

Extract from "The Tyler Story" by Edith Watson (nee Tyler)
Grandaughter of Samuel Kershaw and Mary Lidderdale

Courtesy of Sarah and Anthony Clark

As a youth Samuel Kershaw had been sent to London to work for an uncle who had a wholesale druggist's business. This did not prosper however and Samuel returned to Heaton Norris after a year or two, with only a smattering of knowledge of the druggist's trade. He had received a fairly good education before this at a Dames school near Stockport where he had learned to write in fine copperplate style. This, his good looks, lively manner and pleasant voice helped him somewhat in his quest for work. He was the best liked of his brothers and sisters but the least successful, probably because of a too early marriage with many children to support.

His young bride was a lowland Scot, Mary Lidderdale. Her paternal great grandparents were named William Halliday and Mary McKune who lived in Barlochan Kirkcudbrightshire around 1746 (at the time Bonnie Prince Charlie was a fugitive). A daughter of theirs named Agnes married James Lauderdale and on 15th September, 1804 Peter Lauderdale my great grandfather was born in Kirkcudbright (a year before the Battle of Trafalgar). On December 6th, 1830 (the year the lawnmower was invented) Peter married Mary Muir, both of them then resident in Castle Douglas though Mary came from St Mary's Isle, not an island in fact but a peninsula south-west of Kirkcudbright. St Mary's Isle was the seat of the Earl of Selkirk and as Peter was supposed to have worked as a tailor on this estate according to family legend one wonders if Mary was also employed there. In the marriage entry Peter's surname was given as Lidderdale and no amount of research has disproved the fact that he was the same Peter as the one born Lauderdale 26 years earlier. One of Peter Lidderdale's grandsons, John Kershaw, named his house Lauderdale which perhaps also proves the point. The name Halliday is known to be a family name. In some reference books it is stated that Lidderdale is the Galloway version of the name Lauderdale.

Seven months after the wedding, on 2nd July 1831 a son was born named John, then on 27th February 1833 a daughter Agnes, and on 23rd May, 1835 another son James. These three children were born in Castle Douglas. Between 1835 and 1839 Peter and Mary, and presumably their three children, moved to Liverpool and one wonders if they travelled on the "Countess of Galloway" a steamer which plied regularly between Kirkcudbright and Liverpool. Peter was supposed to have had a gentlemen's outfitters in Bold Street, one of the better shopping areas in Liverpool.

In 1839 another daughter was born named Jane, then in 1841 my grandmother Mary was born, in 1846 a son William, and finally Grace in 1849.

The 1851 Liverpool census shows their address as 3 Anson Terrace, Anson Street

with the following details:

Peter Lidderdale born 1806 in Scotland (a discrepancy with the 1804 birth date), aged 45, married, Journeyman-Tailor					
Mary	wife		43		born 1808 in Scotland
Jane	daughter	unmarried	12		born in Liverpool
Mary	daughter		10	scholar	born in Liverpool
William	son		5	scholar	born in Liverpool
Grace	daughter	infant	2		born in Liverpool

The description Journeyman-tailor infers that he was employed rather than the owner of a tailoring business. Jane's description means that she had already left school and was perhaps working. The three children born in Castle Douglas would by then have been aged 20, 18 and 16, most certainly working away from home, perhaps married, and as my grandmother never spoke of any siblings other than Jane and Grace, it is possible that the three older children never accompanied their parents to Liverpool at all, perhaps having been left in the care of relations.

The Liverpool children attended a Scottish school and a Presbyterian Church in Hope Street, both of which my grandmother remembered as being visited by Gladstone.

Two years after the census, on 24th September 1853 William died, aged 7, also Mary, his mother, aged 46, on the same day. The two certificates make sad reading. William had had a disease of both hip joints for two years with hectic fever for the last six months. Mary's cause of death was pulmonary phthisis which had been diagnosed for a year. The dreadful coincidence makes one think furiously. William's certificate was numbered one ahead of Mary's. Was his death the final straw and did she take her own life? There is no hint of this though on her certificate. They died at home in Anson Terrace so conditions must have been desperate for the whole family. They were buried in a cemetery near Rodney Street which is now closed but the headstones must have been kept and perhaps could be seen.

My grandmother hardly spoke of her childhood in Liverpool and it was always assumed that the total family consisted of my great-grandparents and Mary and her two sisters, that the parents died fairly young and that the sisters were then separated for various reasons. To lose a mother and young brother, after desperate illnesses and on the same day would shake anyone, let alone a child of 12, and I wonder if my grandmother effectively blacked out these tragic memories. My mother, who was the last of her brothers and sisters to die, survived to the age of 99 and only died in 1972, quite unaware of what my subsequent research in 1976 would disclose. The births of the three Castle Douglas children emerged during a visit to Register House in Edinburgh. Later, also, a visit to St Catherine's House in London disclosed the extra information about the family in Liverpool.

The most enduring Lidderdale legend was, perhaps predictably, about a house in Castle Douglas where it was supposed that grandmother had been born and had lived until the family moved to Liverpool. This was, and still is, a house called "Lochbank", which was inhabited by Lidderdals for about 100 years from about 1825. These were higher up the social scale being solicitors and bankers. I have them well documented but my great grandfather Peter does not appear to have been related. There must have been some connection, however because Mary Muir my great grandmother described the house to her children and my grandmother did the same. The picture was as follows: the drawing-room contained cases full of pieces of coral and other objects brought home by uncles who were sea Captains. Tea, taken out of cups with no handles, was only served on Sundays when the elders came in after kirk. During the week the tea was kept locked up in a rather beautiful box. In an outhouse there always seemed to be a haunch of venison hanging and boars hams were cooked at times. This description sounds as though the humbler Lidderdals may have visited but not have lived at Lochbank, although they could perhaps have lived in one of a row of nearby cottages called the Buchan which was part of the property.

My mother visited the house in 1924 during a tour of Scotland and was charmingly received by the occupants who remembered the last Lidderdale to live there. I also visited the house in 1978 and the present owners said that other Lidderdals (now named Scott) from New Zealand had called the previous year. I saw the drawing-room, a beautiful room with high ceilings and intricate mouldings and two long windows with views of the garden and loch. The outhouses are still there, also the cottages, still part of the estate but unfortunately now separated by a busy main road to Stranraer.

It was easy to see, though, that such an attractive house with access to mid-Kelton Church across the loch by means of a row boat, would make a great impact and with conditions in Liverpool far from ideal it was no wonder that visits to Lochbank stood for everything that was happy in life.

As to the sea faring uncles, Peter had four brothers: Robert, born 20 June 1800; James born 3 July 1802: Thomas born 18 April 1808: and another James, born 10 October 1811. Naming a new baby after a former child which had died was common practise then. On the other hand, the clerk Minister filling in the Church register of baptisms during these years must have been extremely old and shaky, judging by the writing and he could have written down the father's name by mistake. A definite mistake by the same man was made when Grace, one of Peter's sisters, was described as son of James Lidderdale and Agnes Halliday. She was born on 12 September 1815. Peter's other sisters were Helen born 5 June 1806: Agnes born 8 December 1809; and Jane born 5 June 1817. Of this family of nine children, eight of whom are described as "son or daughter of James Lidderdale and Agnes Halliday" only Peter was described as "son of James Lauderdale and Agnes Halliday. In going through very old church entries I became accustomed to variations such as Halliday with one "l" or Mure instead of Muir but Peter's surname

seems to have been a fairly radical mistake, if mistake it was.

So, back from ancient Scottish records to scene in Liverpool in 1853. Peter obviously did his best for his three younger children. Jane may have been able to lodge near to the cotton mill where she worked, or indeed may have stayed on in Anson Terrace with her father, but Mary was sent to relations, and Grace to the Jubilee school at Higher Broughton (possibly an orphanage). Mary later told her children that she was unhappy with her aunt and cousins but that may have been a way of covering up the real reason which was the trauma of the double deaths in Liverpool. How could she be anything but unhappy, not to mention separation from the remainder of her family, and no doubt Peter, Jane and Grace suffered for the same reasons. As to the location, a suburb of Liverpool was mentioned, particularly Birkdale. Here are some of mother's own words relating to this period:

I remember going with mother to Bowden in Cheshire to visit a dear old lady (as I was very young she seemed exceedingly old to me). She lived in a pretty house surrounded by a garden. This aunt's name was Mrs Warburton, and there were two sons, one in the Lifeguards, the other in partnership with his father, a market gardener with a business a mile or so from the house. It was at this aunt's home that mother was asked to meet William Lidderdale one of her uncles who was over on a visit from Ohio in America. He was then over 80 and did not come again. He did not come to our home in Manchester and I don't think father met him or the Warburtons. If Mrs Warburton was the aunt whom mother lived with as a child and where she was unhappy I got no impression of strain at all. To me she seemed a very sweet soul and it was obvious that she was very fond of mother. I heard her say "I wish you would come more often, Mary".

William Lidderdale, the uncle from America, had emigrated, fought in the Civil War and died in a Military hospital in Ohio in 1906 aged about 88. He left a small sum of money to his Lidderdale relations and grandmother received a one-fifth share which amounted to £3. The accompanying document is in my albums and James Warburton's name appears as executor. I think William born about 1818, could have been another of Peter's brothers, born in Kirkcudbright, and that Mrs Warburton was one of Peter's sisters, Helen, Agnes or Grace.¹

After a few years with her relations, Mary left and found work doing simple reeling in a cotton mill near Stockport. Here she met the Kershaw family, young Samuel in particular and very soon the Lidderdale and Kershaw families were joined. None of the 3 sisters born in Liverpool prospered, Grace perhaps being the best off financially. She became Mrs George Burwell, the latter being a builder with his own business. Mother said that as a child Aunt Grace had been a great favourite perhaps because she had the knack of

¹ [By AIHC] Evidence has been found for 10 children to James Lidderdale and Agnes Halliday, but not for a William born c.1818. If Mrs Warburton was one of the sisters it was not Helen who died of consumption in 1838 aged 32.

giving children imaginative little presents on their birthdays or at Christmas. The Burwells had 3 sons, Leon and Eddie being the first two. Sadly Grace must have inherited a delicate constitution and George devotedly sold his business and tried his luck in America to see if the climate better suited Grace. I have a photograph of her with Leon on her knee, taken at Perkins Art Gallery, Waupaca, Wisconsin. Her health being no better here the family returned to England and shortly afterwards left for South Adelaide, Australia. Grace's health may have improved somewhat in a drier climate but George had difficulties getting established and Grace, to help matters financially, taught and eventually became headmistress of Birkenhead School in South Adelaide and here she died. Mother said that the family in England lost touch with the Burwells after Grace's death.

When my grandparents Samuel Kershaw and Mary Lidderdale married they set up home in Brown Street, Gorton, Manchester where Samuel had found work in the warehouse of a cotton mill. I have not yet looked for the certificate of their marriage in a church at Hulme so do not know the exact date², but in 1862 the Civil War in America affected the Manchester cotton-trade due to the blockade of the southern states. In mother's own words when writing about her father "the worst of this type of job was that there was no fixed salary. One was paid for working hours only so if the machine workers came out on strike the rest had no work or money. Again, if the mill was having to be run on short time the warehouse staff was affected. During the American Civil War feeling in Manchester was against slave labour in the south and at that time there was near starvation in Lancashire.

There were 6 surviving children of the marriage: Esther, John, Elizabeth (Aunt Lizzie), my mother Sarah Ellen born 8 Apr 1873, Polly and William (Uncle Will). The choice of the last name has made me wonder if Mary named her youngest son after her young brother.

² [By AIHC] In fact Samuel and Mary did not marry until 28 Dec 1884 at St Mark, Hulme. This was after they had had all their children. The delay is presumably due to their extreme poverty over much of their lives – they could not afford the cost of a wedding. In the censuses of 1871 & 1881 Mary is entered as Mary Kershaw so they clearly regarded themselves as married in all but the formal legal sense.