

My father - James / Jim

James 1909 - 2001

Christened Santiago (St James in Spanish) as a requirement in Argentina at the time, my father was born in the area of Saavedra in the industrial city of Bahia Blanca \approx 400 miles south west of Buenos Aires, his father George (previous page) having emigrated from Scotland. About, he estimated, age 3 he moved to Mendoza and used to recall being taken home by a policeman when he was lost in a street with oranges growing by the road side walking his dog "pichicho". He had a very good recall - right back to early life!

Mendoza



His father, George Hutchison Morgan Penny, was born at Nether Kinmundy, Longside, Aberdeenshire on 7 July 1874. His mother, Maggie Buchan, was born at Ythan Wells, Aberdeenshire on 4 May 1881.

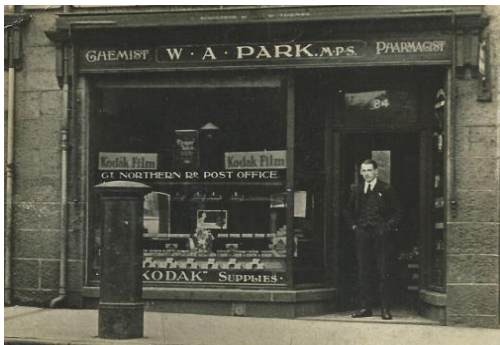
← Taken in 1913, this Argentinian postcard style picture is (left to right) my Dad, Jim, and his brothers Bill and George. Although not apparent from the photo, with Dad estimating the family moved to Mendoza when he was about three this photo may well be from a studio in Mendoza.

By George's return to Aberdeen after WW 1 my father was 10 and at Kittybrewster school. For some time they lived opposite the school in a flat above one of the shops pictured below:-



94 Great Northern Road, Aberdeen. Flat was for sale 2014 about £60k.

Along this stretch of shops was a pharmacy which kindled his interest in the profession. Willie Park was the pharmacist.



I recall Dad talking about holidays at Nether Kinmundy and at Peterculter mentioning his grandfather who was James (1839 -1928) and was in Peterculter in 1910 when his brother Alexander visited from St Louis. My assumption is that my father visited his grandfather in Peterculter only unless they both ended up holidaying at Nether Kinmundy at the same time. Maybe he had been visiting another relative at Kinmundy.

An impact on him was the sight of the airships from the station at Lenabo - expanded on in the next section. My insight about Lenabo was shortly after a business trip near Cardington in the late 1990s when I mentioned to him the size of the hangers. This prompted his talking in detail about the R 101 airship which crashed in its maiden overseas voyage in France on 5 October 1930 effectively ending British airship development. His recollection of airships went back much further to Lenabo which was built in 1915 and demolished in 1920.



Kittybrewster School - photographed Feb 2009



1931 aged 22
I still have the sporran!

We never discussed how he travelled to and from Nether Kinmundy so I am going to surmise that he went by train for most of the journey. At the time (WW 1 and early 1920s) the Great North of Scotland Railway from Aberdeen to Huntly had a junction at Dyce to Maud branching to Peterhead and Fraserburgh. The section from Dyce started as the Formartine & Buchan Railway with its Aberdeen terminus at Kittybrewster. The nearest station to Kinmundy would have been Longside so the last part of the journey could have been by foot, horse & cart or some motorised transport.

He attended Robert Gordon's School in Schoolhill, Aberdeen and moved to 17 Rosemount Viaduct - a short stroll to school. On graduation he went to Robert Gordon's College to study pharmacy. Robert Gordon's great grandfather, John Gordon of Pitlurg, was the owner of Kinmundy estate when it became the free barony of Kinmundy in 1588.

He gave me some notes about his time at Robert Gordon's:-

Age	Robert Gordon's School				Age	Robert Gordon's College	
12 13	1921/22	Class 1A	Mr Scorgie		16 17	1925/26	Evening classes
13 14	1922/23	Class 2A	Mr Barclay		17 18	1926/27	Evening classes
14 15	1923/24	Class 3A	Mr Forbes		18 19	1927/28	Evening classes
15 16	1924>Dec	Class 4A	Mr Murray		19 20	1928/29	Evening classes - passed
					20 21	1929/30	Interval - too young to qualify
					21 22	1930/31	Full time; Aug 31 graduated Oct 1931 qualified MPS

Maybe someone will recognise the names of the school teachers (year heads?); it gives an idea of the method and timescales to qualify in pharmacy at the time.



I have many recollections of visiting No 17 and being given half a crown (2/6 \equiv 12 1/2 p) to spend in the model shop which was to the right of the building entrance (now Cancer Research).

Antlers which were in the hallway (presumably popular for hanging up hats and coats in the early/mid 1900s) are in my house together with an armadillo shell (once a sewing basket).



Dad - Montrose, March 1937

Since qualifying in 1931, James was then a pharmacist in Montrose, London, India and Inverness.

Whilst in Montrose he spent a lot of leisure time clambering around the Cairngorms and had an occasional column in the Montrose Standard writing as "Angus Buchan" - folk from or familiar with North East Scotland may well realise the relevance of the name. I have some 1935 original copies from the paper.

Later in the 1930s when the manager of Lewis & Burrows (aka Matterson's Drug Store) pharmacy in New Oxford Street, London he at least once returned to Aberdeen as a passenger on a commercial boat - maybe not an uncommon practice at the time. Lewis and Burrows Ltd was formed in 1895 to acquire and amalgamate under one management several pharmacy businesses in north and west London,



Dad - November 1940

Early during WW 2, around 1940, he was at RAMC Cookham Barracks, Aldershot as a pharmacist sergeant. He became a Staff Sergeant and then an RSM - apparently the first one ever in the RAMC. He was posted to Singapore which fell in 1942 just days before the ship's arrival - he spent the next 2 to 3 years based at Kohima by the Burmese border. Commissioned to lieutenant during 1944 relocating to Calcutta, I recall his amusement of becoming temporary captain then acting major running the army medical supplies depot there. I have a copy of a 23 page letter he sent to his mother when he was on leave in Darjeeling - I hope to write this up with the inclusion of up-to-date pictures to complement the text.

More WW 2 photos below (found Sept 2022).



Following demob he ran a pharmacy - Henry's in Eastgate, Inverness. Then the opportunity to buy a Victorian style pharmacy - Ogston's in Union Street - came up. Savings from the war helped and Ogston's was sold only when he reached 62; just around the time of decimalisation in 1971! In Ogston's there were decorative oil jars (referred to as "ali baba" jars because of their shape and size) which were painted by someone who had painted the crests of the Highland Railway on locomotives (and presumably other rolling stock). These jars also had the Highland Railway crest (there is still a crest with a list of directors in Inverness station). I wonder where those jars are now?



Mum and Dad on their wedding day - 1946.

I still have the sporran!



Dad in 1935

Moving to Inverness in July 1946, my parents lived at 17 Ardconnel Street (in 2021 Park Hill Guest House and for sale at £450.000); moving in January 1947 to 29 Crown Street then in August to The Anchorage, Merlewood Road; closer to town in Mar 1948 to 36 Broadstone Park they then bought their first house at 19 Glenburn Drive in July 1949 (I remember living there) moving to 7 Damfield Road when I was 6.



17 Ardconnel Street (Park Hill guest house)



29 Crown Street



The Anchorage, Merlewood Road

My sister joined them in 1947 from Buenos Aires where she had been staying with our grandmother she recently mentioned walking to school from Broadstone Park then cycling from Glenburn Drive.

Locums in Wick, Stornoway, Gardenstown and Inverness followed before he moved to Herne Bay then Birchington where he died on 17 August 2001. His ashes are with my mother's in Herne Bay cemetery.

My sister and I have many fond memories of Jim (as he became in Herne Bay) from talks and walks to recollections of his life in many places; Tara too was an avid listener.

Piecing together the sequence of his earlier days was helped by his writing notes. What is unresolved is where exactly he met his grandfather (James 1839 to 1928) - Peterculter certainly but maybe the person he met up with and stayed with at Nether Kimmundy was his great uncle Charles (1858 to 1936) - which makes even more poignant coming across by chance the gravestone in Longside in 2009. Looking at that stone evokes the connection between my father and Nether Kimmundy.

This map serves two purposes. First to indicate where father lived in Argentina and secondly to add in places relevant to my mother and sister.

Phyllis & Melody holidayed in Cordoba

James moved to Mendoza about 1912

Phyllis holidayed with her mother
in Bariloche



Phyllis Buckley born in Buenos Aires - 1912
Melody Iglesias born in Buenos Aires - 1938

Santiago (James) Penny born in Bahia Blanca - 1909

Some of the family member activity in Argentina is expanded on in the Muirden section.

These are the railway lines that would have existed when my father went to Nether Kinmundy and Peter Culter.



In 1957 Jimmy Penny (my father) was Chairman of Inverness and District Pharmacists Association.





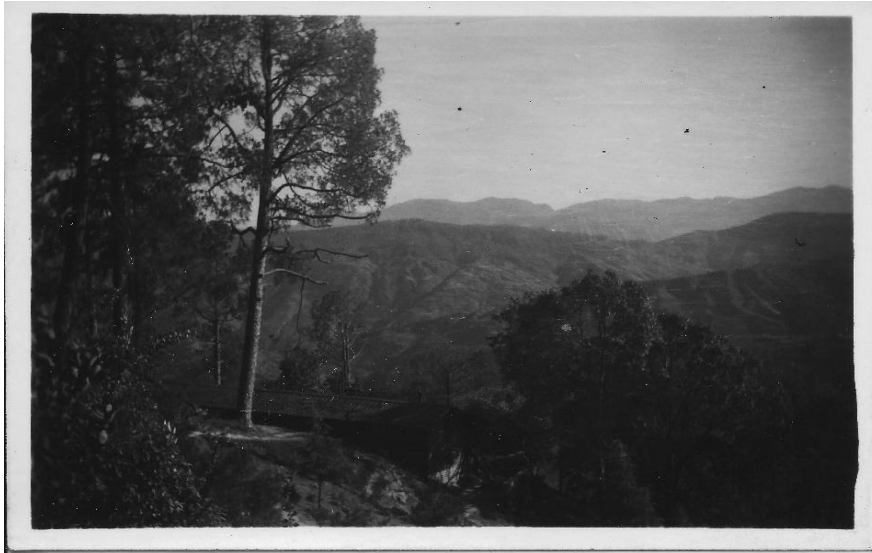
Staff Sergeant Jimmy Penny

Aldershot 1940



Staff Sergeant Jimmy Penny

Aldershot 1940 / 41



Ranikhet - view from pharmacy



Ranikhet - Indian DMM (?)



This plaque is in Herne Bay garden of a remembrance with a copy in our garden in Minnis Bay.