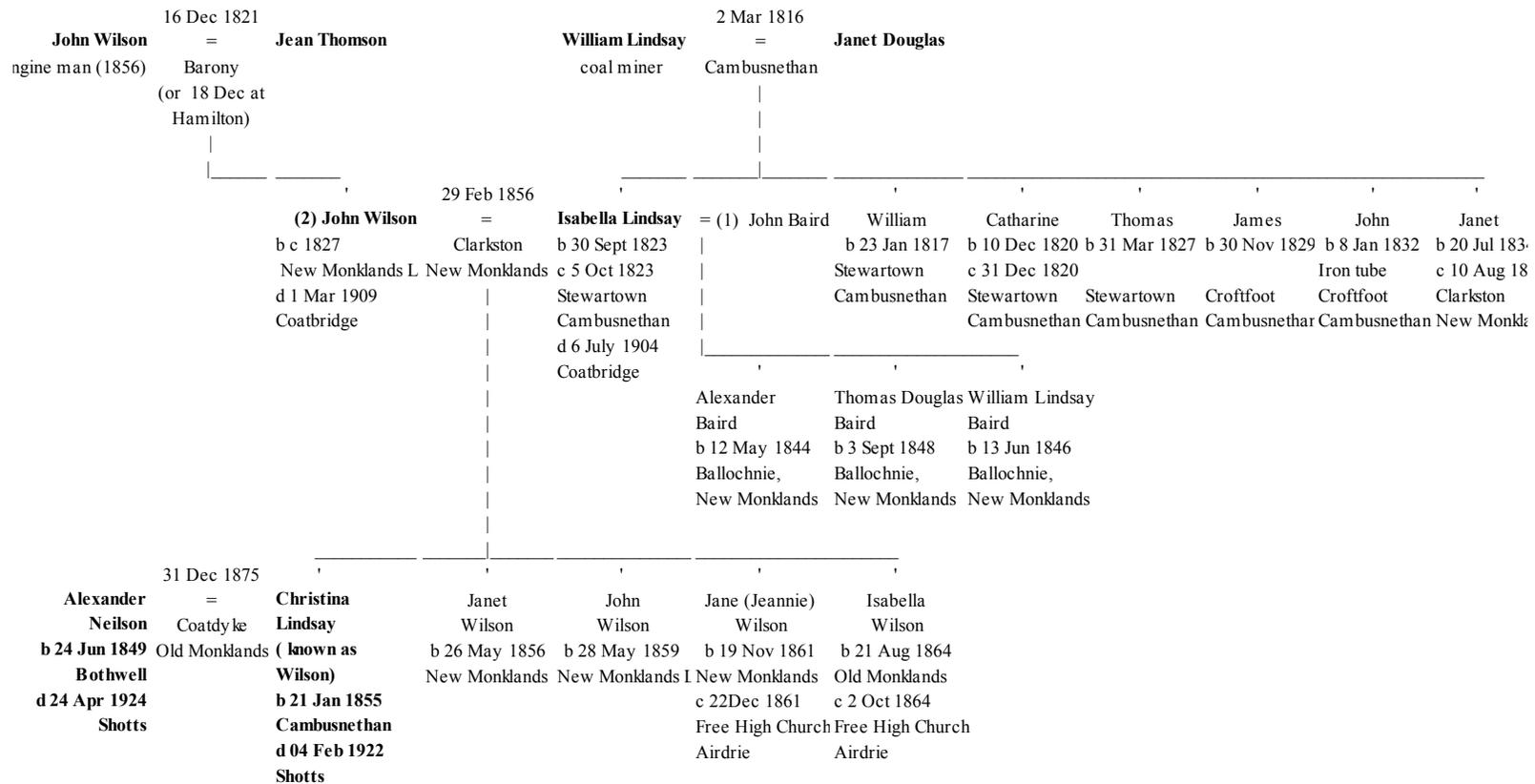


**William Lindsay Janet Douglas**



## William Lindsay Janet Douglas

Research into William and Janet, who were Isabella Lindsay's parents, proved difficult when using her marriage certificate alone as it named only her father and gave even that name incorrectly. Later, Isabella's 1904 death certificate was found to list both of her parents, i.e. William Lindsay, coal miner and Janet Douglas. The information was supplied by one of Isabella's daughters, also called Isabella. It is hard to imagine why this daughter could supply both names, correctly as it turns out, when her mother who was presumably present at her own marriage, did not appear to know them nearly fifty years earlier.

The names were confirmed by looking at Isabella's children from her first marriage. They included a Thomas Douglas Baird and a William Lindsay Baird as well as an Alexander Baird. (See drop line chart).

William and Janet were married on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1816 at Cambusnethan (628/1 FR324) ("William Lindsay and Janet Douglas both this parish") and the O.P.R's there record that they had seven children:

23 Jan 1817 CambusnethanFR 219

Wm Lindsay son to William Lindsay at Stewarton & Janet Douglas his spouse was born on the 23 Jan and bapt 9th Feb.

10 Dec 1820 CambusnethanFR 571

Catherine Lindsay daughter to William Lindsay at Stewarton & Janet Douglas his spouse was born 10th and bapt 3rd Dec.

5 Oct 1823 CambusnethanFR 577

Isobel Lindsay daughter to William Lindsay at Stewarton & Janet Douglas his spouse was born 30 Sept bapt 15 Oct Her third child.

30 Nov 1829 CambusnethanFR587 James Lindsay son to William Lindsay at Croftfoot & Janet Douglas his spouse was born 30 Nov bapt 13 Dec Her fifth child.

8 Jan 1832 CambusnethanFR589 John Lindsay son to William Lindsay at Croftfoot & Janet Douglas his spouse was born 8th Jan bapt 22 Jan Her sixth child.

O.P.R. Clarkston New Monklands 561/6 FR1439 20 July 1834:

Lindsay Janet Douglas L: daughter of William Lindsay collier in Clarkston and Janet Douglas was born 28 July and bapt. 10 Aug 1834.

No post-1855 death record has been found for either William or Janet so it is probably safe to assume that they both died prior to this. Despite searching the 1841 and 1851 censuses for both Old and New Monklands it has not proved possible to find them there either. Assuming that they were about twenty when they married, deaths prior to 1841

would mean they had both died by their early forties. This reflects life expectancy at that time particularly in view of the fact that they were a mining family.

Prior to 1799 records show that many miners had been little more than slaves, they could not legally leave their employment without the written permission of their employer. If the mine they worked in was sold they could be sold with it and were listed in inventories along with horses and stocks of timber. Their children were drawn into servitude by 'arling' at their christening. That is a gift was given by the employers to the parents at the time of the baby's christening in return for a promise on the child's behalf that he would be brought up a miner.

The man was the hewer of coal while his wife was the bearer who carried the coal from the coal face to the bottom of the stairs then up to the surface. During a working day of ten hours or more a woman would carry nearly two tonnes to the surface. Children followed their parents into the mines at around six years of age thus whole families could be enslaved. Unlike slaves, however, miners were paid and the fact that wages rose throughout the eighteenth century shows that masters could not have had complete control, as they would surely have reduced wages as much as possible.

After the 1799 Act abolished serfdom many miners remained trapped by the 'truck' system whereby they were allowed credit in the overpriced Company stores until payday when a paper transaction paid off their debt but left little or nothing over. This forced them to go into debt again before next payday, rendering them unable to save or to shop around for cheaper goods or to leave their employment.

T C Smout in "A History of the Scottish People" says "There are signs that for Scottish coal miners as a whole the decades between 1790 and 1810 represented a peak in their standard of living which they did not approach again until after 1850". Janet and William were married in 1816 but there is no way of telling whether collier William was affected by any of the above. What we do know is that conditions underground would still have been dreadful. Most hewers suffered from silicosis or 'black-spit' which made them invalids by the time they were forty. The only support when they could no longer work was from the parish, which gave only a pittance. Accidents were commonplace, roof falls and explosions caused by the use of naked candles went almost unremarked. No records of these events were kept centrally until 1855.

As mentioned before, research into Isabella Lindsay's parents started badly. On Isabella and John's marriage certificate names both of John's parents are given but no mother is named for Isabella although her father was said to be James Lindsay, collier. Following this slim clue, led to a death certificate for a possible father who was about the correct age and had the correct occupation i.e. collier or more specifically pit brusher. A pit brusher did not, as might be imagined, keep the pit tidy by brushing and cleaning up but was the person who constructed roads in the pit out of stone and possibly also did some work on stone supports for the roof. This certificate has nothing to do with the family being researched but is included as it helps illustrate the conditions in the mines at the time.

The death certificate below is accompanied by a precognition describing how James met his death and illustrating both the conditions underground and the medical facilities available at the time.

1875 Old Monklands Mid 652/2 No. 287

James Lindsay	M	65	1875	David Lindsay	Accident	Mary
Pit brusher			July 4 <sup>th</sup>	Army pensioner	6 days	Lindsay
married to Mary			4h 15 m p.m.	(deceased)	cert by	daughter
Ann Stevenson			12 Waddells	Agnes Lindsay	J Farquason	present
			Land, Whifflet	M.S. Barbour		
				(deceased)		

See Reg. of corrected entries vol. 2 page 82 date July 20 1875:

The following report the result of a precognition has been received touching the death of James Lindsay registered under No.287 in the register book of death for the year 1875.

Name, age and sex	Where and when died	Cause of death
James Lindsay about 65 years male	1875 July 4th. about 4h 0m pm in the house in Waddels Land Whifflet within the parish of Old Monkland occupied by the deceased.	Severe injuries on the face and back and also internally received 24th last in No.7 Coal pit Whifflet by a fall from the roof.  - Dr Farquason Coatbridge attended on the deceased till the time of his death.

Procurator Fiscal's Office  
Airdrie 14 July 1875

Cert by Thomas Clark  
1875 July 20  
at Coatbridge.  
James Mitchell Magistrate.

12 May 1876

It would be ironic if the roof fall had been caused by a fault in supports he himself had built for the roof.