

THE MCNAUGHTONS OF EDINBURGH AND KIRKINTILLOCH

By Ken McNaughton

I inherited the name McNaughton from my 2nd great grandfather John Ross McNaughton (1814-1885) who migrated to Australia in 1838 with his wife Agnes Stirling and one-year-old daughter Jane. It took me 45 years to find out that the names of his parents were James McNaughton and Christian Ross and that he had an older brother Lauchlan [1]. When I had an opportunity to visit Scotland in mid-2007 I decided to visit some of the places mentioned in the documents I had about him and his family. I thought if I filled out the picture of where he had been I might tease out one or two more clues about his predecessors. In particular I hoped to find a link to earlier members of the Clan. The last Chief of the Scottish McNaughton Clan, John McNaughton, married but there is no record of any children. He died at Anstruther, just north of Edinburgh around 1753 [2]. I wondered if my 2nd great grandfather, who was born in Edinburgh in 1814, was related to him or someone else in the line of Scottish Chiefs.



Figure 1. James and Christian were married at Canongate Kirk on 27 January 1804.

MARRIAGE OF JAMES AND CHRISTIAN

James McNaughton, coppersmith, and Christian Ross, daughter of James Ross, mason, gave up their names for marriage on January 27th, 1804, in the historic parish of Canongate (Fig. 1). If you walk down High Street from Edinburgh Castle along the Royal Mile to Holyroodhouse Palace, home of the Monarch, you pass Canongate on the left, one block before Holyroodhouse. King James VII of Scotland (and II of England) arranged for the new building of Canongate that was started in 1688 but by the time it was completed in 1690 the arms of William of Orange were placed on the front.

At this time, Presbyterianism was restored in Scotland. On the floor are flagstones bearing the names of Ministers of Canongate Kirk from 1560 onward. The front pew on the right (east) as you face the front is the Royal Pew, bearing the coats of arms of Queen Elizabeth, Prince Philip and Prince Charles, who stay at Holyroodhouse Palace across the street when they visit Edinburgh. The gallery over the entrance carries the badges of some of the Guilds that survived in Canongate for many years, including the cordiners, the wrights and hammermen. Members of these guilds had the right to sit in their parish church as much as the baillies (aldermen) and magistrates. The interior has been reorganized a number of times and the colors in 2007 are airy and bright (Fig. 2).



Outside, the building and grounds look much as they would have looked when James McNaughton and Christian Ross were married here in 1804. Buried in the grounds is Adam Smith (1723-1790), the Scottish moral philosopher and political economist who published “The Wealth of Nations” in 1776 (the same year the Americans published the Declaration of Independence), arguably the most influential book on the subject ever published. What can we deduce from the fact that James and Christian were married at Canongate? Not much. They may have lived nearby and the church was sympathetic to craftsmen such as James.

Figure 2. Blue pews, red carpet and bright light inside Canongate in 2007.

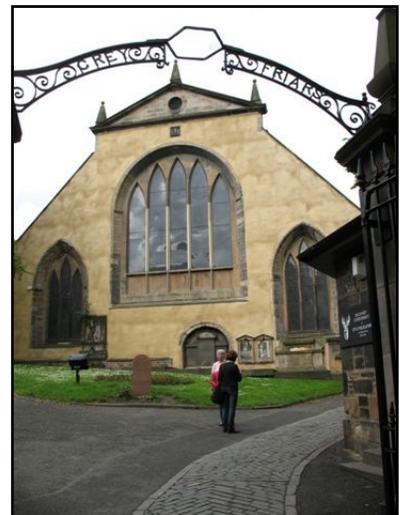
BAPTISM OF LAUCLAN ROSS MCNAUGHTON

My great great grandfather John had an older brother, Lauchlan. “James McNaughton, coppersmith, and Christian Ross, his spouse, Old Gray Friars parish, a son born February 20th last, named Lauchlan Ross, baptized in church April 7th, 1810.” Old Gray Friars Parish is another historic church in Edinburgh. You can get to the site from Canongate in ten minutes by walking west on High Street three blocks, south on South Bridge two blocks, and west on Chambers Street two blocks (Fig. 3).

It is one of the oldest surviving buildings outside the Old Town of Edinburgh. Old Grey Friars Church was erected in 1612 on ground formerly belonging to the pre-Reformation monastery of the Grey Friars. Some time in the latter half of the 13th century swarthy foreigners from the sunny South were seen mingling with the fair-complexioned Celts and Saxons of Edinburgh. Some spoke Norman-French, others Italian, and they wore a rough grey gown with a hood, fastened with a hempen cord at the waist. Following an explosion in 1718, a new Grey Friars church was built on the site in 1721, separated from Old Grey Friars only by a partition wall. Lauchlan Ross McNaughton was apparently baptized in the Old Church in 1810. In 1845 there was a devastating fire and the walls of both portions were almost the only parts left standing. The two sections were finally united in 1929 when the historic building was extensively restored and the interior dividing wall was removed. The current building and grounds must look similar to how they looked in 1810.

Figure 3. Lauchlan Ross McNaughton was baptized at Grey Friars Church in 1810.

Despite having many famous people buried in the church yard, Greyfriars has become most famous because of a dog. Bobby belonged to John Gray, who worked for the Edinburgh City Police as a night watchman. When Gray died of tuberculosis in 1858 and was buried in Greyfriars Kirkyard, Bobby is said to have spent a great deal of time at his grave and left regularly for meals at a restaurant beside the graveyard. Bobby died fourteen





years later in 1872 and was buried just inside the gate, not far from Gray's grave. One of the many tributes to Bobbie was the 1949 Disney movie "A Challenge to Lassie," replacing Bobby with Lassie. Why did James and Christian baptize their son Lauchlan at Old Greyfriars in 1810 after getting married at Canongate six years earlier in 1804? We don't know, but we do know that James was still a coppersmith and they probably still lived nearby.

Figure 4. John Ross McNaughton was baptized at St. Cuthbert's Church in 1814.

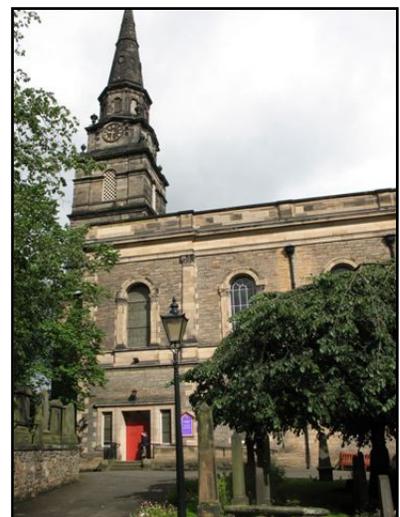
BAPTISM OF JOHN ROSS MCNAUGHTON

My great great grandfather John Ross McNaughton was baptized in St. Cuthbert's Church, Edinburgh (Fig. 4). "John Ross McNaughton, born May 12th, 1814, baptized May 23rd in St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh, to James McNaughton, a coppersmith in Portsburgh and his spouse Christian Ross." Portsburgh was a suburb created in 1649 and annexed by Edinburgh in 1856. St. Cuthbert's Church is a ten-minute walk from Greyfriars. Walk north on Candlemaker Row, west through the Grassmarket onto Kings Stables Road and St. Cuthbert's is tucked into the Princes Street Gardens under the shadow of Edinburgh Castle.

In the year 1127 King David I granted a Charter giving all the land below Edinburgh Castle to St. Cuthbert's. This is the oldest document in the Scottish Records Office, Register House, Edinburgh. In 1314 a knight, St. Giles de Argentine, fighting with the English army against Robert Bruce at Bannockburn, was killed and buried at St. Cuthbert's. To the north of the church the Nor' Loch was formed for the defense of the city in 1450 by damming up the many springs which made the ground wet and marshy. The Minister of St. Cuthbert's was given fishing rights. The Nor' Loch was later filled in. To the south of the Castle at the west end of the Grassmarket the township of Portsburgh grew up with its West Kirk and its own Trades' Incorporations, such as cordiners, wrights, baxters and hammermen. These skilled craftsmen formed a large part of the congregation of St. Cuthbert's. Each trade had its own special loft in the church and their craft banners hanging over the fronts of the galleries made a colorful scene.

Figure 5. The spire of St. Cuthbert's from 1789 was retained in the church opened in 1894.

In 1772 it was decided to pull down the old church and build a new one. The spire was built in 1789 and the new church was opened in 1795. This may have been the building in which my great great grandfather John McNaughton was baptized in 1814, but it was not universally liked. It was extremely uncomfortable, the ventilation was below standard, the seats and passages were too narrow, the floor too low, and the safety measures were abysmal. It was therefore demolished between





1890 and 1893, although the steeple was retained in the new building (Fig. 5). Presumably the grounds (Fig. 6) are similar to what they were in 1814; they are the last resting place for some famous people, including the Scottish mathematician John Napier (1550-1617) who invented logarithms, and the Englishman Thomas de Quincey (1785-1859), author of “Confession of an Opium Eater.”

Figure 6. John Napier and Thomas de Quincey are buried in the grounds of St. Cuthbert's.

Why did James and Christian baptize my great great grandfather John at St. Cuthbert's, after marrying at Canongate ten years earlier and baptizing his brother Lauchlan at Old Grey Friars four years before? We don't know, but we know that in 1814 they were living at Portsburgh and that craftsmen from the area such as James, who was a coppersmith, had strong links with St. Cuthbert's.

KIRKINTILLOCH

Before John McNaughton migrated to Australia with his wife and daughter he obtained two references from Kirkintilloch dated 15 February 1838:

“These certify that the bearer John McNaughton is connected with the United Associated Congregation here though not yet in full communion & that so far as is known to us he is of a blameless character.”

[signed] And. Marshall, Minister

“The bearer John McNaughton has resided for about ten years in Kirkintilloch & has behaved himself in a respectable manner so far as is known to us.”

[signed] Adam Forman, Minister
John Horn, Elder

It was a good idea to get references before embarking on such a pioneering voyage halfway around the world, and may even have been required, given that they were traveling on the Bounty Scheme of Rev. John Dunmore Lang. Bounty ships gave assisted passage to 4,000 Scots between 1837 and 1840 and the McNaughtons traveled in the seventh of these vessels, the *William Roger*, which sailed out of Greenock on 17 May 1838. Lang was born near Greenock, migrated to Australia in 1823 and became the first Presbyterian minister in the colony. He was also a writer, politician and activist and was the first prominent advocate of an independent Australian nation and of Australian republicanism. He agitated for the end of transportation and for the separation of the Port Philip District (later Victoria) from New South Wales. The bounty ship's owner was paid per passenger by the government but ultimately Lang's schemes were not considered successful.

Figure 7. The Forth and Clyde Canal at Kirkintilloch looking east from Cowgate.

In 1832, T. F. Eliot was appointed to the Colonial Office to promote and extend bounty emigration. In 1834 he appointed Scottish agents at Leith and Greenock to see to the chartering, surveying, and provisioning of ships and helping with the embarkations. In 1836 the Governor of New South Wales appointed Dr. Boyter as Colonial Emigration Agent in Scotland to supervise the selection of candidates. Boyter targeted shepherds, farm laborers, country mechanics, and cartwrights. Boyter showed remarkable enthusiasm and energy in the performance of his duties and the success of the large-scale Scottish bounty emigration of 1837-40 owed much to his keenness. By 1837 the bounty system was extended to married couples. James Macarthur, one of the most prominent and influential men in New South Wales, regarded the Scottish bounty emigrants selected in 1837 as a valuable accession to the colony and commended their religious disposition, good sense, and orderly habits. He also thought the Scottish Highlanders most likely to furnish the description of families most urgently required in New South Wales.



What can we learn from the references for John McNaughton? The McNaughtons were living in Kirkintilloch and John may have been living there for ten years. Kirkintilloch is a small town eight miles northeast of Glasgow. Modern prosperity came with the construction of the Forth and Clyde Canal in 1773, bringing the town to prominence as an inland port. The establishment of a railway link to Glasgow (the Monkland and Kirkintilloch Railway) in 1826 allowed Kirkintilloch to further develop as an industrial centre for weaving and as a major shipbuilding centre for both canal and ocean sailing. If John came here in 1828 he would have only been 14 years old. Did his family move, or did he run away from home? He married and had a child in 1837 when he was 23. What did he do between 1828 and 1837? Go to school? Get work? I was able to spend a few hours in Kirkintilloch on 5 July 2007 and here is what I found.

The items of most interest lie close to Cowgate, the main shopping street, which runs downhill from the canal in a northwesterly direction to the William Patrick Library at a tee junction with the Glasgow Road, Route 803, here called High Street. The 35-mile long Forth and Clyde Canal crosses Scotland, providing a route for sea-going vessels between the Firth of Forth, Edinburgh and the Firth of Clyde, Glasgow, at the narrowest part of the Scottish Lowlands (Fig. 7). It seems there would have been work for a young man in Kirkintilloch between 1828 and 1837, although conditions in Scotland were quite desperate, which is one reason why the Bounty Scheme was developed.

John Ross McNaughton could not get work when he arrived in Sydney at the end of 1838, but he was hired by Thomas Watt, who operated the first punt across the River Yarra in Melbourne. So John and his family departed Sydney on the *Hope* on December 17th and arrived at Port Philip on 3 January 1839. Did John have experience working on the Forth and Clyde Canal? Most of the



inhabitants in Kirkintilloch in 1838 were cotton weavers. The population of Kirkintilloch parish would have been about 6,800 in 1838.

Figure 8. The Auld Kirkintilloch Kirk is now a museum.

Although the Church of Scotland was Presbyterian in the 1800s, there were divisions. John’s first reference states “that the bearer John McNaughton is connected with the United Associated Congregation here though not yet in full communion & that

so far as is known to us he is of a blameless character.” This was signed by Andrew Marshall, Minister. In 1837 there were six places of worship in and around Kirkintilloch [3], including the United Secession Chapel on Back causeway, where the minister was the Rev. Andrew Marshall, who was listed under “Gentry and Clergy” as living on Cowgate. Rev. Adam Forman was minister at the Parish Church on High Street and lived at the Manse on Cowgate. The first patron of the Kirkintilloch Parish Church (also known as St. Mary’ Church or the Auld Kirk) was Thomas, High Sheriff of Stirling, a member of the powerful Comyn family, in the year 1150 [4]. Kirkintilloch at one time boasted a strong castle belonging to John “the Red” Comyn, chief rival to Robert Bruce for the crown. Bruce stabbed Comyn during a quarrel in February 1306 and his men finished the job.

In 1712, a group of English MPs restored to the patron his ancient but abrogated right of appointing the parish minister. This move was responsible for the establishing of many Secession churches. When, under the new law, the patron of Kirkintilloch—a descendant of Robert Fleming who assisted Robert Bruce dispose of the Red Comyn—appointed a kinsman, William Fleming, as minister in 1733, some communicants departed from the congregation. In 1766 an Associate Synod Secession Church was set up only a stone’s throw from the Auld Kirk. It achieved a certain notoriety under the pastorship of the controversial Dr. Andrew Marshall (1802-1846) described as a cantankerous man and one of the most conservative of Seceders. This was the man who gave John McNaughton his first reference. It later became a Free Church.



Figure 9. The Kirky Puffer on Cowgate, Kirkintilloch.



Figure 10. John, Agnes and Jane sailed out of Scotland from Greenock in 1838.

In 1811, Adam Forman was ordained minister at the Auld Kirk. He died in 1843, five years after giving John McNaughton his second reference. Forman supplied information for the Statistical Account of Scotland that was published in 1845. He described the Auld Church's miserable state of repair and notes that there were on average 700 communicants. In 1837, when Forman perambulated on Cowgate followed by his faithful dog, strollers would rush out of his sight, for fear of reprimand [5].

The Auld Church was built on High Street by Cowgate in 1644 and served as the parish church until 1914 when a new one was built further south on Cowgate near the canal. The Auld Church has been the town museum since 1961 (Fig. 8). After John McNaughton and his family left Scotland in 1838 came the Disruption of 1843, when 451 of the 1,203 ministers left the Church of Scotland and took a third of her membership with them. John became very active in the church in Melbourne and helped set up the West Melbourne Presbyterian Church.

After an exciting three hours in Kirkintilloch, I repaired to a pub at the top of Cowgate, just south of the Canal, called The Kirky Puffer (Fig.9), "puffers" being steam boats, which presumably would have been common on the canal. I found what I had found in Edinburgh in the sixties—an extraordinary sense of ease and comfort among the people in the pubs. The inside was vast and well appointed, and the people looked relaxed and dignified. All but one man, who seemed to stare at me the whole time he was downing his two beers, and I couldn't figure out why. Did I stand out as a stranger? Did he fancy me? Or was it the ghost of John McNaughton, come back to tell his story?

I drove down Cowgate, over the canal, past the Auld Kirk and the Library, turned left on High Street and drove straight down Route 803 in twenty minutes to Cathedral House on Castle Street, Glasgow, opposite the Necropolis ("Glasgow's Père Lachaise"). I spent a pleasant night, my last in Scotland on this trip, and flew back to the USA next day, Friday 6th July 2007.

Figure 11. In 2007 I sailed the Clyde waters from Gourock, two miles further west from Greenock.

AUSTRALIA

John, Agnes and Jane sailed from Greenock on 17th May 1838. When I came through Greenock on 28th June 2007, I was trying to get used to driving a stick-shift diesel Ford



Mondeo on the “wrong side” of the road in unfamiliar territory in the rain, so this photo is “on the run” (Fig. 10). I sailed into the waters of the Clyde a couple of miles further west, at Gourrock, to catch a ferry to Dunoon (Fig. 11) so I could meet up with the Clan Macnachtan Association Worldwide and see the Macnachtan Castles. It was an amazing feeling to know that John, Agnes and Jane had sailed these very waters 170 years ago at the start of their epic journey to transplant the McNaughton name from Scotland to Melbourne.

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