

The Cally House Timetable

A calligraphy work of art is given to us.

In February 2021, **Mark Grieve**, a local Gatehouse joiner, came to our house and offered us an ornate piece of coloured pen and ink calligraphy that was drawn on a piece of card approximately 33cm x 24cm. The upper part of the piece was further embellished by pastel watercolour painting (see next page).

The card had been found, together with a small amount of paperwork and some old joinery planes in a joiner's chest that hadn't been opened for years. The card has a title "Cally Gatehouse" and was almost certainly used to inform guests at Cally House, when it was still a private residence, of meal times, prayer times and at what time the morning mail arrives.

Where did the joiner's chest come from ?

Mark's father **Stanley Grieve** worked for some years at his father-in-law's joinery – Coid – in Creetown. Years later, Stanley opened a new Coid workshop in Digby Street, Gatehouse, which he and Mark have managed since then. The joiner's chest has been in the Digby Street workshop for many years, and for all this time it is likely that it has not been fully opened whilst its contents lay unexamined.

A memory stirs !

When Margaret heard where the artwork had come from, she remembered conversations between her parents relating to a joiner's chest that belonged first to her grandfather and then to her father, and her mind went into overdrive – *"could this be the same chest ?"*

Margaret continues the story ...

In the mid-1890s my grandfather, **James Hunter**, left his job as a joiner on the Cavens Estate near New Abbey, to take up the position of Clerk of Works on the Cally Estate.

About the same time my grandmother Elizabeth Nicol, a farmer's daughter from Chapel of Garioch, Aberdeenshire came to Cally House to nurse Horatio Granville Murray Stewart. **Mr Murray Stewart died in April 1904** and later that year my grandparents James and Elizabeth married. They lived at Cally Sawmill (formerly Scott's Mill) in Ann Street. I understand that after Mr Murray Stewart died his widow Eliza moved to Rusko House, and later, Cally House was privately let for a number of years.

James starts joinery business

My grandfather continued to work for Cally Estates until into the 1920s when he set up his own joinery business at 6 Catherine Street, Gatehouse (where the **Henry** family had run a joiner's business for years).

Arthur joins the business

My dad, **Arthur Hunter**, joined in the business which he continued until the 1970s.

Dad took ill and sold all his equipment to Coids in Digby Street, including my grandfather's old joiner's chest. Dad was not well enough to supervise the sale and I remember my Mum complaining that she would have liked to have kept the chest.

Stanley opens the chest

This year, during a 'Covid clean-out' Stanley checked the chest and found the Timetable and a number of old wooden planes marked with '**Jas. Hunter**', which confirms that the chest did belong to my grandfather.

How did the Timetable get into a joiner's chest ?

My grandparents had a good relationship with their employers, the **Murray Stewarts**. My parents had a small Davenport desk and an old Persian rug (both rather worn) at home when I was young. I know these came from Cally House, probably as a wedding present for my grandparents, whose second daughter was named Anne Eliza Stewart Hunter after Mrs Anne Eliza Murray Stewart. Mrs Murray Stewart also gave my aunt (her namesake) an initialled silver porringer and spoon as a christening present.

Following the death of Horatio and the letting of Cally House there would have been many artefacts that would have been taken away for repair or to be disposed of. Maybe the Timetable had been framed and it was to be re-framed just before Horatio died. Whatever happened it clearly ended up in my grandfather's chest, came into Mark's possession and it is now back in my hands !!

