

John Cuthill and Janet Hay

John Cuthill Janet Hay

Janet and John were married on Friday 23rd May 1823. The Old Parish Register says:

Denny (476/3) FR826 May 3rd 1823.

John Cuthill of Banknock and Janet Hay, daughter of James Hay of Muirhead gave in their names in order to marriage and were proclaimed on the three following sabbaths and married on twenty three curt.

John's elder brother, William, who would normally, under Scots law, have inherited Easter Banknock when their father died in 1818, was already a successful business man in Denny so the property was passed to John who became "Laird of Banknock". Ownership of any land by ordinary people was unusual at the time and led to Janet and John being referred to as "Laird Bodies".

One interesting fact that has been passed down is that the couple's wedding china had no handles on the cups. They were disappointed because this was old fashioned since handles were "coming in". When they were first married they had a double saddle i.e. a normal saddle with a side-saddle behind. The fact that this snippet of information has been passed down may mean that this was unusual. They seemed to have had no form of wheeled transport.

John was ordained an Elder in Dennyloanhead Secession Church 12 March 1837.

The first child, Jean was born eighteen months after the wedding and the family continued to grow until by the census of 1841 there were seven children listed.

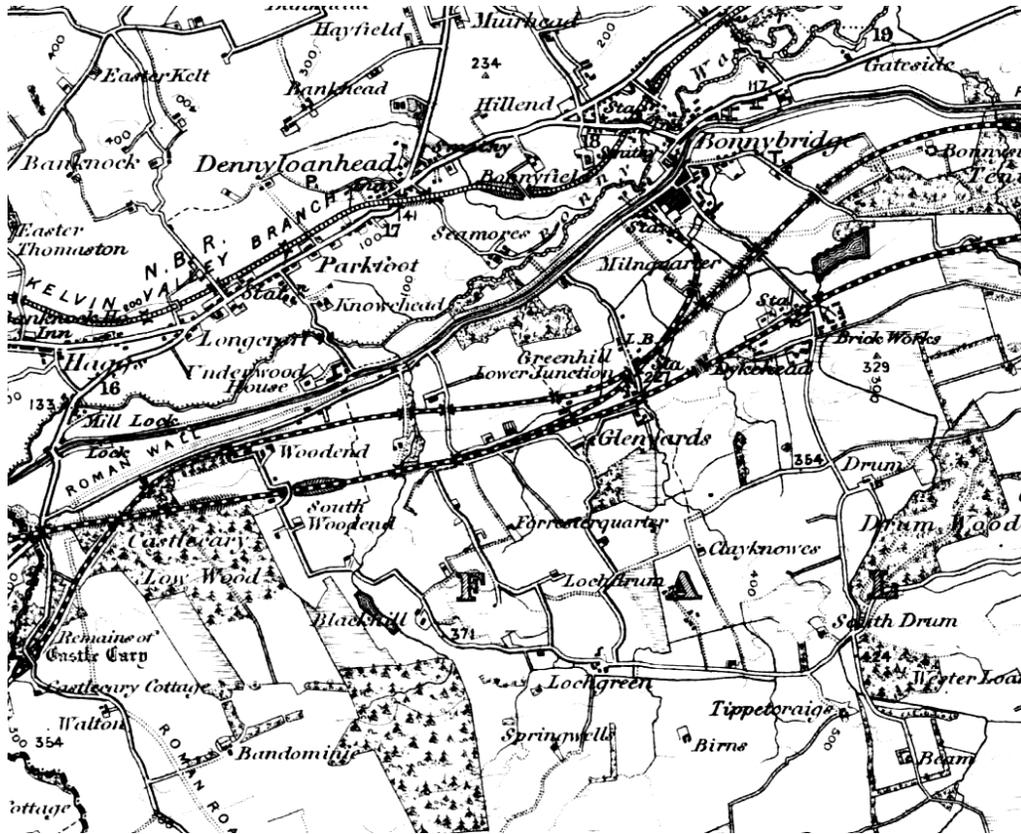
1841 Denny (476)	book 8	page 3	
Banknock			
Cuthill John	40	Portioner farmer	y
Cuthill Janet	30		y
Cuthill Jean	16		y
Cuthill Helen	14		y
Cuthill Elisa	9		y
Cuthill Mary	7		y
Cuthill William	5		y
Cuthill James	3		y
Cuthill John	1		y

Daughter, Janet who had been born on 7th October 1828 is not listed with the family. She may have been staying with relatives.

The year following the census, Christina was born on 8th May, followed by Margaret on 1st April 1845 and Catherine on 6th March 1848.

The following year, the oldest daughter, Jean, was married to Alexander Hamilton. It was thought by the family that she had made "a good marriage".

The young couple were first cousins once removed, Jean being Alex's cousin's daughter. The banns were recorded at Denny, Stirlingshire on 20 January 1849.



From 1 inch to the mile Ordnance Survey map surveyed 1855-60 revised to 1895

By the next census the entry read:

1851 Denny (476)	book 7	page 2		
Banknock				
Cuthill John	h m	54	Farmer of 53 acres	Stirling, Denny
Cuthill Janet	w m	46		Stirling, Denny
Cuthill Helen	d	24		Stirling, Denny
Cuthill Janet	d	22		Stirling, Denny
Cuthill Mary	d	18		Stirling, Denny
Cuthill William	s	15	Farmer	Stirling, Denny
Cuthill James	s	13		Stirling, Denny
Cuthill John	s	10		Stirling, Denny
Cuthill Christina	d	8		Stirling, Denny
Cuthill Margaret	d	6		Stirling, Denny
Cuthill Catherine	d	3		Stirling, Denny

Nearby in another house at Banknock was Janet's mother, Jean with her "niece" Elizabeth Cuthill. This should surely read granddaughter.

1851 Denny (476)	book 7	page 1		
Banknock				
Hay Jean	h m	83	Annuitant	Stirling, Falkirk
Cuthill Elizabeth	niece. u	20		Stirling, Denny



Also in 1851 the Great Exhibition was held at The Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, London. John Cuthill and a neighbouring farmer went to see it, travelling in a covered waggon. John brought back what were probably penny cups, for the children. Catherine's still survives and is pictured alongside.

1853 was a year of mixed fortunes. Janet had a stillborn son on 29th April and the next of their children to marry was Helen who married Robert Chalmers on 21st November. Before the wedding, the family bought a lamp. This was considered very "up-market" as they had used only home made candles up to this time.

At weddings of the farming community in Scotland in the 19th century, brides did not wear white. She would have a silk dress in a dark colour as it was to be her "best dress" for years to come. Often the dress was made to be let out "in case needs be". Helen's dress was dark brown.

At the time of this wedding, crinolines were in fashion. The three youngest girls were so disappointed because they could not wear them. They cut themselves willow wands (which bend very easily), made holes in the hems of their petticoats and inserted the wands to make their own crinolines! Needless to say, they got into a lot of trouble for making holes in their new petticoats.

The next winter, 1854-55, the siege and fall of Sabastapol took place. Years later, Catherine told her granddaughter that, during a snowy spell, she and her brothers and sisters had snowballed a wall, pretending they were at the siege!

January 23rd 1855 saw the untimely death of twenty-six year old Janet. Janet had never been very well and always rode the two miles to Church on horseback while the others walked. This walk involved scrambling down in to the valley of the Kelvin and up the other side before the track joined the main road.

1860 saw another family wedding, that of Elizabeth, who married Thomas Laing on 27th April 1860 in Denny then emigrated the next year to Canada. Thomas (born Feb 18, 1821 Denny) died Jan 18, 1888. Elizabeth died in May 23, 1900. They are buried in the Cromarty Presbyterian Cemetery, Hibbert Twp, Perth Co., Ontario.

The census of 1861 shows John as being retired but since he is apparently still at work in 1871 there must be some mistake.

1861 Census Dist 476 book 8 page 2

Banknock farm

Cuthill John	h	m	64	retired	Stirling, Denny
Hay Janet	w	m	56		Stirling, Falkirk
Cuthill Mary	d	u	28		Stirling, Denny
Cuthill William	s	u	25		Stirling, Denny
Cuthill James	s	u	23		Stirling, Denny
Cuthill Christina	d	u	18		Stirling, Denny
Cuthill Margaret	d	u	15		Stirling, Denny
Cuthill Catherine	d	u	13	scholar	Stirling, Denny

Six rooms with windows

At this time, wool from the sheep on the farm was still spun on the farm by the womenfolk then sent to the local weaver to make blankets. Janet and John also grew flax to be spun and woven into linen. The youngest daughter, Catherine, said that her mother boasted that “she never had a piece of cotton on her back”.

1865 saw the marriage of Mary to Thomas Chalmers, 1867 that of John to Margaret Arbuckle and 1869 that of James to Robina Connell. With only three of the children now at home, and Elizabeth, John and James in Canada, Catherine wrote the poem, which is the only one of her poems to survive:



Catherine and her mother, Janet.

The Old Hearthstone by Catherine Cuthill, Banknock, Denny. 1870.

*I sit alone, by the old hearthstone,
And my thoughts are wandering free,
And the days gone by, in a fancy's eye
I think I clearly see.*

*In the days that are gone by this old hearthstone
Little pattering feet were at home,
But little they knew as the children grew,
Where those little feet would roam.*

*And the winter night, with its cheerful light,
Our memory long will keep.
The mother's smile, and stories beguile,
Till the little ones fall asleep.*

But the world at home too little has grown,

For some aspiring one,
And out he would go, the wide world to know
And leave the old hearthstone.
Hadst thou but known thou old hearthstone,
Many a sound of grief mightst hear,
The father's prayer was whispered there,
There dropped the mother's tear.

The eventful day when he went away
The wanderer when alone,
Will ne'er forget where last we met;
T'was by the old hearthstone.

And the parting kiss, a token this,
Of the love that was still to be.
To know no bound, save the grassy mound
When the eyes no longer see.

But oh, how lone is the old hearthstone,
How strange is the look of the place?
There is something there, 'tis the vacant chair,
Reminds us of his face.

One trial is not alone in our lot
Is by experience seen.
But wounds will heal, though we cease not to feel
The place where the wounds have been.

So, one by one, away they have gone,
And there are only three,
Of the circle wide, who side by side,
Grew under the same roof tree.

But father is there in the old arm chair
Beside the old hearthstone,
And mother, the pride of the home fireside,
Sits in the spot well known.

But who can trace with an eager face,
The future that is in store
For the old hearthstone when we are gone,
And round it sit no more.

Will little ones come, and call this their home,
As if we had never been there?
Will the fire burn bright to give strangers light?
Who will fill the old armchair?

*Will the roof-tree old that has kept out the cold,
 And stood many a storm before,
 And the dear old walls will they moulder and fall,
 Like the friends which they shelter no more?*



Banknock 2001

Census year came round again the following year:

1871 census Denny (476) book 8 page 1

Banknock farm

Cuthell John	h	m	74	farmer of 63 acres	STI, Denny
Hay Janet	w	m	66	blank	STI, Falkirk
Cuthell Christina	d	u	28	blank	STI, Denny
Cuthell Maggie	d	u	25	blank	STI, Denny
Cuthell Catherine	d	u	23	blank	STI, Denny

5 rm with windows



John and Janet circa 1870.

The 1872 Return of Owners of Land for the Stirling area records: John Cuthill, Banknock, Denny: 58 acres Gross Annual Value: £70-5s.

In November 1872 John died of peritonitis. He left a will, some details of which are given below:

Synopsis of Inventory. John Cuthill, portioner, Banknock died 20 Nov 1872.

1. Cash	£ 18
2. Household furniture, stock, implements, etc.	£123-17-01
3. Proportion of year's rent letting to William Baillie. (£3 p.a.)	£ 1-02-06
4. Surface damage due in connection with coal working on lands of Easter Banknock (est.)	<u>£ 4-05-00</u>
	<u>£147-04-07</u>

This estate would be worth £6400 in 2002. John's widow, Janet Hay or Cuthill is executor and the estate is to be distributed as follows:

Liferent to wife and all moveable effects (except threshing mill which goes with the land).

Son James £135, son John £210, Jane (eldest daughter) £210, Ellen £110, Elizabeth £110, Mary £110, Christina, Margaret and Catherine – £150 each if unmarried. If they marry after their father's death and during his wife's lifetime, William is to borrow £40 for each for a marriage outfit and wife is to pay the interest. If they are married before their father's death then they get £110 each.

Note William is not mentioned as a beneficiary. This is because he, as eldest son, would automatically inherit the whole of the heritable property i.e. land, minerals in the ground and buildings. This is recorded in Sasine Abridgements:

Feb 12 1873

1424

Not. Instrument. Janet Hay, widow of John Cuthill, portioner of Banknock, in her liferent use allenary and William Cuthill, engineer, Denny, in fee, - of the 5s land of Easter Banknock, with houses thereon in parish of Denny. with teinds, - on Disps. & Setts, dated 6 Mar 1871, by said John Cuthell, with consent of Janet Hay, with warrant of regn. thereon, on behalf of the said Janet Hay and William Cuthell.

39.156



Margaret, a dressmaker, and Christina, who was slightly simple, never married but Catherine married James Chalmers on 27th April 1876. Catherine's dress was of clerical grey silk and was made by her sister, Margaret. As was usual, the minister came to the house to perform the ceremony. A meal followed and the couple went to their new home in the evening. Owing to the methods of photography in those days, no photo was taken on the day. Sometime during the next month the couple put on their wedding clothes and went to the photographer in the nearest town to have the photo taken. Alongside is Catherine and James's wedding photo.

The next census sees Janet living on her own in the village of Cumbernauld:

1881 Cumbernauld Dumbarton 495 dist 8 pg 15
Main Street, Cumbernauld

Cuthill, Janet h w 75 annuitant Stirling, Denny

Janet survived a further eight years, dying in May 1899 at the age of seventy-six the cause of death being recorded as heart disease.

Death, Denny 1872 (476) No. 115

John Cuthill	M	76	1872	William Cuthill	peritonitis	Wm Cuthill
Farmer			Nov 20 th .	farmer		son
Married to			Banknock	(deceased)		
Janet Hay				Helen Cuthill		
				M.S. Ingles		
				(deceased)		

Death, Cumbernauld (495) 1882 No. 1

Janet Cuthill	F	76	1 st . January	James Hay	heart	William Cuthill son
Widow of			1882	farmer	disease	Denny
John Cuthill			Main St.	(deceased)		
Farmer			Cumbernauld	Jane Hay		
				M.S. Hamilton		
				(deceased)		

Denny (476)

1829
Nov^r. 9th No FR

Janet Cuthill lawful daughter to John Cuthill and Janet (illegible) Banknock who was born seventh October last.

The following charts and notes record what happened to John and Janet's offspring.

