

Niel Ballingall (1840-1916): The Third and Last Ballingall Factor of Balbirnie and Balgonie, Markinch Parish, Fife

By His Distant Third Cousin, Michael T. Tracy

Niel Ballingall was the eldest son of William Ballingall (1800-1888), Factor of the estates of Balbirnie and Balgonie in Markinch Parish, Fife. Niel would eventually follow in his father's footsteps becoming the third generation of the Ballingall family to retain the position of Factor to the Balfour family. Niel Ballingall would purchase residences in the parish more than his father and grandfather ever did, becoming a proprietor of a residence at Coaltown of Balgonie, Milton of Balgonie and residences on Betson and Commercial Streets in the village of Markinch. He developed a very strong interest in farming and the breeding of cattle but it was in the great development of coal mining on the Balgonie estate that he found the fullest scope for his abilities and energy.¹ Niel would never marry, thus ending the line of succession of Ballingalls who would become future Factors of the estates of Balbirnie and Balgonie of the Balfour family. With Niel's death in 1916, his demise effectively ended the dominance of the family as Factors which spanned 142 years. Ballingall himself served in the position for 24 years before his retirement in October of 1912. This then is the narrative of the life and times of the last Ballingall Factor of Balbirnie and Balgonie.

Early years

Niel Ballingall was born on Friday, 17 January 1840 at Kirkforthar Feus in the village of Markinch, Markinch Parish, Fife.² He was the first child of William Ballingall, Factor of Balbirnie and Balgonie, and Janet (Jessie) Purdon Hunter. He was baptized on Friday, 7 February 1840 at Markinch Parish.³

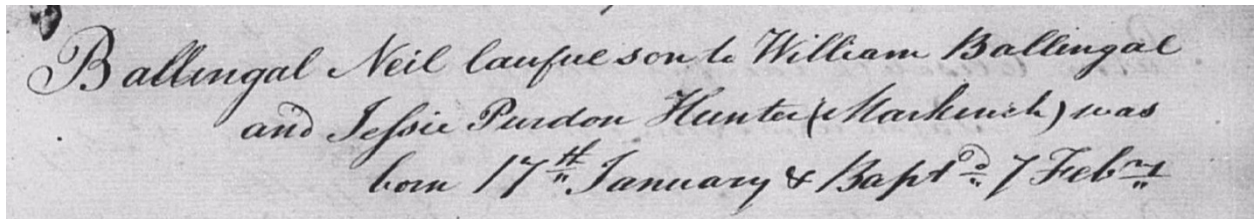


Fig.1. Baptismal Record of Niel Ballingall, 7 February 1840, Markinch Parish Records, Crown Copyright

¹ Ballingall, Rev. James. *The Ballingalls of Sweetbank, Markinch*. Typescript, undated

² Baptismal Record of Niel Ballingall, 7 February 1840, Markinch Parish Records, Old Parish Records, 447/0050 0175

³ Baptismal Record of Niel Ballingall, 7 February 1840, Markinch Parish Records, Old Parish Records, 447/0050 0175



Fig.2. Markinch Parish Church, Markinch, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

After the death of his grandfather and namesake, Niel Ballingall (1750-1843), the family moved from the residence at Kirkforthar Feus to the Factor's residence at Sweetbank in the year of 1843 when the young boy was 3 years old. This is evident by the 1841 Scotland Census for Markinch Parish which listed Niel residing with his parents and was shown as being a year old.⁴

William Ballingall	35	Factor and Land	y
John do	20		no
Niel do	1		yes
John Mun	15	Female Serv	yes
Josephine Lums	15	do	yes

Fig.3. 1841 Scotland Census for Markinch Parish, Fife, Scotland listing Niel Ballingall

⁴ 1841 Scotland Census for Markinch Parish, Fife, Scotland; Enumeration District 4, Page 3

Now at Sweetbank, the home the family settled in at, it would later become his primary residence for the rest of his life.



Fig.4. Sweetbank House, Markinch Parish, Photograph Courtesy of the Markinch Heritage Group

Sweetbank was located 3/8 of a mile west by south of the village of Markinch.⁵ The property is described in the Ordnance Survey Name Books of 1853-55 as "a dwelling house with garden attached, occupied by Mr. [William] Ballingall, Factor for the Estates of Balbirnie and Balgonie, the property of Mr. Balfour, Balbirnie House."⁶

20,000. 11-53. Plan 24A Markinch Parish No. 21. 317

List of Names to be corrected if necessary	Orthography, as recommended to be used in the new Plans	Other modes of Spelling the same Name	Authority for these other modes of Spelling when known	Situation	Descriptive Remarks, or other General Observations which may be considered of Interest
Prestonhall	Prestonhall	Prestonhall Do Do Do	Property Plan Mr. Ballingall Mr. Nichols Mr. Nichols Frisch Map of Markinch	1/2 mile W. of Markinch	A row of Cottages and garden occupied by Laborers and Cottiers
Sweetbank	Sweet Bank	Sweet Bank Do Do Do	Property Plan Mr. Ballingall Mr. Nichols Mr. Nichols Frisch Map of Markinch	1/2 mile W. by S. of Markinch	A dwelling house with garden attached, occupied by Mr. Ballingall, Factor for the Estates of Balbirnie and Balgonie, the property of Mr. Balfour Balbirnie House
Balbirnie Bridge	Balbirnie Bridge	Balbirnie Bridge Do Do Do	Mr. Ballingall Mr. Nichols Mr. Nichols Frisch Map of Markinch	1/2 mile W. by S. of Markinch	An old stone bridge of two arches over the River Leven on the old Waterfoot road. It was built by the County.

Fig.5. Ordnance Survey Name Book for Sweetbank, Markinch Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of ScotlandsPlaces.gov.uk

⁵ Ordnance Survey Name Books, Fife and Kinrossshire Ordnance Survey Name Books, 1853-1855, Volume 92, OS1/13/92/31

⁶ Ordnance Survey Name Books, Fife and Kinrossshire Ordnance Survey Name Books, 1853-1855, Volume 92, OS1/13/92/31



Fig.6. Ordnance Survey Map, 1856 showing Sweetbank, Markinch Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of the National Library of Scotland

The Sweetbank house was demolished in the early 2000's due to its age, neglect and the cost of renovations. Niel Ballingall attended college at the University of St. Andrews in the 1856-57 terms along with his younger brother, Andrew Hunter Ballingall (1841-1901) studying Chemistry.⁷

⁷ Anderson, James Maitland. *The Matriculation Roll of the University of St. Andrews, 1747-1897*. London and Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1905, p. 124

Joannes Prain.
Thomas Sim.
Joannes Sloan.
Jacobus Thomson.

Carolus K. Watt.
Adamus Wilson.
Gulielmus Walker.

Ex classe Logica Gulielmi Spalding Professoris.

James Annandale.
Robertus Walker.

Joannes R. Liddell.

Ex classe Chemica Arthuri Connell Professoris.

→ Niel Ballingal.
Andrew H. Ballingal.
David Skirving.
John Paterson.

John Douglas.
Jacobus Glover.
David Thomson Glover.

Ex classe Logica Gulielmi Spalding Professoris.

Jacobus V. Wylie.

Daniel Turner.

Decimo septimo die mensis Februarii 1857 recepti sunt in Collegio Mariano Theologiae studiosi nomina subscribentes.

Edvardus Caird.
Petrus Galbraith.
Robertus Herbert Story.
Joannis Johnstone.

Robertus Walker Mackersy.
Jacobus Smart.
Jacobus Wilson.

Vigesimo primo die mensis Martii.

James S. Smith.

John M'Donald.

1857=1858.

Decimo septimo die mensis Novembris 1857 receptus est in album Academiae Collegio Stae. Mariae Theologiae studiosus nomen subscribens.

Joannes Scott.

Fig.7. Matriculation Roll of the University of St. Andrews for Niel Ballingall, 1856-57 Term, Matriculation Roll of the University of St. Andrews, 1747-1897, Page 124

After his schooling, Niel began to assist his father in the Factor's office at Sweetbank in about 1857 when he was 17 years of age.⁸

Member of the Fife Mounted Rifles (Fife Light Horse)

The Fife Mounted Rifles was officially recognized on Thursday, 7 June 1860 and organized by Captain Anstruther Thomson. Ballingall had just turned 20 years of age in January and readily enlisted.⁹ The Corps was made up of 4 troops with headquarters of the Brigade at Cupar.¹⁰ It is not known how long Ballingall was in the Fife Mounted Rifles however in 1870 the designation of the regiment was changed to the Fife Light Horse.¹¹

The Early Census Records

Niel Ballingall is listed in the 1851 Scotland Census for Markinch Parish as being 11 years of age, residing at Sweetbank and attending school.¹²

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Parish of <i>Markinch</i>		Quoad Sacra Parish of		Within the limits of the Parliamentary Burgh of		Within the limits of the Royal Burgh of		Town or Village of	
No. of the Householder's Family	Name of Street, Place, or Road, and Name or No. of House	Name and Surname of each Person who abode in the house, on the Night of the 30th March, 1851	Relation to Head of Family	Condition	Age of		Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Where Born	Whether Blind, or Deaf and Dumb
					Males	Females			
38	<i>Proctor's</i>	<i>William Blyth</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>57</i>		<i>Coal Miner</i>	<i>Fife Ballinacraig Burn</i>	
		<i>Jane</i>	<i>Wife</i>	<i>Mar</i>		<i>68</i>		<i>Do</i>	
		<i>John</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>Unm</i>	<i>27</i>		<i>Laborer in Coal Pit</i>	<i>Do</i>	
39	<i>Sweetbank</i>	<i>William Ballingall</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>Unm</i>	<i>50</i>		<i>Writer in Markinch in Practice</i>	<i>Fife Markinch</i>	
		<i>Mist</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>Unm</i>	<i>11</i>		<i>Scholar</i>	<i>Do</i>	
		<i>Andrew Hunter</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>Unm</i>	<i>9</i>		<i>Scholar</i>	<i>Do</i>	
		<i>John Slater</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>Unm</i>	<i>8</i>		<i>Scholar</i>	<i>Do</i>	
		<i>William</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>Unm</i>	<i>6</i>		<i>Scholar at home</i>	<i>Do</i>	
		<i>James</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>Unm</i>	<i>4</i>			<i>Do</i>	
		<i>Annabella Gordon</i>	<i>Daughter in law</i>	<i>Unm</i>	<i>34</i>		<i>Domestic</i>	<i>Perthshire Glasgow</i>	
		<i>Ann Gordon</i>	<i>Servant</i>	<i>Unm</i>	<i>24</i>		<i>House Servant</i>	<i>Perthshire Fife</i>	
		<i>John Gordon</i>	<i>Servant</i>	<i>Unm</i>	<i>22</i>		<i>House Servant</i>	<i>Fife Markinch</i>	

Fig.8. 1851 Scotland Census for Markinch Parish, Fife listing Niel Ballingall (Line 5)

The 1861 Scotland Census for Sweetbank, Markinch Parish listed Niel as being 21 years of age and working as a writer's clerk or commonly referred to as an Assistant Factor.¹³

⁸ Ballingall, Rev. James. *The Ballingalls of Sweetbank, Markinch*. Typescript, undated

⁹ Gourlay, Ian, Wilkie, Ken, Manson, Bruce. *Markinch: Its Church and Parish*. 2010, p. 149

¹⁰ Thaneoffife.org. Accessed at: www.thaneoffife.org.uk/light-horse.html

¹¹ Thaneoffife.org. Accessed at: www.thaneoffife.org.uk/light-horse.html

¹² 1851 Scotland Census for Markinch Parish, Fife, Scotland; Enumeration District 3, Page 14, Line 5

¹³ 1861 Scotland Census for Markinch Parish, Fife, Scotland; Enumeration District 3, Page 14, Line 16

1	William Ballingale	Local	Men	60	Master in Street Bant's	Life Martinich	1	12
	Abraham G. Hunter	districter	Wn.	144		James Street Banting		
	John Ballingale	Shop	Wn.	21	Master Clerk	Life Martinich		
	Andrew G. Do	Shop	Wn.	19	Do Do	Do Do		
	William Do	Shop	Wn.	16	Scholar	Do Do		
	James Do	Shop	Wn.	14	Scholar	Do Do		
	John Street	Shop	Wn.	26	Domestic Servt.	Life Fullard		
	W. M. Street	Shop	Wn.	24	Do Do	Do Do		
5	Total of Houses...			10				
			Total of Males and Females...	10				

According to the 1871 Scotland Census for Sweetbank, Markinch Parish, Niel is shown as being 31 years of age and working as an Assistant Factor.¹⁴

The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the														[Page 5]
* Civil Parish of		* Civil Parish of		Parliamentary Borough of		Royal Borough of		Police Borough of		Town of		Village or Hamlet of		
* Civil Parish of		* Civil Parish of		Parliamentary Borough of		Royal Borough of		Police Borough of		Town of		Village or Hamlet of		
No. of Houses	ROAD, STREET, &c., and No. or NAME of HOUSE.	HOUSES. Inhabited (G.) or empty (E.)	NAME and Surname of each Person.	RELATION to Head of Family.	CON-DITION.	AGE of	Rank, Profession, or OCCUPATION.	WHERE BORN.	Whether 1. Dead and Buried. 2. Blind. 3. Imbecile or Idiot. 4. Lame.	Number of Children from 5 to 15 attending School, or being educated at Home.	Room written On or Over the House.			
15	Lodge	1	Alfred Wilson	Head	Mar	58	Carter	Yife Markind			2			
			Isabella Wilson	Wife	Mar	57		Edinburgh						
			William Wilson	Son		10	Scholar	Yife Markind						
16	Lodge	1	Alexander Philp	Head	Unm	71	Forester	Yife Markind			3			
			Margaret Philp	Wife		60	Housekeeper	Yife Markind						
			Alma Philp	Wife	Unm	24	Machinist	Yife Markind						
17	Lodge	1	Thomas Gifford	Head	Mar	41	Cookman, Servant	Shedden, Leith			5			
			Mary Gifford	Wife	Mar	40	Wife	England, Mills						
			William Gifford	Son	Unm	13	Apprentice Draper	England, Mills						
			James Gifford	Son	Unm	11	Scholar	Yife Markind						
			Elizabeth Gifford	Daughter		6	Scholar	Yife Markind						
			James Gifford	Daughter		3	at Home	Yife Markind						
18	West Markind	1	Ann Dalrymple	Head	Widow	78	Formal Outworker	Yife Markind			2			
			Ann Dalrymple	Daughter	Unm	48	Tapet Finisher	Yife Markind						
19	do	1	Samuel Gifford	Wife	Mar	68	Millwright	Lawson, Middleton			2			
			Marion Gifford	Wife	Mar	65		Yorkshire, Laith						
20	do	1	Robert Gifford	Head	Mar	52	Carpenter, Master	Yife, Markind			2			
			Isabella Gifford	Wife	Mar	45		Yife, Markind						
			William Gifford	Son		9	Scholar	Yife, Markind						
			Alexander Gifford	Son		6	Scholar	Yife, Markind						
21	Sweetbank	1	William Ballingal	Head	Widow	70	Factor	Yife, Markind			8			
			Neil Ballingal	Son	Unm	31	Assistant Factor	Yife, Markind						
			Annabella Graham	Wife	Unm	56	Housekeeper	Yife, Markind						
			Margaret Graham	Wife	Unm	25	Domestic Servant	Yife, Markind						
			Elizabeth Fairley	Wife	Unm	28	Wife	Yife, Markind						

By 1881 Niel is residing with his father at Sweetbank and is listed as being 41 years of age and is a Factor.¹⁵ By this time he was appointed Factor of Lord Leven and Melville's estate near Ladybank.¹⁶ He was noted to adopt new and improved methods but managed to stay clear of anything approaching rash experiments.¹⁷

¹⁴ 1871 Scotland Census for Markinch Parish, Fife, Scotland; Enumeration District 3, Page 5, Line 22

¹⁵ 1881 Scotland Census for Markinch Parish, Fife, Scotland; Enumeration District 3, Page 5, Line 12

¹⁶ Gourlay, Ian, Wilkie, Ken, Manson, Bruce. *Markinch: Its Church and Parish*. 2010, p. 148

¹⁷ Gourlay, Ian, Wilkie, Ken, Manson, Bruce. *Markinch: Its Church and Parish*. 2010, p. 148

Located less than a mile from the village of Coaltown of Balgonie, was the Lochtyside coal pit. Niel's youngest brother, the Reverend James Ballingall wrote: "it was in the great development of coal mining on the Balgonie Estate that he [Niel] found the fullest scope for his abilities and energy. The old Lochtyside coal pit, sunk in 1845, and continued till 1912, was beginning to get worked out during his lifetime, and a project was started for a new and much larger pit. This was the Julian Pit, close to Thornton Junction. Work began in 1883 and was completed in 1886."²²

The Valuation Rolls of Sweetbank

The Lands Valuation (Scotland) Act of 1854 established a uniform valuation of landed property throughout Scotland, which was collected annually for each parish in each county and burgh. These records record the name of each proprietor, the occupier of the property and the annual rateable value of the property. The first Valuation Roll under the Factorship of Niel Ballingall was in the year of 1895 which listed him as the tenant and occupier with a yearly rent or value of the house estimated at 50 pounds.²³

Fig.12. 1895 Scotland Valuation Roll for Sweetbank, Markinch Parish, Fife listing Niel Ballingall (Last Entry)

The 1905 Valuation Roll for Sweetbank is unchanged from the previous decade.²⁴

Fig.13. 1905 Scotland Valuation Roll for Sweetbank, Markinch Parish, Fife listing Niel Ballingall (Last Entry)

²² Ballingall, Rev. James. *The Ballingalls of Sweetbank, Markinch*. Typescript, undated

²³ 1895 Scotland Valuation Roll for Sweetbank, Markinch, Fife, Scotland (VR010100041/398)

²⁴ 1905 Scotland Valuation Roll for Sweetbank, Markinch, Fife, Scotland (VR010100051/443)

The last Valuation Roll in which Niel Ballingall was listed in was in the year of 1915 and showed him as residing at Sweetbank and the yearly rent or value of the house was again estimated at 50 pounds.²⁵

No.	DESCRIPTION AND EXTENT OF SUBJECT	PROPRIETOR	TENANT	OCCUPIER	INDEBTED OCCUPIER Not Rated (as Val. s. 2, ss. 2 and 3)	Annual Value of Dwelling, house of Inhabitant Occupier (Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1900, or Fife District or Grounds (Scotland) Act, 1900)	Yearly Rent or Value	No.
241	Mossfield	Broomfield	Edward Balfour—Continued	Proprietor			£20 0 0a	244
5	Farm and House of	Pyeston	do.	do.	James Blyth, ploughman	£5 0 0	214 12 6a	5
6	House	Pyeston	do.	do.	Finlay Barclay, cattleman	5 0 0		6
7	do.	do.	do.	do.			34 15 0a	7
8	Farm and House	New Inn	do.	do.				8
9	Farm of	Balfarg and Bandon	do.	Proprietor	William Oswald, farm griever	20 0 0	528 15 2a	9
249	House and Garden	Balfarg	do.	do.	Robert Todd, ploughman	4 0 0		250
1	House	Balfarg Farm	do.	do.	William Binstoul, do.	4 0 0		1
2	do.	do.	do.	do.	Walter Marshall, erraman	3 0 0		2
3	do.	do.	do.	do.	Archibald Drummond, ploughman	2 10 0		3
4	do.	do.	do.	do.	James Johnman, shepherd	2 7 6		4
5	do.	do.	do.	do.	Bothy	4 0 0		5
6	do.	do.	do.	do.	David Edmie, ploughman	4 0 0		6
7	do.	do.	do.	do.	Alexander Anderson, cattleman	4 0 0		7
8	do.	do.	do.	do.	Chris. Campbell, park-keeper	4 0 0		8
9	do.	Bandon	do.	do.			135 15 9a	9
250	House and Part of Farm of	Coal	do.	John Ross, farmer	David Black, ploughman	3 0 0		260
1	House	do.	do.	do.	Andrew Oswald, do.	3 0 0		1
2	do.	do.	do.	do.	Henry Sims	3 0 0		2
3	do.	do.	do.	do.			41 2 1a	3
4	Farm and House	Pearson Bank	do.	John Mackie, farmer			24 0 0a	4
5	Bank Park	Prestyhall and Strawhouse	do.	do.			13 12 9	5
6	Sweetbank House, Offices, and Garden	do.	do.	Niel Ballingall, factor			50 0 0	6
7	do. Lands	do.	do.	do.			20 0 0	7
				Proprietor			14 0 5 5a	8

Fig.14. 1915 Scotland Valuation Roll for Sweetbank, Markinch Parish, Fife listing Niel Ballingall (Last Entry)

Public Service

In local affairs, the Ballingall family, including Niel, had a hand in or were at a meeting or on a committee of nearly everything that affected Markinch Parish. Niel was elected to the County Council in 1890²⁶ and like his father was a member of the Markinch School Board in 1897 serving on the board until his death.

A Proprietor

Ballingall was also a proprietor of various lands and residences around Markinch. He owned a residence at Coaltown of Balgonie;²⁷ Milton of Balgonie;²⁸ 30 Betson Street in Markinch;²⁹ and a residence located on Commercial Street in Markinch.³⁰

The Census Records

According to the 1891 Scotland Census for Markinch Parish, Niel is listed as being 51 years of age and is a Factor and residing with his aunt, Annabella Hunter.³¹

²⁵ 1915 Scotland Valuation Roll for Sweetbank, Markinch Parish, Fife, Scotland (VR010100061/507)

²⁶ *Dundee Courier Newspaper*, 6 February 1890, p. 3

²⁷ 1905 Scotland Valuation Roll for Coaltown, Markinch, Fife, Scotland (VR010100051)

²⁸ 1905 Scotland Valuation Roll for Coaltown, Markinch, Fife, Scotland (VR010100051)

²⁹ 1915 Scotland Valuation Roll for 30 Betson Street, Markinch, Fife, Scotland (VR010100061)

³⁰ 1915 Scotland Valuation Roll for 30 Betson Street, Markinch, Fife, Scotland (VR010100061)

³¹ 1891 Scotland Census for Markinch Parish, Fife, Scotland; Enumeration District 3, Page 1, Line 16

The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the															[Page 1]
Civil Parish of <i>Markinch</i>		Quoad-Secre Parish-of		School Board District of <i>Markinch</i>		Parliamentary-Borough-of		Parliamentary Division of <i>West Division, Fife</i>		Royal-Borough-of					
Municipal-Borough of		Police-Borough-of		Borough-Ward-of		Town-of		Village-or-Hamlet-of		Island-of					
No. of Schedule	ROAD, STREET, &c., and No. or NAME of HOUSE.	HOUSES No. In Schedule (a) or Number (b)	NAME and Surname of each Person.	RELATION to Head of Family.	CONDITION as to Marriage.	AGE (last Birthday) Male Female	PROFESSION or OCCUPATION.	Employer.	Employed.	Whether Em- ployed for wages, but not on his own account.	WHERE BORN.	Gender, or G. & E.	Whether Deaf and Dumb, or Lame, Blind, or Mentally Deficient.	Rooms with One or more Windows.	
1	<i>Balgonie House</i>	1	<i>Elizabeth Mackay</i> <i>Agnes Lindsay</i> <i>Johnnie Adams</i> <i>Maggie Gray</i> <i>James Easton</i>	<i>Head</i> <i>(serv.)</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i>	<i>Unm.</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i>	<i>58</i> <i>52</i> <i>20</i> <i>20</i> <i>20</i> <i>20</i> <i>20</i>	<i>Housekeeper Domestic</i> <i>Milliner</i> <i>Housemaid</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i>		<i>X</i> <i>X</i> <i>X</i> <i>X</i> <i>X</i> <i>X</i> <i>X</i>		<i>Abbotsinch, Fife</i> <i>Highland, Perthshire</i> <i>Fife, Perthshire</i> <i>Edinburgh, Perth</i> <i>Highland, Perthshire</i> <i>Highland, Perthshire</i> <i>Highland, Perthshire</i>			<i>51</i>	
2	<i>Balgonie House</i>	1	<i>William Henderson</i> <i>James Do</i> <i>James A. Do</i> <i>Elizabeth M. Do</i>	<i>Head</i> <i>Wife</i> <i>Son</i> <i>Daughter</i>	<i>Mar.</i> <i>Mar.</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i>	<i>58</i> <i>54</i> <i>14</i> <i>10</i>	<i>Gardener</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Schooler</i>		<i>X</i> 		<i>Highland, Perthshire</i> <i>Highland, Perthshire</i> <i>Highland, Perthshire</i> <i>Fife, Perthshire</i>			<i>6</i>	
3	<i>Balgonie House</i>	1	<i>William Marshall</i>	<i>Head</i> <i>(serv.)</i>	<i>Unm.</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>Coachman Domestic</i>		<i>X</i>		<i>Highland, Perthshire</i>			<i>2</i>	
4	<i>Balgonie Lodge</i>	1	<i>James Dixon</i> <i>James Mac Machan</i> <i>William Stewart</i> <i>Alexander Watson</i> <i>Thomas Fowler</i>	<i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i>	<i>Unm.</i> <i>Unm.</i> <i>Unm.</i> <i>Unm.</i> <i>Unm.</i>	<i>52</i> <i>52</i> <i>52</i> <i>52</i> <i>52</i>	<i>Gardener</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i>	<i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i>	<i>X</i> <i>X</i> <i>X</i> <i>X</i> <i>X</i>		<i>Highland, Perthshire</i> <i>Highland, Perthshire</i> <i>Highland, Perthshire</i> <i>Highland, Perthshire</i> <i>Highland, Perthshire</i>			<i>3</i>	
5	<i>Sweetbank</i>	1	<i>Niel Bellingall</i> <i>Annabella G. Bellingall</i> <i>Ann Irvine</i> <i>Agnes Irvine</i>	<i>Head</i> <i>Aunt</i> <i>Serv</i> <i>Do</i>	<i>Unm.</i> <i>Unm.</i> <i>Unm.</i> <i>Unm.</i>	<i>61</i> <i>54</i> <i>20</i> <i>20</i>	<i>Factor</i> <i>Housemaid Domestic</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Do</i>	<i>X</i> 	<i>X</i> 		<i>Do</i> <i>Do</i> <i>Highland, Perthshire</i> <i>England</i> <i>Fife, Perthshire</i>			<i>11</i>	

Fig.15. 1891 Scotland Census for Markinch Parish, Fife listing Niel Bellingall (Line 16)

The 1901 Scotland Census for Markinch Parish listed Bellingall as being 61 years of age and is a Factor and residing with his cousin, Robert Bellingall, who is working as his assistant.³²

Page 10]		The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the												
Civil Parish of <i>Markinch</i>		Parish Ward of <i>II Markinch</i>		Ecclasiastical Parish of <i>Markinch</i>		Quoad-Secre Parish of		School Board District of <i>Markinch</i>		Parliamentary Borough of <i>Fife</i>		Parliamentary Division of <i>Western Division, Fife</i>		
Royal-Borough of		Municipal-Borough of <i>Markinch</i>		Police-Borough of		Borough-Ward of		Town of		Village or Hamlet of <i>Markinch & Balgonie Mills</i>		Island of		
No. of Schedule	ROAD, STREET, &c., and No. or NAME of HOUSE.	HOUSES No. In Schedule (a) or Number (b)	NAME and Surname of each Person.	RELATION to Head of Family.	CONDITION as to Marriage.	AGE (last Birthday) Male Female	PROFESSION or OCCUPATION.	Employer, Worker, or on Own Account.	If Working at Home.	WHERE BORN.	Gender, or G. & E.	Whether Deaf and Dumb, Blind, Lame, or Mentally Deficient.	Rooms with One or more Windows.	
54	<i>Albion House</i>	1	<i>John Young</i>	Head	Unm.	58	Sheepkeeper	Run Account at Home		<i>Fife, Perthshire</i>			2	
55	<i>do</i>	1	<i>Mary Young</i>	Wife	Unm.	52				<i>do</i>			1	
			<i>Christina Collier</i>	Sister	Unm.	52	Blanchet Weaver	Do		<i>do</i>				
			<i>Elizabeth A. Crawford</i>	Sister	Unm.	52	Do (Tobacco Manuf.)	do		<i>Highland, Perthshire</i>				
56	<i>do</i>	1	<i>John Young</i>	Head	Unm.	54				<i>Fife, Perthshire</i>			1	
57	<i>do</i>	1	<i>Magdalene Reid</i>	Head	Unm.	54	Living on own means			<i>do</i>			11	
			<i>Elizabeth H. Arthur</i>	Daughter	Unm.	52				<i>Highland, Perthshire</i>				
			<i>James Edwards</i>	Servant	Unm.	52	Do			<i>Fife, Perthshire</i>				
			<i>John Davidson</i>	Do	Unm.	52	Do			<i>do</i>				
58	<i>Sweetbank</i>	1	<i>Niel Bellingall</i>	Head	Unm.	61	Factor	Run Account at Home		<i>do</i>			10	
			<i>Robert Bellingall</i>	Son	Unm.	20	do (Assistant)			<i>do</i>				
			<i>James Bellingall</i>	Servant	Unm.	20	Do			<i>Highland, Perthshire</i>				
			<i>Agnes Bellingall</i>	Do	Unm.	20	Do			<i>Fife, Perthshire</i>				

Fig.16. 1901 Scotland Census for Markinch Parish, Fife listing Niel Bellingall (Line 10)

³² 1901 Scotland Census for Markinch Parish, Fife, Scotland; Enumeration District 3, Page 10, Line 10

The final census in which Ballingall was listed in was for the year of 1911 which indicated that he was 71 years of age, residing at Sweetbank and is a Factor.³³

The image shows two pages from the 1911 Scotland Census for Markinch Parish, Fife. The left page is the 'Enumeration' sheet (District 3, Page 1, Line 19) listing household members. The right page is the 'Book' sheet (District 3, Page 1, Line 19) providing more details for the same household.

ENUMERATION									
Old Parish and Parish Ward of		Enumeration District of		Religious District of		Municipal District of		Special District of	
Markinch, Second		Markinch		Markinch		Markinch		Markinch	
Road, Street, etc., and No. or Name of House		Household	Household	Household	Household	Household	Household	Household	Household
1		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Calbourn	1	11	John Macrie	5	Head	55	Mar	30 5 5
2				John do		Wife	53	Mar	30 5 5
3				Mary do		Daughter	26	Mar	30 5 5
4				Robert do		Son	19	Mar	30 5 5
5				Isabella do		Daughter	14	Mar	30 5 5
6	Westmarkinch	1	3	Alex. H. Buchan	11	Head	41	Mar	43 9 7
7				Isabella do		Wife	29	Mar	43 9 7
8				Isabella do		Daughter	24	Mar	43 9 7
9	do	1	2	John Macrie	11	Head	61	Mar	16 11 8
10				John do		Wife	56	Mar	16 11 8
11				John do		Son	31	Mar	16 11 8
12				John do		Daughter	25	Mar	16 11 8
13	do	1	2	John Macrie	2	Head	53	Mar	16 11 8
14				John do		Wife	24	Mar	16 11 8
15	do	1	3	John Macrie	3	Head	29	Mar	10 6 2
16				John do		Wife	11	Mar	10 6 2
17				John do		Son	9	Mar	10 6 2
18	do	1	8	Niel Ballingall	7	Head	71	Mar	10 6 2
19				John do		Wife	41	Mar	10 6 2
20				John do		Son	14	Mar	10 6 2
21				John do		Daughter	14	Mar	10 6 2

Fig.17. 1911 Scotland Census for Markinch Parish, Fife listing Niel Ballingall (Line 19)

Retirement as Factor

In October of 1912, Niel Ballingall found it necessary to retire as Factor of Balbirnie and Balgonie because of health reasons.³⁴ "A presentation was made to him by the overseers and foremen of the works, in the name of the 510 employees, at the hall in Coaltown of Balgonie, which had been built for their own use."³⁵ The address which was signed by all the overseers and foremen and stated: "We the employees of Balgonie Colliery and Brickwork desire to express our great regret that you have found it necessary to terminate your long connection with the active management of this colliery, since your boyhood you have been interested in the Colliery and its workmen. In 1883 you set about the sinking and fitting the Julian pit and after many difficulties, you succeeded in developing the mineral resources of Balgonie Estate to an extent greater than was ever contemplated. The pit was supplied with the best appliances of the day and ever since you have shown much enterprise and judgment in readily adopting the most modern machinery electric and other that could be obtained to keep the colliery up to date. We know that apart from our duties as workmen you took a hearty interest in our personal welfare and we desire to express our appreciation of your standard of the miners' houses you have erected. We felt we could not allow the relationship between you, for Charles Balfour the owner of the Colliery and us his employees to terminate without expressing to you our appreciation of the kindly interest you ever took in us and the pleasant relations that always subsisted between us."³⁶ When he retired it ended 142 years of continuous service of his family's Factorship of the estates of Balbirnie and Balgonie. The Balfour family allowed Niel to continue to reside at Sweetbank, a residence that he had known all his life in retirement. Ballingall was interested in golf and bowling. When the "old" Markinch Golf Club presently called the Balbirnie Park Golf Club in 1905, "the Ballingall Cup was presented for the competition by the ladies of the club by Neil Ballingall the Factor for the estate at the time."³⁷ "The

³³ 1911 Scotland Census for Markinch Parish, Fife, Scotland; Enumeration District 3, Page 1, Line 19

³⁴ Ballingall, Rev. James. *The Ballingalls of Sweetbank, Markinch*. Typescript, undated

³⁵ Ballingall, Rev. James. *The Ballingalls of Sweetbank, Markinch*. Typescript, undated

³⁶ Gourlay, Ian, Wilkie, Ken, Manson, Bruce. *Markinch: Its Church and Parish*. 2010, p. 149

³⁷ Gourlay, Ian, Wilkie, Ken, Manson, Bruce. *Markinch: Its Church and Parish*. 2010, p. 39

Ballingall Trophy” which is still presently contested for was presented to the Balgonie Colliery Bowling Club by Niel Ballingall for annual competition beginning in 1914 is the oldest trophy held by the Club.

The Will of Niel Ballingall

On Thursday, 15 February 1912 Niel Ballingall decided to make out his Last Will and Testament.³⁸ He decided to leave to each of the children of his sister, Jessie Alston Reid (1843-1902) 1,500 pounds each.³⁹ Additional money was to be left to his cousin, Niel Ballingall, 2,000; to his clerk, William Marshall, 1,500 pounds; the clerk and agent for the Balgonie Colliery Company, 1,000 pounds; his clerk, James White, 50 pounds and to each of his servants, 5 pounds each for every year they were in his service and employment.⁴⁰ His Last Will and Testament are reproduced below.

³⁸ Last Will and Testament of Niel Ballingall, 15 February 1912, Cupar Sheriff Court (SC20/56/16)

³⁹ Last Will and Testament of Niel Ballingall, 15 February 1912, Cupar Sheriff Court (SC20/56/16)

⁴⁰ Last Will and Testament of Niel Ballingall, 15 February 1912, Cupar Sheriff Court (SC20/56/16)

*Copy 23. Sept. 1916. For Inventory of the Personal Estate of
Niel Ballingal on page 2/83*

EXTRACT REGISTERED LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT AND CODICIL.

AT EDINBURGH the eleventh day of September One thousand nine hundred and sixteen the Deed hereinafter engrossed was presented for registration in the Books of the Lords of Council and Session for preservation and is registered in the said Books as follows:- I, Niel Ballingal Factor, Sweet Bank, Markinch being desirous of settling my affairs in the event of my death do hereby assign dispose and bequeath to and in favor of my brother The Reverend James Ballingal, Doctor of Divinity, Minister of the Parish of Rhynd, whom failing his heirs my whole means and estate heritable and moveable real and personal of whatsoever description and wheresoever situated with the whole title deeds vouchers and instructions thereof declaring always that this bequest shall be under burden of payment of all my just and lawful debts deathbed and funeral expenses and of all legacies bequeathed now or hereafter by me, including without prejudice to such generality the following legacies which I hereby bequeath namely:- To each of the children of my late sister Mrs. Jessie Watson Ballingal or Reid One thousand five hundred pounds Sterling declaring that the lawful issue of any child predeceasing me shall take the parents legacy equally among them: to my cousin Neil Hunter presently at New College Oxford Two thousand pounds Sterling to my Clerk William Marshall One thousand five hundred pounds Sterling: to John ~~Stewart~~ ^{Smart} Allan some time my clerk now Agent for the Balgonie Colliery Company Markinch, One thousand pounds Sterling: to James White my Clerk Fifty pounds Sterling, and to each of my servants (male and female) in my personal service at the time of my death Five pounds sterling for each complete year of service to me: And I nominate the said James Ballingal my brother whom failing David George Alexander Reid my nephew to be my Executor: And I revoke all writings of a testamentary nature executed by me prior to the date hereof: And I reserve full power to alter innovate or revoke these presents in whole or in part at pleasure: And I consent to registration hereof for preservation:

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Fig.18. Last Will and Testament of Niel Ballingall, 15 February 1912, Page 1, Photograph Courtesy of Scotlandspeople.gov.uk

1076

IN WITNESS WHEREOF these presents written by Francis Yates
Strachan Clerk to Messieurs W and J. Cook Writers to the Signet,
Edinburgh are subscribed by me at Sweet Bank, Markinch the fif:
teenth day of February Nineteen hundred and twelve before
these witnesses William Oswald Farm Manager Balfarg Markinch
and Susan Isabella Allan Typist Markinch (Signed) Niel Balling:
al William Oswald witness Susan I. Allan Witness.

I, Niel Ballingal Factor Sweet Bank Markinch do hereby make the
following Codicil to my Last Will and Testament dated the fif:
teenth day of February Nineteen hundred and twelve That is to
say considering that by my said Last Will and Testament I be:
queathed to each of my servants (male and female) in my per:
sonal service at the time of my death Five pounds Sterling for
each complete year of service to me and further considering
that on twenty eighth January Nineteen hundred and fourteen I
purchased Post office Savings Bank Annuities of Five pounds
each for two of my servants Agnes Dowrie and Annie Imrie, at the
cost of Eighty eight pounds five shillings and five pence and
Eighty six pounds fifteen shillings respectively: therefore I
hereby declare that the said sums of Eighty ~~pounds~~-eight pounds
five shillings and five pence and Eighty six pounds fifteen
shillings are respectively to be considered as payments towards
and are accordingly to be deducted from the respective amounts
payable to the said Agnes Dowrie and Annie Imrie under the fore:
said provision of my said Last Will and Testament And in all
other respects I hereby confirm my said Last Will and Testament
And I consent to the registration hereof therewith for preser:
vation IN WITNESS WHEREOF these presents written by John
Morrison Murray Clerk to Messieurs W and J. Cook Writers to the
Signet, Edinburgh are subscribed by me at Sweet Bank, Markinch,
the twenty eighth day of January Nineteen hundred and fifteen
before these witnesses William Marshall and James White both
Clerks in my employment at Sweet Bank aforesaid (signed) Wm.
Marshall Witness Jas White Witness. EXTRACTED from the Register
of Deeds &c. in the Books of Council and Session on this and

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Fig.19. Last Will and Testament of Niel Ballingal, 15 February 1912, Page 2, Photograph Courtesy of
Scotlandspeople.gov.uk

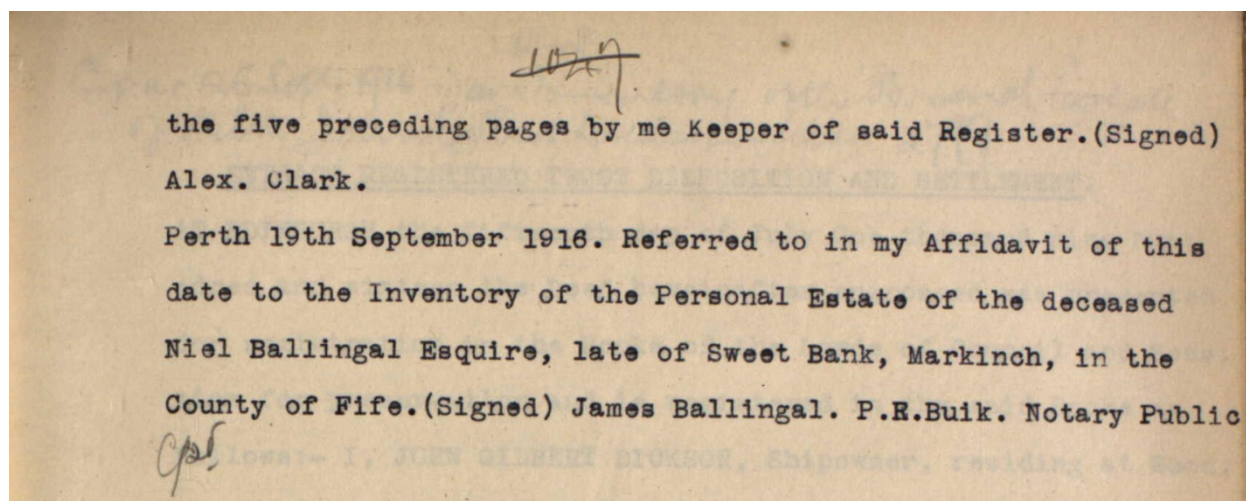


Fig.20. Last Will and Testament of Niel Ballingal, 15 February 1912, Page 3, Photograph Courtesy of
Scotlandspeople.gov.uk

The Death of Niel Ballingal

Ballingal had been suffering from a heart condition for a number of years. In his retirement, he lived quietly at Sweetbank now only with his servants. On Wednesday, 26 July 1916 Niel Ballingal died at Sweetbank of arteriosclerosis exhaustion at the age of 76.⁴¹

Niel Ballingal.	1916.	No. 76	William Ballingal.	Arterio-sclerosis.	James Ballingal	1916.
Estate Factor.	July.	Yours.	Estate Factor.	Explanation.	Brother	July 27th
(Single).	Twenty-sixth		(Deceased).		(Deceased).	Markinch
	5th. Ave. A. No.		Jessie Purdon Ballingal.	Ascertified by	The House,	Markinch
	Sweetbank,		M. L. Hunter.	J. J. Pearson	Phymd.	Markinch
	Markinch.		(Deceased).	M. B. B. Ch.	Perthshire.	Markinch

Fig.21. Death Record of Niel Ballingal, 26 July 1916, Markinch Parish Records, Crown Copyright

His obituary notice was published in the *Fife Free Press and Kirkcaldy Guardian Newspaper* and read: "Death of Niel Ballingal, solicitor, occurred after a long illness at his residence, Sweetbank, Markinch, who died on Wednesday, was for many years factor to Mr. Charles E. Balfour of Balbirnie, and he had also a long connection with the Balgonie estate as factor for Mr. C. B. Balfour. At the opening of the handsome new hall which had been gifted to the inhabitants of Coaltown of Balgonie and district, by Mr. C. B. Balfour of Balgonie then M. P. [Member of Parliament], Mr. Balfour referred to Mr. Ballingal's connection with his family. He said the connection was very old. Mr. Ballingal's father was his father's factor and his grandfather's factor, and Mr. Ballingal's grandfather was his great-grandfather's factor. Mr. Ballingal identified himself for a number of years with the life and work of the district. At the time of his death, he was a Commissioner of Supply and a Justice of the Peace for the County of Fife, and he was joint secretary of the Markinch Gas Company. For a number of years, he represented the division of Markinch South in Fife County Council and was on the Markinch School Board and Parish Council. He was also clerk and treasurer of the Markinch Water Company."⁴² Reverend James Henderson Bryden,

⁴¹ Death Record of Niel Ballingal, 26 July 1916, Markinch Parish Records, Statutory Deaths 447/0001 0029

⁴² *Fife Free Press and Kirkcaldy Guardian*, 29 July 1916, p. 7

Minister at the time of Markinch Parish Church wrote: “By the death of Mr. Niel Ballingal at Sweetbank on 26 July a long and interesting chapter in the history of the parish is closed. He was a man absolutely unique. Unique was also the connection of his family with the parish and district. One hundred and forty-six years ago, in the year before Sir Walter Scott was born, his grandfather, Niel Ballingal, was appointed factor on Balbirnie. He was succeeded by his son William Ballingal who also became factor on Balgonie Estate, and to the two offices, the late factor was appointed in 1880. Born seventy-six years ago, he grew into the Estate, so to speak, and had a most intimate knowledge of its needs and capabilities. He knew his tenants well, he selected them with the utmost care, many of them he helped in crucial times, and it was due in no small measure to his insight and sound judgment that these two estates were amongst the best managed in Scotland and the tenants were second to none. He won the confidence of the tenants and he won the confidence of the two proprietors and was trusted by laird and tenant alike. He won the confidence is a very remarkable degree of the miners in the Balgonie coal fields and few things afforded him more gratification than the presentation he received from them on relinquishing the management of Balgonie Estate and colliery. He served on many public bodies and served them well. Slow to make up his mind, he had seldom to revise it. He was a devoted member of the congregation, a generous supporter of its schemes and enterprises, and his unfailing attendance at public worship was a lesson to us all. He was a strong man, a just man, a man of resolute will, a man of few words and of kindly resolute will, a man of few words and of kindly heart, and now that he is gone we shall realize how large a part he played in the life of the community and we may well say that we shall not look upon his like again.”⁴³ Niel Ballingall was buried on Saturday, 29 July 1916 in the Ballingall family burial lot in Northhall Cemetery in Markinch. His gravestone still stands presently and reads: “Niel Ballingall, Factor, Born 17 Jan 1840, Died 26 July 1916.”

⁴³ Gourlay, Ian, Wilkie, Ken, Manson, Bruce. *Markinch: Its Church and Parish*. 2010, p. 150



Fig.222. Grave of Niel Ballingall and Family, Northhall Cemetery, Markinch, Fife, Scotland, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

On Friday, 29 September 1916 an inventory was conducted at Sweetbank on the estate of the deceased Factor.⁴⁴

With the death of Niel Ballingall, his demise effectively ended the family's Factorship to the Balfour family on the estates of Balbirnie and Balgonie which spanned 142 years. However, this is not what the third Ballingall Factor will be remembered for, but rather the great development of coal mining on the Balgonie estate. Ballingall worked to get the old Lochtyside coal pit up and operational, during his tenure as estate Factor. Like his father and grandfather before him, Niel Ballingall was an effective and influential Factor of his time and for 24 years held himself with the utmost honour and conduct. Fife can be quite proud of one of its own, Niel Ballingall, the Factor of Balbirnie and Balgonie. Niel Ballingall, the namesake of his grandfather is warmly commemorated here in grateful esteem and recognition by his distant third cousin, Michael T. Tracy. This work is dedicated to the Memory of Niel Ballingall.

Memoratus in aeternum (Forever Remembered)

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⁴⁴ Inventory of Niel Ballingall, 29 September 1916, Cupar Sheriff Court (SC20/56/16)

