

*DANIEL CRUICKSHANKS: WAS
AN EARLY FORM OF RSI THE
CAUSE OF ALL HIS
PROBLEMS?
BY NEILIANN MCINTYRE*

Daniel Cruickshanks – a sorting clerk and telegraphist who retired from the Post Office in 1901-- died in The Poor House, Inverness, in 1916. In this blog we will be looking at the different aspects of his life led him to this Daniel [b.1868] was the eldest of three sons of Alexander and Isabella Cruickshanks [nee Fraser] and was born at 23 Grant Street, Inverness.

Inverness has played a significant role in Scotland's history. In April 1746 the last battle fought on British soil took place at Culloden Moor when the Jacobite Army under the leadership of Prince Charles Edward Stuart was defeated by the British Army. Over the years as the town developed on the east bank of the River Ness the gardens behind houses were gradually built over, with narrow closes for access - some of these are still there today. Epidemics, including cholera, occurred from time to time.

The 1860s were an important decade for Inverness. Charles Fraser-MacKintosh (author and a future MP for the Highlands) together with two other businessmen realised that with the coming of the railway there was an opportunity for expansion, growth and prosperity for the town. They began to clear the old buildings between what would eventually become the Railway Station and Church Street, and started on building a completely new street to be named Union Street which had beautiful Victorian buildings. Most of them are still in use today and for many years I also worked in one of them. Looking at the Census's of 1861 and 1881 they also showed that the population of the town expanded rapidly from 12,509 to 17,365.

In 1888 Daniel successfully passed the entry requirements for the Post Office and to begin with he was employed as a Telegraph Messenger. Built in 1843 the main Post Office was on the High Street until 1890 when new premises were built in Queensgate. Not long after it was opened Inverness experienced an earthquake: however there was no loss of life and no damage was done to any buildings. This building was demolished in 1966 to make way for the current Post Office.

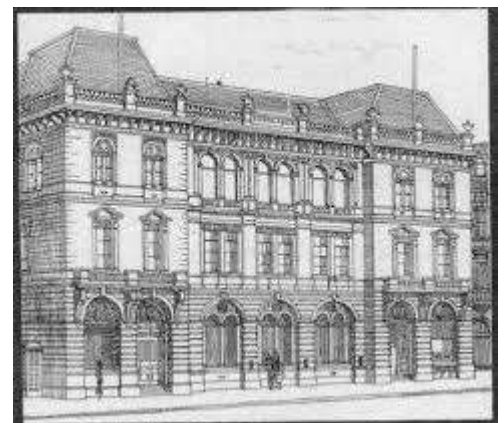


Figure 1: Inverness Post Office, 1890

Also in 1888 Daniel married Helen Lyle Walker at 48 Innes Street, Inverness - a property which was owned by her father Daniel Walker. Following their marriage, the couple lived in the house and it is where they had their seven children – four boys and three girls.

By the 1891 census Daniel had been promoted and was now a telegraphist. However by 1901 he had to retire from the Post Office aged thirty-two due to ill health. I am unaware of the reasons behind his ill-health however it was noted on his application for poor relief in 1915 that he was suffering from 'Wholly Rheumatism and defective vision' which may have been the result of his job within the Post Office and the sometimes poor working conditions that they endured. Barbara Haward in her thesis on telegraphists cramp has said that:

'Telegraphists' cramp is of particular interest as a disease because it emerged in response to the introduction of new technology, the Morse key, into an office environment, at a time when most other occupational diseases occurred in hazardous factory environments.'

Following his retirement Daniel's income was reduced to an annual pension of £26-7-10 – a loss of three quarters of his income. With seven children ranging in ages from a few months to twelve it is clear that he would have had to find alternative employment to enable his young family to survive and the 1901 Census records his employment as an Insurance Agent. Sadly, his wife Helen died in 1906 from phthisis and it was her father who was the informant and signed the death certificate. Helen was buried in Tomnahurich Cemetery under her maiden name of Walker. I had been wondering where Daniel was, perhaps he was working away from home and was unable to be with his wife however could the answer be that Daniel and Helen had perhaps separated?

I was unsuccessful in trying to find him in the 1911 Census in Inverness, eventually tracing him to an address in Glasgow where he was living as a lodger with the occupation of telegraphist. I later discovered that this address was actually the Barnhill Poor House and from what I now know about Daniel's health around that time, a given occupation does not necessarily mean that he was in employment and perhaps the reason why he was living there. Apart from the oldest son the remainder of the children were living in Inverness. Daniel's father-in-law had died in 1909 and whilst unable to trace his last will and testament, on examining the 1915 Valuation Roll his properties at 48 and 66 Innes Street, Inverness were now owned by Daniel's daughters.

By 1915 Daniel had returned to Inverness, where we find him residing in a hostel for people who have nowhere else to live and he has applied for poor relief. Inverness Poor House was built around 1860 finally closing in 1921 and for a period of time it became Hilton Hospital when the property was sold and converted into flats. From the records viewed at Highland Archive Centre I was able to determine that his occupation was given as Insurance Agent with nil earnings and that he was admitted to the Poor House on 22th



Figure 2: Inverness Poor House

February 1915; the cost of his stay to be covered by his Post Office pension. On arrival all new admissions were segregated into a probationary area until they had been examined and declared free from diseases affecting the mind and body by a medical officer. We know that Daniel was already in poor health so perhaps the reason behind his being accepted was due to the fact that he was contributing towards his upkeep?

Eleven months later on 11th January 1916 Daniel died from vascular disease of the heart and interstitial nephritis. Usually when an inmate died the death was notified to the family who could arrange a funeral. If this did not happen the Poor House would arrange for a burial in a local cemetery or burial ground. The cheapest possible coffin or shroud was used with the body placed in an unmarked grave. I have not been able to trace a burial record for him. Daniel was only forty-eight when he died.

We are unable to tell the story of someone's life just from records alone and I cannot begin to know what struggles the Cruickshanks family would have faced following Daniel's retirement and the death of his wife. I am however still left wondering why his children allowed him to go into the workhouse, particularly when they owned two properties in Inverness. Perhaps due to his deteriorating health problems and the on-going costs of his treatment were maybe something they were unable to afford?

In conclusion would Daniel's life story have ended any differently if he had not become a telegraphist, I cannot say that it would have, I just like to think it possibly could have.

REFERENCES

Printed material

- Barbara Haward, 'Telegraphists' cramp: the emergence and disappearance of an occupational disease between 1875 and 1930' (PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh: 2019): <https://era.ed.ac.uk/bitstream/handle/1842/36655/Haward2019.pdf>

Websites:

- Old Buildings of Inverness: <http://scalan.co.uk/oldinverness/oldinverness.htm>
- Charles Fraser MacKintosh: <https://www.ambaile.org.uk/asset/11159/>
- The Elderly and The Workhouse: <https://www.bgs.org.uk/>

Images:

- Inverness PO: <http://britishpostofficearchitects.weebly.com/1890---queensgate.html>
- Inverness Poor House: <http://www.archhighland.org.uk/news.asp?newsid=228>

Fact Sheet: Daniel Cruickshanks

Pensioner Details
<i>Pensioner name:</i> Daniel Hugh Cruickshanks
<i>Person ID:</i> SC1010
<i>Your name:</i> Neiliann McIntyre
<i>U3A group:</i> Scotland
Part One: Birth and Family
1: When and where was your pensioner born?
Daniel Hugh Cruickshanks was born in Inverness on 31 January 1868
2: Who were your pensioner's parents? Record any details you can find out about them here (e.g. occupation, religious affiliation, whether they could read or write)
<p>Father: Alexander Cruickshanks, Brewery Malt-man: Born around 1838 at Inverallan, Inverness Died 15 June 1880 from Suppuration of the Kidneys [18mths] and Uraemia [7days]</p> <p>Mother: Isabella Fraser, Dairymaid: Born 18 February 1843 Baptised 2 March 1843 at Cawdor, Nairnshire. Died 12 December 1907 in Inverness from Hemiplegia</p> <p>Married in Cawdor, Nairn 18 January 1867</p>
3: Did your pensioner have any siblings? What were their names, and how old were they in relation to your pensioner? Use this space to record anything else you have found out about them (e.g., occupation, later life)
<p>John F Cruickshanks: Born 14 December 1869 Birth Place: Rosskeen, Ross and Cromarty 1891 Census lists his occupation as French Polisher</p> <p>Alexander Cruickshanks born in Inverness 1875*</p> <p>James Cruickshanks born in Inverness 1876*</p> <p><i>*Information confirmed on year of birth by ScotlandsPeople search but no certificates obtained.</i></p>

Part Two: Marriage and children/ boarders

1: Did your pensioner marry? What was their spouse's name, and when and where did they marry them? Use this space to record any extra details you can find out about their spouse (e.g. when/where they were born, their occupation). **Note:** *You can also use this space to record any details about people your pensioner boarded with.*

Married Helen Lyle Walker in Inverness, on 13 June 1888 at 48 Innes Street, Inverness

Banns were read in Free Church, Inverness

Helen Lyle Walker:

Born: 18 July 1866 in Inverness

Died: 15 August 1906 from Phthisis [3 years] and Albuminuria 96ths]

Buried in Tomnahurich Cemetery, Inverness

Father: Daniel Walker [Plumber]

Mother: Mary Richmond Lyle Muir

2: Did your pensioner have any children? What were their names, and when they were born? Use this space to record any extra details you can find out about them (e.g. occupation, where they lived later in life)

Daniel Walker Cruickshank: Born in Inverness in 1888 Occupation given as 2nd Engineer Merchant Seaman on death record. **Death:** WW2 - Ship sunk on 20/9/41, rescued and this ship was then sunk on 21/9/41 and recorded as date of death.

Isabella Fraser Cruickshank: Born in Inverness in 1890*

Mary Muir Cruickshanks: Born in Inverness 1892*

Alexander John Cruickshanks: Born in Inverness in 1894*

Hugh Francis Cruickshanks: Born in Inverness in 1896*

James Lyle Cruickshanks: Born in Inverness in 1899*

Helen Lyle Cruickshanks: Born in Inverness around 1900/01 [unable to trace birth record]

Date of birth found on UK, Royal Navy Registers of Seamen's Services, 1848-1939

**Information confirmed on year of birth by ScotlandsPeople search but no certificates obtained.*

Part Three: Work

1: What occupation was your pensioner recorded as doing in census years? Please make sure to state clearly which year you are referring to

1871 recorded as son [recorded as being called David]

1881 Census recorded as a Telegraph Messenger

1891 Census recorded as a Telegraphist

1901 Census recorded as an Insurance Agent

1911 Census recorded as a Telegraphist*

* Highland Archive that the address given was for Barnhill Poor House, Glasgow

2: What occupations were people living with your pensioner (e.g. spouse, children, boarders) doing in the census years? Please make sure to state clearly which year you are referring to

1871 Census: Alexander Cruickshanks [father] recorded as Grain Storekeeper residing in the Burgh of Invergordon

Part Four: Anything Else/Later Life

Please use this space to record anything else you have found out about your pensioner. For example: what do we know about their life after retirement?

1880 – Father, Alexander Cruickshanks dies from Suppuration of Kidneys and Daniel H at the age of 12 was the Informant [signed by him]

1891 Valuation Roll shows him was living at 48 Innes Street, Inverness as a tenant – Property was owned by his father-in-law Daniel Walker

1901 – Retired from Postal Services due to Ill Health. In Census of that year record shows him as being called David and employed as an Insurance Agent.

1906 – Helen Cruickshanks [wife] dies in Inverness on 15 August – Cause of Death: Phthisis 3 years Albuminuria 6 mths. Her Father was present at her death and signed Death Certificate.

? Where was Daniel

1907 – Isabella Cruickshanks [mother] dies in Inverness on 12 December – Cause of Death: Hemiplegia. Rox Cruickshanks [granddaughter] present.

1909 – Father-in-law Daniel Walker dies

1911 – Census shows him living as a Lodger in Glasgow with occupation of Telegraphist. Inverness Poor House Records indicate that this address was for Barnhill Poor House, Glasgow.

Son Daniel W [22] shown as a visitor at 53 Reid Street, Glasgow and occupation given as engineering worker. The remainder of the children ranging in ages from 20 to 10 were living at 66 Innes Street, Inverness [another property owned by their grandfather, Daniel Walker. Isabella shown as Housekeeper; Mary shown as working as a Confectionery Assistant; Alexander shown as a Message Boy; Francis, James and Helen shown as being at School.

1915 Valuation Roll shows that the properties formerly owned by father-in-law, Daniel Walker at 48 and 66 Innes Street, Inverness are now owned by his granddaughters - Isabella, Mary and Helen Cruickshanks.

1915 – Daniel Walker is now residing at North Church Place Model Lodging House in Inverness and has applied for Poor Relief. [North Church Lodging was a hostel where people who had nowhere else to live were sent prior to possibly going into the Poor House] ***Refer to notes under Highland Archive on next page**

1916 - Died in Poor House on 11 January 1916 from Vascular disease of heart, Interstitial nephritis

Part Five: Your Sources

Please use this space to record the sources you have used

ScotlandsPeople

1880 Death of Alexander Cruickshanks [father]: https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/view-image/nrs_stat_deaths/2283828?destination=user/3090787/timelines/186132&image=1

1888 Marriage of Daniel Cruickshanks: https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/view-image/nrs_stat_marriages/3481689?destination=user/3090787/timelines/186132&image=1

1891 Valuation Roll Daniel Cruickshanks: https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/view-image/nrs_valuation_rolls/29363769?destination=user/3090787/timelines/186132&image=102

1906 Death of Helen L W Cruickshanks [wife]: https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/view-image/nrs_stat_deaths/5883251?destination=user/3090787/timelines/186132&image=1

1907 Death of Isabella Cruickshanks [mother]: https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/view-image/nrs_stat_deaths/6017592?return_row=2

1911 Census Daniel Cruickshanks: https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/view-image/nrs_census/33227706?destination=user/3090787/timelines/186132&image=2

1911 Census Daniel W Cruickshanks [son]: https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/view-image/nrs_census/33227705?destination=user/3090787/timelines/186132&image=15

1911 Census Remainder of Children: https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/view-image/nrs_census/33227886?destination=user/3090787/timelines/186132&image=9

1915 Valuation ino children: https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/view-image/nrs_valuation_rolls/29441901?destination=user/3090787/timelines/186132&image=205

1916 Death of Daniel Cruickshanks: https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/view-image/nrs_stat_deaths/6922380?destination=user/3090787/timelines/186132&image=1

Find My Past

1871 Census for Daniel [shown as David] Cruickshanks: <https://www.findmypast.co.uk/transcript?id=GBC/1871/0025636991&confirmedpurchase=true>

1891 Census for Mother and family: <https://www.findmypast.co.uk/transcript?id=GBC/1871/0025636991>

Ancestry

1843 Birth of Isabella Fraser [mother]: *Ancestry.com. Scotland, Select Births and Baptisms, 1564-1950 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014.*

1851 Census for Alexander Cruickshanks: *Parish: Ardclach; ED: 1; Page: 6; Line: 18; Roll: CSSCT1851_29; Year: 1851*

1851 Census for Isabella Fraser: *Parish: Cawdor; ED: 5; Page: 2; Line: 12; Roll: CSSCT1851_29; Year: 1851*

1867 Marriage of Parents - Alexander Cruickshanks and Isabella Fraser: *Ancestry.com. Scotland, Select Marriages, 1561-1910 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014.*

1866 Birth of Helen L Walker [wife]: *Ancestry.com. Scotland, Select Births and Baptisms, 1564-1950 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014.*

1868 Birth of Daniel H Cruickshanks: *Ancestry.com. Scotland, Select Births and Baptisms, 1564-1950 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014.*

1870 Birth of John F Cruickshanks [brother]: *Ancestry.com. Scotland, Select Births and Baptisms, 1564-1950 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014.*

1871 Census for Helen L Walker [wife]: *Parish: Inverness; ED: 13; Page: 4; Line: 11; Roll: CSSCT1871_17*

1881 Census for Daniel Cruickshanks: *Parish: Inverness; ED: 10; Page: 3; Line: 13; Roll: cssct1881_28*

1881 Census for Helen L Walker Cruickshanks [wife]: *Parish: Inverness; ED: 6; Page: 35; Line: 17; Roll: cssct1881_28*

1891 Census for Daniel Cruickshanks: *Parish: Inverness; ED: 7; Page: 55; Line: 1; Roll: CSSCT1891_27*

1901 Census for Daniel Cruickshanks: *Parish: Inverness; ED: 8; Page: 58; Line: 23; Roll: CSSCT1901_28*

1906 Burial of Helen L W Cruickshanks [wife]:

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/182550041/helen-l-walker>

UK, Royal Navy Registers of Seamen's Services, 1848-1939 for Daniel W Cruickshanks [son]:
<https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/60522>

1941 Death of son Daniel W Cruickshanks [son]: *1941 UK Commonwealth War Graves for Daniel Walker Cruickshanks - <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/2706>*

1941 Death son Daniel W Cruickshanks [son]: *National Maritime Museum; Greenwich, England; Merchant Seamen Deaths at Sea*

***Highland Archive Centre: Records for Daniel H Cruickshanks**

Application for Poor Relief – BI/4/1/76

General Register of Poor – BI/4/1/42

Minute Book – BI/4/1/16 General Register of Inmates – HHB/7/4/1/5

Register of Deaths – HHB/7/4/2/1

The following information was extracted from the records at Highland Archive Centre on 30 November 2020 but unable to make copies of records:

32/15 25 January 1915 occupation given as Insurance Agent

Earnings: Nil

Children: Daniel [27] Sea Iron Fitter; Isabelle [25] Keeps home for her brothers; Mary [23]

At home [idle]; Alexander J [20] Farm Servant in Glen Urquhart; Francis [18] Apprentice

Painter with Mr Chisholm, Church Street, Inverness earning 5/- per week; James [12] Now

a Messenger boy with Gamedealer in Market Arcade, Inverness earning 5/- per week;

Helen [14] in school

Born: 23 Grant Street, Inverness

Cause of Disability: Wholly Rheumatism and defective vision

Partially Destitute: 10/1 per week PO pension

Parents: Alexander Cruickshanks, Distiller, died

Isabella F Cruickshanks, died

Late Wife: Daniel Walker, Plumber, died

Marg. Lyle Walker, died

Length of Residence in present or previous premises: Was chargeable in the Barnhill Poor House, Glasgow on 21/4/11* when claim was made on this parish. No previous application in Inverness.

Result of Application:

How disposed by Inspector: Admitted to Poor House

How disposed by Parish Council: Approved and recover costs of Board in Poorhouse from pension.

Admitted to Poor House on 22 February 1915