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HIBD/Publications/HI-Pubs/Pub-Huntia.shtml

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James J. White  
Designer Lugene B. Bruno  
Photographer Frank A. Reynolds

Printed and bound by R.R. Donnelley,  
Hoechstetter Plant, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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ISSN 0073-4071
Abstract

James Lothian (1817–1871), a Scot, was trained as a gardener in his native land. While working at Ormsary House, Knapdale, Argyllshire, he wrote a small book about the cultivation of alpine plants, the first in English. *Practical Hints on the Culture and General Management of Alpine or Rock Plants* was published in Edinburgh by W. H. Lizars during the summer of 1845 and was reissued about 15 years later. Lothian’s career as a gardener, land surveyor, landscape gardener and nurseryman is described, and his other botanical publications are noted.

Introduction

Histories of the rock-garden and of the cultivation of alpine plants rarely if ever mention James Lothian, and he does not have an entry in the authoritative *Dictionary of British and Irish Botanists and Horticulturists* (Desmond and Ellwood 1994). An honourable exception is Graham Stuart Thomas’s book *The Rock Garden and Its Plants — from Grotto to Rock Garden* (1989, pp. 64, 112), but even in this Lothian received fewer than a dozen lines.

James Lothian, a Scot, wrote “a very nice little book” (Anonymous 1845) titled *Practical Hints on the Culture and General Management of Alpine or Rock Plants*, which was published in Edinburgh by W. H. Lizars. While not dated, we know it was first issued in the summer of 1845; we have also discovered that it was reissued about 1860. We were directed to Lothian’s book by William Robinson’s (1870) sarcastic dismissal of “a small book on alpine plants, published not many years ago.”

This long-forgotten book is believed to be the first written (at least in English) devoted wholly to the cultivation of alpine and rock-garden plants: certainly there is not an earlier one held in any British library. The author himself wrote that “I am not aware of any separate treatise extant on the cultivation of Alpine-plants…. The subject is more generally discussed in Horticultural periodicals, indicating an attention to these hitherto comparatively neglected objects, and I hope soon to see more of these discussions. In short, this is given with a good intent, and, I trust, will prove effectual in assisting and drawing general attention to this lovely family” (Lothian 1845, p. 61).

While contemporary reviewers had quite a bit to say about the contents of Lothian’s “little book” (Anonymous 1845), very little information about the author, other than that he was, as stated on the title-page, “GARDENER TO W. A. CAMPBELL, ESQ. OF ORMSARY,” apparently was to be found in print.

James Lothian: Background, career and family

James Lothian was born during December 1817 in Aberfoyle, Perthshire, Scotland (Fig. 1), the eldest son of John, a gamekeeper, and Christian (*olum* Catharine) Lothian. He was
baptized in Aberfoyle on 18 January 1818 by Dr. Patrick Graham (1756–1835), a man with numerous scholarly interests including botany (Desmond and Ellwood 1994). The Lothian family had moved to Callander, 12 miles by road from Aberfoyle, within the next few years because James’ brother, Alexander, and sister, Anna Stewart, were both born in that parish in the early 1820s. When Duncan, James’ second brother, was born in 1825, the Lothians were living at Crochavie on the Duke of Montrose’s estate. By 1829 the family had removed to Aultannabreg in Aberfoyle parish. Thus, James grew up in a part of central Scotland renowned for its mountains, rivers and lochs. To the west is Loch Lomond, and Ben Lomond (3,194 ft.). To the northwest is Ben Venue (2,386 ft.), and to the north many even higher peaks including Ben Lawers (3,984 ft.) and Ben Nevis (4,406 ft., the highest peak in Great Britain), all famous for their peculiar floras including plants classed as alpines (see, for example, Darling and Boyd 1969, Pearsall 1971). Lothian certainly knew these peaks and their native plants: writing about “…some of the Erica tribe, Azalea [Loiseleuria] procumbens, Arbutus alpina [Arctostaphylos alpinus], &c. … [he recorded that] … We [sic] have observed them half way up Ben Nevis, and found there specimens of the latter plant in full fructification” (Lothian 1845). Nothing more is known about James’ childhood, although he surely received a good education because he was certainly thoroughly
literate and numerate, nor about why he chose to make his living (at least initially) as a gardener. His horticultural training must have followed the well-established pattern for that period, beginning around the age of 14 as a garden-boy, becoming an apprentice, and moving on as a journeyman. It was usual for lads to take around two years at each stage, and so it was not unexpected to discover in the 1841 Scottish census James Lothian aged 23 listed as a journeyman gardener at Garscube House, East Kilpatrick (Bearsden), Dunbartonshire, about a dozen miles from his home village. In the summer of 1841 John Claudius Loudon, the Scottish horticulturist and author, visited Garscube House and later wrote a not always flattering description ([Loudon] 1842):

Imagine a broad extensive basin of park scenery, bounded on two sides by irregular banks finely wooded, and the two ends lost by the banks apparently closing on a noble river with a rocky bottom and sides. … The effect is striking … The kitchen-garden is large, and surrounded by substantial brick walls … cultivated in the Scotch manner, with flowers in the borders of the walks, and crops on the wall borders; two things ruinous to all expectations of abundant crops of fruit. … The place was moderately well kept, particularly the kitchen-garden, and though it rained the whole time that we were viewing it, we left it very much delighted.

Garscube House was owned by Sir Archibald Campbell. In 1841 the head-gardener was Robert Guthrie (age 35). There were two other journeyman gardeners: Alex Finlay (age 20) and John Duchar (age 20); and also an apprentice gardener, Robert Hight (age 16). Lothian evidently was soon to complete the journeyman stage of his career and become a fully-fledged gardener.

The only reference Lothian himself made to his training as a gardener is obscure. Referring, in his preface, to alpine plants, he stated that he had “… had considerable experience in their cultivation, under the direction and auspices of a worthy master, one of the most eminent cultivators of the present day” (Lothian 1845, p. [ix]), but he does not name this worthy and eminent master.

On 1 November 1841 in New Kilpatrick Parish Church, Bearsden, Dunbartonshire, James Lothian married Christina (olim Christian) Kirkwood (b. April 1816) who was a native of Kirkintilloch, Dunbartonshire; she was older than James by about 20 months.²

Ormsary and Kilmory

Soon after their marriage, the couple moved to the parish of South Knapdale on the western side of Knapdale, part of the Kintyre Peninsula, Argyllshire, on the west coast of Scotland. James was employed as gardener at Ormsary House, an isolated property on Loch Caolisport. Ormsary House had been inherited a few years previously by William Alexander Campbell (1818–1878), following the death of his father Farquhard Campbell (1759–1839). Mackenzie (1845) wrote that Ormsary House possessed “an excellent garden, now forming part of the shrubbery, [which] was, in the days of yore, from its productiveness called the orchard of Caoliside.” He noted also that the “young plantations at Ormsary are very extensive, and (except at the tops of the hills) very thriving. When Mr. Campbell completes his plan of continuing them to the shore on the south, then laying down some clumps to the north of the house, Ormsary will be one of the best sheltered and beautiful places of residence to be met with” (Mackenzie 1845). Lewis (1846) described Ormsary, “one of the principal seats” of South Knapdale, as “a beautiful residence, with a fine garden and shrubbery, from which plantations are intended to be continued in clumps to the north, and in belts to the shore on the south, for the shelter of this agreeable locality.” While the estate itself was fairly extensive (comprising almost 10,000 acres in the mid-19th century),
the garden proper did not apparently have the need for as many gardeners as Garscube House; only one gardener, Archibald McNicol (age 20), was listed in the 1841 census, while William Robertson (age 42) was employed there in 1851. Presumably James Lothian either replaced McNicol or was engaged as an additional gardener.

Given that the Lothians’ first child, John, was born in the parish of South Knapdale, James must have commenced work in Ormsary either late in 1841 or in the early months of 1842. He was still employed there when his book was completed and published in the summer of 1845 and when his daughter Ann was born at the end of November 1845. Judging by the fact that the Lothians’ next baby, Janet, was born at Kilmory, a village adjacent to Lochgilphead, in the parish of Glassary, James must have left Ormsary and gone to a new position shortly after publication of his book.

The transfer to Kilmory suggests that Lothian went to work in the garden at Kilmory Castle,3 which was situated in an estate that comprised 1,180 acres; according to the census returns for 1841 and 1851 there was only one gardener employed. In the late 1840s, Kilmory Castle was owned by Sir John Powlett Orde (1803–1878), son-in-law of Peter Campbell from whom he inherited it through his wife (the Campbells of Kilmory and Ormsary were related, both families being from the Auchinbreck line).

Campbeltown

Meanwhile, James Lothian’s uncle Duncan (b. 1800) had moved to Campbeltown, near the southern tip of the Kintyre peninsula, by 31 December 1827 when he married Janet McEachran. He was an innkeeper and vintner, and in 1837 lived in Watson Street, Campbeltown. Before 1841 James’ father John, by then a widower, and four of his brothers and sisters had also moved to Campbeltown. John Lothian was employed, as previously in Perthshire, as a gamekeeper and lived in Meadow Cottage on the Duke of Argyll’s property until his death in 1861.

James also moved his family to Campbeltown in the summer of 1849, and for the next two decades he worked at least part-time as a surveyor (sometimes given as agricultural or land surveyor) and also established a nursery and seed business. When another son, named James, was christened in August 1857, James (senior) was described in the baptismal register as a seedsman. The 1861 census records for Campbeltown also have James as a seedsman: the family was then living in Argyll Street. About 1862 Lothian, “Nursery and Seedsman,” issued a List of agricultural seeds, etc.;4 this was printed by W. MacRone in Glasgow. Around this period Thomas joined his father in the business, but the young man was afflicted by pulmonary tuberculosis and died, aged 19, in Campbeltown Nursery on 23 May 1863 (Anonymous 1863; Desmond and Ellwood 1994). The parochial records listed Thomas as a “seedsman” too, while the 1871 census recorded James Lothian as a seed merchant and nurseryman.

Lothian advertised his wares in the local newspaper, the Argyllshire Herald and Campbeltown Advertiser.

Friday November 21, 1856, DUTCH FLOWER ROOTS. JAMES LOTHIAN, SEEDSMAN, CAMPBELTOWN Begs leave to intimate to his Customers and the Public, the arrival of his Dutch Flower Roots in fine conditions, consisting of — hyacinths, polyanthus, narcissus, tulips, jonquils, crocus, narcissus, snowdrops, gladioli, &c., which he is enabled to offer at strictly Moderate Prices, and respectfully solicits early Orders for the same. Main-St. & Argyle-St. …
Friday, March 19, 1858. JAMES LOTHIAN, NURSERY AND SEEDSMAN CAMPBELTOWN, IS now sending out a select assortment of: — Fruit Trees trained and Standards, Gooseberries, Currants, and Rasp, 
Strawberry Plants, Deciduous Ornamental Trees and Shrubs, Climbing Shrubs for seats, Trellises &c., Thorns, Beach [sic] and sweet Brier for hedging, Boxwood and other Plants for edgings, and All kinds of Garden and Farm Seeds, Adapted for the Season, the Climate and the District. CATALOGUES UPON APPLICATION, Main-st, and Argyll-st, …

Friday evening, April 22, 1864. FRUITS 
AND FLOWERS The finest “FRUIT” for table and baking purposes. CUTFLOWERS, BOUQUETS & EVERGREENS [sic] PLANTS for table decorations to be had at JAMES LOTHIAN’S SEED & FRUIT WAREHOUSE [sic] MAIN STREET. Campbeltown, January …


Saturday, April 11, 1868. GARDEN 
AND FARM SEEDS. JAMES LOTHIAN, NURSERYMAN & SEEDMERCHANT, CAMPBELTOWN, Supplies New, and of Improved Stocks, VEGETABLE AND FLOWER SEEDS, GRASSES, CLOVER AND TURNIP SEEDS. EAST LOTHIAN SEED OATS. GOULDING’S BONE AND SPECIAL MANURES. HORTICULTURAL MANURES. GENUINE PERUVIAN GUANO, DISSOLVED BONES, &c. TREES, SHRUBS, FLOWER ROOTS, CAULIFLOWER AND BROCCOLI [sic] PLANTS. GERMAN GREENS, KALE AND CABBAGE PLANTS, 6d per 100. Cheaper per 1000. 6th March ….

From the same newspaper we learn that Lothian showed his plants at the Campbeltown Floral and Horticultural Exhibition. For example on 12 September 1868 the paper reported that the exhibition held on 11 September 1868 “was enhanced by contributions for exhibition from the nursery garden of Mr Lothian, amongst which were dahlias, ferns, and verbenas.”

James’ brother Alexander, a lawyer’s clerk, died in Campbeltown on 17 April 1871. Six weeks later, on 1 June, James himself died; he had been ill for 16 months with “phthisis,” pulmonary tuberculosis, the same disease that had caused his son’s death.

For at least three more years, members of the Lothian family continued the horticultural business — Slater’s 1873 directory listed “Lothian & Allen, nursery and seedsmen, &c. Main St,” Campbeltown. The 1881 census recorded Mrs. Christian Lothian, a widow, living with her son and two daughters in Argyll Street, Campbeltown.

James LOTHIAN, the local botanist

While no obituary of James LOTHIAN has been traced, we have unearthed a series of five botanical articles that he wrote (Lothian 1861a, 1861b, 1862, 1863a, 1863b). The first of the series, titled “Botanical letters from Argyleshire,” was published in the September 1861 issue of the Phytologist. These tend to be lyrical rather than scientific, providing directions for botanical rambles in the Campbeltown area and some glimpses of Lothian himself botanizing. “I never take to the fields, whether on a botanical excursion or otherwise, without my companion — a small pocket portfolio, which serves the twofold purpose of a note- and sketch-book” (Lothian 1863a, p. 523). The last article was published in May 1863: it may not be coincidental that the series ceased the same month that Lothian’s son Thomas died.

These articles included some records of plants that the editor of the Phytologist queried: Epilobium latifolium — “Some readers of the ‘Phytologist’ would be obliged to Mr. Lothian for specimens … —Ed.” (Lothian 1861a, p. 274) — and Ranunculus gramineus — “Will our obliging correspondent send to 45, Frith Street,
Soho Square, London, a few specimens of the *Ranunculus*, which had been often reported as a British plant? Has any reader ever seen an example collected in these isles?” (Lothian 1861b, p. 333).

These articles also provide some additional evidence of Lothian’s horticultural activities. This passage reveals his work as a landscape architect (Lothian 1861a, p. 273):

Kilkenan [sic] Castle stands also in the vicinity of Campbeltown, said to have been erected by King James V. of Scotland. Close to this ancient Castle there is a beautiful and picturesque country, laid out about two years ago, designed by Mr. J. Lothian garden architect and surveyor. It forms a fine promenade, and is much visited by inhabitants and strangers.

James Lothian’s *Practical Hints on the Culture … of Alpine or Rock Plants*

Nothing has been discovered about the origins of *Practical Hints on the Culture and General Management of Alpine or Rock Plants* (referred to hereafter as *Practical Hints*) (see Fig. 2). Lothian does not explain how he came to write it. That he undertook the task while he was gardener at Ormsary House is confirmed by the fact that he is described on the title-page as “GARDENER TO W. A. CAMPBELL, ESQ. OF ORMSARY” and that he dedicated the book to “Mrs. Campbell of Ormsary.” Undoubtedly that was Mrs. Pennel Jane Campbell (née Baillie), widow of Farqhuard Campbell, because her son was not then married. Mrs. Campbell was known for her generosity and, to quote Lothian’s dedication, was an “earnest promoter of horticulture and horticulturists.”

The title and subtitle are explicit. The text, comprising around 10,000 words, is basic consisting of “practical hints”: nothing is explained in detail. Indeed *Practical Hints* is typical of 19th-century books intended for the benefit of ladies such as those who had command of the gardening staff of a large estate: it is not a manual for the staff themselves, the practical gardeners. After the usual preliminaries and a discursive introduction, in Part I, Lothian (1845, pp. 22–37) dealt with “Situation”: “one must be, to a certain extent, guided by the nature and style of the place, besides the taste of the proprietor,” he wrote. Then he discussed the construction of “The Rockery” and “The Pond” (“Let one, two, or three men, as you have the means and the space to be occupied, proceed first to lay a thick stratum of clay along the bottom of the banks … and let it be beat firmly, applying water to soften the clay as required …”), as well as the “Arrangement of the Plants, &c.” In the second part, Lothian (1845, pp. 38–54) expounds on the treatment of the main collection of alpine plants, season by season, ending with a section about the treatment of the “tenderer and rarer” kinds in which he referred to the “Wardian [case], or Portable Greenhouse, first brought into notice, a few years ago, by Dr. Ward of London, who has written a treatise on the subject” (Lothian 1845, pp. 55–64). The work concludes with an appendix comprising “[list[s] of alpines, ferns, marsh, and aquatic plants”; none of the plants were described.

Few gardens were mentioned in *Practical Hints*—Ormsary and Castle Semple, and the botanic gardens in Glasgow and Edinburgh. Referring to the arrangement of rock-work encircling a pond, as shown in the sketches included in the book, Lothian commented that there was an example at “Castlesemple[sic], Renfrewshire, the seat of Colonel Harvey, if memory serves me aright.” This does not indicate long-term knowledge of Castle Semple, so it is unlikely that Lothian had worked there.

Publication of *Practical Hints* was entrusted to the renowned Edinburgh publisher W. H. Lizars, an experienced firm that published
Nelson & King: James Lothian (1817–1871) and his book Practical Hints

illustrated books on, among other topics, medicine and natural history. It is possible that William Home Lizars (1788–1859) (Melville 2004), a painter and an engraver of merit,7 personally engraved the plates for the original issue of Lothian’s book because they are all signed “Lizars sc[ulpsit].” (See Jackson (1991) for similar signatures on illustrations of birds.)

Practical Hints was illustrated with two uncoloured plates showing sketch-plans of rock-gardens, and four hand-coloured plates portraying plants. These plant portraits are not original works; they were redrawn, without acknowledgement (cf. Jackson 1991), from at least two well-known works. The figures of the two plants combined in the plate titled “Summer” (Fig. 3; also reproduced by Thomas 1989), Dryas octopetala and Azalea procumbens (now Loiseleuria procumbens), were clearly taken from James Sowerby’s illustrations for English Botany (t. 451 and t. 865 respectively), while the plate titled “Autumn” owed its origins to plates published in Curtis’s Botanical Magazine, Andromeda tetragona (now Cassiope tetragona) being derived from James McNab’s original (t. 3181; on McNab, see Nelson 1989), and Menziesia empetrifolia (now Phyllocladus empetrifolius) from t. 3176 by William J. Hooker. It is probable that the choice of subjects for the four plates—the first plate, titled “Spring,” portrayed Soldanella clusii

Figure 2. The covers of the two issues of Lothian’s Practical Hints, (left) a: the original 1845 issue with a round ornament and elaborate lettering; (right) b: re-issue of circa 1859–1861 with an oval ornament and plain lettering.
Lothian’s book (see Fig. 2a for original cover design) is not dated, but evidence from contemporary journals indicates that it was released sometime before 23 August 1845 when a review in *The Gardeners’ Chronicle* described it as “a very nice little book” (Anonymous 1845).

The only complaint that we shall now make is that the title does not correctly express its contents: it is not a treatise on alpine or rock plants alone, but on bog plants and water plants as well, and contains very neat figures and plans of a rockery upon and around which to grow them.

In November 1845 the book was noticed in *Magazine of Botany*, edited by Joseph Paxton: “we believe Mr. Lothian is the first who has attempted a separate treatise upon them,” referring to alpines and rock-plants. The following summer, a review in *The Athenaeum* was complimentary ([Lankester] 1846):

This little book contains ample directions for forming a rockery, and for the general treatment of such plants; and a list of those which may be thus cultivated, and illustrations of several of the more beautiful of the species of Alpine plants.

*Practical Hints* is a very scarce work today and is rarely offered for sale by antiquarian book dealers, so it is probable that the original print-run was small.
There is evidence that Lothian’s book went out of print and was reissued between 1859 and 1861 (for its distinctive cover design see Fig. 2b). A copy in the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, is inscribed “Presented to the Greenock Botanical Library by the author July 1862,” and the plate titled “Spring” is signed “Fr. Schenck 50 Geo. St. Edinr.,” not “Lizars sc.” A similar copy (not inscribed) is in Dumbarton Oaks Library, Washington, D.C.

Emil Ernst Friedrich Theodor Schenck (1811–1885), a native of Offenbach who came to Edinburgh in 1840, was a lithographer and is known to have worked at 50 George Street between 1859 and 1861. William Lizars had died in March 1859, and his publishing business was taken over by W. & A. K. Johnston. These facts suggest that the reissue was produced after March 1859 and not later than the end of 1861.

William Robinson’s criticisms (1870)

In his classic book, Alpine Flowers for English Gardens, William Robinson (1870) acknowledged Lothian’s book with utter disdain by printing, within a section headed “What to avoid,” the vignette from its title-page (Fig. 4). He does not mention the name of the author, nor the book’s title, and his commentary was sarcastic:

Figure 4. (Left) a: the anonymous, ornamental title-page of James Lothian’s book, Practical Hints on the Culture and General Management of Alpine or Rock Plants, which was sarcastically dismissed by William Robinson (1870); (right) b: Robinson’s version of the vignette of the peacock and urn from Lothian’s Practical Hints.
The first simple beauty is copied from the frontispiece of a small book on alpine plants, published not many years ago. Growing naturally on the high mountains, unveiled from the sun by wood or copse, alpine plants are grouped here beneath what appears to be a weeping willow—a position in which they could not possibly attain anything like their natural vigour and beauty, or do otherwise than lead a sickly life. The degree of contentment and delight felt by the artist for his subject is shown by his planting the ponderous vase in the centre of the group, and the introduction of the railing is quite beyond praise. …

The ornamental title-page may be entirely imaginary, merely as attractive decoration, as there is no evidence it was “taken from nature.” It is indeed one of the book’s bizarre features—the other is the eccentric pagination. Hay (1941) was not as dismissive as Robinson, but he was describing the book from the point of view of a bibliophile, not a horticulturist with a mission:

Although only consisting of eighty-four pages, measuring 6¼ inches by 4 inches, and containing four coloured plates of alpines, two plates in black and white of suggested plans for rock gardens and a delightfully engraved, vignetted illustration on the title page, it has considerable charm as an example of the leisureed and thoughtful production that characterizes books of the early nineteenth century.

Conclusion

Today, many rock-gardeners would agree with Robinson and The Gardeners’ Chronicle that Lothian’s “very nice little book” did not “correctly” address the subjects of alpine plants and rock-gardens. Yet when Lothian wrote his book in the early 1840s, 25 years before Robinson tackled the subject, rock-gardening was just beginning to be defined and there were few rules. Lothian’s part as a pioneer of rock-gardening and author must be seen in historical context, and his early role deserves full recognition.

Acknowledgments

We are most grateful to the following individuals and institutions for their assistance: Sir William Lithgow of Ormsary, Richard Hancock, Dr. J. A. Gibson, Dr. W. D. I. Rolfe, D. Batty (BSBI Recorder for Kintyre, v.c. 101), W. A. Noblett (Cambridge University Library), Gina Douglas (Librarian and Archivist, The Linnean Society, London), Colette Edwards (National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin), Eoin Shalloo (Curator, Rare Book Collections, National Library of Scotland), Murdo MacDonald (Archivist, Argyll and Bute Council), Eleanor Harris (Local Studies Librarian, Argyll and Bute Library Service), Marjorie Donald (Local Studies Assistant, A. K. Bell Library, Perth), Professor Michael S. Moss (University of Glasgow), Maureen Horn (Librarian, Massachusetts Horticultural Society Library, Wellesley, Massachusetts), David MacFarland (Environmental Design Library, University of California, Berkeley, California), Jim Hinck (Hinck & Wall, Edmonds, Washington), Lindley Library (Royal Horticultural Society, London), John Flanagan (Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew), Linda Lott (Rare Book Librarian, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C.).

The biographical research by WHK was greatly facilitated by the Family History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah. Figures 2, 3 and 4a are reproduced by courtesy of Sir William Lithgow and Mr. Richard Hancock.

Notes

1. His father, John (b. ca.1797), was a native of Monzie, a village to the northeast of Crieff, Perthshire, while his mother was a McFarlane from Aberfoyle. He was probably named after his paternal grandfather James Lothian (b. ca.1767, in Fortingal, Perthshire).

2. The Lothians had at least 10 children during the next 17 years, their first, John (b. 23 May 1842), arriving just 7 months after their wedding. The others were Thomas (b. 5 July 1843), Christian (olim Christina; b. 31 July 1844), Ann Stewart (b. 27 November 1845), Janet (“Jessie,” b. 14 April 1847), Mary Wilson (b. 25 April 1849; baptized 3 September 1849), Helen Stewart (b. 17 March 1851), Robertina Maxwell McFarlane (b. 4 December 1853), James (b. 18 August 1857), and Andrew Wilson (b. 27 December 1858).

3. The castle’s garden, which dated from the 1770s, had been extended about 1830, reputedly with the help of Dr. William Jackson Hooker (1785–1865), then professor of botany at the University of Glasgow. Hooker is said to have provided many of the plants that subsequently flourished at Kilmory. In the mid-1850s, the garden had a reputation for
possessing a “rich collection of Alpine plants and Ferns… said to rank along with the collections in the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh as among the finest in Britain” (Robertson and McKelvie 2000): “In the open gullies, and in spaces cut, as it were, by stealth out of the jungle of low growing trees and bushes, are found little mounds of broken rock, chiefly micacious, between the fissures of which, to the stranger’s astonishment, are found growing, in great profusion and variety, Ferns, indigenous and exotic, Alpine plants, covering square feet and yards, and of sorts which we in general find in gardens confined to a six-inch pot, and carefully protected in a pit or frame…. Notwithstanding the great taste displayed by Lady Ord [sic] for Alpine plants, we did not observe one grown in a pot, nor on what is generally called a rockwork, artificially formed, except in one instance towards the back of the Castle, apparently recently formed…” (C. M. 1855).


5. William Love Gillan Allan had married James’ daughter Christina on the day her father died, and the birth records of their two children, Jemima (b. 1 April 1872) and William (b. 16 January 1874), both indicate that their father was a seed merchant.

6. Castle Semple, near Lochwinnoch, was purchased by John Harvey (olis Harvie; 1753–1820) in 1811. In the early 1830s the gardens were described as “well managed, by… Mr. Lauder, who has the good fortune to be under an excellent master and mistress, Colonel and Mrs. Harvey” (Anonymous 1833). In January 1836 the Revd Robert Smith reported that the gardens, “on the rising ground a little to the north of the house,” were “one of the best features of the landscape” (Lewis 1846):

These gardens were lately formed at very great expense. They contain two large enclosures, surrounded and subdivided by high walls, covered with fruit trees. Along the cross walls in the centre there is a great extent of glass-house; containing not merely vines, peach trees, &c. but a variety of flowers and shrubs. On the north side of the garden there is a large pinery, and behind it a stove house for propagating tropical plants and shrubs. On the south side there is a large green-house; and in the fore-ground an extensive flower-garden, surrounded with shrubbery, and subdivided into plots of different forms, and planted with shrubs and flowers of every name and hue, encircled by grassy borders, and pervaded by gravel walks, “shaven with the scythe and levelled with the roller.” In the north-east side of the fine garden there is an extensive rockery, covered with rock-plants, and encircling a pond, in whose waters a multitude of gold and silver fish play, and from whose centre a beautiful jetée rises. I understand that, though there are some gardens more extensive, and others more remarkable in one or another department, yet there are few formed on a better plan, and in all respects more complete and excellent.

Alexander Lauder was the gardener at Castle Semple in the late 1820s and early 1830s (Hay 1830); by 1841 he had been replaced by James Hardie (age 45) who had six journeymen-gardeners to assist him.

7. W. H. Lizzars had learned the craft of engraving while apprenticed to his father, Daniel. When Daniel Lizzars died in 1812, William was obliged to continue the engraving and printing business. He perfected a method of engraving that performed all the functions of wood-engraving in connection with the illustration of books (Melville 2004). Lizzars, famously, was involved in producing the first three plates of John James Audubon’s astonishing “elephant folio” The Birds of America (Jackson 1991; Hart-Davis 2004).

References


Lothian, J. [1845.] Practical Hints on the Culture and General Management of Alpine or Rock Plants. To which is also appended a list of alpines, ferns, marsh, and aquatic plants, etc., etc. Edinburgh: W. H. Lizars.


