

# BURRAFIRTH

THE FAMILY OF  
GRAEME AND MARJORIE LAURENSEN  
“BURRAFIRTH” NEW PLYMOUTH, N.Z.

25 Annandale St, New Plymouth



*A.L. Jones.*

First edition	1982 published by Graeme Laurenson
Second edition	1984 published by Graeme Laurenson
Third edition	2012 published by Chris Laurenson
This edition	2019 published by Chris Laurenson

## Introduction to the third & fourth editions

Graeme Laurenson, a New Zealander of Shetland Island descent, published three books in the 1980s on his family and the Shetland Islands of his forebears.

With his family tree as its central core, he published "*Burrafirth – the family of Graeme and Marjorie Laurenson*" in 1982. This is more than a list of names and dates - it tells of the lives of his Shetland forebears and also his wife Marjorie's English ancestors. As well as vital dates - the life each person lived, their struggles and triumphs, and their family relationships are carefully told and accompanied by dozens of photographs, maps and diagrams.

*Burrafirth* is now out of print and this edition has been produced as an electronic version. It includes a small number of editorial comments and elaborations and a key to the photograph of relations at the wedding of Jill and Roy. Where possible the photographs have been re-scanned from originals, although a dozen or so have been copied from the original book. In addition a contents page has been added as well as an appendix which updates the descendants of Graeme and Marjorie Laurenson. There are four children, 11 grandchildren, 8 great grandchildren and two great great grandchildren.

The fourth edition includes new editorial comments resulting from correspondence with other researchers, some replacement photographs as well as some revised family trees. Shetland family trees are reproduced as in the original but researchers should check <https://www.bayanne.info/Shetland/> to get more up to date information.

Other books by Graeme Laurenson are:

"A Kiwi in the Shetland Scattald" which contains stories and observations of Shetlanders who came to New Zealand.

"Northern Star to Southern Cross" which traces a number of the West Burrafirth families who had migrated to New Zealand since 1874.

Over the years these books have been used by many extended family members to understand their Shetland roots and as a guide to 'hamefarin' journeys. My brothers and sister are reluctant to draw the curtain on our father's labour of love and we are keen to make copies of the books still in print available to people who would like them. So please contact me at the addresses below. I would also be keen to receive any comments, corrections or new information about any of the contents in this book.

I am also conscious that time passes and this note may be read by people many year's hence when the contact details below may be out of date. However I hope that will not prevent access to those prepared to track us down.

Chris Laurenson (Editor of this edition) [chris.laurenson@outlook.com](mailto:chris.laurenson@outlook.com)

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+64 4 475 8848 (landline)

+64 22 0861 048 (mobile)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My father's stories created in me a great interest in research and have been a fine base on which to build and I am grateful for the opportunity to bring this family story to a conclusion.

To Don S. Laurenson, A.C.A., C.M.A., Raymond Sinclair of Waimana, Bay of Plenty, and Mr J. F. E. Alpe of Norwich, Norfolk, England, I extend my thanks for all their help over the years.

Finally I must acknowledge my great debt to my friend, Erling Clausen, F.R.G.S., F.S.A. (Scot.), of Lerwick, Shetland Isles, who has so willingly been my contact in the Isles.

To all others who have assisted in any way, this book must be my thanks.

Graeme Laurenson



Don S. Laurenson



Raymond Sinclair



J.F.E. Alpe

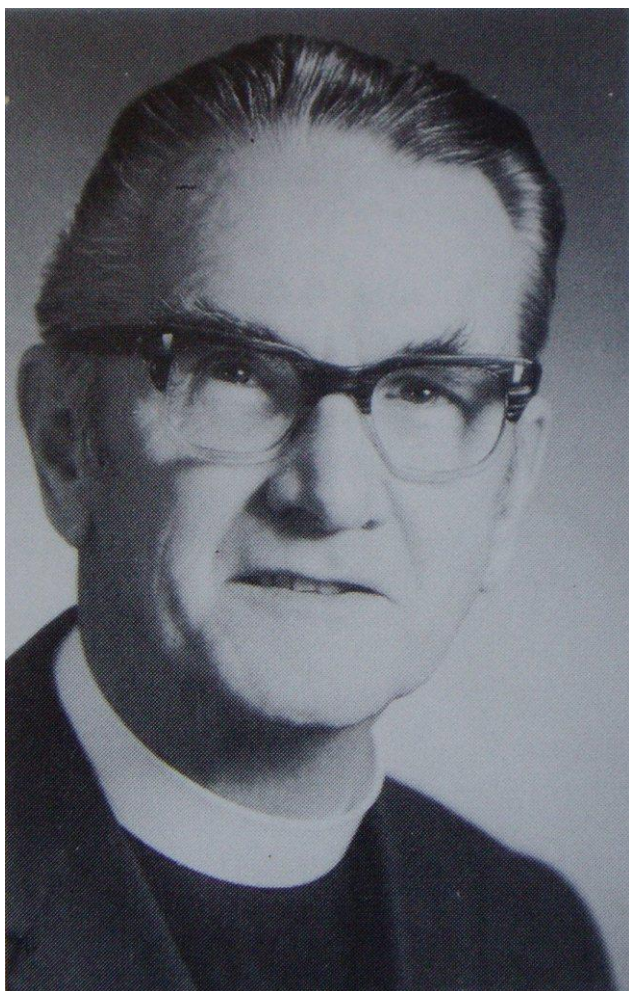


Erling Clausen

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This book by Graeme Laurenson is an excellent example of the fruits of long and serious study of the origins of a group of families with roots in the Northern Islands of Shetland, or by marriage into families from widely separated counties of Britain.

From childhood I remember many references to the work of his honoured father in securing and preserving reliable records of Shetland ancestry.

In this, Graeme has proved a very worthy successor, inheriting the ideals and standards of a generation of rugged pioneers who have contributed within New Zealand for well over a hundred years to family stability and community standards so greatly needed, but so often sadly missing in this restless age.

He offers to his own family and their many relatives this record as a sort of ceremonial offering which will be treasured by all for whom this will obviously become an indispensable point of reference as they seek for their "roots".

We of Shetland stock are a clannish crowd. As one who has always pricked up his ears at the sound of a familiar name, and wondered whether this may be a near relative of "a forty-second cousin many times removed", I welcome this useful piece of research by Graeme, who has added this family record to his fine personal contribution as a respected citizen, and an honoured member of his chosen profession.

His family and relatives are now in his debt for this latest practical evidence of his wholesome hobby interest, so well sustained over long years.

George I. Laurenson C.B.E

## **PREFACE**

### **Forebears**

Our family has a most interesting background, and our children may all have a little of some of the many branches.

Our story is not as diverse as many families might claim, whose forebears might have come from many parts of Europe, the New World and the Pacific.

They were generally Shetland Islanders with Norse and Scottish influence as with the Laurenson and Sinclair families, or of English extraction from a number of the Counties such as the Snows and Hilliers from Somerset and Wiltshire, the Alpes and Pretheroes from Norfolk, the Gurneys from Middlesex, the Dickinsons from Yorkshire and the Lindleys from Nottinghamshire.

Not to be aware of one's family background is regrettable, for as the generations pass, so does a family history become unavailable. Although records are kept in this country and overseas, certain basic information must be known before a start can be made on researching them.

Many years have been spent in compiling The 'Tree' which is the basis of this story, and a study of our tree is very interesting from many angles. For instance, in the Shetland Island families, we can see the Norse era reflected in the Patronymic family naming system, one of a number of aspects was that Jamie's son took the surname of Jamieson, and Laurence's the surname of Laurenson, whilst the daughters had the surname of Jamiesdotter or Laurensdotter, often spelt Jamiesdr or Laurensdr.

Shetland history is not well known and some comments may be helpful here.

The Islanders have a charming legend about the creation of their Islands.

When God had created the world He stood back to admire His handiwork, and his hands were still covered with the soil in which he had been working, so He flicked them, and there appeared in the northern ocean two groups of one hundred Islands, the Shetlands and Orkneys.

Shetland experienced a great change as the result of the marriage of Princess Margaret of Norway and King James III of Scotland. The Princess's dowry was to be 60,000 florins, and security for this sum was the Orkney and Shetland Islands. This security was not unusual in Scandinavia at the time as Copenhagen had been used for security.

Unfortunately the King of Norway's finances were such that the dowry could not be paid and the Orkneys and Shetland were forfeited and came under the jurisdiction of the Scottish Throne in 1468.

The last three of the 44 Earls of the Norse era of the Shetlands were Sinclairs, who at that time were the most influential family in Shetland.

They were rich landowners whose estates included lands in Nesting, Delting, Sandsting, Aithsting, Walls, Whiteness, Wiesdale, Northmavine, Bressay, Burra, Dunrossness, Unst and Fetlar.

In 1475, following the transfer of government of the Shetlands and Orkneys by Earl William Sinclair to Scotland, Shetlanders came under the domination of the Stewart Earls, who misused the excellent Laws and Customs of Norse origin, to their own unscrupulous ends. The least provocation seemed to be an excuse for

confiscation of Shetlanders' land and considerable hardship resulted. Earl Patrick was the uncle of James VI, but this did not save him and his son, who was involved in some sort of treason in Orkney, from being executed in Edinburgh.

In 1611 the declaration that Shetlanders were to be subject to the Laws of Scotland seemed to highlight the bilingual situation in Shetland, but English gradually replaced Norse as the spoken language.

Conditions improved with the years, and such Acts as the Reform Act of 1832, which gave Shetlanders a 'vote', were a great help to Shetland. However not all hardships were the result of harsh administrators, for the land and sea sometimes refused to furnish a harvest, and the people starved.

Then came the era of the 'windjammer', which provided ideal employment for the Shetland men. Here, because of their maritime competence they were able to contribute, to a greater degree than most others. They became aware of the Southern lands of New Zealand and Australia, and were attracted by what those lands had to offer.

So began the steady drift southwards to the 'Shetlanders' second home', which was to culminate in the major migration of the 1870s.

Our English County forebears were all involved in the Social conditions as they applied in that country. English history has been well and completely recorded and it is not necessary to recapitulate it here.

They were families involved in many vocations, including farming, shop keeping, bankers, industry, commerce and the services.

Those who came to New Zealand in those early days were young and determined to take advantage of the excitement and opportunities of the new land in the South Pacific.

These new southern lands were a great magnet, promising a different lifestyle, which had a great appeal to the more adventurous people of Britain.

Most of them, wherever they came from in Britain, seemed to have the right background to tackle successfully the rigours of pioneering life.

In researching the various families it has been necessary to decide on some common point from which a commencement can be made. An obvious start was to determine the first man or woman of each family who stepped ashore in New Zealand, and then to locate his or her forebears overseas to wherever these researches led.

Traditional family stories which so often come down through the generations are often 'glossed up', and consequently it has been found that time spent in checking these stories carefully to their source, is often very worthwhile.

The early endeavours of our forebears in New Zealand are richly endowed with the colourful experiences too numerous to record in this family story, which can include only a few of the highlights.



## **EARLIEST ARRIVALS IN NEW ZEALAND**

Here then in order of arrival are the first of our families to set foot on New Zealand soil.

### **1851, DICKINSON.**

Our earliest forebears to arrive were George Dickinson, his wife Marianne, and their baby son Urban Lindley, from Sheffield in Yorkshire, England. They were among the earliest settlers of Canterbury, arriving before the City of Christchurch had been developed.

Dickinson took up and farmed his allocation of 50 acres of land, which he named 'St. Albans'.

The family grew in numbers and observed the development of the City of Christchurch, over its early years, and were responsible for the naming of one of its suburbs - 'St. Albans'.

### **1874, SINCLAIR.**

Our next family arrived in New Zealand from Brunthill, Vadlure, Mid Braewick in the Shetland Islands. They were Agnes Sinclair (widow 65) with her family, Thomas (son) and Mary Sinclair, with their children James (3) and Barbara (infant), my mother.

Thomas and Mary settled in the Rangitikei district, and after a short period at Bulls, took over a large bush allotment at Pohangina, 18 miles from Palmerston North, which was developed over the years into the fine 'Greenhill' farm. Thomas's brothers James and family, and John accompanied them.

### **1875, ALPE.**

Although Robert Alpe was born in Kensington in London, he had a Norfolk background, and some years after arrival in Christchurch he married Eliza Dickinson, daughter of George and Marianne Dickinson.

They settled in Christchurch. Robert Alpe was employed by the Railways and was Stationmaster at Kaiapoi and later at Newmarket in Auckland.

### **1898, LAURENSEN.**

James Laurenson of West Burrafirth, Aithsting, left the Shetland Islands at the age of 18 to join the full rigged ships. One of his first was the 'Dunearn' of 1563 tons, sailing out of Glasgow for Portland Oregon in America (July 1894).

His first contact with New Zealand was in the Barquentine Rio in January 1898. He first met his future wife Barbara Sinclair in November 1898, the same month that he obtained his discharge at the age of 22 years, as Bosun of the 'Rio'. He remained at sea for another two years.

On April 26, 1905, he married Barbara Reid Sinclair at 'Greenhill', Pohangina, and they settled in Wellington.

James was involved in Industrial life in Wellington, and in later years was engaged in Building.

## 1901, SNOW.

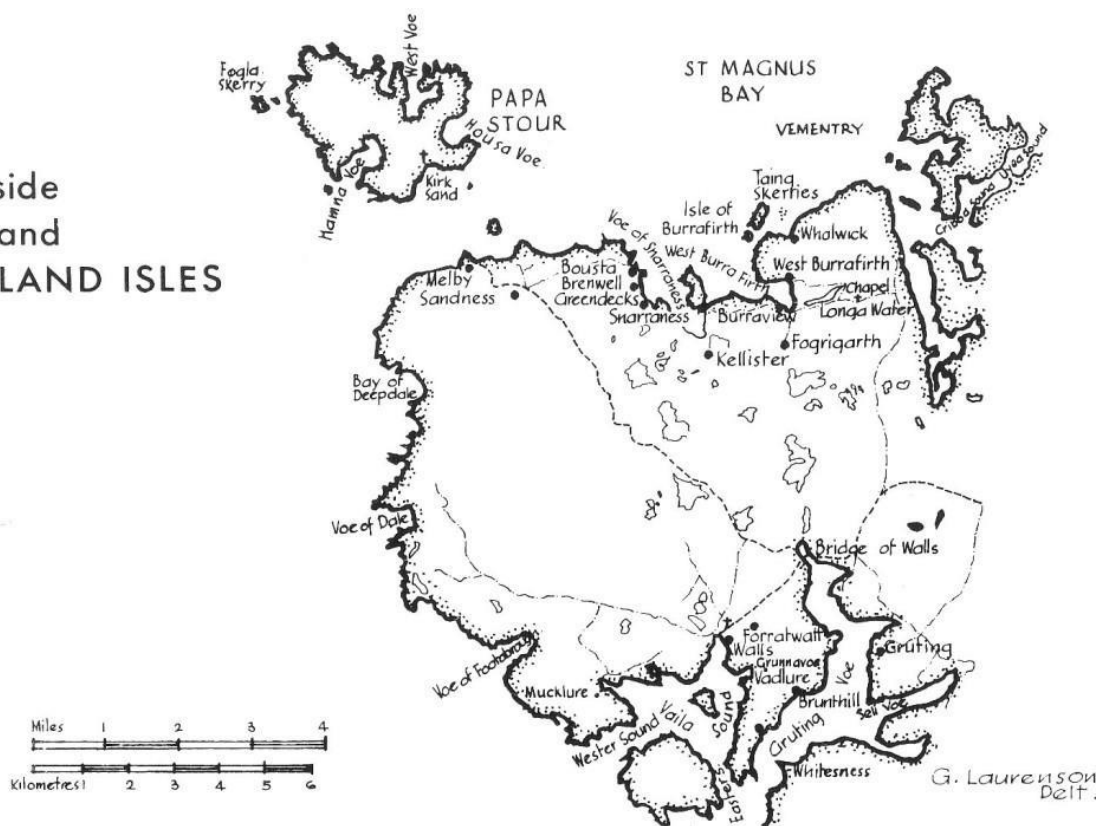
Thomas Weston Snow arrived in Christchurch from Bath, Somerset, England, after a call at South Africa, where he had endeavoured to join his older brother Alfred, who was already serving with the Royal Engineers, however he was rejected because he was under age.

## REPRESENTATIVES.

These then were the representatives of the families from which we are descended, who came to New Zealand in its early days of the country's development.

Family files have been completed which record in detail the story of the various members of the family. Consequently in this booklet it will be necessary to cover only the more general aspects of the stories which follow. Reference to these family files will be necessary for the greater detail which may be required.

### Westside Mainland SHETLAND ISLES



**Narrator: GRAEME LAURENSEN**

## **THE SINCLAIRS OF PAPA STOUR AND SANDNESS.**



The Island of Foula from the Westside of Mainland near Watsness.

*Shetland Museum and Library*

My paternal grandmother's people came from the Island of Papa Stour (the Island of the Priests) in the mid 18th Century.

The Island is located two miles from Sandness on the West Side of Shetland. It has many legends and stories associated with it but is most notable as the home of the Shetland Sword Dance, with which Sir Walter Scott was so impressed during a visit to the Island that he included a detailed account of the Dance as an appendix to his Shetland novel 'The Pirate'.

Other important family connections with the Papa Stour Sinclairs were the Sinclairs of Gruting of whom Edward Sinclair, Laird of Kellister, was a forebear. Others were based at Maclure, Walls, but the family had set up home at Greendecks in the Brenwell district of Sandness when my grandfather, James Laurenson, married Janet Sinclair of Greendecks, to unite the Sandness Sinclairs and the Laurensons of West Burrafirth.

Stella Sheppard, a schoolteacher authoress, in her book, "Like a Mantle the Sea," tells of present day life on this interesting Island.

The Village of Gruting is located at the head of Gruting Voe and it is interesting that the Croft of Brunthill, the home of my mother's family is located on the shores of the Voe a few miles away.

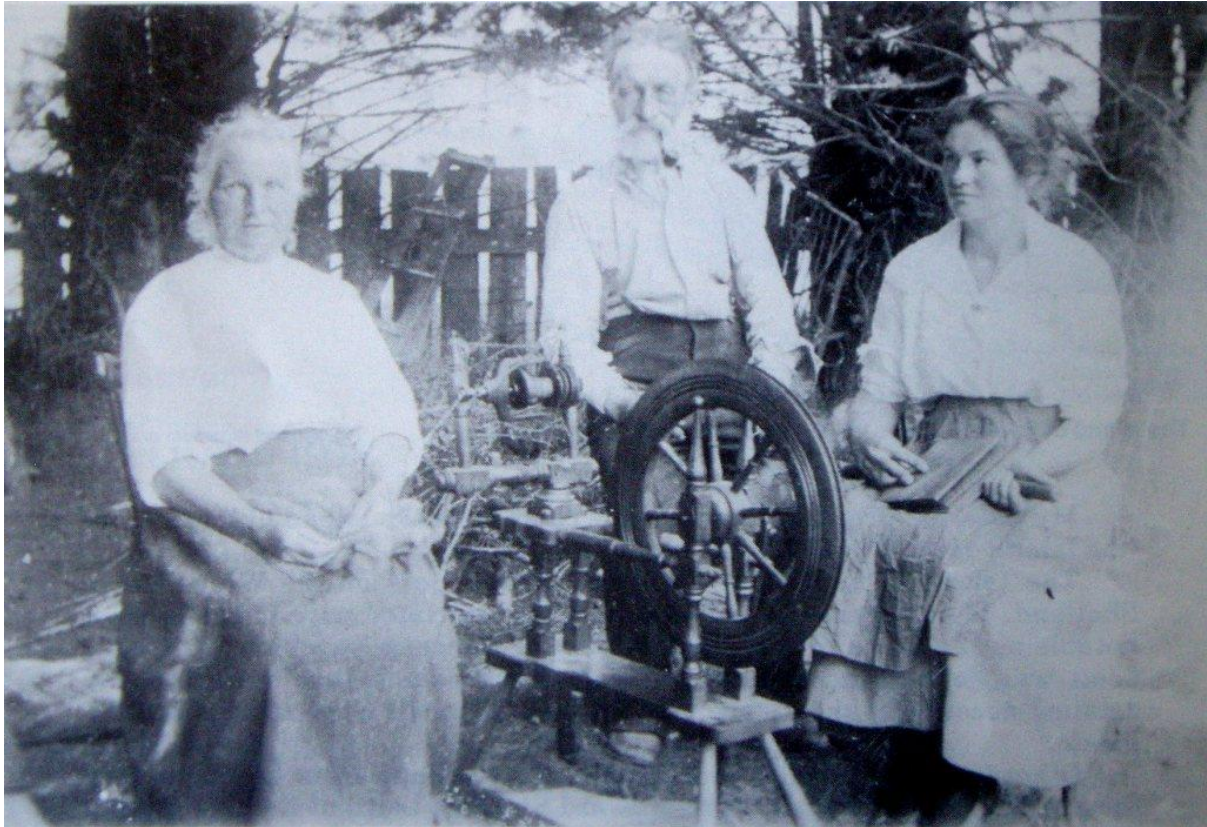
Janet Sinclair (1848-1900) was the daughter of John and Elspeth Sinclair. During a heavy gale the boat in which John was returning under canvas from the fishing

banks, was overwhelmed and capsized. All the crew were drowned with the exception of one man.

Elspeth was left with a young family. They were Robert, Janet, Mary, James and Elspeth.

The name of Greendecks of my father's time has changed over the years, and has been known recently as Greendykes. There is no change of meaning however, for 'decks' is the old word for 'dykes'.

My grandparents Janet Sinclair of Greendecks and James Laurenson of West Burrafirth were married in the Church of Scotland, Lerwick, on December 4th, 1873, and made their home at the Whalwick Croft.



Robert Sinclair, Greendecks and Melrose with wife Margaret and daughter Elspeth. *Mrs E. Bertaud*

Janet's brother Robert married Margaret Fraser of Fogrigarth in 1881 and went to Gympie in Australia, but after a number of years decided to come to New Zealand, arriving in Wellington in 1897.

Purchasing land in Melrose, Wellington, Robert built a home there, and influenced my father to purchase three acres of land adjoining his own, which was to become our Wellington home until 1929.

Robert Sinclair died at Waipawa in 1923, and Margaret his wife died in Wellington in 1941. There were five children from their marriage, John, Henry, David, Harald Mitchell, and Elspeth Janet. Henry died young after an accident at school in 1903. Harald was killed in the Battle of the Somme, in October, 1916.

In my youth I remember Uncle Robert Sinclair telling us about the heavens, for he was obviously very knowledgeable in this field.

John Laurenson a brother of my grandfather, James Laurenson, married Janet's younger sister Elspeth. This family became well established in Edinburgh with a large family, none of whom came to New Zealand.

My father's cousin James Sinclair, Laird of Snarraness and my grandmother Janet Sinclair, shared the same great grandfather, Jerom Sinclair, Laird of Kellister. Janet died at West Burrafirth in 1900.



Island of Papa Stour with Sandness in the foreground.

*Dennis Coutts*

The Greendecks Croft home had been completely demolished when I visited the site in 1963.

On this visit James Sinclair, Laird of Snarraness, who had visited our Wellington home, had arranged to show me the things that I should see on the Westside of the Shetlands. Unfortunately he died just before I arrived in Shetland, and his place was taken by another of my father's cousins, Robert Laurenson of Scalloway.

James' daughter Lorna Gray and her husband Eric, who was Provost of the Capital, Lerwick, accompanied me to more distant areas, for which I was very grateful.



Snarraness Estate.

*Shetland Museum and Library*



Gideon and Anne (nee Laurenson) Sinclair of Snarraness, Sandness, and their family.  
Laird of Snarraness.

*Mrs B Thompson*

## LAURENSONS OF WEST BURRAFIRTH, AITHSTING, SHETLAND ISLANDS.



Herring fleet ready to sail from Lerwick Harbour, in the 'Sail' era of the last century.

*Shetland Museum and Library*

The Laurensons and their forebears have lived at West Burrafirth for many generations. They were fishermen, crofters, and seafarers in the Navy and Mercantile Marine.

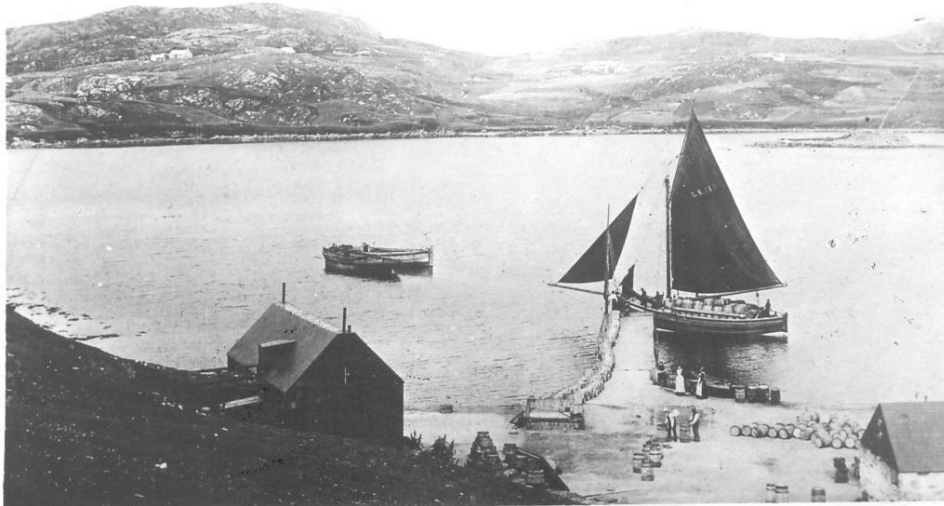
The waters around the Shetland Islands teemed with fish, on which the main industry of the Islands was based. It attracted in its heyday thousands of boats from the Continent and Britain to garner the rich sea harvest. Lerwick and Baltasound were two places used as bases by these fleets. Fishing stations were established all around the Islands, including the Westside of the Mainland where West Burrafirth is located.

Laurensen families had homes around the shores of the Firth but were mainly concentrated in a Hamlet on the sloping ground above Yoran's Beach, where their boats were sheltered.

West Burrafirth was originally a Viking Hamlet and was known in those early times as Borgarfiord. Reference is made in the History of the Lerwick Town Hall to a visit made to West Burrafirth by Jarls Magnus and Haken in 1110 A.D. to capture a recalcitrant Viking. Borgarfiord is Norse for Brock in the Fiord, and Burrafirth, the Anglicised version has the same meaning. About 90 Pictish Brocks or stone towers were erected around Shetland, and although there is some uncertainty when these massive defensive towers were built, there seems agreement that they were erected by the Picts between the first and the fifth centuries A.D. One is located in the waters of West Burrafirth which is connected to the shore by an underwater walkway. It has been in ruins for centuries but over that period it has been a play area for the children of the Laurensen families in their small sailing craft.

There is a school at West Burrafirth and an Interdenominational Chapel, which must have contributed in no small way to the start in life of the young Laurensens. On the Memorial Plaque outside the Chapel are the names of my Uncles Robert of South Africa and George of New Zealand.

### **LAURENSEN, JAMES, West Burrafirth, Aithsting. 1851-1920**

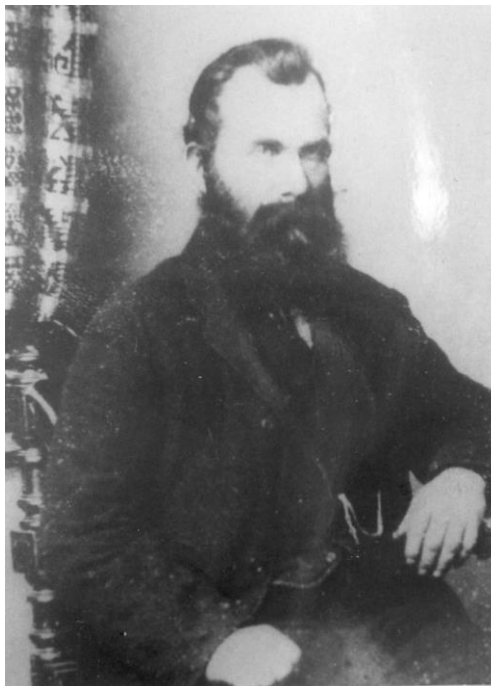


West Burrafirth about 1900. Yorans Beach and Laurensen Hamlet in the distance. Remains of Pictish Broch to the right.

My grandfather James Laurensen was born in 1851 at West Burrafirth, Aithsting, Shetland Islands. He was the eldest child of James and Johanna Laurensen (nee Fraser).

The family lived in West Burrafirth and they had five children, James, George, Anne, Walter, Laurence and John.

Anne married Gideon Sinclair, Laird of Snarraness.



James Laurensen, (Red Jimmy) 1851-1920.



James, who was known as 'Red Jimmy' because of his profuse red beard, was skipper and part owner of the family muckle boat 'Truelove'. He was a most competent sailor, and made the compass with which he navigated 'Truelove' through the rough Atlantic waters of the ocean fishing. He married Janet Sinclair, of Greendecks, Sandness, in the Church of Scotland in Lerwick, on December 4th, 1873.

After a few years at Whalwick the family shifted to the 'New House' the most recently built home at the West Burrafirth hamlet, and this was to remain the family home until grandfather's death there in 1920.

There were eight children from this marriage, Elizabeth, died in infancy, James, my father, Robert Sinclair, Laurence Sinclair, John Bruce, Elizabeth Ann, Mary and George Sinclair.

My grandmother Janet died in 1900, and my grandfather married Elizabeth Laurenson and they had one child, Laurence Sinclair who was born in 1903.

It is of interest that William Laurenson from the 'Modesty' croft on the shores of the Firth was the First Officer of the 'Lusitania' which was sunk in the First World War.



Captain George Laurenson, M.B.E. with his uncle James Laurenson, about 1910.



Laurenson family muckle boat "True Love".

Another member of the West Burrafirth family was Captain George Laurenson, M.B.E. (1869-1955), the last of the 'Sailing Ship Captains' He was decorated during the First World War for running supplies to Russia. He was a massive man, 6 feet 6 inches tall, and a fine correspondent, and after my father's death, I kept in touch with him until his death in 1955.

I remember my father telling me that my grandfather used to tie a black apron around his waist and assist with the services in the Chapel.

It would be difficult to forget my mother's story of the cablegram sent to my parents from my grandfather in Shetland, on the occasion of their wedding: "Sorry I can't come to your wedding, as I am making a gate."

## LAURENSEN, Sons and Daughters

**ELIZABETH LAURENSEN, Born Whalwick 1874, died in infancy.**

**JAMES LAURENSEN (1876-1942). Refer James Laurenson, Wellington. (Page 20)**

**ROBERT SINCLAIR LAURENSEN (1878-1919).**

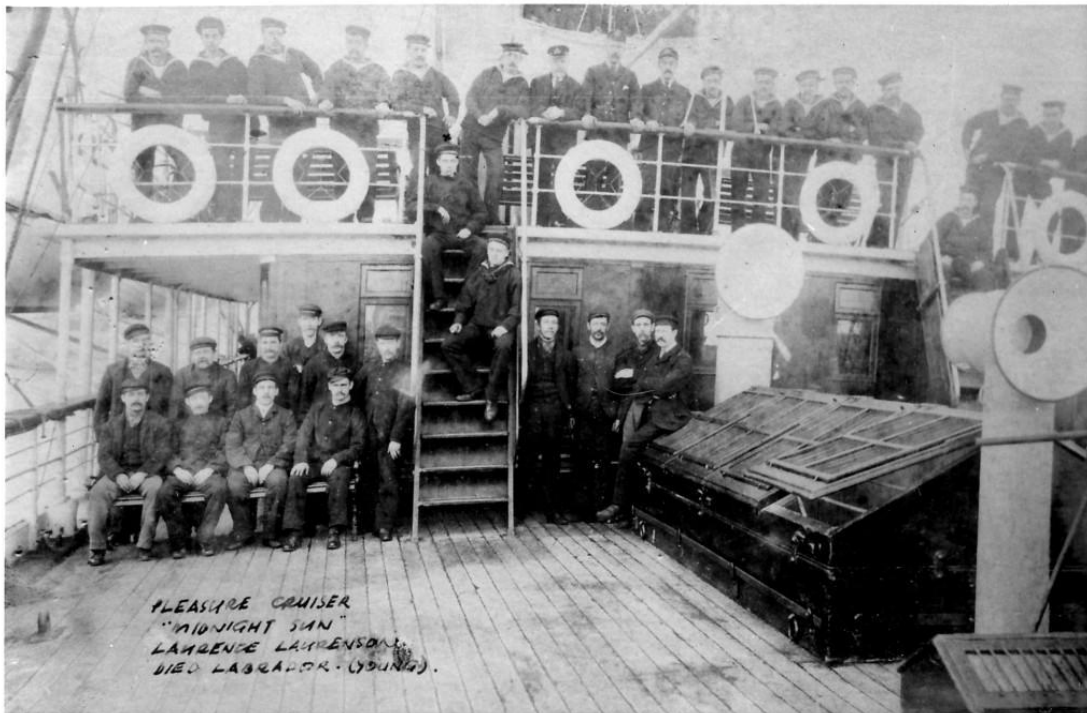
My father's brothers and sisters with the exception of his older sister Elizabeth were all born in the New House at West Burrafirth. Robert his young brother left the Shetlands in 1897 at the age of 19 years. For some years he served on a number of overseas ships in many parts of the world.

In June 1900 he volunteered for War service in South Africa and was posted to the Driscoll Scouts. He was discharged on 10th January 1901, after his term of six months was completed. He had an excellent record both at sea and with Driscoll's Scouts. After the War he was engaged around Port Elizabeth on ship building, and then moved to Kimberley where he was involved in management of diamond mining. He remained unmarried and died at the age of 40 years at the Barkly West Hospital, Cape Province, on August 29th, 1919.

Robert was of similar size to my father, 5'-10 1/2" tall and of the same complexion. He was a man of fine character, who wrote interesting letters illustrating them all with sketches, in which expression he was particularly gifted.

He wrote an unpublished book, 'Lessons in Destiny.'

**LAURENCE SINCLAIR LAURENSEN (1879-1899)**



The crew of the Private Yacht, 'Midnight Sun'.  
Laurence Laurenson, 18 years, at head of companion way.

As with his two older brothers the next brother Laurence had to seek employment on ships travelling overseas. One of the ships he served on was the 'Midnight Sun' a large private yacht sailing in the Baltic, and carrying a large crew. Another voyage took him around Cape Horn and up the West Coast of America to Port Townsend in Puget Sound. The crew were quarantined on shore because of an outbreak of smallpox on ship. Harsh wintry conditions prevailed, and Laurence died that same year in 1899 of lung trouble. He was buried at Port Townsend.

He was a very tall man (6'-4") and an academic who should never have gone to sea with its rigorous life. His intelligence was of a very high standard, and he would have excelled in a vocation where his academic interests could have been used to advantage.

### **JOHN BRUCE LAURENSEN (1882-1957)**

John Bruce, the next brother, derived his second name from the then Lord Lieutenant of Shetland, John Bruce.

Like his older brothers before him, he left the Isles in his late teens, and obtained employment in overseas ships which were eventually to take him to New Zealand in 1906.

After a short while in Wellington, he moved to Taranaki, where farming was becoming well established. He married Miss May Steffert in 1912 and the couple farmed at South Road, Tawhiti Road, and Somerville Road, Hawera.

John Bruce had a very successful land agency business in Hawera where he was a Borough Councilor and a Rotarian.

During the Depression he sold out in Hawera and the family moved to Morrinsville in the Waikato, where he continued farming, and land agency interests.

The Laurenson home at Morrinsville was known for its hospitality, where there was always a friendly welcome in this 'open' home.

There were two children from the marriage. Jean, (Mrs Reg Ellis), Tauranga, and Jack.



James, George and John Bruce Laurenson on occasion of George's departure overseas with N.Z. Armed Forces, 1918.

## **ELIZABETH ANN LAURENSEN (1885-1960)**

Elizabeth spent her young life at West Burrafirth. She married Robert Garrioch who died early in life leaving her with a young son, George. They both came to New Zealand in 1920, staying at the Laurenson home in Melrose, Wellington, for some months before going to Taranaki, where John Bruce, her brother, was farming at Hawera.

Elizabeth married Joseph Watt, a successful farmer of Ball Road, Kakaramea, in 1922, and they had one child, Margaret. Although they were well settled on the Ball Road farm, and George on his own South Road farm, they shifted to Morrinsville, and each farmed at Tahuna Road a few miles from the J. B. Laurenson farm.

## **MARY LAURENSEN (1888-1967)**

Mary was the youngest of the three girls in the family and was born in the New House at West Burrafirth. She was brought up there but later shifted to Lerwick where she married Magnus Williamson of Lerwick who was in the Mercantile Marine.

During the war Mary was involved with the Nursing Service.

She was a kindly person of the highest standards, with a simple Christian faith which was expressed in her strength of character.

There were two children from the marriage: James (*who married Ruby Smith and whose children were: David, Robert, Andrew and Elaine – Ed*) and Ruby (*who married John Fergusson and they had a daughter: Helen – Ed*).

During my first visit to the Islands in 1963 I spent a good deal of time with Aunt Mary and Uncle Magnus and was most impressed by this staunch couple.



Mary Williamson, (nee Laurenson) [*second from left - ed*], marching in Lerwick with Nursing Services in 'Wings for Victory' Ceremony, Lerwick, 1943.

## **GEORGE SINCLAIR LAURENSEN (1889-1918)**

George Sinclair was the youngest of the sons. He was brought up in West Burrafrith, but in his teens commenced training as a stonemason. He qualified in Lerwick and emigrated to New Zealand in 1910.

After arrival he went to Taranaki and was working in dairy factories in the Opunake district, where he became First Assistant at the Waiteaka Branch of the Pihama Cheese Factory near Opunake.

He enlisted for service in the First World War, sailing from Wellington in the S.S. Tahiti with the 40th Reinforcement. This ship was overwhelmed by the Influenza Epidemic off the coast of Africa, and more than 80 of the soldiers and ship's company died. George died on 4th September, 1918, at the age of 28 years. He was buried at sea off the coast of Sierra Leone.

He cherished the ambition of seeing his brother Robert of South Africa, but this was not to be, because of the contagious sickness aboard the ship. Those who knew him well, always remember him for his great sense of fun and friendship, which he believed in sharing with others.

When he left Waiteaka Factory for overseas service, at morning tea time he nailed a bun to the rafters and commented, 'That can stay there until I return.' Actually farmers are still alive who remember the incident, and the fact that it was painted over but never removed until it finally disintegrated after many years.

His name is on memorials at Opunake, and at West Burrafrith.

## **LAURENCE SINCLAIR LAURENSEN (1903-53)**

Laurence was the half-brother of my father. He was the son of the second marriage of my grandfather to Betty Laurenson of West Burrafrith. He was born at the 'New House' West Burrafrith and received his education at the 'schoolhouse'.

He emigrated to New Zealand about 1927. After arrival in Wellington he stayed a short while at our home in Melrose, and then moved to the Laurenson farm at Tawhiti Road, Hawera.

He became involved in dairy factory work, and was Assistant Manager of the Ngutuwera Factory south of Patea.

Laurence married Sadie Ethel Pickett, a school teacher of Hawera, in 1935, and the couple farmed successfully at Rukuhia, Hamilton and finally at Ngarua, Te Aroha. He died at Ngarua, Waitoa, January 11th, 1953, aged 49 years.

There were four children from the marriage: Donald, Ewen, Mary and Sadie.

Laurence was a tall man (6'-4") who was of fine character and high intellect.

## **LAURENSEN, JAMES, West Burrafrith, Melrose, Khandallah, Wellington, 16th June 1876-23rd August, 1942.**

My father was born at Whalwick, West Burrafrith, in the Shetland Islands. He was the eldest son of James and Janet Laurenson. It is of interest that just 5 miles to the south at Brunthill, Mid Braewick, a baby girl was born two years earlier, and that these two were to meet in Wellington, New Zealand and subsequently marry.

He was brought up in a croft home the 'New House' which had a fine view of the Firth. He received his schooling at West Burrafirth School, and was involved in the work around the croft, such as when he and his brother Robert used to row their boat out to the kelp beds in the Firth, load it up with kelp and after the heavy pull back to shore, haul the kelp up to the garden. My father said that as a result, the soil was so rich that the vegetables they grew there were as good as any he grew in New Zealand.

Later he went to the fishing in "Truelove", and his first job each morning was to get his father's pipe alight. Apparently the pipe and the tobacco were very strong, and he always maintained that because he was sick so often as a result, it put him off smoking for life.

My father was the first of the family to leave the Shetlands for the full rigged ships. He was eighteen years of age when in 1894 he sailed out of Cardiff on the four masted barque, "Dunearn" (1563 reg. tonnage) on a voyage around Cape Horn to Portland, Oregon, on the West Coast of America.



Clyde built Barque 'Dunearn' 1563 tons.

He was subsequently followed by his brothers:

Robert Sinclair, died South Africa. 1878-1919.

Laurence Sinclair, died Portland, Oregon, 1879-1899.

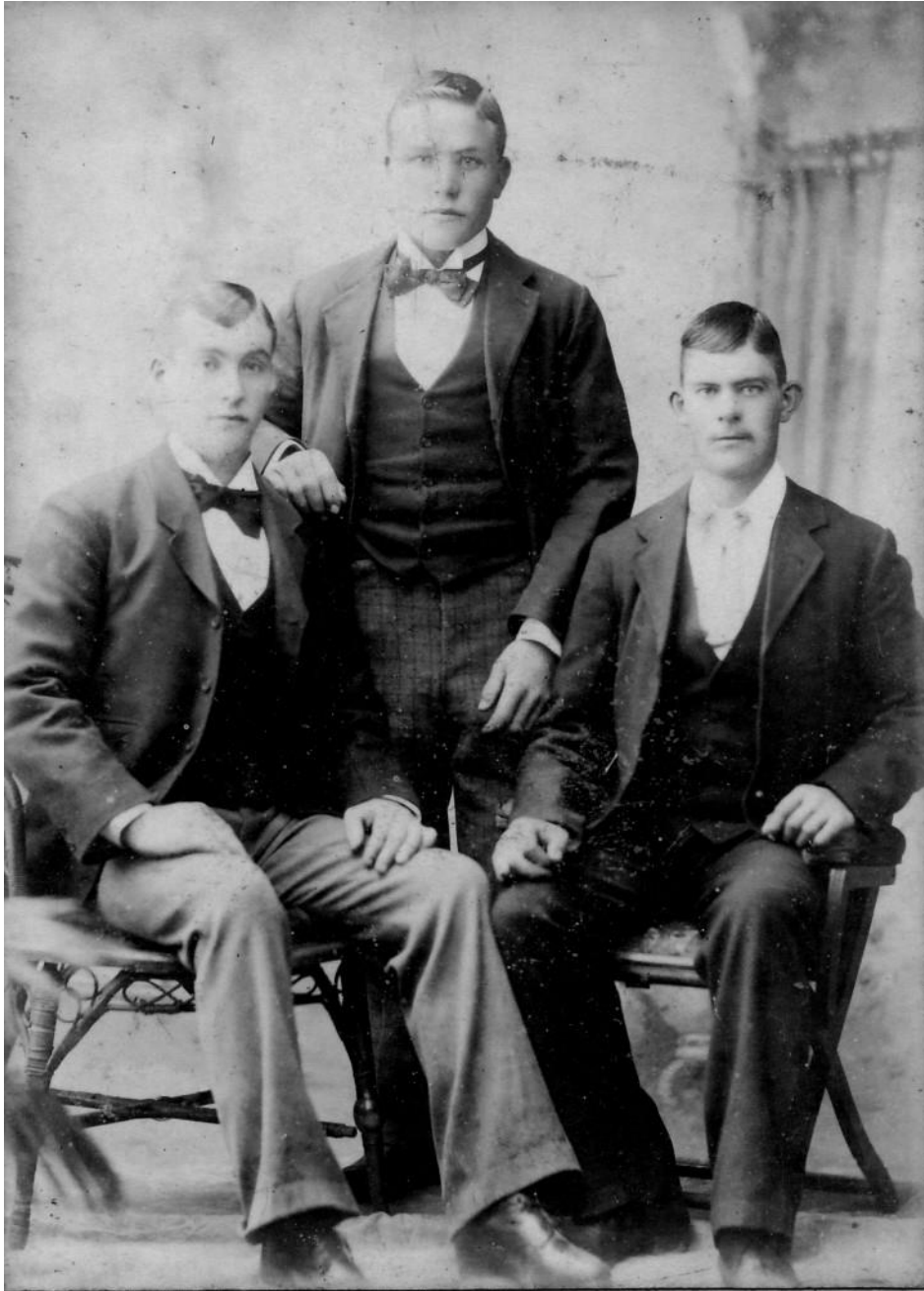
John Bruce, died Morrinsville, New Zealand. 1882-1957

George Sinclair, died at sea, 42 Reinf. N.Z.E.F. 1889-1918

Only his sister Mary remained in Shetland, Elizabeth and his half-brother Laurence Sinclair coming to New Zealand. Elizabeth and her son George arrived about 1920, and Laurence in 1927. My father had many exciting experiences during his years at sea in many parts of the world - including near drownings; being blown so far south into Antarctic waters that they were given up for lost; 'broaching to' in a Cape Horn gale, as a result of steel chains parting and sails blown away, whilst he was at the helm.

On another voyage to Australia on the barque 'Firth of Lorne', he found the ship a very wet and uncomfortable one, but he knew that he could not get a discharge at

Sydney as he had signed on for the voyage (there and back), so he decided to jump ship and see something of Australia.



Shipmates, James Laurenson, - Johansen, Finland, and - Swanson, Sweden, 1898.

He finished up at the Tuggera Lakes 50 miles north of Sydney, where he joined a fishing group for 13 months and he always talked of this time as a very happy period of his life.

The following is a record left by my father, of his experiences at the time, and of his early contact with New Zealand.

"My first connection with New Zealand was when I shipped on board the Napier three masted Barquentine 'Rio' on January 6th, 1898, at Sydney. We arrived in Napier after a passage of 22 days, mooring in the 'Iron Pot' which is now dry land as a result of the 'Napier Earthquake'. I made two voyages in the Rio and was paid off at Sydney in August 1898, and decided to return for a few days to my friends at the Tuggera Lakes.

“When I arrived back at Pyrmont, Sydney, there were two jobs waiting for me, one to return to the ‘Rio’ as Bosun, and the other a berth on the four masted American Barquentine ‘Omega’ sailing for San Francisco.

“I boarded the American ship where my shipmates had arranged with the Chief Officer for a berth for me. These shipmates of earlier voyages were going to leave the ship at San Francisco and then head for the Yukon gold fields. I was undecided what to do and so tossed a coin on the deck of the ‘Omega’ and the fates decreed on the ‘Rio’ and New Zealand. We were all sorry to separate and I never saw any of them again.



Barquentine ‘Rio’.

“I signed on as Bosun of the ‘Rio’ in Sydney in August 1898. I was then 22 years of age. We loaded iron bark logs for building the Glasgow wharf in Wellington. We had a very stormy passage across the Tasman, and the deck was holed by one of the logs. Some of the standing rigging and sails were blown away. We sailed in past the old Port Nicholson Lighthouse under topsails in a strong southerly, and with heavy seas running.

“At 3 a.m. on Nov. 1st, we ‘rounded up’ in Kaiwharawhara Bight and anchored. The tug ‘Duco’ towed us to the wharf where we moored on 2nd November, 1898.

“I liked Wellington very much, and there were plenty of ships in port. That evening whilst the Master, Mate and I were at tea, I asked the Master if he would pay me off as I would like to settle in Wellington. He said he would do no such thing, as I had signed on for the voyage. However, finally he consented and I was paid off at the Shipping Office the next day.

“I first met Barbara Sinclair my future wife in Wellington in November, 1898. We were married at ‘Greenhill’, Pohangina, the home of Thomas Sinclair, Barbara’s father, on 26th April, 1905.

“We made our home at Melrose, Wellington, where we lived for 24 years. We had four children,

Janet Mary (Jean) 11-2-06 - 6-9-37.

Douglas (Sinclair) 28-9-08 - (twin)

Graeme (Sinclair) 28-9-08 - (twin)

Thomas James 3-6-11.



"Herbert John Bruce was eighteen months old when his mother died in the Influenza Epidemic in July 1920. He remained with our family for 21 years."



James Laurenson, Wellington. 1900.



Barbara Sinclair, Wellington. 1900.



Lyall Bay, Wellington, about 1915, showing the Laurenson home, top of ridge, centre.

*Alexander Turnbull Library S.C. Smith Col.*

My father visited Shetland in 1902 and he greatly regretted that he had not made the visit earlier, for his mother had died two years before his return. When leaving West Burrafirth, his sister Elizabeth, who was still living at the New House, walked with him part of the 25 miles to the capital, Lerwick.

In 1904 he commissioned the Wellington architects, Crighton & McKay to design and supervise the erection of a residence on his View Road, Houghton Bay Road

property, and he and my mother were able to move into this fine new home after their wedding.

He was engaged in industrial activities associated with the waterfront, climaxed by his appointment as a Surveyor of Ships, but unfortunately was unable to take the appointment because of a leg complaint. Later he operated as a builder opening up the two large properties he owned, his original property fronting View and Houghton Bay Roads, and another fronting Hungerford and Houghton Bay Roads. There were approximately 50 sections in the blocks.



The Laurensen home, View Road, Melrose, Wellington, (1905-1929).

He was a very studious man by nature, and his record expresses his willingness to research thoroughly all those events and subjects in which he was involved, whether it was Safety Regulations for loading of ships, when he was appointed to a Government-established committee to draft Waterfront Safety Regulations, or on another committee set up to investigate the establishment of a lifeboat service for Wellington Harbour, a subject in which he was very well informed.

His interest in shipping never waned, and the result of his researches are lodged with the Turnbull Library in Wellington. Some have been used and acknowledged as reference material as with the Internal Affairs publication, 'The New Zealand Flag.'

Other subjects were successfully researched such as the mysterious disappearance of the 'Sir James Murray' the first large sailing ship to be built in New Zealand.

He had a fine library and in accordance with his wishes, these books were handed to the Turnbull Library for safe keeping, some alongside those of Sir Robert Stout.

He was always interested in the Wellington Shetland Society of which he was Secretary from 1925 to 1930 inc. and Patron in 1931, 1932, 1933. James Laurensen was a tall, quietly spoken man of good bearing and a commanding presence. He died at Wellington on August 23rd, 1942, in his 66th year.



James and Barbara Laurenson family with Herbert, 2 years and Aunt Elizabeth Garrioch and George. 1928.

*[this photograph is more likely dated 1922 as Herbert would have been 9 rather than 2 in 1928 – ed.]*

My mother, Barbara, who had supported him throughout his life, had established a fine homely atmosphere at Melrose and later at Khandallah where all were sure of a warm welcome. A new home was built at Madras Street, Khandallah, in 1929 and the family moved from Melrose.

'Mum' was loved by all, for she was a good mother and wife. She died at her sister Mary's home at Vadlure in Waitara, on 25th January 1946 in her 73rd year.



Laurenson home, Khandallah, Wellington.

**BARBARA REID LAURENSEN (nee Sinclair). 'Brunthill', Mid Braewick, Shetland Islands, Pohangina, Melrose, Khandallah. (1874-1946)**

**Refer Barbara Reid Sinclair - Pohangina Sinclairs**

My mother Barbara Sinclair was born on May 6th, 1874, at 'Brunthill', Vadlure, Mid Braewick, Shetland Islands. She was only three months old when the family left the Islands for New Zealand in the sailing ship 'Soukar'.



Barbara Reid Sinclair. 1894.

They arrived in Wellington on 2nd December, 1874. Her early life was spent at Bulls and Pohangina. She attended the Bulls School. When her mother Mary died in 1887, she was suddenly thrust into the position of Mother to the young bereaved family. She was then only 13 years of age.

Fortunately my grandfather Thomas was a most competent man who could turn his hand to almost anything, from making and mending clothes, building houses and farm buildings, and constructing farm implements, and harness.

All the family assisted by helping with as many jobs as required to be done around the farm household and garden. From this tragic experience, my mother, and in fact all of the children became very competent at their various household duties, which was to stand them in good stead in later life.



Wedding photograph, Mr and Mrs James Laurenson, 1905.

As the children grew up, and when my grandfather remarried in 1890, my mother left Pohangina, and was in service in a number of fine homes in Christchurch and Wellington.

She met my father in Wellington in 1898, and they were married at 'Greenhill' Pohangina on 26th April, 1905.

They set up home at Melrose in the new house which they had built, and where they lived for 24 years.

In 1929 they built a new home at Khandallah, and lived there for a decade with their family, Jean, Douglas, Graeme, Tom and their foster son, Herbert, who had been looked after by my mother since he was eighteen months old, after his mother had died in the Influenza Epidemic.

My mother was a wonderful wife and mother, and we all cherish fond memories of her bond of love with all the family. She died at the home of her sister Mary at 'Vadlure', Waitara in her 73<sup>rd</sup> year on January 15th, 1946.



'Mum' with Jean, Douglas standing and Graeme at knee.



James and Barbara Laurenson family, 1936, and Jean's husband Jim Harper, right.

## **LAURENSEN, Daughter and Sons.**

### **JANET MARY (JEAN) LAURENSEN, Wellington.**

My sister Jean was born in Wellington on February 11th, 1906.

She was educated at Maranui Primary School and Wellington Girls' College.

Jean trained as a milliner with the Clothing firm of Mackay Logan and Caldwell, Wellington, and for some years was Head Milliner over the large staff. She established her own business 'Jeanette Millinery' at the Shopping Centre, Khandallah.

Jean married James Gilbert Harper, son of Wellington Shetlanders, William and Johanna Harper, who were associated with the Nile River Goldmining Settlement on the West Coast of the South Island.

After a very short illness she died on 6th September, 1937, aged 31 years.

There was no issue from the marriage.

Jean studied music as a teenager, and my father and mother gave her a piano for her 21st birthday present. After Jean's death this piano was given to our daughter Jill and it remains in the Symon home for the grandchildren to play.

We all treasure very fond memories of Jean.

After Jean's death, Jim lived at the homes of his parents, and later with his brother Bill and sister's in law Jessie and Helen. He died on 24th July 1979 at the home of Bill and Helen, aged 79 years.

### **DOUGLAS (SINCLAIR) LAURENSEN. F.C.A., A.C.I.S., Wellington.**

My twin brother was born in Wellington on 28th Sept., 1908. Primary School Education, Lyall Bay School. Secondary Education, Wellington College and Tutorial College. Professional Education, Tutorial Colleges. Douglas qualified as an Accountant in 1934, and as a Chartered Secretary in 1936.

He saw military service overseas in the Solomons with the N.Z. Forces in the Second World War.

Commencing Private Practice in 1949, his firm was involved in three amalgamations, resulting in the National Practice of McCulloch, Menzies. He is now retired and living at Khandallah, Wellington.

Theology has been an important interest and he is a Vestryman of Khandallah Anglican Church. His leisure interests include snooker, indoor and outdoor bowls.

Douglas married Girleen Marjorie Griffiths of Wellington and they have four children.

The oldest Barbara Mary, won a N.Z. Govt. Drama Bursary, and travelled to London where she has since been involved successfully in Theatre and Television. She married Edward Slevin and they live in London and have three children, Daniel, Jack and Amy Carley Jane.

Alan James graduated B. Com., and qualified as an Accountant, and is now a Senior Partner in McCulloch Menzies. He married Louise Raye Sutherland. They live in Khandallah and have three children, Richard Grant, Stephen Rion Douglas and Justine Sarah.

Susan Margery qualified as a Typist and is now Secretary to Staff at Wellington Girls College. She married Phillip Benjamin Davis, they live in Khandallah and have three children, Geraldine Anne, Vanessa Mary, and Simon George.

Peggy Sinclair, qualified as a School Teacher and married Geoffrey Collister. They live in Auckland and have 2 children.



James and Barbara Laurenson family, 1915.

**GRAEME (SINCLAIR) LAURENSEN, M.B.E., P.P.N.Z.I.A., A.R.I.B.A., F.R.S.A. (London)**

**Refer Graeme Laurenson, New Plymouth. (p.90)**

**THOMAS JAMES LAURENSEN, Wellington, Levin, Tauranga.**

My younger brother was born in Wellington on 3rd June, 1911. Primary Education, Lyall Bay School. Secondary Education, Wellington Technical College.

Tom was apprenticed with W. H. Nixon, one of the leading firms of Joiners and Staircase Builders in Wellington. He qualified as a specialist Joiner and Staircase Builder.

He formed his own Joinery and Construction firm in Wellington and Levin, and the Firm was responsible for the construction of many important Buildings in the Wellington and Horowhenua districts.

Whilst in Levin he was a Member of the Levin South Rotary Club of which he was President in 1967.

He is now retired in Tauranga, Bay of Plenty.

Tom has spent a lifetime of activity at Bowls, and has several Championship successes to his credit.



He married Phyllis Josephine Morrissey of Christchurch, and they have two children, Lyndsey Theresa who married Brian Francis Bergin a Manufacturer's executive. They live in Australia, and have four children, Rodney Francis, Catherine Josephine, Bridgette Theresa and Angela Marcella. Brenda Janet married Alvin Claude Davidson. They live in Auckland and have two children, Sally Brenda and Andrew Thomas.



Graeme, Tom and Douglas Laurenson, 1974 at 'Vadlure', Waitara.

*Don Sinclair*

### **HERBERT JOHN BRUCE, Wellington.**

Herbert was born on 8th. June, 1919, and from July 1st. 1920 'Mum' was looking after Herby, whilst his mother entered a Maternity Hospital in Wellington. Unfortunately Mrs Bruce died after contracting 'the flu' and Herb continued to stay on at our home. This stay extended for 21 years and Herb grew to manhood as a beloved member of our family.

His primary education was at Lyall Bay and Khandallah schools, and secondary education at Wellington Technical College.

During the Second World War he served in the Radar Section of the New Zealand Navy.

He married Victoria Stephens and they had three children, Leonie Vivian, Carol Jean and Richard James.

After working with the Dominion Dental Supplies for a number of years Herb was successfully self-employed in a variety of businesses which included grocery, hardware and a hotel.

For about six years he and Vicky have been living in retirement in their fine home in Otaihanga.

# SHETLAND ISLANDS



## **‘BRUNTHILL’ SINCLAIRS, VADLURE, MID BRAEWICK, SHETLAND ISLANDS.**



Walls, Church of Scotland centre foreground. Forratwatt on hillside to left, and Brunthill over the ridge to the right.

*Shetland Museum and Library*

‘Brunthill’ is a croft on the shore of Gruting Voe, in the Mid Braewick district a mile or so south east of the township of Walls.

Walls was the centre of agricultural and pastoral activities, for it was a very fertile area. It is located at the head of Vaila Sound, which is sheltered from the Atlantic Ocean by the large Island of Vaila.

In the heyday of fishing it provided a sheltered harbourage for all the fishing craft which operated from there. It was also a port of call for the South Ferry Ship, and provided a link with the mainland for the island of Foula, 14 miles out in the Atlantic.

It was a very active community and the presence of two fine churches, one Methodist and the other Church of Scotland are evidence of this activity. There is also a central store.

Gruting Voe was selected by ‘Taffrail’, the celebrated naval officer author, in his book ‘the Shetland Plan’, which describes an invasion of Shetland by a Foreign Power, to anchor the aircraft ‘Illustrious’ and supporting destroyers in the waters of the Voe opposite the Brunthill croft. This book was published just prior to the War in 1939.



'Brunthill' Croft home, Vadlure, Mid Braewick, on the shore of Gruting Voe.

In 1963 when I visited the area, the Brunthill croft was showing signs of disrepair and in subsequent years an extra floor has been added in concrete blocks, and the building used as a barn. The standard of the original construction was very high, and this is borne out by its ability after 150 years to carry a loaded upper floor.

I was impressed with its character, for besides being surrounded by reasonably good land, it was located on the shore of the Voe, which must have made it most convenient for its dual activities of fishing and crofting, as it had its own jetty, and because of its fine location would have made a good family home.



Interior or 'Lum' of the Dunrossness Croft Home, typical of many Croft homes like Brunthill.

*Shetland Museum and Library*

## **JAMES SINCLAIR, 'Brunthill', Vadhure, Mid Braewick (1789-1865)**

My great grandfather James Sinclair was the son of Robert and Grisel (Grace) Sinclair of Vementry. Robert Sinclair farmed the charming Island of Vementry, often referred to as 'Little Shetland', for this Island is supposed to display many of the charms of Shetland itself, within its coastline. As an Island it has a most interesting profile which can be studied from the sloping hillside of mainland close by.

There were ten children in the family. The youngest son was Gideon, the great grandfather of the late Laurence Sinclair, who supplied me with this information in 1963. One of Gideon's older brothers James, my great grandfather, born in Sandsting 1789, married Elizabeth Johnson and established a home in the Walls area, for it appears that there was a steady drift southwards from Vementry, through Voe to Walls.

James and Elizabeth had 6 children Robert (1815), Barbara (1818), Grace (1820), Elizabeth (1823), Jean (1825) all born in Aithsting whilst the youngest, Agnes, (1827) was born in Sandsting.

Six related Unifirth families including those of Grace, Jean and Elizabeth, migrated to the Shoalhaven District of N.S.W., Australia, between 1848 and 1867.

After the death of his wife Elizabeth, James married again in 1842 to Agnes Laurenson, my great grandmother, who was the matriarch of all the Brunthill Sinclairs who came to New Zealand in 1874, and all their many descendants. She was the daughter of Thomas and Margaret Laurenson of Seater.



Gravestone-James Sinclair-1789 - 1865.  
church of Scotland Graveyard - Walls.



Agnes Sinclair (nee Laurenson) who at the age of 65 years came to N.Z. in 1874 with her family.  
*Mrs Jan Hughson*

*[Inscription: In Memory of James Sinclair who died at Mid Brewick, Walls, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of December 1865, Aged 76 years. - Ed.]*

James built the Brunthill Croft home about 1830 and James and Agnes had three sons, Thomas, my grandfather, 1843, James, 1845, and John, 1847. Brunthill remained the Sinclair family home for another thirty two years, prior to the family's departure for New Zealand in 1874. James died in 1865 at the age

of 76 years, and is buried in the Church of Scotland graveyard at Walls, where a fine headstone in good repair remains as his memorial. Our Sinclair and Laurenson families are generally Wesleyans.



Church of Scotland. Walls.

In his younger days James was very involved in fishing the waters around the Westside of the Islands, and his competence is illustrated by his invention of a special knot-tying machine for fishing nets which was so successful that Hay and Co., Fish Merchants, purchased the machine and its rights, for it represented a 'break through' in large net construction of those days.

Agnes Sinclair was 65 years of age when she left the Shetlands and came to New Zealand in the Soukar.

She had a very pleasant and engaging personality, which is displayed in many of her descendants throughout New Zealand.

However, she took things quietly after her arrival, being content for some years to assist in the Mangahao Sinclairs home, where she died. She was buried at Mangahao.

James' son, Robert (1815), established a very successful Drapery and Hosiery Business in Lerwick, specialising in shawls. Robert married Helen Moore from the Island of Unst. Her brother, James Moore joined Robert in the business but left later to develop 'Bushy Park' in Kai Iwi, New Zealand

Laurie Sinclair recounted that when his father was a young boy, he visited Lerwick with his father, and they met 'a very important looking gentleman in a frock coat and a 'lum' hat' who was Robert Sinclair, the half-brother of my grandfather, Thomas Sinclair. James Moore's family later gifted the 22 roomed Kai Iwi homestead along with 235 acres of surrounding bush land to the Nation as a Forest and Bird Reserve.

Robert Sinclair migrated to Armadale, Melbourne, Australia in 1885.

Some of his sisters with their families had settled in the Shoalhaven district of New South Wales, from as early as 1853. Robert and Helen's family settled mainly in the South Island of New Zealand, particularly Dunedin.



Bushy Park homestead at Kai Iwi. Presented to the Nation by the Moore family for a Forest and Bird Sanctuary. *Robspography.co.nz*

A son, William, was a graduate of Edinburgh University, and was Bank Manager at Moteuka, Christchurch, Dunedin and Lawrence. He retired in Dunedin.

A daughter, Barbara, married Quintin MacKinnon the Explorer, who discovered the Milford Track, 'The Finest Walk in the World'. She used to visit our home in Wellington when I was a lad, for she was my mother's cousin by James Sinclair's first marriage. She was a good pianist, and used to play some of Quintin's songs, which he sang when guiding people over 'the track', for he was appointed as the first Guide. Two of these songs which I remember very well were: - 'Kind is my Mary' and 'The Wearin' o' the Green'. After Quintin's untimely death she married again to Thomas Hughan of Wellington.

I am grateful to Mrs Edith A. Sinclair of Dunedin, whose husband was the son of William (1854), for providing me with the list of Robert and Helen Sinclair's family, extracted from the family Bible.



## **‘FORRATWATT’ SINCLAIRS, WALLS, SHETLAND ISLANDS.**

The Sinclairs of Forratwatt were Fishermen/Crofters, and Mercantile Marine men. One member of this family, Captain Jerom Sinclair, came to New Zealand in Command, and visited Pohangina in the 1880s to see his sister Mary, my grandmother.

The Croft home of Forratwatt was built on a prominent site which gave a very commanding view of the Voe, and the shipping movements to and fro. The original Croft home has been demolished, although the remains are still visible. The new home has been built some distance back from the brow, and probably in a more sheltered position.

The name of Forratwatt is interesting. First of all, twatt is a farm. Forrat refers to the forward position or thwart of a sixareen, and when the commanding position of the old Croft Home is considered, we recognise the suitability of the name. As the roads in Shetland are not named as in New Zealand, it is very necessary that all Crofts, and geographical features are named, which identifies them rapidly and clearly.

My grandmother Mary, came from this Croft in 1870 to marry my grandfather Thomas Sinclair of Brunthill, a couple of miles away.

She was the second child and eldest daughter of William and Barbara Sinclair.

They had ten children, five daughters and five sons. Family tradition has it that as well as Captain Jerom Sinclair, at least another brother, Scott was a Sea Captain.

Barbara who accompanied the Brunthill Sinclairs to New Zealand in 1874 was a sister.

Forratwatt is now owned by the Wishart family, and Marge and I have been fortunate to receive the very friendly hospitality of Tina Wishart on our visit to Shetland.

### **WILLIAM and BARBARA SINCLAIR, Forratwatt, Walls.**

Sons and daughters.

Jerom	born	1843	
Mary	”	1845	(my grandmother) Refer Thomas Sinclair,
Agnes	”	1847	Brunthill and Pohangina.
Jane	”	1849	
James	”	1851	
Barbara	”	1853	Came to N. Z. in the ‘Soukar’ - 1874.
William	”	1855	
Elizabeth	”	1857	
Scott	”	1860	
Robert	”	1864	



## **‘BRUNTHILL’ SINCLAIRS. DEPARTURE FOR NEW ZEALAND.**



Barque 'Soukar', 1304 tons.

The Brunthill Sinclairs left Shetland and joined the 'Soukar', 1304 tons, which left Gravesend on August 22nd, 1874, under the command of Capt. Adams. There were a total of 414 emigrants to New Zealand on board, of which 108 were from the Shetlands. This group set an all-time record for the greatest number of Shetlanders ever to leave the Islands for New Zealand in one ship. Avalanche holds second place.

Our Brunthill group included the following: -

Agnes Sinclair, Mother, 65 years.

Thomas Sinclair, son, 30 years.

His wife Mary and children James and Barbara, (my mother)

James Sinclair, Son, 27 years.

His wife Jemima, and their daughter Jemima.

John Sinclair, son, 24 years.

Barbara Sinclair, sister of Mary from Forratwatt, 20 years.

The 108 Shetlanders had an advantage over most of the emigrants, for they were no strangers to the sea, and knew what such a long trip in ocean waters might entail. They left on a fine sunny day, but soon ran into rough conditions, which remained with them until they reached the Equator, when King Neptune paid a visit to the ship and the usual festivities were celebrated.

The weather improved until they had 'run their easting down' when they encountered a heavy gale, and considerable damage was done to the ship including the flooding of the forward accommodation in which John Sinclair was berthed with all the single men. The married people were amidships and the single women astern. Hatches were battened down during this gale and

conditions were fairly grim, particularly as the sanitary accommodation had been built on the deck above. During the gale sanitary accommodation was washed away, and when the storm abated it was a case of 'all hands' to effect replacements. Many of the Shetlanders were competent in construction and were able to give considerable assistance. The Shetlanders were also able to assist the crew in the repair and replacement of ships rigging and gear, which had suffered serious damage.

During the passage there were some deaths, including Jemima the infant daughter of James and Jemima Sinclair.

The remainder of the passage was relatively uneventful, and the Soukar's arrival in Wellington Harbour on December 2nd, 1874, was an exciting occasion of great relief.



Wellington Harbour, about 1890.

*Turnbull Library. Henry Wright Col*

On the ship's arrival, James and John went to Masterton and worked in the timber yards there. After a few years they were each allocated undeveloped properties, James at Mangahao, and John at Ballance. The two brothers built a house in Mangahao, where the families and their mother lived together for a while.

The eldest brother Thomas, my grandfather and his family did not travel to Mangahao with the rest of the family, but continued by sea to Wanganui. He lived with his family at Bulls where there was plenty of work available, and when the Pohangina Allotment was issued, they shifted to Ashhurst, where they commenced the development of the "Greenhill" farm property.

Since coming to New Zealand John had married Barbara Tait, the daughter of Shetlanders, and when a road was built to Ballance John built a home for himself and his wife Barbara on their property.

Agnes Sinclair, my great grandmother, lived with James and John for some years whilst they were at Mangahao, where she died and was buried. James and John ultimately built fine large homes for their families on the farms which they were developing.

James and Jemima had seven children, Jemima who died at sea in 1874, Elizabeth died in 1874, John, Agnes, James Robert, Thomas Herbert Henry, and William George.

John and Barbara also had seven children, Elizabeth, Mary (Hopcrofts), Frederick, Arthur, Jessie, Minnie and Anne.

James and John first took over their farm allotments where they had two rivers to cross. Before long bridges were built and it is of interest that the one over Mangahao was opened by the M.P. for the District, and Mrs James Sinclair cut the ribbon for the first traffic.

John Sinclair and his family remained at Ballance, but at the turn of the century James Sinclair sold his property and purchased a farm property at Opunake.

John Sinclair lived to the ripe old age of 90 years, dying at Ballance in his own bed, after only a few weeks of illness in December, 1937.

After arrival at Opunake, James Sinclair was kicked by a young horse, and this accident ultimately was the cause of his death, in May, 1908, aged 62 years.

There are a lot of descendants from each of these families in various Provinces around New Zealand.

### **THOMAS SINCLAIR. 'Brunthill', Vadlure, Mid Braewick, and Pohangina (1844-1928).**

My grandfather Thomas Sinclair was born at the Croft of 'Brunthill' Vadlure, Mid Braewick in the Shetland Islands. He was the eldest of the three sons from the marriage of James Sinclair to Agnes Laurenson in 1842.

He was 30 years of age when he left Shetland with the rest of the Brunthill Sinclairs. Because of the dangers of life at sea around the Shetland Coast, his wife Mary was keen that he should make a change and may have welcomed the family's decision to emigrate to New Zealand. Fishing for Crofters was not so rewarding at that time, and future prospects were not stable, and this was most probably the main reason for the decision to leave the Islands, and seek a new life in New Zealand. The not infrequent sea tragedies which the crofters suffered in their family fishing boats would also have been an influence.

Thomas's life up to that stage had been a seafaring one, a spell in the Navy, and some years in the family boat fishing the waters around the west coast of the Islands. He held a Skipper's ticket for local waters.

After arrival at Port Nicholson, Wellington, from Britain in the Soukar on 2 December, 1874, Thomas Sinclair and his family did not go to Mangahao with his brothers James and John and mother Agnes, but travelled by sea to Wanganui.

He and his family probably stayed awhile at Kai Iwi with James Moore whose sister married Robert Sinclair, Thomas's half-brother in Lerwick. James Moore was farming successfully in Bushy Park, Kai Iwi.

The inclusion of Moore in Margaret's name in 1876 is an indication of the closeness of these two families at the time.

My grandfather said later that he walked from Wanganui to Bulls before deciding that as there was plenty of work offering in that district it would be a suitable area in which to settle.

Before long he had built a comfortable home at Bulls where the family lived until the allocation of the Pohangina block of land was made to him in 1882, when the family shifted to Ashhurst nine miles from Pohangina. The Bulls house was substantially constructed, for it served families well until it was destroyed by fire in the 1960s.

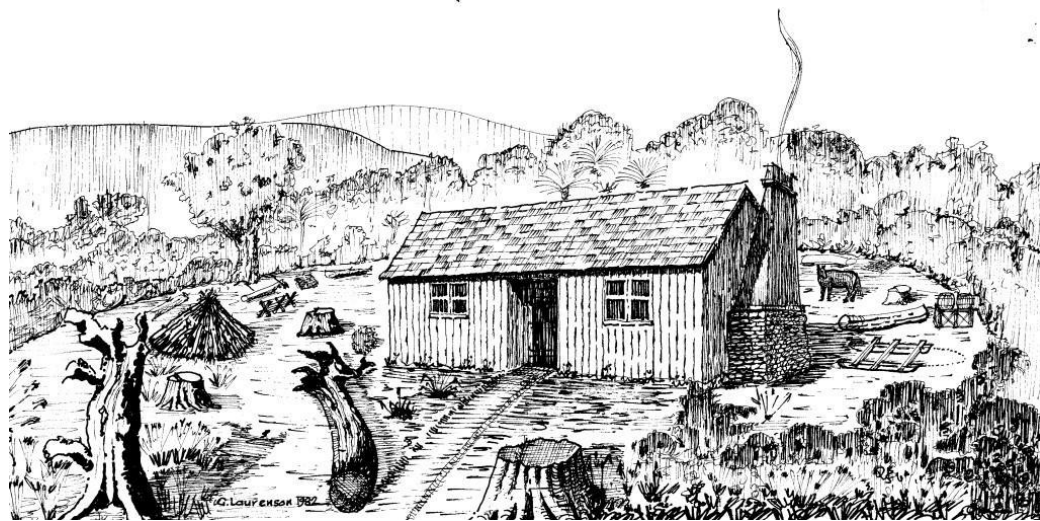


Pohangina, the 'felling and burning' era about 1885.

*R. and V. Sinclair*

By 1885 enough land had been cleared at Pohangina to erect a temporary timber slab house of three rooms. There was a large stone fire-place and chimney in which pots and boilers hung. A large camp oven completed the cooking equipment.

When the roadway was extended two miles to "Greenhill" the family moved in from Ashhurst about 1885. At that time there was no school at Pohangina.



The original three roomed home among the blackened logs and stumps at Pohangina.

*G. Laurensen, sketch*

The family could claim to be reasonably comfortable in this first 'home' on the "Greenhill" farm. Water for household use was contained in large barrels my grandfather made from honeysuckle (rewarewa) timber. A dairy was attached to the rear of the house for "cream setting" and butter making. The place was reasonably spacious and the children slept on camp beds.

Thus began the long years of clearing the high standing bush and the development of the "Greenhill" farm.

"Greenhill" was always a most hospitable home and no one ever went without a bed and breakfast. Even pedlars in wool and fungus in the early days could rely on a bed and breakfast. My grandfather was a most competent man, and he was ably assisted by Mary his wife, who was a busy and efficient housekeeper and mother. The young family were all able to contribute in varying degrees with the household tasks.

Whilst more land was being cleared and sown in pasture, he had begun the construction of a permanent home on the terrace above the road. This house was completed by the late 1880s, and they had only just shifted to the new home when the old house was destroyed by fire.



Thomas Sinclair and family at 'Greenhill' homestead, 1906. *Charles Wildbore*

Bush fires remained a constant danger in these early days and a constant watch was required to avoid the loss of farm buildings.

The family had grown in numbers and by 1885 nine children had been born.

Up to this period the family had progressed well and happily although conditions had been somewhat primitive, common to this pioneering era. Stock was increasing and farm returns were providing a steadily growing if very limited monetary return.

My grandfather always kept in touch with his two brothers James and John near Pahiatua. Unfortunately in 1887 tragedy struck the "Greenhill" home when my grandmother, Mary, who had not been well, responded to a call for assistance from a sick neighbour in childbirth. As a result of this 'mission of mercy' she caught a severe chill from which she failed to recover. *(Another account is that the death certificate cites cause of death as eclampsia [toxemia of pregnancy]. The gravestone at Greenhill says she died on 15 November 1889 aged*

31 but Thomas's gravestone in Pohangina says she died on 15 November 1888 aged 42. If she was born in 1858, as implied by the Greenhill gravestone, she would have only been 14 when her first son James was born in 1872. Ed)

In 1890 my grandfather married Maria Irvine, widow of James Irvine from 'Bremire' Braemar, Dunrossness, Shetland. They were passengers to New Zealand on the Soukar in 1874 (the same ship Thomas Sinclair and his family arrived on). The Irvines first lived in Stoney Creek, Palmerston North. A farm property was purchased adjoining "Greenhill" on which a small house was built for the Irvine family.

Maria Irvine had a family of four children, and there were two children from the Sinclair-Irvine marriage, Jessie Alice Margaret, and Ellen Clara (Lena).

My grandfather also purchased 80 acres of land which bounded the Pohangina River for his son James. This block on which my cousin Vic's home is built was purchased from James by his brother Thomas prior to his takeover of the "Greenhill" farm. At this time this land was heavily bushed in high-standing white pine. "Greenhill" was now a popular place for some of the old Shetland families to visit, and the family names of Jamieson, Jeromson, Laurenson, Johnson and Moffatt have been mentioned by Auntie Betty as frequent visitors.



Bush Camp at the Arawhata Road farm, Opunake. L. to R. Harry Mockeridge, Tom Sinclair and Jim Sinclair. 1900. *R. Carmichael*

Prior to the turn of the century my grandfather had purchased a block of bush country at Arawhata Road, Opunake not far from the farm property of his younger brother James. These blocks of heavily bushed land were at the base of Mt Egmont.

With assistance his sons Jim and Tom felled the bush at Arawhata Road, and after sufficient land had been cleared and grass established between logs and stumps, Tom "drove" a mob of cattle from Pohangina to Opunake to stock the farm.

It was a great disappointment when fire later swept through the farm and at this stage Jim, who had been farming the block, left in 1908 to take up land at Huiroa out of Stratford.

# FAMILY MEMBERS AND OTHERS.

Brothers and sisters of James Laurenson — W. Burrafirth — Melrose



Robert



Laurence



John Bruce



Elizabeth



Mary

Brothers and sisters of Barbara Reid Sinclair -



George



Laurence



James



Margaret



Agnes

Brunthill-Pohangina and Melrose.

daughters of Sinclair -



Mary



Thomas



Elizabeth



Albert John



Lena

- Irvine marriage

Brothers of Thomas Weston Snow — Bath and Wellington



Jessie



George



Alfred

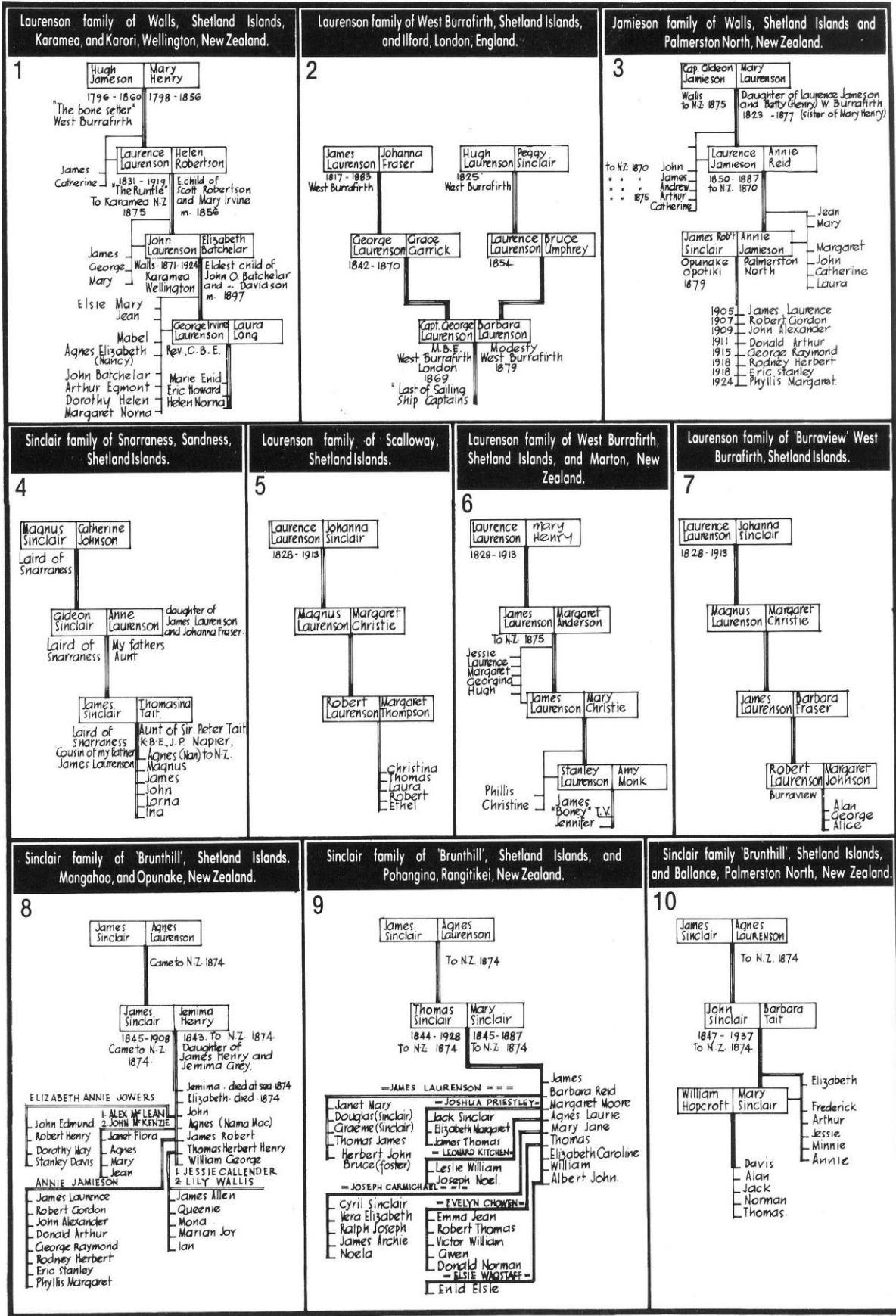


William



Jack

# ASSOCIATED FAMILIES







His Worship Sir Peter Tait K.B.E. J.P. in the Mayoral Robes and Chains of Office of the Napier City Council.



Scalloway – The Old Capital.

# THE FAMILY OF GRAEME AND MARJORIE LAURENSEN (1)

1675

1700

1725

1750

1775

1800

1825

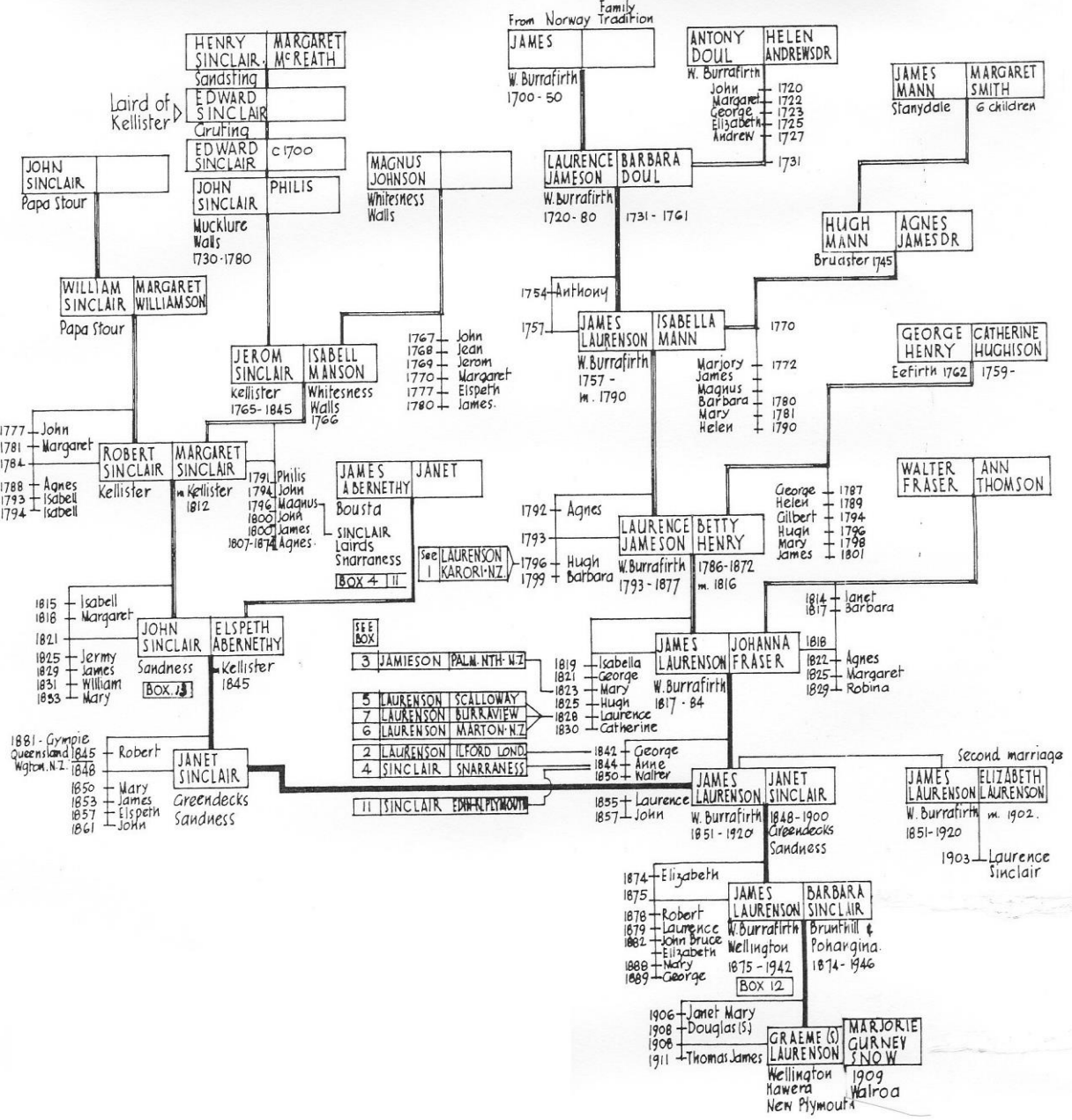
1850

1875

1900

## SINCLAIR FAMILY OF PAPA STOUR AND SANDNESS, SHETLAND ISLANDS

## LAURENSEN FAMILY OF WEST BURRAFIRTH, SHETLAND ISLANDS

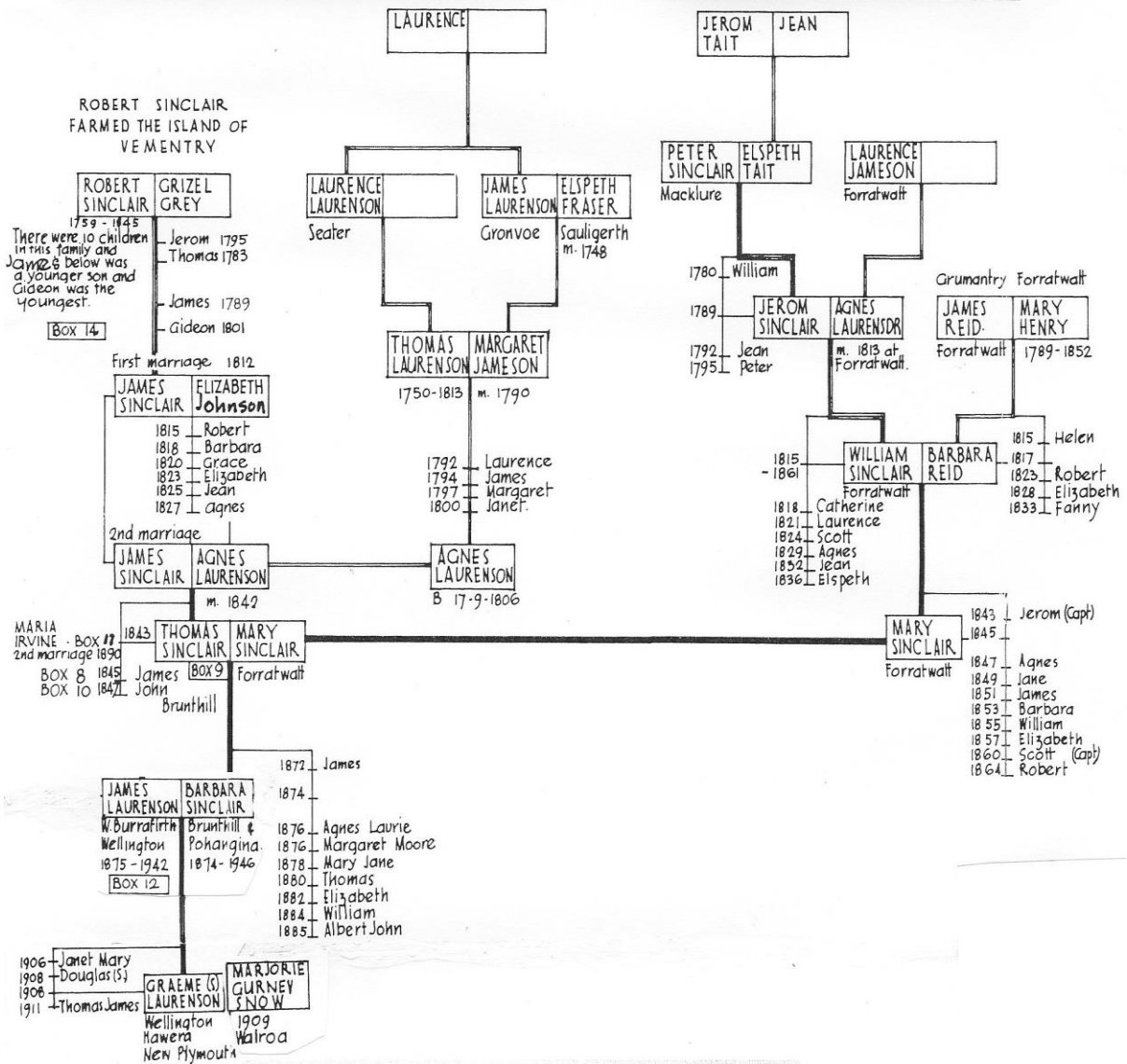


- Box 1 Laurensen - Karori - Wellington.
- Box 2 Laurensen - Ilford - London.
- Box 3 Jamieson - Palmerston North.
- Box 4 Sinclair - Snarraness.
- Box 5 Laurensen - Scalloway.
- Box 6 Laurensen - Marton.
- Box 7 Laurensen - Burraview.
- Box 8 Sinclair - Opunake.
- Box 9 Sinclair - Pohangina.
- Box 10 Sinclair - Ballance.
- Box 11 Sinclair - Edinburgh - N. P.
- Box 12 Laurensen - Wgton, Bof. P, Waikato.
- Box 13 Sinclair - Melrose.
- Box 14 Sinclair - Dunedin.
- Box 15 Dickinson - Christchurch.
- Box 16 Alpe - Christchurch.
- Box 17 Sinclair-Irvine - Pohangina.

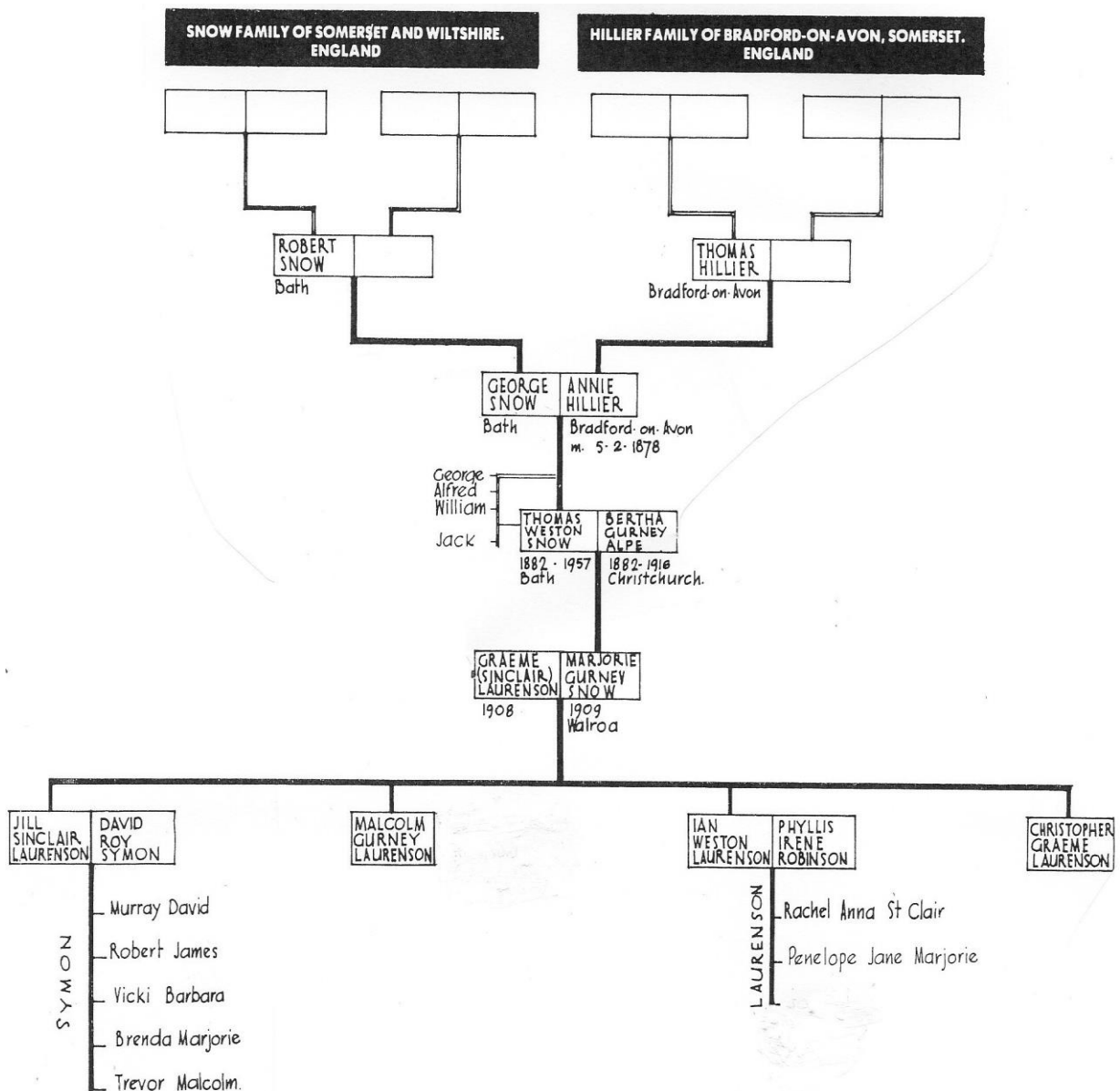
# THE FAMILY OF GRAEME AND MARJORIE LAURENSEN (2)

## SINCLAIR FAMILY OF BRUNTHALL, VADLURE, MID BRAEWICK, SHETLAND ISLANDS

## SINCLAIR FAMILY OF FORRATWATT, WALLS, SHETLAND ISLANDS



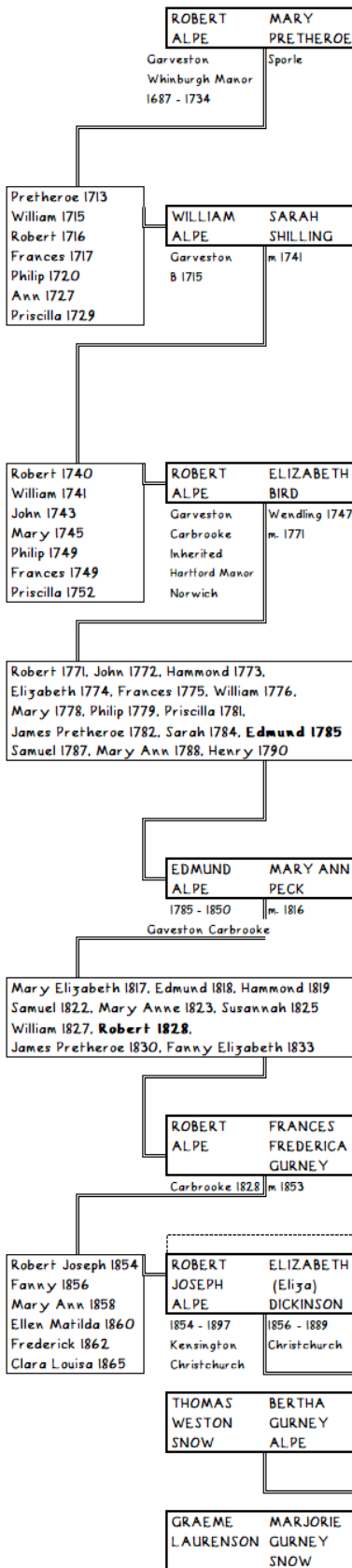
# THE FAMILY OF GRAEME AND MARJORIE LAURENSON (3)



Family trees drawn by G. Laurenson

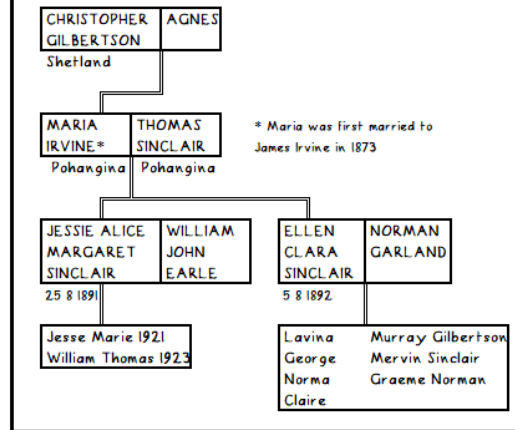
# THE FAMILY OF GRAEME AND MARJORIE LAURENSON (4)

## ALPE FAMILY OF CARBROOKE AND LONDON

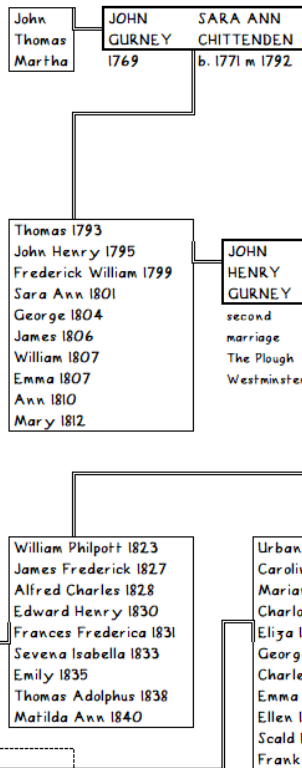


## THOMAS SINCLAIR - MARIA IRVINE (NEE GILBERTSON) Second marriage Pohangina 1890

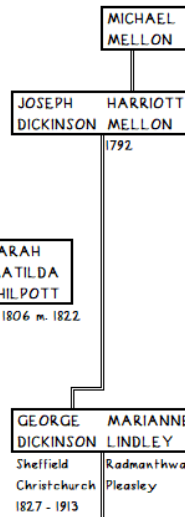
Box 17



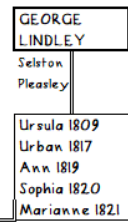
## GURNEY FAMILY OF LONDON ENGLAND



## DICKINSON FAMILY OF SHEFFIELD YORKSHIRE, ENGLAND



## LINDLEY FAMILY OF PLEASLEY NOTTINGHAMSHIRE, ENGLAND





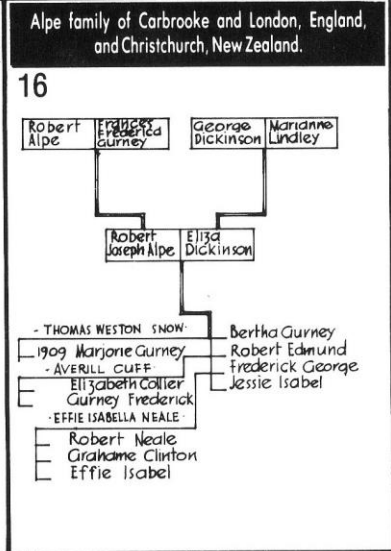
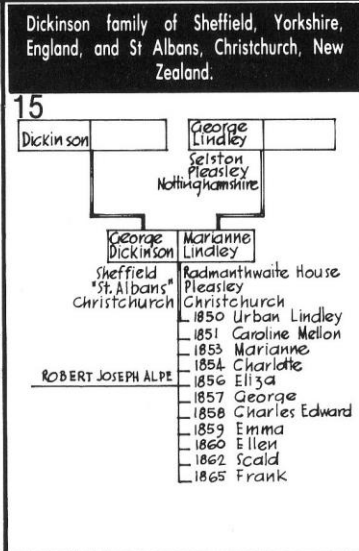
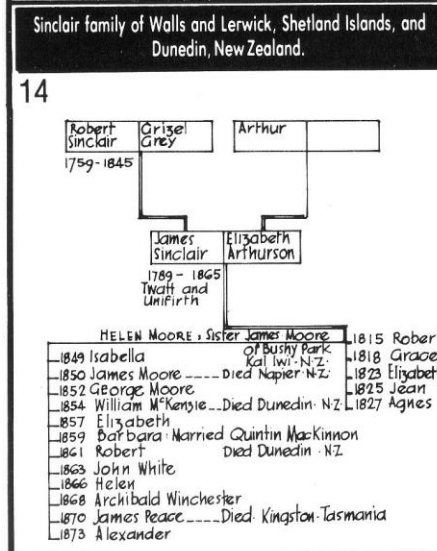
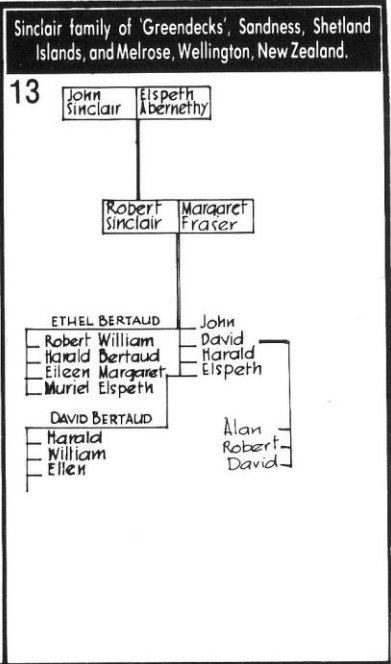
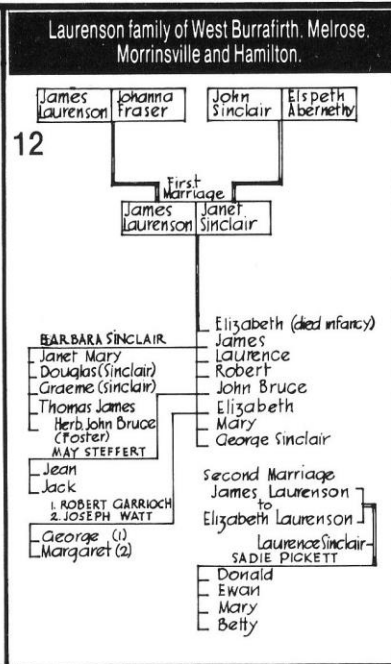
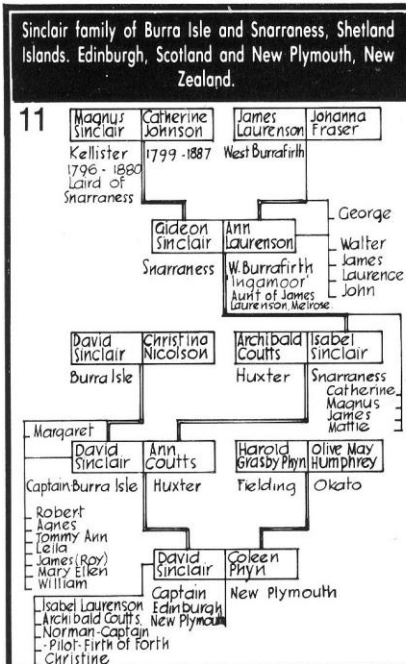
*Dennis Coutts.*

Past Provost Eric Gray J.P. standing beside the Provost's Chair presented to the Zetland County Council by Peter Tait O.B.E., J.P., on behalf of his family.



Lerwick – the Capital.

# ASSOCIATED FAMILIES



Shetland Islanders who were passengers aboard the 'Soukar' and who created a record for the greatest number of emigrants carried by any ship to New Zealand in the 1870s.

From Norwick, Unst. Margaret Gray, widow and 5 children, Robert (15), William, Andrew, Charles and Marian.  
 " Northmavine, David and Janet Greig with 7 children, John(4) Mary, Catherine, George, Janet, William and Margaret and Ann Greig (39)  
 Papa Stour (later Bixter) Gideon and Barbara Henderson and 7 children, Lilia (4) William, James, John, David, Christina Gideon, David Thompson from Bixter (24).

From the homesteads of Brunthill, Vaclure and Forratwatt, Walls.  
 Thomas and Mary Sinclair with 2 children, James and Barbara (later Pohangina), Barbara Sinclair (20), James and Jemima Sinclair with 1 child Jemima, John, Agnes Sinclair (65) widow and mother of Thomas, James and John.

From Walls, Elizabeth Dunlop (21)  
 From Braemar (Bremir) Dunrossness, James and Marie Irvine  
 From Ringesta: Dunrossness, Robert and Grace Harper with 2 children, Jane and Robert.  
 From Ringesta: James and Catherine Flaws with 8 children, Jane, James, Thomas, Catherine, Elizabeth, Robert, George + John  
 From Lerwick: Robert and Janet Tait with 9 children, Jane, James, Peter, Joan, Catherine, Margaret, Robert, Jessie and Ann.  
 From Grindischool: Bressay, William Tait (22), William (70) and Isabella (65) Gawdie with John, Wilhelmina and Jessie Gawdie, James and Christine Nicholson with 5 children, John, Agnes, William, Charles, Grace.  
 James and Mary Halcrow with 4 children, John, Mary, Henry and Isobel, Henry Halcrow (28)  
 Gifford and Margaret Laurenson with 7 children, Jessie, Thomas, James, Margaret, Ursilla Oliver and John.  
 James (30) and Mary Johnston (25), James Gifford, Jessie Gifford, Marian Sinclair (39) Joan Sinclair (27) Jemima Sinclair (25) John Sinclair (21) Williamina Thompson (33), Ursula Thompson (27) Christina Williamson (22) Ann Irvine (23)  
 Jane Halcrow (27) Margaret Fraser (34)  
 The "Soukar" arrived in Wellington Harbour on 2nd December, 1874 after a passage of 102 days.

# FAMILY MEMBERS AND OTHERS

Sister and brothers of Graeme Laurenson — New Plymouth



Jean  
Laird of Snarraness



Douglas  
Scalloway



Tom  
Snarraness, Lerwick



Herbert  
Brothers of Tom Sinclair, Pohangina.



Jim Harper



James Sinclair  
Bushy Park



Robert Laurenson  
Mrs Q. MacKinnon



Mrs Lorna Gray.  
Burraview



James Opunake  
Opunake



John Ballance  
Marton



James Moore



Barbara Sinclair



Robt. Laurenson

Brothers and sister of Bertha Gurney Alpe-Chch.



Nana Mac  
Silhouette



Stan Laurenson  
New Plymouth



Robert



Frederick



Isabel



Robert J. Alpe



Capt. David Sinclair



One of the outbuildings of the Arawhata Road farm has an end wall which comprises one entire slab of timber, which gives some indication of the size of trees which had to be felled to clear the property.

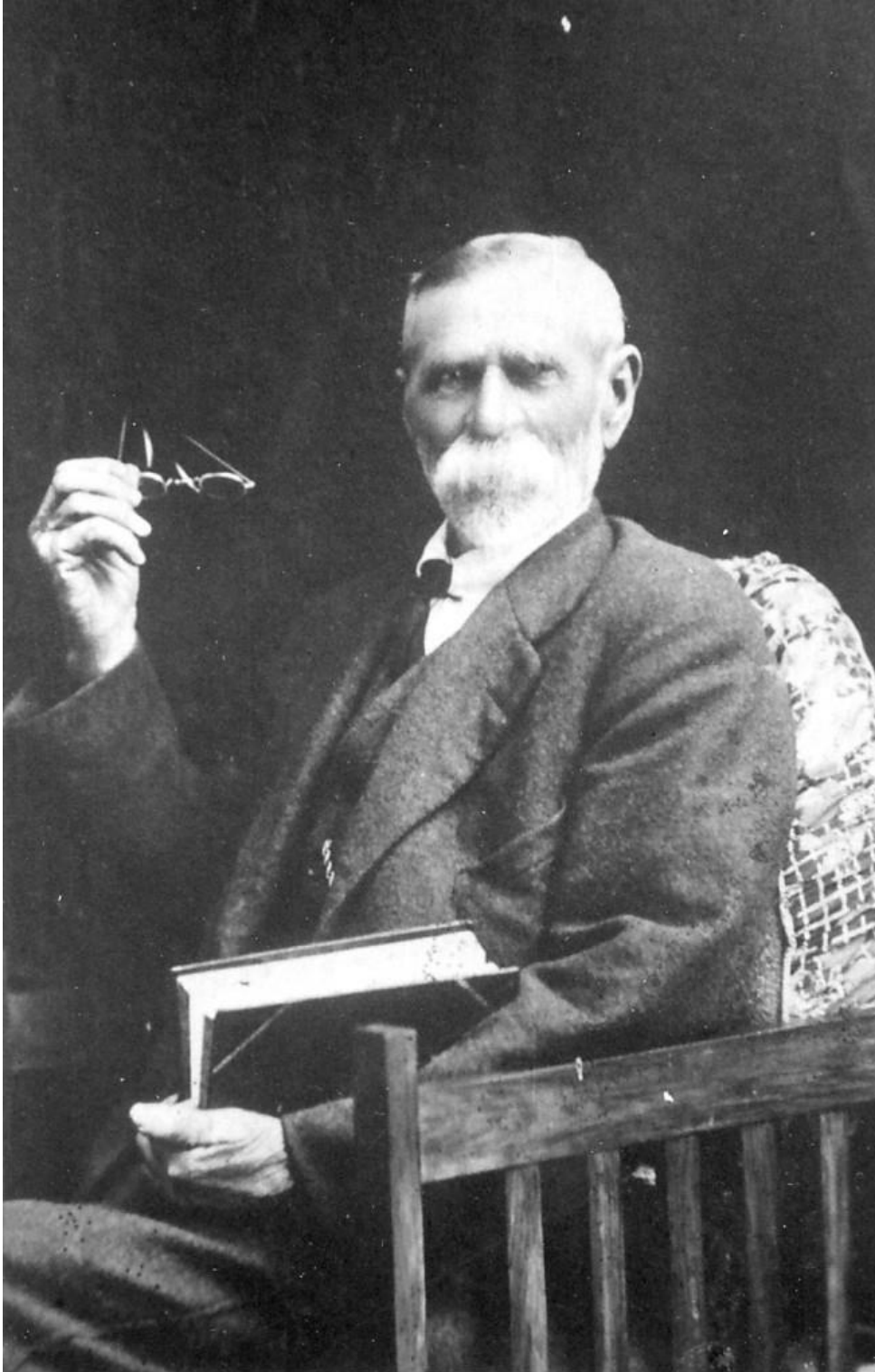


One of the many massive trees to be felled at Opunake. *R. Carmichael*  
L to R. Tom Sinclair, Harry Mockeridge and Jim Sinclair, 1900.

In 1904 my grandfather visited Shetland, and enjoyed his stay there amongst his old friends, who were all pleased to see him after a space of thirty years. He returned via Australia in the Steamship 'Omrah,' of 8282 tons register.

"Greenhill" was now being farmed by Tom and my grandfather built a home on the Opunake farm where he and his daughter Elizabeth lived for about ten years until the end of World War I, when Elizabeth married Timothy Harland who had returned from overseas service, and they then left to farm at Ohura.

My grandfather was now probably feeling the stress of advancing years for he was 74 and at this time, although his daughter Jessie was living with him, he wisely decided to sell the Arawhata Road farm to the Field family in 1920.



Thomas Sinclair, 'Greenhill', Pohangina, 1916.

During his working life he was fortunate in being able to "turn his hand" to all those things which were involved in farm and family life.

He could construct houses for he personally built a number in his life time. Farm buildings from pit-sawn timber, fencing, water wells and troughs, tanks,

harness, equipment, and vehicles, not to mention the care of stock which were growing in numbers, as did his hives of bees, were all included in his accomplishments which he did well.

My grandfather had a hand sewing machine on which he made the family clothes. He made oilskins from unbleached calico and oiled them until they glistened. He made protective footwear for the children similar to the Shetland "Rivelins". He knitted and darned his own socks, and made candles and soap from the fat from animals killed for meat.

The growing family "pitched in" as the years passed, to spread all the jobs that had to be done, for they were a very close-knit family.

He also successfully set broken limbs not only of injured stock, but also the broken arm of one of the girls.

As if this were not enough, he found time and interest to make a violin on which he played his favourite tunes and shanties to which he insisted the children dance as he said "it was good for them."

When he went to Opunake he made another for himself and one for his friend and neighbour George Holmes. He loved playing his violin which is the favourite instrument of the Shetlanders in their native Isles.

All his sons played the violin by ear, and later Jim used to play for the local dances.

Thomas Sinclair served for some time as Chairman of the Pohangina School Committee, in the early years of the school.

Mrs Enid Dryden (nee Sinclair) Thomas Sinclair's grandchild advises that he is listed in the Wanganui Branch of the "Founders' Society".

From 1919 he spent the remainder of his life with his family and died on 11 March 1928 in Hamilton at the home of his daughter Mrs Jessie Earl.

He was 84 years of age and is buried at the Pohangina Cemetery.

**MARY SINCLAIR (nee Sinclair) (1845-1887), Forratwatt, Walls, Shetland Islands, Bulls, Pohangina.**

**Refer Mary Sinclair, Forratwatt.**

My grandmother, Mary Sinclair was born at Forratwatt, Walls, Shetland Islands. (1845-1887).

She was the second child of William and Barbara Sinclair of Forratwatt Croft.

In 1870 Mary married Thomas Sinclair, my grandfather, of Brunthill, Vadlure, Mid Braewick, a couple of miles from Forratwatt. They lived at the Croft home of Brunthill for the four years prior to leaving for New Zealand.

Two children were born before they left the Islands, James born in 1872, and Barbara Reid born in 1874. As the family settled first in Bulls and finally at Pohangina, it had grown to eight, not including William who was born at Pohangina but died in infancy. They were James, Barbara, Margaret, Agnes, Mary, Thomas, Elizabeth, William (died in infancy) and 'Jack'.

My Aunt Betty recalls that her mother was always a very busy person, who was never idle, but always seemed to find time to help neighbours in their troubles.



"Forratwatt" Croft home today.

In 1887 she received a call for help from a neighbour in childbirth. The neighbour lived about three miles away and the weather was bad. Although not well herself, she went to the neighbours assistance, but unfortunately contracted a severe chill from which she did not recover.

She is buried under the large pines at the lower terrace of the "Greenhill" property.



Grave of Mary Sinclair, (1845-1887).

*R. Carmichael*

This grave has recently been protected by the local Historic Society.

## **SINCLAIR, Sons and Daughters**

### **JAMES SINCLAIR (1872-1954).**

James was the eldest of the family and was born on 23rd Feb, 1872, at 'Brunthill', Mid Braewick, Shetland Islands, and was only 2 1/2 years old when the family left Shetland.

He went to school at Bulls and later assisted in the survey of the Pohangina Township.

He worked on the early development of the 'Greenhill' farm, but later was mainly responsible for the bush clearing of the Opunake farm his father had purchased at Arawhata Road, Opunake. He then purchased his own farm at Huiroa, and my grandfather carried on at Opunake by means of stocking the farm with young cattle. The farm at this time was cleared of the high standing bush, but there were logs and stumps everywhere. However good pasture was established amongst these, for the ash from the 'burning' contributed to a good pasture. Weeds not permitted in today's sprayed pastures, were pleasantly aromatic.

James disposed of his Huiroa farm and served overseas in France with the 31st Reinforcements of the N.Z. Expeditionary Forces of the Great War. He was wounded and on his return to New Zealand was engaged with Newton King Ltd. Stock and Station Agents at Stratford and later at Hawera.

He married May Sterling and they farmed for a period at Winks Road, Manaia.

James was very highly regarded by the South Taranaki Community, and was Chief Steward for the Cattle Section of the Egmont A & P Show for many years.

After he disposed of the Winks Road farm at Manaia he purchased a home in Argyle Street, Hawera, where he lived until he died on 30th October, 1954, aged 82 years.

In his last years he spent many happy hours with our family at Fairfield Road Hawera, and was a great friend of us all.

His great love was Dickens, and the children never grew tired when he recounted these stories, and his wonderful sense of humour was a delight.

### **BARBARA REID SINCLAIR (1874-1946), born Brunthill, Shetland Islands.**

**Refer to James Laurenson, Wellington.**

### **MARGARET MOORE SINCLAIR (Priestley) (Twin). (1876-1969)**

Margaret, was born at Bulls on 2nd May, 1876. After my grandmother died in 1887, she lived with the James Moore family of Kai Iwi for some time. She married Joshua Priestley at our Laurenson Melrose home.

There were three children from the marriage:

Jack Sinclair, Pilot Officer, 2nd World War. Killed 30-8-40.

Elizabeth Margaret, (Mrs D. J. Earl.)

James Thomas.

Uncle Joe predeceased Aunty Maggie who died on Feb 16th, 1969 at the age of 93 years.

### **AGNES LAURIE SINCLAIR (Kitchen) (Twin). (1876-1959)**

Agnes was born at Bulls on 2nd May 1876. She left "Greenhill" to be married to Leonard Theophilis Coupland Kitchen, at St Andrew's Church, Palmerston North, on 21st August, 1900.

Len Kitchen was a coachbuilder at Normanby a few miles North of Hawera, and the couple lived there for some time before shifting to Wellington. Their home in Normanby has only recently been demolished. In Wellington they lived at Trentham.

There were two children from the marriage:

Leslie William, and  
Joseph Noel.

Aunty Aggie died in Wellington in July, 1959, aged 82 years.

### **MARY JANE SINCLAIR (Carmichael). (1878-1965)**

Mary was born at Bulls on 6th June 1878.

She married Joseph Carmichael, and they were engaged on the Huiroa farm of her brother James until he left with the N.Z.E.F. for France.

The Carmichael family then shifted to the Princess Street Waitara home of 'Vadlure', which commemorates the district in which the Shetland Croft of Brunthill was located. It was a convenient 'half way' stop for relatives and friends, coming from Auckland or Wellington. Aunty Mary and her family were most hospitable, and when passing the families usually 'called in' to stop awhile.

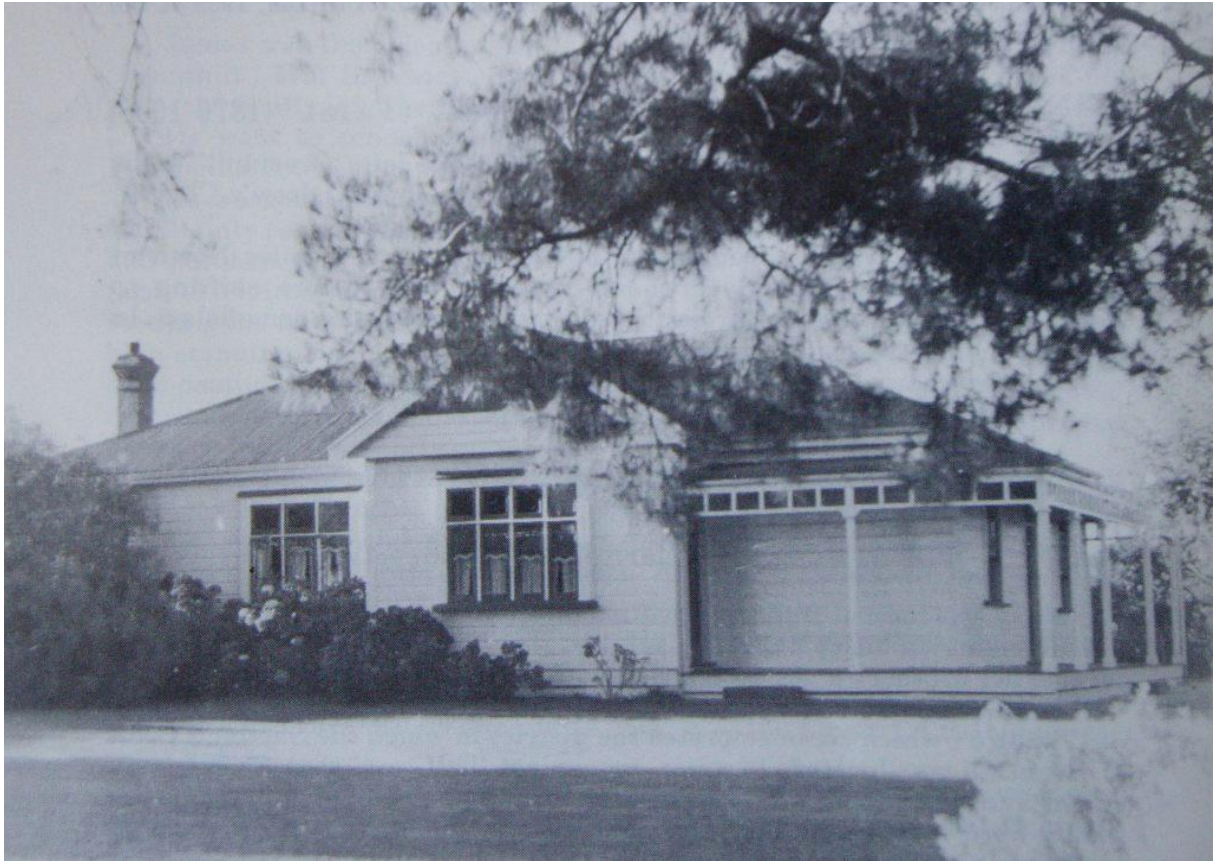
The Carmichaels contributed in no small way in welding strong family links over the years.

There were five children from the marriage: Cyril Sinclair, Vera Elizabeth, Ralph Joseph, James Archie, and Noela.

Aunty Mary died on 28th July, 1965, aged 87 years.

### **THOMAS SINCLAIR (1880-1966).**

Thomas was born at Bulls on 25th June, 1880, and remained at Pohangina to take over the "Greenhill" farm, where he and his older brother Jim had worked so hard in the early development of the farm.



'Greenhill' Homestead today.

*R. Sinclair*

He married Annie Evelyn Chowen and they carried on the fine tradition of farming and hospitality for which "Greenhill" had become known. The Sinclair people and others remember the happy holidays at this fine farm home.

Thomas was involved in many community affairs, and particularly those associated with education and church.

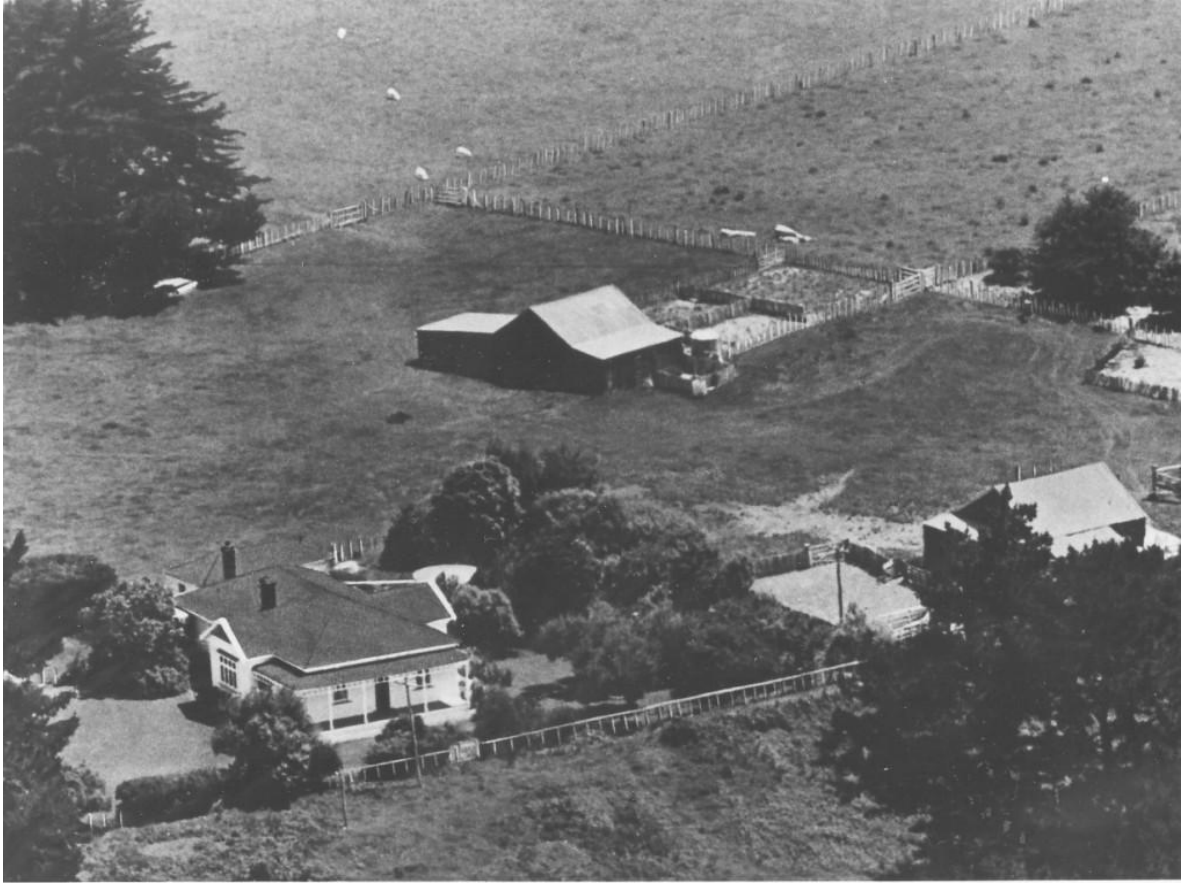
In his late teens Thomas had been engaged in driving a herd of cattle by road from "Greenhill" to the Opunake, Arawhata Road farm, and assisting his older brother James with the bush felling there.

Thomas and his wife Evelyn died on the same day, October 16, 1966, and the funeral service was very appropriately held on the lawns of "Greenhill" where the couple had lived together for so long.

Thomas died aged 86 years and Evelyn was 77 years. There were five children from this marriage:

Emma Jean, (Mrs Jack Quayle), Robert Thomas, Victor William, Gwen, (died young), Donald Norman.

Robert and Victor farm the "Greenhill", Pohangina Property.



'Greenhill' from the air.

*R. and V. Sinclair*

### **ELIZABETH CAROLINE SINCLAIR (Harland). (1882-1976)**

Elizabeth was born at Bulls on 15th June, 1882. She was only very young when her mother died and consequently she grew up amongst her older sisters and brothers, who all endeavoured to fill the gap left by the death of her mother.

When my grandfather took over the Arawhata Road, Opunake farm, after his son James, who had for some years been clearing the 300 acres of its high standing bush, purchased a farm of his own at Huiroa, out of Stratford. Elizabeth accompanied her father to Opunake where he had already built a comfortable home and farm buildings on the property. (Later sold to the Field family). Elizabeth married Tim Harland on his return from the Great War and the couple farmed at Ohura in the King Country.

They farmed at various places, and in Tim's later years at the Research Station at Wallaceville.

After Tim's death, Elizabeth lived with her sisters Agnes and Margaret in Wellington, later coming to Taranaki to live at "Vadlure", Waitara with the Carmichael family. She was the last of her family's generation, dying at New Plymouth on 1st April, 1976, aged 93 years.

She kept contact with all her relatives and friends, and was well known and beloved by all with whom she came in contact.

There was no issue from Elizabeth and Tim Harland's marriage.



**WILLIAM SINCLAIR. Born 1884 "Greenhill," Pohangina. Died in infancy.**

**ALBERT JOHN SINCLAIR (Jack). (1885-1920)**

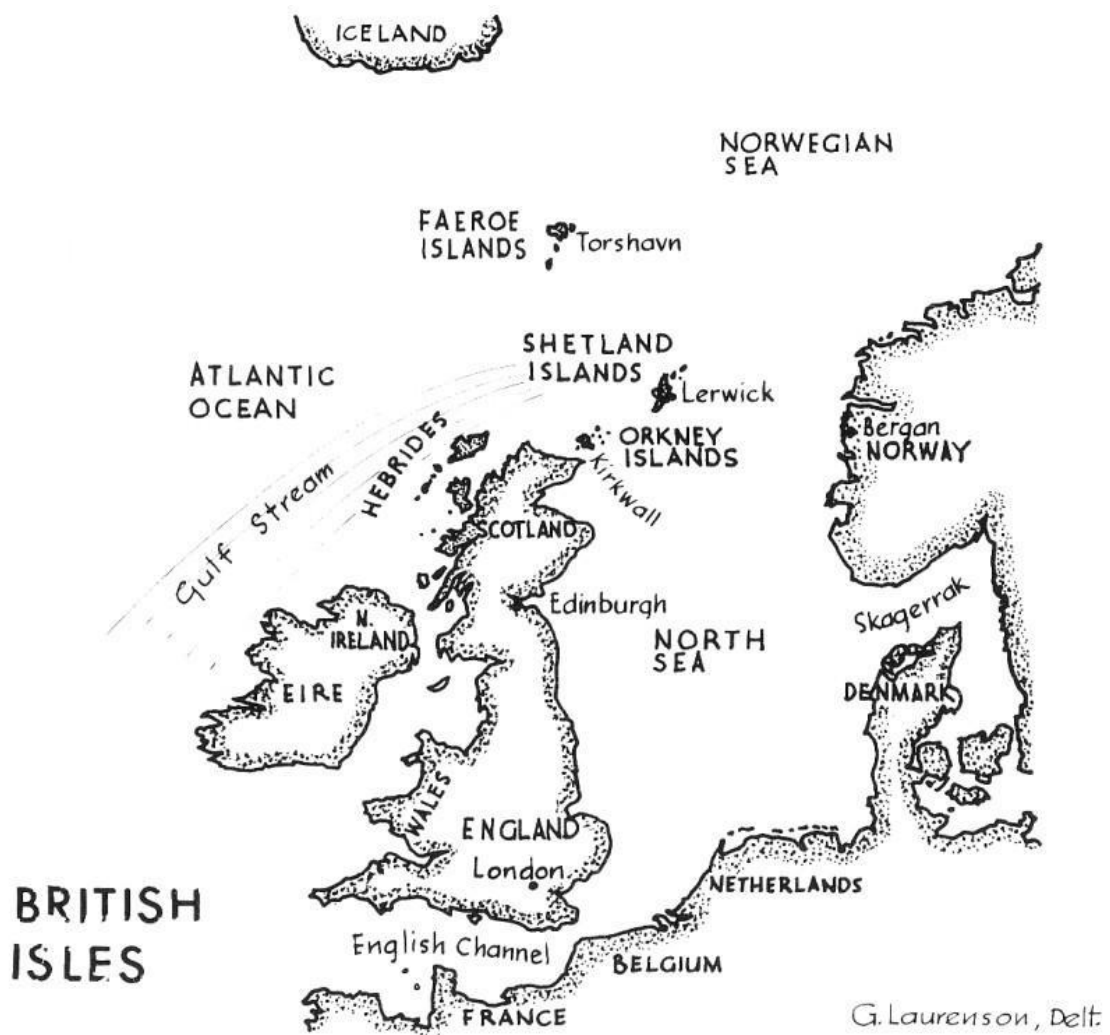
Albert John (Jack) was born at Pohangina on 12th December, 1885, and was the youngest child of Thomas and Mary Sinclair. He was apprenticed as a carpenter and operated as a builder in Palmerston North.

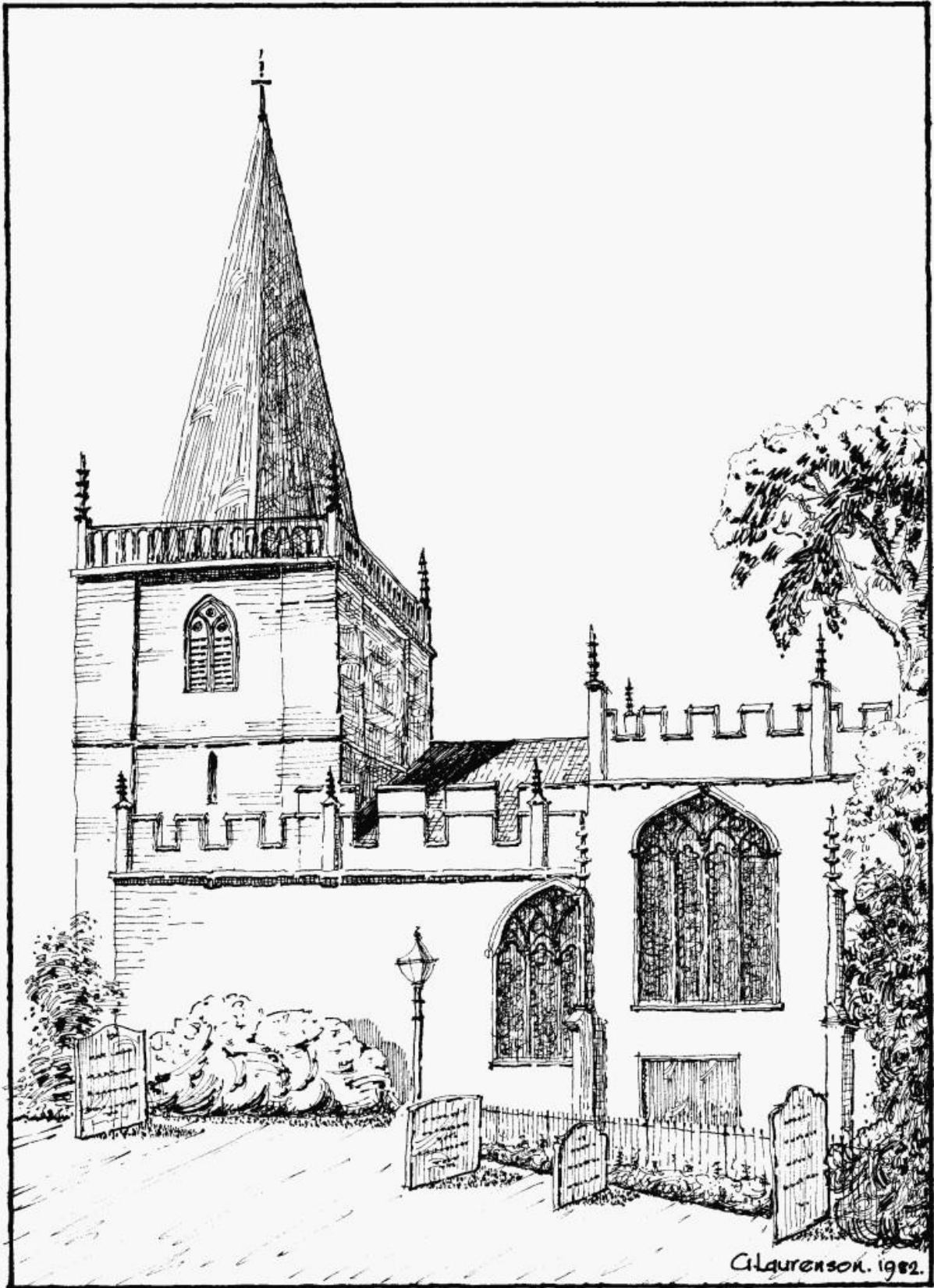
Jack married Elsie Elizabeth Maria Wagstaff of Pohangina, but died as a young man of 35 years.

Before he died, and in spite of the serious illness from which he suffered, he completed a very fine home at Terrace End, Palmerston North, for the family.

There was one child from the marriage: Enid Elsie, (Mrs Bruce Dryden, Waverley)

John died on 20th December, 1920, and was buried at Terrace End Cemetery, Palmerston North.





Medieval Church at Chippenham, Wiltshire.

**Narrator: Marjorie Gurney Laurenson.**

## **THE SNOW FAMILY OF WILTSHIRE AND SOMERSET**

The first information we have of the family is of my great grandfather, Robert Snow of Bath.

### **GEORGE SNOW, 1850-**



'The Font' with L. to R. Elizabeth, Frank Snow and Marjorie Laurenson.

My grandfather George Snow was the son of Robert Snow and was born in 1850 [19 May at Southbroom St James, Devizes, Wiltshire – ed.]: He married Annie Hillier [born 1853 possibly at Bishop Cannings – ed.] of Ironbridge Road, Bradford-on-Avon in the County of Wiltshire on 5th February, 1878, according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church.

George Snow was 28 years of age when he married 25 year old Annie Hillier.

We next hear of George and Annie at Devizes Military Barracks. Devizes is located centrally in Wiltshire and can also claim to be the prehistoric centre of England.

Arthur Mee in his book, 'Wiltshire' says of this County, which is the birth County of Christopher Wren: "Nowhere else in England is such an array of witnesses of ancient life as we find here."

Devizes is one of the oldest towns in Wiltshire, where history is everywhere reflected in the fine Norman Churches and 19th Century Castle. It was a convenient area for Regiments of the British Army to be stationed, as it is the

centre of the most sparsely populated County of England and had large Downs available for Army Manoeuvres.

After his marriage my grandfather was serving with the Royal Engineers at Devizes in the 1870's. There were five children from the marriage, George, Alfred, William, Thomas (my father) and Jack. Their eldest son, George, was born at Devizes Barracks.

After George's discharge from the Army, the family shifted to Bath in the Somerset County, where he was employed as a Nurseryman.

Their first home was at Alexandra Cottages. Later the family set up home at either 29 or 39 Newbridge Road, Lower Weston, a suburb of Bath.



George Snow, Bath.



Annie Snow, (nee Hillier).

### **ANNIE SNOW (nee Hillier). Bradford-on-Avon, Devizes, Weston.**

My grandmother, Annie Hillier of Ironbridge Road, Bradford-on-Avon, was born in 1853 and her father was Thomas Hillier. In 1878 she married my grandfather, George Snow. My father was named after his maternal Grandfather, Thomas Hillier.

Annie Snow died about 1895 aged about 47 years.

Bradford-on-Avon lies on the banks of the Avon, approached over an historic bridge.

This town is unique in Britain for it was by chance that in 1857 thick stone walls, [of *St Laurence's Church – ed*] and with a mini nave only 25 feet long were unearthed. It remains today, just as it was over a thousand years ago, for it was founded by St. Aldhelm about A.D. 705.

## **GEORGE SYDNEY SNOW.**

George Sydney, my father's eldest brother was born, circa 1879, in Devizes Barracks and after his father's discharge from the Army the family moved to Bath where young George attended School at Lower Weston.

He married Gertrude Alice Cook of 4 Lark Place, Lower Weston and the wedding was celebrated at Farnham Parish Church.

George joined the Territorial Army and was attached to the Fifth Battery of Queens Royal West Surrey Regiment, with which he served during the 1914-18 war in India, Mesopotamia, Persian Gulf and Salonica with the rank of Sergeant. He returned to Britain and on discharge carried on with his Painting and Decorating business.



Ruby Davey and Marjorie Laurenson at Farnham.

His wife Gertrude died in 1924. They had one daughter, Ruby, who married Eric Davey. There were three sons from her marriage, Brian, Robin and Peter.

George remarried and his second wife was Miss Alice Salter of Bath, the wedding was celebrated in the Hale Parish Church, Farnham. They returned to Bath later and resided at 62 Locksbrook Road, Lower Weston, Bath, where George died in 1945.

Ruby Davey is widowed and lives at Sheepphouse, Farnham.

## **ALFRED SNOW.**

Alfred the second son was born at Bath on 7th June, 1880. He left home when he was seventeen and joined the Army. He was posted to South Africa where the Boer War was raging, and was involved in the Seige of Ladysmith. He married Isabella Porter who was the daughter of William and Margaret Porter who had come to South Africa from Aberdeen, Scotland, when Isabella was eleven years old. When the Royal Engineers to which Alfred was attached were recalled to Britain, Isabella accompanied him to London. After his arrival in Britain he had

a period of sickness, and was forced to recuperate for some time. When the Great War broke out in 1914, Alfred was fit again and was one of the first to go to France.

Shortly after, their first daughter Ruth, was born, and Isabella and the baby continued to live in London. At the time of her second pregnancy, a couple of years later, Alfred suggested to Isabella that she should return with Ruth to her parents in South Africa and have her new baby there. The baby was Margaret and was only two years old when her mother was advised that Alfred had been killed at Boulogne in France on 4th August, 1918, not long before the signing of the Armistice.

Alfred attained the rank of Warrant Officer First Class, and was awarded the Military Cross before he died at the age of 38 years.

There were two children from the marriage, Ruth and Margaret, both of whom live with their families in South Africa.

Ruth married Reginald Calenborne, and they have one son, Alfred, with whom they live in Howick, Natal, P.O. Box 396 Howick, 3290, Republic of South Africa.

Margaret married Ronald Pollock and they have two children, Patricia and Terence. Patricia married Reginald Fourie and they have three children, Wendy, Robert and Sean, and live in Johannesburg. Terence married Margie Schultz and they have one child and live in East London.

### **WILLIAM ROBERT SNOW.**

William, the third son, was born at Alexandra Cottages, Weston, Bath, on 17th February, 1881, [*the 1891 census for the parish of Weston lists William as the fifth and youngest son aged two so would have been born around 1889 – ed*] and was educated at Lower Weston School. His vocation at Chippenham, in Wiltshire where he settled, was that of a Company Secretary with the Co-op. Retail Societies, in the area.

In the 1914-18 war he served as a Sergeant with the Royal Engineers in Britain.

William married Myrtle Elsie Ashman, and they had one son in 1916, Lionel Frank. Frank married Pearl Jefferies, and they live at Chippenham. They have two children, Richard, a medical practitioner and Elizabeth, a schoolteacher.

William was well respected in his community particularly in Church affairs.

Chippenham has a very historic background, for King Alfred successfully fought the Danes from this area, where he lived, and he bequeathed his Manor House to his daughter at his death.

Amongst its fine buildings is the historic medieval Church of England, which has great architectural interest. Within this old Church is a fine carved font which is inscribed: "In Memoriam, Will Snow, Church Warden, 1943-1959."

William died in May, 1959, aged 70 years.

### **JOHN CHARLES (JACK) SNOW.**

The youngest son, Jack, [*the 1891 census for the parish of Weston lists Jack as the second youngest son born circa 1885 –ed*] served in the 1914-18 war in a Highland Regiment. On his discharge from the Army he was employed for some time as a Tram driver. He and his wife, Kate, took over the Horse Shoe Inn, Combe Down, Bath on the death of Kate's aunt who had been the Proprietor previously.



Horse Shoe Inn, Combe Down, Bath.

Jack was ideally suited for the responsibility of 'Mine Host' as he was liked by everyone for his pleasant personality and marvelous sense of humour.

Combe Down has magnificent views of the surrounding heights around Bath. There is a Castle built by a great gambler in the shape of the Ace of Clubs, this card having won the gambler his fortune. There is a central Church with a fine Memorial window to the men who died in the First World War.

My Uncle Jack and his wife Kate were regular attenders at this Church. He died at Combe Down.

### **THOMAS WESTON SNOW, Weston, Bath, Somerset, England.**

My father, Thomas Weston Snow was born on 18th May, 1882 at Alexandra Cottages, Weston, Bath. He was fourth son [*Thomas may have been the third son – ed*] of George and Annie Snow (nee Hillier). Unfortunately his mother died when he was a young lad, and he was always grateful to the kindly friends and relations, who were so kind to him and his brothers, when they were growing up.

The Boer War broke out about 1900, and the second son, Alfred, enlisted with the Royal Engineers and fought in South Africa.

My father decided when he was eighteen years old that he would follow his brother to South Africa, where he hoped to be accepted for the Army, but he was rejected because he had not reached the minimum age requirement of the Army in this area.

He then decided to come to New Zealand. On making enquiries from the Authorities he was advised: 'Go to Australia first, then take the ferry across to New Zealand, which we think runs every 15 minutes.'

Such was the ignorance about New Zealand at that time, at least in South Africa. Ultimately he took a direct passage.

He found no difficulty in obtaining employment in Christchurch and progressed well in the Stock and Station businesses and was transferred to Napier while with Murray Roberts and Co. His progress was probably due to his excellent memory talent, and a particular aptitude for figures, being able to add mentally even the most complicated group of figures, with speed and accuracy.



Thomas Weston Snow, Napier.



Bertha Gurney Alpe, Napier.

Whilst with Murray Roberts in Napier he met my mother, Bertha Alpe who was with the Napier Automatic Telephone Exchange.

They were married on 13th February, 1908, in the Dickinson Home in Shirley Road, St. Albans, Christchurch.

About this stage, owing to some confusion with another Thomas Snow, my father added Weston to his name.

His next appointment was as Manager of Williams and Kettle, Stock and Station Agents at Wairoa, Poverty Bay in the North Island.

The couple purchased a home in Wairoa, and I was born there on 8th March, 1909. Unfortunately this house was burnt down, and many valued possessions, such as family records and photographs were destroyed by fire and water.

The health of my mother was causing serious concern and a change of climate was advised by her doctor.

My father promptly resigned his position and we shifted to Wellington, where my parents built a house at Onepu Road, Lyall Bay. Unfortunately the hoped for improvement in my mother's health did not eventuate and she died on 24th July, 1916, at the age of 34 years.

My father shifted to Nelson after the death of my mother and was employed with Murray Roberts Ltd, in that town. He had made arrangements for me to enter Chilton House, a private Girls Boarding School on the Terrace in Wellington, and I remained there to complete my primary and secondary education.

In Nelson my father was involved in the Fruit Industry for a time. During this period he suffered a motor cycle accident when on a dark night he collided with a horse which had wandered on to the road. As a result of the accident he remained unconscious for a fortnight, but recovered thanks to the care of Dr Jamieson.



After his recovery he was transferred to the Wellington Office of Murray Roberts and Co, and remained with this Stock and Station firm until his retirement in 1950.

After my mother's death, my father's main interest lay in the fellowship he found in the Masonic Craft, where he was Master of a number of Lodges in Wellington.

He lived with us during his retirement at our Fairfield Road Home, Hawera.

He died at Hawera in May 1960 at the age of 78 years.

**BERTHA GURNEY SNOW (nee Alpe), Christchurch, Wairoa, Wellington. (1882-1916).**

**Refer Bertha Gurney Alpe, Christchurch.**

My mother, Bertha Gurney Snow (nee Alpe), was the eldest child of Robert Joseph and Eliza Alpe. She was born in Christchurch in 1882.

Her childhood was tragically disturbed by the death of her mother in 1888 when she was only six years of age.

There followed years of growing up and gradually taking over the responsibility of 'mother' as well as she could.

In 1897 at the age of 16 years, she was plunged into reality when her father died suddenly, after the family had shifted from Christchurch to Auckland on his being appointed Stationmaster at the Newmarket Railway Station. For some years my mother had to run the house and look after the young children.



The first automatic telephone exchange, Auckland, Bertha Alpe sixth from right.

As the children had become more self-reliant, she joined the Post Office training as a telephone operator, a vocation in its infancy in those days. She was trained

in Auckland where the first Automatic Telephone System was installed in New Zealand. Later she was transferred to Napier, and it was whilst there that she met my father, Thomas Snow, whom she married on 13th Feb, 1908. The wedding was celebrated at the home of her grandparents, the Dickinsons of Shirley Road, St Albans, Christchurch.

I was their only child and was born on 8th March, 1909.



Thomas Snow and Bertha Alpe Wedding at Christchurch in 1908.  
L. to R. Fred Alpe, (no record), bridegroom and bride, Bob Alpe and Isabel Alpe.

Unfortunately my mother suffered from a thyroid complaint and on medical advice my parents shifted from Wairoa to Wellington, but no improvement resulted and she died on 24th July, 1916.

Although I was very young at the time, I remember many events of that time clearly, and I think of her as a very kindly mother, and this memory has been supported by her brothers and friends to me in later life.

The only child from the Thomas and Bertha Snow Marriage was Marjorie Gurney Snow.

The name of Bertha recalls a great Christian at the time of St. Augustine's mission to Britain. Wife of King Ethelbert, who through her influence was brought to Christian baptism. Her Hassock design shows the Cross of Faith, The Anchor of Hope and the Flaming Heart of Charity.

**MARJORIE GURNEY SNOW, Wairoa, Wellington, New Plymouth.**

**Refer Graeme Laurenson, Wellington, Hawera, New Plymouth.**

## THE ALPE FAMILIES OF CARBROOKE, GARVESTON AND GRESSENHALL, NORFOLK, EAST ANGLIA.



Carbrooke Church, Carbrooke, Norfolk.

*Norfolk Central Library*

Our Alpe family of East Anglia can be traced back to the 17th Century. In fact, one researcher has traced his family back to Robert Alpe, a successful farmer in 1200. As Robert is a familiar name in our family, we may well link up with this Robert Alpe. England was then just developing as a racial and cultural unit. After the 100 years' war, she was so organised that the country was able to go forward creating its own types and customs, free from continental administrators.

So we are able to maintain that the Alpe family has been tilling the land of Norfolk for hundreds of years. Our forebears were freehold farmers of Garveston, Carbrooke and Gressenhall.

In 'The General History and Description of the County of Norfolk,' 1845, my great, great grandfather, Edmund Alpe of Carbrooke was quoted therein as one of only three freehold farmers in the district.

Carbrooke is a small town a couple of miles east of Watton. It lies 25 miles from the Coast, and 20 miles west of Norwich, said to be the second largest city in Britain.

Our son Christopher has recently visited the Carbrooke Church, and as he traversed the central aisle of the Nave, he was most impressed by the numerous memorials to various Alpes who had died over the generations, including my g.g.grandfather Edmund Alpe. from the early eighteen hundreds.

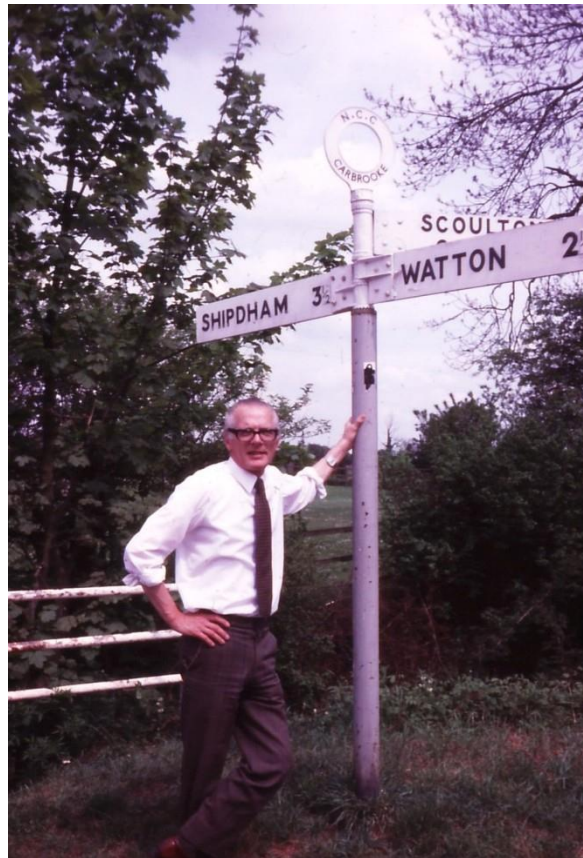


These houses opposite the church comprise the core of the village.

*Chris Laurenson*



The Village Church where the Alpe family worshipped and were baptized. *Chris Laurenson*



John Alpe of Norwich at the entrance of the village of Carbrooke.

*Chris Laurenson*



Memorial Tablets to Robert and Elizabeth Alpe are a dominating feature of the central aisle.

Chris Laurensen

*[In Memory of Robert Alpe Gent who died the 9<sup>th</sup> day of May in the year of our Lord 1815 In the 73<sup>rd</sup> Year of his Age – ed]*

*[In Memory of Elizabeth Wife of Robert Alpe Gent who died y 17<sup>th</sup> Day of Oct in the Year of our Lord 1810 in the 63<sup>rd</sup> Year of her Age – ed]*

The perpendicular style Church is very historical and was dedicated to St Peter and St Paul. It is located on rising ground, and is dominated by a square and embattled Tower, 99 feet high, the third highest in Norfolk.

Six bells are hung high in the Tower, and it is of interest that the 2nd and 3rd bells were cast by Robert Gurney in 1669.

The Church itself is full of interest, and visitors would be surprised to observe the three medieval stone altars, including the Main High Altar which lay buried in the churchyard for centuries. It was ultimately discovered and unearthed complete with its original consecration crosses, and restored to its rightful position.

The Carbrooke Church where my grandfather, Robert Alpe, son of Edmund Alpe, above, was baptised in 1828, is recognised as one of the finest Churches in South West Norfolk. Sturdy towers are a feature of these churches, and the 15th Century tower of Carbrooke Church is a landmark in the district.

A tributary of the River Wissey flows west past Carbrooke to join the Little Ouse on its way north to Kings Lynn and the Wash.

Mr John F. E. Alpe of Norwich has supplied us with some information of the 'Alpe Farm' as it is known today at Gressenhall.

His family owned this farm, but unfortunately the economic conditions of the 1880's were such that the farm went into chancery. When it was released for auction after 25 years, his grandfather was unable to raise the necessary finance to purchase it back, and so after 400 years it went out of the family.

Mr Alpe also advises that:- 'The Alpes of Carbrooke married into a family and adopted the Arms of the wife who was an heiress, (assumed Pretheroe). The Coat of Arms was a stag's head, carboosed.'

## **ROBERT ALPE (1828-), Carbrooke, London, Norfolk.**

Chris Laurenson confirms that the Carbrooke Parish Records which he examined at the Public Record Office at Norwich show that my great-great-grandparents, Edmund and Mary Ann Alpe, had ten children from 1817 to 1833. Edmund Alpe, a freehold farmer baptised at Garveston in Norfolk in 1785, died on 16th March 1850, aged 66 years, predeceasing his wife Mary Ann, who died on 28th April, 1862, aged 74 years.

My great-grandfather Robert was the eighth child of Edmund and Mary and was baptised on 2nd December 1828. All the children were baptised in the Carbrooke Church. Mary Elizabeth, the eldest child, died aged 3 years.

Robert Alpe spent his youth in Norfolk and as a young man moved to London where he was engaged as a licensed victualler at "The Plough" at 18 Rochester Row Westminster a few hundred yards distance from the Abbey. *(The preceding three paragraphs have been edited from the original to clarify the chronology of events – ed.)*

He resided at "The Plough" where he met Frances Frederica Gurney, the daughter of John Henry Gurney who was a licensed victualler and the Proprietor of "The Plough."

Robert and Frances married at St Stephen's Parish Church, Westminster, in the County of Middlesex on April 7, 1853.



Ennismore Arms, Knightsbridge, 1939.  
Birthplace of Robert Joseph Alpe.  
Demolished by enemy bombing during  
Second World War. *Clifton Inns Ltd. London*

In 1853, Robert and Frances Alpe moved to the "Ennismore Arms" an elite "Pub" in Princes Gate, Knightsbridge where Robert was engaged as the Resident Licensed Victualler.

On 4 March, 1854 my grandfather Robert Joseph Alpe was born at the "Ennismore Arms."



Ennismore Arms, Knightsbridge, London, as rebuilt in 1959. *Chris Amies - Flickr*

In a Tourist Publication entitled "Discovering London," produced by Clifton Inns of London to whom I am grateful for information supplied, Knightsbridge is described as a "Bygone Hamlet" which is now a popular shopping area including the famous Department Store of Harrods, together with boutiques, antiques and china shops, restaurants, cafes, and, of course, - "Pubs."

The Brochure then goes on to describe a walk around the area including visits to the four historic pubs, namely, Tattersalls Tavern, The Ennismore Arms, The Enterprise, and The Tea Clipper.

My great-grandparents, Robert and Frances Alpe, lived at the Ennismore Arms from 1853-1859.

At that time the Ennismore Arms was owned by the Earl of Listowel whose second title was Ennismore.

It was a small pub opposite Hyde Park and close to the Albert Memorial and the Royal Albert Hall. Its focal interest has always been its Bar for there was no space for Public Accommodation even if it had been required.

At the time it was much frequented by coachmen. The area was once part of the Grounds of Kingston House built in 1770 by the Duchess of Kingston.

The three storey "Ennismore Arms" which was my grandfather's home for the first five years of his life was bombed in 1940 during the Air Invasion of London, and suffered major structural damage.

It was replaced in 1959 by a very well designed "Georgian" two storey building and today it is tastefully decorated by floral window boxes where "mine host" is a young and attractive woman, Yvonne Long. *[The Ennismore Arms was closed in 2002 and demolished in 2005/6 – Ed]*

The record of Robert and Frances Alpe in England after 1859 is difficult to trace, but it would appear that possibly due to the bad economic conditions in England at that time the family returned to Norfolk, where Robert operated as a draper.

Their son who was my grandfather, Robert Joseph Alpe, lived for five years in Knightsbridge and appears to have spent his youth in Norfolk.

## **GURNEY - Norfolk - England**

The Gurney family of Norfolk were a family of note in England in the 19th century.

There are many Gurney families spread around Britain, but most seem to be descendants of the various Norwich families of which the most important was Earlham.

For some 40 years Gurneys Bank was the largest Bills Bank in the world- but in the great depression of the mid eighteen hundreds they were bankrupted with liabilities of 11 million pounds.

Many of the Banks in Britain today such as Barclays, Lloyds, and Coutts were associated with the great Gurney Bank, but have survived.

All of the Gurneys who were involved with the Bank sold their assets and holdings to endeavour to avoid the 'Crash', but to no avail. Most were left in poor circumstances after a life of affluence.

In a Court claim against the Gurneys in 1869, the Solicitor-General said that "the Gurneys conduct had been that of honourable men. As an old and reputable firm they had done all that was possible to avoid the bankruptcy, having contributed large sums of money, given up their salaries, and sold their homes in support of the Gurney Bank. "

My great grandmother was Frances Frederica Gurney. Unfortunately we have been unable to define clearly to which branch of the family she is associated, but hope in the future this can be solved.

Many of the Gurneys were Quakers, of whom Elizabeth Fry was a leading figure. She was a prison reformer, and was a generation older than Frances Frederica Gurney. This name is interesting as Crown Prince Frederick of Prussia was a frequent visitor to the home of Elizabeth Fry, (nee Gurney), and it could be speculated that there was some association say of the parents of Frances, who may have visited the home on the occasion of one of these visits, and named their daughter after this personable Prince. Incidentally the Prince shared some of Elizabeth Fry's opinions on reforms. Frances Frederica Gurney was the daughter of John Henry Gurney.

She married Robert Alpe in 1853.

They were involved with the Ennismore Arms at Princes Gate, Knightsbridge, London, between 1853 and 1859.

Frances named her son Robert Joseph Alpe, and whilst the name of Robert is definitely associated with the Alpe family, the second name of Joseph, is an important Gurney name, for the original head of this Quaker family was John Joseph Gurney.



**ROBERT JOSEPH ALPE. London, Christchurch, Auckland. (1854-1897).**

My grandfather, Robert Joseph Alpe, was the son of Robert and Frances Frederica Alpe (nee Gurney), who were engaged at the "Ennismore Arms," Princes Gate, Knightsbridge, London. He was born at the "Ennismore Arms" in 1854.



Robert Joseph Alpe, shortly after arrival in New Zealand.

*Grahame Alpe*

This Hotel situated in the Ennismore Gardens area close to Albert Memorial, Albert Hall and opposite Hyde Park, is still operating today. *(It closed in 2002 – Ed)*

My grandfather emigrated to Christchurch, New Zealand, in 1875, where he married Eliza Dickinson in 1880. Eliza was the daughter of a pioneer settler,

who had come from Yorkshire in 1851. (*Interestingly, 17 months earlier, Eliza's older sister Caroline Mellon Dickinson had married Samuel Alpe, a widower, who was a cousin of Robert Joseph Alpe's father - Ed*)

There were four children from this marriage, Bertha Gurney (my mother), Robert Edmund, Frederick George and Jessie Isabel.



Robert and Eliza Alpe with children Bertha and Robert.

Robert Alpe was an employee of the New Zealand Railways, being Stationmaster at Kaiapoi in the South Island prior to his transfer in 1897 to the North Island, where he had been appointed Stationmaster at Newmarket Railway Station, Auckland.



Widower Robert Alpe with his family in 1892  
L. to R. Robert Alpe, Isabel, Bertha, Robert and Frederick. *Grahame Alpe*

Eliza Alpe died in 1888 sixteen months after the birth of Isabel when Bertha, the oldest child was only six years of age. Over the years she had to develop as the 'mother' of the family, and this is confirmed by her brothers in later life.



Robert Alpe with his family after the death of Eliza.

Robert married a second time to Sarah Hollingsworth and there was no issue from this union. He died at his home at Middleton Road, Remuera, on 23rd March, 1897 after a very short illness at the age of 43 years. The children were orphaned at the ages of, Bertha 16, Robert 13½, Frederick 11 and Isabel 9 years.

The name of Edmund has come down through the Alpe generations of East Anglia. This name pays tribute to Edmund (The Martyr) King of Anglia, who was defeated by the Danes in 866 AD. After his capture he was martyred because he would not renounce his faith. St Edmund was interned at Bury St Edmund, and his grave became a celebrated Shrine during the Middle Ages.

## DICKINSON - Sheffield - Yorkshire - England.



First settlers arrive at Port Lyttelton, and Summit Road over Port Hills.

Canterbury Museum

George Dickinson (1827-1913) was my great grandfather and was born in Sheffield, Yorkshire. His English background was farming. He married Marianne Lindley of Pleasley in Nottinghamshire at Mansfield in 1848.

Their home was in West Street, Sheffield, where their son Urban Lindley was born. They left Britain in the 'Labuan' on 8th April, 1851, arriving at Lyttelton on 14th August, 1851.

They settled in Christchurch where my grandfather applied for a Canterbury Association Land Order of 50 Acres which was granted to him. He named his farm property St Albans, and gradually developed it to a stage where it was carrying a cow to the acre. He named this farm after a relative, Harriot Mellon, who became Duchess of St Albans after her second marriage to William Beauclerk, the 9<sup>th</sup> Duke of St Albans. *(The exact relationship, if any, is unclear. Harriot Mellon was also the name of George's mother but the Duchess was 15 years older - ed).* Later when a name was being sought for the area in which the farm was located, Dickinson's suggestion of 'St. Albans' was accepted, and remains the name of the Christchurch suburb St. Albans.

When the Dickinsons first arrived in Canterbury, there was no City of Christchurch, the area being known at the that time as Cooper's Plains, and conditions were rugged in the extreme. In fact Godley, the leader of the settlers, had great confidence in their ability to survive, and is quoted in the 'Story of New Zealand' by Reed as saying to a fellow countryman: -

'Do not be afraid to leave them to themselves  
Throw them in the water and they will swim.'

However the family thrived in spite of the hardships. George and Marianne Dickinson had eleven children

My grandmother Eliza (1856-1889) was the fifth child.



George Dickinson, 'St Albans', Christchurch.

*Canterbury Museum*

George Dickinson had a fine community record which included the following:

He was one of the earliest accredited Methodist local preachers. In 1873 he 'topped the poll' for the St Albans School Committee.

In 1872 he 'topped the poll' for the Avon Road Board, and in spite of much criticism which was directed at the Board, was the only member of the Board to be re-elected. In 1875 in a heavy poll, he again 'topped the poll' and continued to serve on the Board until he retired in 1888.

He was one of the Committee formed to organise the First Canterbury Rifle Volunteers.

In 1881 at the formation of the St Albans Borough Council he was elected a member, and again in 1882.

However, in spite of his community activities, he was best known as a cricketer. He was very proficient spin bowler, and handy with a bat. He represented Canterbury in the first Provincial match with Otago in 1864, and again in the year, 1865, 66, 67 and 68. He umpired the 1873 match.

He was acknowledged at the time as the best bowler in the United Club and took 28 wickets for an average of 4.20 runs. He was a committee member of the Club in 1870.

He encouraged the St. Albans Cricket Club which was formed in 1872. The members of the Club practiced in one of his paddocks, and he even built a barn of such dimensions, that it was ideal for cricket practice, being 30 yards long by 5 yards wide.

His community record must be acknowledged to be a very fine one.

### **LINDLEY, Pleasley, Nottinghamshire, England.**

The Lindleys were farmers at Pleasley in the Nottinghamshire County. Their farm was close to Sherwood Forest of Robin Hood and Maid Marian fame, therefore the name Marianne in the family is not surprising. Perhaps the surprising thing is that it has not been carried on through the family generations.

Radmanthwaite House as it is called in Lindley family records, is still in existence on the Radmanthwaite Farm, No 3 as it was known.

George Lindley the father of Marianne who married George Dickinson and came to Christchurch, came originally from Selston in Nottinghamshire, and on the Radmanthwaite Farm, No 3 as it is known today, brought up a large family. Marianne's mother must have died before she came to New Zealand as she is not shown in the 1861 Census family statistics.

George Lindley employed eight farm labourers on the farm in 1850. MARIANNE was the youngest of the five children; Ursula, Amy, Sophia, Urban and Marianne.

There is some conflict in the spelling of Marianne's name, for in the 1851 Census return she is listed as 'Mary Ann', but in the Dickinson Family Bible which Grahame Alpe has made available, she is listed as 'Marianne'. We have therefore referred to her by the name of Marianne.

## **ALPE, Brothers and Sisters.**



1924 looking west from Gort Street, Auckland. Alpe Bros. building at right.

*Auckland Public Library*

### **BERTHA GURNEY ALPE (1882-1916), Christchurch, Wairoa, Wellington.**

**Refer to Thomas Snow, Wellington.**

### **ROBERT EDMUND ALPE, Christchurch, Auckland. (1884-1941).**

Robert Edmund Alpe was the second child and elder son of Robert Joseph and Eliza Alpe. He was born in Christchurch in 1884 where his mother died in 1889. Later he lived in Rakaia whilst his father was Stationmaster there. Robert joined the New Zealand Railways as a cadet and was transferred to Wellington where he became involved in his chosen sports of gymnastics and rowing.

He won the Wellington open Championship for gymnastics in two successive years and rowed competitively for the Star Rowing Club.

After fifteen years with the Railways Department he resigned to join his younger brother Frederick in founding the Printing and Stationery firm of Alpe Bros. at Auckland.

He married Averill Cuff of Wellington, and there were two children from the marriage Gurney Frederick (Bob) and Elizabeth Collier, (m. Sydney Ross).

He was a keen golfer with the Titirangi Golf Club, and was a Past President of the Auckland Master Printers Association.

He died at his home 35 St. Stevens Avenue, Parnell, on 11th September, 1941, aged 57 years.



Robert and his brother Fred had a very close association, and enjoyed each others company, as they were both keen fishermen and golfers.



Family group of Alpes and *Laurensens* at Fred Alpe's Ranfurly Road home, Auckland.  
Back row: Alison, Fred, Effie, Grahame, *Chris*, Virginia, *Malcolm*, *Marjorie*, *Ian*  
Front row: Richard, David, Steve

### **FREDERICK GEORGE ALPE, Christchurch, Auckland. (1886-1966)**

Frederick George Alpe, the third child and second son of Robert Joseph and Eliza Alpe, was born in Christchurch in 1886.

In his youth he spent some years in Rakaia whilst his father was Stationmaster there. Fred moved with the family to Auckland in 1897, after his father's Newmarket Stationmaster's appointment.

The early death of his father in 1897 affected his life and in consequence he commenced work at an early age with the Printing firm of Collins Bros. Ltd. In 1909 he and his elder brother Robert, who had resigned from the Railways Department to join him, founded the Stationery and Printing business of Alpe Bros. which in 1928 became a Limited Company.

After Robert's death in 1941, Fred carried on as Managing Director. Fred's son Grahame later served as a Director of the Company.

Fred gained several top New Zealand awards for gymnastics and wrestling, and was a keen oarsman and golfer.

He was a Past President of the Auckland Commercial Stationers Association, and vice president of the New Zealand Stationers Guild. He was also a Past President of the Titirangi Golf Club.

He married Effie Isabella Neale of Christchurch and they had three children:- Robert Neale, m. Grace Battersby; Grahame Clinton, m.l. Alison Cooke, 2. Elizabeth Furkert; and Effie Isabel, m.l. Donald Gibbs, 2. Bert Semini.

Frederick Alpe was a man of fine character and popular amongst his fellows, and his life was a success story in view of the early deaths of his parents.

**JESSIE ISABEL ALPE. Christchurch, Auckland**

Jessie Isabel Alpe, the youngest child of Robert Joseph and Eliza Alpe, was born at St Albans, Christchurch on the 14th October, 1887. Her mother survived her birth by only sixteen months.

**LAURENSEN -- ALPE.**

Rev. George I. Laurenson has advised that his granddaughter has married Peter Alpe, a grandson of Frank G. Alpe. Peter is a cousin of Paul Alpe, a great grandson of Samuel Alpe. Samuel Alpe and Robert Joseph Alpe were cousins who married Dickinson sisters, Caroline and Eliza.

## **LAURENSEN family of Melrose, Hawera and New Plymouth**

**GRAEME (SINCLAIR)\* LAURENSEN, M.B.E., P.P.N.Z.I.A., A.R.I.B.A., F.R.S.A., (London). Wellington, Hawera, New Plymouth.**

*(\* Graeme grew up believing that he and his brother Douglas had the middle name 'Sinclair'. However this was never recorded on their birth certificates. Ed)*

I was born in Wellington 28th September, 1908.

I grew up in the happy family atmosphere of our Melrose home, above Lyall Bay, in the era of minimum transport, plenty of open space for young people to fill in their days happily-building forts; caring for pets of which there were always some around the place, goats, rabbits, cats, pigeons, bantams and the offspring of our house cow.

My primary education was at Maranui School, and secondary education at Wellington College and the National Tutorial College.

As I grew up I became aware that I wanted to become an Architect. In those days parents had to pay a premium for their sons to be trained as architects, so although I hopefully made application for a cadetship with a Private Architectural firm, I quickly found that this avenue was closed to me.

I then made application to join the Public Service and was appointed to the Health Department. Following a few interesting and happy years in the Hospital Technical Branch of that Department, where I prepared the plans for a number of Palmerston North Hospital buildings under Mr Charles Scott-Allan I was fortunate to be transferred to Government Architects Office in the Public Works Department.



Graeme Laurenson, Wellington 1930.



Marjorie Gurney Snow, Wellington, 1930.

I trained there for a number of years, being engaged as 2.I.C. in the Architectural Section of the Aerodrome Services Branch, formed to develop Aerodromes, when war was imminent.

In 1936 Marjorie Snow and I were married.

I had qualified as an architect whilst an extra mural student of Auckland University College, and was accepted as an Associate of the New Zealand Institute of Architects.

When Wigram was completed I was transferred to the Hospitals Branch of the Health Department, where I was ultimately appointed Chief Architect and was retained during the War years on the design and supervision of General and War Hospitals, including consultation with the Naval Architect of the Union Steamship Company on the conversion of the Maunganui, for use as a Hospital Ship.

After the war I received a number of offers of partnership in Architectural Firms around the Country, and accepted one with John Duffill of Hawera, in a Province where we had family associations.

After a year, in accordance with the arrangement I had made with John Duffill, I took over the practice. The economy of the Country was improving after the stress of War, and the Practice grew, carrying out many large commissions of varied type, although for many years the practice specialised in Hospital commissions, which were at Hawera, Patea, Stratford, Taumarunui and New Plymouth. To develop this the complement of the practice had increased to a total of thirty, including Architectural and Engineering partners, but excluding Specialist Consultants in Auckland and Wellington.

Although I was involved in many projects during those years my main interest was in the control of the New Base Hospital at Westown, New Plymouth, over a period of 20 years.



Base Hospital, Westown, New Plymouth.

*Laurenson, Robinson and Jim Boon, architects*

I was elected a Fellow of the New Zealand Institute of Architects in 1956, and in 1963 was elected the New Zealand President.

I represented the New Zealand Architects at the first Commonwealth Conference of Architects in London, where I was on the Steering Committee and Chairman of the Professional Practice Committee.

I was appointed the foundation Chairman of the Architects Education and Registration Board, and served in that capacity for seven years, administering the new Architects Act 1963.

I have been involved in Rotary for some thirty years and was President of the Hawera Rotary Club in 1963.

I have served on the Egmont National Park Board for a period of eleven years. My early life was involved in this sphere with the Tararua Tramping Club, and with the Wellington Search and Rescue activities.

Whilst in Shetland in 1963 I suggested that one of the old Norse Longhouse type of Croft Homes, should be obtained and restored as a Museum of the era when the Shetlanders left for New Zealand and elsewhere. It is history now that this aim was achieved and that it seems to be of absorbing interest to Visitors to Shetland.



Croft Home, Dunrossness, Shetland Isles.

I headed the Appeal for funds in New Zealand, which resulted in a substantial contribution being forwarded to Shetland.

I have supported my family in an association with the Anglican Church, St Mary's at Hawera where I was Vestryman, and at St Mary's, New Plymouth.

My sporting interests have been golf and bowls, and Masonry has had a great interest in my life.

In 1971 I was awarded the Queen's Honour of 'Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.'

Life Member: N.Z. Institute of Architects - Shetland Society of Wellington.

**MARJORIE GURNEY LAURENSEN, (nee SNOW), Wairoa, Wellington, Hawera, New Plymouth.**

I was born in Wairoa, Hawke's Bay on the 8th March, 1909, and was the only child of Thomas Weston and Bertha Gurney Snow.

When I was very young my mother's health was causing concern to my father, who had been advised by the family's medical adviser, that she must have a change of climate if any improvement in her health could be anticipated.

Although my father resigned his position as Manager of Williams and Kettle, sold his home at Wairoa, and rebuilt at Onepu Road, Lyall Bay, Wellington, my mother's health did not improve, and she died on 24th July, 1916, aged 34 years.

It was a period of shock for me, but I remember how kind our neighbours, the Ardreys, were to me.

I was 7 years old and was attending the Maranui Primary School, where incidentally my future husband Graeme Laurenson was a student, but neither of us remember the other. My father disposed of his home and made arrangements for me to become a boarder at the private Girls School of Chilton House on the Terrace, Wellington, and it remained my school and home until I was 17 years old. Consequently I never had a home to return to during holidays and I have always been very grateful to friends and relations who opened their homes to me, and made me so welcome. I also remember the pleasant surprise when Mrs Muir of Gisborne made me my first party dress. My school friend Lorna had arranged for me to stay at her parent's home over the holidays.



Chilton House School - Marjorie 6th from left - back row.

Others I remember for their kindness to me during my schooldays were Mr and Mrs Johannes Andersen, the MacDonald sisters of Wellington, and the Lysaght family of Hawera.

As I grew older my holidays were spent in the Nelson District, where my father was stationed, I enjoyed the fruit picking, and the families of Carter, Chamberlain, Higgs and Hopkirk hold a treasured place in my memory.

I joined the Tararua Tramping Club in Wellington, and I enjoyed tramping in the Ranges around Wellington, and the many Social activities which the Club provided. It was here that I met my future husband Graeme Laurenson, an Architectural Student. There was a mutual attraction and we were married at St Mary's Anglican Church, Karori, Wellington on 5th February, 1936.



St. Mary's Anglican Church, Karori – Wellington.



Wedding Photo, Graeme and Marjorie Laurenson St Mary's Anglican Church, Karori, Wellington.

After our marriage we lived in the home my father had built in Messines Road, Karori, while Graeme completed the final year of his Architectural Examinations.

We built our own home at Hungerford Road, Houghton Valley, and shifted from Karori when Jill was just a small baby. We spent nine happy years in this home, surrounded by the finest of neighbours, of whom Doug and Mabs McIntosh rank very high. Malcolm Gurney and Ian Weston were born while we lived there.

Graeme had resigned from the Service to join Mr John Duffill in Architectural Practice at Hawera, so we purchased a house in Disraeli Street, where Christopher Graeme was born. After his birth we moved to the Fairfield Road Home, and the family looks back with the fondest memories of the comfort of this fine old home in which we lived for 14 years.



Graeme, Marjorie, Jill and Malcolm (in pram)  
At Wellington Exhibition.



Marjorie at the age of three years.



Laurenson home, Fairfield Road, Hawera.

Graeme was very busy with his Architectural Practice responsibilities, which were building up rapidly.

I had joined the Women's Club, and my particular interests were the Play Reading and the Bridge Circles.

When we decided to shift to New Plymouth, we sold our Fairfield Road home and we were pleased that Alan Hughson, whose mother was Graeme's second cousin, was the purchaser, which kept this fine family home in the 'Sinclair family.' Alan wished to move in from Napier promptly, so we shifted to our Ohawe Cottage for a few months until our New Plymouth House 'Burrafirth' was completed.

Perhaps the highlight associated with the Fairfield Road home was the wedding of Jill to Roy Symon. Our gardener had brought the property to a park-like atmosphere, and fortunately it was a beautiful summer day when we entertained our friends and relatives.

It was a most happy occasion, and we will always be thankful for this fine start to Jill and Roy's marriage.



Our family had of necessity gone their several ways, Jill to Teachers Training College at Palmerston North, Malcolm to the Air Force at Whenuapai and Singapore, and Ian and Christopher to University, but we have never ceased to be a very close-knit family for which we are very grateful.



Marjorie Laurenson with members of the family in 1956.

L. to R. Marjorie, Ian Malcolm, Chris and Jill.

*David Paul*

When Graeme retired we made the decision to travel to Britain in the last trip of the P. and O. Liner, 'Oronsay'. It was a wonderful experience for us and we enjoyed the three months abroad, visiting our friends and relatives, and seeing the sights which other countries have to offer.

Since we have returned we have lived quietly at 'Burrafirth' tending our house and garden, and cultivating fresh interests involved around the activities of our grandchildren in this generation.

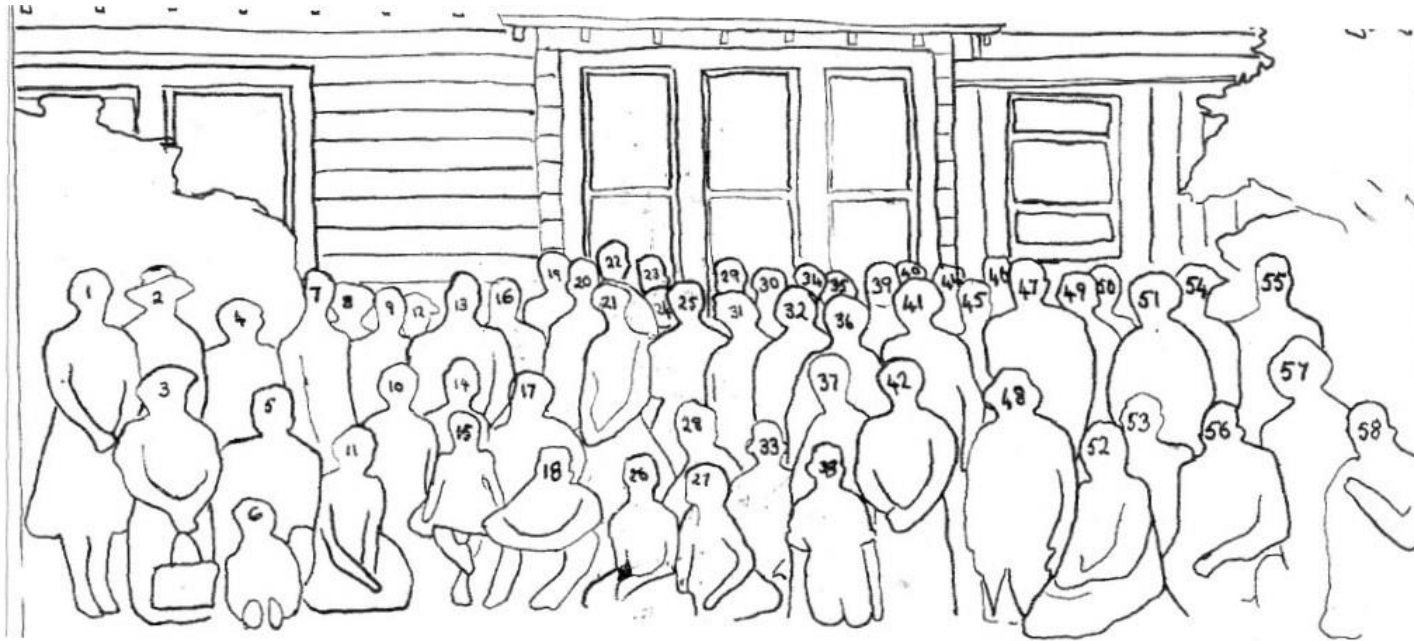


The Laurenson family – 1981. L-R Graeme, Chris, Marjorie, Ian Jill.  
Absent: Malcolm, delayed N. Auckland in bad weather conditions at sea.



Above - The Sinclairs and Laurensens at Fairfield Road Hawera on Jill's wedding day.

David Paul



- |                      |                        |                       |                        |                               |                           |
|----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Jean Quayle       | 11. Margaret Johnston  | 21. Jill Symon        | 31. Lizzie Sinclair    | 41. Mary Carmichael           | 51. <i>Not identified</i> |
| 2. Judith Sinclair   | 12. Mary Griffiths     | 22. Doug Laurenson    | 32. Elizabeth Harland  | 42. Dulcie Carmichael         | 52. <i>Not identified</i> |
| 3. Thea Sinclair     | 13. Graeme Laurenson   | 23. Alan Laurenson    | 33. Chris Laurenson    | 43. <i>(vacant)</i>           | 53. <i>Not identified</i> |
| 4. Evelyn Sinclair   | 14. Kay Johnston       | 24. Girleen Laurenson | 34. Robert Sinclair    | 44. Jim Harper                | 54. Elsie Carmichael      |
| 5. Vic Sinclair      | 15. Robin Gibbard      | 25. Joan Sinclair     | 35. Barbara Laurenson  | 45. Ralph Carmichael          | 55. Archie Carmichael     |
| 6. Margaret Sinclair | 16. Malcolm Laurenson  | 26. Susan Laurenson   | 36. Margaret Priestly  | 46. Clem Trotter              | 56. Tom Laurenson         |
| 7. Ian Carmichael    | 17. Marjorie Laurenson | 27. Peggy Laurenson   | 37. Meryl Carmichael   | 47. Thomas Sinclair           | 57. Phyllis Laurenson     |
| 8. Jean Johnston     | 18. Doug Johnston      | 28. Brenda Laurenson  | 38. Neville Carmichael | 48. Agnes McKenzie (Nana Mac) |                           |
| 9. Ian Laurenson     | 19. Jean Ellis         | 29. Don Sinclair      | 39. Mitchel Fraser     | 49. Vera Carmichael           | 58. Cyril Carmichael      |
| 10. Lois Gibbard     | 20. Roy Symon          | 30. Lyndsay Laurenson | 40. Henry Sinclair     | 50. <i>Not identified</i>     |                           |

## LAURENSEN, Daughter and Sons.

**JILL SINCLAIR LAURENSEN, Wellington, Hawera, Palmerston North, New Plymouth.**



Graeme and Marjorie with Jill, on her wedding day.

Our daughter Jill Sinclair was born in Wellington on 3rd Feb. 1938. She received her secondary education at Hawera High School, where she was a Prefect in her last year.

Jill was a foundation student at the Teacher's Training College in Palmerston North. She obtained her Teacher's Certificate in 1958, and commenced her teaching career at Ramanui School, Hawera in that year. Jill married David Roy Symon on 9th January, 1960. 'Roy' was a contemporary at Hawera High School. He is the son of Eric and Margaret (Peggy) Symon, Lower Hutt.

Jill and Roy's first home was at Palmerston North, where Roy was employed at the Hospital and later with a local Chemist in the City. Having qualified as a Chemist (M.P.S.) Roy decided in 1967 to take over a Chemist's business at Fitzroy, New Plymouth, which he has carried on successfully since that date. [*Roy sold his business and spent some years doing locum work before retiring to take up volunteer communications work for the Police. Jill returned to her teaching career after her children grew up – ed.*]

They have five children: Murray David; Robert James; Vicki Barbara; Brenda Marjorie and Trevor [*Jaya - ed*] Malcolm.

Their home is at 8 Richmond Street, Fitzroy, New Plymouth. [*Jill and Roy moved to 25 Annandale St New Plymouth (Burrafirth) after Graeme Laurenson's death in 1996. Roy died in January 2013 - ed.*]



Jill and Roy Symon family at Fitzroy - L. to R. - Murray, Trevor, Robert, Brenda, Roy, Vicki and Jill.

### **MALCOLM GURNEY LAURENSON, Wellington, Hawera, Auckland.**

Our eldest son, Malcolm Gurney, was born in Wellington on October, 4th, 1939. His primary education was at Wellington and Hawera, and his secondary education was at Hawera High School and Wellington College.

He served for eight years as a Radio Technician with the Royal New Zealand Air Force at Whenuapai Air Base. During this service he was twice stationed overseas at Changi Air Base in Singapore.

After his eight years' service he entered business on his own account in Auckland. He had qualified as a certified Radio Technician, and his aim had been to establish his own Radio and Television Business.

The sea has been his consuming interest, and of recent years he has been busily engaged in sailing around the Auckland Coast in his Trimaran, 'Muckle Flugga' named after the most northern lighthouse in Britain, built by Robert Louis Stevenson's father.

He is presently engaged as a Manager of a City Milk Depot in Auckland.

Malcolm is single and has his own home at 74 Walker Road, Point Chevalier, Auckland. [*Malcolm married Nan Thompson (nee MacIntosh) in 1988. They lived near Kerikeri growing oranges before shifting to Picton where they run a bed and breakfast home - ed.*]



Malcolm Gurney Laurenson.



Trimaran, 'Muckle Flugga'.

*[This photograph is different from the original editions – ed.]*

**IAN WESTON LAURENSON, L.L.B., B.A. Wellington, Hawera, Wellington.**

Our son Ian Weston was born in Wellington on 9th July, 1944, graduated B.A. at Canterbury University. Whilst at University he was elected a member of the Student Executive, and was Editor of *Canta* Student Newspaper.



Ian, Phyllis and little Rachel.

Ian worked for a period with the Public Trust Office but on completion of his L.L.B. Degree at Victoria University he has been employed for some years as a Solicitor with the legal firm of Morrison Taylor & Co. *[Ian worked at Parliament before setting up his own law firm. He later returned to the Public Trust as a solicitor retiring in 2010 –ed. ]*

He married Phyllis Irene Robinson, a schoolteacher, who has since qualified B.A. Phyllis is the daughter of Walter and Janet Robinson of Motueka.

Ian and Phyllis spent 6 months overseas after their marriage in 1973, travelling extensively in Europe and Britain, including in their itinerary, Europe, Britain and the Shetland Islands.

They have two daughters, Rachel Anna St. Clair, and Penelope Jane Marjorie. [*Since publication of this book, Ian and Phyllis's family has increased to four with two younger daughters; Joanna (1986) and Theresa (1988) – ed.*]

Their home is at 17 Sutherland Crescent, Melrose, Wellington.

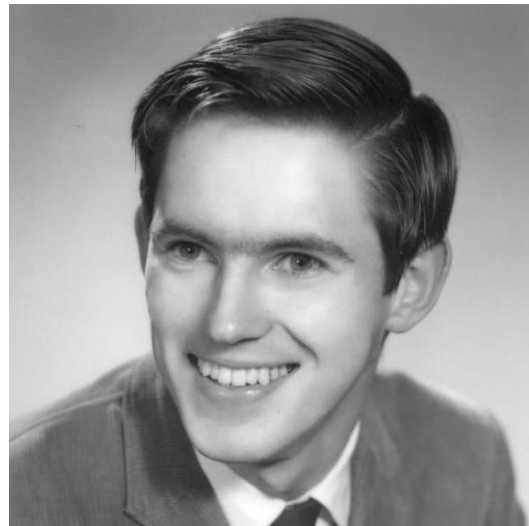
### **CHRISTOPHER GRAEME LAURENSON, M.A. Hawera, Wellington.**

Our son Chris was born in Hawera, 3 November, 1948. He graduated B.A. in Political Science from Canterbury University in 1970.

He remained at University until 1972 studying, for his M.A. Degree which he subsequently completed extramurally at Victoria University in 1979.



Chris and Marjorie at Ohawe.



[Chris on his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday - ed.]

In his last year of full time study at University, Chris was elected to the Student Executive, on which he was appointed International Officer.

Chris joined the Ministry of Transport as an Assistant Research Officer in the field of Road Safety.

In 1976 and 1977 he spent 13 months overseas in Australia, Britain and many countries of South East Asia. On returning to New Zealand he transferred to the Department of Health as an Advisory Officer concerned with graduate recruitment.

In 1980 he was appointed an Executive Officer in the Environmental Health Branch. [*Chris has worked in the Ministry of Health and other health sector organisations since this book was published – ed.*]

He is single and has his home at 11a Firth Terrace, Karori, Wellington. [*Chris married Patricia Elizabeth Simpson in 1988. They moved to Hamilton in 1989 and returned to Wellington in 2001. They have two sons: James Erlam (1991) and Robert Lachlan (1993) -ed.*]

## CONCLUSION

In this record of all the families which make up the background of our 'Burrafirth' family, it has been necessary because of space to place restrictions on many close members of the various families, and to stop the record at my own generation. To record in more detail is quite beyond the scope of this booklet, and I hope that this will be understood and accepted. It is possible, however, that the records in this booklet may assist others to complete their full family story.

In past generations family mottos were very popular in Britain, for instance the Sinclair motto was:

'COMMIT THY WORK TO GOD'.

These mottos were all aimed towards high standards and served these families well.

The motto of the families of the future could well be: -

'KEEP STRIVING'.

Graeme Laurenson, M.B.E.

New Plymouth, February, 1982.



Graeme Laurenson M.B.E. "Burrafirth" 25 Annandale St. New Plymouth. N.Z.



## Appendix to the fourth edition

### Recent photos of the second generation



Jill and Roy (2010)



Nan and Malcolm (2002)

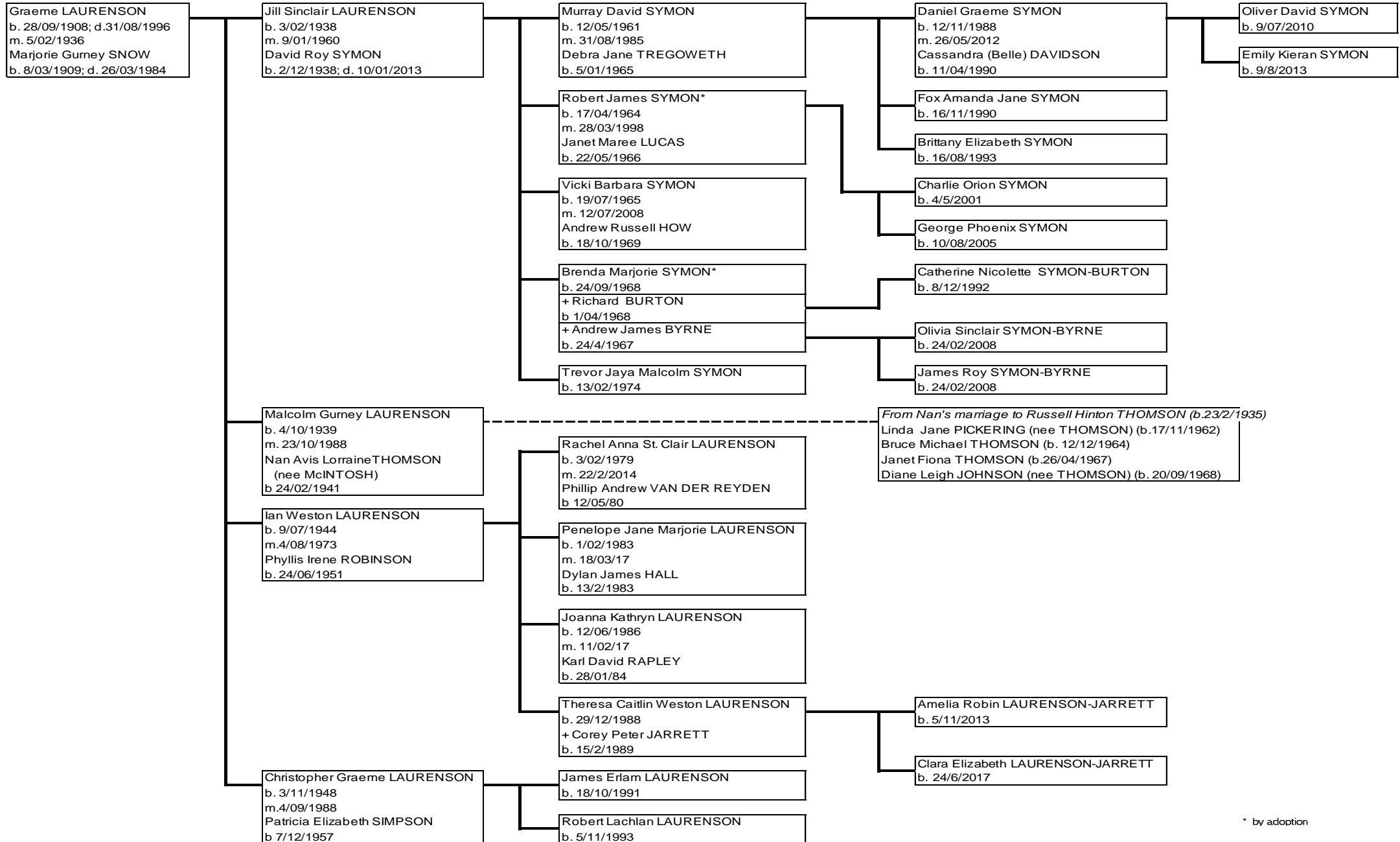


Ian and Phyllis (2010)



Chris and Patricia (2011)

**THE DESCENDANTS OF GRAEME AND MARJORIE LAURENSEN**



\* by adoption