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Lieutenant General Sir Aylmer Hunter Weston

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An Ayrshire General at Gallipoli: Lieutenant-General Sir Aylmer Hunter-Weston

> ‘May they who gave their lives for us,
> Forever dwell with Thee in bliss,
> Where bullets cannot harm or hiss,
> Beyond the Dardanelles.’[1]

The Gallipoli Campaign brought the reality of the Great War home to Ayrshire. Towards the end of July 1915, the local press began to report that the county’s territorial soldiers had been involved in a series of major battles on the far-off peninsula; the official telegrams had already begun to arrive in many homes announcing the death of a loved one.[2]

Gallipoli has been recognised as one of the most disastrous episodes of the Great War.[3] In considering its local dimension, this discussion adopts an unusual perspective. Unlike a number of recent accounts that concentrate on the experiences of the ordinary solider, the focus will be on a senior commander, Lieutenant General Sir Aylmer Hunter-Weston, who was born at Annanhill House, Kilmarnock in 1864.[4] While assessing his generalship during the campaign, the chapter also aims to understand how his command decisions were interlinked with the grim fate of many of his fellow Ayrshiremen in July 1915.

Hunter-Weston’s friends and admirers called him ‘Hunter-Bunter’, but his critics branded him a ‘butcher’ and a ‘mountebank’. Presented as a tragedy of heroic failure,

1

Gallipoli seems to require a stage villain and it is Hunter-Weston who seems to fill the role. Robert Rhodes James, for example, dismisses him as ‘in many respects… a preposterous figure’, while the Australian historian, Les Carlyon describes a general whose ‘bushy moustache quivered as he laughed’, and who ‘... threw away troops the way lesser men tossed away socks’.[5] Vain, bombastic and talkative, there can be no doubt that his personal quirks and flaws contributed to this dreadful public image, but he also emerges as an intelligent and highly professional soldier who became embroiled in a hopeless military adventure at Gallipoli. It was particularly unfortunate that his positive qualities of drive and determination may actually have made a bad situation worse.

Rising Star

We must understand the man before we can critically assess the commander. Hunter-Weston’s background was typical of the exclusive and patrician world of British officer corps before the Great War. This would shape his values, his lifestyle, and his friendships, as well as his professional destiny. His father was a retired soldier who had served in the Indian Mutiny; his mother was the heir of the ancient landowning Hunter family, whose family seat was at Hunterston Castle on the Ayrshire coast.[6] He had a privileged Victorian childhood and was destined for a military career at an early age. Educated at Wellington School, he then trained as a Royal Engineers officer. This choice of unit is revealing - from the very outset Hunter-Weston was determined to treat the army as a serious

profession. He went on to serve on the North West Frontier of India during the 1890s, where he learned the practical elements of soldiering. He also served in the Sudan under General Kitchener, who recognised his potential and sent him to train for higher command at the Staff College. The outbreak of war in South Africa in 1899 came at just the right time in his career. He led a mounted detachment of engineers and won the DSO for a series of demolition raids behind enemy territory. When the elite General Staff was established 1906 as the 'brain' of the army, he was among the first officers to be appointed, quickly winning a reputation as an innovative and intelligent thinker on tactics and training.[7]

Good timing continued to distinguish Hunter-Weston's military career. Appointed to command the 11th Infantry Brigade in February 1914, he now had the perfect vehicle for his theories of training and morale. From the outset he identified closely with 'his' brigade, gladly accepting responsibility for the wellbeing of his soldiers. At a time when self-promotion was seriously distrusted by the British officer corps, he was also becoming something of a showman. His extrovert personality meant that he rejected the remote, mutually respectful relationship that was customary between officers and men in the peacetime army. Instead he never tired of addressing his 'dear men' on parade and was prepared to engage them in individual conversation where circumstances allowed. Massive social, educational, and professional barriers existed between commissioned officers and other ranks, but Hunter-Weston had learned that effort invested in building

even superficial bonds paid dividends. For their part, his men admired an affable and jovial personality who was good at what he did and made an effort to communicate with them. Rejoicing in his 'Hunter-Bunter' nickname, he was a commander who met their expectations of exactly how a general should look and behave. Indeed, for the young Private Arthur Cook of the Somerset Light Infantry, he was simply 'one of the finest soldiers and gentlemen, you could wish to meet'.[8]

When war broke out in August 1914 Hunter-Weston took his Brigade to France. During the first six months of the conflict, he became one of the rising stars of the British army. His brigade - known as the 'Iron Brigade' - took part in the first great defensive battles of the war, including a heroic stand against the German onslaught at Le Cateau. His reputation as a hard-driving commander – a 'thruster' as they were known - was confirmed by his daring crossing of the river Aisne in September 1914.

The Lure of Gallipoli

Against the background of Hunter-Weston's early achievements in the war, it was hardly surprising that when Sir John French, Commander of the British Expeditionary Force in France, was asked to nominate possible commanders for a dangerous mission to the Dardenelles in February 1915, he placed his name on a very short list of suitable candidates. After Brigadier Hubert Gough declined the appointment on the grounds that he

did not want to be involved in a ‘sideshow’, Hunter-Weston was given command of the 29th Division, which was to be the spearhead of the expedition. Always a risk taker and highly ambitious, the romantic mystique of his new eastern enterprise was strongly appealing on many levels, especially when the alternative was the muddy stalemate of the Western Front. In the event, by accepting this eye-catching command at a critically early stage in his career he would seriously compromise his future reputation as a commander.

Hunter-Weston was a world away from the torpid ‘dug-out’ type of officer that has come to be associated with Gallipoli. Nevertheless, his sudden promotion raises a number of important issues. First, the widespread criticism of his behaviour and tactics during the campaign neglects the exceptional challenges of his new command. The most immediate was his lack of experience. He was a product of an army that was just beginning to get to grips with modern warfare. In the new type of battlefield, managerial skills would be more important than the type of heroic personal leadership that he cherished. However, there was more to it than this. Every senior officer early in the Great War faced similar problems of adjustment, but Hunter-Weston’s case would go from leading a brigade of 800 men in France, to spearheading the first opposed amphibious landings in modern history, with a force over 20,000 men under his command. Lacking experience, he fell back on the tactical principles he had learned as a staff officer. In the textbooks war was stripped down to its essentials: victory in combat came from defeating the enemy’s

field army by concentrating superior resources at a decisive point; high morale, a fighting spirit and a willingness to accept casualties were essential in this enterprise, as was determined leadership. His attempts to apply these axioms rigorously explain many of his later command decisions, even though the nature of warfare at Gallipoli often negated them.

Even more importantly, the second challenge facing Hunter-Weston was that he had become part of a chaotic military adventure, where muddle and improvisation made it difficult for any commander to shine**.** Strategically, the Gallipoli campaign was flawed from the outset and further damned by inadequate planning and resourcing.[9] The original plan had been for a purely naval attack to force the Dardanelles straits and steam on to Constantinople. The hope was that by taking Turkey out of the war this demonstration would rally the Balkan states behind the allies, and indirectly support Russia. However, during the month of February, it gradually dawned on the planners, that the fleet would not be able to accomplish this on its own and that some sort of military presence on the Gallipoli Peninsula would be needed. At first, this was simply to involve garrison duty or isolated landing parties, but when navy failed to subdue the Turkish forts overlooking the Dardanelles during March it meant that full-scale combined operations to invade the peninsula were considered essential. The problem was that Sir Ian Hamilton's newly created 'Mediterranean Expeditionary Force' of which Hunter-Weston's division was part was totally ill equipped for a major land campaign, particularly in terms of heavy artillery. Indeed, this simple lack of firepower would be

critical in the campaign.

Hunter-Weston's own doubts about his mission grew as he sailed east with the 29th Division in March.[10] He was asked to write an appreciation by Hamilton while he was still at sea. The analysis he analysis produced was both powerful and prophetic. He was under no illusion over the scale of the task he had on his hands. The landings would require more men than were available to. Nor would it be easy to knock out the Turkish guns protecting the channel on both sides. As a result, his mission had a bleak future:

> Throughout this war none of the combatants has ever succeeded in breaking quickly through even indifferent entrenchments. The usual result has been stalemate. Success has only been attained after long and careful preparation and after the expenditure of an enormous amount of High Explosive Gun ammunition both from quickfirers and howitzers. We are very short of gun ammunition and are particularly short of High Explosive shell. There appears therefore every prospect of getting tied up on an extended line across the pen inform of the Turkish Kilid Bahr plateau trenches - a second Crimea …

He concluded in a similar vein:

> … if the Expedition had been carefully and secretly prepared in England, France and Egypt; naval and

> military details of organization and equipment for disembarkation carefully worked out by the General Staff and Naval War Staff, and if no bombardment or other warning given … the capture of the Gallipoli Peninsula and the forcing of Dardanelles would have been a perfectly feasible operation of war and would almost certainly have been successful … but if the views expressed in this paper be sound there is not at this period a reasonable chance of success… The return of the Expedition when it has gone so far will cause discontent, much talk, and some laughter … It will be a heavy blow to all us soldiers; and will need great moral courage on the part of the Commander and the Government. But it will not do irreparable harm to our cause, whereas to attempt a landing and then fail to secure a passage through the Dardanelles would be a disaster to the Empire.[11]

Hunter-Weston presented these concerns to Hamilton, but when his superior officer rejected them, the army's rigid authority structure gave him no room for manoeuver. For an ambitious officer, resignation was unthinkable, but despite outward appearances, Hunter-Weston's basic lack of confidence in the Gallipoli campaign refused to evaporate. Indeed, his professional pessimism was only strengthened by Hamilton's complex and over-ambitious plan for the invasion of the peninsula. While the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) were to land north of Gaba Tepe on the Aegean coastline, the 29th division were to storm ashore in a dawn attack

on five beaches on the tip of Cape Helles in the south. From there they were to push on through very rugged terrain to seize the Achi Baba ridge and extend a line across the peninsula. Driving six miles inland on the first day of the landings, the way would then be open northwards to the Kilid Bahr plateau beyond and on to Constantinople.

It was the prospect of his men being raked by fire in open boats that haunted Hunter-Weston.[12] These fears surfaced in the 'Personal Note' that he had circulated around the division on the eve of battle:

> We … must be prepared to suffer hardships, privations, thirst and heavy losses, by bullets, by shells, by mines, by drowning. But if each man feels as is true, that on him individually, however, small or however great his task, rests the success or failure of the Expedition, and therefore the honour of the Empire and the welfare of his own folk at home, we are certain to win through to a glorious victory.[13]

'Hunter-Weston's insurance policy', as it became known, was certainly a remarkable outpouring on the eve of battle, causing morale in some units by its all too accurate invocation of the fate that awaited them. [14]

Achieving the Impossible

The landings made at Cape Helles on 25 April were fought as separate battles, but together they punctured any hope of a swift and decisive resolution to the campaign. Hunter-Weston was left with just a toehold on the peninsula, as he had feared. On some beaches his men waded ashore unopposed, on others they were machine gunned and shelled in the water. The main problems facing him on the day of the landings were those of communication. Directing amphibious operations requires an excellent flow of two-way flow of information. However, this failed almost immediately at Gallipoli, partly due to the high number of officer casualties ashore. Hunter-Weston was moored in his floating HQ, HMS *Euryalus*, almost completely cut off from the battlefield. Instinctively, he wanted to land and lead the advance himself, but his staff dissuaded him. Even so, sheer force of numbers prevailed and he eventually managed to land some 17,000 men on the three main beaches in over twenty-four hours. This was an unprecedented feat, and had his first day objectives not been so unrealistic, the achievement might be better recognised. However, his inability to push on further that day was decisive in shaping the rest of the Gallipoli Campaign

During the next few desperate weeks, Hunter-Weston launched a series of brutal, slogging attacks against the Achi Baba. Any hope of surprise was now lost and the risks of failure continued to grow. Many of the decisions that he made during this phase of the fighting at Gallipoli were wrong or poorly judged, but none of them was easy. The landings cost him at least a fifth of his force.[15] Indeed, he had lost so many men he simply could

not advance rapidly, even though speed was essential. Every day lost meant that the enemy would have more time to strengthen their defences. If they were allowed to dig in, it could only mean a long drawn-out struggle, sucking in many more troops - in other words, the Second Crimea that he had predicted in his appreciation. The stalemate of the Western Front would now be repeated at Gallipoli, with flies, heat and disease thrown in for good measure. During May and June, Hunter-Weston made three all-out assaults on the Achi Baba position, but these were frustrated by a chronic lack of artillery support, which prevented him from subduing the enemy's fire long enough to allow his men to mount a successful infantry attack. His failures in these attacks were also the product of the superior tactical capability of his Turkish opponents, who were able to react quickly to every new threat. In other words, Hunter-Weston was already being out-thought as well as out-fought.[16]

By this point Hunter-Weston was thoroughly enmeshed in a failing campaign. He had begun with a better grasp of the strategic situation at Gallipoli than his commander, Ian Hamilton, but the determination that made him such an aggressive and self-confident leader also prevented him from publically admitting his predicament. The threat of being driven off the peninsula convinced him of two things: the first was that a bold offensive strategy was only means of survival; the second was that the public face of his command must be one of inspiring optimism, whatever his private fears. The problem was that to many of his colleagues this outward

confidence seemed jarring and insensitive.

Hunter-Weston's determination at least brought professional rewards. After less than month on the peninsula, he was promoted to command the new VIII Corps as a temporary Lieutenant-General, becoming the fastest rising officer in the British Army. After the failure of his third attempt on Achi Baba in early June, he gave up on all-out frontal offensives and tried a new approach. Instead, he began to plan a series of small-scale operations aimed at seizing key tactical positions in response to his critical shortages of manpower and artillery. A version of the 'bite and hold' tactics that had been pioneered on the Western Front, the hope was that the enemy would be forced to launch costly counter-attacks in an effort to gain lost ground. These attacks offered a new method for prosecuting the offensive at Cape Helles, promising 'good progress without inordinate loss', but ironically for Hunter-Weston they also would cement the charges of brutality, callousness and incompetence that were already beginning to dog his reputation.[17]

Reputation

Among first of the long-awaited reinforcements who arrived at Cape Helles was the 52nd Lowland Division, which included the 1/4th and 1/5th Royal Scots Fusiliers (RSF) battalions, recruited respectively from north and south Ayrshire. They arrived on 6 and 7 June, still wearing heavy serge uniforms, as they had originally destined to serve on the Western Front. Hunter-

Weston was delighted to greet twenty neighbours from the village of West Kilbride, including some young men who had grown up on the Hunterston estate. He had them marched from the rest camp for tea at his HQ and regaled them with selections from his gramophone.[18]

Within weeks these men would in action at the Battle of Achi Baba Nullah, one of Hunter-Weston's new brand of limited offensives. The battle was fought on the 12 and 13 July with the aim of pushing forward the allied centre east of the ridge to align with recent gains on each flank. Due to the shortage of artillery, half of the line was to advance in the morning and half in the afternoon. The real problem, however, was a lack of accurate intelligence regarding the Turkish positions.[19] The Ayrshire men went into action at 7.35 am on 12 July. They surged across no-man's land with fixed bayonets, but the real fighting began when they entered the enemy's defensive maze. They tried in vain to wheel over the labyrinth of trenches, and their attempts to capture a non-existent 'third trench' line caused unnecessary casualties. The 4th Battalion RSF lost a total of 268 officers and men that morning; the 5th battalion lost 215. This was one of a series of disasters to befall the territorial division during July, leaving communities across Scotland mourning 'a second Flodden'.[20]

Despite their cost, Hunter-Weston's new tactics were successful in capturing two Turkish trench systems and securing a new defensive line that gave the Helles army their best field of fire to date. Nevertheless, he continued to be haunted by the lack of

howitzers and ammunition and the fear of a Turkish counter-attack that could easily sweep the allies off the peninsula. After twelve weeks, he had still failed to reach the objective that had been set for the first day of the landings. By mid-July a rising note of desperation entered his analysis of the tactical situation. The next two months, he argued, would be crucial. Rather than a half-hearted balancing act, there had to a frank admission that the Gallipoli campaign could only be supported the expense of the Western Front. It should either be abandoned, or sufficient resources diverted immediately to secure victory. If the required resources were not to be sent, then they should cut their losses and return as many men as possible to Britain: 'the remainder of us told to stick it out (as I shall be very glad to do) and kill as many Turks as possible before we run out of ammunition'. [21]

In the event, there would be no gallant last stand for Hunter-Weston. He had aged visibly since landing at Gallipoli and was invalided home at the end of July, suffering from heatstroke and exhaustion. His reputation on the peninsula was already suffering. Gallipoli was a small, toxic world where disgruntled officers and gossip-hungry war correspondents rubbed shoulders. Indeed, one of Hunter-Weston's bitterest critics was Major-General Granville Egerton, the commander of 52nd, who described him as 'an oily humbug' and a 'murderer'. [22] Crucially, these views would be uncritically fed into later accounts of the campaign, which began to appear from 1930s, cementing his reputation as 'the Butcher of Helles'.[23] There were two accusations. The first was that he inflicted unnecessary casualties; the second was that his attitude towards

his men was one of callous indifference. Were these fair?

In the first place, Hunter-Weston by no means the only general in the Great War who believed that heavy losses might have to be accepted as the price of victory.[24] At Gallipoli, the lack of artillery support made infantry attacks particularly deadly. However, Hunter-Weston calculated that even greater losses might result if the Turks were not driven from their positions. Essentially, the campaign was a race against time. His new limited offensive approach from June onwards was designed to be less costly in terms of men's lives, but it was still the same grim arithmetic. He genuinely believed – not unrealistically – that his depleted and demoralised troops could easily be swept off the peninsula by the enemy simply punching through two or three miles. Against this background, he argued that his troops could not afford to be passive and had to gain ground. As he explained when giving evidence at the Dardanelles Commission in 1917:

> The one thing that a General thinks about all the time is sparing his men's lives – never does a General attack unless he thinks by so doing he will in the end save; that is what our job is, we are very careful on the question of loss of live and the human suffering which must occur. Actually speaking if an attack is well thought out, even if you lose life you will probably save life in the end, because you keep the other people apprehensive and they will not be able to concentrate on you and attack you with overwhelming force.[25]

As regards the second charge of callousness, as a Corps Commander, the pressure of sending thousands of men to kill and be killed was enormous. Generals coped with this in different ways and most, like the taciturn Douglas Haig, kept their feelings to themselves. However, Hunter-Weston was never a man to remain silent. Deeply sentimental about his soldiers, he nevertheless believed that commanders had to develop a measure of personal detachment. Some senior commanders, like Sir John French, were never able to develop this quality when ordering attacks with limited fire support, but in the challenging context of the peninsula, Hunter-Weston believed that such diffidence was dangerous.[26] As a result, willingness to attack at all costs, regardless of casualties, became part of his leadership style, sitting uncomfortably with his joviality and paternalism. Above all, it was his defiant eagerness to expound these views that created the image of a ruthless general. Projecting this persona may also have been a psychological device to strengthen his resolve, but this sort of grandiloquent posturing was also fatal for his reputation. The novelist Compton Mackenzie - actually an admirer of Hunter-Weston - captured one exchange. Hunter-Weston had briefed a colleague on a successful action that had recently taken place:

> ‘Many casualties?’ asked General Paris in a voice that could not hide the bitterness he felt over the

losses of his own splendid Division. And as I think of General Hunter-Weston's reply I fancy I see a falcon strike angrily at some grizzled trusty old dog.
'Casualties?' he cried eyes flashing, aquiline nose quivering. 'What do I care for casualties?'
The other rose from his chair.
'I must be getting back, 'he growled.
'You'll stay to tea?'
'No, thanks.'[27]

Remembrance

On his return from Gallipoli, Hunter-Weston was immediately knighted and later given command of VIII Corps at the Somme offensive in 1916. His corps suffered the greatest number of casualties of any corps on the first day of the battle - over 14,000 men. He kept his corps, although he would never commanded in another major battle again. Instead he turned his eyes to a political career. He was became MP for North Ayrshire in October 1916 and was triumphantly re-elected to the new seat of Bute and North Ayrshire in the 1916 General Election. His relationship with the 52nd Division, both at Gallipoli and at the final advance on Mons in November 1918, was flagged up by the local press in the cost, who reported that constituents hungered 'to share some of the glory which attaches to this great soldier'.[28] He would go on to serve as a popular and hard-working local MP for almost twenty years. In return, he would receive the affection and recognition that he had craved

throughout his army career. When he died in 1940 it was in suitably dramatic style after a fall from the roof of Hunterston House, while doing keep fit exercises.[29]

Ironically, one of Hunter-Weston's first tasks as an MP was the unveiling of local war memorials. These acts had a special poignancy since some of the heaviest losses in north Ayrshire were suffered by the local territorials under his command at Gallipoli. Confronting the human cost of war at last gave him the chance to unleash the emotions that he had kept in check as a commander. Dedicating memorial in Stewarton Parish Church in July 1921, he proclaimed on a powerful voiced that reached every listener:

> Have those men we are commemorating still a place in our minds? Time is a great consoler. Time blurs the sharp outlines of memory. Is it so with your memory of these dead heroes? No! A thousand times, no! Do you, the mothers of these dead heroes forget the babe you bore – the little mouth that suckled you? Do you fathers forget the wee baby hands and feet the dimpled wrinkles forming bracelets around his wrist, and the pride and pleasure and happy trouble he was to you?[30]

Aylmer Hunter-Weston may not have been the 'great captain' that he though, but neither was he a commander who sacrificed his humanity in the pursuit of victory.

End Notes

[1]'In Memoriam' by 'J.N.': *Ayrshire Post,* 6 August 1915.

[2]See, *Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald, Ayrshire Post* and *Troon and Prestwick Times,* 23 July – 27 August 1915.

[3]Robert Rhodes James, *Gallipoli* (London: Pimlico, 1999), 210; Robin Prior, *Gallipoli: The End of the Myth* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Peter Hart, *Gallipoli* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[4]*Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald,* 1 October 1864. For a full biographical study, see, E. W. McFarland, *A Slashing Man of Action: Lieutenant-General Sir Aylmer Hunter-Weston MP* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2014).

[5]Rhodes James, *Gallipoli,* Les Carlyon, *Gallipoli* (London: Bantam, 2001) 120. See also, John Laffin on the 'bovine' Hunter-Weston: *The Agony of Gallipoli* (London: The History Press, 2005), 65.

[6]*Some family papers of the Hunters of Hunterston* [edited for Lt.-General Sir Aylmer Hunter-Weston of Hunterston by M. S. Shaw W.S.] (Edinburgh: J. Skinner, 1925). See also, 'The Pedigree of Hunter of Hunterston, or, Of that Ilk, compiled from State Records, Exchequer Rolls, Parish Registers, and other Public Authorities, and from Charters, Family Documents, and Private MSS. in the possession of Robert Hunter, Esq., of Hunterston', 1865.

[7]*United Services Gazette,* 22 September 1910.

[8]Arthur Cook [George Molesworth (ed.)], '*A Soldier's War'* (Taunton: Goodman and Sons, 1957), 1.

[9]For the background to the campaign see: Prior, *Gallipoli,* 1-71; Travers, *Gallipoli,* 20-36. Note also C. F. Aspinall- Oglander, *History of the Great War based on official documents by direction of the Historical Section of the Committee of Imperial Defence: Military Operations, Gallipoli.* Volume I: *Inception of the Campaign to May 1915* (London: William Heinemann, 1929), [*OHG* (1)], 108-9.

[10]Hunter-Weston (HW) to Grace Hunter-Weston (GHW), 24 March 1915, HW Private War Diary, 48364, British Library (BL).

[11]Note with regards to the opinion of Major-General Hunter-Weston, HW Private War Diary, 28 March 1915, 48364, BL.

[12]HW Private War Diary, 7 November 1915, 48364, BL**.**

[13]HW Private War Diary, 16 April 1915, 48364, BL.

[14]*OHG* (1)*,* 254; William Marshall, *Memories of Four Fronts* (London: Edward Benn Ltd, 1929), 254.

[15]Prior, *Gallipoli,* 108; HW to GHW, 6 May 1915, HW Private War Diary, 48364, BL.

[16]Edward Erickson, *Gallipoli: The Ottoman Campaign* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword, 2010).

[17]F. Aspinall-Oglander, *History of the Great War Based on Official Documents by Direction of the Historical Section of the Committee of Imperial Defence: Military Operations, Gallipoli.* Volume II: *May 1915 to the Evacuation* (London: William Heinemann, 1932)*,* 73.

[18]HW to C. Wigram, 6 May 1915, Hunter-Weston papers, 6503/39/21, NAM; *Largs and Millport Weekly News,* 10 July 1915

[19]R. R. Thompson, *The Fifty-Second Lowland Division, 1914-1918* (Glasgow: Macklehose, Jackson & Co., 1923), 84.

[20]Lieutenant-Colonel David Murray, '52nd Division at Gallipoli – a Second Flodden', *United Services Journal,* 59 (1), March 2008.

[21]HW Official War Diary, 11 July 1915: 48356, BL: HW Private War Diary, 15 July 1915, 48364, BL

[22]Egerton Diary 12 July 1915, Acc.1669/10, National Library of Scotland.

[23]See, for example, Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, *The Uncensored Dardanelles* (London: Hutchinson, 1931); Edmond Delage, *The Tragedy of the Dardanelles* (London: John Lane, 1932).

[24]Michael Senior, *Lieutenant General Sir Richard Hacking: XI Corps Commander, 1915-18: A Study in Corps Command* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword: 2012), 246-7.

[25]Hunter-Weston, Evidence to Dardanelles Commission, Hamilton Papers, 8/2/50, KCL.

[26]Richard Holmes, *Little Field Marshal: A Life of Sir John French* (London: Cassell, 2005), 278.

[27]Compton Mackenzie, *Gallipoli Memories* (London: Cassell, 1929), 151-2.

[28]*Kilmarnock Standard,* 14 December 1918; *Glasgow Herald,* 7 December 1918.

[29]*Scotsman,* 19 March 1940.

[30]*Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald,* 8 July 1921.

The Dukes of Portland by Hugh Watson

Most of the landed gentry in the 18th and 19th centuries principally aimed to secure the survival of their vast estates along with the family name and any title connected to them. This certainly applied to the Dukes of Portland who in the 19th century owned vast estates stretching from Caithness in the north of Scotland to Buckinghamshire in the south of England as well as Ireland.

The 3rd Duke of Portland had an active political career. He was Prime Minister twice [1] albeit 24 years apart, and in the intervening years Home and Colonial Secretary as well as other posts. He was a favourite of the King George III. Some criticised him as an ineffective PM similar to another of the King's favourites who also became Prime Minister - the 3rd Earl of Bute who had been the King's Tutor.

It would appear that the political interests of the 3rd Duke of Portland distracted him from the management of his estates leading to financial short comings. He hoped that his son would restore the family fortunes by marrying well. His father had done this, when as the 2nd Duke of Portland, he married Margaret Cavendish Harley, sole heiress of the Earl of Oxford. This restored the losses incurred by his grandfather the 1st

[1] He became Prime Minister twice in 1783 and in 1807-1809 Government History at https://www.gov.uk/government/history/past-prime-ministers/william-bentinck-duke-of-portland accessed October 2018

Duke of Portland in the "South Sea Bubble", an early Stock Market crash.

In 1794 the 3rd Duke of Portland was taken into William Pitt the Younger's Government to provide much needed Whig support for the encouragement of more votes to go to the “minority” Tory Government[2]. Another leading member of Pitt's Government was Henry Dundas, a Scotsman, who had made his mark in Parliament and provided patronage across Britain and the British Empire especially in India. He was also a guardian of the late General John Scott's (died in1775) three daughters "pretty Miss Scott" “witty Miss Scott” and “rich Miss Scott" who were relatives of Dundas.

Dundas realised that the 3rd Duke of Portland was actively seeking a match for his son and such was the Duke's financial plight was even contemplating marrying him to a "commoner" which was extremely unusual as normally a Duke would not marry someone well below his station.

Duke was first in the Peerage "league table" of Great Britain followed by Marquis then Earl, Viscount, and lastly Baron. All of which entitled the holders to a seat in the House of Lords. Baronets were excluded although the title was still heritable. Commoners were well off the chart and interestingly when the duke's son became the 4th Duke he threatened to disown any sons or daughters who contemplated marrying a commoner! There must have been a considerable amount of money, estates and stocks and shares on offer here to attract the 3rd Duke but where did most of this wealth originate?

It was said that the aristocracy in Georgian times were addicted to gambling.

We have a record of the 3rd Duke of Portland gambling at cards with Lord Harcourt. Such games could last all night long finishing early in the morning. At some time in the night probably the Duke was winning and possibly Harcourt had run out of money but still wished to gamble so he rashly bet his London Town House - Harcourt House- which the Duke went on to win and it became the Dukes' of Portland London Town House for a number of years.

Some 400 miles away in Edinburgh another Town House - Dundas House - changed hands over a game of cards - probably whist. This was a game between Lawrence Dundas and General John Scott of Balcomie[2] (father of the three girls mentioned). Lawrence was a cousin of Henry Dundas and at one time exerted a strong influence on Edinburgh Burgh Council. He was also a Midlothian MP and was also owner of Orkney and Shetland and several estates in England and Scotland. He made his money by providing supplies to the British Army during the "Seven Year's War" and more recently doing the same task for "Butcher Cumberland" in the 1745 Rebellion and aftermath. His influence was such within Edinburgh that he managed to alter the "New Town Plan" to get his new Mansion House built on the intended site of St
Andrews Church in St Andrews Square. St George's Church was built as planned in Charlotte

[2] Henry Cockburn, Journal of Henry Cockburn: being a continuation of the memorials of his time, 1831-1854 page 171

Square at the other end of George Street. St Andrew's Church was intended to be built facing St George's Church at the opposite end. The plans were changed to accord with Laurence Dundas' wishes and St Andrews Church was built on the side of George Street[3].

Following the gambling debt, a compromise was proposed by Scott suggesting to Lawrence that he could keep his new house if he got the Adam Company of Architects to design and build Scott a Town House equally as good for him. Scott's Town House[4] was subsequently erected near York Place in Edinburgh where his eldest daughter Henrietta was born in 29 May 1774 - "rich Miss Scott"- followed by the other two girls. Scott died in 1775 as apparently the result of a hunting accident and the last daughter was still unborn when he died.

In life he was a colourful man being eventually a General in the Army and a Member of Parliament in a total of 20 years in Caithness, Tain and latterly in Fife. Most of his considerable wealth seems to have been due to his phenomenal skill and luck at cards and dice. An online site 'The History of Parliament' states that "General John Scott of Balcomie may have gained as much as £500,000 during a lifetime of Gambling"[5]. The result of a Burgh Election in Dingwall he was involved which was overturned in 1759 by The Court of Session due to blatant

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[3] J F Birrell, An Edinburgh Alphabet, page 21

[4] Mary D Steuart, The Romance of the Edinburgh Streets pages 180-182

[5] https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1754-1790/member/scott-john-1725-75 accessed October 2018

bribery of Scott. But he was not disqualified as he had support in high places pleading to his cousin Lord Mansfield who was the Lord Chief Justice in England and Scott won a subsequent election in Kirkwall.

He is also mentioned in "The History of Gambling" by John Ashton where he is found as a mere Captain Scott "with a modest income and a few debts" gambling with an aristocrat Lord John Bland at White's Gentlemen's Club where Bland is £32,000 down (today's equivalent about £3,000,000). This brought a crowd onto the London Streets with the rumour that an army officer was about to strip the wealth of a Lord. This happened in 1755 probably as Scott was in London following his election as Member of Parliament for Caithness with Government support in 1754. In 1756 as a post note Sir John Bland shot himself on the way to Paris probably due to his mounting debts.

Major General John Scott of Balcomie had the nickname of "Pawky" Scott - meaning clever in a sly way- and he even signed himself "Pawky Scott". Although he had a way with women, he remained unmarried until 1770 when he married 16-year-old Mary Ann Hay. Rumour had it that this marriage was a settling of a gambling debt.

The young lady in question was the granddaughter of the 4th Earl of Kilmarnock executed in 1746 for supporting "Bonnie Prince Charlie." One of his sons, James Boyd, fought on the Government side and was able to get his father's lands but not the title. He later obtained the title of Earl of Erroll when a great aunt died but he had to change his surname to Hay from Boyd.

Scott married Mary Ann Hay on 2nd November 1770 and she gave birth to a boy who did not live long. The birth apparently was recorded in the session records of Crail Church but the relevant page is missing. Scott may have suspected the father was a young officer in his regiment called Captain Sutherland of Duffus whom he suspected of having an affair with his young wife. This was quite close to the outbreak of "The War of Independence" in America. Scott planned to send Captain Sutherland to America to check on the situation and report back to him. As well as providing needed intelligence it would keep Sutherland well away from Scott's young wife.

He invited Captain Sutherland to dine at Balcomie Castle in Fife as recorded in the divorce proceedings the following year. The details of the case reads almost like the book "Tom Jones" by Henry Fielding (who lived about the same time as Scott and the "Tom Jones" part being played by Captain Sutherland of Duffus) with an elopement followed by a chase. On the eve of the elopement Mary Ann (Scott's wife) told her husband that she needed to write some letters and he should not wait up and so she would not waken him she would sleep elsewhere. On awakening Scott asked a servant where his wife was. He was informed that she had gone with Captain Sutherland and Sutherland's servant at 2 am taking Scott's best carriage. Scott assembled his supporters and they left Balcomie Castle heading south stopping at Edinburgh to collect Scott's writer and then travelling into England heading for London[6].

[6] Leah Leneman, Alienated Affections: The Scottish Experience of Divorce and Separation, 1684-1830

Scott's party caught up with the eloping couple at “The Red Lion” at Barnet outside London. On sight of Scott, Captain Sutherland shut and bolted the bedroom door. Then he leapt out of the window running across the fields wearing just his nightclothes and night cap and not stopping until he could hide in a haystack. Meanwhile Mary Ann feared for her life but Scott said "Have no fear for your life but the marriage is all over". Scott hired Captain Sutherland's servant possibly so he would have another witness for the divorce proceedings. On obtaining the divorce Scott then headed for America and did not return until 1773.

Subsequently he married Margaret Dundas the youngest (aged 30) daughter of Robert Dundas, President of the Court of Session, half-brother of Henry Dundas, the Lord Advocate in 5th June 1773. Thus, Scott became related to one of the most powerful political and legal families in Scotland, and he is already a cousin to Lord Mansfield, Lord Chief Justice in England. The start of his second marriage came very close to the end of his life as he died of a hunting accident age 50 (he dies in 7th December 1775). Nevertheless "Pawky Scott" fathered three children, two girls and the third unborn child when he died. Scott gambled right up until his death. He was at White's Gentlemen's Club when he heard of the birth of Henrietta his eldest daughter (born 29 May 1774) as he is £8000 down he immediately doubles his stakes and by close of gambling the next morning he is £15,000 up.

Major General Scott of Balcomie had been dead for nearly 20 years when the 3rd Duke of

Portland and Henry Dundas contemplated the marriage of the Marquis of Titchfield age 27 (the Duke's son and heir) to a commoner "Rich" Miss Scott age 21 (Scott's Heir). Scott's will[7]remained a hindrance to the marriage as it stipulated that none of his daughters was to marry a peer or son of a peer. As one of their guardians, Henry Dundas had the duty to see the terms of the will were upheld. Dundas had the reputation as a fixer and by the time of the marriage one of the other girls Lucy - "witty" Miss Scott - had already gone against these instructions by marrying Lord Doune, son of the Earl of Moray. The third daughter Joan Scott, "Pretty Miss Scott" married George Canning, Dundass' protégé, in 1800 whose social status accorded with her father's wishes. Joan and George signed an agreement leaving the bulk of the inheritance with Henrietta although they took £100,000 into their marriage.

Henrietta Scott, born in Edinburgh was usually described as a Fife heiress. On her father's death, she inherited Balcomie Estate in Fife, Ratho Estate near Edinburgh, and Ladywell estate in Caithness. At the age of twelve in 1786, her Guardians bought her Kilmarnock Estate from the 14th Earl of Glencairn. In the same year Robert Burns published his Kilmarnock Edition with the 14th Earl of Glencairn as his patron for the subsequent Edinburgh Edition.

Her Guardians also bought for her Cessnock Estate, Galston, Mount Estate and Grange Estate, Kilmarnock in successive years. Cessnock Castle became the ducal seat in Ayrshire as

[7] Held by the National Archives in Kew, London PROB11/1020/46

Dean Castle in Kilmarnock was unusable because of a fire in 1735.

On 29 May 1795 when Henrietta reached her majority, Kilmarnock Burgh Council asked the inhabitants to rejoice and illuminate their windows and a celebratory meal was held in Sun Inn Kilmarnock.(Glasgow Courier)

The Glasgow Courier announced on 23 June 1775 "that the Marquis of Titchfield is very soon to receive the hand of Miss Scott in Marriage". On 4th August 1775 she married the Marquis of Titchfield in her mother's London house in Piccadilly and became the Marchioness of Titchfield[8]. They were married by the Reverend Goodenough, the Marquis' former tutor at Eton.

The ante-nuptial contract on the Portland side ensured that the young couple were to take over the estate recently inherited by the 3th Duke of Portland - Welbeck Abbey. This looked more like a Palace than a Mansion standing as it did in 20 square miles of grounds (13,000 acres) although there was a large mortgage[9] over it of £72,000 - roughly about £7 million today. If his son and daughter in law took this off the Duke's hands it would help him to balance his books (although not that much as on his death the 3rd Duke of Portland still left debts of £500,000).

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[8] https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/search/archives/ffdc36ea-ef91-39ba-96da-900c6119c4b6 University of Nottingham, Manuscripts and Special Collections Portland (London) Papers GB159/PlF6/1/25

[9] https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/search/archives/ffdc36ea-ef91-39ba-96da-900c6119c4b6 University of Nottingham, Manuscripts and Special Collections Portland (London) Papers GB159/Pl/6/1

On the Scott's side Henrietta's guardians wanted the Scott name added to that of Portland and also any estates bought by Scott's money such as the Kilmarnock Estate as well as other wealth created by Scott to be inherited only by people of Scott's blood. Later this would cause the Portland inheritance to split when the 5th Duke of Portland died without issue. Scott's coat of arms was also to be included in the Portland's.

The new Marquis and Marchioness of Titchfield moved into Welbeck Abbey in September 1795. Shortly afterwards the Marquis received "The Freedom of Kilmarnock" from Kilmarnock Burgh Council. The Marquis placed the Scott name within his name and the Scott Coat of Arms within the Titchfield Coat of Arms according to the terms of the marriage contract. He changed his signature to "Scott Titchfield" and on becoming the 4th Duke 1809 (on his father's death} to "Scott Portland".

The Coat of Arms reflect which Dukes and Barons have Scott blood and which do not. The 4th Duke placed the Scott Coat of Arms in the centre of the Portland Arms with the Cavendish Snake symbol to the Right and the Bentinck Feathers to the Left.

His son the 5th Duke put double the amount of Scott Coat of Arms in his Portland Arms. Probably stating the obvious that" he had real Scott's blood whilst his father had none" as he did not seem to like his father. This son inherited because the real heir died in1824 because of typhoid making way for a much less favoured son and the Duke and he did not seem to get on at so many levels becoming the 5th Duke of Portland in 1854.

This Duke had the nickname of "The Mole" because he was famous for digging 12 miles of tunnels under Welbeck Abbey.(He employed up to 1500 building trade workers for almost 18 years to create his various buildings above and below ground) These tunnels were just below the surface all having sky lights and 4,000 gas lamps underground. He also had a gas producing plant which extracted gas from coal. Unpopular amongst his fellow peers, his workers although finding him strange appreciated his generosity and care for them in general level of wages, housing in sickness and old age.

The Coat of Arms of the 6th Duke of Portland does not have the Scott Coat of Arms showing he has no Scott blood. The 5th Duke had died without issue but there was still Scott blood and because all his three brothers had predeceased him the Scott part of the Portland inheritance then flowed down the Portland Female line with the surviving three sisters Margaret Harriet Scott Bentinck, Charlotte Scott Bentinck married in 1827, now Lady
Ossington, but with no children and finally Lucy Joan Scott Bentinck married in 1828 to Charles Augustus Ellis, 6th Lord Howard de Walden who died in 1868 and by 1889 she was known as the Dowager Lady Howard de Walden. She had 7 children - six boys and one girl and on her death, her out of favour son Frederick Augustus Ellis the 7th Lord Howard De Walden inherited. He lasted only 4 months and on his death his son inherited aged 19 Tommy Evelyn Scott Ellis. His Coat of Arms includes two Scott Coat of Arms recognising his line from General John Scott of Balcomie. This is underlined by converting Scott's grave in Kilrenny Fife into a Mausoleum with the Inscription "In Memory of General John Scott of

Balcomie who died 20 December 1775 and his wife Margaret Dundas died 23 August 1797. Erected by Thomas Evelyn Ellis Scott 8th Baron Howard de Walden their great great grandson."

Thomas puts General Scott's coat of arms clearly in the Howard De Walden coat of arms with a diagonal repetition, he also for a time reversed his name to Ellis Scott but perhaps on the advice of his lawyers that this was not a good idea changed it back to Scott Ellis (his Great Aunt Lady Ossington changed her name by Royal Licence to Charlotte Scott). The 6th Duke of Portland and Thomas Evelyn Scott Ellis were at last longer term holders for their respective titles, the Duke 64 years and 47 years for the 8th Howard de Walden.

At this time the split in the Duke of Portland's inheritance much favoured the 6th Duke of Portland in number of estates inherited. Originally the title of the 6th Duke of Portland was awarded to his father who died at age 52 - two years short of the death of the 5th Duke. The title was then inherited by his son who was unmarried, aged 22 and an officer in the Coldstream Guards. This son was the only child to his first wife who died 4 days after the birth of his birth. His father subsequently re-married Augusta Browne and he had 3 sons to her with one daughter - Ottoline Cavendish Bentinck (Ottoline Drive Troon is named after her). On inheriting the title and some six estates, his son initially visited the ducal seat at Welbeck Abbey with his stepmother and stepsister Ottoline (a Dutch name). Although Ottoline was only six at that time she was later wrote down her impressions of Welbeck Abbey that day. The previous occupant of the building, the 5th Duke, had built 12 miles of tunnels just below the surface of the Abbey and building operations had been going on for 18 years. He was

in the midst of installing a plumbing system when he died. So with all the piles of rubble and trenches and mud all over the site, access to Welbeck Abbey was nearly impossible. Some workmen cleared rubble at the entrance and laid planks of wood over the trenches to enable the 6th Duke and his party to enter the Abbey. The Duke's first thoughts was to turn tail and head for his Gentleman's Club in London but his stepmother, Augusta Cavendish Bentinck persuaded the Duke to stay and restore the Abbey. The work took at least 3 years but afterwards they were able to wine and dine the Prince Regent and his large Party.

Disraeli invited the 6th Duke to meet him late in his second term as prime minister at the height of his fame. He wanted to return a favour to the Portlands given when he had been leader of the Conservative Opposition when such a post required him to be a landowner and to represent a County. He acquired a loan of £25,000 from the Portlands to buy Hughenden in Buckinghamshire to achieve eventually his ambition to become Prime Minister. So he asked the 6th Duke what he wish for. The 6th Duke asked that his stepmother Augusta Cavendish and his stepbrothers and stepsister be given some honour to raise them from their present status as they had missed their elevation to duchess, lords and lady. Disraeli met with Queen Victoria who she agreed to elevate Augusta to 1st Baroness of Bolsover and her sons and daughter to as lords and lady.

So "Lady of Welbeck Abbey" for ten years was his stepmother Augusta Cavendish Bentinck elevated to 1st Baroness of Bolsover about 1880. She was very popular with the staff whom she provided help for their welfare and supervised the collections of art at Welbeck and rescued the buildings and

grounds from the "building site" status the 5th Duke had left of his unfinished "8th Wonder of the World".

As time passed the servants and his friends speculated if the duke would ever marry. After all it was over 45 years since Welbeck Abbey had the last duchess the 4th Duke's wife Henrietta Scott who died in 1844. The 6th Duke's "love" was breeding and racing thoroughbred racehorses after all he had inherited a 100-stall stable one of the biggest in Europe and he had met with much success with "Ayrshire" winning the Derby in 1888 (this horse had won £35,000 since 1880).

On 11 June 1889 he married Winifred Dallas Yorke – the same year his horses made a record amount of winnings of almost £73,000 (about £7 million in modern money) - and one of them "Donovan" won the Derby about the same time. He had been en route for a spot of grouse shooting at Ladywell Caithness, another of his estates, when he had to change trains at Carlisle and there, he saw Winifred Dallas Yorke[10] on her way to visit her grandparents at Murthly Castle Perthshire, her birthplace.

Entranced by the sight of her, he was eager to formally meet her which he did early in the New Year. An engagement followed in the spring and they married in June 1889. At last the ducal estate Welbeck Abbey had a duchess. It seems later they found out that they had both had been born in Perthshire within 5miles of each other so close the same doctor attended at their birth! His stepmother Augusta Cavendish Bentinck

[10] See Charles J Archard, 'The Portland Peerage Romance' available as an ebook at http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/14371 accessed November 2018

shortly after the arrival of the Duchess, moved to her London Mansion.

That year Winifred suggested he use some of his record horse winnings to help his estate workers who were old or disabled. He built a village of substantial houses and unwisely called it "The Winnings". His friends accused him of bragging about his gambling winnings so put an explanation underneath the sign which did little to quell the uproar. After all the much criticised 5th Duke would regularly build houses for his workforce and estate workers not needing to await windfalls and doing it as part of the regular needs of the estate. Winifred Dallas Yorke is remembered in Kilmarnock by Yorke Place in Bonnyton.
The following list shows the streets associated with the Marquis of Titchfield, 4th Duke of Portland, 5th Duke of Portland and the 6th Duke of Portland in **Kilmarnock;**

1) Bentinck Street Dukes of Portland family name of 4th Duke.
2) Duke Street Built 1859 named provisionally Victoria Street but changed to Duke Street when 5th Duke gave the vital last contribution which enabled the street to be built.
3) Fullarton Street named after 4th and 6th Duke's favourite summer residence Fullarton House in Troon.
4) Henrietta Street named after the 4th Duke of Portland's wife Henrietta Scott.
5) Portland Road time of 5th Duke of Portland.
6) Portland Street time of 4th Duke of Portland.
7) Scott Road perhaps named after Henrietta Scott wife of 4th Duke of Portland

8) Titchfield Street probably named after Marquis of Titchfield who became the 4th Duke of Portland.
9) Turner place named after the factors to the Dukes of Portland - the Turners 10)Welbeck Street named after the ducal seat Welbeck Abbey.
11) Woodstock Street named after one of the 4th Duke of Portland's other titles 'Viscount of Woodstock'
12) Yorke Place named after the 6th Duke of Portland's wife Winifred Dallas Yorke

Places in Troon

1) Balcomie Crescent named after General John Scott of Balcomie father in law of the 4th Duke of Portland.
2) Bentinck Close Crescent and Drive - Dukes of Portland family name.
3) Cavendish Court Lane Place another family name of the Dukes of Portland acquired through marriage at a time they also obtained Welbeck Abbey
4) Cessnock Road probably named after the 6th Duke of Portland Ducal seat in Galston.
5) Dallas Court, Place named after 6th Dukes of Portland wife Winifred Dallas Yorke.
6) Dukes Road probably named after the Dukes of Portland.
7) Ottoline Drive named after the 6th Duke of Portland's step sister Ottoline (derived from Dutch) Cavendish Bentinck (married name Morrell).
8) Portland Street Terrace, probably after 4th Duke of Portland.
9) Titchfield Road after Marquis of Titchfield who became the 4th Duke of Portland.

10) Welbeck Court Crescent, named after the British ducal seat in Sherwood Forest Nottingham. Total 18 places

Galston

(1) Bentinck Square Street, named after 4th Duke of Portland.
(2) Cessnock Place Road, named after Cessnock Castle the Portland's Ayrshire ducal seat in Galston Ayrshire.
(3) Duke Street named after the 4th Duke of Portland.
(4) Henrietta Street named after the 4th Duke of Portland's wife Henrietta Scott.
(5) Titchfield Street named after the Marquis of Titchfield who became the 4th Duke of Portland.
(6) Welbeck Road named after the British ducal seat in Sherwood Forest Nottinghamshire.

Howard de Walden
Kilmarnock.

(1) Charles Street Place named after Charles Augustus Ellis 6th Lord Howard de Walden who married Lucy Joan Scott Bentinck 4th Duke 1828.
(2) de Walden Terrace named after second half of Howard de Walden name.
(3) Ellis Street the surname of the Howard de Walden's who came to Kilmarnock.

(4) Howard Park given to the people of Kilmarnock by The Dowager Lady Howard de Walden (who inherited "The Kilmarnock Estates" in 1889, formerly was a piece of Barbados Green.)
(5) Scott Ellis Playing Field named after Howard de Walden original surname Ellis and the additional surname denoting

Scott blood which he acknowledged as the source of his wealth.

(6) Seaford Street Howard de Walden held two titles the other being the Baron of Seaford an area in Kent.

Why all the interest in the Dukes of Portland? In 1983 on receipt of a plan of Grange Terrace from my solicitor, I discovered that the 6th Duke of Portland had feued 9 plots of land to build 9 houses on the west side of Grange Terrace in Kilmarnock. In 1920 the east side had already been built up including by people such as the architect William Railton who laid out John Finnie Street having designed and built his house in Grange Terrace in 1860.

The origin of the Dukes of Portland is also fascinating. When William of Orange landed at Brixham in Devon to claim the throne of Great Britain a Hans Willem Bentinck was a member of his party. He was already a favourite of the prince having nursed him successfully through smallpox. Hans was a diplomat and a soldier. He fought as a commander at the Battle of the Boyne. For his support William made him a peer in the English Peerage honouring him firstly with the title Baron of Cirencester, the Viscount of Woodstock and finally Earl of Portland - an extinct title which was revived for him. William gave him Bulstrode Park in Buckinghamshire and estates amounting to 135,000 acres of land in Ireland, and other estates in England. Because of jealously in the royal court he had to turn down an estate in North Wales. Although he fell out with the King, William requested his old favourite's presence on his death bed. The first Bentinck to land in England did not achieve the title of Duke. That title came with the Hanoverian succession of George I when the 2nd Earl of Portland was

raised by King George in 1716 to the title of 1st Duke of Portland.

The 1st Duke of Portland also was given a title for his son - Marquis of Titchfield below duke but higher than earl. When William of Orange became joint ruler of Britain with Mary his wife he not only brought a clearer way forward for the protestant religion but the possibility of adopting the Dutch financial system which seemed to be taken on in a measured way with the Bank of England founded 1694 and also imported the Dutch system of a national public debt funded through a Stock Exchange founded in Britain shortly after the Bank. It was the Stock Exchange which brought on one of the earlier Stock Market's Crashes called the South Sea Bubble. People got caught up in investing in South America which was still much controlled by Spain and Portugal and these investments proved to be poor and with a high level of the funds invested in these poor funds the eventual collapse slowed down development for future projects in London and other parts of Britain. The 1st Duke of Portland was unfortunately heavily involved in such investments and when the Bubble Burst and he lost heavily but was offered the governorship of Jamaica which was not a much sought after post. He arrived as Jamaican Governor at the age of 40 in 1820 and left in a coffin at the age of 46 in 1826.

Meanwhile his son inherited the title at the age of 17 becoming the 2nd Duke of Portland in 1826. He married aged 34 Lady Margaret Cavendish Harley, heiress of the Earl of Oxford and thus restored the Portland fortunes. She converted the Portland ancestral home Bulstrode Park into a menagerie and aviary where she had many botanical

specimens. King George and his wife and their 16 children visited regularly as the collection was "fit for a King". She had a superb ceramics collection topped by the Portland Vase. The 2nd Duke died at age 53 with his son succeeding him aged 24.

The 3rd Duke of Portland started his long political career in 1761 when he was Marquis of Titchfield and died in 1809 some say because of stress of politics added to by two members of his government fighting a duel - George Canning the Foreign Secretary and Castlereagh the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies in 1809[11]. A poster on display at Welbeck Abbey in Spring 2018 states that the 3rd Duke was extravagant and left debts of £500,000 to his heir.

His eldest son and heir the Marquis of Titchfield did much to rescue the Portland accounts by marrying Henrietta Scott who was backed along with others by the powerful family of Dundas. To give you some idea of the Scott wealth available. The Isle of May was a small part of the Balcomie Estate situated off the east coast in the Firth of Forth. The Northern Lighthouse Board paid the 4th Duke of Portland £60000 in 1814 (about £6 million today) for the Isle of May so the lighthouse could be replaced by a Robert Stevenson design.

What did the 4th Duke of Portland do for Ayrshire?

(1) He obtained an Act of Parliament to improve the layout of Kilmarnock putting in two new bridges, (King Street and St Marnock Street) New streets King Street, Portland Street, Wellington Street. The new Town Hall. Later Union

[11] History of Government blog https://history.blog.gov.uk/2015/09/02/william-cavendish-bentinck-3rd duke of-portland/ accessed October 2018

Street, Duke Street and lastly John Finnie Street. The body which organised all the work and more needing done was called The Town of Kilmarnock Improvement Trust which existed from 1802 to 1870 m

(2) He obtained an Act of Parliament to design and build a railway line and bridges from Kilmarnock to Troon.

(3) He entered into the already flourishing theme of Agricultural improvements by driving progress and in addition built a manufacturing Agricultural Tile Plant (Scotland' s first) on the Ducal Estate land at Cessnock.

(4) He obtained an Act of Parliament to make Troon's Harbour commercial with wet and dry docks and even started shipbuilding.

(5) He was involved in yacht design racing his yachts against Admiralty yachts in time trials in the Firth of Clyde.

Undoubtedly the 4th Duke not only played a vital part in restoring his family's wealth he made a highly significant contribution to the development of Ayrshire. Eventually the foundations he established ensured the Portlands and the Welbeck estates after him held 5th place in the amount of acreage they held in Ayrshire but number 1 for its value.

The 5th Duke of Portland spent most of his time at the ancestral home at Welbeck Abbey supervising the various grand plans he had in mind to turn it into the '8th Wonder of the World'. He never visited Ayrshire but seemed to take an interest in looking at regular reports from his factors. He also provided a grant for the completion of "Victoria Street" in Kilmarnock after which the name was changed to "Duke Street". He also had called in the plans for "Victoria Street" which he looked at and reputedly

straightened it and sent back to the Kilmarnock Town Improvement Trustees with a cheque for £700.

The 6th Duke lived at a time in 1920's when an Act of Parliament enabled landowners to break the entails or tailzies in Scotland clauses enabling estates to be broken up and the succession bypassed. He created Welbeck Estates Limited in which he placed the dukedom's former wealthy estates, stocks and shares, paintings and all other possessions so his granddaughter Anne could inherit Welbeck Abbey and all the wealth when her father died.

The 7th Duke of Portland provided much information to the nation when he did a deal with the Treasury bequeathing the Portland Papers to the nation in lieu of death duties. So when the 8th Duke of Portland - a distant cousin of the 7th Duke inherited that was all he got as "the cupboard was bare".

The 9th Duke of Portland also inherited the title without the riches and when he died in 1990 as his son had predeceased the title became extinct after 174 years.

The Earl of Portland is a title which lives on and the present holder is one Tim Bentinck, an actor and the voice of David Archer in the long running radio series "The Archers". By this time only the title remains.

What about the Scott inheritance ?
We know that in 1889 this slice of the Dukes of Portland wealth was inherited by the Dowager Lady Howard de Walden as in 1828 she had married Charles Augustus Ellis, the 6th Howard de Walden but her inheritance was due to her father being the 4th Duke of Portland and her brother who became the 5th Duke

of Portland subsequently dying without issue and there being no other male contenders the wealth the Kilmarnock Estates and the Marylebone Estates in London went down the Dukes of Portland female line of which she was third in line to inherit.
The modern wing of the Howards de Walden often feature in The Sunday Times Rich List and the present holder is Hazel Czernin who had to contend with the authorities to gain the title and wealth for herself and her three sisters. She has a son and heir Peter Czernin who has achieved some fame as a film producer with successes as "The Best Exotic Golden Marigold Hotel", "In Bruges", "The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society" and "A Very English Scandal". In turn he has sons who will inherit the Lord Howard de Walden wealth.

General Scott smiles in his grave.

Further Reading

The main deposit of the Portland Papers is at the University of Nottingham although there are also significant deposits in Nottinghamshire Archives and in the British Library in London in London. The latter mostly relates to the Portlands' political careers. In Nottingham University the following are especially of Ayrshire interest.

Portland (London) Collection: Catalogue of the Family and Financial Papers of the Dukes of Portland, 1583-1940

Catalogue of papers relating to the 4th and 5th Dukes of Portland, 1795-1910

Material relating to the trusts, settlements, will trusts etc of the 4th Duke and Duchess of Portland and the 5th Duke of Portland, 1795-1910.

The future 4th Duke of Portland then Marquis of Titchfield married Henrietta Scott, heiress of the Scotts of Balcomie Fife. The material in this section relates to their marriage settlement as well as the wills and settlements of the Scott Family and the management of the Scott estates in North Britain in the period immediately following their marriage.

Reference PI F61 Material relating to the marriage settlement of the Marquis and Marchioness of Titchfield, 1765-c1805. PI F62 contains the wills and settlements of the family of Scott of Balcomie, 1795-1820, PI F63 relates to the management valuation and sale of the Marchioness of Titchfield's estates in Scotland, 1795-1804

A detailed listing of the location of this widespread collection can be on Discovery the catalogue of the National Archives at

http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/c/F20919 accessed November 2018. It even includes the material deposited in Ayrshire Archives under the reference ATD13.

Allurement of the ‘Craig’

By Norrie Hunter[i] and transcribed by Rob Close

‘Yon muckle great puddin’ that sits like a grand currant bun in the middle of the Firth’ was one way my grandfather used to describe Ailsa Craig. Paddy’s Milestone is another caption that has been tagged to the isle, this originating from the fact that the Craig is supposedly half-way between Ardrossan and Belfast. Call it what you will, but there is no doubt that the Craig is one of the most fascinating and panoramic spectacles of the coastal waters of Scotland. As there is very little literary work actually published on the island, I decided to find out for myself what mysteries were hidden on that dark landmass that, believe it or not, is a part of the parish of Dailly - a parish that is completely ‘land-bound’.

The Craig is evidently of volcanic origin and so sheer are the cliffs on the west and south-west sides that it is virtually impossible to land. Only the shingle that has been washed ashore over the centuries allows a careful landing at these points. The cliffs are approximately 400 feet high and are perfect locations for the huge bird colony that has made its home on the island. Sea birds of every shape, size and creed infest the thousands of cliff-top crannies, rearing their young.

Puffins, guillemots and numerous types of gulls now use the facilities of this island in complete freedom from the hand of man.

Having admired Ailsa Craig from within a few hundred yards on past occasions on route for the Isle of Man, it was high time yours truly found out a little more about the goings-on of the Craig. You won't find any regular passenger steamer or hovercraft service to the island, should the notion come to inspect the sights, only an occasional fishing boat leaving Girvan Harbour with supplies for the three lighthouse keepers makes the trip across the ten and a half miles of the Firth. Despite past experiences which I'd rather not recall of fishing boats on the Clyde, I was a bit wary of making the crossing when it was first suggested, but as the Fair weather took a turn for the better, the calm waters off Girvan looked a more promising venture.

Two men who had agreed to take my not too seaworthy self across to inspect the concealed aspects of this solitary Carrick island were the father and son partnership of Gilbert and Jim Brown - skipper and owner of the fishing boat 'Girl Maureen'. Jim, of Rowan Road, Girvan, has been doing the Craig run for the past three years on a contract basis with the Northern Lights

Authority in Edinburgh - controllers of Ailsa Craig lighthouse. Basically, Jim has to make the trip with stores, mail and every so often take a relief man over, and on the odd occasion has had to bring injured men off the island in double quick time to meet the ambulance at Girvan. On arrival at Girvan I felt most relieved at the sight of the calm and placid waters that lay ahead. Jim and his father were on board the boat by the time I got down to the quayside so we wasted no time in getting under way.

Edging our way out of the harbour was a delicate operation because of the many small boats messing about in the safety of the sheltered waters. Up until recently a boat called the 'Ailsa Lady' was employed by the family for the run, but Jim explained that as they plan to start trawl fishing after the summer they had to sell her as she was not suitably equipped. "The 'Ailsa Lady' was bought by a group of skin divers", said Jim, "who use it to take them and their gear out to the wrecks off the Ayrshire coast, particularly the site of the World War I Russian cruiser 'Varyag', near Lendalfoot Point." "At the moment", he explained, "lobster fishing is our main concern, but this year it isn't proving as fruitful as it has dine in the past, so come the back end of the year we plan to begin trawling."

One thing that Ailsa Craig is famous for is granite stone, much of which has been used for the manufacture of curling stones. In 1969, when a group of businessmen organised the mining of the stone, Jim and his father were hired to take men and machinery across to the Craig and, in later months, to transport the huge lumps of stone back to the mainland. But in May of last year, the company decided that it was uneconomical to continue mining the granite so operations stopped. During that two-year period, Jim could recall many experiences he had while on hire to the form, especially the one when one of the quarry men had lost a part of his hand in an accident. "There I was" said Jim, "sitting at my tea, when the local police came battering at the front door. They quickly explained that someone had been hurt on the island and could I get across and back in a hurry. Rushing out of the house, I was bundled into a waiting police car and rushed to the quayside. We managed to get across, pick up the injured man and have him back in Girvan in two and a half hours", he continued, "but a few days later there was a rumour going around the town that I had wavered from the straight and narrow and had been 'lifted' by the police. Obviously the hurried entrance to the police car was a bit suspicious."

For four months of the year, depending on the weather, Jim and his father use the 'Girl Maureen' as a passenger vessel, and take day-trippers around the Craig for an afternoon's sail. On board with us Last Saturday was Mrs A. Noble, wife of the owner of the Girvan boatyard firm Mr Alexander Noble, the company responsible for the building of our seaworthy craft. "There are three generations of our family at present working in the yard at Girvan", said Mrs Noble, "and they are just about ready to complete the final parts of another such vessel."

Under the jurisdiction of the Marquis of Ailsa, the Craig is, and has been for many generations, tenanted by the Girvan family, The present tenant is Mr Ian Girvan of Henrietta Street, Girvan.

It took us the best part of an hour to make the crossing, the skipper giving us plenty of time to take in the sun and fresh sea air. Stepping off onto the small concrete jetty, once used by the quarrymen, the feeling of solemnity is almost chilling. There is no noise of bustling, thronging crowds, or of broken car exhausts, no smoke or fumes, only the peace and quiet that seems to envelop everyone and everything on the island. By everyone I mean the three lighthouse keepers on the Craig.

Until the lighthouse was built on the island in 1883, the only population Ailsa had was of the bird variety, but today there is

the small resident community of faithful channel watchers, namely Messrs W. Ritchie, principal of lighthouse (from Peterhead); T. Goodale, first assistant, from Birmingham; and R. Watt, second assistant, from Aberdeen. Asked what life was like on Ailsa, Mr Ritchie replied, "It's all right really; we work on a shift basis, three men are on at all times with one on shore leave. We spend one month on, and a fortnight ashore so the holiday situation isn't bad at all." The man who was having his two week vacation at that time was assistant Colin McEwan from Perth, but there is also a keeper who stands in if anyone is called away or becomes ill. He is Mr A. McKenzie of Colmonell.

Describing the main jobs concerned with the lighthouse itself, Mr Ritchie said, "our main purpose is to see that no shipping founders on the Craig while they are on the Firth. The 15,000 candle-power light has to be meticulously cared for each day, and we have to make sure that the compressors which operate the huge fog horns are always in perfect working order." Since he started work on the Craig, Mr Ritchie has seen only one wreck on the island and that was in July 1971, when a Swedish cargo ship foundered on the south west corner. "She lay there for six months", he explained, "and up until that time there had

never been a rat on Ailsa Craig, but before she could be re-floated, the vermin swarmed out of her hold and infested the Craig. But now there are not so many rats; most of them have been cleared."

He also spoke of the huge basking sharks that come in close to shore every evening during the warm weather. "It is quite common to see basking sharks in these waters", he said; "their two foot dorsal fin can be spotted many miles away. In the evening, just as the sun is setting they come inshore in an effort to get the small parasites off their back; they rub themselves along the shingle on the beach." Later it was explained that these sharks were not of the man-eating variety; in fact they don't have any teeth, only a large mouth - which they swim with wide open to catch plankton and small fish - and a small gullet. On the return journey we were lucky enough to come to close quarters with one such specimen.

Off the south east point there is the wreck of an ammunition ship, which used to be a popular location for skin divers, but the authorities warned them off in case the ship might explode. Waking around the only flat part of the island there could be seen the remains of the old railway line that used to carry the granite rocks from the quarry to the jetty, the skeleton of what

once was the operation headquarters of the men in charge of mining, and about one-third of the way to the top of this 1,100 feet high mass is a ruined castle of the Kennedy family. Accessible only by a steep and narrow path, the castle was once a strategic point which overlooked the main entrance to the waters and sea-side hamlets that sprang up on the Ayrshire coast many centuries ago.

There are three caves on Ailsa Craig, the largest of which is known as Swine Cave on the north side - thought to have been named so because pigs were reared there at one time. Nearby is the notorious McNall's Cave, named after a noted smuggler who used it as a house and a store for his booty. The most picturesque of the three caves is located at the south west end of the island. This is known as the Water Cave, which has a total length of 142 feet and a central height of 36 feet. The cave is by no means straight; it takes a sharp turn to the right and, if exploration is intended, a torch would be a most useful implement.

After spending about an hour ashore - we had to get back to catch the tide - we cast off for a tour round the hidden side of this amazing solitary chunk. The awesome sight that catches the eye is one of sheer splendour and sheer rock faces that have

been worn away by the winds and tides of countless ages. As we rounded the southern end, it was time to set course for home and Jim turned the boat about and headed for Girvan. Parting is definitely sweet sorrow; for myself it was my first visit to the Craig, and it will certainly not be the last. For Jim and his father it is just 'all in a day's work.

[i] This article first appeared in the Ayr Advertiser, Thursday, 27th July 1972, p.8. We thought it worth reprinting for the contemporary information. Norrie Hunter has not been identified.

When Carrick was like the Wild West

by James Brown

In the late 16th and early 17th centuries it was a common sight in Carrick, as elsewhere in Europe for men to swagger through the streets wearing swords and daggers and brandishing firearms such as pistols and hagbuts (an early form of rifle). Two such incidents that are recorded in the Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland capture the fierce spirit of the times.

John McIlvaine, younger of Grimmett, complained in 1613 that he was relaxing "*in sober manner within the Kaitchpoole of Mayboill*" - a pitch for playing *caitch* (a hand ball game) when he was attacked and abused by John Kennedy of Blairquhan, accompanied by John McDougall (McDowall) of Freuch, Gilbert Baird, younger of Kilquhinzie, David Sinclair in Clonachie, Thomas McCullie (MacAulay?), son to John McCulllie in Clayok, Thomas Girvane in Kilbryde, Thomas Fergusoun in Glenheid, William McTagart, John Sklaitter in Mayboll, James Kennedy of Brockloch and Thomas McIlmun in Bogtoun. Realising that they were not able to carry out their attack as they wished, they retreated but immediately came back again and, disregarding the presence of the Earl of Cassillis, Blairquhan, with drawn sword in one hand and a baton in the other lunged towards McIlvaine. The others, also with swords drawn, joined in but McIlvaine sensibly made a quick exit. The gang probably repaired to a hostlar house to fortify their courage with strong ale as they awaited another chance to get McIlvaine. That chance came when Grimmett accompanied Cassillis to Maybole Castle. McIlvaine obviously survived the attack which probably amounted to shouting, swearing and uttering of evil threats amid the brandishing of weapons.

Summonsed to appear before the Lords of Council, McIlvaine arrived to put his case, but of the attackers, only Gilbert Baird,

younger, of Kilhenzie, David Sinclair, Thomas McCullie, Thomas Girvane, Thomas Fergusoun, John Sklaitter, and John McDougall of Freuch turned up to defend themselves. The Lords gave judgment in favour of the defenders.

Half a century later, things had not improved. An arrest warrant was issued for Jon and George Kennedy, who had been "*guilty of robberies in many parts of the kingdom, especially in the baillieries of Carrick, Kyle and Renfrew"*. This nasty pair, half-brothers on the father's side, to Hew Kennedy of Garrihorn, caused great offence by breaking into a Maybole shop on a Sabbath night and removing a great part of the stock. The following day the shopkeeper, John McMillan, younger, pursued the thieves and recovered some of his goods. The pair were arrested and jailed but they escaped to continue on their rampages.

Not content with indulging in one particular crime, they used highway robbery against Richard McCubbin, a resident of Dailly who was on his way home from Maybole when he was intercepted by the Kennedys. They stole his purse and left him nursing several wounds to different parts of his body. They followed that up when they went to the house of Jon Hodgeon in Burntoun, while he and his family were at home, and stole the best things he had in his house, while threatening to stab him if he should resist. Assaulting someone in their own home was known as *hamesucken* in Scots law.

About three weeks late they carried out a similar assault and robbery at the home of Jon Henderson in Drumoir, taking his purse which contained a considerable sum of money, and then Jon Kennedy cruelly beat Henderson's wife for trying to stop the theft. Another terrifying incident was when they invaded the house of Jean Curry in Maybole and forced her to give them lodging, and before dawn they broke open a storage chest and stole whatever money she had. Of course, news of this pair, emboldened by their

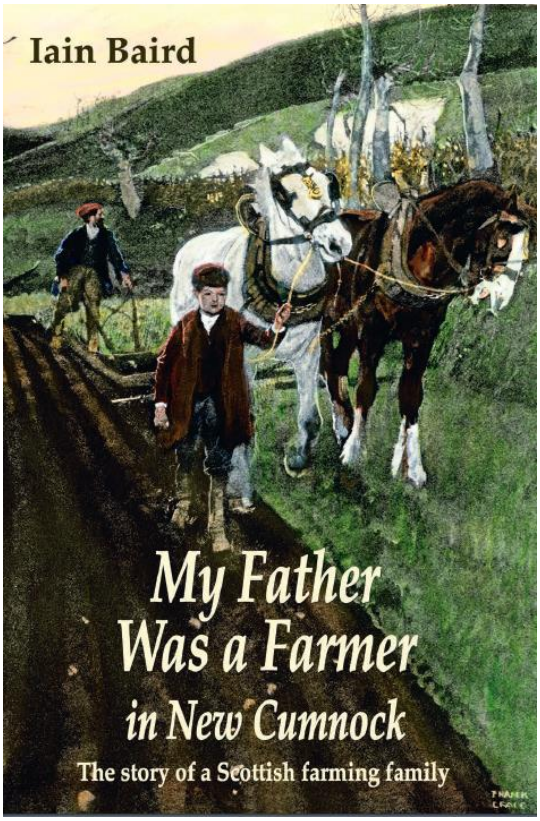
robberies and evading capture, would have spread far and wide and the *kintra clatter* (country gossip) caused folk to be reluctant to travel for fear of losing their money or even their lives.

In October, 1663, the Lords of Council granted full power and commission for the apprehension of the Kennedys to Alexander Kennedy of Kilhenzie, *alias* of Craigoch, Baillie deput of Carrick, Thomas Kennedy of Kirkhill, Jon McMurrie of Cultezoun, Jon Kennedy in Barshean and Captain John McReach (McReath?) to hunt down the evil pair and convey them to Edinburgh to face justice. At present their fate is unknown.

My Father Was A Farmer in New Cumnock. Iain Baird

ISBN978-1-911589-96-9

The end of the nineteenth century was a difficult time for farmers in Scotland. A decade of cold years made it hard to grow crops or feed animals, and grain growers faced competition from America after the repeal of the Corn Laws and the end of the US Civil War. In these harsh conditions, ordinary families still pursued their lives and loves. Blending together fictional characters with the facts of his great-grandfather's family, as well as events in and around New Cumnock, My Father Was A Farmer in New Cumnock tells the story of the Baird family, and their joys and struggles on their farm.



Further Information.

My Father Was A Farmer in New Cumnock describes the agricultural, industrial and social background that existed in and around New Cumnock at the end of the nineteenth century. The book focuses on the Baird family and a fictional town doctor, and describes how events such as the growing coal fields, the expanding train network and demands from the British colonies might have impacted on ordinary working families at this time. Iain Baird has researched events that took place both locally and nationally and woven them into the story that he tells of the two families.

Iain Baird is a retired teacher who has been researching his family's history for the past forty years. The Baird family were firmly rooted in Ayrshire, until his father moved to Gloucestershire to develop his own farm and raise a family.

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