

Biographical entry Stewart, George Irvine Thompson (1872 - 1923)

MRCS Nov 2nd 1899; FRCS June 14th 1906; MA Aberdeen 1873; MB CM 1896; LRCP Lond 1899; MD 1912.

Born 1872

Died 15 July 1923 Ipswich

Occupation General surgeon

Details

The third son of Sir David Stewart, of Banchory-Devenick, Aberdeen. He was educated at Aberdeen and at St Thomas's Hospital, where he was for three years Clinical Assistant in the Throat Department. He also acted as Clinical Assistant at the Throat Hospital, Golden Square, and was House Surgeon at the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children. He was then appointed Medical Officer of Health, Tuberculosis Officer, and School Medical Officer for East Suffolk, with his office at the County Hall, Ipswich. He lived at The Cottage, St Edmund's Road, and died there on July 15th, 1923, survived by his widow.

The Royal College of Surgeons of England

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History of the Parish of Banchory-Devenick Banchory Lands (1890)

Charles Niven had married Mary Stewart, the second of five daughters of Sir David Stewart (King's College graduate of 1855 and knighted 1896) and Lady Stewart of Banchory and Leggart. Lady Stewart was a daughter of David Brown, Principal of the Free Church College, Aberdeen. In 1877 David Stewart had inherited the combworks in Aberdeen started by his father and the business grew in David's hands until by the beginning of the 20th century it was the largest such business in the world. Horn was the main raw material and 100,000 horns a week were imported into his factory in Hutcheon Street. The Nivens had 3 daughters and a son, all commemorated on the gravestone at Banchory-Devenick

Niven oversaw the introduction of the BSc and PhD degrees, the introduction of women students, the teaching of Medical Physics and other changes in the University. He taught for 42 years, a period that saw the discovery of X-rays and radioactivity, the invention of the gramophone, the radio, motor-cars both diesel and petrol, electric lighting and power for public use and even the first steps towards television. Niven organised the move of the Natural Philosophy Department from King's College to larger premises at Marischal College that had facilities for more students to engage in practical work. There was no 'retirement age' then nor a national pension scheme and Niven worked until 1922 when he became seriously ill. He retired aged 77 but did not recover from his illness, dying on 11th May 1923.

"Here lie the remains of/ Charles Niven F.R.S. D.Sc. (Dubl) LLD/ Senior Wranger 1867 Fellow of Trinity College Cambridge 1868 - 1877 Professor of Mathematics Queens College/ Cork 1867 - 1880 and thereafter 42 years Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University of Aberdeen/ born in Peterhead September 14th 1845 died in the Chanonry Old Aberdeen May 11th 1923/ In 1917 during the great European War he expounded to the Admiralty for the destruction of the submarines/ the theory of the location of sound in water/ also of his eldest daughter Alice Margaret born 17th May 1888 | died 16th May 1894/ to whose memory her grandfather Sir David Stewart inscribed a tablet/ in the

mausoleum he erected in this churchyard/ and of his youngest daughter Mary Stewart born 10th March 1895 - died 23rd December 1937/ Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy/ and of his wife Mary second daughter/ of Sir David and Lady Stewart of Banchory Leggart/ born 28th November 1865 - died 8th November 1954/ There shall be no night there/ and of his daughter Lucy Barbara born 10th August 1890 - died 17th December 1959/ she shall be praised/ and of his son/ Charles David Niven M.A. B.Sc. Ph.D. Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada/ born July 16th 1897 - died in Ottawa Canada Sept 30th 1968/ I know that my redeemer liveth"

Banchory Lodge

In 1872 the estate was sold by Mr. Thomson's Trustees to Mr. John Stewart, comb manufacturer, Aberdeen, for £76,000. The career of the late Mr. Stewart was a remarkable one, and might be cited among the many examples of what a determined, persevering, and sound-headed Scotchman can accomplish. Born in Perth in 1810, he started the business of combmaking in Edinburgh about 1828, in partnership with a friend of the name of Whitehead. The venture did not succeed; but, nothing daunted, Stewart removed to Aberdeen, where he started a similar business in Mealmarket Lane, this time in partnership with his brother-in-law, Mr. Joseph Rowell. Combs were then made by hand, but gradually, as the concern increased, it became imperative to introduce machinery. In 1835 the manufactory was removed to larger premises in

Hutcheon Street, where the business grew and flourished till it became the largest combmaking centre in the world. Such handsome annual profits were realized that in 1848 Mr. Rowell retired with an ample fortune. Mr. Stewart, on the other hand, embarked the larger share of his savings in the Great North of Scotland Railway Company. This interest induced him to become also a shareholder and director of the Aberdeen and London Steam Navigation Company, with the avowed object of making Aberdeen the great competitive point for the traffic of the north-east of Scotland, and compelling the southern railways to compete with the Steam Company for such traffic, and thus to modify their rates. To do this effectually he laid down the policy that the fine old paddle passenger boats should be ultimately superseded by screw steamers capable of working at a saving of coal, that the sailings should be bi-weekly instead of weekly, and that the tariff rates and fares should be substantially reduced. The older directors and shareholders, however, dreaded the effect of such drastic changes, and, a bitter opposition springing up against him, Mr. Stewart started three rival screw steamers—the Stanley, Kangaroo, and Gambia—under the title of "The Northern Steam Company." After a tough contest an amalgamation of both companies took place, under which Mr. Stewart became chairman, and his policy may be fairly called the foundation of the present active and prosperous state of the concern. The fight had, however, cost him upwards of £46,000, and as the Highland Railway from Perth to Inverness, which was opened shortly afterwards, got a contract for the carrying of the greater portion of the mails to the north, which had previously been carried by the Great North Railway, a panic set in amongst the shareholders of the latter, and its stock was depreciated to such an extent that Mr. Stewart was obliged to relinquish everything, including his estate of Craigiebuckler. His firm of S. R. Stewart & Co., however, weathered this crisis, and after a few years of successful trading, he was enabled in 1872 to purchase the estate of Banchory, as before mentioned. He died on 25th January, 1887, and was interred in the Free Church burying-ground, Banchory-Devenick. His wife, Mary Irvine, died at Craigiebuckler 24 years previously.

He was succeeded by his eldest son, David, who was educated at the University of Aberdeen, of which he is a graduate. He has for several years been at the head of the combworks in Aberdeen. He is a very active business man, and has filled many public offices. After acting as president of the Aberdeen Chamber of Commerce, he was elected Dean of Guild. A few years ago he was appointed Judge at the Horners' Exhibition held at the Mansion House, London, and at the same time he was elected a Liveryman of the City of London. He married Margaret Dyce, eldest daughter of Principal Brown, and has issue four sons—David Brown Douglas, William Dyce, George Irvine, and Charles—and five daughters—

Mary, Alexandra Catherine Dyce, Julia Charlotte, Jessie, and Margaret Isabel. Mary is married to Mr. Charles Niven, professor of natural philosophy in the University of Aberdeen, who was senior wrangler of his year, and has since been elected a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge.