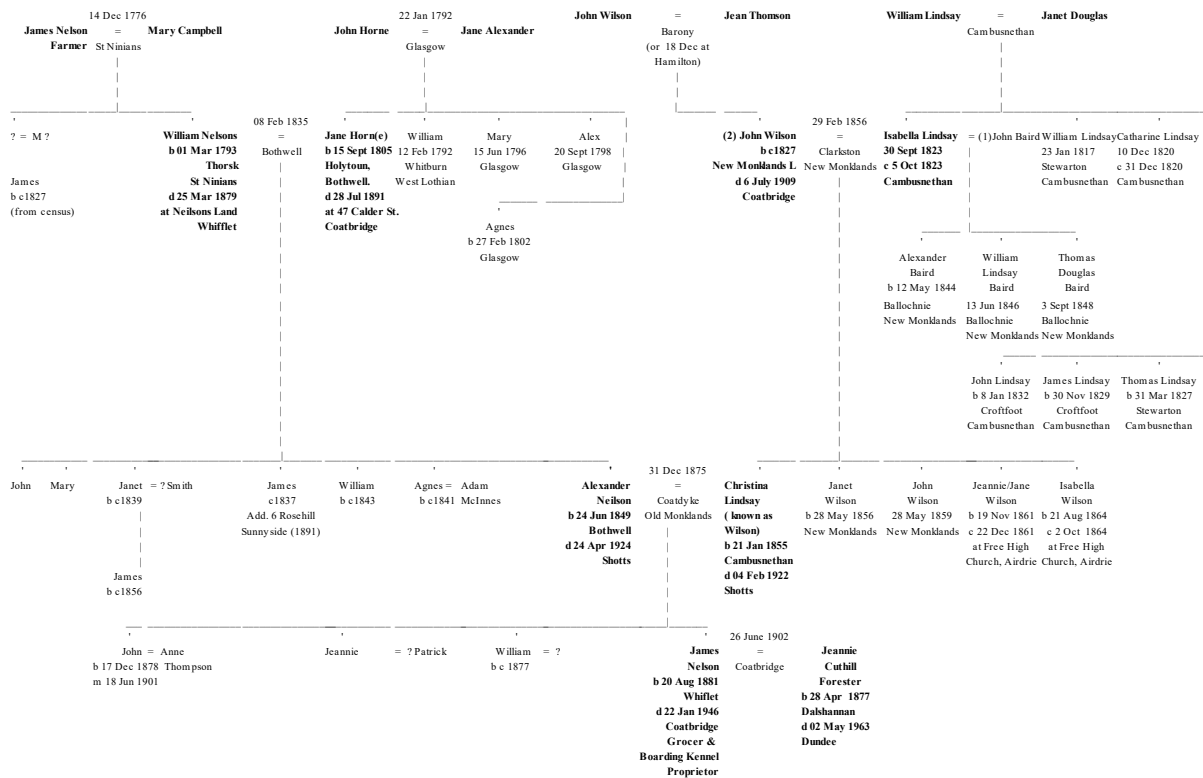


Alexander Neilson Christina Lindsay (known as Wilson.)



Alex and Chris were married on 31 December 1875 at her home, Kylesland, Coatdyke. He was aged 29, an engine worker and a bachelor of Nelsons Land, Whifflet, and she aged 21, a factory hand (the 1871 census says cotton weaver) and a spinster.

Six years later, the 1881 census sees the young family at:

Nelsons Land, Whifflet 652/3 bk 7 pg. 30

Nelson Alexander	h m	37	Iron works labourer	Lks, Old Monklands
Nelson Christina	w m	26		Lks, New Monklands
Nelson William	s	4		Lks, Old Monklands
Nelson John	s	2		Lks, Old Monkland

One room with a window.

James was born later that year on 20 August 1881 at Nelsons Land and a daughter, Jane-Horne (Jeannie) was born two years after that on December 6th 1882 at Neilsons Land Whifflet.

By 1891 the situation has changed and the census shows at:

47 Calder Street (652/2 bk. 36 pg41)

Neilson Jane Horne	h	w	80		Lks. Bothwell
Neilson Alexander	s	m	45	General Labourer employed	Lks Old Monklands
Neilson William	g-son	u	14	General Labourer employed	Lks Old Monklands
Neilson John	g-son	u	12	scholar	Lks Old Monklands

Two rooms with windows

and at:

45 Calder Street: (652/2 bk. 36 pg42)

McInnes Adam	h m 44	Iron shingler	Lks Shotts
McInnes Agnes	w m 51		Lks Bothwell
Neilson James	nephew 9		Lks Old Monklands
Neilson Jane	niece 7		Lks Old Monklands

Two rooms with windows.

So the family is split, two children living with Alex and his mother and the other two living close by with the McInnes's, Agnes McInnes being Alex's sister. Christine is not with the family. From the marriage certificate of Jimmy to Jeannie Forrester she is apparently alive in 1902. A comment made by Jeannie years later was that Alexander's sister, Agnes was "a difficult bitch who caused Christina's breakdown and trouble between various members of the family". Could the breakdown have caused Christina to be Institutionalised? After much searching, an entry was found in the 1891 census for Old Monklands Poor House, Lunatic Wards and Fever Hospital, 652/2 dist 43 pg6:

Neilson Christina	m	36	patient, housewife	born Coatbridge.
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With the exception of the birthplace, which had also been wrong in the 1881 census, and which the authorities might not have been sure of in any case, this would describe the mother of our family.

A number of years after this narrative had been written and when the Internet was available the research was returned to and it was discovered that Christina had been admitted to Gartnavel Royal Asylum, Lanarkshire on 23rd September 1884 then transferred to Old Monklands Poor House, Lanarkshire on 9th October 1888. Later she was transferred to Crichton Royal Asylum, Dumfries on 8th March 1894 and finally to Lanark District Asylum, also known as Hartwood Hospital, Shotts on 19th July 1895 where she died on 4th February 1922. Her patient number throughout was 43084.

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Archives hold some records for Gartnavel. Some records for Old Monklands Poor House and Hartwood Hospital are held in North Lanarkshire Archives and Records for Crichton Royal are in the Ewart Library in Dumfries. Any patient records among them are usually closed for 100 years. In any case, at the time of writing (December 2020) all Archives are closed because of the Covid 19 pandemic. The record of her admission to Gartnavel Royal Asylum and two years of patient notes from there are at the end of this article.

Jimmy's daughter, Nettie, (born 1904) didn't remember her grandmother at all and said they had all but lost touch with her father's family at least partly because her father had been brought up by an aunt. She thought, however, that she could remember seeing her grandfather, perhaps around 1915. Nettie also thought that perhaps her grandfather worked in the local steel works and she recalled mention of a drink problem.

Registers of death for the district had been searched repeatedly from 1881 to 1930 under Wilson, Neilson, Nelson and Lindsay without success. Only when the search was widened to include the whole of Scotland were the deaths found. Alex and Christina both died in Hartwood Asylum, Shotts. (See certificates below).

Christina's life seems to have been particularly sad. No father is named on her birth certificate although John Wilson, who reported her birth to the Registrar, is named as father on her marriage certificate and no parents at all are recorded on her death certificate. It appears that the family was not contacted when she died and a clerk reported the death to the Registrar. She had been in an Institution for more than half her life, her existence forgotten by her family.

Census records for Christina in Hartwood are

1901 655/1 5/12

Christan Nelson, patient, married, age 44, housewife, born Lanark, Lanarkshire.

1911 655/1 5/29

Nor were things easy for Alexander, with his wife institutionalised, he was left with four young children to bring up, albeit with the help of his sister and her husband. If he had a drink problem it is perhaps understandable.

1901 census Coatbridge 652/2 at 12 Coats Street, Old Monklands, Lanarkshire.

Alexander Neilson, head, mar, 50, engine man, born Calder, Lanarkshire with his son, John, age 20.

1911 – to find.

Despite the problems, the family grew up. Jimmy became a grocer's assistant with Reids Grocers, Coatbridge and later opened his own shop, in Lang Loan. Much later, having been a life-long dog lover, he closed the shop and opened boarding kennels at "Elton Mar" in Church Street, Coatbridge. This proved to be his first really successful enterprise and one, which he continued until his death although contact with animals probably exacerbated his severe asthma.



Langloan

With lack of contact in the family, little in the way of personal information has come down through the generations. One exception is Jimmy's school photographs, although he can be identified on only two out of four. Other exceptions are a photo of Jimmy's brother, John and his wife and the family photograph below.



The photo above shows:
Back L-R Anne Thompson, James Neilson, ? , ?.
Front: John Neilson, Jeannie Forrester, Alexander Neilson, ? , ?.

The others are likely to be Jeannie Neilson and her husband (surname Patrick) and William Neilson and his wife.



On the left
John Neilson c 1909 on a post card
sent by John to Mrs. A McInnes (his
aunt). The card reads:

Edinburgh.
Hope you and Annie are keeping
well. Will write later. Please send
Jeannie's married name and address.
I wonder if Annie will know who
this is.

Yours
J Nelson

Right,
Annie Neilson (nee Thompson).



School photographs. Jimmy Neilson is probably on all four but can be positively identified on only two as shown.



Jimmy: middle row extreme left



Jimmy: back row second from left



Births:

O.P.R Bothwell

24th June 1849. To William Nelsons and Jane Horn a son, Alexander

1855 No. 16

Christina Lindsay	1855	F	No info. in father section.	John Wilson	Born
Present	21 st Jan		Isabella Lindsay	Informant	Moffat Mill
	4h 0m a.m.		28, Cambusnethan		

Marriage:

1876 Old Monklands East 652/3 No. 60

31 Dec	Alexander Neilson	29	Nelsons' Land	William Neilsons
Kyles Land	Engine worker		Whifflet	Portioner
Coatdyke	(bachelor)			& Jane Neilson
C of S				M.S. Horne
	Christina Wilson	21	Kyles Land	John Wilson
	Factory hand		Coatdyke Parish	Iron Shovel Welder
	(spinster)		Old Monkland	& Isabella Wilson
				previously Baird
				M.S. Lindsay

Witnesses: James Neilson & Agnes Russell. Minister John Renwick, Garturk.

Deaths:

1922 655/1 No. 24

Christina	F	66	1922	Pneumonia	Jane Stratton
Nelson			Feb. 4 th	5 days	clerk.
Married to			7h 10m p.m.	Morbus Cordis	
Alexander			Hartwood Asylum	unknown	
Nelson			Shotts		
Labourer			U.R. Burgh of Coatbridge		

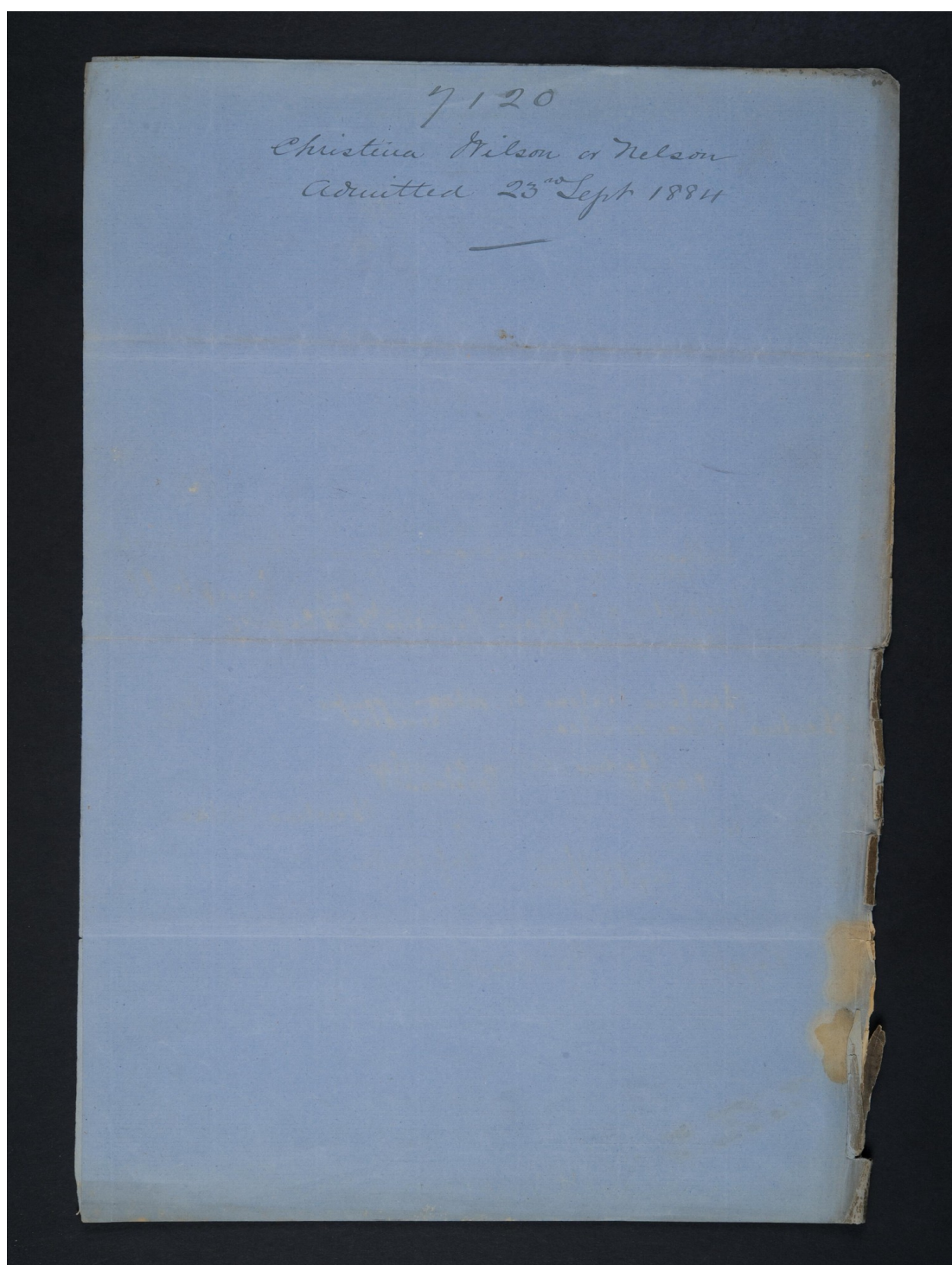
Morbus Cordis = Heart trouble.

(No entries in parents columns)

1924 No.

Alexander	M	80	1924	William	Cerebral	James
Neilson,			Apr 24 th	Neilson	Haemorrhage	Neilson
labourer			7h 10m a.m.	portioner	¹ / ₂₄ day	son,
married to			Hartwood	(deceased)	Senility.	Academy
Christina Wilson			Asylum, Shotts	Jane Neilson		Street,
			U.R. Academy	M.S.Horn		Coatbridge
			Street,	(deceased)		
			Coatbridge			

The following are records from Gartnavel Royal Asylum.



MEDICAL CERTIFICATE, No. I.

I, the undersigned, Adam Penrice Ludhope
being a ⁽¹⁾ Graduate in Medicine of Glasgow University
and being in actual practice as a ⁽²⁾ General Medical Practitioner
hereby certify, on soul and conscience, that I have this day, at ⁽³⁾ 79 Stewart's Land
Coatbridge In the County of
Lanark separately from any other Medical Practitioner,
visited and personally examined ⁽⁴⁾ Christina Wilson or Nelson
Housewife 76 Stewart's Land Coatbridge and that
the said Christina Wilson or Nelson is a ⁽⁵⁾ Lunatic
and a proper Person to be detained
under Care and Treatment, and that I have formed this opinion upon the following grounds,
viz:—

⁽⁶⁾ State the facts.

1. Facts indicating Insanity observed by myself: ⁽⁶⁾
Talks incoherently, sits in a listless way & must
be spoken to loudly to command her attention when
she starts up as from a dream. Forgets the
commonest things.

⁽⁷⁾ State the information, and from whom derived.

2. Other facts (if any) indicating Insanity communicated to me by others: ⁽⁷⁾
Her Mother says "She is very restless at night getting out
of bed all night thro' taking off & putting on her clothes
without reason. takes violent fits of temper, & talks
incoherently about her children

Name and Medical Designation, Adam P. Ludhope
M.B. & Ch.

Place of Abode, Coatbridge

DATED this Twenty-second day of September One thousand eight
hundred and eighty-four years.

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE, No. II.

I, the undersigned, James Farguharson
being a ⁽¹⁾ Medical Graduate of Aberdeen University
and being in actual practice as a ⁽²⁾ Medical Practitioner
hereby certify, on soul and conscience, that I have this day, at ⁽³⁾ 79 Stewart's
Land, Coatbridge near Coatbridge in the County of
Lanark separately from any other Medical Practitioner,
visited and personally examined ⁽⁴⁾ Christina Wilson or Nelson
Housewife, 76 Stewart's Land, Coatbridge and that
the said Christina Wilson or Nelson is a ⁽⁵⁾ Lunatic
and a proper Person to be detained
under Care and Treatment, and that I have formed this opinion upon the following grounds,
viz:—

⁽⁶⁾ State the facts.

1. Facts indicating Insanity observed by myself: ⁽⁶⁾
has lost her
memory to a great extent does not know her
age; says it is six years since she had a child while
it is only nine months. Complains of badly treated
angry to her sister without any seeming cause.

⁽⁷⁾ State the information, and from whom derived.

2. Other Facts (if any) indicating Insanity communicated to me by others: ⁽⁷⁾
Threatened to blow her father & mother
Wife. Organs out, take a dislike to those given
whom she admired most, gets very angry if
thwarted in any way.

Name and Medical Designation, J. Farguharson

Place of Abode, Coatbridge

DATED this twent-second day of September One thousand eight
hundred and eighty-four years.

CERTIFICATE OF EMERGENCY.

(This Certificate authorizes the detention of a Patient in an Asylum for a period not exceeding three days without any Order by the Sheriff.)

I, the undersigned, *Adam P. Ludhope*
being ⁽¹⁾ a Graduate in Medicine of Glasgow University
hereby certify, on soul and conscience, that I have this day, at ⁽²⁾ 76 Stewart's Rd. Coatsdyke
in the County of *Lanark*, seen and personally examined
Christina Wilson or Nelson, and that the said
person is of unsound mind, and a proper Patient to be placed in an Asylum.

And I further certify that the case of the said person is one of Emergency.

DATED this *Twenty-second* day of *September* *1884*
hundred and *eighty-four* years. One thousand eight

(1) State medical qualification.

(2) State place of examination.

ORDER TO BE GRANTED BY THE SHERIFF FOR THE
TRANSMISSION AND RECEPTION OF THE LUNATIC.

I, *William Ludovic May, Esquire, Advocate Sheriff Substitute*
of the ⁽²⁾ County of *Lanark*,
having had produced to me, with a Petition at the instance of ⁽³⁾ *George Campbell*
Inspector of Poor Old Montcalm
Certificates under the hands of *Adam Prentice Ludhope*
and *James Gargpherson*, being two Medical Persons
duly qualified in terms of an Act, intituled "An Act for the Regulation of the Care and
Treatment of Lunatics, and for the Provision, Maintenance, and Regulation, of Lunatic
Asylums in Scotland," setting forth that they had separately visited and examined ⁽⁴⁾
Christina Wilson or Nelson and that the said

Christina Wilson or Nelson is a ⁽⁵⁾ *Lunatic*

and a proper Person to be detained and taken care of, DO HEREBY AUTHORIZE you to
receive the said *Christina Wilson or Nelson* as a Patient into the

⁽⁶⁾ *Royal* Asylum of *Gartnavel* and I authorize

Transmission to the said Asylum accordingly; and transmit you herewith
the said Medical Certificates, and a Statement regarding the said *Christina Wilson*
or Nelson which accompanied the said Petition.

DATED this *twenty-third* day of *September* One thousand eight
hundred and *eighty-four*

To the Superintendent of the ⁽⁷⁾
Royal Asylum of *Gartnavel*

(1) State whether Sheriff, Sheriff-Substitute, Steward, or Steward-Substitute.

(2) State whether a County or Stewartry.

(3) Insert Name and Designation.

(4) Describe him, and if a Pauper, state so.

(5) Lunatic, or an Insane Person, or an Idiot, or a Person of unsound mind.

(6) Public, District, Parochial, or Private.

(7) Public, District, Parochial, or Private.

N.B.—This Form shall remain in the keeping of the Superintendent of the Asylum, after the Order of the Sheriff is obtained.

[FORM A]

25 & 26 Vict., Cap. 54, Sect. 14.

PETITION TO THE SHERIFF TO GRANT ORDER FOR THE
RECEPTION OF A PATIENT INTO AN ASYLUM.

(1) Sheriff or Stewart,
(2) Sheriff or Stewart.

Unto the Honorable the (1) Sheriff of the (2) County
of Lanark and his Substitutes,

Edmondston

The Petition of George Campbell Inspector of Poor
humbly sheweth that it appears from the submitted Statement and accompanying Medical
Certificates, that Christina Wilson or Nelson

(3) State degree of
Relationship, or other
capacity in which Peti-
tioner stands to Luma-
tic.

your Petitioner's (3)
is at present in a state of Mental Derangement, and a proper person for treatment in an
Asylum for the Insane. May it therefore please your Lordship to authorise the trans-
mission of the said Christina Wilson or Nelson to the
Royal Asylum, Gartnavel, Glasgow and to sanction her admission
into the said Asylum.

(4) The date of the
Petition must be with-
in fourteen clear days
following the dates of
the Medical Certifi-
cates.

DATED this
eight hundred and

22nd
84

(4) day of September, One Thousand

STATEMENT.

If any of the Particulars in this Statement be not known, the fact to be so stated.

1. Christian Name and Surname of Patient at length, Christina Wilson or Nelson
2. Sex and Age, Female 29 years
3. Married, Single, or Widowed, Married
4. Condition of Life, and previous Occupation (if any), Domestic Servant
5. Religious Persuasion, so far as known, Protestant
6. Previous Place of Abode, Whifflet
7. Place where Found and Examined, Hutches Road Coatdyke
8. Length of time Insane, 4 months
9. Whether First Attack, Yes
10. Age (if known) on First Attack, 29 years
11. When and where previously under Examination and Treatment, Never
12. Duration of Existing Attack, About 4 months
13. Supposed Cause, Not known
14. Whether subject to Epilepsy, No
15. Whether Suicidal, No
16. Whether Dangerous to others, Yes
17. Parish or Union to which the Lunatic (if a Pauper) is chargeable, Edmondston
18. Date of becoming Chargeable, 22nd September 1884
19. Christian Name and Surname, and Place of Abode of nearest known Relative of the Patient, and degree of Relationship (if known), and whether any Member of Family known to be or to have been Insane, Alexander Nelson her husband resides Hutches Road Whifflet
20. Special circumstances (if any) preventing the insertion of any of the above particulars, None

I certify, that, to the best of my knowledge, the above particulars are correctly stated.

DATED this 22nd day of September, One thousand eight hundred and 84 years

(To be signed by Party applying)

George Campbell

P P

Main points from above

22nd September 1884.

Statements by doctors.

Christina Wilson or Nelson is a lunatic and a proper person to be detained under Care and Treatment and I have formed this opinion on the following grounds.

Medical certificate 1.

Christina Wilson or Nelson.

Talks incoherently, sits in a listless way and must be spoken to loudly to command her attention when she starts up as from a dream. Forgets about the commonest things.

Her mother says she is very restless at nights getting out and into bed all night thro. Taking off and putting on her clothes without reason, takes violent fits of temper and talks incoherently about her children.

Medical certificate 2.

Christina Wilson or Nelson.

Has lost her memory to a great extent does not know her age; says it is six years since had a child while it is only five months, (*it was actually 9 ½ months*) complains of being badly treated, spoke angrily to her sister without any seeming cause. Threatened to blow her father and mother's brains out, takes a dislike to those whom she admired most; very angry if thwarted in any way.



Gartnavel Royal Hospital after closure.

1884

Christina Wilson & Nelson Dec. 29

September 23

Was brought to the Asylum today, from Stewart's Land, County of Kent and admitted as a pauper patient charged to the Old Workhouse.

She is twenty-eight years of age, married, a housewife and a Protestant.

This is the first attack of insanity and the duration is four months. She has four children - the youngest 8 months and the oldest 7 years. Nursed the youngest till two months ago. The three older children had been ill and the second not thought to live and from her constant care, nursing, and anxiety her mind gave way. She is stated to be dangerous to others. No known hereditary tendency.

Prior to admission, she talked incoherently, sat in a bitter way and had to be spoken to kindly to command her attention. Forgot the commonest things.

She was restless at night putting on and off her clothes, had violent fits of temper and threatened to blow her father and mother's brains out.

On admission she was quiet, but restless, somewhat very confused and replied to questions in a rambling, incoherent manner. She could not tell her age and had no idea of the day of the week or time of year. When asked why she had come here, said she had come round this way on business to look after cloth, mixed up affairs and wanted to go away home, but could not tell where home was.

" 24

Physically health indifferent; condition reduced. She sang and talked during the night and would not lie in bed. Today she took no breakfast, sometimes sheds tears, cannot tell why, seems hysterical and confused, speaks incoherently.

October 1

Very absent, has no idea of the day of the week, smiles silly when spoken to and replies in a rambling manner.

" 23

She is quiet and orderly, takes her food well and does a little sewing, but is very mindless, cannot answer the simplest question correctly, sometimes cries and sometimes laughs when spoken to.

November 20

Continues quite apathetic and never gives any reply when spoken to can do nothing whole and requires sometimes to be reminded to take food.

December 18

Quite demented, does nothing and will not speak, seems not to comprehend anything with

January 15

She sometimes passes her faces in her clothes and more frequently into herself, she now speaks and has always a cold blue look.

Admitted 23^d September 1884

1885	March 12	She requires to sleep under observation in the Asylum and some mornings ago when being taken to have her face washed, seized the attend. by the hair and violently assaulted her. Shortly afterwards seemed to know nothing of the
May 14		Little minded, never speaks, but sometimes smiles when spoken to, although merely named. Does not seem to comprehend the simplest words. Her circulation is very languid.
July 16		Can do nothing, sits in the day room & walks out with the other patients & does not seem at all to be impressed by anything around.
September 17		Demoralized, requires constant care and supervision. Takes her food and is able to go to the Hall with the other patients.
November 12		Every care is at times not sufficient to prevent her wetting herself. Quite mindless.
1886	January 14	Very demoralized and still quite unable to occupy herself in any way, never speaks.
March 13		Can not be induced to speak and the only indication that she hears is a faint smile on her face. Is very demoralized.

Transcription of the above **Gartnavel Royal Asylum Records.**

Page 479 – 480.

1884 Christina Wilson or Nelson

Act 29

September 23. Was brought to the Asylum today from Stewart's Land Coatdyke and admitted as a pauper patient chargeable to Old Monklands.

She is twenty eight years of age, *(She was actually 29)* married, a housewife and a Protestant.

This is the first attack insanity and the duration is four months. She has four children – the youngest 8 months *(actually 9 ½ months)* and the oldest 7 years. Nursed the youngest until two months ago. The three older children had been ill and the second not thought to live and from the constant care, nursing and anxiety her mind gave way. No known hereditary tendency.

Prior to admission she talked incoherently, sat in a listless way and had to be spoken to loudly to command her attention. Forgot the commonest things.

She was restless at night taking on and off her clothes had violent fits of temper and threatened to blow her father and mother's brains out.

On admission she was quiet, but restless, seemed very confused and replied to questions in a mumbling, incoherent manner. She could not tell her age and had no idea of the day of the week nor the time of the year. When asked why she had come here said she had come round this way on business to look after cloth, mixed up

affairs and wanted to go away home but could not tell where home was. Bodily health indifferent. Condition reduced.

September 24. She sang and talked when spoken to during the night and would not lie in bed. Today she took in breakfast, sometimes sheds tears, cannot tell why, seems hysterical and confused, speaks incoherently.

October 1. Very absent, has no idea of the day of the week, smiles silly when spoken to and replies in a rambling manner.

October 23. She is quiet and orderly takes her food well and does a little sewing but is very mindless cannot answer the simplest question sometimes cries and sometimes laughs when spoken to.

November 20. Continues quite apathetic and never gives any reply when spoken to can do nothing whatsoever and requires sometimes to be reminded to take her food.

December 18. Quite demented and does nothing and will not speak seems not to comprehend anything said to her.

1855 January 15. Sometimes passes her facies in her clothes and more frequently wets herself, does not speak and has always a cold (*illegible*) look.

March 12. She requires to sleep under observation in the infirmary and some mornings ago when being taken to have her face washed seised the attend by the hair and violently assaulted her. Shortly afterwards seemed to know nothing of it.

May 14. Quite mindless never speaks but sometimes smiles when spoken to although merely (*illegible*). Does not seem to comprehend the simplest words. Fear circulation is very languid.

July 16. Can do nothing, sits in the day room or walks out with the other patients and does not seem to be impressed by anything around.

September 17. Demented, requires constant care and supervision. Takes her food and is able to go to the hall with the other patients.

November 12. Every care is at times not sufficient to prevent her wetting herself. Quite mindless.

1886 January 14. Very demented and still unable to occupy herself in any way, never speaks.

March 18. Can not be induced to speak and the only indication that she hears is a faint smile on her face. Is very demented.

Although Christine was in Gartnavel for a further two years there are no further records.

In 2020 a mental nurse suggested post natal depression initially and said it looked like maniac depressive later. "Demented" was not as we understand it nowadays i.e. not Alzheimer's.