

## Chapter VIII — The 1861 Census.

In the 1861 Census the brothers are separated in their different homes. John (54) is shown at Bardowie House as a china and earthenware manufacturer employing 600 men, women and children. He employs also two female servants: Charlotte Gill, aged 50 who comes from Morayshire and Janet Middleton, aged 24 who comes from Dunfriesshire. There is also a gardener called Richard McGravy, aged 42, from Ireland and he has a fourteen year old servant of his own called Helen Cornell who is from Glasgow. Richard McGravy's surname has been misheard by the census taker because of his Irish accent; his true name is McGreevy and he is to stay in John Bell's employ until John's death in 1880; in fact it is he who reports John Bell's death to the Registrar.

Matthew P. Bell (55) is shown as living at their family home in 245, St. Vincent St., aged 52 and employing 550 men, women and children. There is a discrepancy here of 50 employees. Whether John had another business at this period or whether one of the two made a mistake is not known. It is more likely that Matthew made the mistake than John since John seems to be running the Pottery.

Living with Matthew is Robert Reid, aged 21, a 'potter bowl maker' who is married to Mrs. R. Reid, aged 33, a servant in the house. Her maiden name is Jessie Muirhead and the couple have a son, Matthew Perston Bell Reid, aged 1, who was born in the house, There is also a 16 year old girl servant Margaret MacMillan who is from Campbelltown. The entire Reid family were to stay with Matthew till his death and were to benefit greatly under his will, especially M. P. B. Reid and his subsequently born brother.

The manager of the Pottery at this period is undoubtedly one William McLaughlan who makes his report to the Royal Commissioner investigating the employment of children in 1862 or 3. In his evidence he describes himself as having been at the works for 18 years. But there is a very slight problem presented by an entry in the Census for 1861 (56):

Living in a two-roomed house at 39, Kyle St., i.e. round the corner from the Pottery and in property owned by the Bells, there is one James Simpson who describes himself as Potter (manager). His wife is described as born in England and his three children in Sinclairtown, Fife. So, although he is only 32, it is obvious that he has had wide pottery experience. His circumstances, however, seem humble for the manager of a works employing 600 people and in view of the presence of William McLaughlan on the scene, it is reasonable to assume either that Simpson was the manager of a smaller pottery, perhaps the nearby North British, or of a department in the Glasgow Pottery or that he was indulging in a fantasy,

In the same Census, (57) living at 11, Windsor Street we have a 45 year old man who is to play a large part in the history of the Pottery. He is James Murdoch and is living with his widowed mother, Smith Murdoch, his three unmarried sisters and an unmarried brother. He is the eldest son and was born in Hamilton, as were the two oldest girls. He describes himself as 'Managing Clerk Porcelain Manufactory' and was eventually to become manager and then managing director of the Pottery. When he started work at the Glasgow Pottery is unknown but he witnessed the signing of an instrument of sasine for the Bell brothers in 1858 (58) and is entered as at the Glasgow Pottery in the Post Office Directory for 1856; the other witness in 1858 was William Lochore Brown. Two years before this (59) two clerks from the Works had signed as witness; they were Andrew Lachlan and Andrew Duncan MacNair.

The rise of James Murdoch to a position of power in the Pottery is not very well documented. In 1862 he vanishes from the Post Office Directory probably because he had moved to Hillhead which at that date was not technically part of Glasgow. He is found in a terraced house in Oakfield Avenue when Hillhead is included in 1880.

Meanwhile in 1865, another person who is to play a large part in the life of the Pottery joins it in the person of Charles Arthur. Charles Arthur was a man of some experience of the pottery trade having worked for Verreville Pottery certainly since 1850 and very briefly as manager before joining David Lockhart in 1854 as a partner in the founding of the Victoria Pottery in Pollokshaws, at that time a growing village on the outskirts of Glasgow. (60) It is possible that Charles Arthur had been anticipating his move to Bell's for some time since he had in 1864, moved his home from Shawlands, near the Victoria Pottery to a house at 46, Buccleuch St. to the west of Glasgow's centre and not far from John Bell's former home in Queen's Terrace (61). But it would be rash to put too much emphasis on this move since Charles Arthur and his wife were inveterate house movers. Following the moves is made difficult by the fact that Glasgow, and particularly Hillhead, where he, too, moved next, seems to have changed street names with incredible frequency throughout the Nineteenth Century but even taking this at its maximum Charles Arthur seems to have moved house a lot. This is all the more astonishing when one considers that he had seven of a family and his wife seems most of the time to have managed with only a nursemaid and one servant living in. In 1869 he moves to 4 Belmont Place, Hillhead, given in the 1871 Census as 38 Great Western Road. Then in 1875 he moves to 4 Hamilton Drive, Hillhead which in 1878 becomes 2 Hamilton Drive (one of these may have been a mistake in the Post Office Directory). John Bell lives from 1872 at the other end of this street. This house seems to have pleased them since the Arthurs stayed there until 1895 when they moved to Myrtle Bank, Helensburgh.

He was 37 year old when he Joined the company in 1865 and he was still with them in 1895. He was a married man with seven of a family to which he later added two at least. It must be stressed that he joined the Pottery as a traveller since it has been widely put about that he was the manager of the works. From the 1871 Census on, he is consistently described as "traveller", a position probably of as much importance as the manager and, by the time of the 1871 Census James Murdoch has become "Pottery Manager", a post he retains until 1881.

The head-hunting of Charles Arthur could well have soured relations between the Bells and Lockhart of the Victoria Pottery and one is forced to speculate on the reasons for Bells wanting him. The fact that springs to mind is that Matthew Perston Bell had been in bad health for some time and that it is possible that he retired at this time - he would be 57 years old- in order to rest and recuperate. If this were the case then Matthew's position in the Pottery would be shown very clearly. He was the traveller for the works. This would fit in with the fact that John was undoubtedly the dominant partner and that Matthew seems seldom to have been in attendance when land was being bought or any other business transacted. It should be stressed that there is no proof of this assertion but it is a hypothesis that fits in with the known facts.

In 1867 there appears in the Glasgow Post Office Directory for the first time another character who is destined to play an important part in the life of the Pottery. He is Peter Graham who is described simply as "*at J. & M.P. Bell & Co's*" and as living at 1, New Milton St. ,near Cowcaddens. Aged 37 he is a Glaswegian with a wife and six children, destined to grow to at least eight in number. His trade is "potter" and his children, aged at that time between 15 and 3 are all born in Glasgow so we must assume that whatever experience he has had has been local. By 1868 his address is given as 1, West Milton St which may be the same house but by 1872 he has moved to 31, McAslin St. and in 1874 to 27, Ronald St and he has now become foreman potter of the works and is destined to rise still higher.