

in later times several farmers of this stock in the parish of Stoneykirk, and my grandmother was the daughter of one of them. My father writes: "In early life she was occasionally a hearer of the elder Mr. Ogilvie of Wigton, and her people were staunch Antiburghers." She died in 1838, aged 81. Her brother, Hugh Hannay, Auchencloy, died 6th May 1849, aged 90.

THE NEILSONS.—John Fitz Neil de Carrick swore fealty to Edward in 1296. Nisbet says: "I take this man to be the predecessor of the Neilsons of Craig Caffie." John, son of Neil of Carrick, had a charter of these lands from King Robert Bruce, who was the grandson of Neil, Earl of Carrick, who died in 1256. The Neilsons claimed descent from the Carrick family, and Gilbert, the first of that line, was son of Fergus, Lord of Galloway, "the representative of Celtic princes who had reigned over Galloway from time immemorial." Craiggaffie, near Stranraer, where the old castle still stands, remained in the family for more than four centuries. The last laird (from whom an old connection of mine told me he remembered getting apples when he was a little boy) died 20th December 1786. By his wife, Mary Ross of Balkail, he had three sons: Charles, Thomas, who is buried in the family burying ground in Inch, and John, who was a soldier. In a letter from Calcutta, dated 17th February 1768, the writer says: "I am very sorry to inform you that your nephew, Captain John Neilson, died here some time ago." With these the main branch of the family became extinct. Hugh Neilson of Craiggaffie fell at Flodden. John Neilson of Craiggaffie was one of the friends of John Knox. Another John was a member of the General Assembly in 1590, and Gilbert Neilson of Craiggaffie was fined £1300 for his Presbyterianism. The Neilsons of Barncailzie and other families in the stewardry, and the Neilsons of Maxwood in Ayrshire were cadets of Craiggaffie. My grandfather, Charles Neilson, who was grandson of Charles Neilson (Auchmantle), who died 14th February 1773, aged 97, also represented a branch of the family. He had an only sister, Agnes, who married Thomas Wallace. She died in 1816, aged 63, and was mother of my kind friend Dr. Wallace, St. Michael's, Dumfries, seven other sons and three daughters.

In October 1778 Charles Neilson married Jean, daughter of John McGeoch, tenant in Glenwhillie, and his wife, Agnes McCormick, both from Kirkcowness. Many of the McGeochs or McGieochs, as the name was sometimes spelt, are buried in old Penninghame churchyard, and they may have been a sept of the McGhies or McKies. At all events they were from the banks of the Cree and the hills of Minnigaff—Galloway Ficts, "the strongest of all the Celtic races which constitute the population of Scotland." The older McGeochs whom I remember were among the biggest people in Galloway. One of my grandmother's brothers acquired Barbae, which is still owned by his family. She had two sisters: (1) Agnes, who married Alexander Murray, Laight, and died May 1843, aged 83, leaving numerous descendants. (2) Mary, who married Mr McClymont, Strone, in Glentool. She died 22nd March 1861, aged 90, having had a large family. I remember her not very long before her death as light of foot as a young girl. My grandmother, who had been a strong and handsome woman of great force of character, died 31st March 1848, aged 90. Her husband died 21st February 1828, aged 71. They had four sons: Alexander, John, Thomas, and Charles, but the only surviving male representatives of the family are:—Charles, grandson of the Rev. Thomas Neilson, Rothsay; his second son, the Rev. Thomas Neilson, Victoria, Australia; and his son Thomas, banker, New South Wales.

My mother, in a letter, dated February 1841, to her brother, writes: "Our parents were good people who feared God, and made creditable efforts to train us up to be useful in life and happy in death. I can never think of my father's memory, but it does me good, and the fond recollection of his virtues should keep us all from doing anything mean, or wicked, or unworthy of him."

With these words I close, grateful for so many pious progenitors to Him, "whose mercy is on them that fear Him from generation to generation."