

James Buist (1795-1880): “A Wise Man of the East”: The Remarkable Life of a Fifer, Farmer and Philanthropist
By His Fourth Great Nephew, Michael T. Tracy

“On Tuesday afternoon, Mr. James Buist, Kirktonbarns, was entertained to dinner in the hall of the Royal Hotel, on occasion of his retirement from active business as a farmer...In proposing the toast of the evening, the Chairman said ‘Croupiers and Gentlemen, I now call upon you to drink to the health of a much-respected guest. To the retirement of Mr. Buist from the scene of farming is like the removal of an ancient landmark. Few have been the days during that long period in which the tall form has not been seen stalking across his fields with his weedock in his hand and his weather hat on his head.’”¹ Thus ran the front page of the *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper* for Thursday, 29 September 1870 giving a small glimpse of the accomplished Fife farmer, businessman, investor, and benefactor one James Buist, Esquire. This then is the narrative of the life and times of James Buist.

Early years

The future farmer, philanthropist and benefactor was born on Saturday, 11 July 1795 at Orkie farm in Kettle Parish, Fife.² He was baptized on Sunday, 12 July 1795 at Kettle Parish, Fife.³

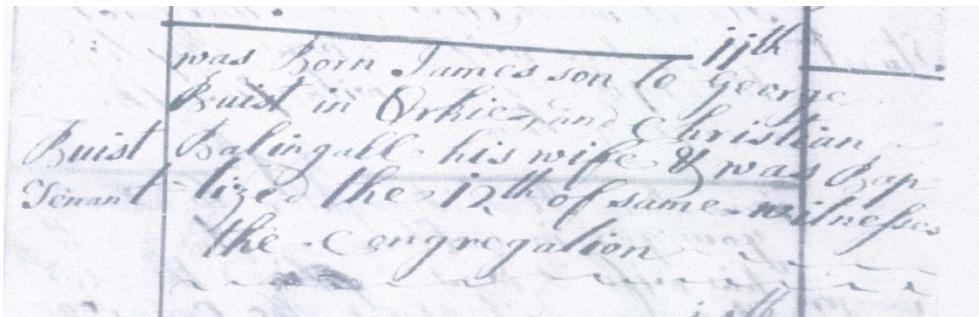


Fig.1. Baptismal Record of James Buist, 12 July 1795, Kettle Parish Records, Crown Copyright



Fig.2. Ordnance Survey Map showing Orkie, Kettle Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of the National Library of Scotland

¹ *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper*, 29 September 1870, p.p. 4-5

² Baptismal Record of James Buist, 12 July 1795, Kettle Parish Records, Old Parish Records 435/00 0030 0103

³ Baptismal Record of James Buist, 12 July 1795, Kettle Parish Records, Old Parish Records 435/00 0030 0103



Fig.3. Kettle Parish Church, Kingskettle, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

He was the last son of George Buist, a tenant farmer, and his second wife Christian Ballingall. He grew up without knowing his father as he was only two years old when his father died. Young James would receive 600 pounds sterling that his father willed to him upon his death.⁴ His mother, Christian Ballingall Buist left Orkie farm after her husband's death in circa 1797-1799 because the lands were turned over to her step-son, Henry Buist. She lived with some of her children namely Janet, Katherine, Thomas, Margaret, Robert and young James Buist on another estate in Forgan Parish, Fife named "Kirktonbarns." She lived there for the next 37 years until her death in 1834. Upon her death, the tenancy of Kirktonbarns was willed to her last surviving son, James Buist.⁵ James Buist matriculated at United College, St. Andrews University as a student in 1810 to study Latin and Greek. Records show that he continued with Latin and Greek in 1811-12 and also started studying Mathematics and Logic; however, there is no record of him ever actually graduating from the University.⁶ Like many students of the period, he did not complete a full degree course.

As a young man, James Buist travelled not only around Scotland but in England as well. There is evidence of his travels to Alnwick, Northumberland, England in the year 1816 at the age of 21. In his travel journal of 1820, he writes, "A description of Alnwick from Scots history of the borders as I took it when in this neighbourhood in the year 1816. Alnwick Castle, the chief seat of the noble family of Northumberland is situated in the neighbourhood of the town, upon a lofty eminence, which enhances

⁴ Register of Deeds, Burgh of Falkland, 1738-1798; University of St. Andrews Library B25/4/1; p.p. 407-426

⁵ Will of Christian Ballingall Buist, 19 February 1835. Wills and Testaments, Cupar Sheriff Court (SC20/50/8)

⁶ Smart, Robert N. *Biographical Register of the University of St. Andrews, 1747-1897*. St. Andrews: 2004, p. 124

the dignity of its appearance.”⁷ Alnwick is a market town in Northumberland, England and he visited Alnwick Castle. The Castle is the seat of the Duke of Northumberland, built following the Norman Conquest in about 1096. After Windsor Castle, it is the second largest inhabited Castle in England.



Fig.4. Alnwick Castle, Photography Courtesy of Britainexpress.com

In the “Observations Made in a Journey through a part of Scotland and England,” he wrote a journal of his experiences and places he visited while journeying from Edinburgh to Walton upon Thames in the county of Surrey, England beginning from Thursday, 20 July 1820 until sometime in August of the same year. He was 25 years old. Traveling on the Union Stage Coach line, Buist gives the reader a clear concise glimpse of the areas geography, climate, history, agriculture and incidents along the way. He stated that the object of this excursion was to visit Mr. J. Rupell who resided at Walton upon Thames some 17 miles southwest of London. Buist wrote of Haddington, East Lothian, “the country became more of a Moorish soil; however, the fields were well cultivated and enclosed with hedges which were neatly formed. Every Friday there is held here one of the best Corn Markets in Scotland.”⁸ He also describes in detail about, “the only object that attracted our attention was the horsemanship of a drunken barber. At one time he galloped around the Coach, then from one side of the road to the other side of the road, all the while maintaining a command of his horse, which was exceptional. He continued to amuse us in that way for some miles before we landed at Newcastle which was about eleven at night.”⁹ While at York, England Buist writes about eating at a local inn stating, “We were greeted with an elegant dinner, the bill, however, was a sad enemy to the purse!”¹⁰ He while in London on Sunday, 30 July 1820 wrote, “The Castle (Windsor) the favourite residence of our late good old King and St. George’s Chapel were the next places we visited... The Tower from the whole summit the spectator enjoys a beautiful prospect of twelve counties of England...”¹¹

⁷ Travel Journal by James Buist, 20 July-August 1820, University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, p. 16

⁸ Travel Journal by James Buist, 20 July-August 1820, University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, p. 8

⁹ Travel Journal by James Buist, 20 July-August 1820, University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, p.19

¹⁰ Travel Journal by James Buist, 20 July-August 1820, University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, p. 44

¹¹ Travel Journal by James Buist, 20 July-August 1820, University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, p.75

man carrying a large bundle of birch
twigs for to supply the masters with
rods of chastisement when any of the
appreciate a transgression. The Castle
the favourite residence of our ^{late} good old
King and St. George's Chapel were the
next places we visited; but we shall not
attempt to describe the State Bed,
the many splendid paintings and other
emblems of Royalty which we saw in
the former nor the banners of the
different Knights in the latter. Then
we left for the round Tower, from whose
summit the spectator enjoys ^{such}
a beautiful prospect of twelve counties
of England.

After having ^{taken} a cursory view of Windsor

Fig.5. Travel Journal of James Buist, Sunday, 30 July 1820, Photograph Courtesy of University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, Special Permission for the Use of This Photograph Granted by the Head of Special Collections

Farming

After his school courses and travelling, James began managing and farming the estate of Kirktonbarns as a tenant farmer. The county of Fife is known as the “Kingdom,” a title derived from its association with the Kings of Scots from the 11th century. It is more largely surrounded by water than any other county in the mainland of Scotland and has extensive manufactures and rich soil for farming. Kirktonbarns located in the Parish of Forgan is a principal farm and the soil is light but fertile. During the lifetime of James Buist, the estate of Kirktonbarns consisted of about 774 acres of land and is located nearly 2 miles east by north-east of St. Fort House.¹² Today, Kirktonbarns has been turned into a bed and breakfast establishment.



Fig.6. Kirktonbarns, Forgan Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

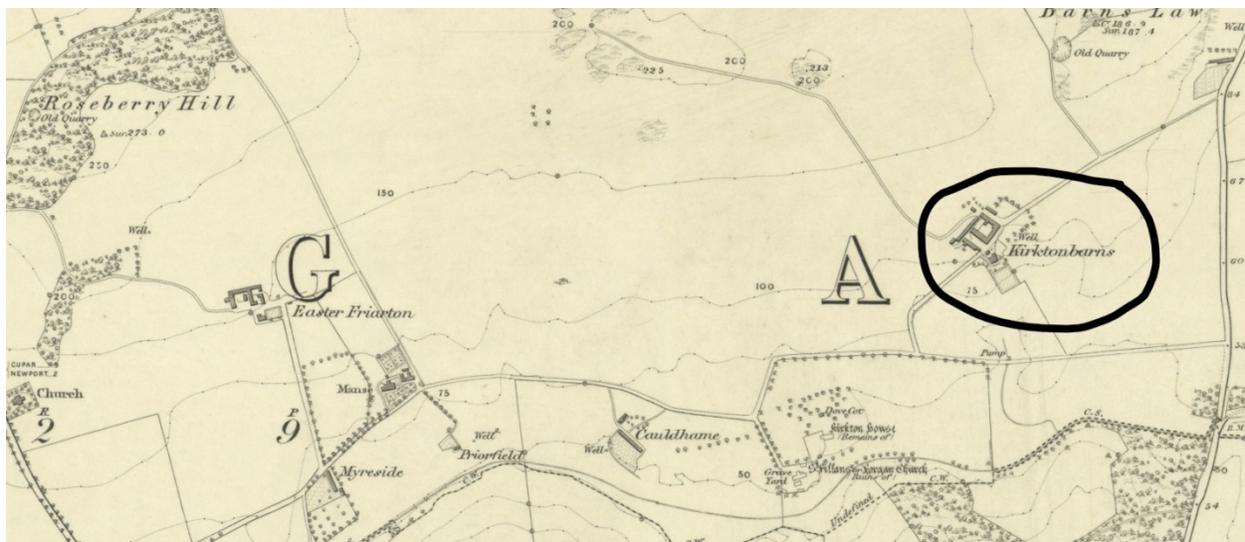


Fig.7. Ordnance Survey Map of Kirktonbarns, Forgan Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of the National Library of Scotland

¹² Ordnance Survey Name Books, *Fife and Kinross-shire OS Name Books, 1853-1855, Volume 34, OS1/13/24/24*

James Buist never married and lived with his older sisters Katherine and Margaret Buist at Kirktonbarns. His older brother, Thomas Buist, was long deceased by this time and had he survived would have most likely have assumed the tenancy of the estate of Kirktonbarns. James and his sisters Katherine and Margaret Buist are listed in the 1841, 1851 and 1861 censuses for Kirktonbarns, Forgan Parish, Fifeshire. In the 1841 Census, James Buist is listed as being 45 years of age, a farmer along with his sister, Katherine Buist, age 50 and his sister, Margaret Buist age 45.¹³

Fig.8. 1841 Scotland Census, Forgan Parish, Fife listing James Buist

He was elected as a member of the St. Andrews Literary and Philosophical Society on Monday, 5 November 1838. The Literary and Philosophical Society was founded in 1838, “when it was announced that several Gentlemen connected with the University and the City of St. Andrews, being desirous of establishing a Literary and Philosophical Society, are anxious to receive the names of those Gentlemen, who are disposed to countenance such an institution. Besides the general object of promoting Literary and Philosophic research, the Society would especially have in view the establishment of a museum in the University. Signed by George Buist, among others.”¹⁴ James Buist was also a member of the Scottish Midland Agricultural Association serving on the Fife District Committee during the 1870s.

The Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland

The Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland was founded in Edinburgh in the year 1784. The Society’s aim was to promote the regeneration of rural Scotland and organized ploughing matches, harness competitions as well as cattle and bull competitions. James Buist was admitted to the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society in the year 1842 at the age of 47.¹⁵ He studied their agricultural publications and applied many of their recommendations to his own farm estate. He also participated in competitions where he would show his cattle and bulls and would enter them in any Fife competition shows held throughout the Shire. These included various oxen, short-haired cows and bulls. He was

¹³ 1841 Scotland Census for Kirktonbarns, Forgan Parish, Fife, Scotland; Enumeration District Number 2, Page Number 13

¹⁴ *Biography of Literary and Philosophical Society of St. Andrews*, National Archives of Scotland, indexed online at <http://www.nas.gov.uk/onlineCatalogue/Person> code: STA81

¹⁵ *Prize Essays & Transactions of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland. New Series Volume 4.8.* Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, 1843, p. 853

highly supportive of this Society and was to remain an active member for the next 38 years. There is a record of his bull winning five pounds in the competition of 1849.¹⁶

James Buist and his two sisters were listed in the 1851 Census for Forgan Parish, Fife. James Buist was listed as being 55 years of age, a farmer of 650 acres of land and his sisters Katherine Buist was listed as being 63 years of age and Margaret Buist being 60 years of age.¹⁷

| Parish of Forgan | | Quoad Sacra Parish of | | Municipality of the Parliamentary Burgh of | | Within the Limits of the Royal Burgh of | | Town or Village of | |
|---|--|----------------------------|------------------|--|---|---|-------------------------------|--------------------|--|
| Name of Street, Place, or House, and Name or No. of House | Name and Surname of each Person who abode in the house, on the Night of the 31st March, 1851 | Relation to Head of Family | Condition | Age in Years | Rank, Profession, or Occupation | Where Born | Whether Blind or Deaf or Dumb | | |
| | Katherine Duncan | Wife | Married | 35 | | Fife Kinross | | | |
| | William Duncan | Son | Single | 15 | Scholar | Fife St Andrews | | | |
| | Katherine Duncan | Daughter | Single | 17 | Scholar | Fife Largo | | | |
| 14 | James Buist | Head | Single | 55 | Farmer of 650 acres Empl 2 men 22 cows 2010 sheep | Fife Kettle | | | |
| | Katherine Buist | Sister | Single | 63 | | Fife Kettle | | | |
| | Margaret Buist | Sister | Single | 60 | | Fife Kettle | | | |
| | William Whyte | Servant | Single | 20 | house servant | Fife Forgan | | | |
| | Janet Whyte | Wife | Single | 21 | do | Fife do | | | |
| 15 | Billy | John Duncan | Servant | 16 | 19 | Aggl. Labourer | Fife Kinghousie | | |
| | William Robertson | do | do | 16 | 18 | do | Fife Cupar | | |
| | Andrew Baird | do | do | 16 | 16 | do | Fife Darnley | | |
| | Thomas Baird | do | do | 16 | 17 | do | Fife Forgan | | |
| 16 | Lizzie Whyte | Head | Married | 46 | Public House, Bread and Bly Loh | Fife Cupar | | | |
| | Janet Whyte | Wife | Married | 46 | | Fife Mearns | | | |
| | James Whyte | Son | Single | 15 | Scholar | Fife Forgan | | | |
| | Alexander Whyte | Son | Single | 10 | Scholar | Fife do | | | |
| 17 | David Loring | Head | Married | 40 | Aggl. Labourer | Fife Anstruther | | | |
| | Rebecca Loring | Wife | Married | 40 | | Fife Ceres | | | |
| | Margery Loring | Daughter | Single | 12 | Scholar | Fife Kingsbarns | | | |
| | David Loring | Son | Single | 10 | Scholar | Fife do | | | |
| | | | Total of Persons | 12 | | | | | |

Fig.9. 1851 Scotland Census for Forgan Parish, Fife listing James Buist

Kirktonbarns by this time also grew in size. The property is described in detail in the 1853-1855 Ordnance Survey as a “well-constructed farmhouse, two stories high with excellent farm steadings in good repair and farm attached by Mr. James Buist, farmer.”¹⁸

¹⁶ Transactions of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland. July 1849-March 1851. Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, 1851, p. 272

¹⁷ 1851 Scotland Census for Kirktonbarns, Forgan Parish, Fife, Scotland; Enumeration District Number 2, Page 4

¹⁸ Ordnance Survey Name Books, Fife and Kinross-shire OS Name Books, 1853-1855, Volume 34, OS1/13/24/24

24
1800.—Nov. 1849. Parish of Forgan No. 21. Class 5

| 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 |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| Lawpark | Lawhouses | Lawhouses Go. | Mr. James Buist Famer Kirktonbarns Mr. W. W. W. Famer Kinross | Byroads of 2 1/2 miles W of Kirktonbarns | A pair of small Cottages on the farm of Kirktonbarns including stable garden attached occupied by the farm labourers of Mr. James Buist, Famer. |
| Kirktonbarns | Kirktonbarns | Kirktonbarns Go. Go. Kirktonbarns | Mr. James Buist Kirktonbarns Mr. O. P. Grant Johns, Kilmarnock Co. Ayr Kirktonbarns Kinross | Nearly 2 miles East of Kirktonbarns D. Scot. House | A mill constructed of iron by strong high mill wheels found to be in good repair on a farm attached occupied by Mr. James Buist, Famer and property of David Gillespie Esq. of Montgomerie |
| Kinross | Kinross | Kinross Go. Go. | Mr. W. W. W. Famer Kinross Mr. W. W. W. Famer Kinross Kinross | Byroads of 2 1/2 miles E. & S. of Kirktonbarns | A of farmhouse and offices in good repair with farm attached occupied by Mr. W. W. W. Famer, and property of David Gillespie Esq. of Montgomerie |

Fig.10. Ordnance Survey Name Book for Kirktonbarns, Forgan Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of ScotlandsPlaces.gov.uk

Upon the death of his brother the Reverend Dr. George Buist in 1860, James Buist inherited the property of Lawpark in St. Andrews.¹⁹ He did not move into the estate until after his retirement in 1870.

Cupar Corn Exchange Company

In the late 1850s, a large trade was being done at Cupar in the selling, processing of wheat and other grains, and a covered building was needed for the weekly corn market. On Friday, 24 January 1860 eight local men one of which was James Buist, Esquire agreed to form a company responsible for these objects and on Monday, 13 February 1860 the Cupar Corn Exchange Company was officially incorporated. James Buist, Esquire was one of its founding Directors and it is one of Scotland's oldest companies. The site was chosen in the centre of Cupar at the crossroads between the Bonnygate, St. Catherine Street and the Crossgate. According to the Caledonian Mercury on Friday, 26 July 1861, "yesterday, the foundation stone of the Cupar Corn Exchange was laid with masonic solemnities..."²⁰ The Cupar Corn Exchange Company is still in existence today.

¹⁹ Will of Rev. Dr. George Buist, 21 April 1830. Wills & Testaments, Cupar Sheriff Court (SC20/50/31)

²⁰ Caledonia Mercury Newspaper, 26 July 1861, p. 2



Fig.11. Cupar Corn Exchange Building, Cupar, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

James Buist and his two sisters were listed in the 1861 Census for Kirktonbarns, Forgan Parish, Fife listing James as being 64 years of age, a farmer of 580 acres, employing 12 men; his sisters Katherine Buist age 70 and Margaret Buist age 69.²¹ In less than three years his sister Katherine Buist would die on Monday, 22 February 1864²² and his last surviving sister Margaret Buist would die on Sunday, 25 March 1866 at the age of 75.²³

| The undermentioned Houses are situated within the Boundaries of the | | | | | | | | | | Page 9 | |
|---|--|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|--------|------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Parish of | | Royal Burgh of | | Parliamentary Burgh of | | Town of | | Village of | | | |
| Forgan | | Cupar | | Cupar | | Cupar | | Cupar | | | |
| No. of Schedule | Road, Street, &c., and No. or Name of House. | HOUSES | | Name and Surname of each Person. | Relation to Head of Family. | Condition. | Age of | | Rank, Profession, or Occupation. | Where Born. | No. of Children in Family. |
| | | Inhabited (1, 2, or 3.) | Uninhabited (1, 2, or 3.) | | | | Males. | Females. | | | |
| 36 | Kirktonbarns Farm House | 1 | | James Buist | Head | Un | 64 | | Farmer of 580 Acres employing 12 Men | Kirktonbarns | 6 |
| | | | | Katherine Do. | Sister | Un | 70 | | James's Sister | Do. - Kirktonbarns | |
| | | | | Margaret Do. | Sister | Un | 69 | | James's Sister | Do. - Do. | |
| | | | | Katherine Bethune | Servant | Un | 32 | | Domestic Servant | Do. - Kingsbarns | |

Fig.12. 1861 Scotland Census for Forgan Parish, Fife listing James Buist along with his sisters

²¹ 1861 Scotland Census for Kirktonbarns, Forgan Parish, Fife, Scotland; Enumeration District Number 2, Page 9

²² Death Record of Katherine Buist, 22 February 1864, Forgan Parish Records, Statutory Deaths 431/00 0003

²³ Death Record of Margaret Buist, 25 March 1866, Forgan Parish Records, Statutory Deaths 431/00 0014

In the year of 1865 in Scotland, there occurred a great plague that affected farmer's cattle and livestock. At the time it was known as "Rinderpest." This was an infectious viral disease of cattle that spread throughout Scotland and England between 1865 and 1866. The *Fife Herald Newspaper* on Friday, 2 November 1865 reported, "Kirktonbarns, Parish of Forgan, tenant James Buist, Esquire, 3 cattle died and many other affected."²⁴ By the end of 1866, the plague had suddenly ended and there are no records of how many of James Buist's livestock it had killed.

During this same time period, James Buist was also a Director for the Eastern Bank of Scotland. The bank was founded in 1838 and according to the *Dundee Courier Newspaper* dated Thursday, 10 April 1862, "the annual general meeting of the shareholders of the Eastern Bank of Scotland was held here yesterday, James Buist, Esquire; one of the Directors, in the chair."²⁵ During the following year (1863) the Eastern Bank of Scotland was acquired by Clydesdale Bank.

The Valuation Rolls

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 which listed James Buist was in the year of 1855 and showed him as being the tenant and occupier and the yearly rent or value of the property was listed at 1,169 pounds and 12 shillings.²⁶

| VALUATION | | | | ROLL. | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| County of Fife. | | | | For the Year 1855-56. | | |
| Number | DESCRIPTION AND SITUATION OF SUBJECT. | PROPRIETOR | TENANT | OCCUPIER | YEARLY RENT OR VALUE. | |
| | | | | | As Estimated by Assessor. | As Adjusted on Application or Appeal. |
| 1. | Manse Office Duncan | Rev. D. Thomson Forgan | | said Rev. D. Thomson | 25 | 0 |
| 2. | Kilbe | Do | | Do | 20 | 5 |
| 3. | Farm of Kirktonbarns | David Gillespie Esq of Mountguthrie | James Buist | said James Buist | 1169 | 12 |

Fig.13. 1855 Scotland Valuation Roll for Kirktonbarns, Forgan Parish, Fife listing James Buist (Last Entry)

The 1865 Scotland Valuation Roll for Kirktonbarns showed James Buist as the tenant and occupier of the property and the yearly rent or value of the property listed at 923 pounds and 18 shillings.²⁷ His lands at Lawpark in St. Andrews were also listed showing him as the proprietor but not residing there and the yearly rent or value of the property is listed at 30 pounds.²⁸

²⁴ *Fife Herald Newspaper*, 2 November 1865, p. 2

²⁵ *Dundee Courier Newspaper*, 10 April 1862, p. 2

²⁶ 1855 Scotland Valuation Roll for Kirktonbarns, Forgan Parish, Fife, Scotland (VR101/1/43)

²⁷ 1865 Scotland Valuation Roll for Kirktonbarns, Forgan Parish, Fife, Scotland (VR101/11/120)

²⁸ 1865 Scotland Valuation Roll for Kirktonbarns, Forgan Parish, Fife, Scotland (VR101/11/178)

| VALUATION | | Parish of <i>St. Andrews</i> | | ROLL. | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|---|----------------------|---|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| County of <i>Fife</i> . | | | | For the Year <i>1865-66</i> | | | | |
| No. | DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECT | PROPRIETOR <small>(including Tenants of Land or other Property, and of the Rights of any such Tenants)</small> | OCCUPIER | TENANT. | | | Yearly Rent or Value of the Property. | Yearly Rent or Value of the Property. |
| | | | | Not under Lease of 10 Years or upwards. | Under Lease of 10 Years and less than 20 Years. | Under Lease of 20 Years or upwards. | | |
| 171 | Cottage Garden at Kirkton | <i>M. Alexander, Makon Menzies</i> | <i>David Menzies</i> | | | | | <i>Brought Forward (1865/6)</i> |
| 172 | Lands near Spalding | <i>do</i> | <i>do</i> | | | | | <i>2 .. 4</i> |
| 173 | Lands near Spalding | <i>do</i> | <i>do</i> | | | | | <i>7 .. 1</i> |
| 174 | Lands near Spalding | <i>do</i> | <i>do</i> | | | | | <i>13 .. 1</i> |
| 175 | Lands near Spalding | <i>do</i> | <i>do</i> | | | | | <i>20 .. 5</i> |
| 176 | Lands near Spalding | <i>do</i> | <i>do</i> | | | | | <i>3 .. 14</i> |
| 177 | Lands near Spalding | <i>do</i> | <i>do</i> | | | | | <i>31 .. 17 6</i> |
| 178 | Lands near Spalding | <i>do</i> | <i>do</i> | | | | | <i>22 .. 6 6</i> |
| 179 | Lands near Spalding | <i>do</i> | <i>do</i> | | | | | <i>10 .. 1</i> |
| 180 | Lands near Spalding | <i>do</i> | <i>do</i> | | | | | <i>36 .. 1</i> |
| 181 | Lands near Spalding | <i>do</i> | <i>do</i> | | | | | <i>30 .. 1</i> |

Fig.14. 1865 Scotland Valuation Roll for Lawpark, St. Andrews listing James Buist (Last Entry)

By 1875 Buist is no longer the tenant farmer of Kirktonbarns and is listed at Lawpark in St. Andrews as being the proprietor and occupier and the yearly rent or value of the property is listed at 50 pounds.²⁹

| VALUATION ROLL—COUNTY OF PIPE.—Parish of ST ANDREWS Continued.—Year 1875-1876. | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| No. | Description of Subject. | Proprietor. | Occupier. | Tenant. | | | Rent payable under such Lease. | Penalty or Ground Annual, &c. | Penalties To whom Payable. | Yearly Rent or Value. |
| | | | | Not under Lease of 10 Years or upwards. | Under Lease of 10 Years and less than 20 Years. | Under Lease of 20 Years or upwards. | | | | |
| 133 | Clatto Lands | Leut-General Sir John Low, C.B.—Contd. | Said Lieut-Gen. Sir John Low | | | | | | £100 0 0 | |
| 4 | do. Woodlands | do. | do. | | | | | | 8 0 0 | |
| 5 | Part of Quarry Park | do. | do. | | | | | | 3 6 0 | |
| 6 | Farm of Nydie | Major Robert Bethune, St Andrews | Ebenezer Roadie, farmer | | same | | | | 65 14 0 | |
| 7 | Farm of Nydie Mill | do. | do. | same | | | | | 85 0 0 | |
| 8 | Fishings of Dron | do. | do. | same | | | | | 15 0 0 | |
| 9 | Woodlands | do. | do. | same | | | | | 10 0 0 | |
| 140 | Frestone Quarry and House, | Knockhill | David Edie, quarrymaster | | same | | | | 4 10 0 | |
| 1 | House and Garden, | do. | do. | | same | | | | 4 10 0 | |
| 2 | do. | do. | do. | | same | | | | 4 10 0 | |
| 3 | do. | do. | do. | | same | | | | 4 10 0 | |
| 4 | do. | do. | do. | | same | | | | 4 10 0 | |
| 5 | Farm of Newton of Nydie | Trustees of late James Home Bigg Esq. | William Fowler, farmer | | same | | | | 308 9 9 | |
| 6 | do. Kincauld | do. | do. | | same | | | | 1556 0 0 | |
| 7 | Part of Kincauld Lands, | do. | do. | | same | | | | 32 0 0 | |
| 8 | do. | do. | do. | | same | | | | 12 0 0 | |
| 9 | Frestone Quarry at Longmuir | do. | David Edie, quarrymaster, Guard Bridge | | same | | | | 60 0 0 | |
| 150 | Woodlands | do. | Said Trustees | | same | | | | 8 0 0 | |
| 1 | Farm of Monkholms | David Watson Wemyss Esq. | Robert Thomson Esq. | | same | | | | 215 0 0 | |
| 2 | House, Offices, and Garden of Easter Kincauld | David B. Meldrum Esq. | Mrs Wyld | | same | | | | 60 0 0 | |
| 3 | Farm of Easter Kincauld | do. | Said David B. Meldrum | | same | | | | 150 0 0 | |
| 4 | Seafield Brick and Tile Work | do. | do. | | same | | | | 4 10 0 | |
| 5 | Manager's House and Garden, Brickwork | do. | George Blair, manager | | same | | | | 7 5 0 | |
| 6 | Houses and Gardens under £4, Strathkinness | do. | Strathkinness Co-Operative Society | | same | | | | 6 0 0 | |
| 7 | House and Garden, | do. | James Grant, grocer | | same | | | | 26 18 0 | |
| 8 | do. | do. | do. | | same | | | | 4 0 0 | |
| 9 | Houses and Gardens under £4, | do. | do. | | same | | | | 26 18 0 | |
| 160 | Strathgrym House, Offices, Garden, and Lodge | George Clark Cheape Esq. | John Blackwood Esq., publisher | | same | | | £1 0 0 | 330 0 0 | |
| 1 | do. Home Farm | do. | Said G. C. Cheape | | same | | | 1 0 0 | 36 0 0 | |
| 2 | do. Woodlands | do. | do. | | same | | | | 100 2 0 | |
| 3 | Part of Lands of North Haugh | do. | do. | | same | | | | 794 6 9 | |
| 4 | Farm of Balgove, Filmar and Links | do. | David Hain, farmer (Govan, jointly) | | same | same | | | 40 0 0 | |
| 5 | Filmuir Cottage and Garden | do. | Misses Mary Charlotte and Eleanor Julian | | same | | | | 61 0 0 | |
| 6 | North Muir and Langlands | do. | Robert Cooper, farmer | | same | | | | 79 0 0 | |
| 7 | Lands of North Muir | do. | Thomas Nicol, jun., Lawmill | | same | same | | | 10 0 0 | |
| 8 | Part of Balgove, adjoining Station | do. | St Andrews Railway Company | | same | | | | 27 17 6 | |
| 9 | Lands of Bowerscreek | do. | Thomas Nicol, Lawmill | | same | | | | 32 0 0 | |
| 170 | House, Offices, and Garden of Spalding | do. | The Hon. Mrs Cheape | | same | | 4 2 1 | J. W. Melville Esq. | 32 0 0 | |
| 1 | Lands of Spalding | do. | do. | | same | | | | 50 0 0 | |
| 2 | Ornighlands Park | John Meldrum Esq. | Said John Meldrum | | same | | 2 1 4 | do. | 130 0 0 | |
| 3 | Farm of Strathkinness | Mrs Eliza Richard, St Andrews | John & Charles Anderson, farmers | | same | same | 5 4 11 | G. J. W. Melville, liferenter | 198 13 8 | |
| 4 | do. Easter Strathkinness | Sir James Malcolm, Bart., Liverpool | Thomas Nicol, farmer | | same | | 11 0 7 | do. | 17 0 0 | |
| 5 | Park, Strathkinness | do. | Robert Mitchell, quarrymaster | | same | | | | 55 0 0 | |
| 6 | Denbrae House, Offices, and Garden | Dr Alexander Watson Wemyss | Said Dr Wemyss | | same | | | | 26 0 0 | |
| 7 | do. Lands | do. | do. | | same | | | | 32 0 0 | |
| 8 | do. Woodlands | do. | do. | | same | | | | 145 0 0 | |
| 9 | do. Mill Farm and House, &c. | do. | David Watson Wemyss Esq. | | same | | 2 8 0 | J. W. Melville Esq. | 376 10 0 | |
| 180 | Farm of Denbrae | do. | David Ritchie, farmer | | same | same | | | 70 10 0 | |
| 1 | House, Offices, Mills, and Land, Denbrae | do. | John Wilkie, millmaster | | same | | | | 22 0 0 | |
| 2 | Denbrae Sawmill, Lands, and House | do. | James Wishart, sawmill | | same | | | | 2 0 0 | |
| 3 | Cottage and Garden at Denbrae | do. | do. | | same | | | | 41 10 0 | |
| 4 | Lands, Nether Bufflets, &c. | Mrs Isabella Thomson, wife of David Key, farmer, Argyll | Said David Key | | same | | | | 10 10 0 | |
| 5 | Lands, Ganpyside, Bassaguard, &c. | George Key, farmer, Argyll | Said George Key | | same | | | | 20 15 0 | |
| 6 | Lands, Over Bufflets | Mrs Jessie Key, wife of Alex. Lowden, farmer | Said Alexander Lowden | | same | | | | 8 17 0 | |
| 7 | Lands, Wester Langlands | Miss Elizabeth Key | George Key, farmer | | same | | | | 11 6 0 | |
| 8 | Clark's Goat Land | St. Mary's College, for Robert Wemyss' Bursary | Robert Lew, carter | | same | | | | 40 0 0 | |
| 9 | Lawmill and House and Land | Thomas Nicol, millmaster | Said Thomas Nicol | | same | | 25 3 3 | City of St Andrews £24 10 .. | 50 0 0 | |
| 190 | Lawpark House and Garden | James Buist Esq. | Said James Buist | | same | | | [J. W. Melville 15 ..] | 15 16 8 | |

Fig.15. 1875 Scotland Valuation Roll for Lawpark, St. Andrews listing James Buist (Last Entry)

In the Evening of Life

James Buist is listed in Westwood's Parochial Directory of 1866 for the Parish of Forgan, Fife. He was noted as "Farmer of Kirktonbarns, by Ferry-Port-on-Craig."³⁰

²⁹ 1875 Scotland Valuation Roll for Kirktonbarns, Forgan Parish, Fife, Scotland (VR101/21/141)

³⁰ Westwood, A. *Westwood's Parochial Directory for the Counties of Fife & Kinross*. Edinburgh: John Menzies, 1866, p. 85

matter of great importance to have science flourish among us, since even our material prosperity depends so much upon it; if it be a matter of greater importance than a high culture should be possessed by those who are to rule among us in the many departments of thought and activity, the efficiency of our Universities must be of extreme importance...Our Scottish Universities have had a noble history. Really, perhaps, in the world no institutions have had a nobler history; and I believe they are as sound and true as ever..."³¹

Sometime in early October of 1870, James Buist did not renew his tenancy lease on Kirktonbarns. A farm roup (auction sale) was held at Kirktonbarns on or about Thursday, 20 October 1870 and the *Fife Herald* reported "As was to be expected from the high reputation that Mr. James Buist has, there was a large turnout for the roup. His cattle bought respectable prices and horses which were very superior went as high as 364 pounds."³²



Fig.17. Kirktonbarns, Forgan Parish, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Dr. Iain Macintyre

James Buist, Esquire it seems even in his later years never really retired from farming. He raised Clydesdale horses at Kirktonbarns, even though he no longer owned and operated the estate. By 1871 he spent mostly the remainder of his life at Lawpark, St. Andrews, the former estate of his brother, the Rev. Dr. George Buist but on occasion went back to the old estate of Kirktonbarns to look at his Clydesdales and add help where needed.

³¹ *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper*, 29 September 1870, p.p. 4-5

³² *Fife Herald Newspaper*, 20 October 1870, p. 2



Fig.18. Lawpark, St. Andrews, Fife, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

A Large Benefactor

Mr. Buist, throughout most of his entire life, made many charitable donations mainly to the Church of Scotland. Due to his strong belief in the Church and because of his brother's life-long commitment to the Church, he donated large sums of monies to missions, church events, church fundraisers with little acknowledgement. He also donated to the University of St. Andrews and other universities across Scotland. *The Central Press of London Newspaper* for Friday, 5 December 1873 reported: "the sum of 1,000 pounds has been contributed to the fund of the London Missionary Society by Mr. James Buist, of Lawpark cottage, St. Andrews. This is the third 1,000 pounds that have been given or bequeathed from St. Andrews during the past few years."³³ This equates, in terms of purchasing power to 232,000 pounds in 2014 in terms of purchasing power or a staggering 3.7 million pounds as calculated by Retail Price Index. (Ref. <http://www.measuringworth.com>.) He also contributed to many mission funds of the Church of Scotland. In the year 1876, for example, he gave a sizeable donation to the India Mission Fund. *The Morning Post Newspaper*, dated Friday, 17 March 1876 stated, "Mr. James Buist of Lawpark, St. Andrews, has handed over to the Rev. Dr. Herdman the sum of 6,000 pounds as a contribution to the India Mission Fund of the Established Church of Scotland."³⁴

The old benefactor had another remarkably generous contribution to give which was probably unparalleled at this time. According to the *Dundee Courier Newspaper* dated Thursday, 11 March 1875: "We understand that Mr. James Buist has intimated to the Congregational Committee of the Town Church his resolve to bequeath the entire estate of Lawpark for the purpose of augmenting the stipend of the second minister of St. Andrews parish."³⁵ This was the parish where his brother the Reverend Dr. George Buist had been a minister, and he had inherited Lawpark from him. He also in 1876 founded and established a bursary for St. Mary's College, St. Andrews in remembrance of his brother, the Reverend

³³ *The Central Press Newspaper*, 5 December 1873, p. 6

³⁴ *The Morning Post Newspaper*, 17 March 1876, p. 6

³⁵ *Dundee Courier Newspaper*, 11 March 1875, p. 2

Dr. George Buist who was a Professor at the college. The annual value was 20 pounds tenable for three years.³⁶ This bursary continued being active until about 1889, some nine years after his death.



Fig.19. James Buist Portrait 1870s, Photograph Courtesy of the Church of Scotland

James Buist, Esquire made out his Last Will and Testament on Saturday, 8 July 1876.³⁷ In the following years he made out codicils to the Will on Monday, 24 June 1878, Monday, 16 September 1878 and again on Sunday, 9 March 1879.³⁸ The trustees to his Last Will and Testament were the following: Peter Christie, farmer; David and John Ballingall, farmers at Dunbog; John Dun, an agent at Cupar; Andrew Buist, nephew and proprietor at Berryhill (since deceased); John Inglis and George Dun, a farmer at Balgonie.³⁹

Sometime in 1878, James Buist also set up with the University of St. Andrews a bursary fund. According to the *Fife Herald* "Dr. George Buist, to whose memory a bursary was lately founded by his brother, James Buist, Esquire of Lawpark."⁴⁰ His health began failing and he quietly passed away on Saturday, 10 April 1880 at his home at Lawpark, St. Andrews at the age of 84. The cause of death was listed as "Climacteric decay," (Natural causes, old age).⁴¹ He was buried in the Buist family liar in Forgan Cemetery, Forgan Parish, Fife on Thursday, 15 April 1880.

³⁶ *St. Andrews University Calendar for the Year 1907-08*. Edinburgh: Blackwood & Sons, 1905, p. 326

³⁷ Last Will and Testament of James Buist, 8 July 1876, Cupar Sheriff Court SC20/50/53

³⁸ Last Will and Testament of James Buist, 8 July 1876, Cupar Sheriff Court SC20/50/53

³⁹ Last Will and Testament of James Buist, 8 July 1876, Cupar Sheriff Court SC20/50/53

⁴⁰ *Fife Herald Newspaper*, 29 August 1878, p. 5

⁴¹ Death Record of James Buist, 10 April 1880, St. Andrews Parish Records, Statutory Deaths 453/00 0054

| | | | | | | | | |
|----|--------------------------------|----------------|----|------------------|----------------|-------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| | | | | | | | | |
| | James Buist | 1880 | 71 | George Buist | blinasterie | John Buist | 1880 | |
| | | April | | James B. Bruce | decease | Pratt | April 20 th | |
| | | Death | | (Deceased) | | Arthur Ford Lewis | St Andrews | |
| 54 | Proprietor of Lawpark (Single) | QV, B.M., A.M. | | Christian Buist | As cert. by | St Andrews | | |
| | | Lawpark | | M. S. Ballingall | Rev. Archibald | | | John S. Orley |
| | | St Andrews | | (Deceased) | M. D. Surgeon | | | Registrar. |

Fig.20. Death Record of James Buist, 10 April 1880, Forgan Parish Records, Crown Copyright

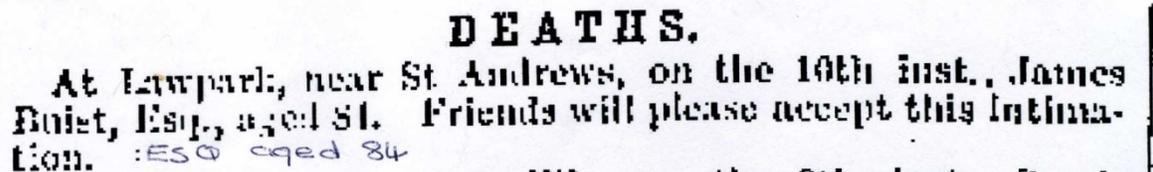


Fig.21. Forgan Cemetery, Forgan Parish, Fife
Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

The *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper* reported "Our obituary column of today records the decease of a gentleman who was highly esteemed in this neighbourhood, namely Mr. James Buist, of Lawpark. The deceased was half-brother to the late Reverend Doctor Buist, so long one of the ministers in the town church here. He came to live at Lawpark some years ago, having then retired from an active agricultural life. Mr. Buist has from time to time given large sums of money to charitable objects, especially to those connected with the Church. We understand that the property of Lawpark is left to aid in increasing the emoluments of the second charge in this parish. Mr. Buist was a member of the session and took an interest in Church matters whilst able. He had been in failing health for two or three years, and without any serious change in his condition he quietly passed away on Saturday morning. The remains of the deceased are to be interred in Forgan churchyard today."⁴² The *Fife Herald Newspaper* wrote "The grave closed over the remains of this well-known and venerable agriculturist on Thursday. For a period of 46 years he occupied the farm of Kirktonbarns on the estate of Mr. Gillespie of Mountquhanie, who greatly esteemed his tenant. By his industry and economy Mr. Buist succeeded in amassing a considerable fortune, and in his later years when he came to reside at Lawpark here, he gave away, it is said, about

⁴² *Fifeshire Journal Newspaper*, 15 April 1880, p. 5

30,000 pounds to different religious and philanthropic objects. In dress and habits of life he belonged to the old school; but he was an upright and honourable man, and very conscientious in all his religious duties. He had made minute arrangements as to his funeral, and the disposal of his effects after his decease. He came of a long-lived race, his brother, Mr. Buist of Berryhill and Rev. Dr. Buist, of St. Andrews, having attained an age, like his own, beyond the four score years. We understand that the property of Lawpark is left to aid in increasing the emoluments of the second charge in this parish.”⁴³



DEATHS.
At Lawpark, near St. Andrews, on the 10th inst., James Buist, Esq., aged 84. Friends will please accept this intimation.
:ESQ aged 84

Fig.22. Obituary Notice of James Buist, *Fife Herald Newspaper*, 22 April 1880

As stated, James Buist, Esquire was a major benefactor of his time to the Church of Scotland and it seems even after his death. Years and even decades later, the Church of Scotland still acknowledged a “Buist Fund” or “The Legacy of the Late James Buist” who gave at least 7,000 pounds each year to the Fund and Legacy itself after death. According to the *Church of Scotland Home and Foreign Mission Record* of Friday, 1 May 1891 “These funds fall to be kept intact, in respect of a Legacy and Donation from the Late Mr. Buist of Lawpark, 7,000 pounds.”⁴⁴

His Last Will and Testament would be reported in various newspapers in Scotland and even in the United States. According to the *New York Times* “Mr. James Buist, of St. Andrews, Scotland, bequeathed \$35,000.00 to missions.”⁴⁵ The *Edinburgh Evening News* reported, “Munificent Bequest. By the will of the late Mr. James Buist, Lawpark, St. Andrews, the following handsome bequests have been left: To the Home Mission Scheme of the Church of Scotland 6,000 pounds; Endowment Scheme 1,000 pounds; Colonial Mission 1,000; Jewish Mission 500 pounds; Ministers Widows Fund 1,000 pounds; to the City of St. Andrews for permanent improvements 1,000 pounds; and to relatives 1,500 pounds. After providing for two annuities of 20 and 50 pounds, the residue of the estate from 28,000 to 30,000 pounds is to be equally divided among four schemes of the Church, viz., the India, Home, Colonial and Endowment.”⁴⁶ To put this into today’s context in terms of purchasing power this is worth around 3.6 million pounds in 2013 or gives an income value equivalent of 29.6 million pounds.

A year after his death, the Church of Scotland continued to honor his memory. The *Dundee Advertiser Newspaper* on Saturday, 12 November 1881 reported that “An oil painting from an enlarged photograph of this gentleman has just been hung in the principal room in the offices of the Church of Scotland, 22 Queen Street, Edinburgh. The painting, which is said to be an admirable likeness, was executed under the superintendence of Mr. Roger, 97 George Street, in whose studio at St. Andrews Mr. Buist was photographed. The inscription on the frame is ‘James Buist, Esq., of Law Park, St. Andrews, whose donations and bequests to the missions of the Church of Scotland exceeded 40,000 [pounds].’”⁴⁷ Interesting enough 133 years later this same portrait was uncovered in the Church of Scotland’s attic and with the help of Moderator Reverend Dr. John Chalmers and this author, the painting was identified however, the frame with the inscription no longer exists.

⁴³ *Fife Herald Newspaper*, 22 April 1880, p. 2

⁴⁴ *The Church of Scotland Home and Foreign Mission Record. Church of Scotland*. Edinburgh: R & R Clark, 1 May 1891, p. 126

⁴⁵ *New York Times Newspaper*, 5 September 1880, p. 4

⁴⁶ *Edinburgh Evening News*, 23 April 1880, p. 2

⁴⁷ *Dundee Advertiser Newspaper*, 12 November 1881, p. 5

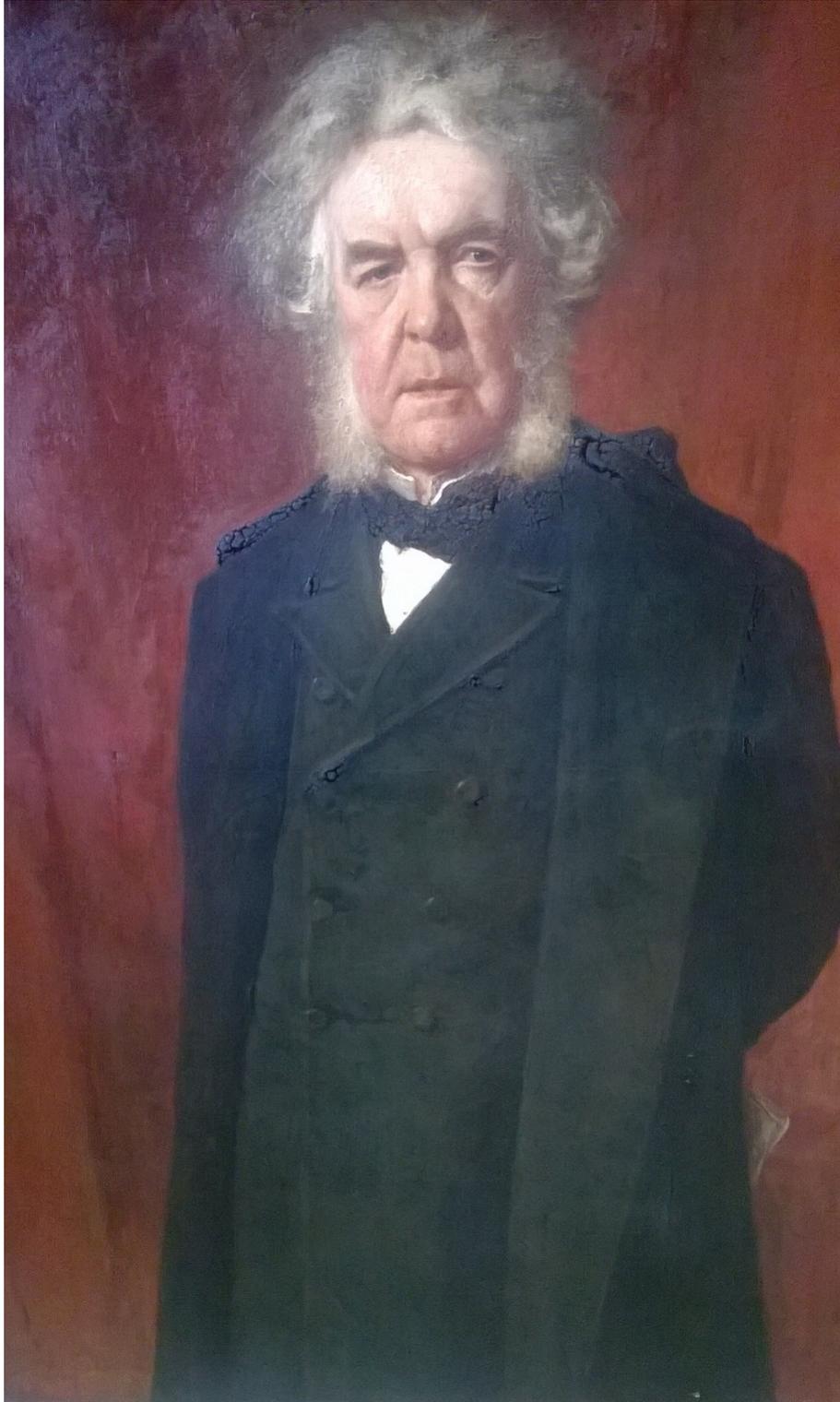


Fig.23. Portrait of James Buist, Esquire, Photograph Courtesy of the Church of Scotland

James Buist, Esquire asked for little during his lifetime but gave all in return. As he himself said upon his retirement in 1870, referring to the “Wise men of the East,” of how they transformed the landscape of farming in Fife, while showing the greatest good neighbourhood to their neighbours, James Buist, Esquire was one of these “Wise men of the East” in his own right. James Buist is commemorated here in grateful esteem and recognition by his fourth great-nephew, Michael T. Tracy. This work is dedicated to the Memory of James Buist.

Memoratus in aeternum (Forever Remembered)

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