

Researching the Heaslet Family in Paisley

The family connection to the Heaslets of Paisley is through the author's great grandmother Jane Elliot. Her mother was a Heaslet and Jane's daughter also married a Heaslet.

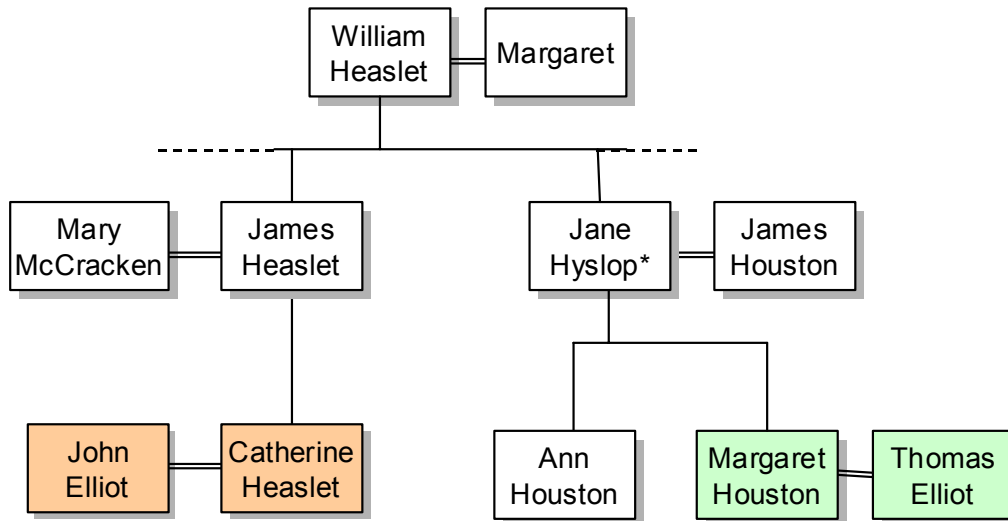
Although the spelling of the Heaslet name has been standardized in this document, there are many interesting versions found in various historical documents making it a difficult task to trace the family. These include: Hazlet, Hazlett, Hyslop, Hislop, Heslet, Haslet, Haslot, Haslett, Hazlitt, Hearslet and Hazlut.

Much like the research done for the Elliot family, the two main sources have been web sites; www.ScotlandsPeople.gov.uk by the General Registrar of Scotland (GROS) and www.FamilySearch.org by the LDS Church. The search began slowly with marriage registrations providing some basic information. Church records on the LDS site were a bit sparse on early 1800's births and marriages but a significant collection of data on some of the earlier families was donated a number of years ago to the Church by a Sandra Naylor of Copperas, Texas. It is assumed that she has a family connection but it hasn't been determined which line that is. Several of the Heaslets emigrated to California in the 1880's so there may be a connection there. Sandra's contribution was a nice addition to my database.

Over time the ScotlandsPeople site has grown and most available census collections have been indexed and made available on-line. The most recent addition was the 1841 census reports that allowed identification of another generation and their Irish origins. Often times, key discoveries are the result of finding older parents living with children (i.e. an entry that gives the relationship to the head of a household). Unfortunately the 1841 census, unlike later versions, does not provide this data so there are some assumptions here. The discovery of William 'Hislop' in the Old Toll House in 1851 makes the probability extremely high that we have the right family connection. Mrs. 'Hislop', Margaret, is a thread mill worker as is one of her sons.

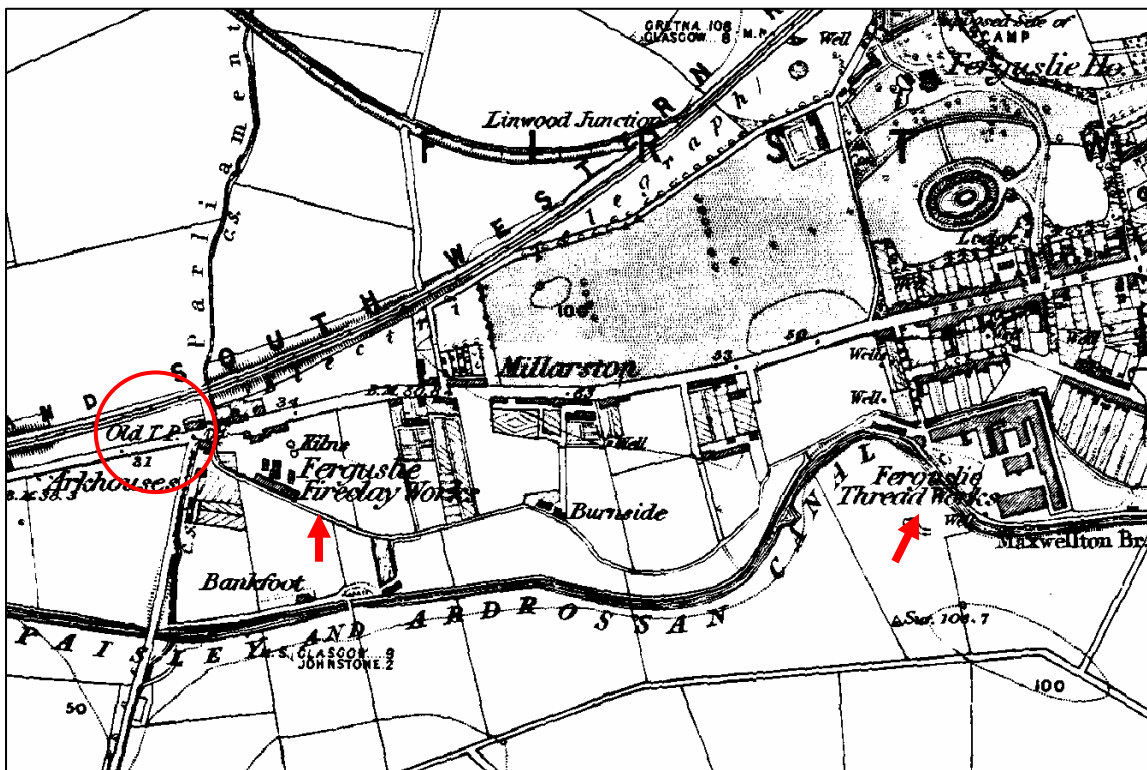
William, born in 1791 in Derry, Ireland, is the earliest Heaslet that I have been able to identify. The name appears to be spelled "Hislop" in the 1841 census of Elderslie, in the Parish of Abbey. There are three 'Hislop' families, one after the other, on pages 17 and 18 of that census. William and his wife Margaret still had two unmarried children at home. The next family on the page is that of James Heaslet and Mary McCracken, which links us to the ancestry data in the LDS files and the Elliot family. We recognize this family from the names and ages of their children. The third family is that of John Heaslet and Ann. We don't know Ann's maiden name. It may be Smith as there was one Anne Smith who married a John Hislop in December 1837 in Abbey parish. There were also two older women shown in the home in 1841; a Catherine Murray (45) before just before John in the list and an Ann Johnson (66) listed just after Ann's children and above a Martha 'Hislit' in the same house. A bit of a stretch to say for sure but these two older ladies could be Ann's mother and grandmother. The young Martha could be another of William's children but may also be a niece. The older children of William and Margaret, John and James, were born in Ireland as were the two older ladies mentioned above. Son Hector was born in Scotland so that would put the family's emigration to Scotland between 1815 and 1823.

The 1851 census contains a very interesting entry under the Heaslet patriarch William who was living at the Old Toll House. It shows a granddaughter names Ann Houston. So which of William's daughters married a Houston? We do have a Jane Hyslop, mother of Margaret who married a Thomas Elliot (see diagram). More research is required but it is possible.



John and Thomas are brothers, sons of Robert Elliot & Elizabeth Montgomery
 * Was Jane a daughter of William & Margaret ?

Much of the known history of the Heaslet family is associated with two businesses that used to lie on the outskirts of the Burgh of Paisley. This portion of an 1864 UK Ordnance Map of Paisley shows the area where they lived and worked.



In the red circle is what is believed to be the Old West Toll Booth house where various members the James Heaslet family were living in 1861. The family patriarch, William, was at this

address as early as 1851. It is located on the Johnstone-Paisley road which changes to Ferguslie Street further to the East of Millarston. In later years parts of the Heaslet family lived at 33 Ferguslie and just off the map further to the East is Newton Street where the Elliots and Williams' lived in 1891. Arrows on the map point to the Ferguslie Fireclay Works owned by the Robert Brown and Sons Company and the Ferguslie Thread Works owned by the Coats family.

Various Heaslets and kin that worked for Ferguslie Fireclay are:

Name	Occupation	Information Source
James Heaslet (b.1816)	Brickmaker	daughter's marriage cert.
Henry Connelly (b.1830)	Labourer (Fireclay Works)	1861 census
William Heaslet (b.1841)	Chimney Can Maker	1871 Census
James Heaslet (1839-1917)	Fireclay worker/Can Maker	1871/1881 census
James Heaslet (b.1859)	White Potter/Potter	1881/1891 Census/Marriage cert.
James Heaslet (1881-1974)	Pipe Finisher/ Fireclay Worker	1901 Census Marriage Certificate

Women from the extended Heaslet family that worked at the thread mills are:

Elizabeth Heaslet (b. 1832)	Thread Worker	Marriage cert.
Catherine (Heaslet) Elliot (b. 1844)	Mill Worker	Marriage cert.
Margaret Heaslet (b. 1848)	Cotton Thread Worker	1861 census (age 13)
Maggie (Ross) Heaslet (b. 1860)	Threadmill worker	Marriage cert.
Kate Elliot (b. 1874)	Mill worker (doubler)	1891 census (age 17)
Mary Elliot (b. 1876)	Mill worker	1891 census (age 14)
Catherine Williams (b. 1883)	Threadmill worker	Marriage cert.
Elizabeth Heaslet (b. 1886)	Thread rewinder	1901 census (age 14)

Various census and church data is available in other files on this site. Let me know if you see any family links/information that I can add to my notes.