

A Copy of Most of
The Red Book

by James Findlay (1819-1904)



(with a 1966 Findlay tree appended)

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List of Contents

References in text and at top of these pages to Red Book page numbers are from original manuscript. Numbers at foot of each page apply to this typescript only, and to this list of contents.

	<u>Page No.</u>
	(see above note)
List of Contents	A) at) beginning
Introduction	B)
Annabella and Barbara Hodgert's ancestors(tree)	C))
The Doctor's Findlay ancestors, children and grandchildren(tree)	D) at end) of book
Findlay descendants of Robert and Mary(Buchanan)(tree)	E)
Robert(the banker)'s account of his ancestors	1 - top of 4
Further notes on them.	4 - 14
Cunninghames(the doctor's stepbrothers, etc.)	15 - 19
More notes about the Doctor	19 - 20
Robert Findlay, 1st of Easterhill(1748 - 1802)	21 - 26
Correspondence with Mr. Muir	27 - 29
The Old Oak Cabinet - various papers	29 - 36
Robert Findlay, 2nd of Easterhill(1784 - 1862)	37 - 40
Uncle James' brother's and sister's deaths	41
The Doctor marries his grandson to Mary Buchanan; the rebuilding of Boturich	42
Buchanans of Ardoch	43
John Findlay(1814 - 1885)	44 - 45
Buchanan of Drumhead	46
Dunlop of Househill	47
Other contents of Red Book summarised	48 - 52
Family Pictures	53 - 55
The Doctor's record of his ancestry	56
Dunlops	58
Bibles and Prayer Books	59
Origin of name of Mansfeldt	60 - 62
Early Findlays	63

Why call it
THE RED BOOK?

Quotation from "Notes on the district of Menteith" by R.B. Cunninghame Graham, published in Stirling in 1895 by Mackay:

"Ancient Highland families often kept a "Leabhar dearg" (Anglice, Red Book), in which they set down what seemed remarkable to them. The unfortunate thing is, that what seemed remarkable to them is generally uninteresting to the modern reader; that which the modern reader would have been infinitely obliged to them for recording was to them commonplace. What they chiefly chronicled were the accounts of fights, of murders, of sudden deaths, marriages, and apparitions of saints and goblins. What we should have desired to hear of would have been the account of the fashions of their clothes and arms, the amount of half-raw meat, or quantity of bowls of porridge, they consumed in a day; if women had rights amongst them, and of what kind they were; and as to whether there were any other amusements at night except the somewhat monotonous pastime of sitting listening to the bards chanting the praises of Fingal and his heroes. Even the bards at times must have been somewhat flat, for in such a climate the difficulty of keeping the Clairseagh at English concert pitch must have been almost insuperable."

INTRODUCTION

1964. The Red Book has been lent to me by my cousin, May Findlay, Carnell, to whom it was left a few years ago by Jim Floyd, grandson of the author, Uncle James Findlay. It is a heavy manuscript book, measuring 21.1/2" x 15.1/2", mostly made up of a collection of trees. These were not, however, the main object of the book, which Uncle James records in his opening sentence (p.1 "I propose in this Book....etc.") when he took up his pen in 1877. One had heard references to The Red Book in family conversation, and its temporary loss among Jim Floyd's effects on his death made me want to have it copied, so that any future loss of the original might be less disastrous. Moreover typescript is less tiring to read than manuscript, and there are so many descendants today who might be interested. So the book has been dictated or copied straight on to duplicating stencils and a hundred copies run off (pages 1 - 63). To this I have added some pages (A to E) to assist the reading of the text.

"The Doctor", and "Robert the banker" provide convenient 'milestones' in our Findlay ancestry, and I have broken up the tree accordingly. I hope the list of contents will help to prevent the superficial reader getting too bogged down, for instance in pages 4 - 14. The constant underlinings have been almost entirely omitted, and the old fashioned double 's' (fs) modernised for ease of reading. Otherwise I have tried to keep for the most part to the exact spelling, etc., even if incorrect today.

To those who find genuine interest in reading about these people of a bygone day, their transport and trade, their medicines, their wrangles and achievements, I would strongly urge this thought:

.....?how many of you, especially those of the senior generation, will put pen to paper in your own way, so that others in days ahead may find lively interest in the commonplace things of today. Already, many family doings and circumstances of the first quarter of this century are unknown history to the majority of the family alive now, and an hour or two of writing by a few of you could produce a record already of interest to many of my age and younger. So, please - another Uncle James or two.

As so many of us today are confused about our cousinships, I have taken the liberty of including under The Red Book title a tree which shows all the Findlays alive today (per the new Burke's Stranded Gentry). And now I rush to print before any more Findlays appear.

One other thing: to anyone who wants to have his personal Family Tree Record filled in (paternal and maternal inverse 'pyramid' for generations back), I commend G.F. Rapkin Ltd., 151 Goswell Road, E.C.1., who produce the blank book, complete with its windows, etc. and Heraldry Today, 10 Beauchamp Place, S.W.3., who are prepared to try to fill it up for you, for a fee, as well as supply the book.

Robert Findlay,
Boturich,
Alexandria,
Dunbartonshire.