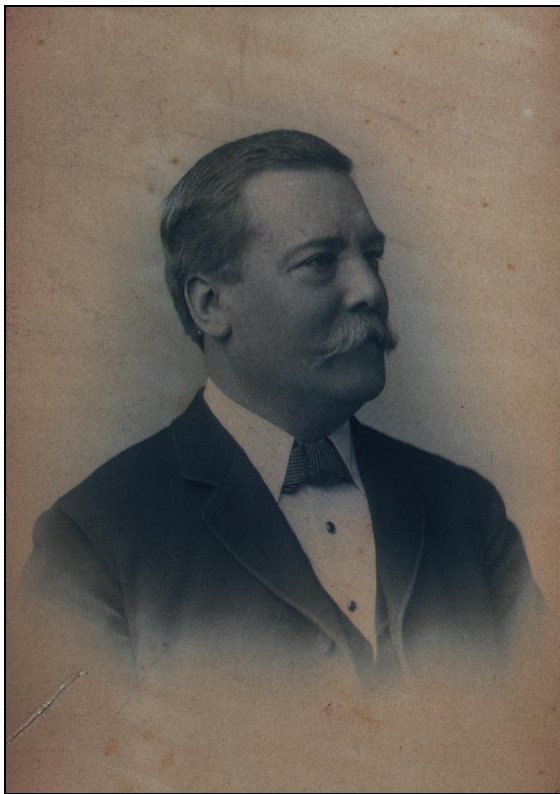


# The Macphersons of Leeds, 1834 to 2011

## The Life, Times and Descendants of Alexander Sinclair Macpherson

Reynold Macpherson, 20 June 2012



Alexander Sinclair Macpherson, 1834-1902



Sarah Brown Macpherson, née Walker, 1843-1910

Alexander and Sarah Macpherson of Glenholme, Harrogate, Yorkshire, about 1890

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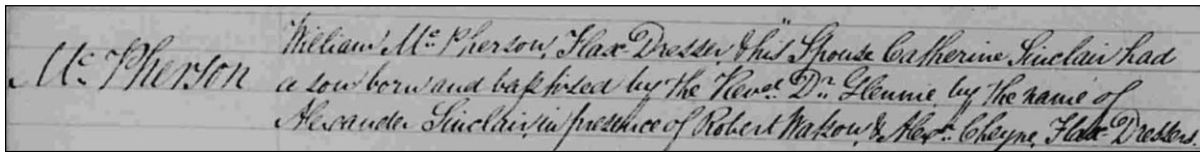
## The Life, Times and Descendants of Alexander Sinclair Macpherson

Reynold Macpherson, 20 June 2012

### Introduction

The story of the Macphersons of Leeds begins in Scotland with the birth of the first ever Sinclair Macpherson in 1834; Alexander Sinclair McPherson. He was sent to Leeds in 1849 by his family when he was 23. In 1855 his mother died and the rest of her children scattered. Since then 13 Macpherson families have given one of their children the middle name Sinclair, probably without knowing why. This chapter shows that it commemorates the life and works of the first Sinclair Macpherson who established the Macphersons of Leeds.

The story starts with an Old Parish Record dated 8 December 1834 of a Birth entry 168/A00 0230 0128 in the Old Machar Cathedral of Aberdeen (OPR, 1834):



This confirms that Alexander's parents were Catherine Alexander Sinclair and William McPherson, a flaxdresser. William had been born and raised in Portsoy, a small village on the east coast of Scotland between Inverness and Aberdeen. He and Catherine had been married in the Leslie Church in Fife on 3 May 1829 (OPR, 1829). They then returned to Aberdeen where William was working with Robert Makow and Alexander Cheyne. There they had two boys; John McPherson, born 14 December 1832 (OPR, 1832) and Alexander Sinclair McPherson, as shown above.

Alexander McPherson's relatives worked in the linen industry. They came from extended families in Portsoy and Leslie in Scotland. Alexander's paternal grandfather was a butcher who came from a family of agricultural labourers and who married a blacksmith's daughter.

About five years later, Catherine and William moved back to Leslie before John was five and Alexander three. There they had two girls; Alison/ Elizabeth McPherson, born 8 November 1837 (OPR, 1837) and Agnes McPherson, born 8 October 1839 (OPR, 1839). For the next ten years things apparently went well, with Alexander starting his career well in Leeds and John returning to Aberdeen. In 1851 the Census showed that Catherine McPherson was living in Back Row, Leslie, aged 50, with her daughters Alison aged 13 and Agnes aged 11 (Ancestry.com., 1851). Father William was apparently absent on the day of the Census.

Tragedy struck in 1855. Catherine died aged 54 and her girls soon scattered in search of work and marriage opportunities. Alison and Agnes worked in the Lothians before emigrating to Otago, New Zealand, and as explained below, both marrying but only Alison having a child (DB Hutton, 2010). Father William McPherson lived on alone for another 11 years in Leslie until being found dead 10 June 1866 (SR, 1866) by Alexander who had been told by letter that his father was ill (W. W. Macpherson, 1940).

There was good reason to scatter. In 1855 Scotland was being racked by cholera, smallpox, whooping cough and measles epidemics. The average Scot in 1855 had a one in seven chance of dying before their first birthday. Life expectancy at birth was only 40 for men and 44 for women (BBC News, 2005, 25 July). People were sustained by family networks and their religious beliefs. The picture to the right, of five generations of Scots women taken in 1855, gives some sense of their grim fortitude.



This chapter is about the first Sinclair Macpherson's background, what happened to him when he shifted south to Leeds, and how he married an English wife Sarah Brown Walker to found the Macphersons of Leeds. Alexander was a fast learner, prepared systematically for a valued profession, married a caring mother who later came into money, built his family's prosperity through loyal and creative contributions to an entrepreneurial enterprise over decades, and then educated his children to inherit the material and cultural capital that he and his wife had accumulated, all in a spirit of Christian altruism. This quiet achiever is the reason for the Sinclair Macphersons.

### The Migrations in the Sinclair Macphersons

Alexander followed the example of his grandfather and father in rising to new level in his trade or profession, migrating and marrying to advantage. His grandfather William came from a farm labouring background to set up an independent business as a 'flesher' (butcher) in Burnside Street, Portsoy (see right), marrying the blacksmith Duff's daughter. Alexander's father William rose from a large family of agricultural labourers and serpentine miners in Portsoy to train as a flaxdresser, a highly respected trade in the linen industry, migrating to Aberdeen and Leslie for better career opportunities, marrying into a large and successful family of weavers from Leslie, the Sinclairs.

Alexander's mother, Catherine Sinclair, also came from a family engaged in the linen industry that was open to migration, while no doubt holding fast to their religious beliefs. Alexander's parents married in the Leslie Parish Church where his mother Catherine had been christened in 1801. His parents immediately returned to Aberdeen, presumably to continue their work in the textile industry, joining the congregation of the 'Old Machar' Cathedral in Aberdeen and later christening John and Alexander there. They were people of the 'Auld Kirk', that is, staunchly conservative Presbyterians of the Church of Scotland.

Sometime between 1835 and 1837, John and Alexander's parents moved their young family back to Leslie, presumably for work opportunities and to be closer to Catherine's family. Back in Leslie (see right, the village green today), among her own kith and kin, mother Catherine then gave birth to her two daughters; Alison/ Elizabeth McPherson born 8 November 1837 (OPR, 1837) and Agnes McPherson, born 8 October 1839 (OPR, 1839).

Both girls were baptized Presbyterians in the Auld Kirk at Leslie. By 1861, Catherine and William McPherson's daughters had left home but not Scotland. The 1861 Census recorded Alison as a 23-year old domestic servant to Christina Mccraw at 2 Smith's Place, Leith Walk, Leith, Midlothian (Census, 1861b). Agnes was a 21-year old domestic servant to Janet Fulton at 2 Thomson Place in the same town (Census, 1861a). They migrated to New Zealand about 1869, probably together.

It has long been known that Alison McPherson married a Mayne in 1874 in Dunedin and had a son Samuel in 1879 (W. S. Macpherson, c 1940). This has been confirmed by Don Hutton's excellent research on the Sinclair family (DB Hutton, 2010) and his more recent findings (D Hutton, 2010b) regarding Agnes McPherson deserve citation in full with footnotes:



**Agnes MACPHERSON**, b. 08 Oct 1839 in Leslie, Fifeshire, Scotland,<sup>1[1],2[2]</sup> d. 27 Aug 1926 in Dunedin, Otago, N.Z.,<sup>3[3]</sup> probate 09 Sep 1926 in Dunedin Court - Probate No. 10119,<sup>4[4]</sup> buried 30 Aug 1926 in Dunedin, Otago, N.Z., Southern Cemetery - Block 19, Plot 18.

According to George Whitefield Armitage's tree, Agnes emigrated to New Zealand. The NZSG Index Version 5 CD has her surname as "McPherson." According to Dunedin CC Cemetery Records Agnes arrived in Otago about 1869.

She married **Angus MCDIARMID**, married 1879 in Dunedin, Otago, N.Z.,<sup>5[5]</sup> b. Abt 1830 in Scotland,<sup>6[6]</sup> d. 26 May 1920 in Dunedin, Otago, N.Z.,<sup>7[7]</sup> occupation Blacksmith (1879),<sup>8[8]</sup> buried 28 May 1920 in Dunedin, Otago, N.Z., Southern Cemetery - Block 19, Plot 18.<sup>9[9]</sup> .... He retired soon after their marriage and they lived off income from property rents.

Agnes "left a legacy of £20 for distribution amongst the poor and needy in the Burgh of Leslie on the first Xmas after her death" (Wilkie, 1926).

Although Alexander left Scotland in 1849 (Yorkshire Evening Post, 1902), Alexander was no doubt part of the discussions that led to his sisters emigrating. He supported them until they married. The McPherson girls may have almost left it too late; Alison married when she was 37 and had only one child while Agnes married when she was 39 and did not have any children.

Why New Zealand?

A number of Sinclairs migrated to Dunedin, offering support on arrival. Otago was also offering assisted (subsidised) or free passages to families and young women suitable for domestic service and marriage (see a contemporary sketch of idealised domestic bliss right).

New Zealand attracted a net 150,000 immigrants between 1853 and 1870, with immigration peaking in the early 1860s (Phillips & Hearn, 2008, pp. 34-41). It was a period of energy and growth driven by three main conditions; powerful provincial governments that encouraged immigration, gold rushes between 1862 and 1867, and the ending of the Land Wars in Taranaki and in the Waikato between 1865 and 1867. Immigrants were seen by the provincial governments as the drivers of development and prosperity. They commissioned agents to offer farm labourers, builders and domestic servants

assisted or free passages, giving priority to families and unmarried women. Over two thirds of the immigrants came from the United Kingdom. Unfortunately, most of the records of arrivals in Otago in the period have been lost.

Alexander apprenticed as an engineering draughtsman in the Wellington Foundry of Leeds, while his sisters Alison and Agnes emigrated to Dunedin, Otago, New Zealand, and his older brother returned to the textile industry in Aberdeen.



<sup>1[1]</sup> Scotlands People - OPR Index.

<sup>2[2]</sup> IGI - Internet Version 1999.

<sup>3[3]</sup> NZSG Index Version 5.

<sup>4[4]</sup> NZSG Index Version 5.

<sup>5[5]</sup> NZSG Index Version 5.

<sup>6[6]</sup> Cemetery Records - Dunedin City Council Website.

<sup>7[7]</sup> Cemetery Records - Dunedin City Council Website.

<sup>8[8]</sup> Hepburn, George - Letter to sister Janet 6 Nov 1879.

<sup>9[9]</sup> Cemetery Records - Dunedin City Council Website.

In sum, to this point, Alexander was sent to Leeds well before the early death of his mother to build a career in heavy engineering, a profession of little interest to the agents offering assisted or free passage to New Zealand. It would also have been difficult decision to cut long standing family, social, military and religious networks in Leslie and Portsoy.

These relationships may also have helped predispose Alexander and his descendants in Leeds towards military service as a form of Christian public service, especially when reinforced by an educational curriculum that encouraged self-sacrifice to the ideals of Anglo-Saxon imperialism, an issue I discuss below. We now turn to Alexander's founding of the Macphersons of Leeds, and later, why his two sons William and Henry evoked their grandfather's success and memories of the link with the Sinclairs by establishing the naming tradition of the Sinclair Macphersons.

### **Alexander Macpherson in Leeds**

To review to this point, Alexander McPherson was born 6 December 1834 and christened two days later in the Old Machar Cathedral in Aberdeen (OPR, 1834). His older brother John had been christened there two years before him on 12 December 1832 (OPR, 1832). They were then moved with their parents to Leslie in Fife between 1835 and 1837, where their two sisters, Alison and Agnes were born; 8 November 1837 (OPR, 1837) and 8 October 1839 (OPR, 1839) respectively. John returned to Aberdeen and his two sisters migrated to New Zealand.

Alexander proved a fast learner at the Burgh School, Kirkcaldy, winning at least three prizes later in the possession of his son (W. W. Macpherson, 1940). In 1847 he was awarded the third Latin Class Prize. Two years later he was presented *The Life and of Sir Walter Raleigh* on 30 April 1849 by John Lockhart and *Herodutus* [the Greek 'father of history] *translated by Cary*.

Oral history in the family (Tritter & Boyce, 2011) has it that Alexander first worked in Dundee, a major centre of the jute industry, helping him develop business links with a jute factory in India that his sons later took turns to visit. His very modest accommodation in Dundee was apparently found by William Stuart 'Bob' Macpherson, Dean of Litchfield.

His Dundee sojourn must have been brief because he was then 'sent' to Leeds by the family in 1849 when he was 23 with a letter of introduction to Peter Fairburn who then ran the Wellington Foundry. He started at the bottom, became a partner from 1877 when 46, and with Sir Peter Fairburn's passing, managed the Foundry. A lengthy obituary and article published when Alexander died 30 December 1902 (overleaf) together provide a clear picture of his career (Yorkshire Evening Post, 1902, 1903).

## DEATH OF MR. A. S. MACPHERSON, OF LEEDS.

The death of Mr. Alexander Sinclair Macpherson, which occurred rather suddenly at Harrogate yesterday morning, severs the last important link connecting Leeds with the early days of the well-known Fairbairn engineering enterprise at Wellington Foundry. It is but a little more than three years since his colleague, Mr. J. W. Naylor, passed away; it is just sixteen months since we lost Sir Andrew Fairbairn. The style of the firm with which all three were so long associated has changed more than once in the last twenty years. After Sir Peter Fairbairn's death in 1862, Mr. Andrew, as he was then, took into partnership his cousin, Mr. F. S. Kennedy, and also Mr. Naylor. Then, some fifteen years later, about the time of Mr. Kennedy's decease, Mr. Macpherson was admitted a member of the firm, having, like Mr. Naylor, been connected with the establishment from boyhood. Two years ago the business was amalgamated with that of three other great machine making concerns in the country, and became known as the Fairbairn, Macpherson branch of Fairbairn Lawson Combe Barbour (Limited). Of this branch Mr. Macpherson was managing director.

Mr. Macpherson has died at his residence, Glenholme, West End Park, Harrogate, after but two or three days' illness. Heart trouble was the cause. He had suffered from it for some time past. He was in the 68th year of his age, and leaves a widow, two sons, and a daughter. Mrs. Macpherson was a niece of the late Mr. William Walker, a well-known Leeds dyer.

The story of Mr. Macpherson's career is another tribute to the value of innate business ability, backed by plodding resolution and native shrewdness. Mr. Macpherson was born in Aberdeen, and educated at Kirkcaldy. His parents sent him to Leeds in 1849 with a letter of introduction to Peter Fairbairn, and that discerning Scotsman promptly set him to work on the bottom rung of the ladder, with the idea of seeing what could be made of him. The boy "framed" well, and as the years passed, with the fruitful results of his employer's small beginnings ever before him as an impetus, he acquitted himself in such fashion as to merit and enjoy the fullest possible confidence of those whom he served. So he progressed; and in the end, as we have seen, justified his training by becoming a partner in the firm. He was a youth of 23 when Sir Peter's son, six years his senior, entered the business; he was 46 when admitted to partnership.

Meanwhile he had represented "Fairbairn's" both in Scotland and the Continent. Of late years he did not travel about much. His energies were devoted to the works; in fact, after the death of Sir Peter Fairbairn, the management of the works, as distinguished from the commercial department, devolved upon Mr. Macpherson. It was an occupation to his liking. Moreover, being a practical man and in close touch with business, he was able to take out several patents, which were of value to the firm in their production of textile machinery and tools. His responsibilities at the same time were great. He had often the oversight of nearly 3,000 workmen. So equable was his temper, however, that to the last every one regarded him with feelings somewhat deeper than ordinary respect; and alike by those who were his subordinates and those who were his equals in business standing, his loss will be greatly felt.

In public affairs Mr. Macpherson took no active interest. He was of a retiring disposition, and had a dread of being thought "pushful." Yet he possessed many of the qualities required by a public man, and in business circles held a very high reputation. His presidency of the Leeds Exchange Club and of the Harrogate Club attested in some degree the esteem he enjoyed. In politics he was a Liberal Unionist, but he rarely appeared on a platform. To Church work, on the other hand, he rendered systematic and generous aid. During the period of his residence in Burley, Leeds, he regularly attended and supported St. Andrew's Church, where he filled the office of churchwarden. On removing to Harrogate he contributed liberally to the endowment of St. Mark's, of which his son-in-law, the Rev. W. Y. Potter, is vicar; indeed, he practically took over the entire financial responsibility of building the church.

Mr. Macpherson was one of the District Commissioners of Property and Income Tax for Leeds; also an ex-director of the Leeds and County Bank, which was afterwards amalgamated with the Birmingham and Midland Bank, and is now incorporated in the London City and Midland Bank. He also held a large interest in the chemical works of Joseph Turner and Co. (Limited), of Queen's Ferry, North Wales.

The funeral takes place at Adel on Friday.

## A ROMANCE OF INDUSTRY.

### DEATH OF MR. A. S. MACPHERSON.

#### THE STORY OF HIS LIFE.

There passed away at Harrogate to-day a man the story of whose career, uneventful enough in one way, adds another page to that romance of industry which has been created by the growth of Leeds into a great engineering and manufacturing centre. Such figures have loomed up not infrequently in the city's history.

And yet the name of Alexander Sinclair Macpherson was but a name to the vast majority of the inhabitants of Leeds. They were aware of it as that of a member of the firm of Fairbairn, Naylor, Macpherson and Company, engineers, of Wellington-street, but of the man himself they knew comparatively little, for Mr. Macpherson played no part in public affairs.

The deceased was born at Aberdeen sixty-eight years ago. Entering the great establishment in Wellington-street as a lad, he rose step by step until, like one of the heroes of the good example books provided for young people, he reached the highest position of all, and was made a partner. That happened twenty-one years ago. When the concern became amalgamated with the firms of Combe, Barbour & Co., of Belfast, and Samuel Lawson & Sons, of Leeds, forming the world-famed combination of Fairbairn, Lawson, Combe, Barbour, Ltd., he remained a partner in the Fairbairn Macpherson branch. He was the patentee of many improvements and inventions in connection with machinery.

Mr. Macpherson, who died at his residence, Glenholme, Harrogate, from heart failure, leaves a widow, two sons, and one daughter. He was at the works a week ago. Dr. Barrs, of Leeds, was called in to consult with local medical men, but death took place this morning.

The deceased was a Liberal Unionist in politics, and a Churchman.

The flags at the works were lowered to half-mast when the news was received of Mr. Macpherson's death.

The funeral will take place on Friday afternoon at Adel Church.

The earliest photograph found of the clever and serious young Alexander (see right) was probably taken when he was in his late 20s. His first recorded presence in Leeds was in 1861 when he was 26 and boarding with George Holmes, a machine model maker aged 39, his wife Frances and their six children at 104 Park Lane, St Andrews, West Leeds (Ancestry.com., 1861). He was described as an unmarried mechanical draughtsman from Scotland. George may well have been a co-worker at the Wellington Foundry.



The shrewd Alexander then married Sarah Brown Walker (see second right, date unknown) on 1 June 1865 (SR, 1865). Their marriage certificate dated 1 June 1865 (Leeds Parish Church, 1865), gives Alexander's father as William McPherson, gentleman, and Sarah's father as Henry Walker, a dyer. The witnesses were Sarah's uncle William Walker (below right), Sarah's youngest sister Henrietta Walker, William's daughter and Sarah's cousin, Mary Elizabeth Pemberton and Eric William Idle. These relationships have been established by reference to William Walkers's will (Walker, 1888) and research since in collaboration with John Cowan of Manton, Alexander and Sarah's first child, Mary Barras Macpherson, was born 28 July 1866.<sup>10</sup>

Sarah was a formidable person in her own right who had overcome a major setback as a child. She was born 22 March 1843 in Leeds, Yorkshire, and christened by her parents Henry Walker and Sarah Wright at St Peters, Leeds Parish Church (Yorkshire Parish Records, 1843). Her parents had been married at the same church on 10 March 1832 (Yorkshire Parish Records, 1832). They had six children; Thomas Wright Walker in 1833, George Walker in 1835, Henry Clough Walker in 1839, William Walker in 1841, Sarah Brown Walker in 1843 and Henrietta Walker in 1846.



The 1841 Census found Henry, a farm laborer aged 31 (therefore born about 1810), wife Sarah 25 (born about 1817), boys Tom 8, George 6, Henry 2 and William 6 months, and domestic servants Sarah Doughty 15 and Henry Verity 15, resident at Broomhills Farm, Potternewton, Leeds (Census, 1841). The 1851 Census, however, described mother Sarah as a widow, 36 and the housekeeper of Broomhill Farm with only three of her children; Henry Clough Walker 12, William Walker 10, Henrietta Walker 5, and two domestic servants, Mar Cuthbertson 23 and E. Naylor 14 (Census, 1851b). The same Census showed that Sarah Brown Walker, a scholar aged 8, was now living with her uncle William Walker, a dyer aged 32, her aunt Mary aged 34, and with her brother Thomas Wright Walker, also a dyer, aged 18, at Farrar's Place, St. Andrews, Leeds (Census, 1851a).

The reason was that Sarah's father Henry died and was buried at St Peters on 5 December 1844 aged 34 (Yorkshire Parish Records, 1844). Sarah and her brother Thomas Wright Walker (the eldest boy and girl) went taken in by her uncle William and aunt Mary. Her brother George was absent from both addresses. Sarah Brown's mother, Sarah Walker née Wright lived on at Broomhill Farm as head of household and owner of railway shares. The 1861 Census had her living with Henrietta aged 15, a maidservant Grace A. Riley 16, a farm manager William Dibbs 45, and a farm boy Robert Wray 12 (Census, 1861c).



By 1861, the Census Sarah Brown Walker was 18 and still living with her Uncle William aged 42 and Aunt Mary aged 44 at 29 Burley Street in West Leeds. Her uncle was doing very well; he was now a woolen cloth dyer employing 15 men. The household now included Uncle William Walker's

<sup>10</sup> The date of Mary Barras' birthday, as with many other birthdays in the Macphersons of Leeds family, was established by combining the information in Mary Sinclair Macpherson's Birthday Book (J. Cowan, 1996) with census data, in this case (Ancestry.com., 1871 -a).

mother Sarah aged 78 (born about 1783, died 14 October 1861), his nephew George N. Pemberton, a wool dyer aged 23, his sister-in-law Eleanor Walker aged 34, his aunt Elizabeth Melsome, a nurse aged 65, and a servant, Mary Law, aged 27 (Ancestry.com., 1861). They had one servant, Harriett Shakelton, aged 14. It therefore appears that Alexander married into a large and successful family of tradespersons in the textile industry that was able to move children around to care for them when tragedy struck. On the other hand, it is not clear why her uncle William Walker left Sarah Brown Macpherson (née Walker) so much of his estate when he died 22 February 1888, as clarified below. It was neither a wedding present to her on 1 June 1865 nor apparently related to Alexander's accession to partnership in 1877. It remains an unexplained windfall to the couple, other than Sarah and her brother Thomas Wright Walker were their adopted children.

The 1871 Census confirmed that Sarah Brown Walker was now 28 and married to Alexander Sinclair McPherson, the mother of Mary Barras McPherson aged 4, William Walker McPherson aged 3 and Henry McPherson aged 1. Alexander and Sarah's marriage apparently flourished, although it was tinged with sadness when they lost their fourth child. In sum, their four children were Mary Barras Macpherson, born 28 July 1866 died 12 May 1941 aged 75; William Walker Macpherson, born 5 September 1867 (Wilson, 1906, p. 227) and died in 1943 aged 76; Henry 'Harry' Macpherson, born 17 July 1869 and died 19 March 1942 aged 73; and Arthur Herbert Macpherson, born 1 July 1871, died seven weeks later on 24 August 1871. I will clarify their lives once I have finished describing their parent's lives.

The Census records also confirm that Alexander and Sarah Brown's material prosperity rose swiftly from the 1860s until he died 30 December 1902 in Glenholme, West Park, Harrogate (FreeBMD. England & Wales, 1902). The obituary above explained how he gained and sustained the personal sponsorship of Sir Peter Fairburn, proved to be a creative marketer, designer and an effective leader of men.

Recall, in 1861, Alexander was a 26 year old single draughtsman. By 1871 he was a 35 year old mechanical draughtsman, married to Sarah Brown McPherson aged 28, with three children; Mary 4, William 3, and Henry aged 1. They were then living at 11 Victoria Terrace, St. John's Hill, West Leeds. They were apparently doing well enough to have two servants, Sarah Ann Dransfield aged 26 and Annie Spince 17 (Ancestry.com., 1871 -b).

By the mid-1870s, Alexander and Sarah Macpherson's growing prosperity enabled them to seek grammar school places for their children, although it is not clear where Mary Barras went to school. They also anglicized the spelling of the family name between 1877 and 1878, from McPherson to Macpherson. When Alexander and Sarah's eldest son was admitted to Leeds Grammar School in the first term of 1877 (Wilson, 1906, p. 227) he was enrolled as "William Walker McPherson". His enrolment record confirms his birth as 5 September 1867 and him being the son of "A.S. McPherson". However, when the second son was admitted to Leeds Grammar School in the third term of 1878, was recorded as being "Henry Macpherson" born 17 July 1869, the son of "Alexander Sinclair Macpherson", and brother of "William Walker Macpherson" (Wilson, 1906, p. 239). The McPhersons once of Portsoy and Leslie were now the Macphersons of Leeds.

By 1881 Alexander, his wife Sarah Brown and their three surviving children were still living at 11 Victoria Terrace, West Leeds (Census, 1881) with Alexander described as a 'Manager' of a 'Machine Making Works.' They had two servants; Annie E. Mair aged 22 and Mary A. Leake 22. They were photographed in the late 1800s (see below right) in their smart carriage, epitomizing Victorian respectability and prosperity. The horses were called Sapphire and Diamond (W. S. Macpherson, 1916a).

In 1888, Sarah received an inheritance which helped propel their family into an even higher standard of living. When Sarah's uncle William Walker died 22 February 1888, his last will and testament allocated £57,697/14/1. This is worth over £4,770,000 today using the retail price index or £29,900,000 using average earnings. The largest bequest, about one seventh, went to his niece Sarah Brown McPherson (née Walker); an "£8,000 investment trust, for her use alone, after her death to Alexander Sinclair McPherson, or descendants after 21





or married, or if no children, to common law descendants” (Walker, 1888). £8,000 in 1888 is worth over £661,000 today using the retail price index or £4,150,000.00 using average earnings (Officer, 2011).

Alexander, who was one of two executors, also received William Walker’s mourning ring, worn in memory of his late wife, and his silver pint. Alexander and Sarah McPherson’s three surviving children, Mary Barras, William Walker and Henry, each received £200. Sarah was also given furniture and household goods to the value of £150.

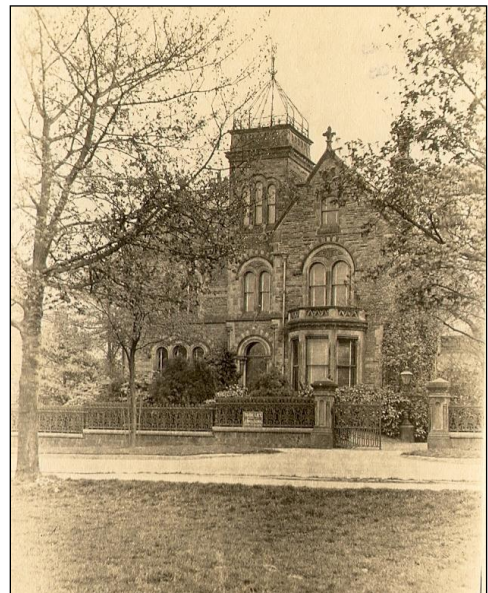
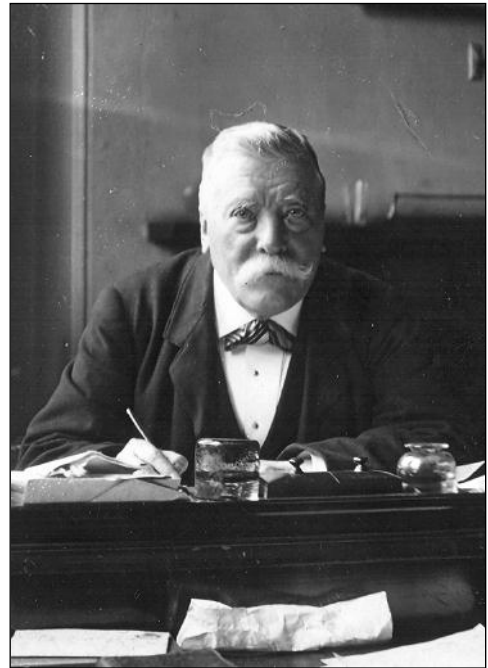
In 1891, when Alexander was 55 and described modestly as a ‘Machine and Tool Maker’ and employer, his family was residing at Burley House, 258 Burley Road, Headingley, West Leeds (Census, 1891). This substantial house serves today as the Burley House Nursing Home for 22 residents who have enduring mental health problems (Carehome, 2010). No picture is available. Also listed by the 1891 Census at this address were his wife Sarah, aged 40, and two of their children, Mary Barras Macpherson, 24 and William Walker Macpherson, 23, a single engineering draughtsman. Their other son, Henry, was absent. Nevertheless, the family now had four servants; Edith M. Potter aged 23, Harriet Moore aged 20, Mary Taylor, a cook aged 42, and Ellen Booth 18. It was evidently a large and affluent household.

In the 1901 Census, Alexander (aged 66), and his wife Sarah (58) were visiting the Hotel Metropole in Blackpool, Lancaster, probably on holiday with Mary A. Pemberton (Census, 1901). Alexander was described as a mechanical engineer and employer, although he may have retired by then. Alexander died in December 1902, just over a year after the 1901 Census. His wife Sarah died 18 November 1910, aged 67, eight years after her husband. The photograph above right was probably one the last taken of Alexander Sinclair Macpherson.

Alexander and Sarah’s final home address was Glenholme, a magnificent Victorian home in West End Park, Harrogate (see right, a postcard from Henry’s photograph collection (H. Macpherson, 1923). The address was also confirmed in a note by Henry’s youngest child Mary Macpherson about the people and places mentioned in the *Belmont Gazette* edited and written mostly by her older brother William Stuart ‘Bob’ (A. Cowan, 2010).

The Sarah Brown Macpherson (née Walker) who married Alexander Macpherson is not to be confused with her maternal grandmother, Sarah Walker (born about 1783 died 14 October 1861). Sarah Walker was the wife and later relict (widow) of Thomas Walker. Their son Henry Walker (born about 1810 and died aged 34 on 5 December 1844) had married Sarah Wright (born about 1818) and had six children, including Alexander’s wife Sarah Brown Walker who was raised by his brother William.

The nature of these relationships between the Macphersons and Walkers was clarified by Alexander and Sarah’s joint tombstone in St John the Baptist’s Parish Church, Adel, Yorkshire. The inscriptions (see right) are an epitaph to the founders of the



**Monumental Inscription No. 206  
St. John the Baptist Parish Church,  
Adel, Yorkshire, England (Gravestone  
Photographic Resource, 1998 - 2010).**

Left Side: In loving memory of Alexander Sinclair Macpherson of Leeds and Harrogate who died Sept 30<sup>th</sup> 1902 aged 67 years. Also of Arthur Herbert infant son of the above born July 1<sup>st</sup> and died August 24<sup>th</sup> 1871. Also of Sarah Brown Macpherson wife of the above A.S. Macpherson died November 18<sup>th</sup> 1910 aged 67 years.

Front Side: In memory of Sarah relict of the late Thomas Walker of Leeds, dyer, who died October 24 1861 aged 78 years. Also Mary wife of William Walker, dyer Leeds who died April 5th 1883 aged 46 years. Also of the above named William Walker who died February 22nd 1888 aged 58 years.

Lower Front: Also Mary Elizabeth daughter of Matthew Pemberton and niece of William Walker who died January 25 1919 aged 74 years.

Macphersons of Leeds and stress their close family links with Sarah's family, the Walkers.

It is also the case that Alexander and Sarah expected their children, especially the boys, to 'do well' at school and prepare for leadership in industry. Annotated photographs in Henry Macpherson's collection (1923) indicate that, after Leeds Grammar Prep School, he attended Thorpatch Grange School (see right). Henry's report card from Thorpatch, in 1883 when he was 14, survives and indicates that he was considered 'Good' at Divinity, History and Drawing, 'Satisfactory' at Arithmetic and Mathematics, 'Fairly Satisfactory' at Latin, 'Fair' in French and Geography and English Composition, and 'Very bad improving' at Writing. His Industrial Conduct, Moral Conduct and Social Conduct were all described as 'Satisfactory'.



Henry's 1885 Report Card from Thorpatch, when he was 16, also survives. It rated him 'Fair' in Divinity, 'Fairly Satisfactory' in English, 'Satisfactory Generally' in Mathematics, and 'Indifferent' in French and Latin and 'Fair' in German. The Principal of Thorpatch Grange, a Mr. Rich. W. Hily, observed dryly that Henry; "Is good in English work but might exert himself in the Languages."

Apart from the vagueness of these ratings and comments, and the emphasis on sporting achievements in his own photographic collection, it appears that Henry was a moderate student of the curriculum of the times that stressed Divinity, Ancient and Modern Languages (of Empires), Geography and Mathematics. There were no technological, social, psychological, cultural or environmental sciences taught that related to the industrial world he was destined for. Lawrence James, in his seminal text *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire*, explained the origins, impact and aims of this curriculum.

Since the 1840s the public schools had undergone a revolution, started by Dr Thomas Arnold of Rugby, which transformed the habits of minds of the middle and upper classes. Arnold and his acolytes sought to instill Christian altruism into their pupils and direct their ambition and aggression towards the playing field. The public schoolboy, educated according to the Arnoldian code, also learned to control himself and to control others through the prefectorial system, a perfect preparation for ruling and chastising the empire's 'lesser breeds'. Intelligence mattered less that the acquisition of 'character', and intellectual activity was largely restricted to otiose [serving no useful purpose] and repetitive exercises in the languages of two former imperial powers, Greece and Rome. The end product was a Christian gentleman with a stunted imagination, who played by the rules and whose highest aim was to serve others. If he had to earn his living, he elected to become an army or navy officer, a senior civil servant, a clergyman, a barrister or joined a branch of the Indian or Colonial administration (James, 1998, pp. 206-207).

Henry's moderate performance and only partially relevant curriculum proved no impediment to him or to his brother William Walker. Since this educational policy clearly starved industry and commerce of creative talent, Alexander and Sarah must have taken a dynastic view of their sons' engagement with education and decided they were destined for leadership in industry, as well as to becoming Christian gentlemen. They paid for their boys' vocational higher education in engineering at Yorkshire College (later the University of Leeds).

Alexander continued with inventive design and leadership that culminated in a full partnership in Fairbairn, Naylor, Macpherson and Company Ltd. which both advertised its services in the *Post Office London Trades Directory of 1891* (Grace's Guide, 2007 see right) and positioned it well for the coming World War One.

The chairman of Fairbairn, Naylor, Macpherson and Company Ltd. was Sir Andrew Fairbairn (born 5 March 1828, died 30 May 1901), a British Liberal politician

**FAIRBAIRN, NAYLOR, MACPHERSON & CO., LIMITED.**

WELLINGTON FOUNDRY, LEEDS,

**ENGINEERS,**

*And Manufacturers of*

MACHINERY FOR PREPARING & SPINNING FLAX, HEMP, TOW, JUTE & WASTE SILK,

*and*

Machinery for the Manufacture of Twines and Rope Yarns;

STRANDING AND LAYING HEMP OR MANILLA ROPES

*AND*

MACHINES OF EVERY DESCRIPTION OF

**ENGINEERS' GENERAL TOOLS,**

**SPECIAL TOOLS**

FOR LOCOMOTIVE WORK,

FOR ORDNANCE PURPOSES, FOR ARMOUR PLATES, &c.

who was born and educated in Glasgow and then in law at Peterhouse, Cambridge. He was called to the bar at the Inner Temple in London in 1852. He was later Mayor of Leeds and chairman of Leeds School Board from 1871 to 1878. He was elected at the 1880 general election as one of the two Members of Parliament (MP) for Eastern West Riding of Yorkshire, and for the new Otley constituency at the 1885 general election. When the Liberals split over Irish Home Rule, Fairbairn joined the breakaway Liberal Unionists, and was defeated at the 1886 general election by the Liberal party candidate (Wikipedia, 2010, June 26).

Reverting to his business interests, Fairbairn then apparently led a series of takeovers to rationalise and significantly develop the textile engineering industry. His key investors were the partners of Fairbairn, Lawson, Combe and Barbour Ltd., a company that had been originally founded in 1812. He registered it as a private company in 11 July 1900, and used it in the takeovers of Fairbairn, Naylor, Macpherson and Company Ltd. of Leeds, Samuel Lawson and Sons of Leeds, and Combe, Baylour and Combe of Belfast (Grace's Guide, 2010).

Alexander's shares in Fairbairn, Naylor, Macpherson and Company were bequeathed to his boys in 1902, although neither of whom would have had enough shares or financial reserves to command a position as a full partner in the wider holding group of Fairbairn, Lawson, Combe and Barbour of Leeds and Belfast Ltd. after the takeover.

In effect, Alexander and Sarah Macpherson ensured that their sons were educated as engineers in order to step into engineering design and management roles despite the industrial rationalisation, in addition to having continuing and substantial income from their share holdings. This also explains why, once they had retired early, both William and Henry were able and felt compelled to continue and further develop major portfolios of 'good works' that reflected their parents' commitment to the Victorian social philosophy of Christian altruism.

Alexander and Sarah Macpherson ensured that their two sons continued as senior managers of the Wellington Foundry in Leeds and that all of their children did 'good works' as Christian altruists

To illustrate, the steadily growing size of Henry's homes long after his retirement suggests that his shares continued to provide rising returns, reflecting the long term success of the holding company; it went on manufacturing tools and machinery for preparing and spinning flax, hemp and jute (Stock Exchange, 1908). By 1936, Fairbairn, Lawson, Combe and Barbour Ltd. was rated, along with Urquhart, Lindsay and Robertson Orchar Ltd., as the largest makers in the world of machinery for the textile industry (Grace's Guide, 2010).

When Alexander Sinclair Macpherson died 13 September 1902 his will dated 25 February (1901) had a net value of £97,936/10/5, is today worth over £7,880,000 using the retail price index or £42,100,000 using average earnings (Officer, 2011). He bequeathed to his wife, Sarah Brown Macpherson, "all plate, linen, china, glass, books, pictures, prints, liquors, furniture and other household effects, all carriages and houses plus £500 and £5,500 annuity." His eldest child, Mary Barras Macpherson, received £2,000 without shares. His two sons, William Walker and Henry, also received £2,000 plus 50% each of his shares and stock in "Fairburn, Laweson, Coombe, Barbour and Company Ltd."

When Sarah died 18 December 1910, eight years later and still normally resident at Glenholme, Harrogate, she died intestate leaving an estate valued at £5,109/17/2 (HMC&TS, 2011), today worth over £387,000.00 using the retail price index or £2,060,000.00 using average earnings (Officer, 2011). Her estate probably went in three parts to her surviving children. She died in the White House, Roundhay, Leeds, the home of her eldest son, William Walker Macpherson.

We now turn to the known histories of Alexander and Sarah's three children; Mary Barras Macpherson, William Walker Macpherson and Henry 'Harry' Macpherson.

## Mary Barras Macpherson

Mary was born 28 July 1866 and died aged 74 on 12 May 1941. She is remembered as a beautiful child (right) and a gracious lady (below). She married William Yeadon Potter when she was 27 on 13 July 1893. William (below right), who was born 23 January 1861 and died 7 December 1933 aged 72, held a Master of Arts degree and became a Minister of Religion. His final appointment was as Vicar of Burton-in-Kendal 1922-1932. They had one daughter who, in turn, had two daughters. Unless otherwise indicated, the information in this section was provided by their granddaughters, Gillian Margaret Tritter (formerly Herbison-Evans née Shoreland-Ball) and Joy Mary Boyce (née Shoreland-Ball) (Tritter & Boyce, 2011) and further elaborated by Joy (Boyce 2012).

It is not remembered why Mary was given the middle name of Barras. Barras is a small village on the coast just north of Arbroath in Scotland. Gillian and Joy think that either William Walker's wife was a Barras or possibly his mother-in-law. Mary spent a lot of time with the Walkers as a child—they had no children of their own they became very close.

Mary Potter (née Macpherson) is remembered as a person who generally enjoyed good health, although, in July 1902, when Rachelina Hepburn Stewart from New Zealand visited the Potters while on an extended tour of Britain and Europe, Mary was having a prolonged convalescence. In a letter dated 21 July, Rachelina wrote home: "We went to St. Mark's Church of which Mr. Potter, Mrs. McPherson's son-in-law, is vicar" ... "After the service we went into the vicarage to see Mrs. Potter who is on the sofa for 6 months complete rest ... her one child Kathleen is 4½." (D Hutton, 2010a)

This 'Kathleen' was in fact Cathleen Mary Yeadon-Potter born 5 January 1898 and who died 19 August 1986 aged 88. Cathleen's link with New Zealand continued for many decades. Don Hutton has established that Rachel Armitage née Stewart in New Zealand was corresponding with her in 1947, well after she had married Lindsay Shorland-Ball on 21 April 1937. Gordon and Inez Macpherson also visited her when they were in the UK.

Lindsay was born 17 October 1912 died 16 September 1978 aged 66. He studied History at Selwyn College Cambridge before taking holy orders in 1936. He served as Curate at Richmond Yorks at the same time as Bob Macpherson. He then served as Vicar at Killinghall, Harrogate, Vicar at North Collingham, Nottinghamshire, Vicar at Mansfield Woodhouse, Nottinghamshire, and finally as Vicar of East Retford and Canon of Southall. Cathleen trained as a doctor at St. James, Leeds, practised briefly during WW2 before focusing on being a mother and a vicar's wife. As noted above, Cathleen and Lindsay Shorland-Ball had two girls; Jillian Margaret Shorland-Ball and Joy Mary Shorland-Ball.

Gillian Margaret Shorland-Ball was born 16 March 1938 in Richmond, Yorkshire. In 1960 she took an English degree in St. Anne's College Oxford University, and then taught for two years at Cheltenham Ladies College. She married Donald Herbison-Evans, on 11 August 1962. Don had a Chemistry BA and a DPhil in nuclear magnetic resonance from St. John's College, Oxford. In 1964 Gill completed a MPhil in Medieval Studies.

Gill and Don had two boys; Jonathan Quetzal Herbison-Evans born 29 August 1965 in New Forest, Hampshire, and Thorin Richard Herbison-Evans born 23 June 1967 in Bournemouth, Hampshire. They moved to Australia where Don taught astronomy at the University of Sydney, researched satellite technology and helped build a radio telescope at Narrabri.



Gill returned to the UK in 1970 with the boys after she and Don had separated and divorced. She then visited Israel and married again, to Alan Levi Tritter, an American mathematician from Boston who was teaching maths and computer science at the Hebrew University. Alan and Gill moved to New York where Alan worked for IBM's research group at York Town Heights. Gill converted to become Jewish and taught adult education part-time.

Gill's children from her first marriage, Jonathan and Thorin, changed their surnames from Herbison-Evans to Tritter and completed their undergraduate education in the United States. Jonathan graduated in sociology from the University of Chicago, completed a DPhil in Nuffield College, Oxford, and today is a professor at Warwick University. He is married to Meri Koivusalu, who completed her MD and PhD at the University of Helsinki they have two children, Elias born 31 August 1999, and Pauli Johannes Lindsay born 9 October 2001.

Thorin graduated in history at the University of Chicago and went on to complete a PhD in the same subject at Princeton University. He is now working at the Jewish Heritage Museum in New York. Thorin married Hee Jeong Son who is Korean. They met at the University of Chicago. They have two boys; Hudson Cole Tritter born 31 July 2001, and Ellis Tritter born 19 September 2007.

Joy Mary Shorland-Ball was born 27 August 1940 in Richmend, Yorkshire. She trained as a nurse at St. Thomas, London. She married Anthony John 'Tony' Boyce on 25 August 1962. They had two children both born in Oxford; Simon Francis Boyce born 23 May 1964 and Joannah Helen Boyce born 16 September 1966. Joy then completed her BA in maths and science with the Open University and then a DPhil at Oxford in 1985 in molecular biology. Research commitments followed along with a lecturing appointment at New College at Oxford in 1990 in Human Sciences. She became a Fellow of New College in 2000 and retired in 2005 as an Emeritus Fellow. Her research projects focused on plant molecular biology, in particular studying the mechanisms by which plants tolerate adverse environmental conditions such as drought.

Joy's husband Tony was born 6 April 1939 and did his first degree in zoology at St. John's College, Oxford. He was awarded a senior scholarship at Christchurch, Oxford and completed his DPhil on computing in taxonomy. He was then appointed a junior research fellow at St. John's College, added a post-doctoral one-year Fulbright scholarship to the University of Kansas where he extended his research in computing. He spent five years at the University of Surrey, before returning to St John's as a lecturer, advancing to Reader in 1990, and finally retiring in 2010 as Principal Bursar and Honorary Fellow, having project-managed the completion of two major new buildings for the College.

Joy and Tony's eldest child, Simon, read Politics, Philosophy and Economics at Wadham College, Oxford. He met his wife, Jacqueline E. Mroz, when they were both working in Buenos Aires. They now live in Montclair, New Jersey where Simon works for National Geographic Television as a Series Producer. They have three sons; Lucas Benjamin Boyce born 18 April 2000, Will Conrad Boyce born 20 August 2003 and Owen Jacob Boyce born 2 June 2005.

Their second child, Joannah, read Russian and Spanish at St John's, Cambridge, before completing her MA in Soviet Studies at Manchester University. She worked in Russia as an editor at the Moscow Times three years, a year in Paris as an editor with Agency France Presse, and then a year in Tennessee as a freelance subeditor. On 13 September 1997 she married Christopher Lon Floyd whom she met while they were both working in Moscow. They live in Oxford where Jo works as a Communications Officer in the Department of International Development, Oxford University. They had two children; Eleanor Macon Floyd, born 29 August 2000, and Daniel John Floyd born 7 January 2005.

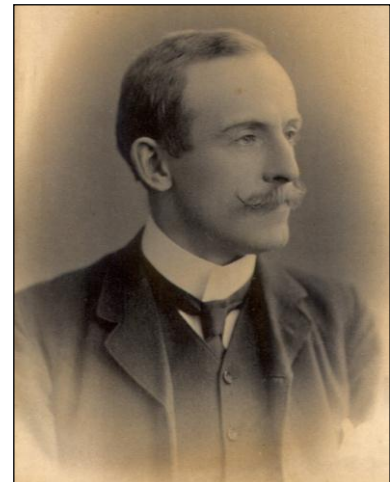
That sums the current knowledge of the extraordinary achievements of the Potters and Shorland-Balls descended from Alexander and Sarah Macpherson's eldest child, Mary Barras Macpherson. We now turn to her two brothers.

## William Walker Macpherson

Alexander and Sarah's second child and eldest boy was William Walker Macpherson, born 5 September 1867 and died 1943, aged 78 (see right). As noted above he entered Leeds Grammar School in the first term of 1877 aged nine (Wilson, 1906, p. 227). He was a clever boy and sent on to study in Paris and Germany, and then to graduate in engineering from Yorkshire College (later Leeds University) (Scott, 1943). He then joined his father either at Macpherson, Naylor and Harrison Ltd. or at Fairbairn, Naylor, Macpherson and Company Ltd. of Leeds. When his father Alexander retired from Fairbairn, Lawson, Combe, Barbour Ltd. in 1902 he took over as managing director of the Wellington Foundry with his brother Henry also in management (Yorkshire Post, 1943a).

In 1903 William was recognised by Leeds Grammar School as a 39 year old engineer in Fairbairn, Lawson, Combe and Barbour Ltd. and as residing at Hawthornden, Roundhay, Leeds (Wilson, 1906, p. 227). This residence at 23 Wetherby Road later became a gentlemen's club; The White House (see right, courtesy Anne Cowan, 2010). William and his wife lived here until late in their lives until the house became too big for their needs and means and they moved into a smaller rented property in Sandhill (Little, 2010b).

William married Elizabeth 'Eliza' Sarah Stanford, commonly known as 'Tye'. They married 14 August 1895 at St Thomas Church, Salisbury, Wiltshire,





England (Ancestry.com., 2008b). Tye was born 15 Oct 1864 in Cranborne Manor, Wiltshire, three years earlier than her husband and died 7 March 1950, seven years after him. Her hair turned white in her 20s (see left). She was the sister of William Stanford born 1856, Mary Jane Stanford born 1857 and Laura Stanford born 1868 (see right). Her parents were William Stanford born about 1825 in Cranborne, Dorset and Sarah Stanford, born 1824.



William and Tye are remembered as loving grandparents by Prue (Little, 2010b). William would whisk his only grandson ‘Tony Lumpkin’ (Tony Little, see below) off upstairs to his office

for small presents; ‘wim wams’. Prue would be scooped up and cuddled by her ‘Grandmama’.

William became alienated with Fairbairn, Lawson, Combe and Barbour Ltd. in 1911 and resigned when they refused a place on the board for his younger brother Henry (Little, 2010a). He thereafter devoted himself to a wide range of charitable, philanthropic and religious interests (Yorkshire Post, 1943b).

William was intensely patriotic and held a 20 year commission in the Territorial Artillery. When WW1 started 28 July 1914 he enlisted in the Royal Field Artillery (see right), aged 47. He served in France from 1917. When WW1 ended 11 November 1918 he stayed on in the British Army until he retired as a major aged 54 on 16 July 1921. His discharge papers confirmed his home address as The White House, Roundhay, Leeds (Ancestry.com., 2008a). He was referred to thereafter as ‘The Major’.



The Major was very outspoken on religious matters and sponsored a missionary to work in India.

However, a surprise visit by his son-in-law David Little, who was selling planes to maharajahs between the wars, discovered that the fellow was doing nothing and simply pocketing the money. When William was told this he refused to believe Tony and continued to pay the fellow and similarly to ‘fritter money away’ on various religious charities to the point that relatively little was left when he passed on. There has been a marked reluctance by some in the family to give to religious charities since (Hancock, 2010; Little, 2010b).

The Major gradually lost his eyesight and hearing in his latter years and had to resign from his many public offices and charities. And while his wife Tye took a more metaphorical view of the Bible (Little, 2010b), he retained his reputation as a fearsome literalist until his death (see right). Some sense of his strict views on religious matters can also be gained from a commentary written after his death (Yorkshire Post, 1943b);

Major W.W. Macpherson, of Leeds, whose death is announced, often expressed himself outspokenly in the Church Assembly. On one occasion, when submitting a resolution expressing concern at the increasing tendency in conversation, in literature, and in the stage to the use of the name of God, often with great irreverence, Major Macpherson said: “I have had sufficient experience in the Army not to be over-squeamish, and if any one tells me to go to hell, it leaves me cold. What should one do if, in a game of bridge, someone says ‘Good God’ because you happen to have four aces in your hand? Should there be politeness on the one hand or loyalty to God on the other? I say you must speak at once.



When Nicki and I married 12 July 1969 in Roundhay, Leeds, and the reception venue had to be cancelled at short notice due to a fire, Nicki's father Jack Grundy rebooked the reception into the White House. William Walker Macpherson's nieces, Eileen, then 59, and Marguerite 'Peggy' then 55, thought it very clever that the reception was being held in "Uncle William and Aunt Tye's home." And, when no one was watching, they slipped away upstairs to visit the bedrooms they had stayed in as children!

Tye and William had two children. Their first was Phyllis Mary Macpherson born 16 June 1899 in Leeds. She was 15 when WW1 started and 19 when it ended in 1918, a beautiful young woman (see right). Like many of her generation, she never married; a not uncommon situation in a society that had lost so many young men during the war.

Phyllis trained as a nurse and was promoted to ward sister in the University College Hospital. There she caught polio, an acute viral infectious disease that attacks motor neurons, causing muscle weakness and acute flaccid paralysis. She probably caught the virus from a polio patient who had to be hand fed using a pipette. She was paralyzed down her right side. Her father tried all sorts of treatments. For example, William had studied in Germany before WW1 and was fluent in German, so he took her to polio clinics there but without success.

Despite the damage to her nervous system she served as a bridesmaid at her sister Jean's wedding 15 February 1927 (see right, Margaret Jean Little, Phyllis and her cousin Bob Macpherson). Soon after Jean's wedding Phyllis and her parents left on a trip to South America. They disembarked at Liverpool from the 'Orduna' on 23 September 1927; William aged 60, Tye aged 63 and Phyllis aged 29, having embarked at Coronel, Chile (Ancestry.com., 2008c). At one point Phyllis may have despaired (Little, 2010b) and fell from a window at the White House, breaking her ankle. Her tragic life ended 11 February 1943 when, aged 44, she died of pneumonia (Aslett, 2010).

William and Tye's second child was Jean Sinclair Macpherson, born 4 August 1901 in Leeds, Yorkshire, England, and died 19 December 1974. Jean was gorgeous from the outset (see below left) and is remembered (Little, 2010b) as a most attractive and highly accomplished woman (see below right). She was fair haired, blue eyed, well read, played the piano, sang in a choir, always up for an adventure and had a great sense of humour. She did a great deal of local charity work.

Jean was also a volunteer restoration worker in local stately homes, helping to rescue curtains dating from as early as 1745 that were hanging in shreds. The restoration process involved soaking them in a bath of rainwater and Saponaria, unfolding the shreds onto new linen backing, gently brushing to bring out the vegetable dyes and



then stitching to fix the pattern in place. Jean was ambidextrous and therefore able to sew from both sides, an enormous advantage. She contributed to restoration work on curtains in the Paris salon on Louis XIV, the Sun King, and to Tudor curtains from Hatfield House and Uppark, before the National Trust took up such work.

It is interesting that the Macphersons appear to have a disproportionate number that are left handed or ambidextrous, some with mild dyslexia that soon resolves itself.





Jean's first cousin Bertie took a great shine to her, and asked her father for permission to marry, but The Major ruled it out on the grounds that they were too closely related (Aslett, 2010).

Instead Jean married the dashing pilot David Dewsbury Little 15 February 1926, at St. John's Church, Roundhay (see right), from the White House. Fog prevented the bridegroom flying his bride to Paris to start their honeymoon. They flew out the following day for Sicily.

David was born 7 May 1900 in the West Riding of Yorkshire and died aged 80 in May 1980 (Ancestry.com, 2007). He probably inherited his adventurist spirit and Christian altruism from his father; another David Little who declined a knighthood for his public services (Aslett, 2010). His father had also restored the yacht *Intrepid*, although the first trip in 1939 ended on a sandbank, and the yacht then had to be mothballed for the war.

Jean and David moved from Leeds down to Terwick, near Rogate, Sussex. The move had the advantage of bringing him closer to his work in Airspeed, Portsmouth.

One of his David's colleagues was Neville Chute, the famous but difficult author of *On the Beach*. His younger brother, Andrew, was an engineer who designed aeroplanes and gliders. Their company was bought out by De Havilland just before WW2.

At the outbreak of WW2, David, then aged 40, enlisted in the Fleet Air Arm of the Royal Navy. He was a Squadron Adjutant at the Yeovilton training base (see right) and was "never happier" (Aslett, 2010). He was listed as a family mourner at William Walker Macpherson's funeral in 1943 with the rank of Lieutenant Commander (Yorkshire Post, 1943a).

Jean and David's first child, Felicity Ann 'Prue' Little, was born 19 July 1928 in Leeds. She was raised in a household that attended the Anglican Church in Terwick assiduously. Prue recalled being "dragged out of bed" and attending for "a long long time". However, after she had married and gone abroad, and returned many years later to the same Church, the Vicar gently chided her; "I haven't seen you for some time." She replied in astonishment, "That's alright. I have a big credit balance here."

Prue married Jonathan James Aslett, born 1930. Their wedding notice described the groom as Captain Jonathan James Aslett, 2nd King Edward VII's Own Gurkha Rifles (The Sirmoor Rifles). Jon was the elder son of the late Mrs Aslett and Brigadier A.R. Aslett of Malvern Court, SW7, a rugby player capped six times for England, playing once against the All Blacks.

The wedding notice also noted that bride was Miss Felicity Ann (Prue) Little, daughter of Mr and Mrs David Little of Terwick Copse, Rogate. They were married by the Dean of Lichfield, the Very Rev. W.S. 'Bob' Macpherson, who was a cousin of the bride.

Jon served with distinction in the Gurkhas and was awarded a Military Cross (The London Gazette, 1965, 18 June, p. 1) (see his citation right). After retiring from the Gurkhas, and henceforth called 'Maj' by Prue, Jon served as a company director prior to his final retirement.

They now live in a beautiful house and garden in Rogate, Sussex, not far from Terwick (see overleaf).



#### Military Cross

Major Jonathan James ASLETT (414796), 2nd King Edward VII's Own Gurkha Rifles (The Sirmoor Rifles).

Major Aslett with his company was given the task of extensively ambushing a sector of the border area. In preparation he personally led nine long and arduous reconnaissance patrols.

On 29th August 1964, while returning from one such patrol Major Aslett and the two platoons he led were themselves ambushed by a superior force. Major Aslett and the point platoon were pinned down by heavy close range automatic fire. Despite the closeness of the enemy Major Aslett, moving in the open, deployed his force and conducted an outflanking manoeuvre which drove off the enemy. Two Gurkha other ranks were killed and three wounded in this action. Major Aslett's courage and leadership in a situation which completely favoured the enemy saved the day and prevented a disastrous defeat.

On 23rd October 1964, an enemy group, which in the end proved to be about seventy strong, approached a platoon ambush commanded by Major Aslett. He allowed three enemy to enter the ambush before he sprang it by shooting and killing the fourth man. While the fire fight between the ambushers and ambushed was going on the main bulk of the Indonesian force deployed and counter-attacked the right flank of our troops' position. Regardless of his own safety Major Aslett manoeuvred his force so as to break up the counter-attack. This encounter cost the enemy six killed and several wounded at the cost of only one Gurkha wounded.

Throughout both engagements Major Aslett's courage was of a very high order and an inspiration to his soldiers many of whom had never been under fire before. On both occasions his leadership and professional ability resulted in the defeat of numerically superior enemy forces.

Jon and Prue had two children; William David Aslett, born 10 April 1964 in Hong Kong, and Sophie Evelyn Aslett. Prue's account follows (Little, 2010b).

William is a director of television productions for BBC Scotland. He married Anne MacLaren, Financial Director of Elton John's Aids Foundation. She was born 4 August 1964 and she and William had two children. Olivia Aslett was born 9 January 1999. James Aslett was born 4 April 2003.

Sophie married Alastair Graham 23 September 1990. They have had five children, the first three born in London. Their first was Thomas James Johnson Graham born 29 January 1997, now at boarding school, Radley, Oxford. Tom is very athletic and doing well. Their second child was Rory Graham born 19 November 1998. Their sole girl came next; Evelyn 'Evie' Rachel Graham, born 23 April 2000. They then had twin boys born 4 August 2004 in Dumfries; Charlie and Angus Graham.

The two families are in the photograph right. Left to right in the back row are Sophie Graham, Rory Graham, Angus Graham, James Aslett and William Aslett. In the front row, left to right, are Alastair Graham with Charlie Graham on his lap, Tom Graham, Evie Graham, Olivia Aslett and Anne Aslett.

Felicity Ann 'Prue' Little is not to be confused with Felicity Ann 'Flick' Hancock (see right, 1954) who married Prue's younger brother; David Antony Sinclair Little, known as Tony. Both Prue and Flick made substantial contributions as informants to this chapter, and, to avoid confusion, are referenced using their maiden names; Prue as (Little, 2010) and Flick as (Hancock, 2010).

To continue now with Flick's recollections (Hancock, 2010), Jean Macpherson and David Little's second child, David Antony Sinclair Little, that is 'Tony', who was born 19 May 1931 in Leeds. Tony married Flick 24 July 1954, a school teacher who now resides at Church View, St. Mary's Road, Dinton, Salisbury. They were also married by the Very Rev. W.S. 'Bob' Macpherson, Dean of Lichfield. Tony and Flick had four children, as seen below; Katharine Jean Sinclair Little (right), Suzanna Mary Little (second left), Harriett Jane Little (third left) and David Rupert Piran Little (left).

To go back for a moment, Flick was born in Singapore. She started her education there but was evacuated to Australia during WW2 when the Japanese threatened. Her parents were senior civil servants and delayed their departure. They were then both killed when their steamship Kuala took a direct hit from Japanese bombers. Very few survived. After WW2 Flick was



repatriated to England and raised by her Guardian, Archie Frazer-Nash, a genial big-hearted racing car driver (see right).



Flick trained as a primary school teacher at Roehampton and taught in London for a few years. After marrying, having children, moving to Salisbury, and starting her children's education, she went back to teaching three days a week for 12 years at Salisbury Cathedral School.

Tony died 5 May 2000 in Teffont Magna, Salisbury, Wiltshire, of a heart attack when painting the swimming pool he had built. Tony was a perfectionist and very determined; he wanted to have the pool ready for summer visitors and worked on through the heat of the day. He was also a fast learner. He built a career as an unqualified pyrotechnical engineer, safely designing and manufacturing fireworks, military pyrotechnics and distress rockets. He also learned to manage company amalgamations, moved the newly amalgamated company and operations to Salisbury, established branches in Melbourne and South Africa, and marketed their products around the world. When a hostile takeover resulted in his displacement, he immediately moved into procurement and lighting, never actually retiring (see below, from left to right, Harriett, Flick holding Katharine's Alexander, Tony and Katharine holding Harriett's Arabella).

Tony and Flick spent many of their holidays with their children and relatives at their cottage Trehaverock, St. Endellion, Cornwall (see below Jon, Tony and Prue). Interestingly, the British PM David Cameron and his wife have just added Endellion to their newborn girl's name, to commemorate her birth in Cornwall.



Katherine's second name Jean came from her grandmother, Jean Macpherson. She added Sinclair before her surname by deed poll in Australia because she liked the name. She was born 29 October 1958 and married Anthony 'Tony' George Milne of Sydney, Australia, 20 April 1981, who came from a farming family in Tamworth, NSW. Tony Milne came to England and worked in lighting

with his father-in-law, Tony Little, and then with his wife Kate, returned to Camare, Australia, and launched his own very successful lighting business.

Katherine 'Kate' Jean Sinclair Little and Tony Milne had three children; Alexander Milne, born 7 December 1984 in Salisbury, England, James Milne born in NSW, Australia 28 June 1987, and Emily Milne, also born in NSW Australia, 11 November 1992. Kate and Tony have divorced.

Suzanna Mary Little, born 12 February 1960, married Richard Denniston. Richard has an English father and a French mother. He was educated in England and today works in re-insurance and regularly visits France. Suzanna and Richard have two sons and a daughter; Samuel Otho Denniston born 28 December 1989, Henry Guy 'Harry' Denniston born 2 March 1992, and Angelica Felicity 'Jelly' Denniston, born 20 June 1994. They are currently living in Salisbury.

Harriett Jane Little was born 8 July 1962, the day after Jon and Prue Aslett married. Harriett married Peter Combes 30 December 1983. Peter was born in Salisbury and today manages a catering business in Teffont Magna. Harriett and Peter have three children; Arabella Combes born 19 October 1985, Daniel Combes born 1 June 1987 and William Combes born 24 October 1991.



David Rupert Piran Little, known as Rupert, was born 7 February 1968 in the Malthouse at Teffont

Magna, and educated at Salisbury Cathedral School. His name Piran comes from the Hancock family who are Cornish Celts. Flick's brother and many other Hancocks have Piran in their names to commemorate St. Piran bringing Christianity to Cornwall from Ireland. St. Piran's oratory has been found in the sands at Perranporth, St. Agnes. It is a family custom to baptize those carrying the name Piran in the oratory. Rupert designs lightning systems and has installations in theatres and in Windsor Castle for the Prince of Wales.

The Hancocks are Cornish Celts who commemorate St. Piran bringing Christianity to Cornwall from Ireland. When they use the name Piran in their family they have the child baptized in St. Pirin's oratory discovered in Perranporth.

Rupert married Marion Kitson, known as Chiggy, the Devon-born daughter of retired General Sir Frank and Lady Kitson, who live on the edge of Dartmoor. Rupert and Chiggy have four children. Their eldest is David Benjamin Little, born 3 December 1999. David was baptized in the Tower of London because his maternal grandfather had military connections there, a relatively short time before his paternal grandfather Tony Little died. Rupert and Chiggy's second child is Constance Olivier Little, born 15 August 2001. Their third child is Piran Thomas Oliver Little, born 9 June 2004. Their fourth child is Anna Elizabeth Little, born 5 August 2008. Photographs are awaited.

That summarizes the current knowledge of the known descendents of William Walker Macpherson. I now need to explain the others who attended his niece's 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday in 1938 (see back row, left to right, his brother Henry Macpherson, niece Marguerite 'Peggy', governess 'Moiey', niece Mary Macpherson, nephew Bob's Peggy, niece Eileen, The Major. Front row, left to right, daughter Jean, wife Tye, sister-in-law Lily and older sister Mary Barras Potter, née Macpherson).



**Henry 'Harry' Macpherson**

Alexander and Sarah's third child was Henry Macpherson, known as 'Harry'. He was born 17 July 1869, married Lily Hallewell 5 June 1894

(see right) and died 19 March 1942 in Leeds, Yorkshire. He was home educated until nine when he went to Leeds Grammar Preparatory School from the third term of 1878 (Wilson, 1906, p. 239).

Harry attended Thorpatch Grange School and Wighill Church near Thorpatch (H. Macpherson, 1923), and graduated in engineering from Yorkshire College, later Leeds University. He joined his father's engineering design team in the Wellington Foundry. In 1902, when his father retired, he joined his brother's senior management team. In 1905 his old Grammar school noted that he was a 36 year old mechanical engineer in Fairbairn, Lawson, Combe and Barbour Ltd. and living at The Tower, Woodhouse Cliff, Leeds (Wilson, 1906, p. 239) (see below right).



The sizes of Harry's homes indicates the steady success he achieved in his career. In 1901 he was 31 and living at 3 Mossland Road, West Leeds, with his wife Lily 28, son Alfred S. 5, son Herbert A, 4, son Henry D. 3, and three servants; Elizabeth A. Gibble, cook 29, Ethel G. Bowser, nurse 20 and Lily Haphins, chambermaid 18 (Ancestry.com., 1901). They moved briefly to Abbeydale, 3 Norland Road, Leeds (H. Macpherson, 1923). They were then at The Tower (see right) from 1904 to 1909 before moving to 'Belmont,' Wood Lane, Leeds, Yorkshire in Leeds, a substantial three storied home. They lived there, according to the *Belmont*

*Gazette*, until soon after August 1918 (W. S. Macpherson, 1918). By December that year they had moved to Ghyllas (see right) in Cortley, near Sedburgh, a substantial country home on a few acres between Cortley and Ravenstonedale. Their boys attended Sedburgh School.



Harry and Lily had their children home schooled until they were about nine. They added Mabel Mary Morris to the household as nurse and governess. She is first referred to in the 22 October 1916 edition of the *Belmont Gazette* (W. S. Macpherson, 1916a) but may have been with the family earlier. She was known first by the children and then by the family as 'Moiey'. She looked after and educated the children 'upstairs', bringing them down for planned meetings with their parents. When they were about nine they left for a more formal boarding school education. The boys went to Sedburgh Preparatory School and then to Sedburgh School.



Once Harry and Lily's boys had finished at Sedburgh, they moved their family back from Ghyllas to Leeds, to Headingley Hall in Leeds (see right). The girls went to Leeds Girls High School and Harrogate College. Anne Cowan has a doll called Nelly dressed in the uniform of Leeds Girls High School made by Lily for her daughter Marguerite 'Peggy' (A. Cowan, 2010).



Moiey stayed on with Harry and Lily in her own room long after the children needed a governess and was included in all family activities. When Headingley Hall was sold in 1942 she moved into a room in a residential home at the family's expense near Eileen's house in Weetwood Avenue, and was visited regularly by family. She joined Mary's family holidays in the late 1950s and 1960s to Whitby. She was still writing letters in the early 1960s to Mary's children using a backing board and rubber bands to indicate where the lines were (A. Cowan, 2010) (see right, Moiey holding Johnny Dickinson, Anne left, Jane right). She died about 1962 in her late 80s, by then virtually blind.



Harry retired about the start of WWI on 28 July 1914 when he would have been 45. The family then mobilized in support of 'The War Effort.' An intense patriot in a family of patriots, Harry volunteered as an Inspector of Special Constables (W. S. Macpherson, 1916c) in the Leeds City Special Police. He converted his 25hp SCAT car into an ambulance (see right, with eldest son Alfred at the wheel). Anne Cowan still has his truncheon inscribed 'Leeds City Police' (A. Cowan, 2010).

Harry and Lily's three eldest sons and servants also enlisted as soon as they could. Alfred Sinclair Macpherson (born 20 April 1895, Leeds, died 3 March 1968) joined the Royal Army Medical Corps when he was still under age. His father intervened and had the enlistment cancelled. When he was of age or gained his father's permission he immediately re-enlisted and served in the trenches of France as an unarmed stretcher bearer. Herbert Alexander 'Bertie' Macpherson (born 4 August 1896 Leeds, died 5 June

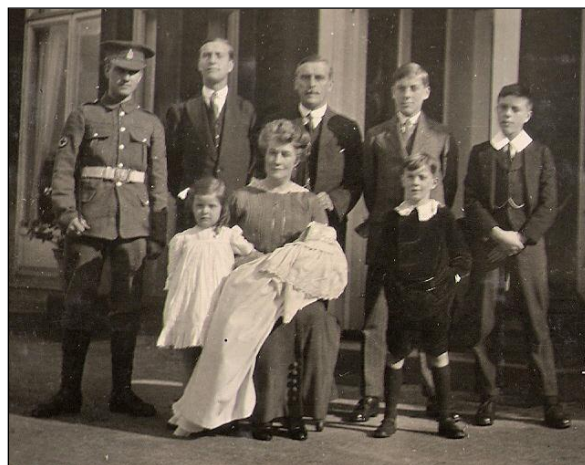


1976, Leeds) enlisted as a subaltern in the East Yorkshire Rifles Regiment. Henry 'Douglas' Macpherson (born 6 March 1898 Leeds, died 14 October 1917) joined the Royal Flying Corps. The male servants joined various regiments.

The photograph right was taken at Belmont in 1914. The back row comprises Alfred, 'Bertie', father Henry, Douglas, and 'Bob'. The front row has Eileen, mother Lily, baby Marguerite 'Peggy' and 'Gordon'. Mary Sinclair Macpherson was born three years later just before the end of WW1 (22 April 1917 at Belmont, died 22 August 2004, Leicester).

Harry and Lily's other children were too young to enlist during WW1. William Stuart 'Bob' Macpherson (born 30 September 1901 died 7 July 1978) and Eric 'Gordon' Macpherson (born 1 June 1907, Yorkshire, died 24 January 1979) were still at school. Both served with distinction in WW2. Eileen Macpherson (born 13 April 1910, died 23 April 1989 in Leeds) was four and Marguerite was not yet one (born 14 August 1914, died 20 July 2003 Leicester).

During this time there would only have been income from Harry's shares. WW1 and its aftermath destabilized and partially scattered Harry and Lily's family. Lily, always strikingly beautiful, aged gracefully, somehow enduring the setbacks encountered by her children and grandchildren, and suffering more and more from ill health as time went on.



In brief, their eldest son Alfred somehow survived two years in the trenches in France, and after only partially recovering from the effects, eloped with and married a single mother Margaret Louise Kendall against his father's wishes, and left for New Zealand. He helped establish the Macphersons of the Far North of New Zealand, as described in another chapter. Their second son Bertie was slightly wounded in France and stayed on to serve in the British Army in India and England until he retired as a Brigadier General, as described below. Douglas was shot down over Ypres in 1917, aged 19, as described in another chapter. None of Harry and Lily's sons joined Fairbairn, Lawson, Combe and Barbour Ltd. And none of the enlisted servants returned.

The rest of Harry and Lily's children in England turned to serve in the Anglican Church, teach and/ or raise families. Bob became a Minister of Religion and eventually Dean of Litchfield. Gordon went first to Kenya and then joined Alfred to go farming in the Far North of New Zealand. Eileen remained a single school teacher in Leeds. Marguerite married William 'John' Johnston, Archdeacon of Bradford and later Bishop of Dunwich 1977-1980 although remaining childless. Mary married William Francis Reynallt Dickinson (born 19 June 1906, died 19 March 1980) and had three children. They all lived middle class professional lives.

In WW1, all the men of fighting age in Harry Macpherson's household enlisted, servants included, and none returned

Harry and Lily lived out their days in Headingley Hall as WW2 approached in comfortable circumstances. Half of the building was sold off as Shire Oak House to help sustain their lifestyle. They were the focus of family life for those raising families in England and for visitors from New Zealand. They had six bedrooms, two box rooms in the loft, a billiard room, a lounge with a baby grand piano, dining room, the butler's pantry, kitchen, scullery and larder, basement and two bathrooms, after the subdivision.



Alfred visited in 1936 from New Zealand and was the centre of many family gatherings (see left, Alfred, sister Peggy and Miss Milnes, Southport 1936). He soon returned to New Zealand, re-enlisted again as a Transport Sergeant soon after the outbreak of WW2 but never again left New Zealand to visit 'Home'. His younger brother Gordon visited England many times with his wife



Ines Bennett after WW2, and again in later decades with their two children; Rosemary Delaney Macpherson (born 15 November 1946) and Robin Mary Sinclair Macpherson (born 24 August 1949). In 1939 Harry and Lily's family took their holidays as usual, this time to Llandudno (see right, sisters Peggy and Eileen), not realizing that it was the end of an era.

WW2 started 3 September 1939 and the British economy was abruptly redirected into winning the war. It was as if the lessons of WW1 had not been learned. All service-aged Macpherson men of Leeds enlisted, as did their relatives in New Zealand. Family gatherings in 1939 at Headingley Hall were increasing bereft of men (see right, Harry, Lily, baby Josephine, mother Bob's Peggy and Mary).



When Harry and Lily died in 1942, Headingley Hall had to be sold in difficult circumstances. The country was at war and fighting on many fronts. It was also the year when the Nazis started their Final Solution of murdering about six million people in concentration camps, the Battle of El Alamein stopped Rommel in North Africa, the Battle of Stalingrad stopped the German advance into Russia, the Japanese invasion was turned around in the Pacific and the Americans started arriving in England to assist. Lily had been ill for some years, but when her husband Harry died suddenly 19 March 1942, she seemed to give up. She died five days later, 24 March 1942. Harry's obituary appears right.

Harry and Lily's children in England not in the armed forces had an inventory made of the contents of Headingley Hall (Hepper and Sons, 1942). Included were 11 Queen Anne style dining chairs, Hepplewhite and Chippendale furniture, Crown Derby and Dresden crockery, and Axminster carpets. On the other hand, their car, a 1937 10 hp Morris saloon car, was five years old and had a cracked engine block. It was valued at £60. The inventory was sent to all members of the family and they nominated what they wanted on items totaling £1,118.6.6d.

Many of the smaller domestic items went to Eileen, then 32 and unmarried and who soon settled at 32 Weetwood Avenue, Leeds. One of the few items that came to New Zealand at that time was a brass model cannon valued at 17/6d that I recall seeing in Gordon and Ines's home in Honeymoon Valley. Other items were sold or shared in the family, a process actively facilitated by their youngest daughter Mary, with some other items eventually coming to New Zealand.

The lives of Harry and Lily's children in Leeds are now detailed, with the exception of their eldest son Alfred and fifth son Gordon whose lives and descendants are the subject of a separate chapter focusing on the Macphersons of the Far North of New Zealand.

**LEEDS ENGINEER**

**Sudden Death of Mr. H. Macpherson**

The death took place suddenly last night at Headingley Hall, Leeds, of Mr. Henry Macpherson. Mr. Macpherson, who was 72, was the younger son of Mr. A. S. Macpherson, of Wellington Foundry. On his father's death, Mr. Macpherson was for some years assistant to Major W. W. Macpherson, his brother, the then managing director.

Mr. Macpherson took a prominent part in the church life of Leeds. He was for many years attached to W r a n g t h o r n Church, and was a Mr. H. Macpherson lay reader. Among the offices he held were those of chairman of the Leeds City Mission and chairman of the Leeds branch C.P.A. He was a director of Hattersley and Son, Ltd., and a member of the board of the Leeds Skyrac and Morley Savings Bank.

In the last war, he was made superintendent of the special police of C Division. He held the honorary rank of superintendent at the time of his death.

His four sons are serving with the Forces, one being in New Zealand, and there are three daughters. Mrs. Macpherson survives her husband.

The funeral is on Saturday. A service will be held at W r a n g t h o r n at 12.15, before cremation at Lawnswood.

## Herbert Alexander 'Bertie' Macpherson

Harry and Lily's second son was the tall and debonair Bertie Macpherson (born 4 August 1896, died 05 June 1976). 'Bertie' played at least twice for the First Eleven at Sedburgh and was 'awarded' his boots (W. S. Macpherson, 1916c). He 'cut a dash' in his uniform as a subaltern in the East Yorkshire Rifles in WW1 (see right, Lily and Bertie). He served in France and had the relatively good fortune to be wounded slightly in the left arm while in command of a transport column (W. S. Macpherson, 1916b).

His next postings during WW1 were to various staff roles in Egypt in 1916, Salonica 1916-1917 and India 1917-1919 (Sedburgh School, 1925, p. 65). He decided to make a career of service in the Army, eventually retiring as Brigadier General.

Bertie married Lillian Margaret Sidebottom 14 April 1931 in St. Andrew's Church, Farnham, Surrey, England. She was dubbed 'Bertie's Peggy' to avoid confusion with Marguerite 'Peggy' and Bob's Peggy. Peggy was 11 years Bertie's junior (born 27 June 1907 died Apr-May-June 1982) and came from a monied background. They were back in India in 1935, enjoying the inter-war peace, and were visited there by Mary prior to WW2 starting (see right, 1937, tiger hunting, Mary left, Peggy fourth). They lived a very good life in the largest house in the family with beautiful furniture, much of which may have come from Headingley Hall (A. Cowan, 2010).

They retired to a comfortable home in a large garden in the village of Bulmer, near Malton, North Yorkshire. They maintained a formal dining room modeled on a combination of an Officers Mess and Headingley Hall, and 'entertained for England' (A. Cowan, 2010).

I recall Bertie as a formal yet kindly fellow. Peggy became a regal and larger-than-life woman. She kept an excellent garden. They lived well, well into their 70s. Peggy outlived Bertie by six years, dying suddenly while driving home after a bridge party (A. Cowan, 2010).

Bertie and Peggy's first child, Caroline Sinclair Macpherson, was born in Farnham, Surrey, Kent, 21 June 1932. Caroline accompanied her parents to India in 1932-1933 soon after her birth. She was educated in England and qualified as a radiographer. She ended her professional career as Head Radiographer at Charing Cross Hospital, London. She never married.

Like her mother, Caroline kept a fine garden in her retirement in the Scottish village of Kirkcudbright (see above right, Caroline, Mary and Rosemary, all Sinclair Macphersons, 2008). She died 5 August 2009 in Kirkcudbright, Kincardineshire, Scotland.

Caroline's brother, Timothy Ian Macpherson was born in England 28 August 1936 and died 9 September 2007. He discovered his greatest talent early; making people laugh (see right, 1939). He kept ponies at one stage, entertaining our children royally when we visited in the late 1960s. He was very charismatic and irreverent; our children especially loved his cat called Cluny.





On 21 September 1962 Tim married Angela Mary Russell Dodd (born 28 August 1936). They had had two girls: Fiona Rose Sinclair Macpherson born 29 February 1964 in Kensington, Middlesex, and; Amanda Katherine Russell Macpherson born 5 July 1965 in Berkhamstead, Hertfordshire. The family lived for a period at Osthouse, Pugs Hole, Sussex.

The two girls were privately educated. Fiona developed a career as hedge fund manager in the City of London, never married, and today lives in the Cotswolds. Amanda married James Saligari in 1999 and they had three children; the youngest is Tom. 'Mandy' is tipped to become a family historian (A. Cowan, 2010). More detail on this potential role is awaited.

Tim continued to glide through life, working hard in bursts, often restoring old homes. Angela eventually despaired of him and they divorced. He then married again, to Lyn, who had a daughter from a previous relationship. They were very supportive grandparents to two children under five during her daughter's illness and ultimate death from cancer. After her death they did a lot of child minding, up until Tim's death in 2007.

That completes the known descendants of Henry and Lily's second child, Brigadier General Herbert Alexander 'Bertie' Macpherson.

### Henry 'Douglas' Macpherson

Harry and Lily's third son was Henry Douglas Macpherson, was born 20 March 1898 in Leeds, Yorkshire. He was a Second Lieutenant in the 29th Squadron, Royal Flying Corps (see right). Douglas was killed in action 14 October 1917 over the Ypres Battlefield in WW1, shot down by a German Ace. It was a terrible loss to the family. He is buried in the Mendinghem Military Cemetery, Belgium, 17 km northwest of Ypres. Douglas is the subject of a separate chapter.



### William Stuart 'Bob' Macpherson

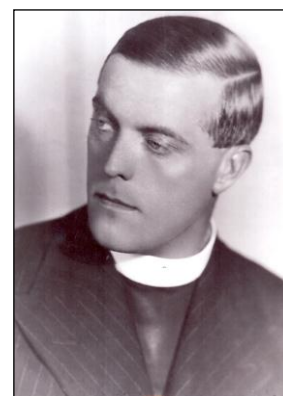
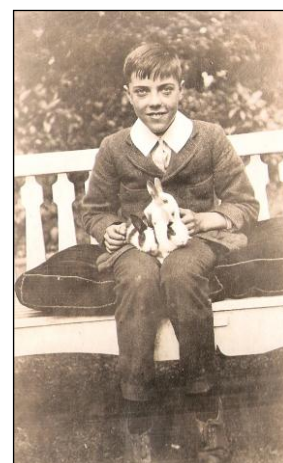
Harry and Lily's fourth child was born 30 September 1901 and known as Bob. He had a talent for observation, analysis and interpretation beyond his years, as well as a subtle wit. In WW1 (see right, 1914), too young to enlist, he edited and mostly authored a number of editions of the *Belmont Gazette* and the *Ghyllas Gazette*. These in-house family newspapers documented the actual and fictional events in the life of the family at war. Copies of these *Gazettes* are with Anne Cowan (A. Cowan, 2010) and her sister Jane, the originals with Bob's daughter Josephine, and provide many insights into a family at war.

Bob was educated at Sedburgh, where his own two boys were later educated, and at Pembroke College, Cambridge University. He graduated in Arts in 1928. He then visited his brother Alfred's farm in the Far North of New Zealand as well as branches of the Sinclair and Macpherson families in the South Island. Some of his photographs taken in 1928 will be displayed in the chapter concerned with The Macphersons of the Far North of New Zealand.

Don Hutton noted that Bob put Headingley Hall as his place of residence when he visited the Armitage homestead "Garmancare" near Temuka, N.Z. from 24 to 26 October 1928 and signed the Visitors' Book. He arrived back in Glasgow 12 December 1928 on the *Caledonia*, a ship of the Anchor Line (Ancestry.com., 2008c).

After a period at Wycliffe Hall, a Church of England theological college of the University of Oxford, he was ordained in 1932 (see right). Bob served as a Curate at Richmond from 1932-1937. He was a Minor Canon and Senior Curate at Richmond Cathedral 1937-1939.

Bob married in 1937 when he was 36 to Margaret Josephine 'Peggy' Wilton. She was dubbed 'Bob's Peggy' to differentiate her from with 'Bertie's Peggy' and from Marguerite, the first 'Peggy' (A. Cowan, 2010). Bob's Peggy was born 21 July 1917, 16 years Bob's junior.



Bob and Peggy's first child was Josephine Mary Macpherson, born 18 June 1938 in Ripon, Yorkshire (General Register Office England, 1938). She soon met her first cousins (see right, Bertie, Bertie's Peggy, Bob's Peggy and Bob, Caroline, Josephine and Tim, 1939).



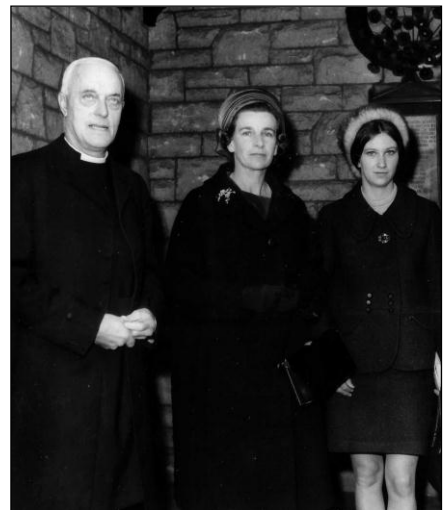
Bob then served six years as a Chaplain in the Royal Navy, mostly on the HMS Indomitable (Fleet Air Arm, 2000-2001). This famous aircraft carrier was commissioned 10 October 1941 and was lucky to survive being hit by two 500Kg bombs when helping to resupply Malta on Operation Pedestal (see below right, HMS Indomitable with HMS Eagle behind, taken from flight deck of HMS Victorious).



After repairs, she was helping with operations in Sicily on 16 July 1943 when she was hit again, this time by a torpedo. She was sent to the US for repairs, and in July 1944, joined the Far East Fleet. On 4 May 1945 she was hit by kamikaze planes. She survived to serve in the Mediterranean and Home Fleets after the war. Bob also developed a special relationship with The Green Howards (amalgamated into The Yorkshire Regiment 6 June 2006) and was their officiating chaplain.

After WW2, Bob returned to the Anglican Church, serving as Rector of Richmond from 1945 and Archdeacon from 1951. It was then announced in 1953 by 10 Downing Street that the Queen had approved the appointment of the Venerable W.S Macpherson as Dean of Lichfield (Yorkshire Post, 1953). He served there until he retired in the 1960s, settling in Hawkchurch, Devon, where he died 7 July 1978.

Bob and Peggy came to my brother Gilbert Peter Macpherson's wedding to Vyvyan Prain in Dunfermline (see right, Bob, Peggy and Nicki, 1968). Bob was dressed in his formal coat and gaiters, as befitting his rank in the church. He was a big, gentle and thoughtful man who spoke with persuasive precision.



Bob's Peggy now lives in the Church of England Pension Retirement Home, Broadclyft, Devon (A. Cowan, 2010). Two of her sons live nearby; Peter Macpherson is in Axminster and David Macpherson lives near Weymouth. She is now into her 90s. She and her three children are pictured below right; Peter, Bob's Peggy, Josephine and David. Each of their families are now discussed in turn.

Josephine Macpherson married John Norman Collie on 3 October 1959. John was born 7 June 1925 and died on 24 June 2011. A Service of Thanksgiving celebrated his life at All Saints' Church, Ecclesall, Sheffield on Friday, 8 July. The service guide explained that John was born "at an early age" as he liked to say, in London. His early career was as an Army officer in India during and after World War Two (giving him a lifetime aversion to baked beans) and then as an accountant. Subsequently he studied history at Cambridge, where he also did his theological training. He was ordained in 1954, serving in the parishes of Leicester and Melton Mowbray. He moved in 1959 to Lee Abbey, north Devon, where he and Josephine were married and had their first son Andrew. In 1962 John became Vicar of Streatham, London, where their second son was born. In 1968 the family moved to Sheffield, where John became Vicar - and in due course Rural Dean - of Ecclesall, an

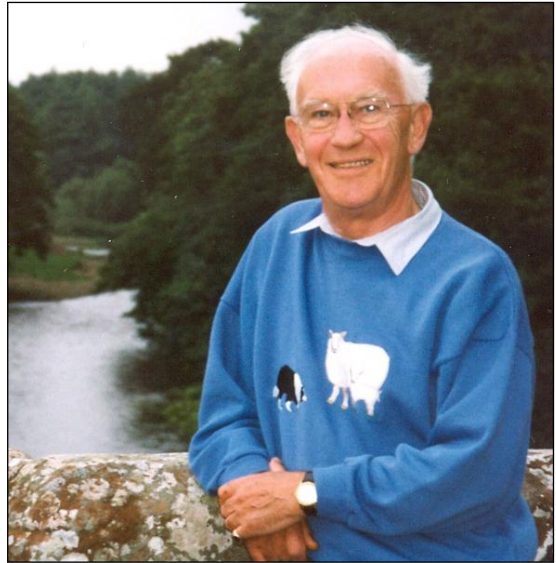


honorary canon of Sheffield Cathedral and for a period Chaplain to the Master Cutler. John retired in 1990, enjoying the opportunity for food, wine, holidays and “avoiding walks” (see right).

Josephine and John Collie have two sons and seven grandchildren (Collie, 2011). Their eldest son, Andrew John Collie, was born 3 July 1960 in Barnstaple, Devon. Andrew worked for a missionary society, Mission Aviation in Coalwood, Canterbury Road, Lyminge, Kent, and more recently as Buildings Manager, All Souls Lougham Place Church.

Andrew married Ruth Ann Hatchman on 27 July 1985, a primary school teacher born 5 February 1962. Andrew and Ruth had three boys (see second right). Mark Andrew Collie was born 15 March 1989 in Bexley, Hertfordshire and has just graduated from Durham University with Honours in Theology. He is taking a working holiday on a ferry. James Hugh Collie was born 25 January 1991 in Bexley, Hertfordshire and has completed an arts foundation degree, and deferred a university place in favour of an internship with a church in Winchester where he arranges the music. Thomas Peter Collie born 2 August 1994 proved an excellent chorister and attended the Choir School at Lichfield Cathedral before going on to Canterbury Grammar School where he has his sights on a place at Cambridge University.

John and Josephine’s second son has asked that none of his personal information appear in this family history.



Bob and Peggy's second child was David Sinclair Macpherson, born 7 February 1942. G.W. Armitage noted that at one time David was a teacher at Strathallan in Scotland (D Hutton, 2010a). He became a head teacher in middle England and retired to Portesham, Dorset, near Weymouth. He married Susan Mary Scott on 27 July 1978. Susan, known as 'Sue', is about 15 years younger than her husband and was still teaching in 2010. David and Sue had one boy and two girls; Anthony, Fiona and Charlotte.



Anthony Alexander Macpherson was born 2 February 1981 in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, England (see right, Sue and Anthony). He went to Durham University and read theology. He married a doctor in 2008 or 2009, and in 2010, was teaching at Oakham School, Rutland, soon to move to Stowe where he is to be a house master.

David and Sue's second child is Fiona Louise Macpherson, born 19 October 1983 in Oxford, Oxfordshire, England. She went to Cambridge University and has recently married to Ben whom she met at Cambridge. Their third child is Charlotte Ann Macpherson born 11 November 1985 in Oxford, Oxfordshire, England. She went to Bristol University, and by 2010, was working in film production.



Bob and Peggy's third child was Peter Sinclair Macpherson born 25 April 1944. He married Ailsa McBay 23 August 1975. They had two children and later divorced. Their first child was Katherine Alexandra Macpherson born 23 January 1979 in Weymouth, Dorset. Katherine is known as 'Katie' and is married and works for a bank. Their second child was Duncan Stuart Macpherson born 31 December 1982 in Weymouth, Dorset. Duncan went to Bournemouth University (see right, Duncan Macpherson, Peter Sinclair Macpherson and Bob's Peggy). That completes the known descendants of Henry and Lily's fourth child, William Stuart 'Bob' Macpherson.

### Eric Gordon Macpherson

Harry and Lily's fifth child was born 1 June 1907 in Leeds, Yorkshire and known as Gordon. In brief, he was educated at Sedburgh where he excelled in all areas (see right, about 1927). He went to Cambridge University and studied Theology, Theological History, History, and Psychology.



Gordon was especially close to his father and brother Bob in the years after WW1 (see below, about 1930, Gordon, Harry and Bob). He taught at Sedburgh Preparatory School before purchasing a preparatory school in Kenya with a friend from Sedburgh. When this venture failed to prosper they sold up.

Gordon then decided to visit his brother Alfred in the Far North of New Zealand in 1935, prior to coming 'home' and probably to lead Sedburgh Prep. He was spellbound by New Zealand and bought a farm in Honeymoon Valley, Peria, near Kaitaia. When Ines Bennett visited him, his sweetheart from Sedburgh days, he proposed again, this time with success. Ten days after they married he left to serve in WW2 in the New Zealand forces. Ines ran the farm during his absence, as did the other Macpherson women.

When Gordon returned he and Ines were blessed with Rosemary and Robin. Gordon died 24 January 1979 in Peria and was accorded the tangi (funeral) rites of a Maori chief on the Ngati Kahu marae (meeting place) Kauhanga in Peria, before being buried in the Maori section of Peria's Anglican Graveyard with a view up Honeymoon Valley. Ines was later buried beside him. A fuller version of Gordon's life will be told in the Macphersons of the Far North of New Zealand.



### **Eileen Macpherson**

Harry and Lily Macpherson's sixth child was Eileen born 13 April 1910 in Leeds, Yorkshire. As noted above, she was residing with her parents at Headingley Hall until it was sold in 1942. She soon moved into 32 Weetwood Avenue, Leeds, later taking in a companion, Doris Bellhouse, who shared with her for many decades. Eileen was corresponding with Rachel Armitage née Stewart in New Zealand in 1947 (D Hutton, 2010a).

Although not formally qualified, Eileen served as a teacher at a local independent school until her retirement. When Nicki and I visited her in the 1970s she was accompanied everywhere by her dog Shandy. Her previous dogs were Honey and Brandy (see right, I think). She suffered from diabetes from her 20s, became insulin dependent and her eyesight deteriorated. In her final years, her sisters Peggy and Mary took turns on a two week rota to care for her at Weetwood in conjunction with paid care staff. She died 23 April 1989.



### **Marguerite Pemberton 'Peggy' Macpherson**

Harry and Lily's seventh child was Peggy Macpherson, born 14 August 1914 and died July 2003. She was the original Peggy in the family. She married William Johnston 11 May 1943, a Minister of Religion known as John (see right). He was an Archdeacon at Bradford prior to becoming Bishop of Dunwich, a village that fell off a cliff in Suffolk. He was a 'suffragen bishop,' that is, a vice bishop to the Bishop of Edmondsbury and Ipswich and died 23 May 1986. They had no children.



In 1985, the year before John died, they were living at Church Stretton in Shropshire, about eight miles south of Shrewsbury. When John passed on, Peggy became even closer to Anne Cowan. When she moved out of her Shropshire home she went to the Church of England Pension Board Home in Kibworth Beauchamp, near Market Harborough. When she became unable to care for herself she moved into Manton Hall Residential Home, to be near Anne, and was visited every day. When she became disruptive she had to be moved to a unit for people suffering from dementia on the outskirts of Leicester. She was there for about five years. Anne visited her every Wednesday and Saturday and her sister Mary also visited once a week (A. Cowan, 2010). She died 21 July 2003.

### **Mary Sinclair Macpherson**



Harry and Lily's eighth and final child, Mary, was born during WW1 on 2 April 1917. She was home educated by Moeiy until enrolled at Leeds Girls High School and Harrogate College. She served as a nurse during WW2 (see left).

After the war she visited her older brothers Alfred and Gordon in New Zealand. She went for six months but, not having had a home after the sale of Headingley Hall in 1942, stayed on at Honeymoon Valley with Gordon and Ines for some time. She explored New Zealand's cultures with an exuberance she never lost (see right, 1946).



Returning to England, Mary became a matron at St Peter's Preparatory School in York. She kept her belongings and her base with her older sister Marguerite and 'John' Johnston. She then met her husband in an unusual way. She attended the funeral of Mrs Dickinson, wife of the late Rev. Dickinson of Cautley, in St Mark's Church, Cautley. The Rev Dickinson had been a close friend of the Macphersons when they were at Ghyllas. His son Frank had been at Sedburgh in the same year as Gordon, and had known Gordon's brothers. Despite the 11 year difference in age, Mary and William Francis Reynallt 'Frank' Dickinson started going out and were married 7 August 1954. Frank was 48, Mary 37. Anne was born nine months and one week later; a honeymoon baby.

Frank was born 19 June 1906. He served as a Royal Air Force officer in heavy bombers during WW2 (see right). After the war he became the financial director of S. & J. Watts Ltd., Manchester. When made redundant in the late 1950s he found work as a salesman and as a tax official, before finally retiring in his early 60s. Frank died suddenly 19 March 1980 outside the family home in Syddal Road, Bramhall, Cheshire.

Mary and Frank had three children, two girls and a boy. Their first child noted above, Anne Mary Dickinson, was born 12 May 1955. She qualified and served as a teacher in special education, and today holds a Masters degree and leadership responsibilities in a local school.

Anne married John Ashleigh Cowan 28 May 1983 who was born 22 September 1944, 11 years older than Anne. They moved into the village of Manton, Rutland, soon after they married and are still there. John is a quantity surveyor and has contributed to major construction projects around Britain. From 2007 he was working three days a week, keen on family genealogical research and, with Anne, very helpful in the writing of this chapter.

Anne and John have two children. The eldest, Andrew James Reynallt Cowan was born 26 April 1985. Andy read Product Design for a Master of Design at Leeds University. He is also a fine athlete and adventurer, has helped lead expeditions to Peru and the Himalayas and is currently Manager of a Climbing Instruction Facility. Recently Tom Cowling, Andrew and Will Kirstein (see second right above) took part in a 13 hour running, cycling and kayaking challenge in Scotland to raise money for the Alzheimer's Society (Rutland and Stanford Mercury, 2010).

Their youngest is Victoria Fay Cowan (see third right above, with John and Anne). She was born 4 February 1987 in Rutland on the road to Oakham Cottage Hospital when Anne's contractions outpaced her husband's driving. She went to Leeds University to read a BSc in Psychology and, by 2010, was a Human Resource Manager in London.

Mary and Frank's second child was born 28 November 1956; Jane Susan Dickinson. Jane married 25 July 1981 to Robert Charles Beresford Burpitt, born 24 January 1954 in Panteg, Monmouthshire, Wales. Jane and Robert (see right) built a joint career in the service industry as hoteliers and restaurateurs. They refurbished the Annandale Hotel in Moffat, Dumfries and Galloway. They owner-operated the Shaven Crown Hotel in Shipton Under Wychwood, Oxfordshire. They now manage Le Petite Pain, in Oxford, slipping away with family whenever they can to their beautifully renovated farmhouse near Surgeres, France.



Jane and Robert have three children. The first, William Guy Beresford Burpitt, was born 20 August 1984 and baptized 17 February 1985. His degree from Bournemouth University was in International Hospitality Management. He now manages a villa complex on the island of St. Martin in the Caribbean.

Their third child, Thomas Reynallt Burpitt, was born 28 September 1988 in the Cresswell Maternity Hospital, Dumfries. He studied Business and Marketing to HND level at Southampton Solent University, and in 2010, was working with his father and mother in Le Petit Pain. In August 2010 both William and Thomas were able to join their parents for a holiday in France (see right, from left to right, John Cowan, William, Robert, William, Jane and Anne). The table was between the back door and the pool, and the weather, company, food and wines were all truly magnificent.



Jane and Robert's second child, Lucy Jane Burpitt, was born 8 August 1986. Lucy studied for a BA in Early Childhood Education at Sheffield Hallam University. She visited Australia and New Zealand in 2009 and was adopted by Macphersons of the Far North as their own 'Lady Di' (see right, left to right Gwyn Macpherson, Vyvyan Macpherson née Prain, Rosemary Macpherson, Nicki Macpherson née Grundy, Angus Macpherson, Gilbert Peter Macpherson and Lucy). In 2010 she had a play skills leadership role in an East London school.



Mary and Frank had a third child, a son; John Nicholas Reynallt Dickinson, born 24 December 1958. John has Down's Syndrome. He has lived much of his adult life in residential accommodation of the Home Farm Trust (HFT), a charity. He is visited regularly by his sisters Anne and Jane and by his nieces and nephews. He is pictured right with Mary in 1988 meeting HRH Princess Anne - the Princess Royal, Patron of the HFT.



Harry and Lily's youngest child, Mary, served as the matriarch of the Macphersons of Leeds and New Zealand for another 24 years after she lost Frank. She regularly organized family holidays for her children and grandchildren in England and in France with her daughters. Mary regularly visited relatives in England and Alfred and Gordon's descendents in Australia and New Zealand until air travel became too difficult.

In her final years Mary moved into a bungalow in Manton village to be closer to her daughter Anne. She died there 22 August 2004.

### **Concluding Note**

Since Mary exemplified what is regarded as best about the Macphersons of Leeds by many in the family, it is appropriate to end this chapter at this point (see Mary right, in France, 1995).

In the next chapter I will take up the story of how her older brothers Alfred and Gordon founded the Macphersons of the Far North of New Zealand.





## Appendix 1 – The Main Homes of Two Generations of Macphersons of Leeds

To assist further research, the main homes of Alexander Sinclair Macpherson and his wife of Sarah Brown Walker in Leeds, and the two generations that followed them, have been summarized:

- Farrar's Place, St. Andrews, Leeds. This was the 1851 home of Sarah Brown Walker, a scholar aged 8 living with her uncle William Walker, a dyer aged 32, her aunt Mary aged 34, and with her brother Thomas Wright Walker.
- 29 Burley Street, West Leeds. This was the 1861 home of Sarah Brown Walker, 18, still living with her Uncle William aged 42 now employing 15 men and Aunt Mary aged 44, plus Uncle William Walker's mother Sarah aged 78 (born about 1783, died 14 October 1861), his nephew George N. Pemberton, a wool dyer aged 23, his sister-in-law Eleanor Walker aged 34, his aunt Elizabeth Melsome, a nurse aged 65, and a servant, Mary Law, aged 27.
- 104 Park Lane, St Andrews, West Leeds. This was the 1861 lodgings of Alexander Sinclair McPherson, 26, an unmarried mechanical draughtsman from Scotland, boarding with co-worker George Holmes, a machine model maker aged 39, his wife Frances and their six children.
- 11 Victoria Terrace, St. John's Hill, West Leeds. This was the first known home of Alexander Macpherson and his wife Sarah Brown Walker, from before 1871 until after 1881.
- Burley House, 258 Burley Road, Headingley, West Leeds, today the Burley House Nursing Home. This was the home of Alexander Macpherson, 55, and his wife Sarah Brown Walker, 40, from before 1891. He was then a 'Machine Tool Maker' and employer, with Mary Barras Macpherson, 24, William Walker Macpherson, 23, a single engineering draughtsman, Henry absent and four servants.
- Glenholme, Harrogate. By 1902, this was the final magnificent Victorian stately home of Alexander Macpherson and his wife Sarah Brown Walker (H. Macpherson, 1923).
- The White House, 23 Wetherby Road, Roundhay, Leeds. This was the home of William Walker Macpherson and his wife Elizabeth Sarah 'Tye' Stanford from about 1905.
- Abbeydale, 3 Norland Road, Leeds. This was Henry and Lily's first known home 1902?-1904 (H. Macpherson, 1923).
- The Tower, Woodhouse Cliff, Leeds. This was Henry and Lily's second home, from 1904-1909 (H. Macpherson, 1923).
- Belmont, Wood Lane, Leeds, Yorkshire. This was Henry and Lily's third home, until after April 1918.
- Ghyllas, near Cortley, near Sedburgh. This was Henry and Lily's fourth home, by December 1918 until about 1928.
- Headingley Hall, Leeds. This was Henry and Lily's final home, from about 1928 until sold in 1942 (H. Macpherson, 1923).

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