion that from the moment James Weir purchased Over Courance his intention was to close down all access to his property to what he undoubtedly considered trespassers on his land. Before the assault case came before the Court it will be remembered he had already made enquiries through the Parish Council concerning rights of way and, as Sheriff Campion pointed out, no reference to this sub judice matter could be used in the case of assault on Robert Anderson. With this case now behind him, Weir renewed his efforts to secure his property from unwanted people.

The problem seems to have centred on the fact that the road in question was not defined as strictly a ‘drove road’ but rather a ‘servitude road’, and the question arose, did the term ‘servitude’ allow the passage of not only foot-people and stock but also wheeled wagons, carts, carriages, etc. Had it been a straightforward case of being a ‘drove road’ there would never be any doubt as to its status.

Throughout the closing months of 1906 the new mansion house of Over Courance was nearing completion, and during this period the local people who habitually used the road between the

Raehills Estate and the Moffat – Dumfries road continued to do so without interruption, despite the fact that they had no choice but to pass within feet of the Over Courance front door, as the house had been built completely across the old road. Needless to say, James Weir found this intrusion intolerable and he determined to put a stop to it without delay.

His solution was to instruct his men to dig trenches across the road in the proximity of the house for the purpose of drainage, as he later claimed in Court, but of course by doing so he made it impossible to drive a horse or a horse drawing any sort of wheeled vehicle along the road. Word of these excavations soon reached the ears of David Scott at Mollin Farm, who, with Robert Anderson and other members of the farm workforce, promptly back-filled the trenches during the night. On two further occasions the trenches were re-opened, only to be re-filled by Scott and his men. Consequently work on the completion of the mansion house ground to a halt, and in April 1907 James Weir sought through the Court an interdict against “David Scott, farmer of Mollin, from entering and thereby trespassing over the land immediately to the north east of the mansion house”. The terms of the interdict which was laid before Lord Ardwell in the Bill Chamber on Monday 24th April 1907 were as follows.

“Mr. James Weir of Over Courance, complainer, against David Scott, farmer of Mollin, respondent, for the purpose of which was to interdict the respondent from trespassing upon Over Courance, and was also asked against the respondent to prevent him and others from filling up or otherwise interfering with or altering trenches cut or to be cut by the complainer within the lands and also thirdly from cutting or destroying wires laid or to be laid or where fences or other fences were to be erected by the complainer within his lands and finally also from engaging in any operation upon the solum of the lands or buildings and the works or improvements constructed on his lands.”

James Weir was then asked for his statement of facts and gave his version of the digging of drainage and sewerage trenches and the refilling of the same by David Scott and the men with him unknown to James Weir. With regard to the cutting of wire James Weir stated that upon obtaining possession of the estate he planted a plantation of young trees at a point immediately to the north end of the mansion house and surrounded the same with a wire fence. The respondent (Scott) upon one or more of his unlawful entries had cut and destroyed a considerable portion of the fence. Owing to these actions the complainer was unable to complete the mansion house so as to allow of his inhabiting it and otherwise interfered with the reasonable enjoyment of his property. On the 30th March 1907 James Weir had through his law-agents, written to David Scott asking him to give an undertaking not to interfere with the building operations, but the respondent had refused to give any such undertaking, and thus the present action had been considered necessary.

It was now the turn of David Scott, who in his statement confirmed his farm of Mollin was a part of the Raehills estate which adjoins that of James Weir in the north east. He went on to say that after James Weir obtained possession of Over Courance at Whitsunday 1906 he demolished the old mansion house, which did not interfere with the road in question and then proceeded to build a new house on a site slightly farther to the east that extended over the old road, which house is now completed. Scott went on to say that from time immemorial and at least for the past forty years prior to the building of the new house the proprietors of Mollin by themselves or their tenants and others had enjoyed peaceably and without interruption a servitude of way for all kinds of traffic from Mollin by way of Whiteknowes, Elstree or Over Courance as now called, “to the public road between Dumfries and Moffat as of right under his lease for all purposes and his direct road to the Smithy and Post Office which were both close to where the road emerges on to the public road and

is about two miles shorter than the other access to his farm to any place west of where the disputed road emerges”.

Scott denied Weir’s statement about the opening of the trenches and stated that in December James Weir caused a trench to be cut across the road which prevented him from using the road for his carts in exercise of his servitude rights. Scott further claimed the trench did not appear to be connected in any way with the drainage system of the new mansion which in any case was almost completed. He admitted that he re-filled the trenches “on three occasions which was about 3rd January. With regard to the cutting of the wire and removal of trees, Scott admitted that he did so but only removed a small portion, that portion being the part that caused an obstruction to the servitude road”.

Having now had statements from both sides, Lord Ardwall passed his findings to Lord Low, who on April 6th granted Interim Interdict to James Weir until a full trial of the facts came before the Courts, when the rights of both parties would be determined.

It was the 24th January 1909, about nine months after the imposing of the Interdict, that the case next came to Court, and during this period some sort of uneasy truce held between James Weir and David Scott. In the Outer House of the Court of Session it was Lord Johnston who was appointed to “here proof in the right of way case at the instance of John James Hope-Johnstone of Annandale, proprietor of the farm of Mollin against James Weir, Esq. of Over Courance and Burrance, Kirkmichael”. In September 1907 James Weir purchased from the Duke of Buccleuch the neighbouring farm of Burrance, thereby increasing the amount of land he owned to about 1,630 acres. The Pursuer, J. J. Hope-Johnstone, was represented by Mr. John Wilson, KC and Mr. Hann, whilst the Defender James Weir’s counsel was Dean of Faculty Mr. Scott Dickson KC and Mr. Moncrieff.

Mr. William Carter CE (Chartered Engineer) Edinburgh was the first person to be called to make a report, following a visit he had made to the ground at Over Courance on 10th December 1908. To understand fully the details contained in his report it would seem best to repeat what he had to say verbatim, with the addition of one or two explanatory notes where appropriate. Reference should also be made to the map which will help to clarify the actual positions of places mentioned in Carter’s evidence. He confirmed the accuracy of the plans produced showing the right of way in question, and that it led from Mollin Farm, the property of J J Hope Johnstone, Esq., through the grounds of Over Courance, past the mansion house of that name to the public road from Moffat to Dumfries, about 11 miles from Dumfries, a milestone situated at the Over Courance servitude road end confirming this. He further confirmed that the old buildings were all to the west of the servitude road and that Mr. James Weir had placed his new house on the top of that road. The servitude road had a carriageway of sixteen feet, leaving a slight margin on each side. There was a loop road leaving the servitude road at right angles which proceeded a short distance to the south of the mansion house, again connecting with the servitude road. This loop road was only ten feet wide of carriageway and rather less in places, and its object was to give access to offices behind and to the west of the mansion house. Mr. Carter then made reference to a letter written in July 1908 by Mr. Weir’s agents that the road round the west of the house went through his garden. This, Mr. Carter stated, was not an accurate statement. The only thing that would justify a reference to a garden was the presence of a few rows of cabbages and some currant bushes. These, he noted, were all planted in a narrow strip between the ten foot carriageway and the wall. The gradient of the old servitude road was 1 in 14 at its southernmost point and ran more or less consistently at this gradient for a considerable portion of the way, barring a short nip of 1 in 9 near Pheasantfield; there were also flatter stretches towards the approach to Whiteknowes. Whoever laid out this road, Carter

continued, had done so to the best advantage. It was carried along a ridge, which offered adequate drainage.

James Weir's agents had, under his instructions, submitted plans for a substitute road, which was to run along the line of the Burn a considerable way but then showed a gradient of 1 in 8 for three hundred yards and, in Carter's opinion, this was "an exceedingly heavy gradient for a loaded horse. There were short lengths much steeper, for instance 1 in 6, 7 and 8, and at these parts no consideration was given for the opportunity for a horse to rest, and the width of the proposed carriageway was nine feet, which meant two carts could not meet and pass".

Mr. Weir's law agent, the Dean of Faculty: "I may at once say that the proposed road has not been completed pending the issue of this case, but my client has incurred great expense in the initial forming of the road."

Mr. Carter: "There is no indication of that on the ground."

Dean of Faculty: "Is it possible to improve the gradient on the proposed line?"

Mr. Carter: "No. Not without anything like a reasonable expenditure of money. To improve the gradient an oblique line would be taken from the Gill Cottage to Pheasantfield, a distance of 666 yards. That would give a gradient of 1 in 12. Taking a line most approximating the old servitude road would give a road passing close to the east side of the new mansion house. That road would be out of sight of the ground floor windows and sixty feet from the east face of the house. That road could be accomplished with comparatively little expense. The present existing loop road could be used for giving access to Mr. Weir's cottages and the gradient of it could be improved. The right angle junction with the old servitude road could be improved. While I was on the ground on the 16th January, my second visit, I saw a cart of coals going to Over Courance. They were taken by the original servitude road. It would have been impossible to have taken that load by Mr. Weir's proposed substitute road. By the old servitude road the distance from Garrel Smithy to Mollin Farm is 3,633 yards, and by St. Ann's Bridge 5,870 yards and by the Pleasance Gate 880 yards longer than the servitude road.

"The proposed servitude road would be absolutely useless for farm traffic to Mollin Farm, prohibitive for traffic going up and dangerous for traffic coming down. That is my opinion if the road were put into thoroughly good order. I noted that the original servitude road had the appearance of having been rolled and to do so was quite practicable. It would not be at all practicable to roll the substitute road."

Dean of Faculty: "This is a large mansion house at Over Courance. You don't seriously suggest that a cart road should be placed right across the main elevation of the house at only some sixty feet distant?"

Mr. Carter: "I say frankly I would not like it myself."

Dean of Faculty: "Do you admit it would not be reasonable?"

Mr. Carter: "No. I merely mention it as the best plan from an engineering point of view."

The Dean of Faculty now cross examined Mr. Carter at length with regard to the gradients at different parts of the existing and proposed roads and asked: "Is it not the case that heavy traffic goes up the Mount in Edinburgh with a gradient of 1 in 12?"

Mr. Carter: "Yes, but you cannot compare the proposed substitute road with the Mount. On Mr. Weir's proposed road there are bad turns and it is narrow, so narrow that three horses abreast could not be used. At present you could take an ordinary cartload of about one ton over the whole length of the servitude road which, as I have stated, is kept rolled. It would be impossible to roll a road with a gradient of 1 in 8 such as the substitute road."

Dean of Faculty: "Could it not be done with a horse roller?"

Mr. Carter: "Yes, and kill a dozen horses in the process!"

Dean of Faculty: "Oh! I don't think so!"

Here the examination of Mr. Carter's oral report ended.

At this point Mr. Harold Scholar Hogg, Chief Engineer of Glasgow, who had accompanied Mr. Carter on his visits, corroborated all of Mr. Carter's observations and calculations, and went on to say that the substitute road offered was not good enough. It would take many hundreds of pounds to improve the gradient. To make a gradient of 1 in 14 a fifty foot bank would be required. Further evidence was provided by Andrew Wilson, Chartered Surveyor, another of Mr. Carter's assistants, and Charles Hay, Architect in Dumfries, gave evidence regarding the levels of the various roads.

Mr. Hay stated that where the road left the enclosed ground at Whiteknowes it ran over open moor to the Mollin march wall, the gradient being an easy one generally except for a length of twenty-eight feet which was 1 in 8. He noted that in places the road was somewhat marshy but these places had been regularly made up with cartloads of stone and continued to be so. Speaking of the servitude road in general, he said it had plenty of width and places where a horse could rest. He considered the road to Mollin a good farm road throughout. On cross examination, he stated that the substitute road showed gradients as steep as 1 in 6 for a distance of 274 yards between the Garrel Burn and Pheasantfield. He had experience in the making of avenues and public roads, and considered the proposed substitute road totally unsuitable.

Next to give evidence was William Barrowman, carting contractor in Moffat. On being questioned as to his qualification to give an opinion on the matter, he said: "I have many years' experience of some of the most hilly roads in Dumfriesshire in my occupation as carter. I do not consider the proposed substitute road as satisfactory. It is on a steep slope and any efforts to improve the gradients would produce a deep cutting which would be apt to fill with snow. I have often carted lime to Whiteknowes up the old service road and on the 17th September 1908 I carted bricks, cement and fire grates to the new mansion house. In November I carted a furniture van to Over Courance; it weighed over four tons and I used three horses. The road to Mollin is a good one, in good repair throughout the year and the gradients are light".

Andrew Kirkpatrick, County Valuer and farmer of Longbridgemuir, Ruthwell, stated he examined the roads in question on the 7th January 1909 and came to the conclusion that the proposed substitute road was not a reasonable road in place of the old servitude road. Neither was the proposed road satisfactory for children going to school at Garrel as it ran too close to the burnside. At times of flood it constituted not only an inconvenience but also an unacceptable degree of danger.

Andrew Kirkpatrick was followed into the witness box by Samuel Thomas Farish of Allan Bank, Dumfries. Farish was the person from whom Weir had purchased Over Courance in 1906, and as such was able to throw a great deal of light on the matter of rights of way over the estate. He was also one of the most respected parishioners in Kirkmichael. Born at Kirkland Farm in 1855, his father and grandfather had farmed the property as tenants of the Duke of Buccleuch since the 1790s, when David Farish moved there from Bankhead of Tinwald. Kirkland was a large farm of more than 2,000 acres, about 700 of pasture and arable with the remainder being hill grazing, (the upland part being now entirely covered by part of Ae Forest).

Samuel Farish had been thoroughly involved with parish affairs throughout his life. He served on the Parish Council, the School Board, and his name is associated with practically every other activity that took place within the parish of Kirkmichael. In 1900 he made the decision to semi-retire, and on the 5th July 1900 he purchased from one Robert Baird the 408 acres that comprised the estate of Over Courance for £7,000. Here he continued to farm in a smaller way until the Spring of 1906, when he finally retired, firstly to Elm Bank, Annan and then to Allan Bank Dumfries in 1908.

Giving evidence, he stated: "I was born in the parish of Kirkmichael and lived there for most of my life. I purchased Over Courance in 1900 but sold a small portion of it to Messrs. Seaton Wightman of Courance, and in 1906 sold the remainder to Mr. Weir. Mr. Weir purchased from the Duke of Buccleuch in September 1907 the neighbouring farm of Burrance and had access made through the march wall for the continuance of farming the conjoined properties.

"The road leading to the farm of Mollin passed the front of the old house and I know that that road was regularly used by cart traffic in the district. I have often seen David Scott, tenant of Mollin, or any of his farm-servants drawing carts up and down that road and it is also used by all the cadgers, and was particularly of use to anyone from Mollin wishing to go to Garrel Smithy. In 1905 I accompanied Mr. Weir over the property and told him distinctly that there was a right of way leading to Mollin Farm. I sold my property to Mr. Weir in the office of my solicitor, Mr. Symons in Dumfries, and on that occasion Mr. Symons distinctly asked Mr. Weir to remember that there was a right of way there. Mr. Weir replied 'I'll make that all right'. After the purchase was completed I discovered that Mr. Weir was preparing to build a new house and that it would encroach upon the road. I spoke to Mr. Weir about it and again he said 'I'll make it all right with the County Council'. Mr. Weir made light of the matter. Mr. Weir then asked me 'Who keeps the road up?' and I told him I did from the Edinburgh road to Over Courance House, and the District Council gave me the free use of the road-roller seeing that it was a right of way. I left Over Courance on 31st May 1906, and by that time Mr. Weir had begun to demolish the old buildings. On one occasion while I was away the roof was taken off the stable."

The next person to be called was Donald McLeod, an architect from Nottingham, who had formerly been in the employ of Mr. Weir in Glasgow and left his position there in 1907. He stated: "I prepared the plans for the new house from drawings and designs submitted to me from Mr. Weir. Originally the proposed site of the house was not nearly so far onto the public road, but at Mr. Weir's insistence it was moved to where it is now actually placed. During the construction of the house I had lodgings for some time with Mrs. Gracie at Sheilburn. She and also others told me that the road had been used as a cart-road for over fifty years. I mentioned these facts to Mr. Weir but he made light of the matter. He said 'I'll give them another road' and also made reference to the interference with the road being first challenged in August when an incident took place which resulted in a charge of assault in the Sheriff Courts."

Samual Farish's solicitor, John Symons of Symons and Macdonald, writers, Dumfries, was next to be called, and stated: "On the day or the sale in my office I called Mr. Weir's attention to the fact that all parties were taken to have satisfied themselves as to servitudes, and made special reference to the alleged right of way passing through Over Courance. To this Mr. Weir replied 'I'll get that put right with the County Council. The matter comes before the District Committee and an agreement was come to as to the solum of (and I quote) "the new drove road and footpath" and it was stated at that conference that the sub-committee of the District Council would not take anything to do with the question of vehicular traffic. Mr. Murray and Mr. Primrose, representing Mr. Hope Johnstone, rose and left the meeting."

In cross-examination John Symons said Mr. Weir had shown himself quite willing to meet the views of the District Committee and the public, but he never conceded the cart-road, and at the conference Dr. Gillespie, the Chairman, said the Committee would have nothing to do with the question of vehicular traffic and would confine themselves only to the question of the drove road.

John Primrose of Primrose and Gordon, solicitors, gave evidence confirming there was a district road as far as Whiteknowes on the estate of Over Courance and from there on there was a clearly defined and well-used track to Mr. Hope Johnstone's property of Mollin.

William Gabriel G. Murray of Hillside, Lockerbie, factor for Mr. Hope Johnstone, denied when asked that he had ever given up the right of way in question. "I said to Mr. Weir" he continued, that neither he nor Mr. Hope Johnstone desired to create a right of way where there was none but they intended to maintain the right of way they had. Mr. Weir asked "Will I shut this one up then?" to which I replied "You can do what you like, we will knock it down till a Court of Law decides that we have no right to the existing right of way. I do not consider that it is reasonable for Mr. Scott our tenant to be deprived of the right to this road." At this point the proceedings came to an end for the day.

CHAPTER FOUR

The next sitting of the Court, before Lord Johnstone, did not take place until early June 1909, and it was the turn of Mr. Moncrieff, KC to speak on behalf of the defender, James Weir.

Mr. Moncrieff: "If the proposed line put forward by Mr. Carter is followed it would take the road through the orchard of fruit trees, several of which would have to be removed, and my client objects to this disruption most emphatically." In reply, Lord Johnstone said: "That is an objection I could not consider." His Lordship then went on to consider the position as it stood at that moment in time and said he needed to consult further with Mr. Carter before coming to any decision.

Questioned by Mr. Moncrieff, Mr. Wilson, on behalf of Mr. Hope Johnstone, reiterated that the road selected by Mr. Carter was very satisfactory as to its existing purpose and that the gradients were more favourable. Mr. Moncrieff then asked: "Do you have any idea how much this proposed road of yours will cost?" Mr. Wilson: "Not more than £150; my client does not even pretend to claim the very best surface to a substitute is required." Lord Johnstone intervened: "I could not attribute pretence to Mr. Hope Johnstone at any time,"

Four days later, Friday 15th June 1909, the Court of Session again sat, Lord Johnstone again presiding. In an opening statement he said that after remitting the matter again to Mr. Carter he had had the opportunity of fully considering the situation, and he had come to the conclusion that he felt himself obliged to reject Mr. Weir's proposals and to adhere to Mr. Carter's report and proposal with one slight modification, and that was that the proposed road would necessitate the removal of certain fruit trees. That work, he said, should be done at the proper season, giving time for Mr. Weir to harvest any crops of fruit. In view of this he thought that the matters should remain as they were until October. In all other respects he held that the road should run on the lines proposed by Mr. Carter and be of the breadth suggested by him until it reached a point which His Lordship would leave to the engineer to fix but would be to the north west or rear of the mansion house and offices. The road would access in the first place to the offices, to where there must be considerable coal cartage judging by statements made by Mr. Weir himself, and therefore to his advantage and not his inconvenience. He thought that having passed the point of access to the offices it did not necessarily need to be the full breadth of eighteen foot and that, having passed that point, ten foot would be sufficient.

Counsel then addressed His Lordship on the question of expenses and the Pursuer, Mr. Hope Johnstone, was found entitled to expenses.

could be forgiven for thinking the time had come to throw in the towel, but James Weir had no intention of doing any such thing.

Instead he now sought to dispute the right of way to Mollin Farm over the approach that lay over the open muirland of Whiteknowes Hill from a point where the existing road left the enclosed land of Whiteknowes to where it entered, via the gate in the march wall that enclosed the lands of Mollin on the neighbouring estate of Raehills. There was no single well-defined road to Mollin over this muir ground and much depended on the state of the moor's surface at any given time. As has been noted previously, cartloads of stone were placed from time to time in the wettest places, but nevertheless the actual road remained undefined.

The existing approach to this muirland through the enclosed land of Whiteknowes was the continuation of the servitude road from a point a few yards short of Whiteknowes Farmhouse garden where it took a sharp left turn and continued in a westerly direction for about a quarter of a mile where a gate in the wall gave access to the hill. On a map of the estate produced along with the sale particulars in 1835 this line is clearly shown and was in regular use. For some reason, for which it is difficult to find an explanation, James Weir claimed the road should, from the point where it deviated to the left (or west), continue straight on, past the house, steading and stackyard, and then, slightly bending to the left follow a line more or less parallel with the Mollin Burn until a gate to the muirland of Whiteknowes Hill was reached, and he further claimed that this route was marked on a map and was therefore the line that should be followed. The accompanying OS map clearly shows the various routes under discussion. James Weir appears to have entered discussions with Mr. Hope Johnstone and it was agreed, possibly in an attempt to avoid yet another court case, that Mr. William Carter, Civil Engineer, should make an inspection of the ground and produce a report on his findings. In due course Mr. Carter produced his report in which he stated that on examining the line preferred by Mr. Weir he found that it represented a line on which there was no indication of actual vehicular traffic and in fact it was no more than a footpath. (It is indeed marked as such on modern OS maps.) Mr. James Weir chose not to accept Mr. Carter's findings and insisted that his preferred line should be followed, but Mr. Hope Johnstone argued that the line to be followed was the continuation of the cart-road as Mr. Carter found it to exist on his examination.

The inevitable appeal to the Courts was the only way to solve the matter, and in early March 1910 the dispute came before the Lord Ordinary, Lord Skerrington, in the Court of Session, the upshot of which was that he issued instructions to Mr. William Carter to lay out the road on the line of the existing one. To this James Weir's counsel objected on the grounds that His Lordship's decision was taken "without statutory sessions of the Court and upon one-sided evidence". The objection was overruled on the grounds that if Mr. Weir's preferred line was followed Mr. Hope Johnstone would be deprived of the use of the whole road as much of the plan-line was over soft and boggy ground. Yet again Mr. Weir was thwarted and found liable for expenses. Finally a joint-minute was drawn up in which at last Mr. Weir agreed to give the line over the hill-road desired by Mr. Hope Johnstone, and that on the other hand Mr. Hope Johnstone agreed to accept the newly constructed road around the west side of the mansion was "satisfactory and sufficient". The last mention of the dispute was made before Lord Cullen, presiding over the Court of Session in July 1910, when Mr. Moncrieff KC for James Weir craved His Lordship's approval of a final report laid down by Mr. Carter CE, and after some discussion on minor points His Lordship gave his approval.

William A. Carter's report:

"In obedience made to me by Lord Johnstone in 1908-9 and in accordance with agreement made by the parties in this case, I have examined the ground laid out, the roads in question, and seen the

same completed. The work which has been executed may be divided into two portions, viz. (1) that referring to the portion of road diverted around the west side of the mansion-house of Over Courance and (2) that referring to the portion of road over the moor to the west of Mollin Farm.

“Of Part 1: I can confirm the structural portion has been carried out in a tradesman-like manner and is entirely to my satisfaction.

“Of Part 2: That portion of the road marked A and C on a plan submitted by me along with my earlier report dated 11th May 1909 was abandoned and it was agreed that the road should follow the old line marked ADC on the plan with certain improvements in the way of widening and a larger curve at B to ease access for carts or wagons to and from Mollin. This road has also now been completed in terms pronounced by the Court and the agreements arrived at by the parties. Therefore the whole length can now be accepted as a substitute road for the original road interfered with by the erection of Over Courance House. With regard to that part of the road that crosses the moor of Whiteknowes Hill I have placed eight stones to mark the road as a permanent way. These stones are 8” square of red sandstone, chisel-dressed with the angles and corners chamfered off and each bears the date 1910 on the side facing inwards to the road and stand one foot above the natural surface of the ground.”

The report goes on to give the exact distance between the stones as they cross the moor, and ends: “No construction work has been executed on this part of the road – my duties being simply to lay out the line and mark the same in a permanent manner for the benefit and convenience of any work which at a future date may be considered.”

No improvements have ever taken place over this part of the right of way. Whiteknowes Hill remains much as it was in 1910 and several of the marker stones can still be seen.

CONCLUSION

Taking into consideration the outcome of the various court proceedings, which, while they lasted, must have been an irritating, unsettling and expensive distraction to say the least to James Weir, he nevertheless persisted with his ambition to transform Over Courance from what was actually little more than a working farm, albeit with a better than average dwelling house, into a gentleman’s residence surrounded by ornamental grounds and policies. The building of his new mansion house following on almost immediately after he purchased the property was the first step, and only months after its completion the purchase of the neighbouring farm of Burrance from the Duke of Buccleuch no doubt added to his perceived status of landed gentleman.

Returning to the mansion, the house itself was surrounded on three sides by lawns and formal flower-beds, some of which were in situ prior to 1906, as can be seen by reference to the map. To the south and below the old access road leading to the offices to the west of the house a large ornamental pond some three hundred yards long and about forty yards wide was constructed in a natural shallow hollow, which could be overlooked from the principal rooms of the house and the garden. Water to feed this feature was supplied by an elaborate and extensive system of large underground drainage pipes. These conveyed water from the fields about Whiteknowes to the head of the pond; more drains running in from the Burrance direction augmented the main supply, and

concrete inspection pits with slabbed covers built in at intervals throughout the line ensured that in the unlikely event of a blockage occurring the precise point of the problem could be quickly identified and dealt with. The land of Over Courance is notoriously wet and no doubt the drainage system not only fed the ornamental pond but also had the added advantage of running off excess water more efficiently than the old-fashioned three inch tile pipe drains. Improvements to soil condition, and consequently crops inevitably followed. Returning to the ornamental pond, a well-constructed retaining hatch acting as a sluice at the southern end to regulate the water level was installed and the edges were beautified with ornamental shrubs, specimen trees and clipped formal hedges. All these features, though now somewhat overgrown, are still clearly visible at present, and it does not take much imagination to bring to mind just how strikingly beautiful it must have been in its heyday.

A kitchen garden about an acre in extent complete with potting shed and heated greenhouses attached, cold frames, nursery beds, vegetable plots and orchard were laid out to the west of the new substitute road. From the entrance to the kitchen garden a roadway was constructed in 1907 to connect Over Courance with Burrance. To the right of this road, through a part of what on the map is called Crow Plantation, a plantation of rhododendrons was laid out through which a grass-covered avenue or walkway could be followed for about two hundred yards, where a right-angle turned to the east, and continued between lines of beech trees down a gentle slope back to the mansion house garden. Again these features are easily traced today.

It should be borne in mind that although James Weir had very little experience in agricultural matters he quickly became an efficient farmer and land manager. He improved the health of his sheep flock immensely by judicious application of manures to the upland part of Burrance, where "louping-ill" was causing serious problems in his flock, and during the years of the first World War he was fully engaged in the production of food on the estate. No doubt he was well advised and assisted by a farm manager, but following the marriage of his daughter Janet to James Fergusson he found an enthusiastic and willing partner in his son-in-law, who took the agricultural development to new heights following James Weir's death on 10th July 1920. In all probability James Weir derived a great deal of satisfaction from his efforts to develop Over Courance to the property of a landed gentleman. However, he seems never to have enjoyed the popularity and respect of a local laird. No record can be found of him ever being much involved in parish affairs; never is his name connected with the parish curling club, bowling club or horticultural society, all thriving institutions in his day. Instead reports exist of further friction, for instance a dispute between him and the Garrel School Board over a new supply of water to the school did nothing to improve the opinion the majority of the inhabitants of Kirkmichael had of him. Perhaps a final comment on James Weir, among the neighbouring lairds and larger farmers in Annandale may well have been "Ah, a clever and successful man, James Weir, but not quite a gentleman".

CHAPTER 5

The Subsequent Proprietors of Over Courance

following the death of James Weir. 10th July 1920

Mary Weir inherited Over Courance from her husband, being a Trustee of the property since 1915 along with her daughter Janet and son-in-law James Fergusson, Janet's husband, along with other family members. Living alone at Over Courance, Mary continued to employ a number of household servants: two chauffeurs, William McRobert and John Little; four gardeners, David Black, William Craig, William Copland and Alexander Maxwell. The farm manager, James Johnstone, living at Burrance, retired on the death of James Weir, having been first engaged in 1911. His responsibilities were undertaken by the Weir's son-in-law James Fergusson, who moved into Burrance in 1920. Mary Weir was interred beside her husband James in Gomerigg Cemetery following her death on the 9th May 1931.

On the 31st March 1915 James Fergusson had married Janet Weir, the younger daughter of James and Mary Weir. He was the only son of James Fergusson, Ardnith, Partick, Glasgow.

James Fergusson (the younger) proved to be a most progressive farmer and land manager. On first taking up residence at Burrance in 1920 he set about an extensive expansion of the farm steading and offices. The house at Burrance was already a large and attractive property, having been rebuilt by the Duke of Buccleuch in 1823, who at this time undertook vast improvements to all the estates in his possession. James Fergusson extended Burrance to the rear, replacing most of the old steading with two-storied offices on three sides of the former farmyard and all connected internally with the original house. On the estate he continually seized on, and put into practice, many ideas that were virtually unheard of in his day but are now commonplace. In 1929 he oversaw the designing, building and bringing into operation of a power station which supplied electricity by Direct Current to parts of the estate. Existing dwellings were thoroughly renovated and new ones erected. On the higher ground of the estate, much exposed to the elements and suitable only for a sheep farming enterprise, he erected a sheep-handling facility which included a large indoor lambing shed and shearing and dipping sheds, all of which would stand comparison with modern equivalents seen today.

By 1935 a large free-range egg producing unit was set up at Burranrig (not Burrancraig as printed on the map) where Samuel Paterson, Poultryman, had control of the day-to-day operation, yet again an example of breaking new ground, certainly as far as Dumfriesshire was concerned.

Unlike his father-in-law, James Fergusson was fully involved in local affairs. He served on the Parish Council, was a member of the School Board and stalwart supporter of any club or organisation that existed in Kirkmichael during his years there. To illustrate this point, in February 1930 he erected a lighting system to illuminate the Kirkmichael Parish Curling Pond on the neighbouring farm of Meikleholm in order that competitions could take place after dark on winter evenings. This must surely have been a unique innovation in Dumfriesshire.

As a form of relaxation, James Fergusson engaged in shooting over the estate, and in between 1923 and 1947 his gamekeeper John Paul, living at the aptly-named Pheasantfield, had the responsibilities of rearing and caring for the gamestock. The mansion house, gardens and surrounds continued to be maintained to a high standard; four gardeners continued to be employed, also a chauffeur. Between 1939 and 1950 David Kelly was the farm manager, being replaced by David Houston. Frederick Wilkes held the position of estate engineer, and the valuation roll of 1950 lists Robert Coupland rabbit trapper, John Boyle drainer and Donald Campbell forester, besides several shepherds, cattlemen and ploughmen.

James Fergusson died in 1961, and it was his wish to be buried high up on the north west corner of the estate, overlooking much of the land he had devoted so much time, effort and expense on developing. The actual position of his burial place now lies within the boundary of Ae Forest in the vicinity of the recently erected Harestanes Wind Farm. This corner of the estate where the grave lies was sold to the Forestry Commission in 1964 by Donald Grant, Esquire, who had recently purchased the farm of Burrance from Mrs. Janet Fergusson.

Janet Fergusson continued living at Over Courance following her husband's death. She died on the 22nd October 1964 and was interred in the family grave at Gomerigg Cemetery in Kirkmichael beside her parents and eldest sister, Mary Jane Weir (1883-1956).

Mary D. Dolmestch, daughter of James and Janet Fergusson, then inherited the house and estate, with other members of the Weir family remaining as trustees. The land was leased to Donald Grant, whose family still farm it today with Burrance, so the farm land remains intact.

Mary Weir married Carl Dolmetsch in 1937. He was a talented musician of world-wide repute, born in 1911. His father, Arnold Dolmetsch, was also an exceptionally talented musician who gave concerts of ancient music throughout England, Europe and America. He established a workshop in Haslemere, Surrey for the manufacture of harpsichords, clavichords and viols, and, later, recorders. It was there that he established in 1925 an annual two-week Festival of Old Music, which gained an international reputation and continued until 1996. Arnold Dolmetsch died in 1940. His son Carl took over the running of the business, but during the years of World War II turned the musical instrument workshops into a factory for the production of plastic components for use in aircraft.

Like his father, Carl Dolmetsch performed in public from the late 1920s. In 1932 his concert accompanist was Joseph Saxby. They struck up an amazing partnership which lasted for almost the next sixty years. Following the end of the War they were both anxious to encourage the young to take up music, and to do so they developed the mass production of plastic recorders which found popularity in schools in the ensuing years and remained so until comparatively recently.

For most of their married life Carl and Mary Dolmetsch lived at Weald View, Haslemere, Surrey, and were only occasional visitors to Over Courance. Their marriage was dissolved in 1961 and Mary moved to a house named Graybiel, Peebles, dividing her time between here and 57 Gloucester Place, London. Carl Dolmetsch had married, secondly, Greta Matthews, and he died on the 11th July 1997 at Haslemere, within a week of his friend Joseph Saxby. Mary Dolmetsch did not retain ownership of the mansion house for long and by early 1965 she had completed the sale of the house and estate to the Servants of the Paraclyte.

The Servants of the Paraclyte were founded in 1947 by Father Gerald M. C. Fitzgerald. A Roman Catholic community of vowed priests and brothers, their mission was to dedicate their lives to providing care, spiritual direction and individual and group therapy, prayer and contemplation to fellow priests and religions. Their residential homes are always located in peaceful and tranquil settings, so not surprisingly Over Courance proved very attractive to them. During their occupancy of the house their numbers varied, a dozen being about the maximum. Among their guests were many missionaries who had endured considerable stress in Africa and other parts of the world, so it seems that Over Courance could be seen at this time to have been a place of rest and recuperation.

The land and buildings on the estate remained their property but were leased to Donald Grant of Burrance. They continued to occupy the estate until 1981, by which time they had adopted the name of Shiloh for it, although apart from in the accompanying Sales Catalogue this name has not been found to exist.

In 1981 Shiloh, or, strictly speaking, Over Courance, was sold to John Reive, Director of Reive Investments, who took up residence in the house and continued to lease the land to Donald Grant. In 1986 the estate became the property of John Reive's family who decided to sell. Donald Grant purchased the land, and the mansion house was bought by a consortium of business people who converted it into a twelve bedroomed residential home. By 1995 a new development in the gardens around the house turned the property into a forty-eight bedroomed residential home for the elderly, and was given the name of Singleton Park. In 2001 fire broke out one evening in the mansion house. Despite the best efforts of the Fire Brigade the interior was completely gutted and only the exterior walls remained more or less intact. Thus it remained until 2022 when the present owner, Mr. William Hewitson, Building Developer and Contractor, had the remains removed, leaving a cleared site.

FOR SALE PRIVATELY

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COURANCE
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A74 5 miles Moffat 10 miles Dumfries 11 miles Lockerbie 10 miles

A magnificent Country House constructed at the turn of the Century on a slightly Elevated site with panoramic views over the surrounding countryside.



The house has been extensively refurbished in recent years and includes Reception Hall, Drawing Room, Billiard Room, Morning Room, Dining Room, Kitchen, Library, 11 Bedrooms, 2 Bathrooms, Shower Room etc. along with second floor attic rooms, all with the benefit of oil fired central heating.

Extensive Garden Grounds etc.

Vendors Solicitors
JAMES SMITH & VALENTINE
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20 Murray Street, Annan (04612-2575)
60 Whitesands, Dumfries (0387-55366)
24 Lowther Street, Carlisle (0228-
28939)

Situation

The property lies just off the A701 Moffat/Dumfries road about 5 miles from the A74 which provides rapid access to all routes North and South. There is a main line station at Lockerbie.

Shiloh is approached over a tree lined tarmacadam driveway which sweeps around an island bed in front of the house.

The following accommodation is provided in spacious proportions all extensively refurbished by the present owners.

Entrance Porch

Entrance Vestibule

Reception Hall

28'8 x 24' with oak panelling, 5 Brass pendular light fittings, sandstone fireplace and leaded windows.



Dining Room

17' x 24'2 with oak and marble fire surround, 2 bay windows, 4 wall lights and three pendant lights.



Butler's Pantry

with stainless steel twin sink, worktops and built in cupboards

Large Fitted Kitchen

Excellent range of Anglo German built units, 2 cooker points, Aga 4 oven, plumbing for automatic washer, stainless steel sink unit, Telephone point. Stair to wine cellar from basement.

Larder

with mantile shelves.

Rear Entrance Hall

leading to rear staircase.

Toilet

with washhand basin and W.C.

Main Oak Staircase

with interesting carved animal heads to handrail, brass stair rods.

Half Landing

with leaded windows - smoke door.

Bedroom 1

17' x 12'9 with mahogany built in wardrobes and chest.

Bedroom 2

15'10 x 16'7 + bay with washhand basin, oak fire surround, telephone point.

Bedroom 3

14' x 15'6 with wardrobes and fitted drawers.

Drawing Room

26'7 x 22'11 overall + bays, modern tiled fireplace, 2 bay windows, 5 gilded two bracket wall lights, impressive 5 branch centre pendant light fitting.



Billiard Room

25' x 17'5 with washhand basin, oak fire surround, door to conservatory, 4 pendant lights and two strip lights.

Morning Room

Efel Woodburning Stove, mosaic fireplace with oak surround, 2 magnificent oak display/storage cupboards, built in writing desk, Bay Window.

Understairs
Cleaning Store

Downstairs
Cloakroom

with W.C. and washhand basin.

Bathroom	with pink washhand basin and bath, shower point, heated towel rail.
Separate W.C.	with washhand basin.
Bedroom 4	13'3 x 12'4 with washhand basin and oak fireplace.
Bedroom 5	13'10 x 13'2 with fitted wardrobes and drawers, washhand basin and fireplace.
Bedroom 6	17' x 13'1 with oak fireplace.
Library	20' x 17'6 with fitted oak shelves with doors, bay window, fitted desk unit.
Bedroom 7	14'5 x 13'10 with washhand basin and two wardrobes, shower point.
Bedroom 8	14'3 x 13'7 with washhand basin and shower point.
Bedroom 9	9'10 x 14'6 with washhand basin and shower point.
Bedroom 10	14'5 x 10'2 with washhand basin and shower point.
Bedroom 11	9' x 10'11 with washhand basin and shower point.
Shower Room	with washhand basin, W.C., heated towel rail, electric wall heater.
Bathroom	with 3 piece suite, electric wall heater.
Housemaid's Pantry	with linen cupboard.
Staircase to	6 other attic rooms.
	W.C. and washhand basin.
General Note	Carpets and curtains may be purchased by separate negotiation.
Outside	The grounds are a particularly attractive feature of the property with many well established lawns, flower beds, shrubs and trees along with fruit and vegetable sections. Excellent range of good domestic out offices to include - Stone Tool Shed, Coal Store, Greenhouse 90' x 14', Large Sawmill/Workshop, Saw Pit, Former Sawmill. Garage block with much potential for conversion to either holiday lodges etc. subject to planning consents.

Sporting:-

Shooting	The shooting rights are in hand and will be included in the sale, but much shooting is available locally from local Estates.
Hunting	The property is in the Dumfriesshire Hunt Country.
Fishing	Good fishing is available within a radius of 10 miles in either the River Annan or the River Nith, as well as several other border rivers. Yachting is available at Kippford.
Golf	There are 18 hole golf courses at Powfoot, Dumfries and Lockerbie.
Racing	The nearest race courses are Carlisle and Ayr.
Woodland	All standing timber on the property is included in the sale at no additional cost.
Services	The property has private water and drainage along with mains electricity. Telephone subject to British Telecom Agreement.
Rateable Value	£2625 (this is the matter of appeal).
Town & Country Planning	The property is at present used as a small guest house for 6 visitors, although with the necessary consents there is enormous potential for expansion either to a Country House Hotel, Nursing Home etc., with much scope in the conversion of the outbuildings to ancillary uses.
Rights of Way	The property is sold subject to all rights of way, wayleaves, burdens etc. as at present existing.
Minerals	In so far as these belong to the vendor they will be included in the sale.
Viewing	Strictly by appointment with the agents.
Offers	All offers in proper Scottish Legal Form should be lodged with the agents.
Entry	Entry and vacant possession by arrangement.
Deposit	A deposit of 10% of the purchase price will be payable to the agents within seven days of the acceptance of an offer, but, notwithstanding the property will not pass from the seller to the purchaser until the balance of the price is paid in full.

Summary of the History of Over Courance Estate 1555 - 2022

1557 - 1785	Described in 1500s as a “fortalice” and the property of members of the Johnston family, kinsmen of the Johnstons of Lochwood, named variously Cowrinche, Courans, Upper or Over Courance	Register of the Privy Seal, Buccleuch Muniments, The Amnandale Book of the Johnstones, Johnston Family History, Register of Baptisms, Kirkmichael Parish
1785	Robert Johnston sells the Estate to Francis Shortt, Joint Town Clerk of Dumfries	General Register of Sassines
1797	First advertisement for a tenant in Whiteknowes, a newly reclaimed farm	Dumfries Weekly Journal
1803	Francis Shortt sells Nether Courance to Glasgow merchant James Walker	Gen. Register of Sassines
1809	Francis Shortt feus a number of cott-houses and yards to his farm overseer George Raphael	Gen. Register of Sassines
1825	Francis Shortt sells Upper, Over or Courancehill to Patrick Campbell of Lawers who changes the name of the estate to Lawers	Gen. Register of Sassines
1834 and 1835	Patrick Campbell sells Lawers to Dr. John Easton of Edinburgh. James Knox produces a Plan of the Estate showing full extent of land reclamation	2 nd Statistical Account of Kirkmichael 1833 Gen. Register of Sassines RHP no NY0591 from the Hope, Todd and Kirk papers
1850/51	Dr. John Easton dies and the property is in the hands of his Trustees	Gen. Register of Sassines
1854	The Trustees sell Over Courance to Robert Bruce Baird of Edinburgh	Gen. Register of Sassines
1857	Baird arranges to have the name of the house changed to Elstree by agreement with the Ordnance Survey Office	Baird’s correspondence with the OS Office (attached)
1882 and 1898	R B Baird makes two attempts to sell the estate by roup	Notices in Dumfries Standard
1900	R B Baird sells Elstree to Samuel Thomas Farish, farmer, Kirkmichael by roup in Edinburgh. Farish retains the name Over Courance	Notice in Dumfries Standard June 1900 and Report of Sale July 1900 Valuation Rolls, Parish of Kirkmichael 1900-1

1905-06	Samuel Farish sells Over Courance to James Weir. The old house is demolished and a new mansion house to Weir's design and specification blocking the former servitude road is erected	Gen. Reg. of Sassines. Valuation Ross Parish of Kirkmichael 1905-06 Evidence given by Samuel Farish and others in the Right of Way case 1906-1910. Court of Session reports Edinburgh
Sept. 1907	James Weir purchases the adjoining farm of Burrance from the Duke of Buccleuch	Gen. Reg. of Sassines
Between 1907 and 1920	Over Courance policies developed and landscaped, and farmland improved	
1919	James Weir appoints members of his family as Trustees in the event of his death	Family property Deeds and Dispositions
1920	James Weir dies. His widow Mary inherits the estate	Weir family memorial stone Gamerigg Cemetery
1931	Mary Weir continues to live at Over Courance until her death 9.5.31. Janet her daughter moves from Burrance with her husband James Fergusson. James runs the estate until his death in 1961	Weir family memorial stone Gamerigg Cemetery
1964	Janet Fergusson sells Burrance to Donald Grant, Esq. Later same year she dies and Over Courance is inherited by her daughter, Mary Dolmetsch	Family memorial stone Gamerigg Cemetery
1965	Mary Dolmetsch sells Over Courance to the Servants of the Paraclyte who use it as a rest home for vowed priests. They name the property Shiloh and lease the land to Donalds Grant of Burrance	Valuation Rolls 1965/66 and oral recollection by Roger Grant, present proprietor
1981	Shiloh purchased by John Reive of Reive Investments who occupies house but continues to lease land to Donald Grant	Sale Particulars and oral recollection by Roger Grant
1986	The family of John Reive inherit Over Courance and sell the house to a consortium of businessmen who convert it into a 12 bed residential home for the elderly. Donald Grant purchases the land of Over Courance from the Reive family	Valuation Rolls and oral recollection by Roger Grant
1995	A new development erected on the site of the Over Courance gardens extends the residential care home to a 48 bed complex and it is renamed Singleton Park	
2001	Fire completely destroys the interior of the mansion house leaving only the exterior walls standing	Dumfries Standard and other local papers

2021	Singleton Park Care Home closed following inspection by D & G Council. DGNHS provide care until alternative arrangements made for the inmates	Dumfries Standard and other local papers
2022	Exterior walls of the mansion house demolished and removed by the present owner of the site, William Hewitson, Building Developer and Contractor, Lochmaben, Dumfriesshire	

Other Volumes in the Series

Volume 1: Anwoth to Borgue

Cardoness House, Anwoth
The Holme, Balmaclellan
Balmaghie House, Balmaghie
Hensol House, Balmaghie
Laurieston Hall, Balmaghie
Slogarie House, Balmaghie
Borgue Old House, Borgue
Senwick House, Borgue

Volume 2: Colvend & Southwick to Kelton

Southwick House, Colvend and Southwick
Glenlochar House, Crossmichael
Castledykes, Dumfries
Stroquhan House, Dunscore
Physgill House, Glasserton
Ravenstone Castle, Glasserton
Dildawn House, Kelton
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Janefield, Kirkcudbright
Marks, Kirkcudbright
Neptune Park, Kirkcudbright
Barnbarroch, Kirkcudbright
Logan House, Kirkcudbright
Over Courance, Kirkcudbright

Volume 4: Kirkpatrick Irongray to Minnigaff

The Grove, Kirkpatrick Irongray
Lochanhead House, Lochrutton
Cumloden, Minnigaff

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Corsock House, Parton
Glenlaggan, Parton
Mochrum Park, Penninghame
Dunskey House, Portpatrick

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Argrennan House, Tongland
Bogra House, Tongland
Broomlands, Troqueer
Goldielea, Troqueer
Mabie House, Troqueer
Barwhinnock House, Twynholm

Volume 7: Twynholm to Urr

Cumstoun House, Twynholm
Largs House, Twynholm
Castlewigg, Whithorn
Spottes Hall, Urr

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