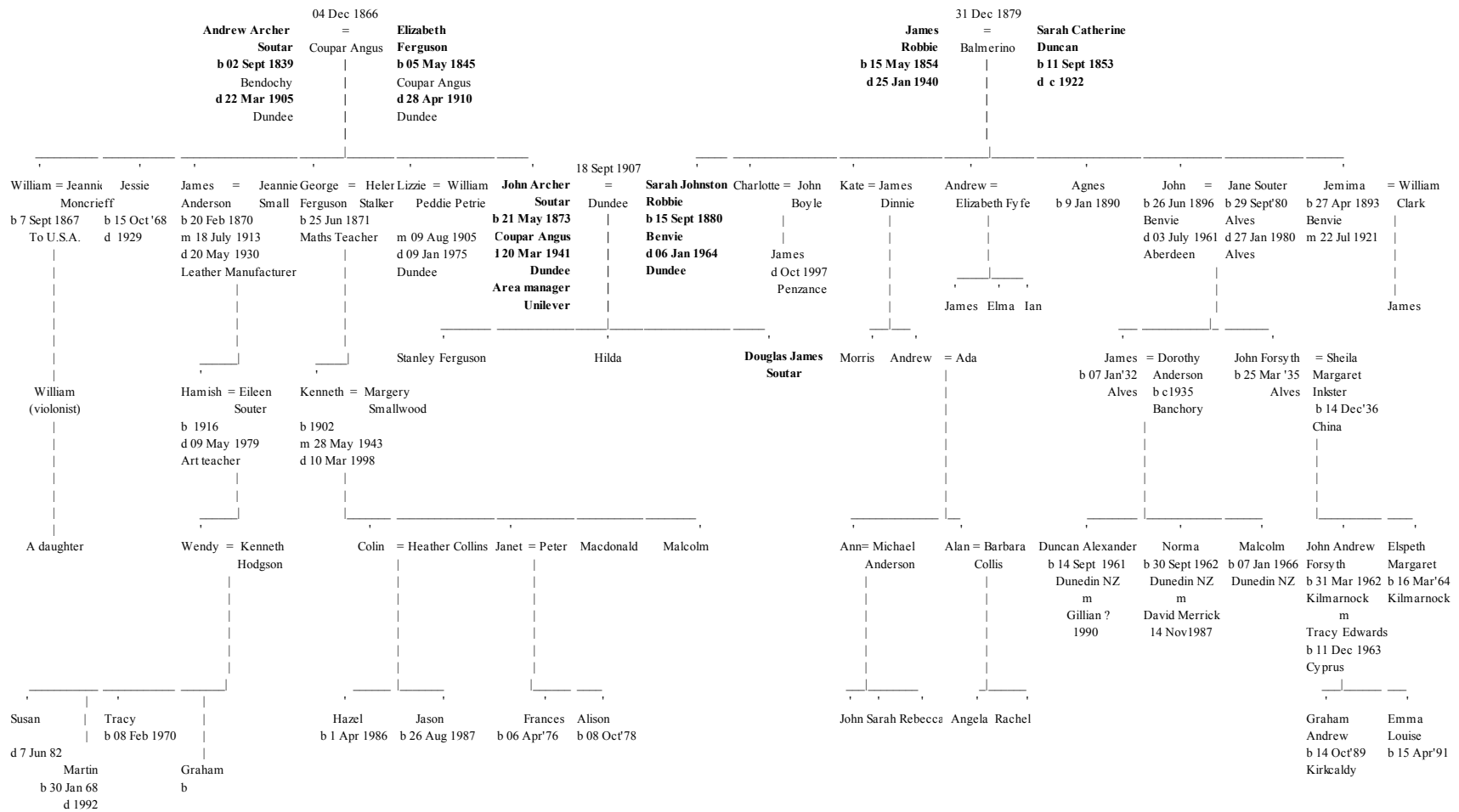


**John Archer Soutar and Sarah Johnston Robbie**



John Archer Soutar Sarah Johnston Robbie

John Archer Soutar and Sarah (always known as Sis to the other members of her family) Johnston Robbie were married on July 18th 1907 at Mathers Hotel, Dundee. At the time of marriage he was 34, a commercial traveller with Van den Berg Ltd and she, 26 and an assistant school teacher in Blackness School. She wore, not a bridal dress, but a dress in cream satin, trimmed with red velvet. The couple had been introduced when John's brother-in-law, Willie Peddie-Petrie who was organist at Liff Church, took John and other of his choristers from Dundee to sing at Liff Church, where Sarah and her family were members. After the wedding the couple lived their whole married life at 85 Magdalen Yard Road in Dundee.



John Archer Soutar



Sarah Johnston Robbie

Three children Douglas, Stanley and Hilda were born between 1908 and 1916 all of them being baptized in St. Pauls (South) Church by Rev. James Boath Wood.



L-R Douglas, Hilda and Stanley.

Magdalen Yard Road was an interesting area to be brought up in. About 8.15am. figures could be seen walking from Windsor Street, Shepherds Loan and round about and converging on Magdalen Green Station to catch one of the two trains which stopped there about 8.20am and which would carry them to the centre of town. All movements on both the LMS and LNER railway lines were clearly seen from the windows of the house. The Band Stand was the social centre on summer Sundays when performances were given every second week. People would come from all over town and sit on the grass for several hours, listening. The annual flower show also took place on "the Green". This was preceded by the building of a high wooden fence which, although sturdy, could be climbed if the right place was chosen near one of the uprights. Many of the local boys could gain free access this way.



Adults L-R George, John, Sarah, Jessie, Nellie, Jim. Children L-R Douglas, Stanley, Kenneth.

The children played the various games in season: rounders, kick the can (which involved running through back greens and over fences) and daisy chain making. Although the children in Taylors Lane played hopping games such as hop scotch those on the front didn't, probably because parents and neighbours would have frowned upon any chalking on pavements. In fact the children on the front didn't play much with those in Taylors Lane, not through snobbery, but because they went to different schools. The call home for the Taylor's Lane children never varied "Willie, Jean, - yer wantit". In more genteel families, big brother was sent out to fetch you.

At a cousin's wedding during the first war the guests at the reception in Queens Hotel were described in detail in the local paper: Mrs John Soutar in apricot ninion with yoke of net and black hat. Mrs Peddie Petrie in azure blue bengaline relieved with lace and worn with a black plumed hat Mrs D.M.Brown (no relation but wife of the owner of the shop of the same name) came in a toilette of tabac corded silk, with golden brown hat. Miss Helen Stevenson in a pretty gown of knife-pleated white chiffon, her black hat trimmed with a cerise plume. At another wedding around the same time the descriptions are Mrs J Soutar in peach coloured silk mousseline, and a

smart black hat with black plumes and Mrs Peddie Petrie in a pretty saxe blue frock and black hat.

For children below school age, a favourite walk was to see the horses being shod in the smiddy west of Greenfield Place - an exciting place for children. After they started school, Harris Academy in Park Place, the children passed the smiddy daily until it closed. Horses played a big part in everyday life at that time and Hilda recalls two stories, one about which she still feels slightly guilty. The coalman's lorry was standing outside the manse. As she passed she said "gee up!" and was shocked and amazed when the horse moved off round the corner and, quite slowly, up Taylors Lane. To make amends she quickly ran round the back to where the coalman was delivering to tell him "Your horse has gone off". The other incident happened outside their door when a horse fell, struggled to get up but as it was still firmly fixed in the shafts of the cart it couldn't. People trying to help couldn't release it because of its struggles. Sarah came to the door and with the benefit of her country upbringing shouted "Sit on its head". They did, the horse stopped struggling, and they were able to release it from the shafts and it could get up.



Magdalen Green Band Stand 1998

Good behaviour was always required on the way to school as the Rector, Barry Robb who lived in Wormit travelled by train to Esplanade station and walked up Magdalen Yard Road (now Roseangle) to school. He presented an impressive figure in his frock coat and striped trousers. Once Hilda reached school age, Douglas, being the oldest, got, as his mother said, "the durdram" (the strife), that is, had the responsibility of looking after her even when she insisted on standing on his feet as he walked a few paces up the street. This lasted until he eventually complained to his mother about it. (Another expression that Sarah used was "Heid Billydackus". The Collins' Pocket Scots Dictionary says "In some parts of Eastern Scotland, the person in charge of something is jocularly or derogatorily referred to as the heid billydackus". "The word possibly comes from billy, an old word for a man or a workmate, plus a mock latin ending".) As the children grew older they would be sent up to the shops for messages, Stanley got the reputation for being unable to remember what he had been sent for but he never came back empty handed. If he couldn't remember what he had been sent for he simply brought a quarter of best coffee although his mother took a dim view when she was presented with a quarter of best coffee twice in one day. One thing they were

always warned about was not to be caught in Taylors Lane when the bumper went at lousin' time as they would be covered in jute fibres (ooze) in the crowd.

All three children gained University entrance qualifications but, as John's father Andrew, had run into financial difficulties when he put one of his sons, George, through university, John, not wishing a repetition of this made his own family finances more secure by putting Douglas out to work (in the Clydesdale Bank) before completing the education of the other two. Stanley went to St Andrews University (at Dundee) where he studied medicine and Hilda studied art at Dundee College of Art.

Going on holiday was a great event preceded by the packing of **the trunk**. Hours of washing, ironing and packing preceded the arrival of the porter from Magdalen Green station who loaded the trunk onto his barrow to be sent "luggage in advance" to arrive, as if by magic, at the holiday destination - often St Andrews but at other times, Kirriemuir, Aberdeen, Pitlochry and Montrose (where Hilda remembers Douglas helping teach her to cycle). St Andrews was popular because John could travel back and forward for two weeks before joining the others full time for his own fortnight's holiday. A house was taken and the whole extended family holidayed together - Aunt Lizzie, Uncle Willie, Aunt Jessie, Uncle Jim, Aunt Jeannie, were all present on various holidays. The pattern during the holiday was that the women and children went to the beach where they sat beside the bathing shelter, played in the sand, made sand castles and some of them even went into the water while the men went off to play golf although perhaps without much success.



Back: L-R Douglas, Sarah, Maggie (bathing attendant) Front: Nettie, Lizzie, John, (unknown child)

The family's visits always seemed to co-incide with the Childrens Special Service Mission run by Mr Hudson Pope whom John's sense of humour renamed Hudson Soap. (Hudson's Soap was widely advertised at one time). One of Hilda's cherished memories is of the day when walking to the beach, her mother stopped one of the boys leading the ponies to the beach and paid six pence to let her ride all the way to the beach.

The children all excelled at sports and athletics and on one occasion when they entered for the local sports in St Andrews, Douglas and Stanley won every event between them. Their mother was "black affronted" and they were made to return the

prizes. On one occasion the family took a mystery tour by bus from St Andrews - it took them to see of all things the Tay Bridge!

Visits were also made to Benvie; Hilda's earliest memories of Benvie are of Aunt Mim's wedding in 1921 when she was a bridesmaid, aged four. The wedding was held in the parlour which she is sure would have been decorated with the sweet peas which grandfather prided himself in growing with four or even five heads. The boys went to Benvie too and enjoyed "helping" Grandfather to stoke the fire to dry grain spread on the slatted floor above. This should have been done by keeping an even layer of smouldering chaff burning slowly, adding an extra scoop of chaff to any part of the fire which threatened to burn through but the boys would soon have a roaring fire going and grandfather would have to re-make the whole thing. Swimming in Mill pond was also enjoyed.

Douglas who had been transferred by the bank to Coatbridge married Nettie Nelson there on 14 July 1934. Before marriage when Douglas returned home at weekends, his father would leave the church in the middle of the evening service to go to the station to see him off. In 1943 Stanley married Margaret Darling on 12 Nov at St George's Parish Church, Edinburgh and Hilda married Alexander Allan at 85 Magdalen Yard Road on 22 August 1944.

John had learned to drive when he was in The Volunteer Force (City of Dundee RASCMT(V) ) as no. V595902 from 18:07:18 to 31:03:21 and later bought a car but didn't drive as driving made him too tense and, as a result, Hilda did most of the driving. As a pedestrian though, John took the attitude "I was here before the cars so they can keep out of my way"

John retired in 1938 an event recorded in the paper:

"A very well known personality in the provision trade in Dundee and district, Mr John A Soutar, 85 Magdalen Yard Road, is on the eve of retiring. Mr Soutar's connection with the margarine trade extends over a very long period. He entered the service of Van Den Berghs, Ltd., as traveller in 1898 and later transferred his services to Jugens, Ltd., as district manager. He continued to occupy that position when the two firms were amalgamated some years ago and became part of the Unilever organisation.

Mr Soutar had a remarkable record in the matter of health. He had been 39 years at business without having been off."

When John died, three years later the obituaries repeated the above information and added: "One of the oldest members and secretary of Dudhope Bowling Club which he joined in 1898, he in his younger days frequently represented the club in Hunter Cup matches."

"He took a leading part in Dundee Grocers' Benevolent Society, and was session clerk of Old St Paul's Church."

"Mr Soutar is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter. One son is Mr Stanley Soutar F.R.C.S. (Edin), resident assistant in the surgical department of Dundee Royal Infirmary, while Mr Douglas Soutar is a banker. The daughter is an art teacher."

Confirmation:

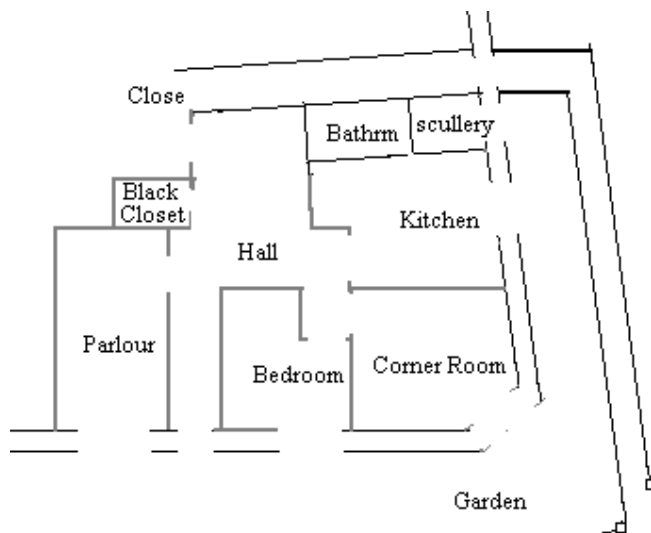
Soutar, John Archer, commercial traveller, retired, 85 Magdalen Yard Road, Dundee  
Died 20 March 1941 at Dundee, testate, confirmation Dundee 5 June to Sarah  
Johnston Robbie or Soutar, 85 Magdalen Yard Road, Dundee, widow, executor. Will  
dated 24 Apr 1930. Recorded 30 May 1931. Value of estate £875:14:7.

After John's death, Sarah continued living at Magdalen Yard Road for about fifteen  
years when, suffering from angina, she moved to stay with Stanley in Somerville  
Place. She died 6 Jan 1964.

Confirmation:

Soutar  
Sarah Johnston Robbie or  
1 Sommerville Place, Dundee  
testate  
Recorded Dundee 10:3:64

Sketch plan of 85 Magdalen Yard Road







85 Magdalen Yard Road in 1998



John and Sarah with Stanley (left) and Douglas



Stanley and Douglas



Douglas



Back: L-R Aileen, Lizzie, George, Jessie,  
Front: Hamish



Back: Stanley and John  
Front: Nettie, Hilda, Sarah.



L-R Sarah, Douglas, Nettie and Hilda



Back: Nettie and Douglas  
Middle: Sarah and John  
Front: Hilda.



Douglas was a founder member of Harris Academy R.F.C.  
and helped erect the first rugby posts at Elliot Road sports ground.  
Above he is on the extreme left and below he is in the back row, second from the left.





Wedding gift from school staff to Sarah and John.



Sarah and John's wedding china.

1873 279 No. 40

John Archer Soutar	1873 May Twenty first 9h 16 m am. George Street Coupar Angus	M	Andrew Archer Soutar grocer  Elizabeth Soutar M.S. Ferguson 1866 Dec 4 Coupar Angus	Andrew A Soutar father. present.
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1880 No36

Sarah Johnstone Robbie	1880 Sept 15 <sup>th</sup> 3h 00m pm Benvie Liff & Benvie	F	James Robbie miller Sarah Catherine Robbie M.S. Duncan 1897 December 31 <sup>st</sup> Balmerino	James Robbie father
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1907 No. 213

1907 on the eighteenth day of July at Mathers' Hotel Dundee After banns according To the Established Church of Scotland	John Archer Soutar Commercial Traveller, bachelor.	34	1 Rustic Place Dundee	John Archer Soutar Grocer (master) (deceased) Elizabeth Soutar M.S. Ferguson
	Sarah Johnstone Robbie Assistant School Teacher, spinster	26	Benvie Liff & Benvie	James Robbie Meal Miller Sarah Johnstone Robbie M.S. Duncan

Ministers: George Dingwall minr.of Liff & Benvie, Jas. Boath Wood minr.of St Pauls South, Dundee.  
Witnesses: James Anderson Soutar, Charlotte D Robbie.

1941 282/1 No. 84

John Archer Soutar Margarine Salesman Married to Sarah Johnstone Robbie	1941 Mar 20 <sup>th</sup> 11h 20m pm 85 Magdalen Yard Road Dundee	M	67	Andrew Archer Soutar (deceased) Elizabeth Soutar M.S.Ferguson (deceased)	Cardio vascular degeneration James Soutar son 382 Perth Road, Dundee
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1964 282/2 No. 84

Sarah Johnstone Robbie Widow of John Archer Soutar Food Manufacturer's Manager	1964 Jan 6 <sup>th</sup> 7h 45m am Fort House Nursing Home U.R. 1 Somerville Pl. Dundee	F	83	James Robbie miller (deceased)  Sarah Catherine Robbie M.S. Duncan (deceased)	Hypostatic Pneumonia Cerebral Arteriosclerosis son Stanley Ferguson Soutar
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