

THE ANDERSON FAMILY

OF

WEST YELL

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By Trevor Fulton(Feb.2000)

Most people are ignorant or just misinformed about the history and people of Shetland. It was settled by Norwegian colonists about 700 A.D. They had no ruler and every family settled on udal*areas. This system of landholding remained until Shetland was pledged to Scotland in 1468. In about 900A.D. Harald 'thick-hair' the first overall King of Norway came over with a fleet and forced the Shetlanders to accept his suzerainty, the lordship of Norway, which lasted until 1397. At this time Norway became part of Denmark, and ruled Shetland for the next 71 years. During this period, several Danish officials settled in the islands. Shetland and Orkney became the surety for the unpaid dowry in the contract of marriage between Princess Margaret of Denmark and King James III of Scotland in 1468. This debt was never paid and eventually important Scottish families began establishing younger branches of their powerful houses on Shetland. With them came feudalism and within 100 years most of the little udal properties were acquired and consolidated into huge feudal estates. This land-grabbing, the gross abuse of power, the ratification of the Old Norse Laws and the gradual erosion of the Old Norse language caused much suffering and a setback in the social and economic development of Shetland.

My paternal Shetland origins come from the island of Yell. This family used patronymics which meant every generation derived their surname from the father's christian name. Within a couple of generations, the branches became widespread under several different surnames. The family was not a Norwegian udal family, but one originating from a Danish official. An elderly ancestor was known to be able to recite the lineage back 27 generations, but this oral record was lost with his death in the early nineteenth century. Today, we can only go back to the dependable written and oral sources. Tradition suggests the original ancestor of the family was a Danish official (the Fowde of Yell) who was from Gotland. He was shipwrecked at The Barrier, near Aywick and thereafter settled in the area. The first named individual is Sjovald of Aywick. This is a Danish name which helps confirm the family tradition. From Sjovald, came the lairds of Aywick and latterly our family descend in this order:-

- ii) Laurence Sjovaldson, who was married to Margaret daughter of Andrew Tullock of Skea, he died at Aywick;
- iii) John Laurenceson, who was married to Euphemia Sutherland, he was the Fowde of Yell in 1612 under Earl Patrick Stewart and died in June 1635, he had a charter for 5 merkland*in North Aywick;
- iv) Francis Johnson, who was married to Grisel Mansdaughter, he was portioner of Aywick, he died at Aywick in 1667;
- v) John Francisson had charter from Alexander Douglas of Spynie commissioner for the Earldom for 13 merkland in South Aywick in August 1664;
- vi) Andrew Johnson, who was married to Elizabeth, the daughter of David Scott of Reafirth, he had sasine* to lands of South Aywick on disposition of his father in August 1698;
- vii) Robert Anderson, as fourth son and with little chance of gaining adequate land at Aywick, he became tenant at West Sandwick, on the west coast of Yell.

Yell was described in Buchanan's History (1582) as "so uncoath a place that no creature can live there in, except such as are born there". Yell, although 17 miles long by 6 miles wide has very little arable land, and this all lies around the coastline, as inland parts are hilly and dominated by peat moss. Yell's most famous son was John Williamson(d.1803) known as "Johny Notions". He practised inoculation against smallpox very successfully, long before Jenner's inoculation became universal. The population of Mid and South Yell parish was recorded as 986 in 1755, and had exploded to 1422 by the recording of the 1791 Statistical Account. This maybe substantial evidence of "Johny Notions" success. There was no school on Yell in these times, although some islanders could read and a few could write.

Scottish lairds owned most of the island and parceled out portions of land to tenants. Before the salt tax was imposed the crofter*/fisherman had been able to sell off their surplus fish to foreign traders. After 1712, the lairds took over this lucrative trade, and the crofters found themselves fishing just to pay the croft rental to the landowner. Subsequently, portions of land became smaller as the laird attempted to get a greater number of males fishing. As fish stocks dwindled, the men had to travel further away from the island. Due to the dependency cycle, fishing to pay the rents, many males attempted to escape without the laird's permission. The landlord often fined a family if a son was allowed to leave. The crops maintained most families for 8 months only, so the immense quantities of small fish was a saviour. The boat crews run prodigious risks, going out eleven leagues to lay their lines, in small six oar'd boats. The season was from 12th May to the 12th August each year. Each boatcrew made two fishing excursions to the Haaf*each week. Monday to Wednesday and Thursday to Saturday. So the only full sleeps they received was Wednesday and Sunday nights. The only break in this routine was for the Feast of St.John, on June 24.

The female population of the island always exceeded the male population, because the hazards of fishing outweighed the dangers of child birth. All the males were fishermen and sailors, but were accustomed to working their small crofts when back on land. Both sexes could handle the spade, which was their only implement of husbandry. The women cultivated the soil, attended the cattle, milked the cows, clipped the sheep, spun and knitted as well as carrying burdens as there are few carts and no roads. The climate of the Shetlands is damp but not particularly cold, but the cottages were damp and poorly kept. The cold earthen floors didn't offer the encouragement of cleanliness.

For this article, I start the concise details of my family history with the birth of Andrew, the son of Robert Anderson and Jean Johnsdaughter, on the 5th July 1730, at West Sandwick on Yell Sound(Jaelaswindh). As the family was still using patronymics, he became Andrew Robertson. I believe he had two brothers, John Robertson and William Robertson. This Andrew Robertson seems to have spent all his working life in West Yell either in his mother's birthplace Netherhoull (nearer hill), a toonship of 6 cottages and 28 merks of land, or Everhoull, sometimes spelt Averhoull(over hill) which had five cottages and only 18 merks of land. Both settlements and another called West Brough were only a short distance North Wick*of Sound at West Yell. From here the local sixareen crews launched their boats. The area in those times was called "Strand Scattald*" and had a long line of feudal owners. At Averhoull there is an ancient burial mound, which has

* refer to glossary on page 9.

remained on good arable land for thousands of years. Andrew was a small tenant crofter with only two and a half merks of land at Everhoull. Evidence suggests he may have captained a sixareen. In the winter months, he became a woollen weaver sharing his loom with other family members. In his lifetime, this was a very prosperous sideline which would have enhanced the family's quality of life. Andrew Robertson must have been a prominent respected member of the community, as he was elected by the Kirk Session to be an elder for the Parish of South Yell, on August 4, 1771.

Andrew was married at an early age to Agnes Laurenceson, but this union produced no children. Andrew took for his second wife, Janet Johnson and they produced nine children. John (1758), Robert (1760) and Henry were the eldest children. The Mid and South Yell parish records are missing over a decade of recordings and therefore I don't know all of their children. The family I have traced are Magnus(1773), Thomas(1775),our ancestor Arthur born on 25th November 1779 at Averhoull, and two younger sisters, Christian (1782) and Jean(1787). Andrew Robertson would have been 56 at Jean's birth. In September 1773, Basil Scott of Voesgarth tried to remove all his tenants from Netherhoull, Everhoull and other South Yell lands and cancel their tenancies. Obviously in Andrew Robertson's case the laird failed to gain a favourable response in his quest, from the courts.

By 1800, Averhoull was supporting four crofter/fishermen families. Andrew Robertson, his second wife and the youngest members of the family were in one cottage. In two other cottages were his sons; Robert Anderson, married to Barbara Petrie and Henry Anderson married to Louisa Mouat. The fourth cottage belonged to William John Blance, who was married to Christina Thomson. William John Blance and Henry Anderson were both skippers of sixareens fishing from Fethaland. Both Robert and Henry Anderson were to drown at sea, in a mishap during 1817. They left two widows and many children, seven of them were less than ten years old.

In 1802 and 1803 the climate ruined the crops, so for the first time the British Government sent oatmeal and bread out to Shetland to be distributed to the needy. A survey of Yell households show there was 3 males and 4 females living in Andrew Robertson's house. In May 1804, the family was obviously having financial difficulties. Andrew Robertson owed £69.11s. to the feudal laird Robert Bruce of Symbister. Andrew's sons Henry(Everhoull) and Magnus(Netherhoull) owed £7.8s. and £ 33.12s respectively to Robert Bruce. They apparently cleared these debts as Andrew and his two sons Robert and Henry are still recorded as tenants at Everhoull in 1806, and two years later Andrew Robertson owed only £8.5s. A court summons in 1808 for Andrew Robertson of Everhoull gives some idea of his longevity. I believe he had just passed away and this may be Robert Bruce of Symbister's attempt to force his heirs to pay the outstanding rental and debts. The only other information on Andrew Robertson, was that he died at Netherhoull and therefore probably buried in Sound Kirkyard. This is a very ancient burying ground with a few old crude stone crosses. It was the site of a medieval chapel. In 1337, a four masted barque manned by Catholics run into a tremendous gale and the heavy seas smashed it's steering gear. They all prayed that if they ever reached safety, they would build a chapel. They landed on the rugged coast at the point where the kirkyard now stands and built the promised chapel. The chapel stood for 481 years before the stones were used to build a new dwelling called Kirkhouse.

Arthur the son of Andrew Robertson became subsequently became known as Arthur Anderson. Most of his descendants adopted this surname, as the old Norse patronymic tradition was being superseded to conform to British influences. Today patronymics is only practised in Iceland. Arthur followed his forefathers by working a small 6 acre croft and fishing during the season. In 1809, Arthur married Jean(Jane), the third known daughter of Robert Ramsay and Ursula Isbister of Newgord, on the western side of the island of Unst. She was born at Newgord in 1785, so was 23 years old at her wedding. They lived the majority of their married life in the large crofting community of Sound, in West Yell. It had 12 cottages nestled together near the Ulsta to West Sandwick droving track. Their first child was a daughter Ursula(1810), followed by an heir Andrew(1812), our ancestor Basil Anderson born on November 14, 1815 at Sound, Janet (1818), Henry (born October 15, 1819), Margaret (1826) and Robert (born November 8, 1828). Arthur and Jean are known to have two still births as well. The youngest child Robert was the only sibling not born at Sound. He was born at Arisdale, a very isolated property inland from Hamna Voe. The Anderson's and their six children had moved from Sound onto this property as tenants, in 1825. The previous tenant, James Anderson had been kicked off by the proprietor Robert Bruce of Burravoe. During an educational reiew on August 27, 1823, there was 8 people living in the Anderson cottage at Sound. All five children could not read. Although it was five miles to the nearest school, the children were not attending because there was no teacher available. The family was willing and could afford to pay a teacher's tutoring fee for the children. The cottage was given 1s.6d. to purchase a bible and a copy of the new testments. Fishing and whaling were the obvious work opportunities for the boys. While the females of the house could contribute to the family survival by perfecting the art of woolspinning.

On Wednesday September 8, 1819, a shoal of caain(pilot) whales appeared in Lunna Firth. Immediately the inhabitants of South Yell put out their boats and proceeded to drive them towards the shore. Word of the action spread to West Yell and 32 males quickly equipped themselves for the slaughter. Arthur Anderson was one of eight men from Sound, while his brother Thomas was one of nine men from Everhoull and Netherhoull joining the chase. They manned their boats at Sound and rowed around the coast, to assist in the action. The South Yell men had driven the shoal up Hamnavoe into shallow water about 68 fathoms from shore. They found it impossible to force the animals any further and night was approaching fast. The West Yell men had kept their distance but now came to the assistance to avoid the whales escaping. The West Yell men suggested that as many as possible should be killed afloat. This was accepted by all hands and 33 slaughtered whales were towed onto the eastern shore of Hamnavoe. Obidiah Stove, the merchant of Burravoe took over the direction of everything and as it was dark, instructed everyone to return the next day. The next morning the West Yell men returned by walking over the Hill of Clothan and assisted in hauling the carcasses above the floodmark. The flinching* of the whales was put off until Tuesday September 14 because it was the Fast Day, prior to the dispensing of the sacrament. Five days later, all parties returned to claim their share of the divided flinch. Without

warning Obidiah Stove violently dismissed the West Yell claim to any of the whales. He ordered them off the ground, claiming as factor of the heritors, the right to half the kill as was the law.

On October 2, the long legal battle commenced in the Sherriff Court, when the West Yell men brought a joint action against Obidiah Stove. They wanted £28.17s.6d. plus interest, which they believed was the half share of the 33 whales, plus £20 for damages and £10 expences. Stove vigorously attacked the action, objecting to the jurisdiction of the court. He believed it was a maritime question and should be heard by an Admiralty Court. When this was dismissed Stove argued that the claim should be against the share claimed by the South Yell men and not the heritors share. He stated the West Yell men were never invited or required for the kill. The arguments, the petitions, the appeals and the numerous court sittings witnessed a painfully slow legal process over several years. Stove argued from every possible angle; that there was never any proof 33 whales were killed, the original claim couldn't be amended, there could be no actual value per animal because every bladder was a different weight and there should be no claim for interest because no interest had been accumulating. Finally on October 14, 1824 came a judgement from the Sherriff against the defender. Stove had to pay £24.10s. plus interest back to September 1819 as well as the complainers legal expenses of £24.6s.5d over five years.

Obidiah Stove still wasn't finished and petitioned the Court of Sessions in Edinburgh on January 31, 1826. He again argued that the matter was a maritime action and the fish were King's property and thus the takers had no rights. On July 1, 1829, Stove tried again by bringing an appeal against the 1824 judgement of the Sherriff Clerk of Zetland's. Finally on March 1, 1831, with only 22 of the original West Yell men still living, came the judgement by J.H.MacKenzie in the Lords of Council and Session Court at Kirkwall, Orkney. He found the original amount of damages due to the respondants was wrong because they were not involved in the complete whale drive. He reduced the damages to £15 plus interest and found Obidiah Stove liable for all the expenses of the respondants, on the production of their accounts.

True sadness engulfed the Anderson family when they lost both their oldest children Ursula and Andrew in 1831 or 1832, and they were to lose the youngest Robert in 1851, when he was only 23 years old. Robert had been a fisherman before he received his merchant seaman's ticket in 1849 and joined the whaling fleet as an apprentice. He was 5 foot 8 inches tall, with a darkish complexion, brown hair, brown eyes, with no scars and could write. On July 16, 1832, Yell experienced it's first major tragedy when 31 boats and 105 men from the island were lost in a tremendous storm. Surprisingly no members of the family are recorded as victims. Henry Anderson the third son causes the biggest mystery. He went to sea in 1842 as a landsman and served on the whaling fleet. He was 5 foot 8 inches tall, with a fair complexion, brown hair, blue eyes and could write. Henry married Andrina Johnson(Clothan) in 1851 producing a daughter Andrina Janet Anderson the following year. His wife died during the delivery, and Henry soon enlisted on a ship and sailed off never to be heard of again. His daughter was raised by her uncle John Johnson and his wife at Clothian, West Yell. Henry never sent any money or had any contact with his child. Andrina Janet eventually married a cousin once removed, named William Anderson. Today members of this branch still reside at Ulsta on Yell, in Lerwick and on Orkney.

Arthur and his family were living in their cottage Rattletoun(Rattlun) in the toonship* called Sound at West Yell, for both the 1841 and 1851 census. The cottage had two chimneys and an attic plus an attached storehouse and a livestock house. Rattletoun looks out over North Wick of Sound to the shingle tombolo* leading to the Ness Of Sound. Arthur was paying £3.2s.8d. as a tenant of Robert Bruce of Burravoe in 1853 and for the year 1855 through to 1859 Rattletoun's rental was £2.19s.8d. per annum. Arthur Anderson died there at noon on May 21, 1855 succumbing to asthma, which he had bravely battled with for six years. He was buried at Sound Cemetery on May 23. His widow remained with her two maiden daughters at the Sound cottage(Rattletoun) until late in 1861. By this time old age had made Jean quite helpless. She moved back to her birthplace Newgord, Unst where her only remaining son Basil and his family could care for her. Jean Ramsay passed away at 9am March 17, 1863 in her son's cottage at Newgord. Soon afterwards, her oldest surviving daughter Janet followed her to the grave at 1.30am, on February 2, 1865 at Sound. She had suffered for 15 days from an unknown complaint with no medical attention available because Yell still had no resident doctor.

The youngest and only living daughter Margaret Anderson remained at Sound working as a domestic servant and gaining an income from wool spinning. Unlike her three brothers she couldn't write her signature. This suggests the family may have given some education to the boys, while their sisters missed out this privilege. Margaret now alone at Sound produced an illegitimate daughter registered as Margaret Jane Anderson at 6am, on October 18, 1865. Margaret and her daughter remained in a cottage at Sound, West Yell. Eighteen months after the birth, Margaret appeared before Rev. James Barclay and the elders at a sitting of the Kirk Session. Margaret wished to submit to discipline and baptise the child. She said the father of the child was a young man named John Nicolson, who's mother lived in West Yell. Although he was supporting the child the elders demanded Margaret produce a certificate from the father of her daughter, or bring him before the session. John Nicolson never appeared and although Margaret tried to be admitted for discipline on several occasions, her case was deferred and possibly was never resolved adequately. Eventually the daughter grew to work as a agricultural labourer and woolspinner. The daughter suffered from consumption of the lungs for several years and finally succumbed in her mother's cottage at 5.30am on June 14, 1887 when only 21 years old. Her mother Margaret Anderson became a pauper suffering from scrofula, and in 1892 is listed on the parish register getting poor relief. She received annual relief of £2.3s.10d. to cover her clothing, lodging and ailment costs. Margaret died at Sound from a catarrh of the stomach at 1am on November 16, 1898. Today, Rattletoun has the honour of being the home of a famous historian of Shetland documents and Yell named John H. Ballantyne. The property is just under five hectares in size, but it's location at the bottom of the steep slope of the plateau results in much of the land being quite boggy.

Basil Anderson with whom we are concerned, was living with his family at Sound when he first enlisted on the whaling ships and went to sea as a seaman in 1839. He had no previous naval or foreign service. Basil was educated and could

write. He was five foot 6½ inches tall, with a fair complexion, fair hair, blue eyes and no scars. Whaling was on a terminal decline, as overfishing had made large whales very scarce in the Arctic waters. On top of this, the 1830 disaster when 13 Arctic whaling ships were lost, and 1835 when another 5 sunk and six other ships were frozen in, had made it difficult for the industry to find financial backing. Basil didn't receive his merchant seaman's ticket until he signed on for another whaling season at Lerwick on March 6, 1845. His registration number was 251611.

Basil Anderson's known whaling record is as follows;

1839-first went to sea as seaman

1845-sailed on whaler, the name presently unknown, which departed from Lerwick on March 9. It returned to port on June 22. Out of his wages came expenses, for oatmeal, coffee, tea, sugar, knives, gloves, and clothing.

1846-sailed on 'Union'(Captain John Ogston) which departed from Lerwick on March 9. It had a crew of 19 men. It returned to Peterhead on August 13. The catch was no whales but 1500 seals(13 tons of oil). The 'Union' was a barquentine, 225 tons built in 1812 and measured 80 feet x 25½ feet. The owner of ship George Arbuthnot of Peterhead made a heavy loss on this 'Union' voyage. Basil was paid for 5 months 5 days at 30/- per month plus 1/- per ton of oil less expenses, which included tobacco. Basil's final cash payout was £3.5s.11d.

1847-sailed on 'Fairy'(Captain Kerr) which departed from Lerwick on March 17. It returned to Aberdeen on July 22. The catch was no whales but 5400 seals(78 tons of oil). Three ships were lost in the ice during this season. Basil was paid for 4 months and 5 days at 30/- per month plus 1s.3d. per ton of oil less expenses which included a half share in a fiddle and whisky. The purchase of the fiddle for this voyage suggests Basil was a musician. Basil's final payment was £4.17s.6d. His brother Henry was on the top performer for that season, the 'Eclipse' which returned with nine whales and 3,500 seals (165 tons of oil). Henry received only £1.9s.5d after expenses.

1848-sailed on the 'Fairy'(Captain Kerr) which departed from Lerwick on March 9. It fished the Davis Strait and returned to Aberdeen on July 29. The catch was ½ a whale and less than 150 seals(4 ton of oil). This voyage was a financial disaster and the ship was put up for sale, to try to recoup the losses. Basil was paid for 4 months and 20 days at 32s.6d. plus 1s.3d. per ton of oil less expenses including rum and whisky. Basil final cash payment was £1.0.2d. plus a direct payment of 19s.2d. was made to John Johnson(Sound) from his wages.

1849-sailed with his youngest brother(first time at sea) on the 'Anne'(Captain Hunter) which departed Lerwick on March 17 for Greenland. The ship suffered much damage in the ice and arrived back at Lerwick on August 6. The catch was no whales and 1800 seals(33½ tons of oil). Basil was paid for 4 months and 21 days at 35/- per month and 1/- per ton of oil less expenses which included rum, whisky and tobacco. His brother Robert received less than half of Basil's pay rate. Basil's final payment was £1.11s.8½d, while his brother received 10s.6d.

1850-sailed on the 'Abraham'(Captain John Gravill) which departed Lerwick on April 6. This vessel had a crew of 25 seamen and fished the eastside of Davis Straits. 'Abraham' was built in 1819, and was 319 tons. During the season, the British fleet of 32 ships caught 88 whales, 74,058 seals and 1872 tons of oil. The 'Abraham' arrived back in Lerwick on October 30. The catch was two whales(27 tons of oil). Basil was paid for 6 months and 25 days at 30/- less expenses including rum. Basil's final payout was £4.9s.

1853-sailed on the 'Abraham'(Captain John Gravill) which departed from Lerwick on March 11 for Greenland. Twenty-six seamen made up the crew. They had a huge seal kill, 3,500 by April 20, but experienced bad ice and rough weather. The whaling fleet had now shunk to 13 vessels, all based out of the port of Hull. The 'Abraham' returned to Lerwick on September 5. The catch was one whale and 4,400 seals(40 tons of oil). It was a fair season and no ships were lost. Basil was paid for 5 months and 25 days at £2 per month, 1s.6d.per ton of oil and 9d.per 100 skins less expenses. Basil's cash release was £1.21s.9½d.

The above whaling records came from the shipping agents Hay and Co. in Lerwick. Many other whaling records are held in the Maritime Records Office, in Newfoundland, Canada. Of the whaling ships Basil sailed on; the 'Union' was wrecked in Arctic Ice in 1859, the 'Fairy' was lost in ice the following year, 'Anne' was wrecked in a gale in 1861 and the 'Abraham' wrecked in 1862. In 1871, although very favourable season, highlights the hazards of the industry. Thirty-four American vessels had to be abandoned in the ice and only one ship survived to be refloated, although there was no loss of human life.

Basil Anderson, and Barbara Ramsay who was residing with her parents at Hammar*of Lund, Unst, proclaimed their marriage banns three times at the Unst Church, on December 5, 1847. They were first cousins, as Barbara's father was a younger brother of Basil's mother. Barbara's parents were Laurence Ramsay(Newgord) and Mary Stickle(Underhoull), who was the youngest child of Andrew Stickle and Barbara Williamson. Barbara Ramsay had been born at Newgord, Unst on 2nd October 1825, the eldest child of Laurence and Mary. Basil Anderson and Barbara chose December 14, and St.Magnus Church at Hamnavoe on Yell, to be wed. Rev.William Telfer, the Missionary for South Yell took the service, while Barbara's uncles Robert Ramsay (Caldback) and James Ramsay(Ordale) were the witnesses. The newly weds were able to move into a vacant cottage a door away from Basil's family at Sound, West Yell. Their first child Mary was born June 16,1848 but she was quickly taken, and when another daughter arrived on June 22 the following year, she was also christened Mary. The first male Arthur was born at Sound, West Yell, on August 23,1851. Soon after this, Unst promised better prospects and Basil and Barbara uprooted, moving to where her parents lived at Hammar of Lund. This overlooks Lunda Wick the partially sheltered cove, where the local fishing boats set off. The possible reason for their shift, was the loss of Basil's brothers in 1851. Basil may have found a new sixareen to crew. His father-in-law is recorded as skipper of several different Unst boats. Family information suggested Basil at one stage sailed with Captain James Brown, famous for the 1896 *Fridtjof Nansen* rescue, on his Arctic ship called Windward. This is hard to believe as Brown was born in Peterhead during 1847, and didn't get a commission until 1865 and the Windward wasn't launched until 1860. All this seems too late for Basil's seafaring days, so it maybe Brown's father he crewed with.

Robert was the first born on Unst, on August 16, 1853 at Hammar of Lund, followed by Henry Ramsay Anderson at Vigga, born at 6pm on August 6, 1855. Both these neighbouring properties were owned by John Ogilvy, Esquire of Lund. Vigga was beside the ancient Kirk of Lund and it's beautiful burying ground. It appears Basil Anderson was the tenant on 6 merkland of Vigga paying £4 rental per annum, while his father-in-law Laurence Ramsay was the tenant farmer on Hammar of Lund, a 6 merkland property with £5 annual rental. In 1855, Basil Anderson was manning a sixareen, which left Unst on May 24, to go ling fishing. In 1858 the Anderson's moved to the vacant cottage of Newgord, in Westing, which had previously been occupied by John Harper in 1856. This appears to be the same croft occupied by Basil's maternal grandfather Robert Ramsay and later by his wife's parents. Newgord was pronounced Newgarth, which means a new fenced enclosure. They paid £4 rent per year to the proprietor Thomas Mouat-Cameron of Garth. Thomas Anderson was born at 6pm April 25, 1858 at Newgord, in Westing and Jean(Jane) Margaret was born at 10pm December 27, 1860 at Newgord, in Westing. The next child born was a son named Laurence, on June 2 1863 who died of whooping cough on February 21, 1865 at Newgord. The Westing croft was 4 merkland on Major Cameron's Estate and possibly only 3½ acres in size. Their thatched cottage had two rooms with an attached storehouse and a livestock house. Basil's neighbours were William Sinclair and Laurence Isbister. In 1862, Mr. John Walker the factor*for Major Cameron persuaded his employer to adopt a principal of clearing out the tenants on an extensive scale. The crofters were no longer allowed to graze the scattalds, therefore they were forced to reduce their sheep numbers and Major Cameron moved his own sheep onto the land. The lairds attempted to clear the crofts by making rentals excessive or cancelling leases, forcing tenants onto poorer land. Previously crofters could freely graze animals on scattald but now lairds claimed the rugged hills, fencing them off, and began charging levies for grazing.

This policy does not seem to be behind the Anderson family shift in 1865 to the elevated location of Snabrough (Snowtown) where they remained for nine years. They possibly moved just because the Snabrough property was a better prospect and the cottage in better repair. This cottage was previously occupied by two widows Henry Henderson and Henry Pennant. Snabrough was a community comprising of four crofts overlooking a little freshwater loch. On an inlet of the loch was the ruins of an ancient Pictish broch. Snabrough is pronounced Snabera. The Anderson's lived in the Easterhouse, which had three windows, one chimney, two doors and a thatched roof. The cottage was on high fertile pastures, 54 metres above sea level. Within the dykes*during the spring the land bloomed into a sea of wild flowers. This croft was 5 merkland and had available a large area of scattald on the West Garths of Snabrough. This area was moorland covered in purple heath, mosses and poor grasses. The rental of the croft seemed to vary from year to year £5(1865), £6.4s.(1867), £5.12s.(1868) before returning to £5(1874). When the Anderson's moved from Newgord it appears that John Spence a fisherman went into the cottage at Westing.

Basil and Barbara's two youngest children were born at Easterhouse, Snabrough. The first was another baptised Laurence (9am, 13 September 1866) and the youngest was Basil (6pm, 9 June 1869). The family had two schools for their children's education to choose from as both were within a reasonable walking distance. There was a Free Church School at Underhoull and there was another school at Uyeasound. As well as bringing up the children, Barbara was engaged in spinning the wool taken off their small flock of sheep. In 1869 it became compulsory for all boats in Shetland to be registered. Basil Anderson registered his boat No.897 as a third class vessel named 'Prize'. It was used for handline fishing near the shore. It was a 16 foot open clinker built boat, with a 12 foot keel. The boat was under 15 tons crewed by two adults and one boy, with four oars and no sail. Snaravoe a little inlet where the Yell-Unst ferry service disembarked about a ½ mile south of Snabrough is given as the mooring point. The registration of this vessel was cancelled on September 27, 1872 when the owner considered the boat "done". At the recording of the 1871 census, the eldest child Mary is only family member living away from home. She is employed as a house servant at Blytheyoat, the crowded cottage shared by George Brown and his wife, and his son-in-law Andrew Fraser's young family. Blytheyoat was a six acre croft only ½ mile north of Easterhouse, Snabrough.

The Anderson's were still the indirect victims of the changing times, as the lairds discovered farming was financially more rewarding than fishing. The introduction of large stock farms was accelerated by abandoning fishing as a condition of croft tenancy. These clearances received little opposition as the crofters were accustomed to shifting, as few held hereditary leases. Unst was at the forefront of improvements. Here the lairds concentrated on agriculture ahead of fishing and the island became one of the most affected by the clearances. Unst population decreased at an alarming rate. Some parts of the islands were totally vacated, and only the stock left to shelter from storms in the abandoned deteriorating cottages. As tenancy became unbearable, emigration was inevitable and between 1871 and 1881, from a population of 33,000 in Shetland over 4640 islanders left their homelands forever.

The onset of the serious land clearances coincided with the first New Zealand Government scheme, introduced by Julius Vogel, to assist large-scale immigration. Rev. Peter Barclay, a Presbyterian clergyman who had served in Napier, New Zealand from 1858 to 1866 was appointed Emigration Agent for New Zealand, in September 1873. His aim was to recruit particularly single women, but the numbers of females who took up the option didn't dominate the final figures. Rev. Barclay made two trips to Shetland and encouraged the islanders with a guarantee of extra advance, from the New Zealand agents. This advance was to cover the cost of travel to their port of embarkment. During Rev. Barclay's second recruiting drive, knowing he had difficult task within a limited timescale, he was joined by Mr. A.H. Smith, the Edinburgh agent for the General Government of New Zealand. In six weeks, they managed to raise 343 emigrants for New Zealand from Shetland. On Wednesday, August 26, 1874 they arrived on a steamer at Baltasound, on Unst. The following day, they attended the Unst Agricultural Show and spoke to many locals. On Monday 31st, they held a well attended public meeting. Barclay and Smith gave advice and explained the details of the emigration, before booking and making preparations for many to travel to London. From here, the islanders would board the Clarence which was heading to Hawke's Bay. The Anderson family made the dramatic decision to emigrant and were accepted for assisted

immigration to New Zealand. To make their case more acceptable to the New Zealand agents, Basil gave his age as 45 instead of 59, and his wife 44 instead of 50.

Indeed, some of those booked at Unst, by the agents, could not pay their fares to Lerwick, only fifty miles to the south, or procure sufficient clothing for themselves, without the generosity of friends. Many crofters had to sell their sheep and cattle, sometimes way below their true worth, to insure a quick transaction. Their economic situation was aided by the granting of promissory notes for the travelling expenses from Lerwick to London, which for a family of seven amounted to £10. Wet and stormy weather in the spring caused late sowing of the crops on Snabrough. Wet weather lately had retarded the ripening of the crops. So the Unst harvest was very late, so the crops had to be left in the ground. Ryegrass had failed in many places, a potato disease was again common in the crop, and fodder crops were down on recent years. As soon as the Anderson's left Easterhouse, John Sutherland a Fetlar fisherman moved onto the Snabrough croft.

During September 1874, five ships carrying 1400 immigrants sailed under the Julius Vogel Scheme for the Antipodes, from Gravesend alone. The Cospatrick sailed for Auckland(11th), the Star of India for Lyttelton, the Clarence for Napier(24th), the Margaret Galbraith for Otago and the Carnatic for Picton(28th). The hazards of these journeys is evident by the fate of the Cospatrick. She was carrying 429 emigrants and a crew of 44 when she caught fire on November 17, off the Cape of Good Hope. The fire spread so fast only two lifeboats got launched, both overcrowded with 81 souls. The abandoned ship took 36 hours to sink. Nine days later three crew members the only survivors in one lifeboat were rescued by another vessel. This tragedy cost 470 hopefuls their lives.

Having farewelled their freinds and loveones, the Anderson family travelled down to London, with the main body of Shetland immigrants. They left for Lerwick from Uyeasound on the 'Chieftains Bride' on Wednesday morning at 10 am. They were informed they were now to go on the 'Carnatic', for the Marlborough province. This disappointed the Rev.Barclay, who was still in Lerwick finalising their departure details and had naturally been anxious to send them to his old province. After an overnight stay in Lerwick, they left on the overnight Aberdeen steamer at 7pm on Thursday, September 10 amongst a party of ninety-one emigrants. The steamer cost the adults 8s.6d. in steerage. When they arrived in London, they were housed in the Emigration Depot, previously a hotel 150 yards from Blackwall Pier. The Anderson family paid £12.12s.3d. on 19 September 1874, their proportion of the total cost of passage which was £148.10s.0d. for the ten family members. They were now informed they had been re-transferred to the 'Clarence'. Their ages made it impossible to travel on the ship together. Mary(house servant) and Jane found accomodation in the single women's quarters, while Arthur(ploughman), Robert(farm labourer), Henry (labourer) and Thomas were with the single men. This left their parents and only the two youngest boys in the family steerage bunks.

The ship they were to travel on was the impressive Blackwall frigate 'Clarence'. It was a barque registered at 1105 tons, 198 foot long by 36.5 foot, and was built by Pile's of Sunderland in 1858. With the figurehead of the Duke of Clarence and under the command of Henry Emmett, she had done long service with the East India Company. On her previous voyage she had conveyed coolies from Calcutta to Dunarava. During that voyage the ship had experienced an epidemic of Diarrhoea and ship fever resulting in large mortality. For the voyage to New Zealand, 348 passengers including 98 Shetlanders embarked at Gravesend on Monday 21st September 1874, to join the crew of 45. The vessel wasn't cleared by the inspectors for three days, but the passengers were entertained by a large yachting regatta on the Tuesday.

Finally they were towed from the docks at 1pm on September 24 into the Thames Estuary, to start their momentous and harrowing journey. On November 17 in gales and heavy seas the Clarence lost both the lower stunsail boom and the royal backstay, which carried off the main top masthead. The vessel leaked so much during this storm, that even the women passengers had to take their turn to man the pumps. In the tropics, the berths were an oppressive 88 degrees and on the deck 90° in the shade. Many slept on deck some nights to receive relief from the extreme heat. Every evening, the men engaged in music, singing and dancing on the quarter deck, while a negro named Jim Johnston arranged boxing bouts for youths. In contrast the single women, under the watchful eye of the matron, were permitted onto the poop deck, but not allowed to mingle, even with family members.

On December 15, two crew members were put in irons for breaking into the forward hold and stealing wine and spirits, during the previous night. They appeared before the Napier Magistrate on the ship's arrival in New Zealand. The vessel tragically lost a young crewman overboard, but it was the disease which swept through the ship, which was the most unbearable. Twenty six deaths were recorded in only 62 days, 18 were children seven or under, and 12 of the dead were from the Shetlands. The last person to perish on the journey was four year old Basil Anderson. During the night of December 29, he died from Diarrhoea and fever. His body was wrapped in canvas, weighted with six-shoot attached to his feet. At 900 hours next morning, with the Captain reading a prayer his tiny body was lowered into the ocean, off the Otago coast. The Anderson family honoured Basil's memory by not naming any of the following generation with his christian name. The surgeon on the Clarence, Dr.Murphy made a scathing report about the journey. He criticised authorities in England, for not anticipating the effect the change of diet would have, when forced on the Shetlanders. They had only previously known a fish, potato and pudian meal diet. The preserved meat, soup and salted pork provided was totally unsuitable for children, especially through the tropics where all the health problems commenced. The doctor states the Shetlanders had very unclean habits, and were very peculiar people. They were almost unmanageable in their manners and mode of living. He believed they were lazy, disgustingly filthy and sadly neglectful of each other. Mothers would sleep all night, giving no nourishment or comfort to their ailing children. Children were left in soiled beds. Perhaps the truth was the illness caused a total collapse of morale and coming from an isolated place, they were more sensitive to this particular infection. The Doctor said the Shetlanders were very troublesome, shunning advice and instructions. He believed the sudden major variations in temperature during the voyage magnified the health problems of the passengers. This was Murphy's maiden voyage, and his own health problems for three weeks and the stress of the demands on his services, maybe the reason for this strong response. The Shetlanders themselves had bitter memories

of the doctor, believing that his mismanagement aided the epidemic. His journal reveals a young man lacking experience of epidemics aboard ship. He was at his wits end dealing with a tropical disease, a situation which defied his skills. The Shetlanders did give real cause for alarm, when two suffered from mental illness. A single man became suicidal, while a single woman threatened to kill a fellow passenger.

The ship arrived in Hawke Bay on the fourth day of the new year, 102 days out from Gravesend. The encroaching darkness and the danger of the reefs persuaded the captain to anchor in the bay overnight. It was 12.30pm the following day before the Captain eventually dropped anchor in the roadstead about a ½ mile off the East Spit(Ahuriri foreshore). With all the illnesses experienced on the journey, the passengers and crew expected the ship to be put in quarantine. Surprisingly, the Napier officials cleared the vessel. The passengers and belongings were taken ashore by longboat at 6pm, only to have the horror of being carried the last 50 yards to land, in the arms of tattooed natives. This was a memory which stayed long in the memories of the women and children. Everyone was housed and fed for the night at the Immigration Barracks. Next day, most of the new arrivals were rapidly absorbed into the work force. Basil and his four oldest sons were engaged by Mr.Allen an agent for the government public works. They went to work as labourers on the laying of The Spit to Waipukurau railway line, which was nearing Paki Paki. Most of the single females on board found domestic positions with wages of 8 to 15 shillings a week. Exactly two weeks later, Basil Anderson while engaged on the railway construction at Paki Paki was the victim of a major landfall. He had his leg badly broken and sustained other injuries, and was under medical treatment at Napier Hospital for a period. He was an invalid for the rest of his life. In the month following the arrival of the Clarence, the illness brought by the passengers spread through the local community. It was called 'Clarence fever' before it was diagnosed as Typhoid. Panic and anger spread through the locals as deaths occurred and the hospital exploded with symptom sufferers. The Quarantine officer received violent flack and was close to being lynched.

Basil and Barbara had a house in Havelock North, where they lived until 1884, when they moved into a smaller cottage in Onepoto Gully in Napier. Now their children were married and moving on. Only young Laurie and possibly Thomas were still living at home with their parents. The Onepoto Gully house was second on the left going up Main Road from Corunna Bay. The Shetlanders kept in close contact for a full generation, thus keeping their dialect alive, and assisting in the welfare of their kind. Basil passed away August 31, 1896 and was buried at the old Hospital Hill cemetery. Barbara was now matriarch and was forthright in signing the groundbreaking Women's Suffragette Petition during 1893. Sometime after losing her husband she was cared for by her youngest daughter in her Onepoto Gully cottage. After the intemely death of her daughter, Barbara went to stay in her eldest daughter's home at Ahuriri. Barbara lived into her 87th year dying on Sunday March 2,1913.

Mary Anderson the eldest daughter, finally married at Havelock North in 1881, to a fellow Shetlander, fellow Clarence passenger and recent widowed, Anthony Robertson. He had sadly lost his only son James, to the illnesses on the Clarence, then within a year of arriving had lost his wife and a new seven month old daughter. His marriage to Mary delivered more despair, as both their first two children Barbara Margaret Elizabeth and James Arthur lived only 6 months and 20 days respectively. The 1882 Freeholders List shows Anthony owning sections of land in both Napier and Hastings. Anthony and Mary adopted a daughter Nellie(b.1884) who later married Herbert Prebble and ran the Wimbledon store in Southern Hawke's Bay for many years. Nellie was the daughter of a close friend of Anthony. Anthony Robertson was employed as a railway porter firstly in Hastings until 1887 before transferring to The Spit railway station, at Ahuriri. They lived at this station for several years and later in Domett Street where they resided until 1904. After this they purchased a nice home at 11 Lever Street, near the Scapa Flow. Both Anthony and Mary were very active with St.Andrews Church in Port Ahuriri and were highly respected residents. Anthony loved to smoke a pipe, but he was never permitted to light up in the house. So he would retreat to the henhouse at the rear of the property, to enjoy this pleasure. Mary chose a Sunday evening in November 1927 to depart this world, her husband joining her on July 15, 1931, during his 87th year.

Arthur Anderson and his brother Robert started a coachdriving business in Havelock North, and in 1882 Freeholders List are shown as owning a acre of land in the village. This partnership dissolved, and Arthur was associated for the rest of the decade, coachdriving on the two routes between Havelock North and either Hastings or Napier. He was the driver for Mr.John Simpson,who owned the Albert Hotel Livery Stables. He was well known in both the village and the railhead. Arthur moved to Hastings in 1888 to commence business on his own account and for years drove the coach from between Hastings to Napier. In those times the rivers of the Heretaunga Plains had no flood barriers and thus Arthur had many adventures with the numerous floods. In September 1896, while returning from Napier in near darkness and in driving rain, he drove into a gully approaching the Karamu bridge. He suddenly found the water upto his knees in the driving box. Only the strength of his excellent team of horses avoided a catastrophe. No injuries resulted and there was only a little damage to the freight. Arthur often told tales of his experiences during the tragic 1897 floods, which claimed 12 lives at Clive. Eventually, he handed the driving over to his son, although he continued as the propietor of this coach service for a period. Later in life, Arthur was a stockbuyer and went into farming before retirement. He was married Ellen Bouskill and they had two children Arthur Fitzpatrick(1879) and Barbara Helen Dorothy(1882). While in Hastings, from 1892 onwards the family home was at 300 Karamu Road south. Arthur died suddenly in a private hospital in Napier after an operation on October 28,1930. His relict died on New Year's Day in 1943.

Robert Anderson married an Irish lass from County Carlow, Jane Douglas in April 1882, and had six children; Robert Douglas, Alice Mary(Molly), Ethel Gertrude(Gert), Edith Kathleen Ramsay(Dick), Lily Ruth(Lala) and Eugenie Louisa (Zay). After giving up coachdriving, he joined the Napier Post Office, firstly as a postie, before gaining promotion to be a clerk. He was active with the Presbyterian Church and a very keen gardener. The lived in Byron Street and later in a house on Barrack Hill, before eventually building a large palatial two story kauri home on May Ave, Napier during 1901.

The house is still in lovely condition and well kept. Robert died in 1939 and was buried in Park Island Cemetery. His wife died in Waipukurau during September 1950, and was buried beside him.

Henry Ramsay Anderson known as Harry, took up carpentry soon after his arrival in Hawke's Bay. He served his apprenticeship in Hastings. Henry was out of his time when he married 23 year old Mary Phillips, on February 5, 1887 at her uncle Charles Phillips home in Marlborough Street, Waipukurau. Mary was an uneducated domestic from Cornwall, who had been nominated for immigration by her aunt, Rebecca Phillips, a nurse in Waipukurau. Mary had arrived at Napier on June 25, 1885, on the 'S.S.Aorangi'. This ship was eventually scuttled in the Orkney Islands, as a 'block ship' during the First World War. Harry and Mary lived in Waipukurau during the early years of their marriage. Their first two children were born in the Central Hawke's Bay town, Barbara Ann Pengelly(December 16, 1887) and Henry Charles Phillips (September 1, 1890) who was affectionally known as Snow. With Hastings growing fast, they moved to the town to capture the work prospects in the building industry. They produced another son, William Thomas Arthur (December 6, 1891) but lost him at 8 weeks to gastro enteritis. Henry and Mary's two youngest children were Minnie Braven (January 20, 1894) and Thomas Ramsay (August 6, 1895). Sadly, Henry lost his young wife to pneumonia on July 27 1897, at their home 'Alnwick'. This came two days after Henry had fallen off a new construction in Ellison Road, breaking two of his ribs.

Early in August 1899, Harry Anderson remarried. This time to his young 25 year old housekeeper and nanny to his children Margaret Groves. This union didn't produce any children and they constantly moved from house to house, mostly along Heretaunga Street. The children often went to school, to come home in the afternoon, to find they had moved a few doors further down the street. Finally in 1919, they brought a large villa at 203 Charles Street, where they took in a stream of boarders, to help their finances. Sadness was the loss of his youngest child Thomas Anderson, in the carnage of Passchendale during October 1917. He is one of hundreds of young men, who were never identified and never awarded a grave. In 1931, just after the big 'Quake', Henry and his wife Margaret moved into a small cottage at 606 Miller Street, a few doors away from his brother Laurence. After Margaret died in 1937, Henry went to live for a couple of years, with his widowed sister-in-law Elizabeth McKenzie. In 1940 he went to stay with his widowed daughter Minnie and her family at 706 Victoria Street. One summer while the family was away on holiday, old Harry tried to surprise his daughter by restraining and varishing her floor. Sadly the stain was very dark and not appreciated as anticipated by his daughter. Harry died on September 12, 1945, at the grand age of 91 years. He had outlived all his brothers and sisters, although he may have had a weakness for the bottle.

I know very little about Thomas Anderson, apart from a bearded young man in a photo. In 1887 he is listed as a plasterer in Napier and in 1892 a carpenter in Hastings. He died of tubercular langingits (TB) in Napier on September 21, 1893. He was buried in the old cemetery on the Hospital Hill and was later joined in the same plot, by his parents.

Jane Margaret worked as a domestic servant and she was known as Maggie. She married a true scot from Banffshire named William Scott, on April 26 1882. They were married at the residence of her sister in Hastings. William a highly qualified horticulturist came to New Zealand, ten years earlier. He had learnt his skills as an apprentice gardener at Stroloch House, at Newmachar 12 miles from Aberdeen. Afterwards he was employed on several great Scottish Estates, including Floors Castle(Kelso), Gordon Castle and Fochabers. William immigrated to New Zealand in 1872 and quickly found positions landscaping many large Hawke's Bay country properties. Their first child was born at Pourerere, while working on Charles Nairn's station on the Central Hawke's Bay coast. She was Margaret born on December 21, 1884. The Scott's soon moved onto John Harding's Mount Vernon property, which had several large glasshouses. Afterwards they resided in Clive and later Fernhill, although both Barbara Edith (November 21, 1887) and William Harold Anthony(May 6, 1896) were born in Hastings. They lived in Lyndon Road, Hastings for a short time, then moved to Napier. William attended the large private garden of Henry Tiffen, himself a very keen horticulturist. The Tiffen gardens were a beautiful sight, frequently thrown open to the public. They were planted in tropical flowers and shrubs, amongst which were many rare specimens.

The Scotts lived in many different houses, residing in Dickens Street for about 12 years, Thackeray Street and Shakespeare Road. At one stage they lived on the corner of Dalton and Tennyson Streets, opposite the Tiffen gardens. This was upstairs above H.C.Wilson and H.Davies Dental Surgery. One night the gas of a bunsen burner in the surgery was left going, which caused an explosion and tremendous fire. The Scott's escaped with their lives and a few possessions, but lost nearly everything else they owned. They lived with the Robertson's in Ahuriri for a period then moved to a new abode in McDonald Street for several years. The family moved into William's mother-in-law's Main Street home for a small period. After a large interval, the Scott's had some more joy in their lives, when another wee lassie, Vivienne Ramsay arrived on Christmas Day 1905. The joy was shortlived as on September 3, 1907 William Scott was burdened with bringing up a family without a wife, after Maggie surrendered to Tuberculosis. Luckily his two oldest daughters were capable of fulfilling the family's housekeeping needs. The family moved into another house at 21 Havelock Road in 1916. William Scott died in Napier Hospital on July 30, 1918. Tragically his only son Harold, who had been invalided home from the European fields of war, died in the same hospital, just 4 months later. He was another family victim of Tuberculosis.

Laurence Anderson was only eight when his family arrived in Hawke's Bay. He began as a scholar at Havelock Public School, which he attended for all his education. He took up a cabinet-making apprenticeship, and worked for many years in Napier. Once out of his time in about 1885, Laurence moved to Hastings to take up a position with a building firm. Laurence married Emmie Cable on November 2 1892 at St.Matthews Church, Hastings and had two sons Laurence James Roy (January 25, 1898) and Eric Dudley(November 4, 1901). The family lived at 503 Victoria Street, and Laurie became foreman of H.H.Campbell, a leading building and joinery firm in Hastings. Laurence gave 28 years service(Gold Star) to the town's fire service, of which he was a founding member in 1885. He began as a fireman before promotion to lieutenant(1902) and was secretary of the Hastings Municipal Fire brigade for a long period. He was a member of the

Ancient Order of Foresters, and held the top office of the Star of Hastings Lodge No.12 (Protestant Alliance Friendly Society of Australasia). Laurie held many positions with the Hastings Football Club around the turn of the century. Laurence had to leave the building trade after sustaining an injury, which prevented him carrying out his duties and he became a club steward until he retired. Laurence died in Hastings on August 1, 1942 and his widow was a grand age at the time of her demise in 1963.

Glossary

crofter.....tenant of a small holding
dykes.....walls around yard or field
factor.....estate manager
flinching.....cutting meat into strips
Haaf..... deep or open ocean
hammar.....a rocky outcrop on a hillside
merkland.....value of land derived from original feudal duty paid to the superior
sasine.....method of land investiture, originally involved giving of earth and stones, later just the registration of conveyance
scattald.....poorer grassed hilly common ground, freely grazed by crofters
tombolo.....a shingle spit connecting two pieces of land.
toonship.....hamlet
udal.....freehold
wick.....bay