

# Dr Alexander Dott

Doctor in Gatehouse 1900 - 1916

**Alexander Dott** was born on 21<sup>st</sup> January 1864 at Bridge End, Laggan, Invernesshire.

His parents were **Alexander Dott** and **Jessie Campbell**, who owned a general store in Laggan Bridge, which is on the A86 south of Kingussie. They sold everything from groceries to tweeds for visiting shooters and fishers. The shop later became a Post Office.

Alexander's grandparents, John Dott, a carter and Mary Dott, were from Fife but had moved to Kingussie in the early 1800's. The Dott family are believed to have originally been timber merchants from Scandinavia who had traded with merchants from Fife.

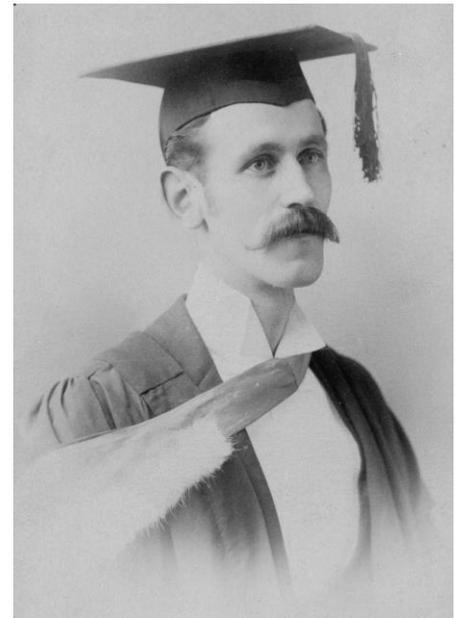
In 1871 Alexander was 7 years old, living with his parents Alexander & Jessie Dott at Bridge End of Laggan where his father was a 'general merchant'. There were 2 older brothers (Donald and Andrew), and a younger brother and sister (David and Annie). Alexander also had older siblings John and Mary, who were no longer living with their parents in 1871.

He was educated at the local school where he was taught, at least partly, in Gaelic. (In the 1911 Girthon census he stated that he was a speaker of both Gaelic and English.)

By 1881, aged 18, he was a scholar continuing his higher education in Inverness where he lived with his aunt Isabella and her family.

He then attended Edinburgh University where he graduated in 1890 as M.B. & Master of Surgery.

His first post after graduating seems to have been in Todmorden, Yorkshire where he was a medical practitioner in the 1891 census.



## 1891 Census - Todmorden, Yorkshire

Household No.	Occupation	Name	Relationship	Sex	Age	Profession	Notes
266	2	John Hingley	do	S	19	do	X do do
		James Greenwood	Head	M	48	Winder on Cotton	X Lanc. Walsden
		Betsy do	Wife	M	47		do do
267	Stanley Tern	Alexander Dott	Head	S	26	Medical Practitioner	X Scotland
		Janina Prossley	Serv.	S	48	General Serv. (Domestic)	X Lanc. Royton
	do						
268	do	Lord Fielden	Head	M	38	cloth agent (Cotton)	X do Todmorden
		Mary do	Wife	M	35		Yorkshire do
		Robert do	Son		9	Scholar	do do

His granddaughter, Anne Jack, believes that around this time Alexander travelled the world as a surgeon on board ship.

In the Medical Directory for 1895, he is listed as the Medical Officer for Creetown, 9 miles from Gatehouse..

\***DOTT, ALEXANDER, Creetown, Kirkcudbright-sh.—M.B. and C.M. Edin. 1890; (Univ. Edin.); Med. Off. Kirkmabreck Parish.**

Alexander moved to Gatehouse about 1896.

At first he lived as a lodger with Mr & Mrs Bertram at 64/66 High Street. (*ex 1901 Girthon census*).

While living there he probably kept his horse and carriage across the road in the old Brewery building as seen in the photo below right.



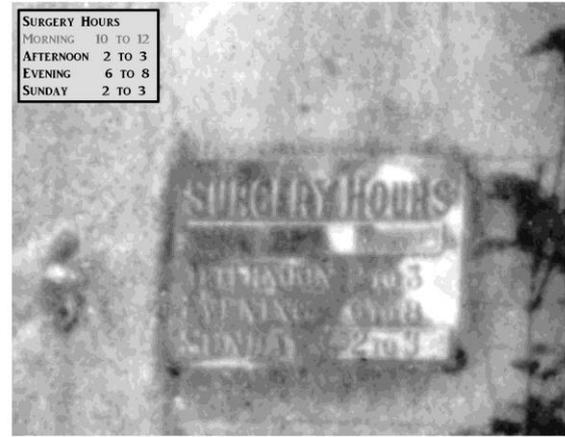
Alexander Dott married **Catherine Greig Torry** from Castle Douglas on 21<sup>st</sup> January 1910, in Castle Douglas. Catherine's father Robert Torry was a clerk/newsagent, her mother a telephonist.

The couple's first home in Gatehouse was 2 High Street, a rented house on the corner of Ann Street, where Alexander also had a surgery. It was at this house that their two children **Alastair** and **Mary Marjory** were born in 1910 and 1913.

### Extract from Medical Register for 1913

DOTT, Alexander .....	Gatehouse of Fleet .....	1890, Nov. 8 S.	M.B., Mast. Surg. 1890, Univ. Edin.
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In 1914 the Dotts bought a house further up Ann Street which was known as Kirk's Cottage or simply The Cottage. Alexander renamed it Corriebuie - a Gaelic name meaning yellow hollow - which is believed to have connections with his old home at Laggan Bridge.



Corriebuie showing Dr Dott's car and the surgery hours sign.

During the First World War, Alexander was recruited by the army to conduct medical examinations on the local men who had volunteered for military service, and his signature appears on many of the World War I records.

Alexander soon became involved in the everyday life in Gatehouse. In 1914 he ran 'Ambulance Classes' for ladies in the town, and the Dumfries & Galloway Standard reported that he was gifted a standard lamp in gratitude. He also took similar classes in Newton Stewart, and was given a gold watch in thanks.

Also in 1914, he was co-opted onto the Town Council. He was also a keen green bowler, serving on the committee and taking part in competitions.



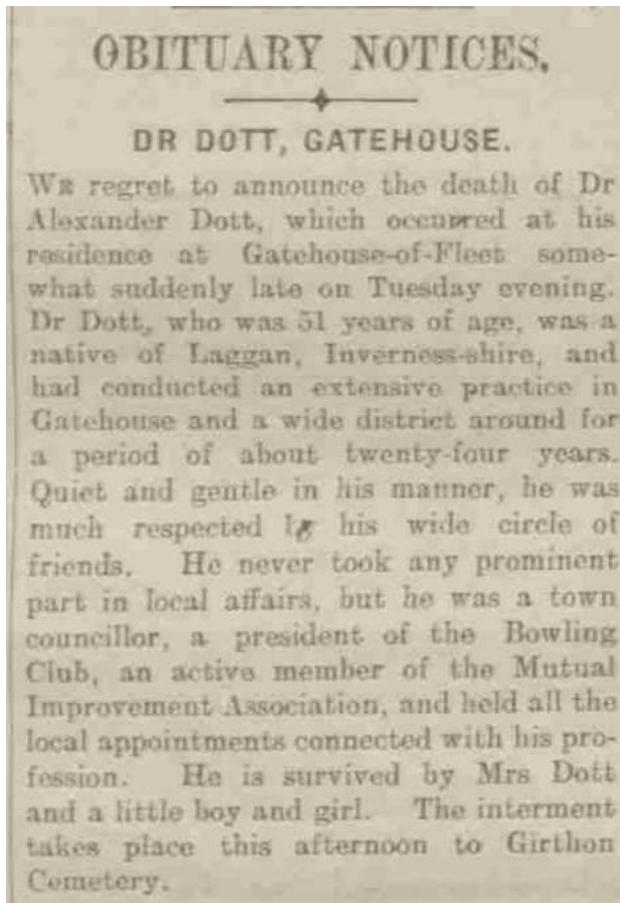
Dr & Mrs Dott c.1916



Marjory & Alastair Dott c.1919

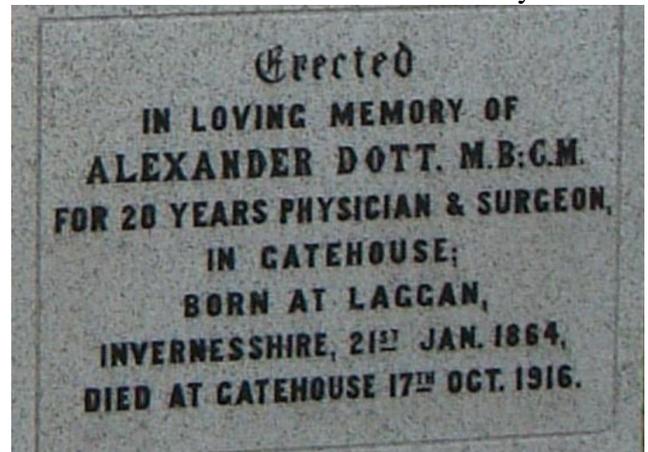
In October 1916, Dr Dott went to visit a patient in very bad weather. He caught a chill and died sometime afterwards at his home in Ann Street. His death was a great shock to the people in the town, and because of the shortage of doctors due to the First World War, it was some time before Gatehouse again had a resident doctor.

Catherine Dott continued to live in Gatehouse for a number of years, finally selling her house in 1945. Alastair and Marjory both left Gatehouse for work, Marjory was a teacher at Corsock School, while Alastair moved to Glasgow to work as engineer with the Electricity Board, but both retained a love of the town where they had grown up and returned 'home' most years of their lives.



Obituary from Dumfries & Galloway Standard  
21st October 1916.

Gravestone at Girthon Cemetery.



*Last Updated :18 March 2017*