

Chapter 31
1950 – 1957
Cambusbarron / Stirling

Home, School and Play – 1953-56 (i)

To a lad like me, just after WWII, the prospect of receiving family visitors, namely, ‘Aunt’ Jeanie Rennie Telfer and ‘Aunt’ Mary Hope, from New York, USA to holiday in our family home in Scotland was initially intriguing, and then, as such nostalgic voyages to the ‘old country’ were repeated periodically over the years throughout my teenage years in the 1950s, and beyond, they became as delightful to us all, as the origins of these two spinster ladies at that time remained very much a mystery to my sister Elizabeth and myself. In retrospect our ignorance was mostly self-inflicted as, fairly typical of the young, we seldom, if ever, enquired about relatives’ pasts, far less were offered more than basic information from Mum about them, as her, rather than Dad’s blood relatives.



My recent genealogical researching has revealed a great deal more about these previously unknown relationships. However, in the 1950s and 1960s when we especially enjoyed Mary Hope’s company immensely, not to mention all the ‘candies’ she always brought as gifts from New York, the closeness of kinship was so obvious, that details of it seemed superfluous.

‘Coronation Year’ was special when the by then 74 year old Jeanie was making what proved to be her last visit to the Scottish homeland from which she had first emigrated from Maryhill, Glasgow to Orange County, New York State in 1908. Her niece Mary, originally of Garngadhill, Glasgow, who had followed Jeanie’s footsteps to the USA in the 1920s was with her of course. We children had learned to know and love Mary from her two previous visits, just after the war, and ‘Aunt’ Jeanie proved every bit as lovable during her sentimental journey ‘home’.

Elizabeth and I now know that Jeanie was our 1st cousin, twice removed and Mary our 2nd cousin, once removed our common ancestors being our Great x 3 Grandparents, William Telfer (1811-1896) and Jean [Rennie] Telfer (1807-1876) of Falkirk, Scotland.



The postcards of the ships in which Mary crossed ‘the puddle’ on various occasions were carefully stored by me and I am proud to give them another ‘airing’ here.





RMS Coronica



Jeanie died in New York City in late 1953, but Mary lived-on in their joint home overlooking the East River, at 542 East 79th Street until her death in 1988.

That same year, I returned from the wonderful holiday in France to enter my Junior Certificate (3rd Year) at the High School of Stirling and had some success academically over the whole session as a 2nd prize winner in my class IIIa(ii), as well as receiving the award of my third successive badge for excellence in Physical Education. However, as I had quite precociously gained a place in the School Senior 1st XI cricket team, I also gained permission to have silver braid stitched round the edges and pockets of my school blazer - an honour reserved for pupils who maintained 1st team status on a regular basis in major inter-school sports' fixtures. The year was then climaxed for me, along with Jim Watson and Ronnie Dyce, by our being elected by our peers to serve as Senior School Prefects for the following three years in the Upper School.



**Got
My
Braid**

And

**So
Proud
Of
Myself !**