



The **LINDSAY MEMOIRS**

A Record of the
Lisnacrieve and Belfast Branch
of the Lindsay Family during
the last two hundred years

**James Cuthbert Lindsay
James A Lindsay
Belfast 1884**

Edited and Published by
Paul Middleton



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during the last two hundred years
1884

*'A people which takes no pride in the achievements of
remote ancestors will never achieve anything worthy
to be remembered by remote descendants.'*

Lord Macaulay

GENS HAUD INCURIOSA SECRUM

Written by
James Cuthbert Lindsay & James A Lindsay
in Belfast, November 1884
Edited and Published by Paul Middleton
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FOREWORD AND DEDICATION

I decided to transcribe this History in October 2014, after finding the typewritten manuscript stored away in the Lindsay family chest. In the preceding years I had never taken the trouble to decipher properly the 70 pages of bound typescript, but reading through it recently I realised it is a valuable insight into the Victorian view of a Lindsay family history. The language is somewhat quaint and the style a little indulgent, but the pride of these cousins writing of their family is clear and decisive.

It is only appropriate to dedicate my work on this to Margaret Green née Lindsay, and to John and Pippa her children, and the grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Paul Middleton 2014



Note: At the front of the volume is pasted this rather crude drawing together with the signature of Beatrice Eleanor Lindsay, Pippa's great-aunt. 'Auntie B' was a chocolate box artist employed by Cadbury's at Bournville near Birmingham.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Beatrice Eleanor Lindsay". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

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PREFACE

This short volume of Memoirs has been compiled in the belief that it will be found of interest to the numerous members of the large circle of the Lindsay family.

The facts relating to the period prior to the year 1790 were collected many years ago by our late uncle, John Lindsay, who devoted much time and labour to this object. While largely availing ourselves of his manuscripts, we have made every effort to amplify and corroborate their details by a reference to historical documents, and by the accumulation of independent testimony. Careful search has been instituted among the Churches, Graveyards and Registries of Tyrone and Fermanagh, and facts have been thus verified or brought to light.

For the events subsequent to the year 1790 there is no lack of evidence - oral, documentary, and derived from the public press - and our labour has been mainly that of selection and condensation. The short biographical accounts which we have inserted in Chapter III Section 3 are derived mainly from notices - obituary or otherwise - found in the public press.

It will be evident that our relationship to the personages in these Memoirs has necessarily restricted our liberty of comment. Praise has been limited by the canons of good taste, and criticism has been restrained alike by regard for the feelings of many who are still living and by the wise maxim - *'DE MORTUIS NIL NISI BONUM'*.

The fact that we have few notable events or remarkable achievements to chronicle will not, we think, deprive these memoirs of value in the estimation of those for whom they are intended.

'Every family should have a record of its own. Each has its peculiar spirit, running through the whole line, and, in more or less development, perceptible in every generation. Nor need our ancestors have been Scipios or Fabii to interest us in their fortunes. We do not love our kindred for their glory or their genius, but for their domestic affections and private virtues. And why should we not derive benefit from studying the virtues of our fore-fathers? An affectionate regard for their memory is natural to the heart. They are denied, it is true, to our personal acquaintance, but the light they shed during their lives survives within their tombs, and will reward our search if we explore them'. - Lord Lindsay.

These Memoirs are now presented to our relatives and friends in the belief that, however brief and fragmentary, they will yet be found to possess some interest and value, and in the hope that at a future day there may be found some one willing to supplement our labours, and to continue the records which we have begun.

James Cuthbert Lindsay
James A Lindsay MA, MD

Belfast, November 1884.

CHAPTER 1

From the earliest records down to the settlement of the Lindsay family at Lisnacrieve, Co. Tyrone (1670-1747).

Section 1 - Their Origin in Scotland

According to authentic documents and oral tradition, the original ancestor of the present Lindsay family was a native of Ayrshire, Scotland, where he lived about the middle of the latter half of the 17th century. His Christian name was James, and he appears to have been a farmer and a Presbyterian. This latter fact exposed him to the full fury of the religious persecution which was then raging in Scotland, under the auspices of the notorious Earl of Lauderdale, to whom the chief direction of Scotch affairs had been entrusted by Charles the Second.

Section 2 - Migration to Ireland

In consequence of this persecution, James Lindsay determined to leave Scotland, and to begin life again in Ireland, and in the year 1678 he put his resolution into effect, crossed over to Ireland, and settles as a farmer in the tract of country lying between Derry and St Johnstone.

Section 3 - The Siege of Derry

Nothing further is known of the fortunes or career of James Lindsay until the memorable year of the Siege and Relief of Derry, 1689. He does not appear to have been a resident in the city, or to have taken part in the military operations; but his sons - four in number, James, Alexander, Robert and David - were all numbered among the heroic defenders of Derry.

The history of the Siege of Derry - the most memorable, according to Macaulay, in the annals of the British Islands - is a thrice-told tale. For months previous to the closing of the gates, Derry had been a refuge of crowds of Protestant fugitives who fled from the furious Popish persecution inaugurated by Tyrconnell the Irish Viceroy under James the Second, who on March 12th 1689, had landed at Kinsale with the view of retrieving on Irish soil the errors and disasters which had led to the loss of the English crown. On the 17th April James appeared before the walls, vainly expecting an easy surrender. But the intrepid garrison were in no humour for submission, and having got rid of their treacherous governor they prepared

behind their feeble defences to offer a desperate resistance. Courage and resolution supplied the place of armaments and defences, and the garrison not only successfully defied the besiegers, though led by the most skilful generals of France, but made frequent courageous sorties, and succeeded in inflicting great loss upon the enemy. These sorties were frequently led by Colonel Murray, who held one of the chief military commands in the city, and amongst his troopers was James Lindsay, eldest son of him who had emigrated from Ayrshire. Alexander, the second son, was a physician, and with his younger brothers, Robert and David, also served in some military capacity.

The siege dragged slowly along. Privation, disease, and the accidents of war, struck down numerous victims, amongst whom was Alexander Lindsay, whose duties as a physician exposed him to unusual perils. At length, on August 1st, the city was relieved, and the baffled besiegers retreated towards Strabane.

Section 4 - From the Siege of Derry to the Settlement at Lisnacrieve (1689-1747).

Nothing further is recorded of James Lindsay (the original settler from Scotland), and the date of his death has not been preserved.

After the Siege of Derry, when King William's authority was firmly established over Ireland, those persons who had taken a leading part in the defence of the city received tracts of land in recognition of their services. Amongst those who were thus rewarded was James Lindsay, the eldest of the four brothers, who was assigned a district of country in Connaught. His wife, however, was much averse to removing to a distant part of the country inhabited almost exclusively by Roman Catholics, and she induced her husband to forego his share of the lands which had been forfeited to the crown. He subsequently settled as a farmer at Castlefin. Before following the history of this James Lindsay, who was the ancestor of the present family, we shall dismiss in a few words the records of his two surviving brothers, Robert and David.

After the termination of the Siege of Derry, Robert and David Lindsay settled as Farmers at Raphoe, and their descendants comprise those Lindsays who in after years lived at Raphoe, at the Waterside, Derry, and in that district of country near Newtown-Conyngham named 'The Lagan'. Some of the members of this family removed from Raphoe to a place called 'The Harp', near Trillick, others to Keerins, between Omagh

and Sixmilecross. One of the sons of either Robert or David Lindsay (it is uncertain of which), was named James, and he removed from Raphoe to Rahony, between Trillick and Fintona. He was a man of small stature, and was known as 'Little James Lindsay' to distinguish him from his cousin of the same name, who also settled at Rahony, and whose name will appear in the subsequent narrative.

These branches of the Lindsay family had numerous descendants, the majority of whom emigrated to America at various times between the years 1772 and 1810.

We return now to James Lindsay - the eldest of the four brothers who took part in the defence of Derry - who, as has been already stated, settled as a farmer at Castlefin.

He had a family of four sons and two daughters. The names of the sons were John, James, David and Samuel. The names of the daughters have not been preserved. Of the four sons, James, the second, was the ancestor of the present family; but before detailing his history we shall relate briefly what is known regarding his three brothers, John, Davis and Samuel.

John, the eldest brother, was noted for his tall stature, strength and agility, and in the performance of some muscular feat he received an injury to his spine which led to his death at an early age, and while still unmarried.

David, the third brother, married and settled as a farmer between Augher and Monaghan. He had three sons, all of whom, however, died unmarried, so that this branch of the male line is now extinct.

Samuel, the fourth and youngest brother, settled at Coolbuck, in County Fermanagh, and married Kitty Montgomery, a member of an English family which had settled in Ireland about the year 1620. Their granddaughter, Hannah Cowan, married in 1791 Alexander Lindsay, brother of James Lindsay of Lisnacrieve, the father of the founders of the firm of Lindsay Bros, of Belfast.

We return now to James Lindsay, second son of James Lindsay of Castlefin, and grandson of the original settler.

JAMES LINDSAY (1685-1773)

This James Lindsay (born 1685) lived at Castlefin with his father until the year 1724, when he married Agnes Primrose, of Ballycushie, between Fintona and Augher. Soon after his marriage he left Castlefin and took a farm of 114 acres in the townland of Rahony, and soon afterwards another

farm adjacent of 80 acres.. Both these farms belonged to the estate of Sir Henry Mervyn. These farms bordered on the one belonging to 'Little James Lindsay', of whom we have already spoken, and to distinguish the cousins, James Lindsay from Castlefin was named 'Big James Lindsay'.

John Primrose - father of Agnes Primrose - was twice married. By his first marriage he had issue Agnes (married to James Lindsay), and Samuel who settled between Tempo and Fivemiletown, and became the ancestor of the Primroses who subsequently lived in that neighbourhood. By his second marriage, John Primrose had several children, with whom he emigrated to America, and settled in one of the New England States. He became very wealthy, and held the Commission of the Peace for many years before his death.

James Lindsay lived at Rahony from 1734 till 1747, when he removed to Lisnacrieve. By his marriage with Agnes Primrose he had a family of five daughters - Kitty, Ellen, Agnes, Lydia and Anne, - and two sons - David and John. Of these David was the ancestor of the present family. We shall therefore first dispose of his sisters and brother.

Of the sisters, Kitty, the eldest, became in the year 1746 the heroine of an abduction which made a great sensation at the time, and the details of which have been fortunately preserved. She had a suitor named Thomas Breen, of Augher, who, on his addresses being rejected by her, determined to accomplish by force what fair means had failed to secure for him. Collecting together a band of his neighbours and acquaintances, he sallied forth by night and made a descent upon James Lindsay's house at Rahony. The door was forced open, and a search having been made for Kitty, she was discovered in her room with her little brother John, then a child of eight years of age. In spite of her desperate resistance, she was dragged out of bed, and forced hastily to put on some loose clothing. Her little brother, who was warmly attached to her, clung in mortal terror to his sister, fearing that some great wrong was about to be done, and in the scuffle which ensued such great and cruel violence was used by the abductors, that the little boy had his shoulder dislocated, and received other serious injuries, so that he died a few days after. The father, who had also been aroused, used all his efforts and entreaties to make Thomas Breen forego his evil intentions, but in vain. The band of marauders, having secured their victim and seated her on a pillion behind one of the horsemen, started on their homeward journey. No sooner had they disappeared into the darkness than James Lindsay, rousing himself from his despair, ran quickly to the house of his first cousin, who, as has already been stated, also lived at Rahony.

The cousins at once started in pursuit, and after riding about eight miles, they overtook Breen's party at an inn kept by one Maclean, where they had stopped to rest and refresh themselves after the night's adventure. James Lindsay fearlessly entered the inn, and found that the party elated by their success, had drunk rather freely. He threatened them with punishment for their crime, whereupon one of them offered that if he would pay the reckoning to the landlord of the inn, his daughter would be at once restored to him. This James Lindsay readily agreed to do, but the money having been paid, he found that he had been too easily duped, as Breen once more laid hold of his daughter, and seating her on horseback, carried her off to his father's house near Knockmany.

James Lindsay now returned home, and, exhausted by the excitement and fatigues of the night, he fell asleep in his chair by the fireside. In his sleep he had a vivid dream, which seemed to tell him that if he would set out a second time in pursuit he would succeed in recovering possession of his daughter. With a simple reliance on what he regarded as a divine inspiration, he forgot his fatigue, and having mounted a fresh horse, rode with all possible speed to Breen's house at Knockmany. Having arrived there, he found all dark and silent, most of the marauding party having returned to their homes, and the others lying in drunken slumber. After reconnoitering for a little, James Lindsay perceived a glimmer of light at one of the windows, and on venturing to tap on it he was answered by his daughter from within. Encouraged by the prospect of rescue, Kitty Lindsay succeeded in making her way out of the house unobserved, and, mounting a horse, she and her father galloped home with all possible speed to Rahony, where they arrived at daybreak.

A few days afterwards James Lindsay repaired to Omagh and lodged criminal information against the participants in this outrage. Many of those concerned in it occupied respectable positions in life, and such powerful influence was brought to bear upon him to relinquish the prosecution, and allow his daughter to be married to Thomas Breen, that he reluctantly consented, much against his own judgment, and it is believed against the inclination of Kitty Lindsay herself.

There were several sons and daughters by this marriage. The eldest son, named David, had a numerous family, of whom one (also named David) served in the army, and was present at the battle of Waterloo. Another son, named Thomas, was also a soldier, and lost his life at the battle of Salamanca, July 22nd 1812.

Kitty Breen died in 1757, eleven years after her abduction. We return

now to her father's history.

The harvest of 1747 was a disastrous one in County Tyrone. The yield of wheat was so deficient that the farmers were obliged to send to Newry and obtain supplies from the English markets. Hay was also an entire failure, and fodder became so scarce that the cattle died in large numbers. James Lindsay suffered severely, and probably in consequence of his losses he determined to leave Rahony. He arranged with Mr Charles Eccles for a lease of a portion of the townland of Lisnacrieve, whither he soon afterwards removed, having spent twenty-three years of his life at Rahony. The house in which he lived there was still standing as late as the year 1846.