

Dunfermline's Industrial Past

William Richmond & Son, Clay Pipe Manufacturer

New Row, and James Place, Dunfermline.

William Richmond was born at New Lanark, Lanark-shire, c1832. In 1853, when he married Isabella Henderson, he was working as a tobacco pipe maker and residing at Back of Vaults, Leith. Isabella's father, John Henderson, was also a tobacco pipe maker in Edinburgh, and it is possible that William either worked with, or for, Mr Henderson.

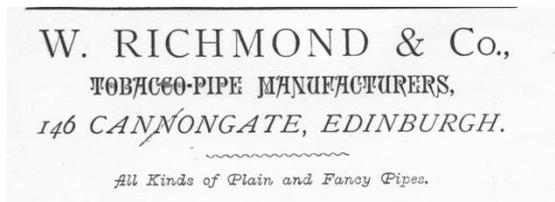
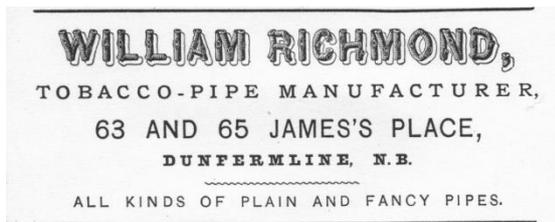
William and Isabella had three children born in Edinburgh, all at the quaintly named 'Big Jack's Close', 225 Cannongate, Edinburgh. The registration of the birth of the third born, William, on 25th November, 1859, indicates that, although he was born at Big Jack's Close, his father, William, was then residing at New Row Street, Dunfermline. This is the best clue that William moved to Dunfermline around 1858/59 and probably began manufacturing clay pipes in the town at that time. The census record of 1861 shows William, his wife Isabella, and children, John, Marion and William, all residing at New Row Street, with William Snr. designated as a tobacco pipe maker, employing one boy.

During the ensuing years Richmond's business must have moved from New Row to James Street, and then to Pittencrieff Street. A notice in the Dunfermline Press of 25th June, 1870, states:- *'William Richmond, Tobacco Pipe Manufacturer, in thanking the inhabitants of Dunfermline*

and surrounding district for their patronage over the last 13 years, begs to intimate that he has moved from James Street to Pittencrieff Street, where he will carry on his business as formerly. – Dunfermline 24th June, 1870.

In the 1881 census the Richmond family are shown as residing at 95 Pittencrieff Street, with a further five children having been born since the move to Dunfermline – See Note 1. By that time the business had become a real family concern with William Snr. designated a tobacco pipe manufacturer employing two men and one female. These are probably family members as son John, then 26, is shown as a pipe maker; daughters Marion, (24), and Isabella, (15), both pipe trimmers; and son William, (21), a pipe time hour worker.

It is probable that by 1881 the Richmond business premises had moved to James Place, Dunfermline. James Place (later to be incorporated into Pittencrieff Street) then extended west from the junction of Pittencrieff Street, William Street and Coal Road, almost to the top of Urquhart Cut. It would appear that the business was located on the south side of James Place, at its extreme westerly end (possibly the premises later used as storage units by Souness, the iron-monger).



The above adverts appeared in the Fife Trades Directory of 1888-89, the lower of which probably relates Mr Richmond's father's business in Cannongate, Edinburgh.

A notice in the Dunfermline Press of 10th January, 1885, states:- *“William Richmond, Tobacco Pipe Manufacturer, James Place, Dunfermline, begs to thank his numerous customers in the town and district for the confidence they have placed in him for the past 28 years, and at the same time has much pleasure in intimating that, for their convenience, he has taken those premises at 31 Chalmers Street, lately occupied by Thos. Keir, Painter, which he will use as a store and shop for all kinds of his manufactures, and where orders will be received and executed with the same despatch as heretofore. If closed, orders can be left at 39 Chalmers Street.”* It is likely that, as indicated, the Chalmers Street premises was used merely as an outlet for the convenience of the public, with the factory remaining at James Place.

In the 1901 census the Richmond family are residing at 75 James Place, Dunfermline, with William, then 69 years, still designated as a clay tobacco pipe manufacturer and an employer. He was still supported by family members with

son, John, (46), a clay pipe maker, and daughters Isabella and Christina, both clay pipe trimmers. A further son, Henry, who would take over the running of the business, was also working for the firm at that time.

William Richmond Snr. died in May 1908, by which time his sons William Jnr. and Henry were running the business. According to Dunfermline Trade Directories this situation continued until about 1912, after which only Henry is mentioned. Henry continued to successfully run the business until his death in June, 1942, at the age of 73, although by that time the demand for clay pipes had greatly decreased.

In October, 1937, an article in the Dunfermline Press saw Henry repudiate a press claim (in another newspaper) that a Mr William Stewart, who had died the previous week in Cupar, was the last clay pipe manufacturer in Fife. Henry went on to explain that although he now ran the Dunfermline business on his own, he had at one time around the turn of the century employed five men, turning out some 240 gross of clay pipes a week. He recalled how he often went around the district with his father's horse drawn lorry heavily laden with nothing but clay pipes. Henry admitted that, as a result of the increased popularity of cigarettes and the introduction to the market of cheaper 'briars', the vogue of the clay pipe had suffered a drastic set-back in recent years. However, he still did good business with the coal miners of Fife, who still preferred their clay 'cutties'.

Moulds, of malleable iron, for producing clay pipes in a number of shapes and designs cost a guinea or more in Henry's younger days, but by the 1930s he only had six in use. The manufacture of one clay pipe was the result of eight different processes, all carried out by hand.



Richmond's clay pipe moulds now held in Dunfermline Museum

Henry remembered a range of pipes made at the factory included the Gardener, a pipe made in a variety of styles personalised for the different lodges of the Free Gardeners, or ancient Society of Gardeners. The right side of the bowl of these pipes (as held in the smoker's mouth) generally had a Masonic compass, set square and pruning knife, with the left side having a design or inscription referring to the particular lodge, e.g. Palm Bowhill, Vine Blairadam, Thistle Beath, Lily of the Valley, Crossgates, or just inscribed 'Free Gardeners'. Another favourite around the turn of the century was the 'Buller', a pipe which commemorated General Buller embarking for South Africa at the head of 7000 men for the Boer War in October, 1899. Buller's successor, Field Marshall 'Bobs' Roberts and Baden Powell also had clay pipes named after them. There was also a boom time for Richmond's pipes when the Forth Rail Bridge (1882 – 1890) was being built. The navvies working on

the bridge smoked 'cutties', and their pipes were named after the bridge, just for them.



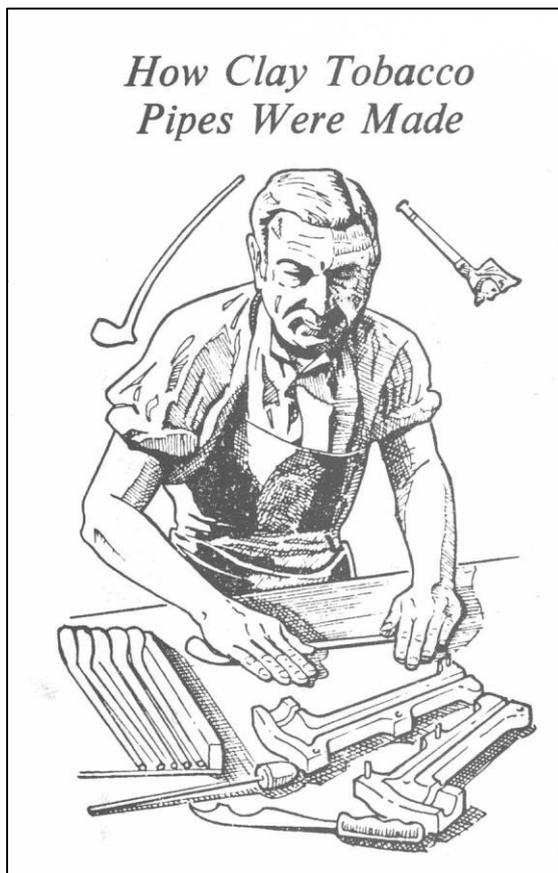
Three examples of Richmond's clay pipes which can be seen in Dunfermline Museum

Coal miners called their clay pipes 'jaw warmers' – they could hold the bowl of the pipe against their jaw for a quick warm up. The miners continued to smoke their pipes (not underground of course) even when the stem had broken off to an inch or so of the bowl. Henry was adamant that he could always tell a hard smoker by his teeth, as four on one side of his face would be worn away by holding a

'cutty' clay pipe. He made one of 'soft' clay for those who preferred it.



Henry Richmond at work in his James Place premises c.1936



Sketch of a clay-pipe maker at work

As stated above Richmond's Clay Pipe Works closed following the death of Henry in 1942, having survived in the town for some 85 years.

Note 1 - William Richmond was born at New Lanark, Lanark-shire, about 1832. On 1st July, 1853, whilst working as a

tobacco pipe maker and residing at Back of Vaults, Leith, William married Isabella Henderson, residing at Crawley Court, Leith, the daughter of John Henderson, also a tobacco pipe maker, working in Edinburgh. The wedding was at South Leith Parish Church. It is possible that young William was in fact working for Isabella's father at that time. The couple had three children whilst residing at the quaintly named Big Jack's Close, 225 Cannongate, Edinburgh, viz. John Henderson Richmond, b. 20th October, 1854; Isabella (Marion) Gould Richmond, b. 24th September, 1856 (Isabella was re-named Marion on 12th October, 1865, just prior to the birth of Isabella 'mark 2' on 15th October, that year); and William Henderson Seaton Richmond, b. 25th November, 1859. William and Isabella appear to have moved to Dunfermline around 1860, where they had a further five children, viz. Isabella Gould Salmond Richmond, b. 15th October, 1865 at New Row, Dunfermline; Henry Henderson Richmond, b. 9th September, 1868, at James Street, Dunfermline; Christina Whyte Richmond, b. 11th January, 1871 at Pittencrieff Street, Dunfermline; Helen Salmond Richmond, b. 17th August, 1873, at Pittencrieff Street, Dunfermline; and James Gould Richmond, b. 24th March, 1876 at Pittencrieff Street, Dunfermline. William Snr. died, aged 76 years, on 18th May, 1908, at 75 James Place, Dunfermline. The cause of death was Senility/Bronchitis and his death was registered by his son, Henry Richmond. His widow, Isabella, died two years later on 18th December, 1910, also at 75 James Place, and also from Bronchitis.

John Richmond died, aged 81 years, on 13th April, 1936, at 227 Pittencrieff Street, Dunfermline. He was single and his occupation was given as Tobacco Pipe Maker.

William Richmond, (25), Tobacco Pipe Maker, residing at 11 Drummond Street, Edinburgh, married Kate Baird, (25), Weaver, James Street, Dunfermline, at James Street, Dunfermline, on 26th June, 1885. The witnesses to the marriage were George Taylor and Mary Baird. There is no trace of William's death in the Scottish records. Check for Kate.

Marion Richmond, (30), Housekeeper, James Place, Dunfermline, married George Taylor, (30), Baker, 68 Pittencrieff Street, Dunfermline, at James Place on 29th July, 1887. The witnesses to the marriage were John Taylor and Isabella Richmond. Marion died on 13th January, 1928, aged 71 years, at 271 Pittencrieff Street, Dunfermline. The cause of death was cerebral thrombosis and the death was registered by her son, John Taylor, 265 Pittencrieff Street, Dunfermline.

Isabella Richmond, (37), Domestic Servant, residing at 75 James Place, Dunfermline, married Ralph Hutchison, (32), Steam Crane-man (Widower), 43 James Place, Dunfermline, on 3rd April, 1903, at 75 James Place. The witnesses to the marriage were Peter Hutchison and Christina Richmond. Isabella died on 18th February, 1952, at 27 Bothwell Street, Dunfermline. The cause of death was myocarditis and the death was registered by Ralph Hutchison, (step-son), Main

Street, Crossford. Isabella was pre-deceased by Ralph.

Henry Richmond, (26), Tobacco Pipe Manufacturer, residing at 75 James Place, Dunfermline, married Helen Johnston, (27), Damask Weaver, residing at 48 Appin Crescent, Dunfermline, on 11th January, 1895, at 48 Appin Crescent, Dunfermline. The witnesses to the marriage were James Richmond and Janet Johnston. Henry died on 17th June, 1942, at 279 Pittencrieff Street, Dunfermline. He was 73 years of age, the cause of death was Angina Pectoris and the death was registered by his son-in-law John Sutherland. His widow, Helen, died on 9th February, 1945, also at 279 Pittencrieff Street.

Christina Richmond, (31), Domestic Servant, residing at 32 James Place, Dunfermline, married Robert Fyfe Morrison, (24), Tailor, residing at Ross Lane, Dunfermline. The witnesses to the marriage were Isabella Hutchison and Ralph Hutchison. Christina died on 22nd August, 1931, at 63 Bothwell Street, Dunfermline. She was 58 years of age, the cause of death was Influenza/Toxaemia,, and her death was registered by her son, John M. Morrison.

Helen Salmond Richmond died on 1st November, 1884, at 63 James Place, Dunfermline. She was 11 years of age, single, and the cause of death was Scarlet Fever; Nethritis; Uraemic Convulsions.

James Gould Richmond.....

The 1911 census shows that Henry, then 42 years of age, is residing at 45 James Place, Dunfermline, with his wife, Helen

(43), daughter, Helen (14), and adopted son Harry, aged 3 years. Harry's place of birth is shown as Aberdour. Interestingly, Henry is designated as a 'manager' of a tobacco clay pipe factory.