

Carswell Connection

Carswells in Kirkcudbrightshire

by Robert Ford DeBoo, Victoria, BC, November 2007

My mother, Hazel Helen Carswell (1906-1992), was a life-long resident of Quebec City. We are connected to the group of about twenty Carswell individuals who came to this Canadian immigration port from Scotland in 1846. We are also descendants of Thomas Carswell (ca. 1747-1839) who farmed near Kirkgunzeon, Kirkcudbrightshire (now part of Galloway & Dumfries). Thomas and his wife, Jannet Sloan, are buried in the village churchyard there; they had nine children.

Review of census and other records have shown that Carswell is neither local in origin, nor was it ever very abundant in Kirkcudbrightshire. Recent studies are pointing to a possible connection to Renfrewshire, a Scottish county south of Glasgow with an abundant supply of Carswells, relatively speaking. Current investigations are considering the possibility that Thomas left Renfrewshire as a young man, and migrated to rocky Brounhill Farm near Kirkgunzeon circa 1770s. He and Jannet later moved across the road (between Dumfries and Dalbeattie) to complete their long lives together at Torkirra Farm, a place with fewer rocks.

Nine children was not an unusual number for our Carswell line; four or five offspring was common. While descendants are still found in the area of old Kirkcudbrightshire, the name has not persisted very well: Carswell today is no better known here than it was two hundred years ago. Chronic outward migration and marriage likely kept the ranks of Carswell namesakes very thin here. What really is unusual about our line is the non-establishment of a locally descended population – our many Carswell offspring in this pleasant part of Scotland all left or changed the name!

Some Kirkcudbrightshire Carswell References

Carswell, F W. 1992. The Carswells of Kirkcudbrightshire. *Carswell Chronicle* IX (2): 7-8.

DeBoo, R F. 1999. *Carswell of Torkirra (Part I)*. Self-published, 139 pp.

DeBoo, R F, and J N C Searle. 2002. A Carswell family of Kirkgunzeon Parish, Scotland. Part II. Self-publ., 55 pp.

DeBoo, R F, and J N C Searle. 2004. A Carswell family of Kirkgunzeon Parish, Scotland. Part III. Self-publ., 194 pp.

DeBoo, R F, and J N C Searle. 2007. A Carswell family of Kirkgunzeon Parish. Part IV. Self-publ., 146 pp.

Eastwood, T A. 2002. A Carswell family saga. Self-publ., 53 pp.

For additional information, contact Robert DeBoo - DeBoo@pacificcoast.net

Craig of Neilston

John Carswell of NSW Australia is interested in finding details and possible descendants of Alexander Carswell, who was the third child and third son of Allan Carswell & Agnes Howie, and who was born at the farm Craig of Neilston Renfrewshire Scotland on 2 June 1783. The only information left on old documents is that he died in Van Diemens Land (Tasmania) or New Zealand. No records of him to date have been found in Scotland. Please contact John at - jccarswell@clearmail.com.au



Editor's note: I would love to see more of this type of query. One of the primary purposes of doing this Newsletter was as a way for individuals to exchange information on Carswell family tree research. With over 80 recipients of the Newsletter from around the world, there has to be lots of helpful information out there. It's still great to see copies of letters, diaries, and general Carswell information, so keep them coming.

Carswell DNA Study

The Carswell DNA study began in 2006 and to date we have had great success in being able to further our knowledge of the family's history.

The family name Carswell is believed to be descended originally from the Strathclyde Britons and recorded as a family 'of great antiquity' seated at Carswell in the Barony of Renfrew. DNA research is providing tantalizing clues of links to ancient kingdoms and empires both before and after the Roman invasion of Britain, as well as revealing previously unknown relationships between group members.

Project Results:

At the present time, four of five participants (not known to be related within 10 generations) have recorded results indicating Haplogroup I1c and trace their origins to the area surrounding Carswell and Nether Carswell in East Renfrewshire.

This dna type is relatively rare and is able to afford an insight into family movements going back some considerable time. Of more practical use is the ability to determine which branches of the family are most likely to give success in time-consuming genealogy research.

A genealogy database can be located at - genealogy.carswell.com.au

We are especially interested in having tested family lines thought to originate from other areas of Scotland, Ireland and England.

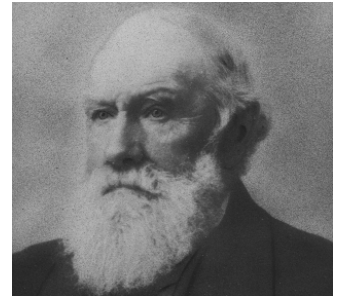
Although we have recommended in the past that participants should have a minimum of a 37 marker test, we have enough samples with the 37 - 67 marker tests now to be able to make fairly confident extrapolations and you can of course have additional markers tested as necessary, so there is good value in people taking the 12 marker test which is more affordable. The tester must be male.

Persons testing before Christmas this year will be entitled to a considerable discount. The 12 marker test is available for \$99.00 An ideal present for the man who has everything.

For additional information, contact Ian Carswell: icarswell@netspace.net.au

James Carswell's diary, February 1847

Following is the second of monthly entries from the diary of James Carswell, Miller, at Dalbeattie, Kircudbrightshire.



February, 1847

- 1 Monday. Cold and frosty. My father went off to Glasgow this morning to try to buy some bones or guano. Working in the mill or drying.
- 2 Tuesday. Cold and frosty. Wind about North. Working in the mill and drying. I hear that Mrs Hunter that is (was) Miss Hardy is dead on last Friday in Ireland. Her husband was away getting her fortune and just got home in time to see her last.
- 3 Wednesday. None of us at Dumfries. Cold and frosty. Working in the mill and drying.
- 4 Thursday. Still cold. My Father came home from Glasgow, bought no bones or guano. Working in the mill and drying. I hear that Thomas Clownie is got married in England with a wife and has some money. He has come home and cuts a great dash.
- 5 Friday. Cold and windy. Working in the mill and drying.
- 6 Saturday. Cold and windy, from the west. I hear that John Copeland in Conniven has gone away and left his wife. He is supposed to have gone to America. He went away on last Tuesday morning. Working in the mill.
- 7 Sunday. Cold and frosty. I was at church and heard Mr Frazer-Colvend preach from John 8 chap and 36 verse "If the Son therefore shall make you free ye shall be free indeed." My father and mother was away at the Kirkland today. Their children being bad in the chest.
- 8 Monday. Cold and frosty. Wind N-West. My father was at Castle Douglas but bought no corn. I was working in the mill and drying.
- 9 Tuesday. Still cold and frosty. Working in the mill. I received a letter from my Brother in law N. Caven and is well.
- 10 Wednesday. Cold and frosty. Working in the mill & drying. My Brother was at Dumfries and my Father was playing at the Snahmel stones. I hear that George McMurdoch is dead this morning at Edingham of inflammation of the bowel.
- 11 Thursday. Cold and frosty. Working in the mill and drying.
- 12 Friday. Cold and frosty. I was playing at the ice. Working in the mill.
- 13 Saturday. Cold and frosty. I was playing at the ice. Working in the mill.
- 14 Sunday. It has been a very wet night so it is a fine mild morning. I was at church and heard Mr Arthur preach from 2nd Timothy 1st chap and 10 verse – "Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."
- 15 Monday. Soft day with some rain. Working in the mill.
- 16 Tuesday. Soft day with some rain. Working in the mill.
- 17 Wednesday. Soft day and a good deal of rain. I was at Dumfries – and sent away a letter to N. Caven. I hear that Margaret Maxwell is dead this day – she is daughter of Mr Thomas Maxwell, Merchant, Dalbeattie. Horses very dear, the middling sort dearest.
- 18 Thursday. Soft day. Working in the mill and drying.
- 19 Friday. Soft day – very windy with sleet showers. Working in the mill and drying. James McAdam was here. He told us that Kathrine McAdam is dead. She is daughter of S. McAdam.
- 20 Saturday. Very soft day. I was dreping (dressing) the flour stones.
- 21 Sunday. Fine mild day. I was at church, heard Mr Arthur preach from 2nd Timothy 1 chap and 10 verse – "hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."
- 22 Monday. Fine day. My Father was at Castle Douglas and sold about 500 bushels of bones. Working at mill.
- 23 Tuesday. Very fine day. Working in the mill. I commence to plant my garden. The Railway levelers are through at work levelling between here and Dalbeattie. They have been working here about this 3 or 4 days.

continued on page 4

24 Wednesday. Rather frosty this morning. My father was at Dumfries and brought the millrights out to repair the mill.

25 Thursday. Cold and frosty. I went away to Dumfries to get some castings. This is Kirkgunzeon cow rent day.

26 Friday. Cold and frosty. The millwrights repairing the mill. I went away to James McMunn's singing concert – they sang but very poorly and Duncan was fiddler.

27 Saturday. Cold and frosty. The millwright took down two of the mills spindles, the one of them will be required to be turned, and the other laid and turned. This is Copeland rend____ [?] day at Dalbeattie.

28 Sunday. Frosty but very mild. I was not at church. There was a collection in the church for the Home Mission.

Interesting web sites

Quebec Genealogy - <http://www.thatsmyfamily.info>

Veterans' web sites - <http://warmem.s4.bizhat.com>

www.genuki.org.uk/big/MilitaryRecords.html

www.regiments.org/milhist/about/faq.htm

www.regiments.org

www.fettes.com/scotsatwar/regpages.htm

<http://www.nas.gov.uk/guides/soldiersWillsasp>

A great site with amazing Scottish books - <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/books.htm>.

Old maps of Scotland - www.nls.uk/maps/index.html

Free site for census records - www.freecen.org.uk



and best wishes for 2008.