

## 54 High Street : Town Hall



### ◀ Chronology of Ownership & Occupancy ▶

- 1781** Feu charter to Robert Kelly.  
**1784** Sold to John McGeoch.  
**1797** Ownership of John McGeoch and his wife Jean McDowall.  
**1828** Ownership of James McGeoch, farmer at Girthon Kirk, heir of John McGeoch, joiner at Girthon Kirk.  
**1839** Sold by James McGeoch to Mary Blyth.

**1841 Girthon Census :** No Mary Blyth or John Houston in High Street.  
*Following entry based on who was living in neighbouring properties.*

**Enumeration District 7 Page 3 Front Street 55**

<u>Surname</u>	<u>Forename(s)</u>	<u>Rel.</u>	<u>Mar.</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Birthplace</u>
Gordon	William			m	35	land surveyor	Kirkcudbrightshire
Gordon	Margaret			f	25		Kirkcudbrightshire

Gordon	James		m	10		England
Gordon	Janet		f	8		England
McKnight	Mary		f	25	female servant	Kirkcudbrightshire
Bowman	Thomas		m	40	thread manufacturer	Scotland
Dixon	James		m	50	ironmonger	Kirkcudbrightshire

**1851 Girthon Census :** No Mary Blyth or John Houston in High Street.  
*Following entry based on who was living in neighbouring properties.*

**Enumeration District 2 Page 4 High Street (South) 07**

<u>Surname</u>	<u>Forename(s)</u>	<u>Rel.</u>	<u>Mar.</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Birthplace</u>
Dalziell	Robert	head	m	m	40	innkeeper	Kbts, Rerrick
Dalziell	Betsy	wife	m	f	35		Kbts, Crossmichael
Dalziell	John	son		m	12	scholar	Kbts, Crossmichael
Dalziell	Alexander	son		m	10	scholar	Kbts, Crossmichael
Dalziell	Barbara	dau.		f	4		Kbts, Kirkpatrick
Dalziell	Betsy	dau.		f	2		Kbts, Kirkpatrick
McCaa	Sarah	servant	s	f	18	house serv.	Kbts, Girthon

**1859-60 Girthon Valuation Roll :** Miss Mary Blyth, owned a house and garden that was occupied by John Houston.

**1861 Girthon Census - Enumeration District 1 Page 10 High Street South 19**

<u>Surname</u>	<u>Forename(s)</u>	<u>Rel.</u>	<u>Mar.</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Birthplace</u>
Houston	John	head	m	m	33	hotel keeper	Kbts, Kirkmabreck
Houston	Alison	wife	m	f	24		Dumfries, Moffat
Houston	Mary	dau		f	5	scholar	Kbts, Kirkmabreck
Houston	John	son		m	4m		Kbts, Girthon
Campbell	Mary Ann	servant	s	f	20	domestic servant	Kbts, Girthon

**1865** Inherited by Alexander Blyth brother of Mary Blyth.

**1865** Sold by Alexander Blyth to Isabella Bain or Kirkpatrick, mother of James R Kirkpatrick.

**1871 Girthon Census - Enumeration District 1 Page 9 & 10 High Street South 18**

<u>Surname</u>	<u>Forename(s)</u>	<u>Rel.</u>	<u>Mar.</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Birthplace</u>
Tait	Thomas	head	m	m	58	painter & glazier	Kbts, Gatehouse
Tait	Isabella	wife	m	f	53		Kbts, Anwoth
Tait	Maggie H	dau.	s	f	20		Kbts, Anwoth
Tait	Robert L	son		m	12	scholar	Kbts, Anwoth
Tait	Andrew C	son		m	9	scholar	Kbts, Anwoth
McGill	Alexander	head	m	m	61	mason	Kbts, Girthon
McGill	Elizabeth	wife	m	f	53		Kbts, Anwoth
McGill	John	son	s	m	22	mason	Kbts, Anwoth
McGill	Agnes	dau.	s	f	17	pupil teacher	Kbts, Girthon
McGill	Mary	dau.		f	15		Kbts, Girthon
McGill	Alexander	son		m	12	scholar	Kbts, Girthon
Hemphill	Joseph	lodger	s	m	24	bobbin turner	Lanark, Glasgow
Toul	Joseph	lodger	s	m	19	groom	Kbts, Kelton
Carson	Jemima	head	m	f	34	groom's wife	Wigtown, Newton Stewart
Carson	Lizzie	dau.		f	7	scholar	Kbts, Gatehouse
Carson	Mary	dau.		f	4		Kbts, Gatehouse
Carson	Hannah	dau.		f	3		Kbts, Gatehouse
Carson	James	son		m	7m		Kbts, Gatehouse
Carson	Sarah Grace	dau.		f	7m		Kbts, Gatehouse
Carson	Sarah	sis-in-l	s	f	17	formerly nurse	Kbts, Gatehouse

**1878-9 Girthon Valuation Roll :** Misses Mary & Agnes Kirkpatrick + James R Kirkpatrick (draper) + Miss Isabella Kirkpatrick (a minor) owned a house & garden in High Street that was occupied by John Houston.

**1881 Girthon Census - Enumeration District 1 Pages 8 & 9 High Street (South) 26**

<u>Surname</u>	<u>Forename(s)</u>	<u>Rel.</u>	<u>Mar.</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Birthplace</u>
Henry	William	head	m	m	31	saddler	Kbts, Borgue
Henry	Nicholas	wife	m	f	33		Dumfries, Thornhill
Henry	Maggie M	dau		f	9	scholar	Dumfries, Thornhill
Henry	Samuel J	son		m	6	scholar	England
Henry	John W	son		m	4		England
Henry	Mary Jane	dau		f	1		Kbts, Gatehouse

**1884-85 Girthon Valuation Roll – Kirkpatrick’s appear only to own house & shop at 50-52 High Street**

- 1885** Sold by J R Kirkpatrick for £200 to town hall trustees (1) John Faed, artist, (2) James Nichol Cox, surgeon, (3) Andrew McLean, shoemaker and (4) Alexander McDonald, blacksmith.
- 1885** John Faed and others borrowed £600 from the Loyal Rusko Lodge of Oddfellows per John Fergusson, draper, treasurer.
- 1889** The Old Town Hall was built by public subscription and “vested in the people of Gatehouse of Fleet for all time”, it was for many years the largest single span hall in the Stewartry.
- 1899** Loan repaid and property taken over by Gatehouse Town Council.
- 1945** Plans for a community centre on the site came to nothing.
- 1960s** When the hall became run-down and in need of repair, plans were drawn up to replace it with a new Civic Centre and theatre on the ground that is now the town car park. Plans fell through for this development also.
- 1975** Money was collected to either upgrade the old hall or to build a new one, but local government re-organisation removed the Town Council and again the plans came to nothing. The property was taken over by Dumfries and Galloway Council.
- 1976** The Stewartry District Council proposed to demolish the old building, a move which was opposed by the Interim Community Council, on the grounds that the hall belonged to the people “for all time” and that they must replace it with an appropriate New Hall. No agreement was reached and the Interim Community Council, in the name of three of its members, took the matter right up to the High Court, and won its case.
- 1978** The Regional Council, as building authority, stepped in and required the District Council to demolish the old hall on the grounds of public safety. This time the District Council appealed to the Sheriff Principal, and the Sheriff in Kirkcudbright decreed that the facade should remain, but that the actual hall should be demolished.
- 1982** The District Council and the Community Council agreed a development plan to which the Community Council had to get the agreement of the majority of voters in the old Burgh
- 1994** Following demolition of the hall and conversion of the Council Chamber to a flat, the garden and access to Garries Park was opened.



1994 : Opening of the Old Town Hall Gardens

*Last Updated : 14 April 2015*