

The story of a letter, found in her Grandmother McAdam's handbag, was solved one day when Cath Donley was working in Thomson's paper shop.



A customer asked her to copy her family tree which proved also to be Cath's.

The letter was found to be written by Cath's Great Great Aunt prior to immigrating to Tasmania. The customer Helen being a descendant of a sibling of Cath's Aunt.

Born in Kelton in 1835, Agnes Stevenson started work at Glenlair, Knockvennie. After this she moved to Glasgow and it was while here that she saw an advertisement for free immigrant passages to Tasmania (Van Diemens Land).

Possibly this one in the Standard

FREE EMIGRATION TO TASMANIA.
Under the auspices of the Tasmanian Government.
 100 FEMALE SERVANTS of Good Character may obtain FREE PASSAGES to the flourishing Colony of TASMANIA by the Ship "ANTIPODES," on 31st August. They will also be provided with an Outfit of Bedding and Cooking Utensils.
For the protection and advantageous settlement of Female Emigrants not under the charge of relatives, the Colonial Government have made the most careful provision, no Person being permitted to hire any Female from the "Depôt" without the authority of the Government Emigration Officer, by whom the capabilities and wishes of each woman, with regard to employment, are ascertained; and that those Persons only who are known to be suitable Employers are allowed to hire any Servant from the "Depôt." By this means no young Woman can fall into improper hands on her arrival in the Colony.
On arriving in the Colony the Immigrants are maintained at the Expense of the Government until they procure Employment, and while in the "Depôt" and on board Ship are placed under the care of a Matron and a Surgeon Superintendent. Wages range from £18 to £40. A large stock of Clothing is not required. Each Emigrant should take a piece of calico and flannel with her, and make up Under-Clothing during the voyage. Early application must be made to CHARLES M. HEPBURN, New Zealand Emigration Office, 62 Jamaica Street, Glasgow.

At this point she wrote this letter to her Mother which must have broken her Mother's heart.

Glasgow 22nd April 1860

My Dearest Mother,

No doubt you will be wondering at my long silence, in not writing to you oftener, sooner. But tho I don't write to you I am often thinking about you. More specially at the present time. I know very well you will be in awray when I tell you all. But dear Mother just don't think of it.

Well, the long and the short of the matter is that I Sail for Tasmania, that is Van Diemens Land, the end of next week. I know it will take you by Surprise, but I have long been thinking of it. Tho I daresay I have made up my mind rather hurriedly at the end, but I got a very ----- offer to go in a way of a free passage. Sure of a good place when you get there, at wages ranging from twenty five pounds to thirty pounds a year. So you see it was a great temptation, I may regret it in many ways, but in the meantime I am determined to try it. I know I shall feel it very much leaving all my friends and family, but I'll live in hope of coming back to old Scotland yet. Maybe with a Rich Guidman .

My trunk is to be forwarded to London on Friday first, then next Wednesday (tomorrow week) I start myself in the afternoon by rail to London then we set sail on Saturday (God Willing) in the good ship Antipodes for Tasmania.

Excuse me for not writing to Maitland. I should have answered his letter Sooner this time. But you will see I will write to you more often when I get to the other side of the globe, for I will think far more of a letter from home than I do now. I intend writing shortly after I land and give you a full and true account of al my adventures in crossing the seas.

Remember me kindly to all my friends. Ask Maitland if you see him soon to write me a few lines before I start.

Now Mother don't be angry with me at what I have done, I did it for the best, and now dear Mother farewell. If we should never meet again on this earth God Grant that we may so live that we shall meet hereafter, will be the prayer of your loving daughter

Agnes Stevenson

PS I will expect a letter from you Soon just to old address.

26 South Portland Street

Glasgow.

She travelled in the Antipodes which would have been a similar ship to this.



On the way it is recorded that the Ships Surgeon Samuel Mault died.

The ship's passengers record shows Agnes on board the Antipodes .

Agn Stevenson

Arrival Port: Launceston

Arrival Date: 5 Dec 1860

Departure Port: London

Departure Date: 1 Sep 1860

Ship: Antipodes

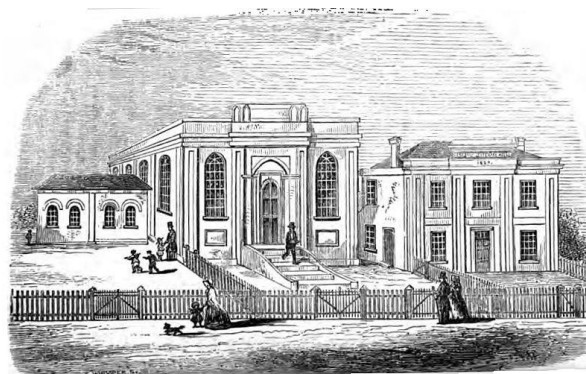
Gender: Female

Place of Origin: Galloway

Birth Year: abt 1837

Occupation Cook

On arrival at Launceston she would have become familiar with buildings like these.



WESLEYAN CHAPEL AND MISSION PREMISES,
LAUNCESTON, VAN-DIEMEN'S LAND.

After landing their arrival was advertised in

The Cornwall Chronicle, Launceston, Saturday 15th December 1860

IMMIGRATION.

THE UNDERSIGNED IMMIGRANTS
have arrived per ship ' Antipodes.'

They will be available for hire at the
Stores known as Thompson and Co.'s
corner of William and Tamar-street,
on and after Monday, the 10th instant,
from 10 a.m. till 4 p.m.

John Thompson,
Immigration Agent.

It is amusing that this story started and finished with a trader called Thomsons.

Agnes's brother, Cunningham Stevenson, was buried at the Galtway and the gravestone was found to be on the ground and needing restored. Helen appealed to his descendants for funds and the stone was restored which was marked by this celebration.



Cunningham had 11 children and there are several well known families in the photograph, Hall, Houston and McAdam.

Cath's family is lucky to have a photo of each generation.



*Cunningham's daughter Mary
Holding the baby*



Her children



*Daughter of the lady on the left
Mary McAdam, Cath's Grandmother*

As told by Cath Donley 2020

Further to the above. Jane Houston (Young,) has given us this photograph linking several more families to Cunningham.



The Mother is Elizabeth Stevenson who married George Houston who had a drapery shop where McClymont's used to be.

Top left is Jane's Grandpa.

Next to him is Jean Harrisons Mum, Bess.

On the right with the ringlets is Nell Hall (Hunter's) Mother.