

John McDouall, Manager of the Oriental Bank of Hong Kong.

Introduction

These two papers trace the ancestry of John McDouall, Manager of the Oriental Bank of Hong Kong. The original article in our Clan Bulletin #20, is attached in the appendix.

The article posed the question, 'From which of the three principal families was John McDouall likely descended?' The answer, like so many others that can be traced as far back as the 17th century, is that absolute proof has not been found, however the evidence does point to a connection with the Logan McDoualls.

Mike McDowall (UK) and Bruce McDowall (AUS) are seasoned researchers who write about their work in finding out more about John McDouall.

Mike's first thoughts: 'John died in Hong Kong on 13th Oct 1873, age 42, leaving £4000 in England, according to his will, which was attested by Patrick Campbell, Manager of the Oriental Bank in Threadneedle St. one of his Executors. Unfortunately there is no sign of James and Mary and family in the Scottish Census records, but interestingly, James has the designation 'Esquire' which suggests that he was a 'gentleman'. The search continues!'

And Bruce's initial response: 'The family is complex, especially as that male line as far as I have traced, has 2 marriages with other McDOWALL/McDOUALL families. I cannot link any of them to the landed gentry, but I'm always inclined to think there is a likely link, if distant - hidden by time and a lack of records. As we know only too well, it is challenging enough trying to connect all individuals we know to have been part of the gentry, let alone side-branches.'

In Search of John McDouall. 1831 – 1873.

Author: Mike McDowall, October 2021

On 26th August 2021 a rare \$5 note issued by the Oriental Bank in Hong Kong was sold at auction in London for £130,000.

Established in 1842 as the Bank of Western India in Bombay, its head office was moved three years later to Threadneedle St., London and re-named the Oriental Bank. The majority of its directors and overseas staff were Scottish, however, and in 1850 the Bank opened a branch office at 23 St Andrew Square, Edinburgh. By 1860 the Oriental Bank Corporation was one of the largest British-owned overseas banks, with assets over £12.6m and fourteen branches in India, the Far East and Australia.



Issued in June 1860 in Hong Kong, the banknote carries the signatures of Scots manager John McDouall, and accountant, James Webster.

James Webster from Crail in Fife was born in June 1833, the only son of Andrew Webster, the parish schoolmaster, and his wife Euphemia (Bell). He came back from Hong Kong in 1865 and in 1869 married Catherine Kerr, settling in Burntisland where he died, age 80, in 1913.

John McDouall came from Stranraer. In 1851, age 20, he was employed as a junior manager in the Edinburgh office and in 1858 he was sent out to Hong Kong to open and manage the first bank in the colony. He was clearly a young man of some ability.

I first became aware of this story when it appeared as a short article in the September issue of the *McDouall of Freugh* news bulletin, edited by Philip McDouall, who, with his brother Stuart, are direct descendants of John McDouall, the last laird of Freugh, (and Provost of Stranraer circa 1734).

The challenge was to find out more about John McDouall. Which branch of the family, if any, did he belong to?

The marriage of John McDouall's parents – James and Mary Laurie took place in Kirkcolm on the 2nd of August 1828. The marriage was also recorded in Stoneykirk Parish two days later, which suggested that both had a connection with the northern part of the Rhinns. This proved to be not altogether true. The different spelling of Laurie (Lawrie, Laurie, Lawrin, etc.) also proved to be unhelpful when attempting to access the records.

Sheuchan Cemetery, where my grandfather, Provost George W McDowall and his wife Isabella are interred, lies on a hill overlooking Stranraer with a lovely view to Loch Ryan. The discovery of a gravestone here confirms James McDouall's death in N America (Evans, Georgia), and his widow, Mary Laurie McD, who died in Stranraer on 21 June 1852. This leads us to the 1841 Census where we find Mary and her sons John, age 10 and Walter, age 7 in Lewis St, Stranraer. At No 14 Lewis St. (*cf Pigot's Directory 1837*) is Col Robert McDowall, age 65 and his wife Jane. Also in Lewis St are Mary's sisters-in-law, Maria, Helen, and Jane. In the 1851 census, a year before her death, Mary is recorded as a 'Widow' and 'Annuitant', age 48.

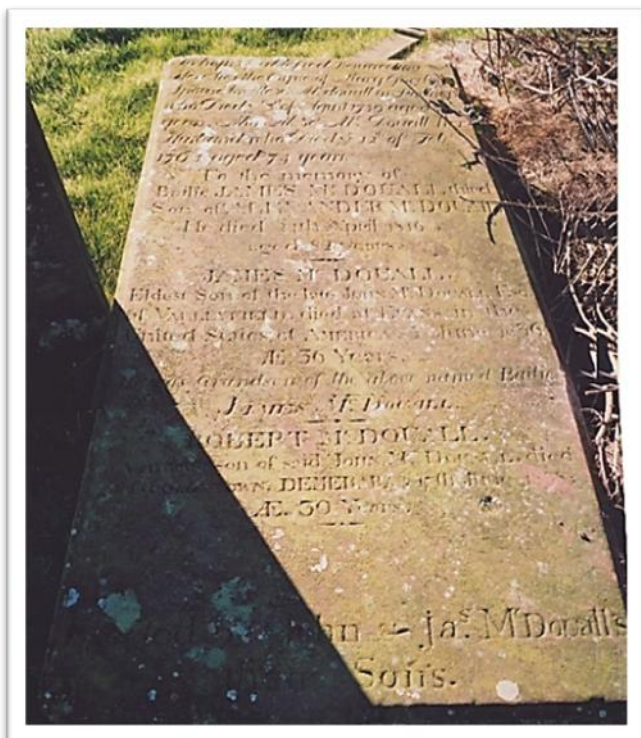
Despite clues to the contrary, it is to Kirkmaiden Parish in the southern Rhinns of Galloway, that we have to go to find, essentially, the whole story. The Churchyard occupies a hill above the town of Drummore and amongst the 399 memorials is a unique group of three fallen table-stones to the south of the small Kirk. (I was involved, in 2003, in mapping the Churchyard while the stones were recorded by Betty Allan, Shirley

McNellie and Diana Henry for D&G FHS. The stones are nos 80, 81, and 82 in the Inscriptions booklet).

No 82 records Mary Gordon, spouse of Alexander McDouall; their third son James who was a Bailie on Stranraer Town Council; James' eldest son, John 'of Valleyfield' which is in the parish of Kirkcolm; and *his* eldest son James, Mary Laurie's husband, the father of John, the Hong Kong banker. Four generations – the stone was in fact, erected by John and his cousin James.

Alexander, of Port Nessock (Port Logan), born in 1691, is therefore John's GGG-Father, which is as far back as we are likely to go. However, the Examen Roll of 1684 listing all residents of the Parish includes Robert McDouall and his wife Marion in Portnessock. The fact that Alexander's first son is named Robert (after his grandfather?) supports the suggestion that this could be Alexander's parents.

The story does not end here, however. Stone no 80 confirms that Grace (Grisal, Grizal, etc.) McDowall



Tablestone No.82 in Kirkmaiden Churchyard

was the wife of Bailie James McDowall. She was born in Kirkmaiden on 16th Nov 1733 and married James in April 1771. They had two daughters – Helen and Mary. Records appear to show, however, that James had previously been married, on 25th Dec. 1760, to Sarah McBryd(e), the daughter of James McB and Elizabeth McQuistine. They had five? sons, including John (of Valleyfield), their second son, born on 30 Aug. 1765.

The inscription on stone no 81 which lies between the two, is inaccessible, being covered by stone no 91. This stone was erected by Provost Alexander McDouall in memory of his brother Major General Robert McDouall CB, who died in Stranraer on 15 Nov. 1848, age 74. The proximity of this stone, the fact that both gentlemen were named as trustees for John in his will, and being neighbours in Lewis St to John's daughter-in-law, Mary Laurie, on her return from America, suggests a strong family link.

No doubt, stone no 81 would have contributed to our story. Could it have recorded James's first wife and children?

Another table-stone (this seems to have been favoured by the family) found in Stranraer Parish Churchyard provides yet more information. Dedicated to the memory of John McDouall, Esq. of Valleyfield, the stone was erected by his wife, Helen in 1830 and records John's death in April 1827 and six of their children, John, Robert, two Alexanders, Ann, and Grace who all died in infancy. The deaths of Helen and their other children, John, who died in Demerara in 18(5)0, Jane, Helen, and Maria (the ladies from Lewis St on the 1841 census) have been added later. They do not appear in 1851, but on the 1861 census Maria and Helen are at 2 London Road and Maria is at 11 London Rd in 1871.

So the search for John's ancestors has reached back four, possibly five, generations with no conclusive evidence of a link to any of the three most prominent of the landed families – Logan, Freugh and Garthland. However, John's grandfather, John (of Valleyfield) owned extensive property throughout the Rhinns, which in accordance with his will, was sold on his death, and the proceeds passed to his remaining children. Sufficient for his son James and young family to seek a new life in the USA.

Unfortunately, James died a few years after they arrived, and Mary returned to Stranraer, a 'widow and annuitant' with her young sons, John and Walter, to Lewis St.

John married Adeline Gibbs Huddleston in Hong Kong in August 1867. They had three children, Mary Laurie, who died in infancy, Robert and Lauchlan. Robert had a career in the Army, rising to the rank of Brigadier General, and his son, also Robert, gained fame as an author of cookery books. John died tragically in a carriage accident at the age of 42 and is buried in the Colonial Cemetery in Happy Valley on Hong Kong island.

John McDouall, Manager of the Oriental Bank of Hong Kong

Author: Bruce McDowall. October 2021.

We can't say definitively which of the principal families this John McDouall was from, but we have learned much more about him.

He was born 07 February 1831 at Stranraer, Wigtownshire, to James McDouall & Mary Laurie. A brother, Walter Laurie McDouall was born at Stranraer on 21 December 1833. The family sailed from Liverpool to New York on the Champlain, arriving there 02 September 1834, intending to settle in Canada. James died at Evans, USA, 05 June 1836. Mary returned to Stranraer with their sons, John and Walter. Walter settled in London, married Priscilla Gole 27 February 1868, and died without issue 10 June 1868.

As we know from the September 2021 bulletin, John settled in China. He is known to have been in Canton, (anglicised name for Guangzhou), Shanghai, and Hong Kong.

He married Adeline Gibbs Huttleston at Christ's Church, Canton, on the 1st August 1867.

Also known from the monumental inscriptions in the bulletin, they had a daughter, Mary Laurie McDOWALL born October 1867, who died 24 October 1868, and that John died 13 October 1873. Adeline died at Bruges, Belgium in 1887.

The only other known child of the marriage was Robert, born 03 November 1871. He joined the army, and was Commissioned Colonel 03 June 1919, and Brigadier General 15 November 1924. He married Mabel Constance PENNINGTON at the Parish Church, Frimley, Surrey. She was a daughter of army General, Sir Charles Richard PENNINGTON. They had 2 children, Mary Adelyn Pennington McDOWALL born 28 October 1903, and Robert Ninian Huttleston Pennington McDOWALL born 08 November 1908. Robert snr died 31 May 1941 at Wokingham, Berkshire.

Robert jnr was a Flight Officer in WW2, known as Robert Pennington McDOWALL, but he later became a private secretary in exclusive London clubs, and author of 14 gourmet books. He died 11 December 1984. No marriage or children have been found.

Returning to James McDOWALL & Mary LAURIE, Mary was a twin, born 25 July 1803 at Urral, parish of Penninghame, Wigtownshire. Her parents were Patrick Laurie of Urral and Walter McCAA. James was born 24 April 1800, the 2nd son of John McDOWALL of Valleyfield and Helen McDOWALL. They married 01 August 1796, in the parish of Kirkmaiden. Their 1st son, John, was born about 1797 and died 29 December 1800, so James became heir.

The parents of Helen McDOWALL are not known, may have been James McDOWALL and Grizel McDOWALL, who had a daughter Helen born 30 April 1772 at High Curgie, parish of Kirkmaiden. It is also unknown who this couple were.

Note: The McDOWALL spelling has been used here to distinguish these other McDOWALLs from the line of John McDOWALL, banker of Hong Kong. These 2 variants often appear alternately for individuals, but the latter line were insistent on the McDOWALL variant in the late 19th and the 20th centuries, where spelling of family names actually indicates much more than the whim of an official. That encourages one to believe that this line was a branch of the McDOWALLs of Logan or Freugh.

John McDOWALL of Valleyfield was the eldest son of James McDOWALL, (Bailie of Stranraer), and Grace McDOWALL, born about 1769. From his will of 18 February 1826, he had 4 brothers and sisters surviving at that time. No other record of them has been found.

Grace McDOWALL was born 08 November 1733 at High Curgie, the 3rd daughter of Patrick McDOWALL and Helen MILROY.

John McDOWALL of Valleyfield had all of his children baptized in Stranraer. Although they were born at the farms of Dumbae and Gayfield in the parish of Leswalt, both farms were within the Burgh of Stranraer. John held many properties within the Burgh. No record could be found of his purchase of Valleyfield. That may have followed the passing of his father in 1816. Valleyfield is a farm of 80 acres in the parish of Kirkcolm. It was formerly part of the farm of Little Airies. He died 14 April 1827, leaving an inventory of £4,863.

Bailie James McDOWALL was born 23 May 1734 at Stranraer, the 3rd son of Alexander McDOWALL and Mary GORDON. Their sons Robert born 1729, and John born 1732, had died, so James inherited when Alexander died 12 February 1765 at Portnessock, parish of Kirkmaiden. The ancestry of Alexander McDOWALL and Mary GORDON is not known.

This line of McDoualls had wealth and connections, so were highly likely to have been a branch of either the Logan or Freugh lines. The number of them having been buried in the Kirkmaiden Cemetery, the odds may favour the Logan line. However, lots of land deals were done between these families, especially when marriages between them occurred.

I've finished researching and have created a database on Family Tree Maker. An outline of John's family tree is shown in the attached chart.

Lineage of John McDouall, 1831-1873, Oriental Bank Manager, Hong Kong

Descendants of Alexander McDouall

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1 Alexander McDouall 1691 -1765
  +Mary GORDON 1704 -1739
..... 2 Ann McDouall 1728 -
..... 2 Robert McDouall 1729 -
..... 2 John McDouall 1732 -
..... 2 James McDouall 1734 -1816 aka: Bailie James McDouall
..... +UNKNOWN
..... 3 John McDouall 1769 -1827 aka: John McDouall of Valleyfield
..... +Helen McDowall 1772 -1841
..... 4 John McDouall 1797 -1800
..... 4 Maria McDouall 1798 -1879
..... 4 James McDouall 1800 -1836
..... +Mary LAURIE 1803 -1852
..... 5 John McDouall 1831 -1873 ← John McDouall of the Oriental Bank of HK
..... +Adeline Gibbs HUTTLESTON 1842 -1887
..... 6 Mary Laurie McDouall 1868 -1868
..... 6 Robert McDouall 1871 -1941
..... +Mabel Constance PENNINGTON 1874 -1951
..... 7. Mary Adelyn Pennington McDouall 1903 -
..... +Robert Ivan KNIGHT
..... 7. Robert Ninian Huttleston Pennington McDouall 1908 -1984 aka: Robin McDouall
..... 5 Walter Laurie McDouall 1833 -1868
..... +Priscilla GOLE 1838 -1917
..... 4 Robert McDouall 1801 -1806
..... 4 Alexander McDouall 1804 -1805
..... 4 Helen McDouall 1805 -1864
..... 4 Alexander McDouall 1807 -1808
..... 4 Robert McDouall 1808 -1838
..... 4 Jean McDouall 1809 -1849
..... 4 David McDouall 1810 -
..... 4 Grace McDouall 1812 -1827
..... 4 Ann McDouall 1814 -1815
..... *2nd Wife of James McDouall:
..... +Grace McDowall 1733 -1819
..... 3 Helen McDouall 1772 -
..... 3 Mary McDouall 1774 -
..... 2 Alexander McDouall 1736 -
..... 2 Margaret McDouall 1738 -

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Notes

Bruce: Based on the uncertainty of who was the mother of John McDouall of Valleyfield, the chart above shows her as UNKNOWN. There is a chance that his mother was Grace McDowall, but if his reported age at death is correct, he was born about 1769, 2 years prior to his father marrying her. His father may have been previously married, or John may have been illegitimate, one of many possible reasons why a baptism for a known individual cannot be found.

We don't know if the James who married Sarah McBryde was Bailie James, or another James McDouall. In fact I consider it unlikely that it was Bailie James, as Sarah's issue spanned the marriage of Bailie James with Grace McDowall. Further, according to his MI, John of Valleyfield was born about 1769. That doesn't carry as much weight as the overlapping marriages, but does add to my thinking that these were 2 different individuals.

Mike: Yes, I agree - there is a problem with Sarah seemingly being around after the 1771 marriage of Grace to Bailie James giving birth to Alexander and an unnamed daughter. Clearly the records have been misread, but in what way, who knows? On the basis that there are no other records for the birth of James, John, William, Archibald, other than to James and Sarah, I think we have to admit Sarah as the likely wife/mother since it doesn't seem to be Grace. Unfortunately, there is no reported death of Sarah McBryde. If only stone No. 81 was accessible, we might find the truth!

Appendix: Original Bulletin Article

The McDoualls of Freugh

Chief's Chat

Dear clan members,

Fascinating stuff in this bulletin for all family tree enthusiasts. And what makes ours all the more attractive is the relatively small ancestral line-up and the large amount of correspondence associated with it. Nearly all McDoualls, with that surname and that spelling (or similar), are of families that originally came from Dumfries and Galloway.

And to whet your appetite here's another brand-new story, literally hot off the press, providing another link with Hong Kong, where a number of McDoualls have served in one capacity or another over the past 160 years or so.

John McDouall, born in Stranraer in 1831, featured in the news upon the auctioning of a Hong Kong five dollar note dated 1860. It was sold for £130,000 to a Hong Kong collector, and was signed by Oriental Bank Manager John McDouall.



A rare Five Dollar Note of the Oriental Bank of Hong Kong
Signed by the Manager John McDouall in 1860 (JMcd Man)
Sold at Auction in Aug 2021 for £130,000

As for which of the three principal McDouall/McDowall families he is descended from, we do not know. *Anybody?*

The Oriental Bank began life as the Bank of Western India, in Bombay in 1842, but in 1845 moved its head office to London. In 1850 it opened offices in Edinburgh, and in 1851 John McDouall, aged 20, was employed as a junior manager. In 1858 he was sent out to Hong Kong to open and manage the first bank in the colony.

The Oriental Bank Corporation became the issuing bank for Hong Kong's first bank notes. John McDouall stayed in Hong Kong for the rest of his life, dying tragically in a carriage accident at the age of 42 when he was manager of the entire Oriental Bank Corp., then the wealthiest and most successful bank in the region. He was buried in the Colonial Cemetery in Happy Valley, on Hong Kong Island.



Hong Kong grave and inscription of John McDouall
Born 7th February 1831 / Died 13th October 1873
The grave of his infant daughter Mary lies behind