
James, Mary & Alexander

British 1820 Settlers to South Africa

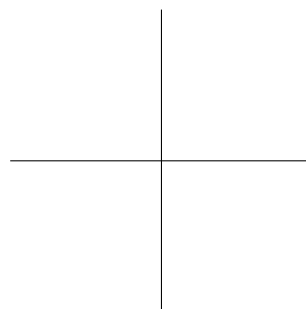
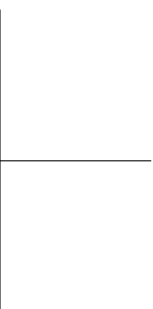
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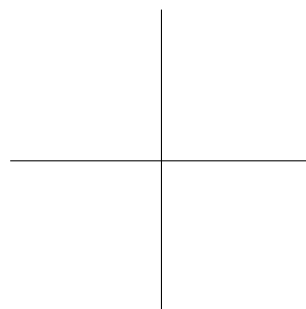
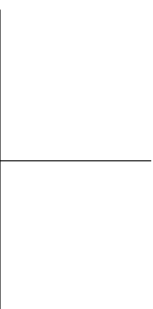
This book is dedicated to ...

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Preface

This book documents the genealogy of the McDonald family, focusing on the (male) descendants of James McDonald and Mary Welch. James and Mary were British 1820 Settlers who emigrated to the Cape Colony. This work aims to provide a comprehensive reference for the descendants of this lineage.

The book is divided into chapters that detail the lives and contributions of each generation, from James and Mary to the present day. Each chapter includes biographical information, historical context, and genealogical records.

The primary objective is to preserve the McDonald family history, ensuring that future generations have a detailed record of their ancestry. This book also includes information on allied families and significant individuals who played a role in the family's history.

Welcome to the genealogical record of the McDonald family.

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgments are due to the many family members who contributed their time and information, making this project possible. Their efforts have ensured that the legacy of James McDonald and Mary Welch will be remembered and celebrated.

Introduction

Overview of the McDonald Family

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Historical Context of the 1820 Settlers

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Chapter 1

James McDonald

♂ James McDonald

[a]

★ 9th October 1789, Crawford, Lanarkshire, Scotland.
≈ 11th October 1789, Scotland.
† < 7th November 1822, Cape Colony, South Africa.

⊞ Mary Welch, 12th May 1817, St Botolph-without-Bishopsgate.

1.1 Early life in Britain

James’s birth date, birthplace, and parents remain uncertain. The most reliable source is Biggar’s 1820 Settler list, which listed his age as 31 (eGSA 2024a, pp. 536–539). This suggests a birth year between 28th September 1787, and 27th September 1788. However, settlers often inflated their ages to qualify for the program, so this estimate should be viewed with caution.

FamilySearch and 1820settlers.com suggest James McDonald was born on 9th October 1789, to William Wallace McDonald and Janet Aitchison in Crawford, Lanarkshire, Scotland, with a baptism on 11th October 1789 (FamilySearch 1789) (1820settlers.com 2021a). However, this lacks evidence to definitively link them. The birth date contradicts the age calculation above, and the suggested parents’ names haven’t reappeared among known descendants.

1.2 The Journey to the Cape Colony

James, Mary, and their one-year-old son, Alexander, immigrated to South Africa with the British 1820 Settlers (Nash 1987, p. 46). Their names first appear in Alexander Biggar’s settler correspondence. This letter, dated 27th September 1819, was addressed to Lord Bathurst from 3 Northumberland Court, Strand, London, in which Biggar proposed a list of potential members for his party to South Africa(eGSA 2024a, pp. 536–539). They are also referenced in his later settler returns (Appendix 1.3.3 provides a complete list and further details) (eGSA 2024b).

1.3 Settlement and Life in the Cape Colony

1.4 Marriage and Family

Marriage to Mary Welch

James McDonald and Mary Welch were wed on the 12th May 1817, at St Botolph-without-Bishopsgate, Bishopsgate, City of London (FamilySearch 1817) (1820settlers.com 2021a). The marriage record shows James signing his name, while Mary made a mark ("+") next to hers. Both were listed as parishioners. Isaac Netto and Catherine Netto (née McDonald) witnessed the ceremony (Figure 1.1).

1.5 Descendants

Alexander McDonald, born from the union of James McDonald and Mary Welch, is their only known descendant (Nash 1987, p. 46).

1.6 Death

James must have died before the 7th November 1822 because we know that marriage bans were published on that date for Mary Welch and Robert Henman. See Chapter 2.2 for further details.

1.7 Associates

Chapter 2

Mary Welch

2.1 Early life in Britain

2.2 Marriage and Family

Marriage to James McDonald

For further details refer to Chapter 1.

Marriage to Robert Henman

Marriage bans were published on 7th November 1822 in Grahamstown for Mary Welch's and Robert Henman (1820settlers.com 2021a) (1820settlers.com 2021b).

2.3 Descendants

2.4 Death

Chapter 3

First Generation

Overview of the first generation...

3.1 Alexander McDonald

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Birth and Early Life

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Marriage and Family

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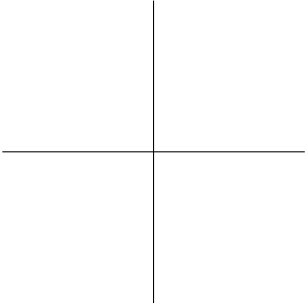
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3.2 Descendants

3.3 Death

Contributions and Legacy

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Appendix A

Genealogical Charts

A.1 Detailed Family Trees

A.2 Charts for Each Generation

Appendix B

Historical Documents

B.1 Marriage Certificates

B.2 Birth and Death Records

B.3 Wills and Legal Documents

Appendix C

Photographs and Illustrations

C.1 Family Photographs

C.2 Maps and Illustrations

Appendix D

Glossary of Terms

D.1 Genealogical Terms

D.2 Historical Terms

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