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March 8, 1986

Dear Alex:

Your letter arrived this week and I found the enclosures re. the Squire, very interesting. The record of the Squire's work performance shows he was obviously doing well, going straight up in his profession - an officer on the beat in 1873 to full inspector by November, 1879 ..... then comes the "compusorial" resignation. (I find that word very interesting). I didn't know about the previous police work experience ... would Partick Burgh be a suburb of Glasgow?

I think I sent you ~~Dad's~~ a copy of Dad's written speculation about the problem. I remember ~~and~~ discussions between Uncle Jim and Dad years ago (I think I was still in college and Uncle Jim was visiting) and Uncle Jim's recollection of a comment his mother made in the farm kitchen at Newport when the Squire was doing something or other with his gun (cleaning it, I think) and apparently he had always been keen on guns, that ".....all our troubles stemmed from a gun". I think Dad was convinced the problem had something to do with poaching and poaching laws, perhaps having been seen on restricted property with a gun, and even if he was not guilty of poaching would be in dire trouble. Looks as if the matter was covered over in the record, as this would seem to signify. We may never know the true story.

I noticed that the letter to you from the Chief Superintendent has the address as "Wakefield". That brought to mind a ballad Dad used to sing, and I can only recall a scrap of it...but it always intrigued me. Perhaps if you are in the West Riding, in a Library there you might be able to track down the ballad and get the words. It must have been a ballad. I fancy like the "Derby Ram" it may tell an interesting story. Here is all I can dredge up from memory...

".....lodged in Wakefield Goal

Fourteen days hard labour

For pulling on a donkey's tail !! "

"The boys", of course would have brought the song with them from Yorkshire to Newport. It would be fun if you could find the words and music.

As for relatives, I suspect you know more of them than I do. I have never met Mrs. Sylvestri or her sisters. I have ~~and~~ heard your Dad talk of them...sometime you could send me her address and when Don and I go overseas we could look her up. I have been at The Level but that was away back in 1953 and I met the parents of the young people who are there now. Jeanie and Alex both stopped there and introduced themselves.

Re. Birnie Kirk. I understand legend says the first church planted there was erected "on Birnie's Holy Mound" ..(and perhaps it was a Druid holy place before the arrival of the Celtic Church missionaries) by St. Brendan the Voyager on his way back around the north of Scotland from his voyage to the New World (Nfld.) He is supposed to have stopped along the Moray Firth and picked Birnie to erect his church. There is a very very old bell in the church as I remember. This would seem to bear out the stories of the Irish legends.  
Birnie's Holy Mound

Birnie was certainly a holy place for long ages and was the Bishop's seat before the erection of Elgin Cathedral.

Again, on your comments re. the Disruption. As I understand after the exodus of 1843 the Tamshill and Birnie folk who were dissenters worshiped in "Auld Trochie's" barn (ie Alexander Farquhar) until a more respectable place of worship could be acquired.

I know the Aunties attended The Free Church on the High Street in Elgin...When Dad went over as a student before WW 1, it was the pulpit of the famous old minister Dr. (the Rev) Robert Cowan. He is the subject of Isobel Cameron's little books. Do you know them? There are a whole series, but off the top of my head two or three of them are The Doctor, The Doctor Calls Again, More About the Doctor. The old minister took Dad to meet an old gentleman in his nineties who had worked on the farm, Trochail for Auld Trochie. Dr. Cowan introduced Dad as "Auld Trochie's son all the way frae Ameriky". And the old gentleman looked at Dad and enquired, "Did you mak your fortune?" I also know Dad preached in that church again when he was in Elgin on leave during WW 1 and staying with the Aunties (who then lived at 47 Reidhaven St.) By then Dr. Cowan was dead...I think he died early in 1914.

By the way, Dr. Beatrice Ogilvie is dead too, in early 1984. Her executor, a cousin from Yorkshire, found my name in her address book and wrote to tell me about her passing. She left her estate to a Nursing Home in Elgin.

If you are in Aberdeen, you might try and locate Dr. ~~Dorothy~~ Dorothy Younie. She lived in a little cottage not far from St. Macha's Cathedral. I have never met her. She is John Younie's widow (and I believe a double cousin...a Mitchell, she was related somehow to the Farquhars...her husband was the son of the Rothes Younies) It was in the draper shop of Mr. Younie in Rothes that Alexander Farquhar and his brother (William?) apprenticed before they set up shop in Elgin and then afterwards in Knivesbridge where they sold hats "by appointment to Queen Alexandra". John Younie spent his career in India with the British Civil Service and he died there sometime around the early years of the war (WW 1)...he had sent his family home to Scotland, so he died there alone. Perhaps you know all of this... I understand from Dr. Younie's letter to me after she had met Jeanie, that he had had quite a lot to do with the foot work leading to the eventual Mountbatten severance after the war. (He was a graduate I think, of Oxford)

It was rather an accident that our Jeanie met Dr. Younie. It was in the summer of 1978 when she was trucking around Scotland, and she was in Aberdeen visiting with Dr. and Mrs. Wetherly. Dr. Wetherly had been in Sackville that spring as visiting lecturer in the Biology Department at Mt. A. and Jean had met them both, and when they learned she was planning to be in Scotland that summer, extended an invitation to stay with them when she was in Aberdeen. (Dr. Younie had returned to medicine and set up a practice in Aberdeen after her husband's death and she brought up her family there...three daughters and a son)

In Aberdeen something was said at the Wetherlys about relatives and Jeanie mentioned that a cousin of ~~her~~ her grandfathers had lived in Aberdeen and that the family in Nova Scotia had lost touch what with the war, etc. ... "Dr. Younie, John Younie's widow". To make a long story short, it turned out Mrs. Wetherby's friend was Dr. Dorothy Younie. I had the nicest letter from her telling me how much she enjoyed meeting Jeanie. She may not now be in Aberdeen...if she is still



even the phone book!!

alive. Jean saw her last for a few minutes in the summer of 1981. She is retired from her practice now. She has one daughter living in Canada (the Sudbury area I think) and one in either Australia or New Zealand, and she visits them regularly, and a daughter and a son in Edinburgh. I do not know their names nor do I have addresses. Perhaps somebody at the University or in a Medical Clinic could help you locate her. I am sorry, but I can't put my hand on her letter.

I was interested in the doings of your family. As for ours, Ian is hoping to get work in the spring on a farm in River John...a small mixed farm and they sell cream to Tatamagouche Creamery. The people seem super so I hope it will materialize. Nothing much doing yet on a farm...but spring is coming. Jean is presently serving with the Northern Manitoba Medical Service, at the moment is on a Cree and Ojibway Indian Reserve (4,000 population divided into several communities), St. Theresa Point on Island Lake some three hundred plus miles north-east of Winnipeg. She is having an interesting time. Later on this spring she expects to be in the hospital at Churchill and then will take over from the resident doctor at Churchill Inlet and Rankin Inlet and Whale Cove. All of this, added to her experiences last year with the Grenfell Mission in the Labrador, will make her quite knowledgeable about some of our native communities. Maura and Jol are busy with their livestock, their jobs and they are looking for an addition to the family in the spring. That will change our status completely! Alex... He is finishing off his law degree at Dalhousie and has been accepted to article with a firm in Toronto, Blake Cassels. I am hoping he won't decide to stay in Ontario, but I know that is where the action is. I hope when he is in Toronto he may meet your Alex. It would seem that they would have some things in common.

As for us ...Don retires this spring. It has all come upon us rather suddenly. We literally shelved any plans for the future until we got Ian set upon a path again. We have made no plans but will stay in Sackville for a year or so anyway and see what develops. Perhaps that is the best way of proceeding, who knows. But next year, hopefully we will be freer to come and go as we please.

I doubt I have been able to contribute anything you did not already know. I hope you have a great holiday and fun tracking down some of your interests, including Allistair MacLean. I would be interested in reading some of his sermons and meditations now. Perhaps, now that you know of Dr. Cowan, you may become interested in him too. I know he had a tremendous following in the area and his parishioners worshiped the ground he trod on.

Have a good holiday...will be interested in hearing all about it.

As always,

Margaret.

My typing isn't as good as yours, but since the accident last February I find it easier to type than to write letters by hand.

m.p.