

Mary Tasker's family in America

Mary Tasker and her husband William Hannah Lundie brought up their children in Auchterarder, not far from Mary Tasker's home in Coupar Angus, Scotland. Her youngest child Alexander Brock Lundie left for America at the age of 17. Tracking him became difficult until I found him in the 1885 Iowa State Census staying with, an unknown **John Tasker**.

I imagined that Alexander Brock Lundie was very brave, and I am sure he was, for sea travel was not a luxurious business in 1883, but I realised that he had probably gone to his uncle **William Tasker**, Mary's brother who, through his aunt Catherine Tasker's Will, I had discovered had "gone to America". I realised that young Alex had at least had one relative to whom he could go. It appears I was mistaken. He had several relatives to whom he could turn for help.

This pamphlet is about those people:

Hannah Andrew [Donaldson],

John C. Tasker,

William Tasker and

Grace Tasker [Scroggie]



Mary Tasker



Alexander Brock Lundie

Who were these people?

Helen Andrew m Andrew Tasker

- **John C. Tasker, Catherine Tasker, William Tasker, Betty Tasker, Mary Tasker**, plus 2 other children who died young

Mary Tasker m William Hannah Lundie. There were my great, great grandparents.

- **Alexander Lundie** plus 7 other children including **James and Marshall Lundie**

See the attached appendices

For more family information look at the web p
I'll gladly supply the login information

© Veronica van Zyl 2013 E-mail: Veronica@verian.ca

Precarious Sea Travel

Kate Sophia Johnson Tasker in 1942, John C Tasker's daughter-in-law, recalled¹:

... When 28 years of age John started across the ocean for the United States in June 1842. They were 66 days at sea owing to the vessel having sprung a leak. John with others persons had to pump their way to save their lives. The laws governing instances of this kind provided payment for such services by the ship company which enabled him to pay his way.

- Mary Tasker's aunt, **Hannah Andrew** (her mother's younger sister by 5 years), was possibly the first of the family to go to America. In 1817 Hannah Andrew had married **James Donaldson** in Coupar Angus, and ten years later (**1827**) when Mary was 2 yrs old, Hannah had left from Dundee for New York, on the brig *Eliza*¹. The next record I have of the family was for 1850, where they were farming in Augusta, Carroll County, Ohio where the family included 14 children. The following year (1851) James died; but Hannah lived on for another 30 years.
- In **1842** Mary Tasker's oldest brother left for America. Mary was 17 when John left. Of **John C. Tasker** there was no record until I found the 1885 Iowa State Census that included Alexander Brock Lundie. Now a written family history has been published which fills the gap² and records that John C. went to his Aunt **Hannah (Andrew) Donaldson** in Ohio when he arrived in America.
- In **1851** Mary's second brother, **William Tasker** left to join his brother **John C. Tasker**. Two years earlier, Mary (24 yrs old) had married **William Hannah Lundie**, a school teacher who had moved to Coupar Angus from Arbroath. Their first son, **John Lundie** was 1 yr old and Mary was likely pregnant with her second child **Helen**, when William set sail. William joined his brother John in Ohio where John was working as a book keeper

Time line

- 1827- Hannah Andrew (Donaldson) leaves for America with James Donaldson
- 1842 – John C Tasker leaves for America – goes to Hannah
- 1851 – William Tasker leaves for America, goes to John C Tasker in Ohio
- 1852 - John C Tasker and William Tasker buy land in Iowa
- 1853 – Grace Tasker and Andrew Scroggie leave for Canada
- 1874- Helen Lundie leaves for South Africa with her husband Thomas Shearer
- 1877 – Rev John Lundie leaves for South Africa
- 1884 –Alexander Brock Lundie leaves for America – goes to John C. Tasker in Iowa

¹ New York. Registers of Vessels Arriving at the Port of New York from Foreign Ports, 1789-1919. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration. M237, rolls 1-95.

² <http://iowajones.org/families/Tasker.htm> History of the John C Tasker Family



Hon. John C. Tasker

to a wealthy Quaker, James Farmer, in Salineville, only about 6 miles from the farm of their aunt Hannah Donaldson. John C. and his wife **Mary Jane Paul** had two children by this stage.

“Sometime during 1852 John Tasker and his brother William Tasker went prospecting and bought land in Wyoming Township, Jones County, Iowa. John Tasker returned to Ohio, leaving his brother William in Iowa.

In 1855 John moved his family to Iowa, living with his brother William, until he built a four room house from material taken from the hill he built it on, where he lived until he died.”³

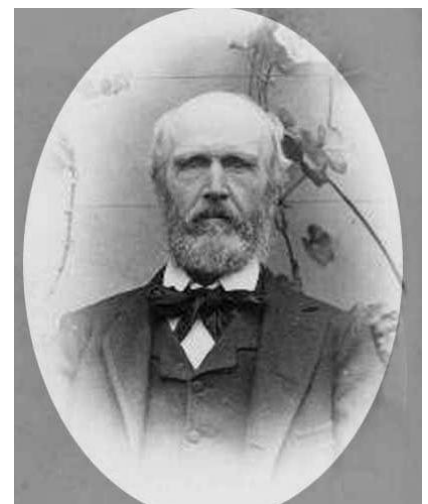
This was the Iowa farm to which Mary Tasker’s son, **Alexander Brock Lundie** went in **1884**, and, as he was recorded in the 1885 Iowa Census as a ‘farm hand’, he was probably learning how to farm from his uncle, which was useful as he later bought a farm of his own in Ohio. Although he was elected [Jones] County Supervisor in 1870, and represented Jones County in the **State of Iowa legislature** from 1872-74, John C Tasker continued farming. By the 1880s three of John C’s sons had developed a large cattle business in Montana where they owned a farm for grazing their cattle. During the disastrous winter of 1886-87 their herd froze, or starved, and they went broke, whereupon John gave them all he owned, except his farm. He had been considered a rich man to this point.

It is not known how long Alexander stayed with his uncle John, or whether he was involved in the Montana enterprise, but Alex was living in Clinton, Iowa in 1891 when he went down to visit the ailing John C Tasker.⁴ Clinton, Iowa which is about 75 miles south east of Jones County, was at that time, a busy logging town where cut timber from Wisconsin was floated down the Mississippi River.

Meanwhile Mary’s brother **William** had married John’s sister-in-law. William’s wife, **Grace Paul** was sister to John’s wife, **Mary Jane Paul**. Two brothers married two

sisters.

William and Grace Tasker brought up their family of 7 children on a farm near John’s farm, in Wyoming Township, Jones County, Iowa.



William Tasker

³ <http://iowajones.org/families/Tasker.htm>. History of the John C. Tasker Family

⁴ {Eureka [newspaper] Jones County, Iowa, USA, Thu 21 May 1891 col 3. “Onslow Items”}



Woman holding a cat is thought to be **Grace Tasker**

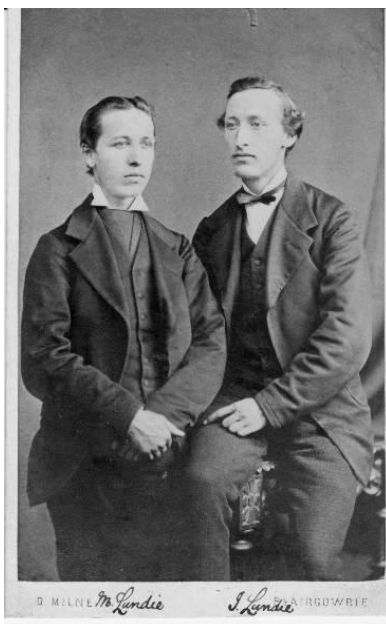
Things are a bit murky, but there was another relative who settled nearby - **Grace Tasker married**

Andrew Scroggie in 1849. Grace was possibly a "half, second cousin" to Mary Tasker. [See appendix for possible relationship.] Grace was born a year before Mary, in Cargill (6 miles west of Coupar Angus where her father, George Tasker was a blacksmith). Grace and Mary undoubtedly knew each other; the community was too small for them not to have. People from Cargill came to Coupar Angus to get married and both fathers were blacksmiths. Grace's parents **George Tasker & Christian Brown**, accompanied Grace and Andrew Scroggie to North America. In 1861⁵ they lived together in Dereham Twp, Oxford County, Upper Canada.⁶ Why Andrew and Grace Scroggie moved to Iowa is not known, perhaps to be near family, but by 1870⁷ they lived in Clay Township, Jones County, Iowa, not far north from John and William Tasker, who were in Wyoming township. Of Grace's parents, George and Christian Tasker, no further records have yet been found.

There is some doubt as to exactly how Grace Tasker was related to John C, William, and Mary Tasker, but she definitely was, for Grace's sister **Mary Gray Tasker** (who married **Peter Grant** in 1856 in Cargill, Scotland) sent, a photograph album which included photographs of Mary

Tasker's children, to her sister in Iowa. It was the labeled photograph in Grace's Iowa album that enabled me to identify the same photograph in the Rev. John Lundie family album in South Africa.

So, far from being alone in America, **Alexander Brock Lundie** had at least 4 families that he could turn to for help, if he needed it. And that was not all, as further research has uncovered that more of Mary Tasker's family went to live in America. Betty Sidey, Mary Tasker's sister had children who settled in America, too, but that story is for another time.



Marshal and James Lundie from the Iowa album



Marshall and James Lundie from the Rev John Lundie album, South Africa.

⁵ Library and Archives Canada; Ottawa, Ontario, Canada; Census Returns For 1861; Roll: C-1060-1061

⁷ USA Federal Census 1870; Census Place: Clay, Jones, Iowa; Roll: M593_401; Page: 32A; Image: 67; Family History Library

Relationship of Grace Tasker to Mary Tasker:

Further investigations are needed but it seems that Grace Tasker and Mary Tasker may have had the same great grandfather, **Andrew Tasker** [b 1700 in Coupar Angus] but not the same great grandmother. We suspect that the two lines are as follows: [See appendix for relationship chart.]

Grace Tasker: Andrew Tasker → Robert Tasker → George Tasker → Grace Tasker

Mary Tasker: Andrew Tasker → John Tasker → Andrew Tasker →
Mary Tasker

Thanks

To Mike Scroggie for permission to use his photograph, thought to be of Grace Tasker, and of the Lundie brothers, Marshall and James, brothers to Rev. John Lundie of Malan Mission.

To Fran Tasker Duncanson for permission to use her photographs of John C. Tasker and William Tasker.

To both for all their collaboration

To Yvonne Lawlor for sharing the Rev John Lundie photo album

There is something strange about the Tasker family for although we have proof that Mary's parents (Andrew Tasker and Helen Andrew) had 7 children, only 2, Ann (born 1811) the eldest, and Mary (born 1825) the youngest, are recorded in the Old Parish baptismal records. The other siblings we know about from the family grave stone, the census records where they are recorded with their parents, or Catherine's Will, and now also from the John C Tasker family history.

At this time some strict Presbyterians objected to the parish minister being appointed by the local lord (laird) and refused to have their children baptised, or to pay for the baptisms. This is the only explanation I can currently offer for the missing baptismal records.

Relationship Chart

Mary Tasker [461] is the Half 2nd Cousin of Grace Tasker [19433]

