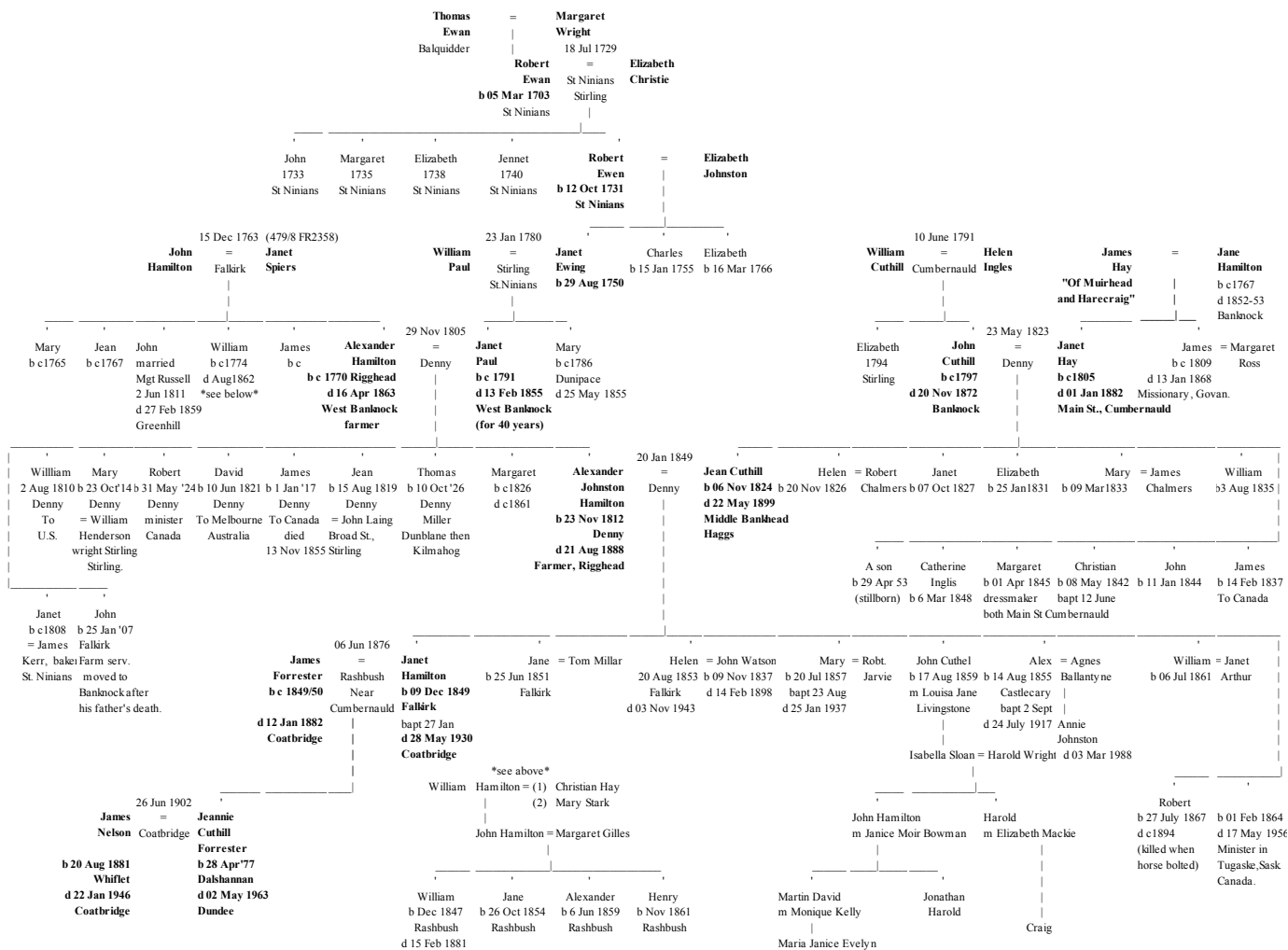


Alexander Hamilton and Jean Cuthill



Alexander Hamilton Jean Cuthill

Alex, having been born on 24 November 1812, was thirty-six when he married twenty-four year old Jean. (She had been born on 31 Oct. 1824). Jean was Alex's cousin's daughter and both were resident in the parish of Denny. They were married in 1849, the banns being recorded at Denny, Stirlingshire on 20 January. The wedding would have taken place at her family home, Banknock which lies to the North West of Dennyloanhead and its church. Rev. Dr. James Stark was the minister and his assistant, Rev. Dr. John Edmond.



Five of the silver spoons pictured were a wedding present to Alex and Jean. They are monogrammed JC but engraved in script such that JC can also be read as H. They are hallmarked Glasgow 1847 and have a story of their own:

On Jean's death, the spoons passed to the couple's daughter, Janet then to her daughter, Jeannie who eventually gave them to her daughter, Chris. Years later when Chris's sister, Nettie was visiting she spotted some of the spoons thrown in the farm midden. She

gathered them up and returned them to her mother. Much later again, Nettie's son Douglas, troubled that there were only five when, he assumed, there should be six, set to and made a matching spoon to "complete" the set. This sixth spoon is hallmarked Edinburgh 1987. Since then it has been suggested that there may originally only have been five, the number five signifying health, wealth, happiness, a boy and a girl.

The first child, Janet was born on 9th December 1849 and baptised on the 27th December. A year later the census shows the young family at Righead farm (see map over).

1851 Denny. Census district 489 book 1 page 6

Righead

Hamilton Alexander	h	m	36	Farmer (50 acres 2 labs)	Stirling, Denny
Hamilton Jean	w	m	26		Stirling, Denny
Hamilton Janet	d	u	1		Stirling, Falkirk
Buchanan Janet serv	u	20	servant house		STI, Denny
McCan John serv	u	17	servant ag		NK
Smiley William serv	u	12	servant ag		STI, Slamannan

Later in 1851, Jean was born on 28 June, followed by Helen in 1853 on 20 August.

On 17th April 1853, Alex had been ordained and inducted as an elder in the United Presbyterian Church at Dennyloanhead by Rev. James Stevenson, who had succeeded Dr Stark as minister there in 1850.

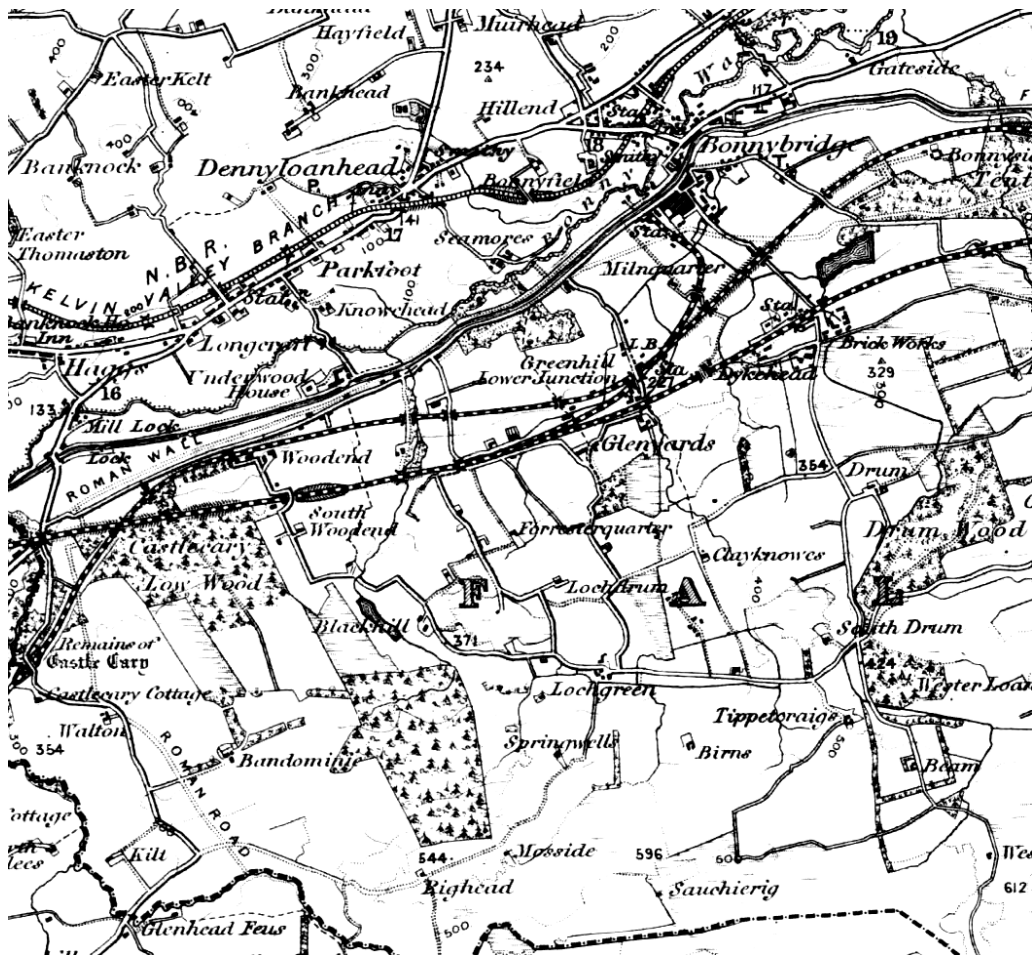
A first son, Alex was born on 14 August 1855 then Mary Stark was born 21 July 1856 and John on 17 August 1859 so that at the next census the people recorded were:

1861 Denny. Census district 479/2, book 11, page 3

Rigghead

Hamilton Alexander	h	m	40	farmer of 40 acres	STI, Denny
Hamilton Jean	w	m	30		STI, Denny
Hamilton Janet	d		11	scholar	STI, Denny
Hamilton Jean	d		9	scholar	STI, Denny
Hamilton Helen	d		7	scholar	STI, Denny
Hamilton Alexander	s		5	scholar	STI, Denny
Hamilton Mary	d		3		STI, Denny
Hamilton John	s		1		STI, Denny
Pitcairn Thomas	serv		40	farm servant	Lks, Rutherglen
Hopkin Isobel	serv		14	domestic servant	STI, Falkirk
Bryce Alexander	serv		12	farm servant	STI, Denny

The house had three rooms with windows



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

The final children to complete the family were: James, born on 1 Feb 1864 and Robert on 27 July 1867.

By the 1871 census, the address had changed. Previously the neighbouring farm of Rashbush had been tenanted by Alex's cousin, John with his wife Margaret Gilles and their family (Rashbush is not shown on the above map but was on the road between Rigghead and Bandomnie). After John's death it appears that Alex took over Rashbush as well as Rigghead. The wedding of Alex and Janet's daughter in 1876 took place at Rashbush according to the certificate but the banns say Rigghead. In the 1881 census, the family were living at Rigghead. Later still in 1888, Alex is described, when being confirmed as his father's executor as "farmer Rashbush".

In 2001 nothing remains of the Rashbush buildings, only a slight widening of the track where they had once been. The present owners of the land had no knowledge of Rashbush.

1871 Denny. Census district 479 book 11 page 3.

Rashbush

Hamilton Alexander	h m	57	farmer	STI, Denny
Hamilton Jane	w m	46	farmers wife	STI, Falkirk
Hamilton Jannet	d u	26	farmers daughter	STI, Falkirk
Hamilton Jane	d u	17	farmers daughter	STI, Falkirk
Hamilton Ellon	d u	19	farmers daughter	STI, Falkirk
Hamilton Alexander	s u	15	farmers son	STI, Falkirk
Hamilton Mary	d u	13	farmers daughter	STI, Falkirk
Hamilton John	s	11	scholar	STI, Falkirk
Hamilton William	s	9	scholar	STI, Falkirk
Hamilton James	s	6	scholar	STI, Falkirk
Hamilton Robert	s	3		STI, Falkirk



Alex and Jane taken about the time of the 1871 census.

1881 Denny census district 492/2 book 2 page 1.

Reghead Farm				
Hamilton Alexander	h m	65	farmer of 200 acres 100 arable 1 boy	Stirling, Denny
Hamilton Jane	w m	55	farmers wife	Stirling, Denny
Hamilton Alexander	s u	25	farmers son	Stirling, Falkirk
Hamilton Ellen	d u	27	farmers daughter	Stirling, Falkirk
Hamilton Mary	d u	23	farmers daughter	Stirling, Falkirk
Hamilton John	s u	20	cabinet maker	Stirling, Falkirk
Hamilton William	s u	18	joiner	Stirling, Falkirk
Hamilton James	s	16	scholar	Stirling, Falkirk
Hamilton Robert	s	13	scholar	Stirling, Falkirk
Paterson David	serv	14	farm servant	Dumbarton, Cumbernauld

Alex & Jean's granddaughter, Jeannie, passed down the following information:

At one time there was an outbreak of anthrax at Righead. The beast nearest a broken window caught it first and of course it spread to the whole herd. As normal in these cases, the entire herd was slaughtered and the carcasses buried on the farm. The field where they were buried was said by Jeannie to be the best on the farm for years after.

Does the fact that the story of the broken window has been remembered make it look as if there may have been recriminations along the lines "It wouldn't have happened if you had repaired that window"? This certainly seems plausible.

Another story recalled by Jeannie was about the tailor who called once a year to make clothes to last the family for the ensuing year. (This was normal at one time). This tailor had the habit of arriving drunk. One year some of the older children saw him approaching. One of them lifted a black pudding from the kitchen and ran down to lie in wait behind a hedge. When the tailor passed, the boy pushed the pudding through the hedge and called "quack quack". This was repeated several times at various places on the road. When the tailor eventually reached the farm, he told a long, involved story about how he had been attacked by a gang with a gun on the road and had beaten them off single handed. When Jeannie told the story it always ended "and they showed him the black pudding and said 'there's the gun' ".

The church played a big part in the lives of the Hamilton family, as it did for many people. Alex and Jean saw another two ministers in the Dennyloanhead charge, Rev. Dr. Charles Jordan in 1867 and Rev David Kerr in 1879. (David Kerr was the son-in-law of Robert McKenzie and Jean Menzies who are mentioned elsewhere in this work).

The majority of the congregation, of course, walked to church each Sunday and in the case of the Hamilton's, the distance travelled one way was in excess of four miles. The most likely route appears to have been by way of Lochgreen, Forresterquarter, and Greenhill then along a right-of-way through Seabegs Wood to Seamores and thence to the church. To save on the cost of boots and shoes, they walked in bare feet for most of this distance, putting on boots only when they reached the main road or even at the church door.

The services were long, very long, by present day standards and frequently lasted several hours. Outside the church after the service there would be long conversations

with friends, relations and neighbours. In good weather these too might last for hours before the long walk home, a walk no doubt enlivened by the recollection of all the gossip which had been gathered if not by the inspiration of the service!

At the end of each year, Alex and Jean wrote up their books for the year and on one occasion discovered they had a surplus of one penny. This penny they gave to the church.

Alex died 21st July 1888 of senile debility and chronic nephritis and confirmation was granted to his son, Alex:

Alexander Hamilton, 31 Aug - confirmation of Alexander Hamilton, farmer, Rashbush, Castlecary, parish of Falkirk, County of Stirling who died 21 July 1888 at Rashbush aforesaid, testate, granted at Stirling, to Alexander Hamilton Junior, farmer, Rashbush, aforesaid, his son, executor nominated in will or deed dated 2 October 1884 and recorded in court books of the commissariat of Stirling, 31 August 1888. Sc67/36/87 fol 438. Value of estate: £278.5s.6d.

21 August 1888	Inventory	St. Duty £1,10/-
1 Cash in house		£ 8-0-0
1 Crop, stock, farm implements, household furniture and other effects which belonged to the deceased conform. To appraisement thereto made by Thos. Binnie, Auctioneer, Falkirk 8/8/88.		<u>£270-5-6</u>
	Total personal	<u>£278-5-6</u>

(This is equivalent to approximately £17,500 in 2000).

Affidavit by executor. Deceased had no heritable estate in this country.

Essence of Disposition & Settlement dated 2 Oct 1884.

Sole executor Alex Hamilton – must “ailment and maintain Jean Cuthill in the event of her surviving me during the period of her life after my death and that in a manner suitable to her station in life. Also to pay 6 months after my death £20 to each to Janet Hamilton, Jane Hamilton, Helen Hamilton, Mary Hamilton, John Hamilton and William Hamilton and to Robert Hamilton my youngest son, £40. In the event of James Hamilton not having completed his education prior to my death said Alexander Hamilton jnr. shall be bound to pay him whatever sum or sums may be required to complete his education and to maintain him in a suitable manner during the time he is receiving his education.”

The explanation for the last part of the will is that James was studying for the ministry. On qualifying, he emigrated to Canada, settling in Tugask, Saskatchewan. There he remained for the rest of his life. On December 2 1953 The Tugaskie Globe carried the following as part of its Senior Citizens' Week:

Rev J Hamilton, who is approaching his 91st birthday, gave a challenging message to the younger generation to perpetuate the rich religious heritage found in our midst. Mr Hamilton in a forceful message challenged young men and women to rally round the Christian Church, the "Faith of the Fathers". He pointed out that a wide gap in church leadership existed which could only be filled by a greater interest in church life.



Early pioneers were not only interested in material progress but were also concerned with Spiritual things. Many times they faced hardship caused by early frost, economic depression and drought. Many were poor and helpless and had doubts in God and fellowmen. With faith they were sure and confident that a better day would come and they rose from the dust to carry on. Many willing and glad hands served Christ in their community but their work remains unfinished as they passed on. The Christian Church is the best medium, through which man can express his highest in morals and ethics. This heritage can only be preserved by the succeeding generations accepting their challenge and responsibility. James was not the first of the Hamilton's to enter the ministry, his Uncle Robert, for example, had followed the same course and had also emigrated to Canada.

After Alex's death, Jean remained at Rigghead with Robert and Mary helping in running the farm. In Slater's Directory 1893 both an Alexander and a Robert are listed at Middle Bankhead

1891 census.

Falkirk L 479/2 Falkirk L Dist 10 Page 4.

Rigghead farm

Hamilton	Jane	h w	66	tenant of farm
Hamilton	Robert	s u	23	farmer employed
Hamilton	Mary	d u	33	farm servant employed
Muir	Agnes	serv u	18	farm general serv. employed

Jean died 22 May 1899 of pneumonia.



Rigghead c 1924





Three views of Righead and environs 1999.

The top view shows stonework that is perhaps uncommonly well dressed for a small, remote, farm. This may indicate that Alex's father, who had trained as a mason in his youth, had built or at least renovated the cottage at some time.

Birth: Old Parish Registers (O.P.R.) Stirling, Denny 476/1
 1812 Alexander Hamilton lawful son of Alexander Hamilton and Janet Paul,
 Banknock was born on 23rd Nov. last.

Birth: O.P.R. Stirling, Denny 476/1.
 31 Oct 1824 Jean, daughter to John Cuthill and his spouse Janet Hay.

Marriage: O.P.R. Stirling, Denny 476/1. Alexander Hamilton residenter parish of
 Falkirk and Jean Cuthill daughter of John Cuthill, Banknock. Banns 20th January
 1849.

1888 Death Falkirk L 479/2/97

Alexander Hamilton	1888	M 73	Alex Hamilton	senile	Alexander Hamilton
farmer	21 July		farmer	debility.	son.
married to Jane	4h 30m a.m.		deceased	Chronic	
Cuthill.	Rigghead		Janet Hamilton	nephritis.	
	Parish of		M.S. Paul	1 year.	
	Falkirk		deceased		

Death 1899 Hags 476/2 no. 11

Jean Cuthill,	22 May	F 75	John Cuthill	pneumonia
widow of	1899		4 days	
Alex Hamilton	Middle Bankhead		Janet Cuthill	
farmer	Hags		M.S. Hay	



L-R Nellie Watson, Jessie Watson, Jeannie Ellis nee Watson
 Grandchildren of Alex & Jean.

Jessie Watson in the photo above used to tell the story of the time when she was a
 child and had to have a tooth out. The cost was one shilling with anaesthetic or
 sixpence without. The family could not afford the anaesthetic and the memory of the
 extraction without it remained with Jessie all her life.



Interior of Dennyloanhead Church c1978

The following, quoted from a family history written between 1880 and 1884, names other members of Alex and Jean's family:

Jean Hamilton (named after mother), born 28 June 1851; married Thomas Miller, Bankhead, Denny, son of James Miller, farmer, now retired and staying at Bankhead and Janet Hay, died. Their family were: Jane Miller (m.m.), born 2 Feby 1879. Janet Miller (f.m.) born abt Oct 1880 died May 1883. James Miller (f.f.), born 12 June 1882.

Helen Hamilton (m.sis.), born 20 Aug 1853.

Alexander Hamilton (f.f & f.), born 14 Aug 1855, farming with his father.

Mary Hamilton (f.s. & m.s.), born 20 Jul 1857.

William Hamilton (f.b.m.b.), born 6 July 1861; learning to be a joiner, Cumbernauld.

James Hamilton (f.b.& m.b.), born 1st Feby. 1864; studying for the ministry.

Robert Hamilton (f.b.), born 27 July 1967.