

James Stark Watchmaker



James Stark was born in Calton, Glasgow on 29th January 1843. His parents were James Stark (described as a paper salesman) and Janet Hope.

In 1851 the family were living in the Gorbals area of Glasgow. James was aged 8.

In 1861 they were in Hutchestown, Glasgow and James (age 18) was an apprentice watchmaker.

In 1871, on census night, James was visiting a jeweller called William Bown in Handsworth, Staffordshire. He was 28, single, and a watchmaker born in Glasgow.

On 1st December 1875 James married Catherine Spence at Millbrex, Aberdeenshire.

[Catherine was born in 1851 in Fyvie, Aberdeenshire and was a farmer's daughter. In 1871 she was a student living in Edinburgh.]

In 1876 James and Catherine had a daughter Katharine Isabel Stark, born at Girthon.

In 1879 James Stark bought 8/10 High Street in Gatehouse for £475. These premises had previously been used by Bain's the ironmongers and grocers.

In 1881 James and Catherine were living in High Street (8/10) and they had a 2nd daughter Mary SJH Stark [Mary Susan Janet Hope Stark born Girthon 1880]

James Stark died on 15th January 1884, aged 40.

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By 1891 Girthon Katherine Stark (widow, 39, born Millbrex, Aberdeenshire) was at 8/10 High Street with her daughters Karine Bell (14) and Mary Susan (11). Katherine was a watchmaker, jeweller and ironmonger. Also living with her were niece Maggie Spence Hunter (20, a sub matron) and 2 nephews Edward Ewen (22) and James Stark Ewen (16). All 3 were born in Aberdeenshire. Edward was a watchmaker & ironmonger. James was a watchmaker & ironmongers apprentice.

[Katherine's maiden name was Spence. Her sister Isabella was married to George Ewen. Edward and James were 2 of their sons]. Presumably her nephews were helping Katherine run the business.

In 1892 the property of 8/10 High Street passed to Katherine Stark, widow.

On 15th June 1897 Katherine Stark remarried in Edinburgh. Her second husband was Montague Chapman Welton Okey, who was about 20 years her junior.

[Montague was born about 1873 in Colchester, Essex. In 1891 he was an apprentice watchmaker, living with his parents in Glasgow]

In 1901 Montague and Katherine Okey were living in Buckinghamshire. He was 27, born Colchester and a watchmaker & optician employer. According to the census Katherine was 40, born Scotland but *she was*

actually 50. Montague's step daughter Mary (21, born Scotland) was living with them. She was a book seller.

By 1911 the couple seem to have separated. Montague (age 37) was a boarder in a house in Regent's Park, London. He was an ophthalmic optician. He was married and '13 years' had been entered in the years married column but was scored out.

Katherine Okey was visiting her daughter Mary Makeham (age 31, born Gatehouse) and her son-in-law Reginald Makeham. Katherine was 59, born Millbex, Aberdeenshire. She too had written '13 years' of marriage and no children and it was also scored out.

In 1912 Katherine Okey sold 8/10 High Street, Gatehouse to the McMurray Brothers who ran an ironmongery, jewellers, watch making and opticians business for many years. In the years between 1897 and 1912 Katherine rented out the property in Gatehouse.

Catherine Okey, widow, from Bury St Edmunds died 3rd August 1932. She left her estate to her daughter Mary Susan Janet Hope Makeham, wife of Reginald Linnell Makeham.

Montague Okey seems to have emigrated to Buenos Aires, Argentina. He is believed (by a family researcher on Ancestry) to have been bigamously married in 1913 to Rose Emily Green. He died in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1924.

Katherine Stark's nephews Edward and James both remained in south west Scotland.

Edward married Maggie Wylie whose parents owned and ran a draper's shop at 2/4 High Street, Gatehouse.

In 1887 Maggie Ewan née Wylie bought 2/4 High Street from her father.

In 1901 at 2/4 High Street were Edward Ewan (32, born Methlick Aberdeenshire) who was a jeweller and qualified refractionist, *a type of optometrist* with his wife Maggie A. Ewan and his in-laws James and Catherine Wylie, who may have run the shop as a drapers.

In the 1912 Valuation Roll Edward Ewan is listed as a jeweller at 26 Buccleuch Street, Dumfries.

The Wylie's sold 2/4 High Street in 1923.

James Stark Ewan had a jewellery business in Castle Douglas for many years. He died there in 1959.