

James Hunter (1835-1910) and Margaret Petrie (1832-1913)

1. The Train Journey – March 19<sup>th</sup> 1872.

The family huddled together for warmth on the hard benches of a third class railway carriage. They were all present – and barely a word was being spoken. Margaret Petrie, now Margaret Hunter, and her husband James, had five children with them. There was the oldest, Christina, who was fifteen and struggling with the youngest James, who having recently learnt to walk was keen to demonstrate the skill at every opportunity. Opposite sat three girls, Jane, Margaret and Janet ranging in ages from eleven down to seven. All were dressed in depressing mourning black, and James wore a black armband.

Margaret watched the train follow the line of the Ochil Hills, and glanced past the hill-foot town of Dollar towards the cot-house where she was born, now lost in the folds in the hills. They had boarded the little train at Oakley Station, having walked down from Easter Bonhard Cottages. This was a small station on the North British Railway Company line from Dunfermline to Alloa and on to Stirling. James had been given the day off his lambing duties by the hard-pressed farmer -- Sam Wilson, and Margaret's brother, Peter, who lived in the next cottage was working a double shift by way of cover.

Gradually the stations passed on the way to Stirling Station, where they would change trains. So the stations rattled past; East Grange, Bogside, Forest Mill, Clackmannan Road, Alloa, Cambus, Causewayhead, and finally Stirling. All the way she looked at the marching line of hills and the familiar towns at their foot --- Dollar, Tillicoultry, Alva and Menstrie. They alighted quietly at Stirling East station and walked through the still sleepy streets of the ancient town to another, bigger station. The Caledonian Railway station at Stirling was all bustle, and shouting porters and a censorious Station Master with his pocket-watch out. The London express was fully seven minutes late. This would never do. Ignoring the activity, the Hunters walked over to the local train on the far platform.

After the London express took off for the exotic south, the slow stopper train pulled out in the opposite direction. First stop Bridge of Allan, then Dunblane, Kinbuck, Greenloaning, Blackford, and finally Crieff Junction where they would be met. Again the hills picked up on the right-hand side of the train as it proceeded northwards. Over to the east however, there was the wide sweep of good farmland, which was the rich vale of Strathearn. At the station, there was a sombre faced John Graham, the tenant farmer of West Mains Farm, on the Estate of Gleneagles waiting on the platform. Alongside him stood the Station Master, James Myles. He spoke first.

“ I would just like to express our condolences for your sad loss.”

John Graham motioned to a waiting farm wagon, and they were off on the final leg of the journey to West Mains Farm, where Graham farmed 130 arable acres with the help of a couple of farm labourers and two boys. One of these had been Alexander Hunter, aged fourteen. He had died of acute meningitis as certified by Dr Dorward at 20 minutes past three in the morning two days before.

John Graham's wife, Elisa, said to Margaret "I am so very sorry. We did all we could. It just came upon him so suddenly. One moment tending the lambs and the next gone. We still cannot believe it."

"Nor I. We came when we got your letter. It was kind of you and the Factor to arrange for the burial here....."

And at this point she trailed off into sobs and her eldest daughter, Christina, took over checking the arrangements.

Her beloved son who she had so determinedly named after her father, Alexander, was dead at fourteen; so suddenly, and so savagely. She had let him go to this first job, and he was now dead within not much more than a year. If only she had kept him close.....

#### Notes

1. Alexander Hunter died, as described, on March 17<sup>th</sup> 1872. His employer, John Graham, who was present when he died, signed the death certificate the next day.
2. Graham was a tenant farmer. He called himself "Occupier" on the death certificate. The farm was part of the Gleneagles Estate, and is very close to Gleneagles House, and the site of Gleneagles Castle. The estate amounted (and still amounts) to a little over 7,000 acres. There were bigger farms on the estate – for example the North Mains farm extended to 1500 acres though the majority of this farm was not arable. At the time, the laird was Robert Adam Philips Haldane-Duncan, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Camperdown, 22<sup>nd</sup> Laird of Gleneagles, who was a Civil Lord of the Admiralty in 1872, and thus presumably in London.
3. James Hunter worked for Samuel Wilson in 1871. He and Margaret lived with their children at the cothouses, Easter Bonhard farm, which is just north of Carnock Village in west Fife. Interestingly, Alexander had already left home in 1871 when the census was taken—but was not recorded at West Mains Farm – so where was he? The farm cottages at Easter Bonhard still exist. Wilson employed seven labourers on his farm which extended to 360 acres, as well as a dairy maid. It is likely that the land belonged to John Wardlaw, who was a 28 year old widower at the time, and lived at nearby Carnock House.
4. Margaret's brother, Peter Petrie, lived in the next cottage at Easter Bonhard, Carnock in 1871. He was 27, and lived there with his wife Mary and two children – Alexander aged 3, and Jane aged 1. Like Margaret, he gave his place of birth as Dollar.

- The Caledonian Railway Company did not open the famous hotel at Gleneagles until 1924. It lies north of the railway line, and several miles from the mouth of Gleneagles where West Mains Farm, and Gleneagles House, is situated. The railway line between Stirling and Perth, branched off at the station towards Crieff, and the station, which is now called Gleneagles (re-named for the Hotel) was then known as Crieff Junction. It housed a stationmaster and two porters plus families in 1872.

Fig 1: The death certificate for Alexander Hunter 1872. Parish of Blackford, Perthshire.

1872. DEATHS in the Parish of Blackford Page A. in the County of Perth

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 Maternal Surname of Mother.	Cause of Death, Duration of Disease, & Medical Attendant by whose certificate.	Signature and Qualification of Informant, and Residence, if out of the House in which the Death occurred.	When and Where Registered, and Signature of Registrar.
1	<u>James Hunter</u> <u>Agricultural</u> <u>Labourer</u> <u>(Single)</u>	<u>1872</u> <u>January</u> <u>2nd</u> <u>at home</u> <u>at</u> <u>Blackford</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>William Hunter</u> <u>Agricultural Labourer</u> <u>(deceased)</u> <u>Christina Hunter</u> <u>(deceased)</u>	<u>Supposed</u> <u>Heart Disease</u> <u>no medical</u> <u>attendant</u>	<u>John Hunter</u> <u>Half brother</u>	<u>1872</u> <u>January 19th</u> <u>Blackford</u>
2	<u>Henry Taylor</u> <u>Farmer</u>	<u>1872</u> <u>February</u> <u>1st</u> <u>at home</u> <u>at</u> <u>Blackford</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>83</u>	<u>Henry Smith</u> <u>(Farmer)</u> <u>(deceased)</u> <u>Mary Smith</u> <u>(deceased)</u>	<u>Old Age</u> <u>no medical</u> <u>attendant</u>	<u>James Taylor</u> <u>Son</u> <u>at home</u>	<u>1872</u> <u>February 1st</u> <u>Blackford</u>
	<u>Alexander Hunter</u> <u>(Single)</u>	<u>1872</u> <u>March</u> <u>1st</u> <u>at home</u> <u>at</u> <u>Blackford</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>James Hunter</u> <u>(Farmer)</u> <u>(deceased)</u> <u>Christina Hunter</u> <u>(deceased)</u>	<u>Heart Disease</u> <u>no medical</u> <u>attendant</u>	<u>John Hunter</u> <u>Brother</u> <u>at home</u>	<u>1872</u> <u>March 1st</u> <u>Blackford</u>

J. T. Robertson Registrar.

## 2. The Accident – 30 March 1884

There was a knock at the door of the bothy, and the tall farm-worker ducked under the lintel and into the bright sunshine of a pleasant spring morning. He was in charge of a gang of young farm workers who were planting crops, and he shared the small building with four others. His wife and extensive family were still resident at 3 Bridge Street, Tillicoultry; and he was shortly to move to a new job on the Wallace Estate at Halbeath.

This was James Hunter, and his younger brother Henry stood in front of the cottage. James nodded to the brother he barely knew.

“What brings you out to the wilds of Clackmannanshire then Harry?”

James was the brother who had not followed his father into the pits. Whilst Thomas, William and Henry were all coal miners like their father John Hunter, James had been a farm worker from an early age, and whilst he did not earn the same money as the rest, he was fifty years old and not yet stooped or crippled.

“It’s not Mother is it?” Marion Hunter was seventy-six, and whilst their father was dead these ten years or more, she continued to live near her mining sons and their families at Wellwood Colliery.

Harry fixed James with a long look. “No. I’m afraid that I have come to tell you that there was an accident at the Derby Pit at Wellwood – the new pit that is. William was suffocated by smoke. We wanted you to know.”

For a second, James looked over his brother’s shoulder to the far distant outline of the Lothian Hills. The air had never seemed clearer; the visibility sharper. Strange what could happen so suddenly underground.

“How did it happen?” he asked quietly.

“William was on the night shift and a fire caught hold. Some say that it was due to the foolishness of the oversman, Andy Beveridge. If it was, then he paid with his life too. Something set fire to wood near the underground engine, and Beveridge decided to try and put it out before calling Mr Ferguson, the Manager. Andy seemed to have an idea that he could vent the pit of the smoke by opening a trap door underground between two levels, and releasing the smoke into the main underground roadway – trouble was the smoke rushed faster than they could.

Andy and William and another lad, Tam Stenhouse were all overcome. It was only when they diverted a burn into the steam pipes leading to the underground engine, that they managed to put out the blaze, but by then it was too late.”

James sat on a dry stane dyke. “How is Jen?” Janet Strang was William’s widow and with two girls of fourteen and seven, then things would not be good.

“ I don’t think she has stopped crying at all. All the family is gathered though, and we’d like you to come across for the funeral. It is at the New Cemetery on Wednesday. They’ve set up an emergency fund already – and the Provost contributed £5 to start it.”

“ They’ll need help from the company though – no charity will sustain these families for very long.”

A long silence developed, broken only by the distant cry of a whaup.....

#### Notes

1. The Dunfermline Journal of 5 April 1884 reported the events at Wellwood thus: “ Sad calamity at Wellwood Colliery. Three men suffocated. Heroic conduct and narrow escapes of rescuing party.”
2. The Dunfermline Saturday Press added, “ The accident at the colliery was a melancholy one.....it is seldom that so much ignorance is displayed by an Oversman.”
3. Compensation, if any, is unknown. The Workmen’s Compensation Acts were to follow but often ineffective in an age when the local Doctors were often in the pay of the colliery companies. A considerable amount would depend on the generosity of Thomas Spowart and Co Ltd.
4. William left a widow of 43, Janet Strang, and two daughters – Jane and Marion.
5. James was the only male Hunter not to work in the coalmines, and for this he received considerably less wages but avoided the dangers and exhaustion of working underground. Instead he became the Gamekeeper on the Halbeath Estate, working for the Wallace family.
6. His father John Hunter died at Wellwood Colliery in 1872, having been born in Halbeath in 1810. His widow, Marion Sneddon died at Wellwood, fourteen years later, at the age of seventy-eight.
7. Thomas Hunter, later a warder at the town jail in Dunfermline, died in 1904 at the age of almost seventy, whilst his brother Henry Hunter also died in Dunfermline, having reached eighty.

Fig 1: The Dunfermline Press article covering the accident at the Derby Pit, Wellwood in 1884, which killed William Hunter.

### A RELIEF FUND INSTITUTED.

At a public meeting at Wellwood on Thursday evening - Mr Hayworth, missionary, presiding - a committee was appointed to solicit subscriptions for behoof of the families of the unfortunate men. The committee includes the names of Provost Donald, Dunfermline, Rev. Mr Dunbar, Mr Brown of Colton, Mr W. Robertson, jun., manufacturer; Mr Weir, Secretary of the Miners' Association; Mr Andrews, manager, Lassodie; and Mr Ferguson, manager, Wellwood. The Provost has generously headed the subscription list with a donation of £5. Reference has been made to the fund elsewhere.



#### "Dunfermline Saturday Press"

18 July, 1885

#### MINING ACCIDENTS IN THE YEAR 1884

... The accident [March, 1884] at the Elgin Colliery was a melancholy one. It was due to the foolhardiness or ignorance of the man in charge. Something left burning at an underground engine had set fire to the woodwork, and deceased, who was an oversman, and some others, were trying to extinguish the fire before the arrival of the manager. It seems not to have occurred to him that if he opened a door leading into the air-course beyond the engine-house that a greater current of air would pass and, failing to reach it from where they stood, he and other two went to the shaft, and passed along the return air-course to it.

When they reached the door and opened it, the smoke overpowered them, and they died before assistance was got. When the manager arrived, about two hours afterwards, the fire, which was of a trifling importance, was put out, and a search made for the bodies, which were found at various points on the road. It is seldom that so much ignorance is displayed by an oversman.

#### "Dunfermline Saturday Press"

23 July, 1887

#### PIT ACCIDENT

Yesterday, a fall from the face took place in the Derby Pit, Wellwood, and the coal alighting on William Masterton, three of his ribs were fractured. (He was attended by Dr. Drysdale).

#### "Dunfermline Saturday Press"

17 March, 1888

#### MINING ACCIDENT

On Tuesday, William Hynd, an oversman employed in the Derby Pit, Wellwood Colliery, Dunfermline, met with a serious accident. Hynd had been employed on an incline when the chain gave way. The result was that a loaded hutch came down the "brae" at a great speed and ran against

It was a fine day in April 1900 when Mr Robert Wallace, proprietor of the Wallace Estate, and owner of several small local collieries, arrived at the upper part of the Buckie Burn, just across from the disused Eliza Pit. All that remained of the flooded coal mine was a small cottage, which was now occupied by one of his shepherds Alex Adamson. Wallace was carrying a tripod, and one of the latest cameras, for he was fully occupied in photographing his estate and its workers.

Today Wallace was taking a posed photograph of his gamekeeper, James Hunter. Hunter had arrived before him, as arranged. He had a shotgun on his arm, and was accompanied by two black sheep dogs; one an older dog, jet black and impressively trained; the other was also black but younger and with a white blaze on its chest, and four white paws. James Hunter wore his Sunday best tweeds and thick soled new leather boots. He had his waistcoat turned up to keep him warm, for he wore no coat, and it nearly covered his neatly pressed white cotton shirt and starched collar. His watch-chain sat prominently on the middle of his waistcoat, whilst a leather fob linked to a small whistle, which was safely in the breast pocket of the tweed jacket.

R W Wallace was taking an album of his lands and people as a sort of social record of the age. He was well known for being a kindly landlord and good employer, giving his colliers extra pay in July each year for their holiday week, and not insisting that people leave their cottages right away on death or retirement. If he was concerned about the long-term future of his main investment – the Halbeath colliery, then he did not show it.

“Right James, perhaps you could stand as if about to fire at a fox or some such. Shall we say “at the ready?” or some such. What would be grand would be if you could stand in the dry bed of the burn itself – the rocks make a great backdrop. Then just get the dogs to sit either side of you, and look past the camera. Ideal.”

James could feel the cold steel of the barrel on his left arm. With one rapid movement he could bring the shotgun up and dispose of another rabbit or grouse or partridge or pheasant. However, now there was just a head swathed in black silk, hunched behind a camera on a tripod. If he could get back to the ‘Liza Cottage, where his daughter and son-in-law lived, then he could change back into his working clothes without any stains or rips.

“I’ll let you have a copy of course, James.”

“That would be very nice of you Mr Robert,” said James thinking that he had no album and no use for photographs.

“I was reading in “the Scotsman” that the Highland Brigade have entered Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State, so that is good news.”

“Indeed it is Mr Robert. The last letter we had from young James was that he and his pals had survived a battle at Paardeburg Drift, and that the Boer general Cronje had surrendered. So all in all, it is a lot better news than at the start. His mother worried that we might have lost him at Magersfontein, but he came through right enough. It is

a hard thing for Mary and the bairns to have a husband called back from the Reserve list for duty overseas.”

“ Indeed Hong Kong as a single man is a very different prospect to South Africa when a wife and family is left behind. Still, it is a matter of duty to Queen and Empire”

“Aye, I was quite forgetting the Empire, Mr Robert.....” and then the two men just smiled, and left it at that. James Hunter with his deerstalker hat with the flaps tied above the crown, retired to a waiting cup of tea in the ‘Liza Cottage with his daughter Kirsty.

## Notes

1. From 1884 to his death in 1910, James Hunter worked for the Wallace family at Halbeath. He resided in the Black Row, which I believe was demolished many years ago – though the site is currently having houses built on it (2007).
2. He died at Hallhouse, Halbeath which is presumably very close to Halbeath Farm house.
3. He and Margaret Petrie had at least seven children from 1856 to 1872. These included Christina (Kirsty) Hunter who was the oldest and who married Alex Adamson in 1884. They lived at the ‘Liza Cottage. Alex also worked for the Wallace family.
4. His one surviving son was James Hunter, junior, was born in Carnock in 1869 and died in Stanthorpe, Queensland in March 1924. He served with 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders in Hong Kong, – they moved there from Ceylon in 1888 and were the garrison for four years. They returned to Scotland in 1892. He left the army in 1893 (after a standard six year enlistment – he enlisted on 7 March 1887), and married Mary Mitchell in 1894, reverting to being a coal miner.
5. In October 1899 James Hunter, junior, was called back along with 500 other reservists to the regiment, due to the outbreak of the second Boer War. The 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion (formerly the 91<sup>st</sup> foot) sailed in “SS Orcana”, and arrived on 17<sup>th</sup> November 1899 at Cape Town. They were then sent to join the Highland Brigade under Major General Andrew Wauchope, part of Lord Methuen’s forces sent to relieve Kimberley and Mafeking. They first took part in an action to cross the Modder River, and then secondly were involved in the disaster of Magersfontein Hill. The Highland Brigade was badly mauled by 5000 Boers in dug in rifle pits due to poor reconnaissance. Their battalion commander, Colonel Goff, three officers and 32 others were killed and 77 wounded. It was at this battle that the piper corporal of the Argyles, Jimmy MacKay won lasting fame by standing up and piping “The Campbells are coming” to steady the regiment. James played the drums in the pipe band and must have known MacKay.
6. Robert W Wallace was the proprietor of the Halbeath Estate in 1900. His family company had sunk the Eliza pit in 1862 as part of the Halbeath Colliery. It was prone to flooding, and was abandoned in 1876. The Buckie Burn runs nearby, and in this period many of the local burns were dry as the water filtered into old mine workings.

7. On 15 August 1902, notice was posted in the villages of Kingseat and Halbeath as follows: “NOTICE TO WORKMEN – notice is hereby given that fifteen days after this date that all contracts with workers above and below ground will terminate due the practical exhaustion of the coalfield. All workers wishing to remain in occupancy of our houses are requested to apply to the Manager. Wallace Brothers.”
8. The photograph of James Hunter, senior, still exists, and is exactly as described. He has a straight, long nose, and a light full beard, neatly shaped.
9. The 1<sup>st</sup> battalion, Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders returned to Britain in 1903. They had lost 143 men in the war, but never suffered the reverses that they met at Magersfontein again.

Fig 1: The photograph of James Hunter, gamekeeper, at Halbeath. 1900.



#### 4. Emigration -- 1 August 1911

It was the height of the Imperial summer. More than a quarter of the world was painted red on school globes. The British ruled colonies on every continent on earth, and where they had spread in sufficient numbers and dominated the natives until they were insignificant (at least in the eyes of London), they set up four great Dominions, designed to give self-rule and prevent another Boston Tea-Party from disrupting the

relationship with the Mother-land. Large numbers of British still emigrated to the United States of America which was prospering like no nation had ever prospered before, but equally large numbers preferred to leave the British Isles and yet still live under the British flag, where British law prevailed, and the settlers set themselves to build a better country in their new lands than they had left behind. In almost every case, there was a hope of economic improvement at the heart of the decision to emigrate, but equally there were a multitude of personal reasons why one family made the journey and others did not. It was on that personal level that Margaret Petrie tried to wrestle with her emotions as she gently rocked back and forth on the battered old chair by the side of the blackened cooking range.

The room was crowded and much noisier than usual. Children ran in and out of the small cottage in Farm Row, Halbeath. It was a bright summer's day but not warm; certainly not warm in the heart of Margaret Petrie, for she felt a chilling emptiness. Here she was, surrounded by her four daughters, and their husbands and off-spring, and all that she had eyes for was her last remaining son, James Hunter. Stiffly, he stood and smiled back, for this was a leaving party, and they are not the best for merriment. Beside him was his wife, Mary Mitchell, and she carried in her arms the quickly growing and restive toddler Mary Mitchell Hunter – born two years before. Outside, their other children, James aged fifteen, Kate aged eleven and young Margaret (six) played with their cousins in the lane. Inside, besides her husband, who sat on an equally battered chair on the other side of the range, sat, stood and lounged Christina and her husband Alex Adamson, Jane and her husband Bob Morton, Margaret and her husband Sam Ross, and Janet with her grown up son and daughter, Alexander and Jean. The room was crowded. The girls hadn't been together for years because whilst Kirsty and Jen lived in Halbeath, Meg lived over in Townhill and Jeanie even further afield in Muiravonside. Now they all had eyes for their brother.

“Well, the chaps I've been writing to say that there is a grand future in Queensland, and the government want to open up the country. They want farms to be built out of bush. More than that, they are giving land grants to ex-soldiers for free. Hundreds of acres, and nothing to pay.”

“So who is to lose this land that they want to give to you?”

“That's the beauty of it, Mother. No-one at all. It is just forest and bush. Maybe a few black fellows roam over it – but that is all. It's not like here where everything is buttoned down, and held by the gentry.”

“So you could end up owning more land than the Wallaces – imagine that.”

“I'm not saying that it will be easy, but it can be done. I'll have to clear trees and build a cabin, but I've done worse in the army. I know how to handle animals and I certainly know how to dig, and this time it will be for me – not for some owner or laird.”

“So what do you grow in Australia? Kangaroos?”

“Hardly – but the country raises all sorts of food from wheat to oats to fruit. Not only that but there are huge herds of sheep and cattle. And then there is Mary's health to

consider. You know that asthma nearly did for her last winter, and her cough never leaves her now. The doctor says to get her to a dry climate, and now!”

Mary smiled at her husband, but said nothing.

James continued “and we’ve been into town to get our pictures taken. Look at this!” and he handed over a photograph on a card to his mother. It came from the studio of W G Mackie. They were to be found at North Station Road, Dunfermline.

“You all look very smart but where’s the baby?” said his mother.

“Oh I looked after young Mary for Jimmy and Mary whilst they were in Dunfermline having their pictures taken. She is far too young for putting up with a photographer.” cut in Kirsty Adamson, her oldest daughter.

And there stood the family group about to emigrate to Australia. At the back was James himself, with a grey flannel suit, and silk tie. In front sat Mary to the left with an embroidered black blouse in silk and taffeta, complete with a long string of pearls, caught at the throat by a brooch. To her side were the children, James, Kate and Margaret. Kate and Margaret wore black velvet dresses with embroidered collars. Young James sported an enormous bandage on his left index finger where he had fallen on some wire. Like his father, he affected a handkerchief in his top pocket.

James said, “We’d like to give you this, and also this too.” He handed his mother the photograph and his silver medallion from his watch chain. It lay in her hand. It was a Kruger Rand, which had been cut down into the shape of an ornate cross. It had come back with James from the wars in South Africa, and now it would remain in Fife.

The group then broke into five conversations at once; fully taken up with the detail of journeys, and packing, and schools, and clothes for the tropics. Margaret just looked at the silver watch-piece. It didn’t seem much for a son she would never see again in all probability, and there again, maybe what it represented was more precious than anything.

## Notes

1. In 1911, the population of Australia was 4.5 million, which was a shade less than Scotland. Today the population of Australia is five times that of Scotland. In 1911, almost 100,000 people living in Australia were born in Scotland, and the ethnically Scottish proportion of the population represented some 13% of the population.
2. I believe that James Hunter met Australians serving with the Imperial Forces in the Boer war. It was through those contacts that he chose to emigrate to Australia.
3. Mary Mitchell’s health was a major consideration in choosing Queensland where the climate is considerably better for people suffering from respiratory problems. He eventually settled in Severnlea, near Stanthorpe, which is in the granite belt of Queensland, some 3000ft above sea level, and on the New

South Wales border. It avoids much of the humid tropical heat of Brisbane, and must have been a considerable improvement for Mary.

4. James and Mary did get a land grant, and cleared a fruit farm out of the bush. James died in Stanthorpe Hospital, after an accident when clearing more land for the farm. This was in March 1924 when he was only 54 years old. His children all married in Australia, and had families, and there could be close to a hundred living Australians who trace their ancestry to the migration of James Hunter and Mary Mitchell in 1909. Mary died in Brisbane in 1940 at the age of 65.
5. The photograph and coin still exist. They were passed in 1913, on the death of Margaret Petrie, to her eldest daughter Christina (Kirsty) Hunter who married Alex Adamson. She lived from 1930 until her death in 1939 with her son and daughter-in-law John and Elizabeth Adamson – in Halbeath. When Elizabeth was in her early eighties, in 1974, and widowed, her small house in Dunfermline was sold. She gave both the coin and the photograph, in which James can be seen wearing the coin on his fob-watch strap, to me. In 1987, I was delighted to return the coin and a copy of the photograph to James' grand-daughter Pat Skilton, who was the daughter of the baby in 1909, Mary Mitchell Hunter. Whilst James never saw Scotland again, his grand-daughter made it home after a gap of over seventy years. We were glad that she did.
6. James wrote to his nephew, John Adamson (B 1886) inviting him to come out and work with him on the farm but he felt unable to leave his parents because he was an only child.
7. The Hunters sailed to Brisbane from London on 13 August 1911 on S.S. Topilla. The passenger list still exists and gives the ages stated.

Fig 1: The emigration photograph of James Hunter, junior, and Mary Mitchell, with family. Dunfermline 1911.



Fig 2: The family of James Hunter and Margaret Petrie

*Descendants of James Hunter*

