

## Caleb Threlkeld's family

E. CHARLES NELSON

Tippitiwitchet Cottage, Hall Road, Outwell, Wisbech, PE14 8PE, U. K.

MARJORIE RAVEN

7 Griffin Avenue, Bexley, New South Wales 2207, Australia.

### INTRODUCTION

The Revd Dr Caleb Threlkeld was the author of the first flora of Ireland (Nelson 1978, 1979; Doogue & Parnell, 1992), and a keen amateur botanist (Nelson, 1979, 1986). A native of Cumberland, Threlkeld was a physician by profession and a dissenting minister by vocation. He lived in Dublin from 3 April 1713 until his death on 28 April 1728.

Hitherto biographical information about Caleb Threlkeld has been derived from contemporary parochial and university records, from his book *Synopsis stirpium Hibernicarum* (Threlkeld, 1726; Nelson & Synnott, 1998), and from biographies written many years after his death (Pulteney, 1777, 1790). Until the present authors, quite by chance, made contact no other sources were known to Irish and British scholars, but we now wish to draw attention to the existence of a manuscript containing substantial details of Threlkeld's family in The Mitchell Library, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. In particular, the manuscript provides previously unavailable information about Caleb Threlkeld's parents, wife, and children.

### THE THRELKELD MANUSCRIPT: history and contents

The Mitchell Library manuscript, a book of 60 folios, was 'found among the private papers of the Rev<sup>d</sup> Lancelot Threlkeld, late of Premier Terrace, William Street, Sydney', following his death on 10 October 1859.<sup>1</sup> Lancelot Edward Threlkeld was descended from Joshua Threlkeld (b. 29 July 1673), an elder brother of the Irish botanist, the Revd Dr Caleb Threlkeld. It contains, *inter alia*<sup>2</sup>, a transcript of a document that had been compiled by James Threlkeld, the third son of Caleb Threlkeld, although the extant autograph is not by James Threlkeld. On folio 7 there is a subtitle, as follows

The Geneology of the Family of the  
THRELKELDS of Cumberland  
So far as can be truly Traced by me  
James Threlkeld Revenue Off<sup>r</sup>.  
Third Son of Caleb Threlkeld & Eliz<sup>th</sup>. Dalrymple  
his wife, Compiled & Extracted from antient  
Records, & Originals that have been, as well  
as numbers of that Family still living as  
have come within my Knowledge —  
Done in the Year of Our Lord 1748 —

Some of the information in this manuscript was derived from a letter dated 22 January 1759<sup>3</sup> I have reason to be sensible how fast the Infirmary's of age are coming upon me [deletion] & my own manifold defects, & how unequal my best abilities are for such an arduous task as this I propose undertaking in which a due regard should be had to a thorough knowledge of the Family's & their connexions through the different branches

thereof, & be cautious of advancing no falsehood & suppressing no truth, must therefore be obliged to have recourse to constant assistance (as you have spent a life of Sixty odd years among them & have not passed one month Sixty odd miles distant from them) in order to revise correct & like to use the first 4 Rues of Arithmetick to render this work compleat. sent to James Threlkeld's brother John by their cousin Thomas Threlkeld of Keiburgh (or Caburgh).

The manuscript contains some apparently contradictory information. For example, James the author of the genealogy, married Mary Row (or Rowe)<sup>4</sup> and is stated in one entry to have 'no living issue' [f. 23]. On a previous page [f. 20] is a record that 'James Had Several Children by Mary Row his Wife who all Dyed young except one called Mary who was married In Dublin to one James Allen a Lapidary on the 7<sup>th</sup> Day of August 1748. & was buried the 21<sup>st</sup> of the Same Month & Year, she dying the 18<sup>th</sup> & Interred In the Cabbish Garden belonging to St Patrick's.' James Threlkeld presumably wrote the original autograph of his genealogy after his daughter's death, when he had no *living* issue.

### THE THRELKELD MANUSCRIPT: biographical contents

Thomas Threlkeld (b. 1646) married Bridget Brown (b. ca. 1654), only daughter of Anthony Brown of Slack<sup>2</sup> and Isabel Watson of Renwick<sup>6</sup>, and the couple had six children. Their third child, and third son, who was born at Keibergh<sup>7</sup> on 31 May 1676, was named Caleb. Thomas Threlkeld, aged 63, died 'at his own mansion in Keybergh<sup>8</sup> on 31 January 1712. Bridget Threlkeld survived her husband by nine months, and died, aged 58, in October 1712.

While a student at the University of Glasgow, Caleb married Elizabeth, daughter of Alexander and Jennet Dalrymple. Their marriage took place in Edinburgh on 7 March 1698, and was celebrated by the Revd James Kirk. Elizabeth Threlkeld's mother was formerly Jennet [? Dionysia] Shaw of Bucclair, while her father was 'the feudatory Laird of Auchin Houry near Glasgow in the Parish of Badarnock'.<sup>9</sup> Students in the University of Glasgow were not prohibited from being married, as was the case in English universities at this time, nor did marriage prevent a student from graduating at Glasgow.

Caleb and Elizabeth Threlkeld lived at Low Huddlesceugh near Kirkoswald in Cumberland, where Caleb served as a minister. While living in Cumberland, the couple had six children. The manuscript in The Mitchell Library provides some dates of birth but these are in conflict with dates of baptism obtained in 1977 by ECN from the parochial records (see Nelson, 1979). The names of their children are as follows; the dates of birth are those given in The Mitchell Library manuscript, the dates of baptism (except that of Thomas and Priscilla<sup>10</sup>) are from the parochial records.

Name	Birthday [OS = Old Style]	Baptismal date
<i>born in Cumberland</i>		
John	14 April 1700 OS	1 May 1699
Elizabeth	10 September 1701 OS	15 October 1701
Bridget [Bridgett]	13 November 1703	
Thomas	2 June 1706	
James	4 June 1708 OS	[no date in parochial record]
Priscilla	6 December 1710	31 December 1710
<i>born in Ireland</i>		
Mary	[c. 1713]	<b>died</b> 22 February 1715

By his own account Caleb Threlkeld (1726: Appendix [p. 11]) left Cumberland on 26 March 1713 and landed in Dublin on 3 April 1713. Pulteney (1777) stated that his wife and children remained in England for a year until they also moved to Dublin. However these dates are contradicted by the information in The Mitchell Library document which records the birth and death of a seventh child: 'Mary born in Dublin, Maiden lane where she Dyed of the Small pox near 3 years old February 22<sup>nd</sup> 1714/15 In Back Lane.' It is difficult to correlate the dates, but if Mary Threlkeld was born in Dublin, Mrs Threlkeld must have accompanied her husband in the early Spring of 1713, and Mary must have been born soon after they arrived in Dublin, otherwise she could not have been 'near 3 years old' when she died. The lives of Caleb and Elizabeth Threlkeld's other children can be summarized briefly.

1. John, their eldest son, married and moved to London; he had no children, and died in London on 2 April 1765 about one o'clock in morning, aged almost 65.
2. Elizabeth, their eldest daughter, also moved to London, and married John Holford; they had two children, William and Elizabeth.
3. Bridget married Thomas Standbrook, and they had children, Thomas and Elizabeth.
4. Thomas was unmarried when he died.
5. James married Mary Rowe(or Row). All but one of their children died in infancy, and their daughter Mary died on 21 August 1748, a fortnight after her marriage to James Allen.
6. Priscilla; no information is included about her.

#### REFERENCES

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**TRANSCRIPT**

Following is a partial transcript of The Mitchell Library manuscript, providing information about Caleb Threlkeld's family. Folio numbers are in square brackets.

**[10]**

Thomas Threlkeld son of John of Keybergh Maryed Bridget Only Daughter of Anthony Brown of Slack & Isabel Watson of Renwick.

Thomas Threlkeld was my Grandfather & Dyed at his own Mansion In Keybergh the last Day of January 1712 Aged 63 Sixty three —

Bridget my Grandmother dyed the October after 1712 at Slack about the 58 year of her age —

He could remember Oliver Cromwells Shouldiers with their Capa pie Armour when he was a Schollar at Appleby In Westmoorland —

**[11]**

Thomas Threlkeld has Issue by Bridget Brown.

- 1 John Threlkeld, who married Bridget Orpheur  
living January 22. 1759
- 2 Joshua [who married] Temperance Harrison
- 3 Caleb, who was my father, Elizabeth Dalrymple
- 4 Tabitha, who dyed unmarried
- 5 Abigal, Married Thomas Threlkeld
- 6 Elizabeth Married John Beauchamp of Abby<sup>d</sup> ...

[details of various family members omitted]

- 3 Caleb Being at the Colledge of Glasco Married Elizabeth Dalrymple Daughter of Alexander Dalrymple & Jennet Shaw of Bacclair ...

**[12]**

Which Alexander Dalrymple was the Feudatory Laird of Auchin Houry near Glasgow In the Parish of Badarnock.

Achin Houry In the Parish of Badarnock & Barony of Mugdock about five miles to the North of Glasgow in Scotland —

Caleb Threlkeld & Elizabeth Dalrymple were Married on the Seventh day of March 1698 the Marriage was Celebrated at Edinburgh by the Rev<sup>d</sup> James Kirk

For twelve Years they lived at Hudlescough In the Parish of Kirkoswald & in that time had born to them

- 1 John Born Aprill 14<sup>th</sup> 1700 old style
- 2 Elizabeth September 10<sup>th</sup> 1701
- 3 Bridget
- 4 Thomas
- 5 James Born the fourth day of June 1708 all old style  
& Mary born in Dublin, Maiden lane where She Dyed of the Small pox near 3 years old  
February 22<sup>nd</sup> 1714/15 In Back Lane. ...

**[17]**

Batized by the Ministry of the Rev<sup>d</sup>. M<sup>f</sup>. Caleb Threlkeld ...

Thomas Threlkeld Son of Caleb June 2<sup>d</sup>. 1706 Keyborgh ...

## [18]

James Third son Caleb was born June 4<sup>th</sup>. 1708. Cabergh  
Priscilla Threlkeld, Daughter of Caleb & Elizabeth Born [?] <sup>th</sup>. December Baptized 31<sup>st</sup>.

## [21]

Alexander Dalrymple had to wife Jennet Dionysia Shaw, Daughter to John Shaw of Bucclaire, By which he had ... & Elizabeth married into England unto Caleb Threlkeld, she had John living at St. Johnston. ...

An Epitaph by Mr Pope

How lov'd, how valu'd once avails thee not

To whom related, or by whom begot

A Heap of Dust alone Remains of thee

It's all thou art, and what all proud shall be

John Threlkeld Eldest Child of Caleb & Elizabeth dyed

in London April 2<sup>d</sup>. 1765 about one morning aged 65. Born April 14<sup>th</sup>. 1700 Old Style.

## [20]

Caleb ~~el~~ ~~el~~ Elizab<sup>th</sup>. Dalrymple

1730/1 James ~~el~~ ~~el~~ Mary Rowe —

James the first Christned by the name of the whole Threlkeld Family, he being Baptized by his Mothers Sisters Son, the Rev<sup>d</sup> James Paul, who requested he might have the naming of him which was granted him —

James had several children by Mary Row his wife who all Dyed young except one called Mary who was married In Dublin to one James Allen a Lapidary on the 7<sup>th</sup> Day of August 1748. & was buried the 21<sup>st</sup> of the Same Month & Year, she dying the 18<sup>th</sup> & Interred In the Cabbish Garden belonging to St Patrick's.

## [23]

4 Caleb had issue by Eliz<sup>th</sup>. Dalrymple

1 John married & resides in London no issue

2 Eliz<sup>th</sup>. Married in London has issue

3 Bridget Married has issue

4 Thomas Dyed unmarried

5 James Married Mary Roe no living issue

6 Mary Dyed at 3 years old in Dublin.

## NOTES

1. Lancelot Edward Threlkeld was born on 20 October 1788 in London, the son of Samuel Threlkeld, a turner and brushmaker, and his wife Mary. Lancelot eventually became a missionary and was sent by the London Missionary Society to Tahiti in 1816. He died in Sydney on 10 October 1859 (Raven, 1992).
2. The Mitchell Library manuscript, donated by Miss F. Whelan in January 1961, is a complicated document, with much of the principal information repeated in different

handwriting at the end of the work. It was written sometime after July 1778 because it records the death of one Elizabeth Threlkeld on 20 July 1778 and her burial on 21 July in the Cabbage Garden Cemetery, Dublin. She was the daughter of James Threlkeld and his second wife, Mrs Mary McNeal (née Burnet), who died on 12 July 1778, eight days before her infant daughter (who had been born on 12 May 1778). N.B. this James Threlkeld was *not* the third son (born in June 1708) of Caleb and Elizabeth Threlkeld, who married Mary Rowe (see note 4 below).

3. The Mitchell Library ms contains (f. 6) a transcript of a letter as follows  
     To Thomas Threlkeld of Cadburgh  
     Sr.  
     It is not merely from an ambition to make the most publick profession of my sincere love & Regard to you that I take the Confidence of presenting you with this attempt of mine, but because I apprehend it in a peculiar manner suitable to yr. circumstances as you are the present Head & principall of our truly Honest & Industrious Family & moreover I flatter myself both the subject & Substance qualifyd for a favourable acceptance.
4. The date 1730/1 is written beside a line (f. 20) that reads 'James ~~is~~ Mary Rowe'. The date March 1731 is given on f. 23, and is evidently the date of their marriage. It would accord with other dates. James would have been about 23 years old.
5. The Mitchell Library manuscript (f. 9) refers to 'lands in Slack (alias) Keybergh Slack', which suggests this was a locality in the parish of Kirkoswald.
6. A village situated about two miles ENE of Kirkoswald.
7. There are two references to Caleb's place of birth in The Mitchell Library manuscript. 'Thomas the Elder then settled at Keyburgh, & there built his Mansion House (which I myself [i.e. Thomas Threlkeld] do remember part of which [is] still standing' (f. 4). 'In the [year] 1618 Thomas Threlkeld Finished his House at Keyburgh In which my father Caleb Threlkeld was born In the Year 1676' (f. 8).
8. Keibergh is in the parish of Kirkoswald.
9. This is probably Baldernock, a parish situated in the southwestern part of the old county of Stirlingshire. It lies about eight miles north of Glasgow. We have not been able to identify or locate 'Auchin Houry'. (We are grateful to Simon Bennett (Assistant Archivist), Archives & Business Records Centre, University of Glasgow, for his assistance with our research.)
10. The baptismal entries in the parochial records for Thomas and Priscilla coincide with those quoted in The Mitchell Library manuscript (ff. 17-18). James' date of birth is recorded in The Mitchell Library manuscript (f. 18), but was not among the dates received by ECN in 1977 (cf. Nelson, 1979; Nelson & Synnot, 1988: xix & note 30). Because the Mitchell Library manuscript only has transcriptions of the baptisms from 1704, the earlier children (John, Elizabeth and Bridget) are not recorded in it.