

[William Stark, schoolmaster at Anwoth and Skyreburn Schools](#)

William Johnston Stark and his wife Charlotte came to live at Anwoth Clachan about 1847. William was schoolmaster at Anwoth Public School (the parish school), a position he was to hold for about 48 years, according to his gravestone in Anwoth Old Kirkyard.

William Johnston Stark was born in September 1818 at Abbotshall, Kirkcaldy, Fife. His parents were William Stark and Elisabeth Roger.

In the 1841 census, William was a schoolmaster at Hillend Village, Inverkeithing.

William Stark and Charlotte Miller had a son William in 1847, although no record of the birth has been found. Later census records show that the baby was born at Scone, Perthshire. Baby William was christened on 31st March 1847 at Anwoth.

Presumably William his father had moved to Anwoth as the school master about this time.

In November 1847, William married **Charlotte Miller** in North Leith, Midlothian. (Charlotte was born in 1825 in Leith, parents George Miller and Margaret McKay.)

In the 1851 census, the family were living at Home Cottage, Anwoth (*probably the house now know as Rutherford Cottage*), just along the road from the Anwoth School.

Father William was 32, born Kirkcaldy, Fife. Mother Charlotte was 25, born Leith, Midlothian.

They had 3 children, William (3, born Scone), Margaret (2, born Anwoth) and an unnamed girl who was less than a month old (*She was later named as Frances.*)



Another daughter Elizabeth was born in 1855, the first year of official registration in Scotland. Her birth certificate gives extra information, including the fact that Elizabeth was Charlotte's sixth child and that a female child had previously died. (*Possibly an Elizabeth born 1849 Anwoth who had died before 1851 census*)

By 1861 they family lived in Anwoth Schoolhouse and now had seven children. Father William J. was 42, mother Charlotte, 35 with William (14), Margaret (12), Frances (10), Barbara (8), Elizabeth

(5) and twins Andrew and James (11 months). Father William was the Inspector of the Poor, Register of births, marriages and deaths for Anwoth, and session clerk, as well as schoolmaster.

By 1871, the family were still in the Schoolmaster's House at Anwoth Clachan. William J. Stark (52, born Kirkcaldy) was still parish schoolmaster and registrar. His wife Charlotte was 46, born Leith. There were still 6 children at home. Margaret (22), Andrew and James (both 11), John *Swainson* (8), George *Miller* (6) and Alexander *Roger* (4).

About 1872 a decision was made to close the Anwoth Parish school at the clachan and move the school into Gatehouse where many of the children attending the school now lived. This new school took over what had probably been the old Free Church school building on Dromore Road. The Headmaster was David Clark, the previous head of the Free Church School.

Anwoth Parish had for many years had another small school at Laggan (Mossyard) for the children from the western side of the parish. About this time the Laggan School also closed and a new school was built at Skyreburn on the site of the old waulk mill. William Stark became head of this new school.

By 1881, the family were living at Skyreburn Schoolhouse. William J. Stark (62), was still a teacher of a public school and registrar, and was with his wife Charlotte (55). Only 3 children were now at home. John S. Stark was 18 and an unemployed draper's assistant. His brother George M, aged 16, was a druggist's apprentice and Alexander R. 14, was still at school.

In 1891 William J Stark (72, schoolmaster and registrar), his wife Charlotte (65) and children Barbara (37) and George M (26), chemist were still living at Skyreburn Schoolhouse.



On 31st December 1898 William Johnston Stark died, aged 80. He is buried in old Anwoth Kirkyard.

In 1901 widow Charlotte (75) with daughters Barbara (45) and Elizabeth (43) had moved into town to Fleet Street. Barbara and Elizabeth ran a shop selling fancy goods. They lived at 8 Fleet Street.

Charlotte Stark died on 19th October 1905, aged 80.

Children of the William & Charlotte Stark.

William Stark - born in 1847 at Scone but was christened at Anwoth. In 1871 he was living at Cardoness House and was a 24 year old footman. He married Agnes Mather in Stirling in 1879. In 1871 William and Agnes were living in Edinburgh. William was now a butler. They had a young daughter Charlotte (11 months old) and William's brother Andrew was with them on census night.

In 1891 William and Agnes were living at St Andrew's Square, Edinburgh. He was now an office keeper. They had 3 of a family - Charlotte (10), Robert (6) and William G. (under a month old)

He died in Edinburgh in 1914 and is buried in Comley Bank cemetery, Edinburgh.

His second son William George Stark was killed in action in France in 1917. His wife Agnes died in 1925.

Margaret Stark was born in 1848 at Anwoth. She died in 1924 at Anwoth. In 1891 she is listed as a housekeeper when she was with her sister Frances and her husband in Stranraer.

Elizabeth born was born in 1849, Anwoth and died young, before 1851.

Frances Stark was born in 1851 at Anwoth. In 1890 she married Robert Torrance, a plasterer. The couple lived in Stranraer. Robert died in 1899, aged 48. In the 1901 census Frances was a grocer in Stranraer. By 1911 Frances Torrance (57) was living with her sisters Barbara and Elizabeth at 8/10 High Street, Gatehouse.

Frances Torrance bought 26 Fleet Street in 1916. Her sister Barbara had been renting this house. Frances moved there and lived in the house until her death in 1945. The house was left to her niece Jessie Vernon Stark or Edwards, daughter of her brother George.

Barbara Stark was born in 1853 at Anwoth. Barbara was unmarried. After her father's death in 1898, Barbara (age 45), her sister Elizabeth (single, age 43) and their mother lived in Fleet Street. This seems to be Number 8 Fleet Street. The sisters ran a shop with fancy goods.

By 1911 Barbara and her sister Elizabeth were shopkeepers of fancy goods at 8/10 High Street.

Later Barbara moved to 26 Fleet Street, the house which her sister Frances bought in 1916.

Barbara died in 1949.

Elizabeth Stark was born in 1855 at Anwoth. Her birth certificate states that she was her parent's 6th child (they had 1 boy and 3 girls living, and 1 girl deceased).

In 1871 Elizabeth was a house servant at a house in Creetown. By 1881 Elizabeth was with her sister Frances (Fanny) in Stranraer. They were both house servants. In 1891 she seems to be a house servant to a retired military officer in St Andrews, Fife.

By 1901. she had returned to Gatehouse and was living with her mother Charlotte and sister Barbara in Fleet Street (No. 8) and was running a shop selling fancy goods. In 1911 she was with her sister Barbara at 8/10 High Street. Elizabeth died in Anwoth in 1932 and had presumably moved to 26 Fleet Street with her sister Barbara.

Alexander Stark, born at Anwoth in 1858, died as a youngster in 1860.

Twins **James and Andrew Stark** were born in 1860 at Anwoth.

James Stark trained as a chemist. In 1891 he was a boarder in a house in Creetown. He married Marion Jane Turner in 1900 at Blackfriars, Glasgow. He and Marion were living with her parents in Creetown in the

1901 Kirkmabreck census. James was a dispensing chemist. The couple are known to have had 1 son (James 1905 - 1991)). The family were still living in Creetown at the time of the 1911 census. James died in 1946 in Dalmellington, Ayrshire. Marion died in 1954 at Ayr.

Andrew Stark moved to Edinburgh and was living with his brother William and his wife Agnes in the 1881 census. Andrew was age 20, unmarried, and was a grocer's assistant.

In 1882 Andrew married Sarah Jane Brown in Leith. By 1891 the couple had moved to Inverness. They had 3 daughters and a son. Andrew was now a grocer.

In 1901 they were still living in Inverness and had had another son and daughter.

Andrew died in Inverness in 1908.

John Swainston Stark was born in 1862 at Anwoth Schoolhouse. He was living there with his parents in the 1871 census and was also with them in 1881 when they had moved to Skyreburn Schoolhouse. In 1881 he was age 18 and an unemployed draper's assistant.

He was married in 1883 at Wavertree, Lancashire to Margaret Williams, a 27 year old school mistress. John was a 30 year old clerk from Childwall, Liverpool.

In the 1901 Liverpool census, at Wavertree, John, 38, was now a manager of a sugar warehouse. His wife Margaret (34, born Childwall), and children William W. (6, born Childwall), Elizabeth C. (5, born Childwall), Charlotte (3, born Liverpool) and Frances (1, born Liverpool)

John died in Liverpool in 1905, age 42.

At some point son William was sent back to Gatehouse to be educated.

In 1911 Margaret Stark was a widow with 4 children. William (16), Elizabeth (15), Charlotte (13), John (8) and Alexander (7). William and Elizabeth both worked as clerks at a biscuit factory.

Son William Webster Stark enlisted with King's Own Liverpool Regiment and was killed in June 1915 in Belgium.

George Miller Stark born 1865 at Anwoth. Chemist. See separate sheet.

Alexander Stark was born at Anwoth in 1866. He was the couple's youngest child. He was with his parents in 1871 when he was a 14 year old schoolboy but after that he seems to disappear.

In 1932 an Alexander Roger Stark died in Dundee age 54 but this age is wrong.

Stark the Chemist STORY

From the late 1890s 18/20 High Street was a chemist shop run by the Stark family. Members of the same family continued in the business until the shop was sold in 1970.

George M. Stark

George Miller Stark was born in 1865 at Anwoth Schoolmaster's House where his father William was the school teacher. William was from Fife and his wife, George's mother, Charlotte Miller, was from Leith. George was the second youngest of seven children.

In the mid 1870s the Stark family moved to Skyreburn School House.

In the 1881 Anwoth census, at Skyreburn Schoolhouse, George was a druggist's apprentice, but by 1891 he had qualified as a chemist. It is not known for certain where George did his training but from the 1870s there was a chemist at 18/20 High Street Gatehouse, run by John Hall, so he may have done his training there. John Hall died in 1884.

In the 1891 Girthon census the house at 18/20 High Street appears to be unoccupied, although the shop might still have been operating. Living in Church Street, Joseph Bennett (17, born Girthon) is described as a chemist's apprentice. He may have worked at the chemist's shop.

George Stark was still living with his parents at Skyreburn but was now listed as a chemist.

George married Jessie McDade from Creetown in 1892 at Girthon. It is likely that they were living at the house by the chemist shop in the High Street from about that date.

In 1898 George and Jessie had a daughter Jessie Vernon Stark, born in Girthon.

In the 1899 Girthon Valuation Roll George M Stark was the tenant of a house, shop and powder magazine owned by the trustees of John Hall.

By 1901 George M Stark (36, born Anwoth) and his wife Jessie (36, born Creetown) were living at 10/12 High Street. They had one child - Jessie V. Stark (2, born Gatehouse). George is described as a shopkeeper, chemist and druggist.

Later in 1901, George and Jessie had a son Ralph Sydney Stark, born in Girthon.

In 1908 George bought 10/12 High Street from the Trustees of John Hall's estate.

1911 census George M Stark (46, born Anwoth) was living at 10/12 High Street with his wife Jessie (46, born Creetown) and 2 children - daughter Jessie Vernon Stark (12, born Girthon) and Ralph Sydney Stark (10, born Girthon). George was a pharmacist.



Also in the 1911 census across the High Street at number 7/9 were George's sisters Barbara (55), Elizabeth (53) and widowed sister Frances Torrance (57) plus a niece Frances Stark (11, born in England). *Frances Stark was the daughter of a brother - John Swainston Stark. She was born in Liverpool in 1900. Her father had died in 1905.*

Barbara and Elizabeth ran a shop selling fancy goods.



George Miller Stark died in 1924 and his daughter Jessie took over running the chemist shop where she had helped and trained with her father for many years.

In 1928 Jessie Vernon Stark married David A. C. Edwards at Girthon. David was a trained chemist.

The couple had two sons. Michael born in 1929, who worked with the BBC and died in 1978 and George, born 1931 who worked abroad - in Polynesia where he married and died.

For a time the shop and house remained the property of widow Jessie Stark with David A.C. Edwards, chemist as her tenant.

Sadly the marriage did not work out and David Edwards left Gatehouse. The couple divorced in 1962.

Apart from the High Street property. Jessie Edwards also owned 'The Crag' a bungalow just outside Gatehouse, near Cardoness Castle, in the 1940/41 Valuation Roll.

Jessie died in 1969 in Dumfries. Her husband David predeceased her.

The shop at 18/20 High Street - 'Stark the Chemist' was sold in 1970 but continued to trade under the same name for a number of years.

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