

Appendix E: Adam family, courtesy of Mr Richard Burgess.

Alexander Adam 1801-25.8.1863, buried at Kirk O'Muir, gravestone 120.

http://burgesses.info/taylor/st_ninians_and%20adam_farms.html

The earliest confirmed ancestors in Stirlingshire were James Adam and his wife Isabella, née Muirhead. They were probably living at Buckieburn, a farm about five miles south of Stirling. This seems to have been the main family property for subsequent generations. They had at least six children: John, born about 1801; Janet, b. 6 March 1805; Alexander, b. 1805; James, b. 1810; Mary, b. 1811 and Elizabeth, b. 1828. Mary married James Taylor and they have a [page link](#) to themselves. Janet is as yet untraced beyond her baptism on 20 March 1805. All the others appear in the census records, beginning in 1841.

A map of the area giving farm names is helpful to show the extent of Adam influence in St Ninians.

From the 1851 census up to 1896 when he died, John Adam, the eldest son, lived and farmed at Buckieburn close by Loch Coulter. Sometimes it was called Easter Buckieburn, as shown on this map. Wester Buckieburn was a quarter of a mile away across the Buckie Burn. In 1841 John was farming at Glendales, a name I have been unable to trace. Perhaps it was an earlier name for the Buckieburn farm.

In 1863 John inherited two farms from his brother Alexander: Todholes and Greathill, where Alex had been living when he died. They are shown on the map near the reservoir fed by Bannock Burn (of battle fame). The 1861 census shows Alex living at Greathill and farming 400 acres with his nephew James Taylor, Mary Taylor's son, and Agnes Adam, his niece, who twenty years earlier had been living with Mary and her family in Stirling.

John put his son John into Greathill and he ran the farm until 1897 when he inherited Buckieburn from his father and moved back into the family home, married, and started a family at the age of 56. The elder John also intended to leave to his son William the farm at Easter Craigannet, below Craigannet Hill and close to the River Carron which runs from west to east across the map. In the event William predeceased his father and in a codicil John left the farm to his third son David and stated that he would make provision for William's widow and children during his lifetime. In the 1891 census they are living at the nearby farm called Easterton.

In the will, Easter Craigannet is described as "lying within the Parish of St Ninians Barony of Dundaff late Regality of Montrose and Sherifffdom of Stirling". Impressive!

John's will also refers to stock at Townfoot by the River Carron east of Dundaff Hill. To give an idea of the size of his "estate" the grid lines on the map are every two and a half miles. When John's brother Alexander died his death was officially reported by another brother, James Adam of Muirpark, which lies between Todholes and Loch Coulter. In 1871 Muirpark was a farm of 1000 acres. So, between them, the family of James and Isabella Adam presided over some half dozen farms extending across at least six miles of the parish of St Ninians.

An account of John's death in 1896 appeared in several papers, including the Aberdeen Weekly Journal which, on Friday 28 August, reported it as follows:

"The death has just taken place of possibly the oldest farmer in Stirlingshire in the person of Mr John Adam of Buckieburn and Easterton, Carronbridge, Denny. He had entered his 97th year. Up till within the past four years Mr Adam was able to attend the public markets, where "Buckieburn" was familiarly known, and as an agriculturalist was held in respect. For over 50 years he had occupied Easterton, attaining to a position of affluence by his wonderful energy and ability."

He was not above making the occasional error however, as this report in the Glasgow Herald of Tuesday 27 February, 1866 shows.

"Justice of Peace Court - Cattle Plague Prosecutions... John Adam, farmer at Buckieburn, was charged with a contravention of Orders in Council for the prevention of cattle diseases, so far as having, on or about the 16th day of January last, allowed a portion of a bull which had died of rinderpest to remain unburied, and to be dragged by dogs from place to place over the farm, and thereby encouraging the spreading of the disease. A plea of guilty was given in, and Mr Monteath pled several extenuating circumstances, and craved a modification of fine and expenses. The Justices accordingly fined the pannel in the nominal sum of 2s. 6d., and £1 of expenses."

The "Pannel", or more usually "panel", is the accused person under Scottish law.

There were Adam families living at Cairnock, Craigannet, Muirmill and the Post Office at Carronbridge, all along the River Carron, and at Craigengelt by the Buckieburn Reservoir. No proven relatives of the main family yet, but with so many nephews and nieces working on farms, and several instances of marriages between Adam and Adam to track down it is probably only a matter of time before most of these farms and families are linked.

Daniel Defoe visited the area on his way from Glasgow to Stirling and in the 1720's his impressions appeared under the title "A Tour Through The Whole Island of Great Britain". He wrote:

"From Kilsyth we mounted the hills black and frightful as they were, to find the road over the moors and mountains to Sterling, and being directed by our guides, came to the river Carron: the channel of a river appeared, indeed, and running between horrid precipices of rocks, as if cut by hand, on purpose for the river to make its way; but not a drop of water was to be seen. Great stones, square and formed, as if cut out by hand, of a prodigious size, some of them at least a ton, or ton and a half, in weight, lay scattered, and confusedly, as it were, jumbled together in the very course of the river, which the fury of the water, at other times, I doubt not, had hurried down from the mountains, and tumbled them thus over one another."

The scene has probably not changed significantly in a couple of centuries. The upper Carron runs through one of the remote, largely unpopulated regions of Stirlingshire. Several of the original farms are no longer inhabited or have disappeared under reservoirs, and the development of forestry in the region has hardly made the hills any less "black and frightful" to the traveller.