

Fraser Family History

My father, Graham Fraser, knew little of his father Ninian's Scottish ancestry. Graham knew his grandmother died when his father was a baby; he had been told his grandfather died in a quarry accident. He knew Ninian had a brother, possibly lost in the First World War. But what became of Ninian after his mother's death in 1899, and after his father's presumed death at some subsequent point, we had never known. Nor had we ever known anything of Ninian's father or brother. Ninian never spoke much about his family or his childhood, so the years between his birth in 1899 and his enlistment in the Royal Navy in 1915 had always been a mystery.

I set out to answer these questions:

- Who was Ninian's father, what was his ancestry and what became of him?
- Who was Ninian's brother and what happened to him?
- And what became of Ninian between 1899 and 1915 (when we know from his Navy record that he was living at 1 Gateside Cottage, Denhead)?

These questions uncovered a very remarkable story, and some amazing discoveries, putting back together the story of a family that fell apart amid great hardship and tragedy. In places it is extremely upsetting; and for some readers this story contains discoveries that may be unsettling, and may change their own stories. I'm sorry about this.

In passing this on, I dearly hope it may jog some deep-seated long-lost memory from any members of the Fraser family who see it – and if anybody has any memories, pictures or documents they feel may help, I would really, *really* love to see them.

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A note on sources: Almost all of this research has been carried out on line, a lot of it through the Scotland's People website (www.scotlandsppeople.gov.uk) which has digitised Scottish birth, marriage, death and census records. Other sources include www.freebmd.org.uk and the pay site www.ancestry.co.uk Sources for the World War One material included the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (www.cwgc.org) and the Scottish National War Memorial (www.snwm.org), as well as regimental museums of the Black Watch and the Gordon Highlanders. Material from America was sourced through the pay site www.ancestry.co.uk. I have visited the Plymouth and West Devon Record Office. And there have been many kindnesses from other researchers, specifically family members. Other sources are given in the text. Where ages seem confusing, we must remember people of past eras sometimes fibbed about, or simply didn't know, their age.

1: Ninian Fraser



Ninian Fraser with grandson Stuart, in 1965

Ninian Fraser was born at 7 in the morning of October 20th, 1899 at 26 Horsewater Wynd, Dundee. He was the second son of James and Margaret, known as Maggie, Fraser. The tragedy that began his life is clearly visible on his birth registration:

1899 FRASER, NENIN (Statutory Births 282/02 0706)

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1899. BIRTHS in the District of St. Mary in the Burgh of Dundee

No.	Name and Surname	When and Where Born.	Sex.	Name, Surname, & Rank or Profession of Father. Name, and Maiden Surname of Mother. Date and Place of Marriage.	Signature and Qualification of Informant, and Residence, if out of the House in which the Birth occurred.	When and Where Registered, and Signature of Registrar.
706	Ninian Fraser	1899, October 20 th 7 th 0 th a.m. 26 Horsewater Wynd Dundee.	M.	James Fraser Juste Mill Worker Margaret Fraser M. S. Burns Decemed 1895, January 1 st , Dundee.	James Fraser Father	1899, October 31 st Dundee Mr Mack Registrar.
	William Duncan	1899, October 21 st 4 th 40 th a.m. 11 Horsewater Dundee.	M.	William Duncan Railway Car Conductor Elizabeth Duncan M. S. Salt Dec 31 st 1896 Dundee Lechee.	William Duncan Father	1899, October 31 st Dundee Mr Mack Registrar.
708	Alice Elizabeth Robertson	1899, October 21 st 2 nd 0 th p.m. 4 Tanker Street Dundee.	F.	James Robertson Clerk Elizabeth Robertson M. S. Cuthbert June 2 nd 1899 Dundee.	James Robertson Father	1899, October 31 st Dundee Mr Mack Registrar.

Mr Mack Registrar.

Eleven days after his birth, his mother was dead.

He was incorrectly registered as ‘Nenin’ on his birth, a mistake repeated in his Royal Navy enlistment papers in 1915 when his address was given as 1 Gateside Cottage, Denhead; his occupation was a farm labourer; his next of kin was pencilled in later as his wife, Kathleen. Ninian served throughout World War One and afterwards as a stoker in the Royal Navy. He blamed his later deafness on the colossal noise of working in confined spaces.

Ninian married Kathleen Louisa Davey in Plymouth in 1922. Together they had ten children: Harry (Henry J, b 1924), James (also Henry J, b1925), Margaret Audrey, known as Audrey, (b 1926), Graham Ninian (b 1928), Phyllis Edna (b 1930), Donald G (b 1931), Gloria (b 1932), Brian F J (b 1935), Jean (b 1940) and John A (b 1942). Kathleen already had a daughter, Joan (1922-2009), before their marriage.

Life was not easy for this large family, and money was always short. They grew up in the crowded, narrow streets of Depression-era Plymouth, living in rented homes around Stonehouse and Devonport. Ninian, terse, short and fond of a drink, worked as a painter and in the Royal Navy dockyard. He was a Naval reservist until 1928.

In 1928, Ninian was convicted and imprisoned for a financial crime (Graham surmises it was for not paying the rent), and served 28 days in the old Plymouth Prison, now long closed.

During the Plymouth Blitz of World War Two, the centre of the city was largely destroyed by repeated German bombing raids. Many of the children were evacuated from the stricken city, including my father, who was billeted with a family in West Cornwall.

Over the years, members of the family have gradually lost contact. Joan passed away in 2009, and today only James, Graham, Phyllis, Gloria and Brian remain in touch.

Ninian died in Plymouth in 1980; his wife Kathleen four years later.

Maybe the following explains more about Ninian Fraser. My father remembers that on what turned out to be the last time he saw Ninian, he stopped as he was leaving and, for the first time in his life, walked over and kissed him. Graham remembers: “He looked up at me with absolute *astonishment*, as if to say ‘what on Earth did you do that for?’.”

2: Dundee, 1899

Eleven days after Ninian was born, his mother Margaret, or Maggie, died of puerperal fever. James Fraser registered the birth of his son and the death of his wife on the same day, October 31st 1899.

1899 FRASER, MARGARET (Statutory Deaths 282/02 0612)

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1899. DEATHS in the District of St. Mary in the Burgh of Dundee

No.	Name and Surname Rank or Profession, and whether Single, Married, or Widowed.	When and Where Died.	Sex.	Age.	Name, Surname, & Rank or Profession of Father, Name, and Maiden Surname of Mother.	Cause of Death, Duration of Illness, and Medical Attendance by whom certified.	Signature & Qualification of Informant, and Residence of one of the Houses in which the Death occurred.	When and where Registered, and Signature of Registrar.
010	Joseph Paul	1899, October	M	39	John Fraser Sailor Dundee	Acute Disease 6 months	Charles Grant Nurse	1899, October 30 th Dundee
	Margaret	Spicity Street						
	Full Mill Worker	10 th 10 th a.m.						
	Margaret Fraser	Royal Infirmary Dundee			Margaret Fraser M. J. Griffin Dundee	As Cert. by Dr. G. Brown M. D.	Dr Taylor's Lane Dundee	1899, October 31 st Dundee
011	Margaret Douglas	1899, October	F	16	David Smith Pebles Stationer	Apoplexy Two Days	David Pebles Father	1899, October 30 th Dundee
	Pebles	Spicity Street						
	Milliner	at 15 th a.m.						
	Single	153 Loches Road Dundee			James Pebles M. J. Gray	As Cert. by Robert Davidson M. D.		1899, October 31 st Dundee
012	Margaret	1899, October	F	26	Thomas Burns Book Binder Dundee	Puerperal fever 7 days	James Fraser Midwife	1899, October 31 st Dundee
	Fraser	Spicity Street						
	Married to	5 th 01 st a.m.						
	James Fraser	Full Mill Worker Dundee			Margaret Fraser Dubno M. J. White	As Cert. by A. Marshall C. G. P. M.		1899, October 31 st Dundee

M. J. Meek Registrar.

Puerperal fever was also known as childbirth fever, and was a serious form of septicaemia contracted after childbirth because of poor hygiene.

We can only imagine the gravity of the tragedy. James Fraser had lost his wife, baby Ninian would never know his mother, and - we now know after more than a century - two, not one, other children were left motherless.

James and Maggie were both poorly-paid workers in Dundee's massive jute industry, living in crowded tenements (known as 'pletties') in its streets and 'wynds' (Horsewater Wynd is still there today, though most of its buildings are long demolished). Time and again in this story you'll find references to the same crowded streets - Blackness Road, Lyons Close, Brook Street, Littlejohn Street.

The jute factories were deafeningly noisy and the atmosphere was full of tiny particles of jute fibre, or 'stour', which filled workers' noses, mouths and lungs. Women and children were the main groups employed in the factories as they could be paid less than men and their smaller bodies and hands could move more easily amidst the dangerous spinning and weaving machines.

Jute production made vast fortunes for “jute barons”, such as the Cairds and the Baxters, who lived in splendid villas. Their lives were markedly different from those of the mill workers. Cramped and unsanitary housing, low wages and periods of unemployment meant that life was hard and often short for most mill workers and their families.

- Source: Verdant Works, Dundee, a preserved jute mill now run as a museum to the industry. It's very near Horsewater Wynd.



Entrance to Verdant Works, Dundee



Exhibit in Verdant Works

James and his wife married at James's home, 7 Lyons Close, on New Year's Day, 1895 (Maggie lived nearby at 14 Lyons Close). They lived in a town known for its hardships, the sort of hardships that directly contributed to Maggie's death.

At the turn of the last century, Dundee was an industrial city with few pretensions – a hard town. According to the 1901 Census, its crowded streets were home to more than 163,000 people. Poverty and its effects were notable, even by the standards of the day. In 1901, the Registrar General noted that, of the Scottish cities... ‘the highest death rates among children in their second year were 8.13 per cent in Dundee’... and... ‘the mortality of infants under 12 months ranged from 13.93 per cent in Paisley... to 21.28 in Dundee.’ The Dundee Year Book of 1903 illustrated the cycle of privation and disease. Poor, ill-ventilated rooms... ‘with the walls and the ceiling running with moisture or crumbling with decay’... were commonplace in the tenements, where often there were absolutely no sanitary arrangements, or an outdoor convenience serving eight or ten families.

Dundee was an industrial town and the Edwardian period was one of harsh experiences and privation for most of its citizens. Even of those with work as textile operatives and labourers it was said that ‘physical deterioration is a necessity of their economic

circumstances' and their diet was poor to the extent that 'it compares unfavourably with that of agricultural labourers in England and with that of pauper and criminal inmates of public institutions'.

For some, the distant war in South Africa was as much a prospect for square meals as for travel and adventure. Even so, the fitness of potential recruits continued to be a problem. This state of affairs prompted a Royal Commission of Enquiry, that reported in 1904. In his evidence, Sir Archibald Hunter, who then commanded the Forces in Scotland, stated that they got their 'worst class of recruit, physically, from Dundee' and even people living in the satanic mills of Warrington, Lancashire.... 'working under the same conditions of life exactly as the people that live in Dundee, were of nothing like the inferior quality that these Dundee boys are.'

Part of the reason for this was diet even though, by comparison with previous decades, conditions had improved and food prices were falling.

In the 25 years to 1903... 'shop quality bread has fallen from 6½d to 5d and Danish butter from 1/6 to 1/2... Oatmeal has fallen from 12½d to 10d, boiling beef from 10d or 11d to 7d or 8d... Australian corned beef in 2lb tins from 1/3 to 10½d... The cheapest tea in 1879 was sold at 2/- to 2/4 per pound, now it is advertised at 1/2 and 1/4.' Quite how much difference this made for the very poorest people is not clear. Defective teeth – the second most common cause of rejection for the army – were ascribed to 'a combination of hot strong tea and soft bread... the most frequent diet taken by the working classes in Dundee'.

Continued concern about the physical condition of the poorest occasioned a report by the Dundee Social Union in 1905. Following a medical inspection of children in a number of local schools, it was concluded that... 'taken as a whole, the state of nutrition of the boys was bad. At Brown Street they presented a poor, underfed appearance, probably from improper as well as insufficient food'. The common fare of tea, bread and margarine was described as not being... 'a diet on which bone and muscle can be built up, to say nothing of nerve tissue'. By comparison with national standards, girls as well as boys were generally below average in their height and weight at almost all ages.

Dundee was not... 'a city of revelry by night. On ordinary evenings the streets are almost deserted shortly after nine and, by midnight, but for the sound of horse-drawn sweepers and a rare belated cab, it might be the city of the dead... Saturday night, however, is an

exception. Then the streets are crowded and rough until after eleven o'clock and the echoes of drunken brawls may be heard in the slums far into Sunday morning'.

- Source: Dundee City Council Local History Centre

This was the tough environment into which Ninian Fraser - who grew up to be, like his sister Margaret, tiny - was born. And in which their mother died. Maggie had been ill for seven days.

In the immediate aftermath of Maggie's death, her mother, Mary Ann Slater (formerly Burns, maiden name White) moved into 26 Horsewater Wynd to help James cope with Ninian, his four-year-old brother James and his two-year-old sister Margaret. We can surmise this with confidence because two months later, in December, Mary Ann herself died of pneumonia, aged 47. On her death registration, her address is 26 Horsewater Wynd.

Earlier the very same year, in March, Ninian's other grandmother, Euphemia Fraser, had died. What a year of misery!

When I started work, the only certain reference we had to the family subsequent to this terrible year of 1899 was from Ninian's Royal Navy service record dated from 1915, where his address at 1 Gateside Cottage, Denhead, is given.

What happened to him after his mother's death, between Dundee and Denhead, we had never known. Neither had we known the fate of his father James, nor of his brother James. We hadn't even known his sister Margaret existed.

What happened to two small children and a babe in arms, born into poverty, left motherless and grandmotherless?

Before answering – as far as I can - these questions, let me tie up what we know of Ninian's immediate ancestors and the close family members we, and perhaps he, never knew he had.

3: Ninian Fraser's grandparents

Margaret Burns was the daughter of **Thomas Burns**, a coal miner from Glasgow born in 1852, and **Mary Ann White**, a 'hard wax dealer' from Glasgow. Thomas was the son of John Burns and Margaret Burns, *nee* Lees. Mary Ann was the daughter of John White and Mary White, *nee* Dewar.

Thomas died on October 18th 1878 at the age of 26. According to his death certificate, on which Mary Ann made her mark ('X'), he 'fractured skull from a fall down stairs while intoxicated'. He was dying for two days; no medical attendant was summoned. Presumably the family could not afford it. The couple were living at 68 Gallowgate, Glasgow, at the time.



Gallowgate, Glasgow, 1868

Mary Ann married again, to Thomas Slater, in 1882 in Glasgow. By this time Mary Ann was a hawker. But Thomas died of pneumonia in 1897, a 'pauper' in the City Poorhouse, Glasgow; his widow again made her mark, but her address was recorded as 7 Lyons Close in Dundee. Perhaps they had separated. I have so far found no record of children of this marriage.

James Fraser was the son of another **James Fraser**, born around 1841, and **Euphemia Lawrie** or **Laurie**, whose birth date is uncertain. James, we *think*, came from the parish of Kiltarlity in Inverness. He was the son of another James, a crofter, of Crearag (born c1803), and his wife Elizabeth, *nee* Porteous, b c1806. Another theory has him coming from Colinton, near Edinburgh, the descendant of a line of shepherds and farm workers.

Ninian's grandfather James was an engine fitter, and in 1901 may have been a railway contractor's foreman, as it is thought he was lodging in Neilston, Renfrewshire in 1901 (*Source: Tay Valley Family History Society*). We have no record of his death, but we know from the marriage records of his children that he was alive in 1904, but dead by 1910.

Euphemia, who may have been born around 1846, was the daughter of James Lawrie or Laurie, a weaver, and Janet Lawrie or Laurie, *nee* Moodie.

We can surmise that James and Euphemia's marriage was a 'shotgun wedding' – they married in Thimblerow, Perth, on July 27th 1866; on August 24th 1866, less than a month

later, their first daughter, also Euphemia, was born! Between the census returns of 1881 and 1891, probably before their eldest daughter's marriage in Dundee in 1885, the young family moved from Perth to Dundee, presumably for reasons of James's work.

Grandmother Euphemia's age at her death in Dundee in March 1899 is given as 44, making her born in 1855 and meaning she was 11 when she had her daughter in 1866, an unlikely scenario. It seems more likely her widower lied about her age, or had forgotten, or wasn't clear when he gave it.

Having concentrated so hard on the mysteries surrounding Ninian and his immediate family, the next challenge for now will be to look back at his grandparents and beyond. But for now, on to Dundee in the 1880s and 90s.

4: Ninian Fraser's Uncles, Aunts and Cousins

Mary Ann Slater had at least three children with her first husband, the ill-fated coal miner Thomas Burns - Ninian's mother Margaret (Maggie) and his Aunts Grace and Ellen (Nellie):

Grace Carroll and Ellen Donaldson. Mary Ann's death was registered by her daughter Grace. Grace and her husband Thomas Carroll, a Roman Catholic, who married in January 1890, had at least one son, Edward, born in May 1890 in Dundee (they can't have been very strict Catholics!). Edward was therefore a first cousin for Ninian. Thomas, from Aberdeen, was a ham curer.

Lodging with Grace in 1891 at 219 Overgate were her sisters Maggie and Ellen Burns. Ellen, born in Glasgow in 1877, was already, at 14, working in the jute industry.

Ellen, known as Nellie, married David L Donaldson in Dundee in 1898, when they were both living at 38 Horsewater Wynd. Thomas and Grace Carroll were witnesses. By 1901 the Donaldsons had a son, David, then 3.

I have not been able to trace Thomas, Grace and their family in the 1901 Census for Scotland or England and Wales, nor the Donaldsons in 1911, and may now pursue the idea that they emigrated. But if they did, Grace returned. By now a widow, Ninian Fraser's Aunt Grace died in a nursing home in Lochee, Dundee, in 1956, aged 84. Her death was registered by a niece.

Edward, by 1911, was a soldier. Aged 20, he was a Private in the 2nd Battalion of the Black Watch, serving in India. According to the Scottish National War Memorial in Edinburgh, Private 1392 Edward Carroll of the Black Watch, born in Dundee, died on September 25th 1915 on the Western Front (presumably on the first morning of the Battle of Loos, in which the Black Watch suffered heavy casualties), but the Commonwealth War Graves Commission has no record of him. I've queried this.

James and Euphemia Fraser had eight children, all born in Perth:

Euphemia (1866-1930). She married Alfred Bell Watson (c1863-1944) in 1885. They had three children, more cousins of Ninian's: Richard, alive in 1944 when he registered Alfred's death, Louise or Louisa, b c1888, and Mary Ann, b c1892. One of the girls had a presumably illegitimate daughter, Euphemia, in 1909, judging by the 1911 census return. They were living in Hunter Street, Dundee, in the 1901 census and at 82 Brook Street in 1911. Alfred was a witness at the wedding of his brother-in-law Alexander Fraser and Winifred Dolan.

On their marriage in 1885 in the Episcopal Church in Dundee, Euphemia's mum is the familiar Euphemia Fraser, maiden name Lawrie – but her father is given as Alexander Fraser! Remembering that she was born only a month after James and Euphemia's marriage, we can only wonder if there was some other drama we may never discover....

Alexander (1868 - before 1932). He married Winifred Dolan (1870-1944) in 1895 at 14 Lyons Close, Dundee, where Margaret Burns was living too. Alexander and Winifred had

four children: William (b 1894, the year *before* their marriage), Alexander (b 1897), Winifred (b 1899) and Robert (b 1902).

Winifred married Joseph Lamb in 1932. She already had an illegitimate son, Robert, who, Alf Wallace remembers, became a well-known talent scout for the English soccer team Wolverhampton Wanderers.

Here's a rare old Fraser photo, of Ninian Fraser's cousin William Peter Fraser, the son of his uncle Alexander, with his wife Catherine McKenna:



William (died 1943) married Catherine McKenna; their children included Elizabeth (1928-1968), who married Alfred Wallace (b1924). Elizabeth and Alf's children included my distant cousin Vivienne Snee, b1965. I've been in touch with Alf and Vivienne since they contacted me after an article I wrote appeared in the *Dundee Evening Telegraph*.

James Ninian's grandfather, born on July 25th 1871 in Perth, of whom much more later. His grandmother Janet Laurie made her mark ('X') to register the birth, and James's parents are given as James Fraser and Euphemia Laurie – though Frazer is spelt with a 'z'.

Robert (1872-1875), who died in 1875, before his third birthday, of a 'scarlatinal or measles infection' and acute infant nephritis.

Louisa (1875-1932). She married William Webster (c1873-1936) in 1894. I can't find them in the 1901 census. Louisa's death was registered by her sister Isabella – which may imply the Websters had no children. Louisa was a witness at the wedding of Alexander Fraser and Winifred Dolan.

Ninian (1877-1918). This Ninian Fraser merits a book on his own remarkable story.

5: Ninian Fraser (1877-1918)

Was my Grandad named for this uncle? The elder Ninian had a remarkable life, and there are some puzzles about him, too.

He can't be found, despite the unusual name, in the 1901 census. And his age varies greatly over:

- His first wedding to Rose Ann Crossgrove in 1910, when he's 25. He had moved over the Tay from Dundee to Ferry-Port-On-Craig, today known as Tayport.
- At his second wedding, two years later, to Isabella McCulloch, in Ferry-Port-On-Craig, he's 30.
- At his death in 1918, when his wife is recorded as Isabella Fraser of Brook Street, Dundee, he is aged either 43 (death registration) or 45 (Scottish National War Memorial).

Ninian and Rose Ann married on December 30th 1910; very unusually, *five* witnesses were there. The bride was heavily pregnant when they married, but less than a month later, poor Rose Ann died of 'acute tubercular disease of both lungs' on January 24th, 1911. They must have known she was dying when they married. Almost her last act was to give birth to her son, another Ninian – eerily, *another* Ninian destined to grow up motherless. Ninian Fraser was born in Ferry-Port-On-Craig on January 17th, 1911, a week before his mother's death.

(A Ninian Fraser, b 17th January 1911, died in Bromley, Kent, in the April quarter of 1976, aged 65 (11 1128). A Ninian Fraser married Rose V Cutts in Bedford, Bedfordshire in 1944 (3b 744). Ninian and Rose appear on electoral registers at various addresses in London, from Brixton and Norwood to Paddington, from 1950 to 1961.)

After Rose Ann's death, Ninian Fraser married again, to Isabella McCulloch, in 1913. An Isabella Fraser is recorded as born in Ferry-Port-On-Craig in 1913 and died in Dundee (surname / maiden name Fraser; mother's surname McCulloch; other surnames Dempsey / Scott) aged 88 in 2001. Alf Wallace has confirmed this Isabella was my grandfather's cousin, the daughter of his Uncle Ninian. She proudly records her father's name on her tombstone in Dundee. Alf Wallace remembers her well, as a kind woman – she once saved him a long walk home by giving him a 1d bus fare when he was a lad.

At the outbreak of World War One, Ninian Fraser, though by this time approaching middle age, must have volunteered for service.

His 4th Battalion of the Royal Highlanders, better known as the Black Watch, drawn almost entirely from Dundee, was known as 'a city at war' (*The Black Watch*, Eric and Andro Linklater, 1977). After being decimated at the Battle of Loos in 1915, the 4th and 5th battalions amalgamated and after that point Ninian served with them in every subsequent major theatre of war on the Western Front, including the Somme. He was wounded out of the Black Watch in the earlier stages of the Battle of Passchendaele (3rd Ypres) in 1917. He was

reported wounded in *The Scotsman's* casualty lists of September 10th, 1917. He returned to the Western Front, seemingly posted to the Cameron Highlanders, and presumably suffered the wounds that killed him in the last stages of the final German attack of the war in 1918.

Private Ninian Fraser of the Black Watch ('latterly Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders'), born in Perth, died of wounds on August 22nd 1918, his age given as 45 by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the Scottish National War Memorial, but as 43 on the military record of his death. The CWGC records him as 'husband of Isabella Fraser of 69, Brook Street, Dundee'.

He is buried at Longuenesse (St Omer) Military Cemetery; St Omer was the General Headquarters of the British Expeditionary Force from October 1914 to March 1916 and a considerable hospital centre.

After that detour, back to the last of Ninian's uncles, aunts and cousins.

Catherine (1880-1959). She married, in 1903, James Smith. In the 1901 census she was boarding at 3 Littlejohn Street with no other members of her family. (Her sister Isabella was living at 6 Littlejohn Street on her marriage to James Gardiner, of 9 Littlejohn Street, in 1902). James, a glazier, and Catherine were living in Blackness Road, Dundee, in 1911, with their children Jemima (7), Alexander (5) and Catherine (3). Ninian's Aunt Catherine died of a stroke in Dundee Royal Infirmary in 1959, aged 78. Her death was registered by her husband – and we'll return to James Smith later in this story for a key piece of evidence.

Isabella (1882-1964). Isabella married James Gardiner (1882-before 1916) on New Year's Eve 1901; I can find no record of children. I think James Gardiner must have been one of the thousands of Scottish victims of the Battle of Loos in 1915 (two James Gardiners are recorded but with no biographical details at all), the reason why Isabella married a second time, to John Lindsay, in 1916. Rose Ann Charles was a witness at this wedding; in 1917 a child called Rose Ann Charles Lindsay was born (her birth certificate can't be read because of the 100-year confidentiality rule on birth certificates in Scotland). Was Rose Ann Charles Lindsay John and Isabella's daughter? In 1918 we see the birth of John Fraser Lindsay (birth certificate can't be read; no death recorded); was he their son? A J Lindsay was alive in 1957 when he registered the death of his father, John Lindsay. In 1964 the death of Isabella, with the surnames Fraser, Gardiner and Lindsay is recorded.

We can see that Ninian, far from having no family ties as was the picture I gathered as a young lad, had many close relatives alive and well and living in and around Dundee until pretty recently.

6 Ninian's lost brother, James Fraser

James Fraser was born to James and Margaret Fraser in November 1895 at 15 Midkirk Style, Dundee.

1895 FRASER, JAMES (Statutory Births 282/02 0746)

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1895 BIRTHS in the District of St Mary in the burgh of Dundee. Page 249.

No.	Name and Surname.	When and Where Born.	Sex.	Name, Surname, & Rank or Profession of Father, Name, and Maiden Surname of Mother. Date and Place of Marriage.	Signature and Qualification of Informant, and Residence, if out of the House in which the Birth occurred.	When and Where Registered, and Signature of Registrar.
745	Elizabeth Gibson	1895, October Thirtieth 3 rd 30 th a.m.	F	William Gibson Sailor Bridget Gibson M. S. Mulligan	Bridget Gibson Mother	1895, December 3 rd At Dundee M. S. Meek Act - Registrar.
		52 Polpack Road, Dundee.		1892, July 26 th Blairgowrie		J. B.
746	James Fraser	1895, November Twelfth 11 th 30 th a.m.	M	James Fraser Jute Mill Worker Margaret Fraser M. S. Burns	Margaret Fraser Mother	1895, December 3 rd At Dundee M. S. Meek Act - Registrar.
		15 Midkirk Style Dundee.		1895, January 1 st Dundee		J. B.
747	Robert Mackay	1895, November Twentieth 3 rd a.m.	M	William Toddie Kibbet Shoemaker Charlotte Kibbet M. S. Mackay	William Toddie Kibbet Father Present	1895, December 3 rd At Dundee M. S. Meek Act - Registrar.
		12 St Mary Place, Dundee.		1891, August 21 st Dundee.		J. B.

Jas. McAllister Registrar.



Midkirk Style tenements, late 19th century.

My father says Ninian said he had been notified of his brother's death during World War One.

163 J or James Frasers died in the first war; working from the Scottish National War Memorial at Edinburgh Castle and the records of the Commonwealth War Graves

Commission, most can be discounted as 'our' James. But 26 of them have no identifying information left whatsoever, so any one of them *could* be our relative.

But remarkably, just one James Fraser killed in World War One had his birthplace recorded as Dundee: Private 266910 James Fraser of the 6th Battalion, Gordon Highlanders.

The Gordons were based in Aberdeen but recruited in Angus (Dundee's county). James Fraser was one of many (more than 250) Gordons killed and, in his case, wounded on the first day of the Battle of Arras, April 9, 1917, possibly when a huge ammunition dump blew up (*War Diary, Gordon Highlanders*). He died a day later of his wounds at a casualty clearing station.

1917 FRASER, JAMES (Statutory Deaths 118/AF 0348)

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ARMY FORM W. 3231.

RETURN of WARRANT OFFICERS, NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS and MEN
of the 6th Battalion Gordon Highlanders KILLED in Action
(CLASSIFIED 2012)
or who have DIED whilst on Service Abroad in the WAR of 1914 to

10 JAN 1919

REGT. NO.	RANK	NAME IN FULL (SURNAME FIRST)	AGE*	COUNTRY OF BIRTH	DATE OF DEATH	PLACE OF DEATH†	CAUSE OF DEATH
✓ 26617	Pte.	Gordon, Peter	38	P. of S. Keith	9. 4. 17	P. of S. France	Killed in Action
✓ 266059	Pte.	Smith, Albert C. P.	24	Hamby	9. 4. 17	do.	do.
✓ 266242	Pte.	Jamieson, James	17	Scotland	10. 4. 17	do.	Died from Wounds Recd. in Action
✓ 266904	Pte.	Staines, William T.	37	do.	9. 4. 17	do.	do.
✓ 266319	Pte.	Simpson, Alexander	21	Inceby	10. 4. 17	do.	do.
✓ 265013	Pte.	McCulloch, James	31	Scotland	10. 4. 17	do.	do.
✓ 266077	Pte.	Hiddleston, James	19	Afford	10. 4. 17	do.	do.
✓ 266045	Pte.	Thom, William	20	Keith	10. 4. 17	do.	do.
✓ 265001	Sgt.	Kiddell, John	25	Scotland	10. 4. 17	do.	do.
✓ 266910	Pte.	Fraser, James	20	do.	10. 4. 17	do.	do.
✓ 265914	Cpl.	Lammer, Joseph	21	Americus	10. 4. 17	do.	do.
✓ 266065	Pte.	Stonach, Charles	17	Keith	11. 4. 17	do.	do.
✓ 265001	Pte.	Broman, Joseph	19	Scotland	14. 4. 17	do.	do.
✓ 265013	Pte.	S. L. L., Charles	17	do.	12. 4. 17	do.	do.
✓ 266266	Pte.	Banks, John	19	Aberdeen	9. 4. 17	do.	do.

* The Age or approximate Age should be given in complete years, i.e., Age last birthday.
† The Country should be entered if the actual place of Death is not known.

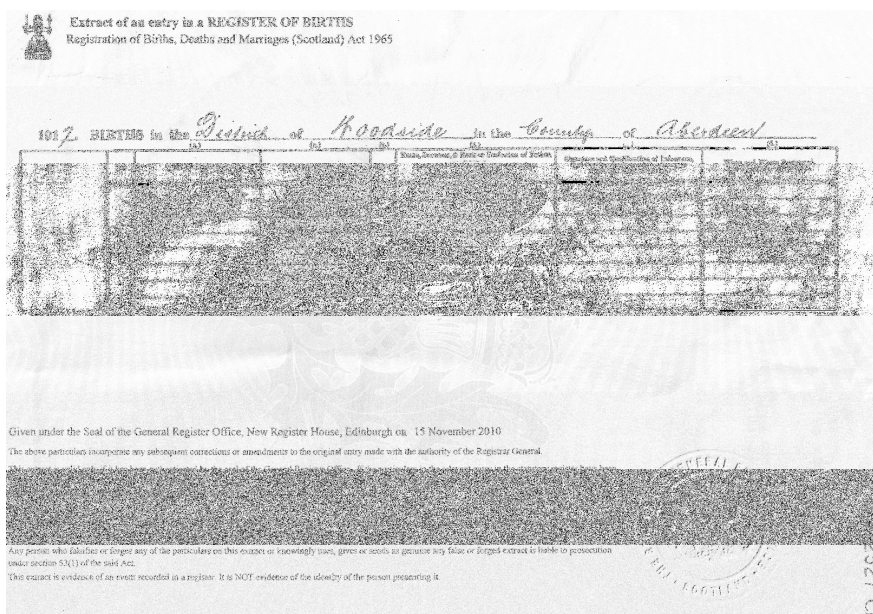


Gordon Highlanders at Arras

On James Fraser’s body was his paybook and in it he left a brief soldier’s will, leaving everything to his ‘sweetheart’ Barbara Sanderson (*sic*), of 265 Great Northern Road, Aberdeen, also recorded as his next of kin (*The National Archives, Scotland*). I have a copy of the will. He left nothing to any parents; our James had no surviving mother and, we now suspect, may not have been in contact with his father. Unfortunately, his service record, which would definitively identify him, was destroyed in the blitz on London in World War Two. The Gordon Highlanders Museum in Aberdeen has been very helpful, but holds no other evidence.

I wrote an article for the *Aberdeen Press and Journal* to try to trace any descendants of the Barbara Sanderson mentioned in James Fraser’s will. It was a long shot, but one Wednesday evening our phone rang. On the line was Audrey McGregor, from Aberdeen, the granddaughter of Barbara Sandison – *and James Fraser*.

James died on April 10th, 1917, leaving everything to his unmarried sweetheart Barbara Sanderson – we now know her surname was actually ‘Sandison’, and looking closely once more at James’s will we can see efforts to correct the spelling of the name. In September 1917, Barbara gave birth to an illegitimate daughter. She named her daughter Jamesina Fraser Sandison. Here is the birth certificate, with the father’s details poignantly absent:



Given the extraordinary name for a girl, and the fact that the address on this certificate and in James Fraser's will are identical, there seems to be no doubt whatsoever that Jamesina was James Fraser's daughter. Whether he knew his 'sweetheart' was pregnant, as he lay at that casualty clearing station dying of his wounds, we shall never know. Nor can we know poor Barbara's thoughts when she received news of James's death.

Their daughter became Jamesina Petrie, mother of Audrey McGregor, her sister Pat and her three brothers Bill, Richard and David.

Audrey and her family have little information on the grandfather they never knew, mainly, they believe, because of the stigma of illegitimacy. Barbara emigrated to America and died there. So far, the only evidence we have to link James Fraser to our family is circumstantial pictorial evidence.



Above left are Audrey McGregor's brothers Bill and Richard, *possibly* the grandsons of James Fraser, the same generation as the grandchildren of Ninian Fraser. Above right are, from left, Audrey, her dad, her sister Pat, Barbara Sandison's sister Mabel and Audrey's brother David.

To me, Pat, the girl in the centre of the right-hand photograph, could be a double for my sister Alison. My father, who agrees, adds that Richard, on the right of the picture of the two brothers, bears a resemblance to his brother Brian. I'd love to know what others in the family think.

This is the only photograph of James Fraser's daughter Jamesina, the lady holding the baby:



It's impossible to prove anything with the photographs – but it *is* possible to conclude that they do not rule out the theory that this James Fraser of the Gordon Highlanders was indeed Ninian's lost brother.

Did Ninian's brother James Fraser die at Arras in 1917? We cannot be sure and may never be sure – but four things support the possibility: Ninian *said* his brother was killed in the war; the James Fraser who died at Arras came from Dundee, the only James Fraser recorded to have done so; pictures of the descendants of the James Fraser who died at Arras are, at least, not so dissimilar to our family that they make a link impossible; and we cannot at present find James anywhere else.

I have checked civilian death records on line for James Frasers born in 1895 in Dundee, mother's maiden name 'Burns', and found *no* listings.

Omitting the 'mother's maiden name' search criteria, there are 37 James Frasers born in 1895 in Dundee who died in the century 1895-1995.

Our James is definitely *not* one of the James Frasers who died in infancy between 1895 and 1902, but the only way to rule out the possibility that James was one of the other 35 is to check all 35, which one day I'll try to do!

For now, for me, I believe our relative may be 266910 Private James Fraser, of the 6th Bn, Gordon Highlanders. He is buried (plot II. A. 32) at Roclincourt Military Cemetery, near the village of Roclincourt, a little to the east of the road from Arras to Lens in Pas de Calais, France.



Roelincourt Cemetery and below, James Fraser's grave



7: Ninian's father, James Fraser

So what happened to James Fraser after 1899 and the death of his mother, wife and mother-in-law in the space of 10 months, leaving him with a babe in arms and two small children?

We cannot find the young brothers anywhere in the 1901 census for Scotland - the only hint is a James Fraser of the right age, 6, recorded as a boarder with a Robert and Jessie Fraser in Dundee, but Robert and Jessie do not appear to be family members. Of Ninian there is no glimpse at all. James himself may be lodging with a Betsy Spence; there is a James Fraser registered there as a calendar worker (another mill job), of roughly the right age. I cannot find a Margaret.

Dad remembered that Ninian used to refer with dislike to a woman named 'Annie Crow'. Could this mean anything? I searched Scotland's People for a marriage between James Fraser and an 'Annie'.

And this led to the discovery that James Fraser married again, in Dundee, in 1904. His bride was Annie Coutts. The parents are James's parents; he is a widower; this is without question our man. (Note that Annie's mother was Annie Culbert).

1904 FRASER, JAMES - COUTTS, ANNIE (Statutory Marriages 282/02 0099)

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(Page 50.)

1904. MARRIAGES in the District of St. Mary in the Burgh of Dundee

No.	When, Where, and How Married.	Signatures of Parties Bride or Profession, Whether Single or Widowed, and Relationship (if any).	Age.	Usual Residence.	Name, Surname, and Rank or Profession of Father. Name, and Maternal Surname of Mother.	If a regular Marriage, Signatures of officiating Minister and Witnesses. If Irregular, Date of Courtship, Decree of Decernation, or Sheriff's Warrant.	When & Where Registered, and Signature of Registrar.
99	1904/ on the eighth day of April at 17 Seaviewburn Dundee.	Signed/ James Fraser John Reppe Widower/ Singer	28	Seaviewburn Dundee.	James Fraser Abigail Pittie James Euphonia Fraser M. J. Louie Decerned	Signed/ Walter J. Logan Charles W. S. Church Singer	1904/ April 12 th at Dundee
	after Publication according to the Terms of the United Free Church	Signed/ James Coutts John Reppe Singer	21	Seaviewburn Dundee.	William Coutts John Mill Brown Annie Coutts M. J. Culbert	Signed/ Albania Mary Mitchell Witness Annie Mitchell Witness	at Dundee Mr Meek Registrar
100	1904/ on the eighth day of April at 23 Albany Terrace Dundee.	Signed/ Andrew Fitzgerald Paul Paul's Witness Bachelor	20	17 Glamis Street, Dundee.	Thomas Fitzgerald Commercial Traveller James Fitzgerald M. J. Macrae	Signed/ W. J. Mason of St. David's Parish Singer	1904/ April 13 th at Dundee
	after Banns according to the Terms of the Established Church of Scotland	Signed/ James Machar John Reppe Singer	19	16 Colquhoun Street, Dundee.	William Machar Catherine Lapper Elizabeth Machar M. J. McDonald	Signed/ George Machar Witness Margaret Ann Stewart Witness	at Dundee Mr Meek Registrar

We now also know that James and Annie had a son, Robert, born a year later:

1905 FRASER, ROBERT KNIGHT (Statutory Births 282/02 0410)

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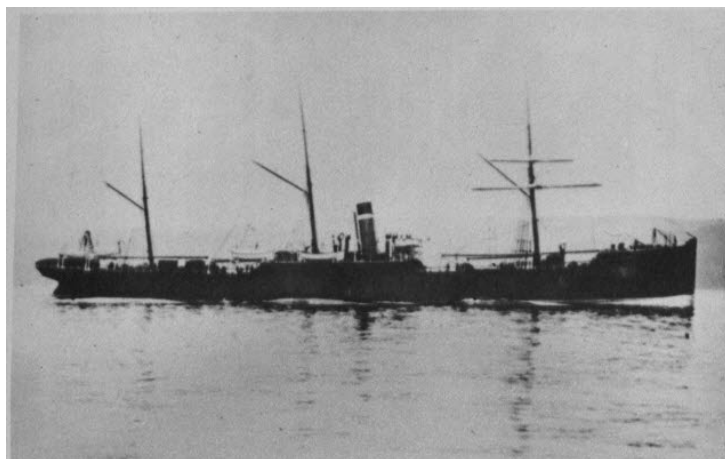
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1905. BIRTHS in the District of St. Mary in the Borough of Dundee

No.	Name and Surname.	Sex.	Name, Surname, & Rank or Profession of Father. Name, and Maiden Surname of Mother. Date and Place of Marriage.	Signature and Qualification of Informant, and Residence, if out of the House in which the Birth occurred.	When and Where Registered, and Signature of Registrar.
409	David Morrison Murray	M	William Murray Electric Car Driver Jane Murray M. J. Stewart 1892, April 7 th , Dundee	William Murray Father Present	1905. May 22 nd At Dundee M. J. Meek Registrar.
410	Robert Knight Fraser	M	James Fraser Assistant Gate Mill Operator Annie Fraser M. J. Stewart 1901, April 5 th , Dundee	Annie J. Fraser Mother	1905. May 22 nd At Dundee M. J. Meek Registrar.
411	William Connell Kelly	M	James Kelly Ship Yard Labourer Margaret 12 Saltfield Walk, Dundee Annie Kelly M. J. Stewart 1900, December 31 st , Dundee	Annie Kelly Mother	1905. May 22 nd At Dundee M. J. Meek Registrar.

M. J. Meek Registrar.

What happened then? In 1906, James and Annie Fraser (*sic*), from Dundee, travelling with an infant called Robert and a seven-year-old girl called Maggie, sailed from Glasgow to Boston, Massachusetts, USA, on board the SS *Corean*.



The SS Corean

On the ship's manifest, James is a mill worker. Annie is listed as having been in America before – “seven years, Brooklyn”. James is described as cross-eyed, a hereditary condition. My Dad had it; I have it. They were among 213 passengers. James had \$4 in his pocket.

They are headed for Andover, Massachusetts and “father-in-law James Ross”, who has paid for their passage.

In 1910, Bob was able to tell me, Annie and her stepdaughter Margaret, with her son Alfred (whose fate is so far unknown to us) were living in Higgins Court, Andover, though there is no sign of James. They have a lodger, James Smith.

So... did James Fraser simply abandon his sons in Scotland, or did he make some sort of provision for their care? If he did, that provision did not, seemingly, come from his direct family, for none of his brothers and sisters have James or Ninian with them in the 1901 or 1911 census returns. We have no record of any contact between James Fraser and his sons, but thanks to that lodger, James Smith, we do now know for certain that he *did* maintain contact with his wider family back in Scotland.

James Smith is the husband of James Fraser's sister Catherine; he sailed to the States in July 1909 aboard the SS *Laurentian*, and the ship's manifest notes he is on his way to join James Fraser in Andover, at 16 Higgins Court. This is definitive evidence of family contact, and may suggest there was some sort of contact between James and his boys.

America didn't work out for James Smith – by the 1911 census the glazier was back at home in Dundee with Catherine and their children.

But James stayed. Maybe he was away looking for work in 1910, because by the 1920 US Census, the family is living in another, nearby, mill town, Passaic, New Jersey. James is a mill hand. His ill-fated daughter Adeline, b c1915, is with them and offers a clue that the family moved back to Andover shortly after the 1920 Census was taken: she died aged six, and was buried in Andover. Their other children, William (b c1911), Alexander (b c1912), John (b c1918), and Peter (b c1919) offer a further clue that their time in Passaic was brief – only Peter is recorded as born in New Jersey, so they may have been there just from 1918 to 1920.

In the 1930 US census, James Frazier and Annie C Frazier (*sic*) are living at 13 Post Office Avenue in Andover with their children William C (b1911), Alexander (1912), John C R (1918), Peter C (1919), Celia M (1921) and Richard B (1924). The property was rented for \$22 a month, and the family had a radio set.

James could not read or write – though the *Corean's* manifest said he could, and we think he signed the birth and death registrations of Margaret and Ninian 31 years earlier. John, Peter, Celia and Richard had attended school in the last year.

James was 34 when the couple married, Annie 21. They are now 58 and 47. Their year of immigration is given as 1906. It is unclear whether they are naturalised Americans.

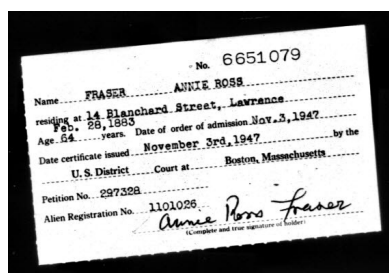
Neither James nor Annie have an occupation. William is a pin setter in a bowling alley, Alexander a helper machinist in a rubber goods factory. Only the two boys are working. William was at work the day before, Alexander was not, and has line number 28 on unemployment schedule.

Peter C Fraser, born New Jersey 1918, living in Essex County, Ma, enlisted in the US Army on Feb 25 1943, 31299693. He'd been educated to grammar school level, and was employed in the semi-skilled warehousing sector. He was white, single and without dependents.

A John C Fraser, born 1917 in Massachusetts, living in Essex County, Mass, enlisted in the army on April 30 1946 (20104527) for the Hawaiian department at Fort Devens, Mass. He was white, educated to grammar school level, and without dependents. He'd enlisted on Jan 16 1941 in the National Guard infantry at Lawrence, Mass. He was occupied in unskilled occupations in the manufacture of boots and shoes. A John C Fraser is buried in the veterans' section of the cemetery in Andover, Massachusetts.

What of James Fraser? It seems he died in Lawrence, Massachusetts, on October 3rd 1940, aged 67, and was buried in Andover's Spring Grove Cemetery. I don't have his death certificate yet – William J Maloney, clerk for the city of Lawrence, told me it does not list his spouse, though it states he was married. It notes that he was born in Scotland and gives his father as James Fraser. His life had taken him from Perth to tragedy in the streets of Dundee and on to America and a large family. Did his son in Scotland ever know what had become of his father? It is unlikely that we'll ever know.

We have an indexed record from 1947 suggesting that Annie, no longer Annie C but now Annie Ross Fraser, applied to become a naturalised American:



At what point and how she resolved the issue of her parentage we may never know, but it seems clear that there must have been some sort of reconciliation or acknowledgement before she arrived in the States in 1906, for James Ross paid for her passage. Maybe she had visited him earlier, between 1891, when we know she was in Arbroath, and 1906, when the *Corean's* manifest noted she had spent seven years in Brooklyn. Given that she was variously known as Annie Culbert, Annie Ross and Annie Coutts, I've had great difficulty tracing her travel between Scotland and the States, but I would like to resolve a bit more of her tangled family background.

The other question about Annie's parentage, to me, is this: did James Ross go to America because he had fathered an illegitimate child?

Annie Ross Fraser died in Broadway Nursing Home, Methuen, Ma, on December 3 1957, aged 74. She is identified as the widow of James Fraser, born in 1883. Most crucially, it names her mother as Annie Culbert, matching the 1904 marriage certificate, but her father as James Ross – again and conclusively linking that name to our search. Her death was

registered by her son, William C Fraser, of 7 Durham St, Lawrence – also given as Annie’s address.

And finally, from Andoverma.gov, the website of the town of Andover, Massachusetts, a search of Spring Grove Cemetery’s records reveals:

Lot Detail Section W Lot 495 B.

Last Name	First Name	Initial	Age	Sex	Interment Date	Section	Lot
FRASER	ADELINE	R	6	F	09/24/1920	W	495 B
FRASER	ANNIE	R	74	F	12/10/1957	W	495 B
FRASER	CELIA	M	10	F	04/10/1931	W	495 B
<u>FRASER</u>	<u>JAMES</u>		<u>67</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>04/20/1940</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>495 B</u>
ROSS	JAMES		32	M	06/06/1949	W	495 B
ROSS	MARY ANN		75	F	12/13/1961	W	495 B
ROSS	WILLIAM	C	48	M	09/01/1935	W	495 B
TERWILLIGER	CAROLYN		1	F	04/17/1946	W	495 B

James and Annie were buried with their two little daughters, and close to members of the Ross family. The following other James Rosses are buried:

ROSS	JAMES		37	M	09/07/1900	W	217	Link
ROSS	JAMES		32	M	06/06/1949	W	495 B	Link
ROSS	JAMES		57	M	11/20/1949	A	502	Link
ROSS	JAMES		60	M	08/15/1924	A	502	Link

And the following Coutts burials are listed. Annie Fraser’s father was a William Coutts on her marriage certificate, and seemingly married her mother Annie Culbert.

Last Name	First Name	Initial	Age	Sex	Interment Date	Section	Lot	Link
COUTTS	DAVID	L	71	M	04/27/1953	W	199	Link
COUTTS	ISABELLLA	M	45	F	09/29/1899	W	199	Link
COUTTS	JEAN	G	87	F	09/09/1969	W	199	Link

COUTTS	WILLIAM	C	91	M	04/15/1941	W	199	Link
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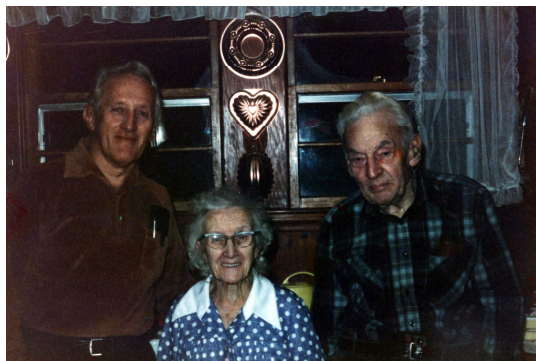
It's interesting that Ross and Coutts figure in the same cemetery.



Spring Grove Cemetery, Andover.

8: Ninian's sister, Margaret

Margaret Fraser's family provide us with some fascinating evidence of the Fraser family in America. None of Ninian Fraser's family even knew she existed until this research began, but now, thanks to Bob Gaudette, we can see her face for the first time:



Above left, Margaret is pictured in 1983 with her son William on the left and her husband Lymert Wood on the right. The right hand picture is of Margaret at Christmas 1982.

Margaret was born in Dundee's Blackness Road in 1897:

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1897. BIRTHS in the District of St. Peter in the Burgh of Dundee

No.	Name and Surname.	When and Where Born.	Sex.	Name, Surname, & Rank or Profession of Father, Name, and Maiden Surname of Mother. Date and Place of Marriage.	Signature and Qualification of Informant, and Residence, if out of the House in which the Birth occurred.	When and Where Registered, and Signature of Registrar.
511	Margaret Fraser	1897, July 13th	F	James Fraser, Labourer (pre-Marriage).	Glennie Fraser Maiden	1897, July 13 th at Dundee.
		26 th 30 th 31 st 14 Blackness Road, Dundee.		Maggie Fraser, wid. Burns.		J. J. Miller Registrar
				1894 January 1 st Dundee		
					(James W. Wood)	1897.

The signature of Maggie Fraser is just about all that's left of Margaret's (and Ninian's and James's) poor mum, who died two years later in 1899 aged 26.

We know that Margaret was in Andover in 1910 and 1920 from census returns (by 1920, she had moved out of the family home and seems to have been renting an apartment by herself). In the 1920s, she married her husband Lymert Wood, and by the 1930 census the Woods and their children are a growing family.

Bob Gaudette remembers Margaret:

Margaret Fraser had 3 children with Lymert Wood, all boys John, William and Phillip. William is my stepfather's father, he is still with us at 91 years old. Margaret died June 13, 1991. She was known to us as Granny. I remember her as a very nice woman and she was very short as well. I was about 14 when she died but I had not seen her for some years. She had dementia and was put into a nursing home, so I only remember her from when I was younger. Her husband Lymert died shortly after in 1993.

We are wondering why Ninian and James were left behind and who they were left with? It's very sad that the family was split apart. My mother told me that she remembers Granny telling her that she did not like her mother very much. She was referring to Annie as her mother. I wonder if Annie had something to do with the split in the family?

My stepfather and his father are just stunned that Granny had 2 brothers that she never told anyone about.

William did have contact with Peter Fraser up until 10 years ago I believe. He does not know where Peter is now. Interesting story, William Wood had mentioned to Peter Fraser once about Margaret being a step child. Peter was shocked and did not believe him. He said that can't be true, he knew that she was older but he kept saying "she used to take care of us, she's our sister". I guess it wasn't talked about in the Fraser/Ross family. William Wood said that he remembers playing with Peter and the other children as they were close in age. He called them the Ross kids, but he doesn't remember his grandparents at all. They didn't visit often.

It's wonderful to have this direct personal link to James Fraser and his family in America, to know even only a little bit about them. I never imagined we could get so far. It would be great to think this history could now go further, and to see if the descendants of James Fraser and Annie Ross can add anything more to our story.



Peat Inn.

As ever, answers provoke more questions – why was Ninian with this particular landlady? Had James lived with her too? Why did they end up out in the countryside in Fife? Who paid for Ninian's lodgings?

But for now, we know that Ninian Fraser had food, shelter and education by 1911 – it was a small house, but nevertheless had three rooms with windows. He was also at school, and maybe his brother lived nearby.

10: More questions

We now know very much more of the Fraser family, but here are some of the remaining questions.

- I. I would like to establish – or fail to – a link between the Watsons, Robertsons and Frasers to see if this implies James Fraser made provision for his sons in Scotland.
- II. Can we ever confirm that James Fraser, Ninian's brother, was the James Fraser who died at Arras in 1917? We may never be able to do so 100 per cent.
- III. I would like to trace the Fraser line further back – beyond James Fraser's parents is so far unresearched, though Alf Wallace has a great deal of detail on the Colinton theory.
- IV. Could any of the Frasers of Andover and Lawrence, Massachusetts, be contacted? I would still very much like to look at a picture of my great grandfather James Fraser, and know more about him.

Clearly, if there's ever the free time and / or free money, I would love to visit Dundee, St Andrews, Cameron parish and the United States to see what information I can gather from archives that aren't so far digitised and available on the internet. For example, there are school details from Denhead in the Fife Local History Archive.

But if anybody has any helpful suggestions, documents, memories or pictures to offer, I would be absolutely delighted.

In the meantime, this is my best effort at the story of the Frasers... so far.

Stuart Fraser

Cornwall, April 2013.