
12 APPENDIX: FAMILY BIOGRAPHIES

The difficulty associated with using census and civil registration data, as indeed with any documentation, mainly concerns its accuracy. Discrepancies in data regarding age, names, relationships etc are commonplace. The reasons for such inaccuracies can be attributed to both the recorder (registrars in the case of the civil register and enumerators, in the cases of the censuses) and the recorded (the individuals supplying the information). Registrars and enumerators often favoured particular spellings of names, eg either Agnes or Agness, Kerr or Carr, and when informants were illiterate, recorders would attempt a phonetic approximation. The transmission of inaccurate information on the part of the informant may have been inadvertent, as they may not have been in possession of the required facts. Incorrect indexing, examples of which are not infrequent, can also impede this kind of research, whilst the tracing process can also be hampered when an individual possesses a common forename and surname. This is compounded when researching such frequently occurring names before compulsory civil registration in 1855. Despite these problems, the censuses and civil register represent excellent sources, and, with time, persistence and experience, their shortcomings may be circumvented. Keeping this in mind, the information relating to those sometime residing at Jack's Houses identified from the census returns of 1841, 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881 and 1891 is set out below.

12.1 Baxter

The Baxters, comprising John (37), a blacksmith, Agness or Agnes (33), George (12), John (7), Alexander (4), Allan (2), William (1), Janet (9) and Jean (6) lived at one of Jack's Houses in 1841. Since this census does not state individual relationships it is assumed that they made up a family of man, wife and seven children. This census did not specify the number of windowed rooms so it is not possible to say with any certainty which of the cottages they inhabited. Neither was place of birth specified, save indicating whether individuals were born in or outside the county of Linlithgowshire, and in this grouping, all were born outside Linlithgowshire. Therefore the Baxters could not be traced accurately further than the 1841 census due to the factors mentioned above.

The communion roll of the Free Church in Kirkliston (1844–45) recorded John Baxter and his wife at Jack's Houses. It would therefore be reasonable to assume that the family had been living at the same address for the past five years.

In 1858 John and Agnes' son Alexander, who was then living in the Canongate in Edinburgh and working as a blacksmith, married Margaret Rose, a dressmaker of the same address. Their son Allan was married in Aberdeen in 1861, where his occupation was given as 'engine smith'. His usual residence was 25 South James Street, Edinburgh. His bride was Margaret Scott, a 28 year-old spinster whose father, William Scott, was a farmer and her mother was Elizabeth Yeoman. By the 1881 census Allan and his wife had moved to 50 Anderson St, Govan, Glasgow, where he was working as an engine smith. Allan died in 1912 in Duke St, Glasgow, of chronic bronchitis.

Their son, William married in 1866 at 2 Charles Street, Aberdeen. His occupation was given as 'cloth weaver' and his bride, Ann Scorgie, was a domestic servant. They were of the same address, 11 Carmelite Street, Aberdeen. William died in Selkirk, where he had been working as a woollen weaver, almost 20 years later, on 21 March 1885.

12.2 Gibson

Contemporaneous with the Baxters, in 1844, a William Gibson and his wife are recorded on the communion roll of the Free Church in Kirkliston and their address is given as Jack's Houses. Unfortunately, because of the skeletal detail of this source, it was not possible to trace them further.

12.3 Sharp

In 1841 one of Jack's Houses was inhabited by George Sharp (45), a wright; Ellen (45); George (25), a wright; Gabriel (20), a wright; Isabella (15); and William (6). All were born in Linlithgowshire. Again, these individuals could not be traced accurately further than the 1841 census.

12.4 Brash

Colin Brash (40), a blacksmith who lived at Jack's Houses in 1851, was then a widower living with his two daughters, Janet (13), and Agnes (11), both at school. He died of a malignant abdominal growth in 1856 at Dalmeny. The members of the family were all born in West Lothian. His daughter Janet married Andrew Brown, an engineer, in 1859. She was then a domestic servant and the couple married according to the forms of the Free Church. Her sister Agnes, a dressmaker, married late in

life at the age of 50 to John Notman, a widower, who was a carting contractor. Agnes died in 1910 at the Women's Hospital, Whitehouse Loan in Edinburgh. The informant for her death certificate was described as a 'trustee', indicating that Agnes left personal estate.

12.5 Gilbert

In 1851 Lewis Gilbert (60), farm labourer and widower of Elizabeth West, lived in one of Jack's Houses with his married daughter, Margaret (36), a housekeeper; his unmarried son, Alexander (31), who worked as a quarry labourer; and his granddaughter, Elizabeth Corstorphine (16), who was still at school. They were all born in West Lothian. The 1861 census index, given that the forename Lewis was fairly unusual, revealed that he was living with his second wife, Margaret, in Queensferry, in a dwelling with three windowed rooms, and the couple were not sharing the accommodation with anyone else. Curiously, Lewis's occupation had changed from the staple farm/agricultural labourer to that of 'spirit dealer'. A marriage between Lewis Gilbert and Margaret Potter was recorded in the Kirkliston Old Parish records for the year 1852. Further research confirmed the death of Lewis's first wife, Elizabeth West, who perished in 1848 in the parish, aged 39. The second Mrs Gilbert survived her husband by almost 30 years, dying in 1891 at East Terrace Cottage, Queensferry, aged 87. The death certificate recorded her as widow of Lewis Gilbert, labourer. She was found dead, therefore the death was not certificated by a doctor. Her grand-nephew from Dalmeny signed the certificate. Lewis died of flu and lung congestion in 1862 at Queensferry aged 72. The informant on his death certificate was a neighbour.

In 1858 Lewis's son, Alexander, now living in Glasgow and employed as a free stone cutter, married Mary Husband. They do not appear to have had any children. When he died in 1883, aged 69 and suffering from paralysis, his occupation was given as 'stationer'. Alexander's wife, Mary, died in 1899 of cardiac disease at Bonhill Poorhouse Glasgow.

Lewis had another son, William, a farmer who ran Millrigg farm at Kirknewton. William married Margaret Watt in 1853. They had two children, a boy, Lewis, and a girl, Margaret, who both died tragically of scarlet fever in quick succession aged eight and six respectively. When William died in 1894 aged 76 of an embolism and gangrene of the leg, he was retired and left a personal estate of £1,489 12s 6d. His sister Margaret, widow of Thomas Corstorphine, died the same year at the same address leaving a personal estate of £2,165 12s 10d, a large amount of this sum having been left to her by her brother William.

Lewis Gilbert's granddaughter, Elizabeth Corstorphine, never married. When she died at Portobello

in 1909 suffering from general paralysis she was 74 years old and an annuitant.

12.6 Curron or Curran

In 1861 Patrick Curron (35), an agricultural labourer, was residing in the one-windowed-room dwelling of Jack's Houses, which he shared with his wife Bridget (38, maiden name, Kerr or Carr), also an agricultural labourer, his daughter Margaret (3) and son Samuel (2), his niece Elizabeth Kerr or Carr (12), his mother-in-law Mary Kerr or Carr (70), and brother-in-law, Samuel Kerr or Carr (24), an agricultural labourer. Patrick, his wife, mother-in-law and brother-in-law all originated from Ireland whilst his niece was born in Aberdeen and his son and daughter in Kirkliston. His son Samuel died of scarlet fever in 1864 aged five. His mother-in-law died two years later at Humble Quarry.

In the 1871 census, Patrick, still working as a farm labourer (his age now given as 42) was residing at Humble Quarry in a one-windowed-room house with his wife Bridget (age given as 43) and niece, Elizabeth (age given as 20), working as a farm servant, as was his daughter Margaret, now aged 13. Also part of the household was his son John (10 years old); his niece Joan (6 years old), and infant nephew Robert. The latter three were all born in Linlithgow.

It is interesting to note the stark contrast with the next entry in the census which was the Dudgeon family, the tenant farmers of Humble. The Dudgeon household comprised four adults: Robert and George Dudgeon, unmarried brothers aged 62 and 72 respectively, together with two servants, Elizabeth Andrew (45) the cook, and Elizabeth Buchanan (28) the housemaid, and they occupied a 14-windowed-room house. The juxtaposition with the Currans having four adults and three children occupying a one-windowed room living nearby demonstrates the massive inequities in housing of this time.

In 1881 Patrick Curran was working as a cattle feeder and living at Humble quarry with his wife Bridget and son John and nephew Robert Curran, both agricultural labourers aged 19 and 14 respectively. Patrick died in 1891 at Broxburn aged 68 and his occupation was given as 'labourer'. The cause of death on the certificate was 'old age'. His wife, Bridget Carr, died three years later aged 76 at Broxburn. Her death was attributed to 'age and debility'. Patrick's daughter Margaret, who married Thomas Tighe, a general labourer, died in 1925 aged 68 at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh (her usual residence was in Broxburn).

12.7 Borthwick

In 1861 James Borthwick (30), an agricultural labourer, was living in the house with two windowed rooms at Jack's Houses together with his wife Ann

(29), also an agricultural labourer, his daughters Janet (4), Jane (2) and his niece Jane Cowper (1), who was listed as a boarder with the family. James and his wife Ann were born in Kirkliston. Their daughters were both born at Humbie and his niece at Corstorphine. By the time of the 1881 census James was employed as a cellarman and he and Ann were living in Kirkliston with their three sons, Ramsay (15), a railway porter, James and David aged 12 and 6 respectively and his father Ramsay Borthwick, a retired farm servant aged 73. All were born in West Lothian. Four years later James died at the same address, aged 56, of a strangulated hernia and peritonitis. His wife died five years later at the same address of congestion of the lungs and general paralysis. She left a personal estate of £47 12s 6d.

In 1884 his daughter Janet married Peter Swan, an engine keeper, and they settled in the Linlithgow/Philipstoun district. They had at least five children. A year later his daughter Jane married John Rodger, a saddler, and had at least eight children.

12.8 Dodds

Anthony Dodds and his family resided in the house with two windowed rooms at Jack's Houses in 1871. He was then aged 27 and worked as a coachman and gardener and was born in Ancrum, Roxburghshire. His wife, Margaret (33), came from Eckford in the same county and his son George (4) was born in Ayton, Berwickshire, while his daughter Agnes (3) was born in Ladhope, Roxburghshire. The previous census (1861) found 16 year-old Anthony in the Ancrum district of Roxburgh, where he was working as a ploughman for a farmer called Thomas Stoddart who owned 700 acres. He was living at Woodhead farmhouse with the farmer's family and several other servants. Meanwhile, Anthony's family were housed nearby at Woodhead cottages on 'Blackhill' farm, where his father was employed as a farm steward, sharing the one-windowed-room accommodation with his wife and Anthony's younger siblings, all boys, aged 11, 8, 5, 3 and 10 months. At the following census (1881), the family were situated in Kirkcaldy, where Anthony was employed as a jobbing gardener. He then had three more children, Anthony (8), William (6) and Jane Ellen (4), all attending school. The boys were born in Dumbarton and the daughter at Twynholm, Kirkcudbrightshire.

The next census found the family living in accommodation with four windowed rooms in Kirkcaldy. Anthony, then 48 years old, was working as a coachman, his wife Margaret was 53 years old. Their son George (24) was employed as a linen calenderer, their son Anthony (18) as a painter, William (17) a grocer's assistant while daughter Agnes (23) was an unemployed domestic servant. Daughter Jane Ellen was employed as a general servant in a large house in Kirkcaldy. His wife, whose maiden name

was Margaret Smail, died in 1898 in Leith aged 62 of chronic phthisis pulmonalis (TB). In the 1901 census Anthony was a gas works labourer living in Leith with his daughter Agnes, now head of the household, who was still unmarried and a confectioner working on her own account, as well as his niece, Lilly Dodds, aged 9. It was one-windowed-room accommodation.

Anthony Dodds died from cerebral thrombosis in 1919 at Craiglockhart Poorhouse aged 75.

12.9 Fleming

In 1871 Agnes Fleming, a young widow aged 27, born in Aberdeen and employed as an out-worker, appeared to inhabit the one-windowed-room house by herself. It was not possible to trace her further.

12.10 White

The 1871 census recorded the White family living in a one-windowed house in Penicuik: their details were as follows: head of household Robert White, a shepherd, aged 38; Janet, his wife, aged 35; daughters Margaret, Caroline and Janet aged 12, 10 and 1 respectively; and sons James, Robert and George aged 8, 6 and 3 respectively. Their youngest child, Janet, did not survive to the next census, dying of croup when she was 4 years old, at Dalmeny. In 1881 Robert White (47), a shepherd born in West Calder, Midlothian was living in the house with two windowed rooms at Jack's Houses. With him were his wife Janet (44) born at Walston, Lanarkshire and employed as a servant, two unmarried daughters, Margaret (21) and Caroline (20), both servants and born respectively in Stow and Temple in Midlothian. Two sons also stayed there; Robert (15), an agricultural labourer, and George (13), both of whom were born in Penicuik, Midlothian. In the 1891 census, though alive at the time, Robert White was not recorded living with his family (perhaps he was outdoors tending to sheep at that time). In any case, his wife Janet, then 55 years old and working as an agricultural labourer, was recorded as head of household. She was living in a house with two windowed rooms near Currie, Midlothian, with her unmarried son James (27), an agricultural labourer born in Eddleston, Peeblesshire (who had not been recorded as living with the family in the 1881 census but appears in the household in the 1871 census), and her unmarried daughter Caroline, a domestic servant.

Robert White was found dead in his house at Balerno in 1893 aged 59. His occupation was recorded as shepherd. In the 1901 census his widow Janet was described as an annuitant living with her unmarried daughter Caroline, an outdoor worker. They were living in three-windowed-room accommodation near Currie. Janet died in 1909 of heart disease at Easter Currie. Her daughter Caroline

died of heart failure in 1926, her usual residence was Humbie at Kirknewton and her occupation given as 'farm worker'.

12.11 Anthony

Old parish records reveal that James Anthony's parents were married on 28 August 1839 at Kirknewton, East Calder. Records of the birth of four children born before civil registration were found: William, born in 1840; Janet, born in 1842; another William, born in 1844; and a John born in 1850. Since two children bear the same name it is assumed the first-named child in each case died (before civil registration, baptisms and marriages were often recorded, whereas deaths often went unrecorded). Also, it is common for the ages of individuals to be approximate rather than strictly accurate.

The 1861 census records James Anthony as a 3 year-old living in Colinton Farm Cottages, Midlothian with his father, William Anthony, a 45 year-old agricultural labourer; his mother Grace (41 years); sisters Janet (a 14 year-old farm servant) and Agnes, a schoolgirl aged 9; and brothers John, James and Richard, aged 6, 3 and 5 months respectively. Also residing with them in their accommodation of two windowed rooms, was a lodger, Elizabeth Elder, a widow aged 47 who was born at Fort George.

The next census (1871) found James Anthony, then aged 13, living with his parents William Anthony (56), an agricultural labourer and Grace (50) born at Bathgate and Ratho respectively, together with siblings Agnes, John and Richard, 19, 16 and 10 years old respectively, and all born at Colinton. By the time of the 1881 census James was working as a blacksmith and lodging with a family of eight (the Skeds) in Ratho.

James's father, William, died in 1893 aged 79 years at Colinton of cardiac disease and 'softening of the brain'; his occupation was given as a ploughman

In 1891 James Anthony (32), blacksmith born at Colinton, Midlothian occupied the house with two windowed rooms at Jack's Houses with his wife, Georgina (31) born in Lasswade, Midlothian, and sons William (7), George (6), James (4) and Alexander (1), all born at Ratho. In 1901 James occupied Humbie farm cottage, which had two windowed rooms. With him were his wife, sons William (17) apprentice grocer, George (16) Post Office messenger and James (14) apprentice wood turner, as well as Bessie (8), John (5) and Charles (2). The latter three children were all born at Jack's Houses. The youngest child, Bessie Anthony, a dressmaker, married Peter Fulton, a cashier in 1917 in Edinburgh and appeared to have had two children; Georgina, born in 1918 and John, born in 1920. Both children were born in Edinburgh. Bessie died in Edinburgh in 1962 aged 70, as a result of coronary thrombosis.

In 1927 James Anthony's wife Georgina died in Edinburgh of arterial sclerosis and cerebral haemorrhage. Ten years later James himself died aged

79 suffering from chronic nephritis and anasarca at the same address.

12.12 McRiner

In the 1851 census, Peter, aged 29, was working as an agricultural labourer and resided at Ormiston Castle, Kirknewton, East Calder with his wife, Mary, 30, and daughter Catherine, aged 5, and two younger daughters, Agnes and Isabella.

The 1871 census found Peter McRiner and his family at Ochiltree Castle in a house with two windowed rooms. He was then recorded as being a farm servant, aged 48, his wife Mary, an agricultural labourer, aged 49. His unmarried daughter, Catherine, aged 24 and her son George, aged 12 months were also living with them. This illegitimate child became a farm grieve and died of influenza and myocarditis aged 73 in 1945 at Overtoun farm cottage, Kirkliston. George's children could still be traced in the West Lothian area until recently. Also, whilst interviewing the farmer George Dudgeon of Humbie farm, the McRiner name and its association with the farm was familiar to him.

Peter McRiner could not be traced in either the 1861 or 1881 censuses. This could mean that the family were out of the country. However, a search for the family in the British census of 1881 yielded nothing. The more likely explanation of the mysterious disappearance of the McRiners in these two censuses is either evasion on the part of the McRiners or enumerator error.

In 1891 the house with one windowed room at Jack's Houses was inhabited by Peter McRiner (64), a roadsman, and his wife Mary (62). Peter was born at Ratho and Mary, at West Calder. Peter and Mary (maiden name Nicol) had married in Linlithgow in 1842. By 1855 they had had their sixth child, James. His siblings were two male and three female, one of whom had died. In 1870 one of his daughters, Agnes (20) married a ploughman, Andrew Morton (26) in Linlithgow, and by 1881 they were living near Bathgate, where Andrew worked as a farm servant, and had five children. In 1891 the Mortons had moved to Edinburgh, and with his brother, James, then living with them, Andrew Morton had set up a dairy business. There were four more children, and elder children were most likely employed in the business as they had occupations such as dairymaid and van man, whilst one offspring was a dressmaker. In 1901 the family was at the same address in Edinburgh carrying out the same business. Although a few of the older children had left home most, except for the youngest two (who were attending school), were employed in their father and uncle's business.

Agnes Morton (maiden name McRiner), died in 1911 at the old hospital at Restalrig, Edinburgh of pelvic cancer aged 61.

Peter McRiner died aged 78 in 1896 at Kirkliston. His occupation was given as 'roadsman' and cause

of death was bronchitis. Though in his latter years he was mainly employed as a roadsman, he had also worked as a ploughman and an agricultural labourer. Mary McRiner survived her husband by four years.

After being recorded in the 1901 census as living on the parish relief with her sister at Overtoun Farm, Kirkliston, she died later that year, aged 74, of heart failure.