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David Bell--b.9-9-1790 at 'Aboyne' Aberdeenshire-- was employed in 1815 as a stone mason on the construction of a road crossing known as "The Mound" which crosses Loch Fleet some four miles south of "Golspie" on the main road south to "Inverness".

A decision was made to build the mound after the Meikel ferry sank on Dornoch Firth during a crossing on 16th. August 1809 with the loss of 100 lives.

A start was made on the construction in the summer of 1815, but owing to bad weather conditions a halt was called at the end of August with only one-third of the 900 yard crossing completed. Work commenced again the following March and the gap finally closed on the 19th. June 1816.

Ten of David and Christina's children were born at the mound and somewhere between 1836 and 1840 they moved to "Forres" which is situated a few miles east of Inverness.

Their remaining two children were born at Forres.

Times were unbearably hard in the Scottish highlands in the early 1800's with extremely bleak, snowbound winters, resulting in famine, poverty and starvation, made worse by the "Highland Clearances" when thousands of small farmers were forcibly evicted from the land (the worst period being between 1813 and 1820). Their houses were burnt to the ground by the greedy, already rich landlords to make room for more sheep and deer for hunting.

It is claimed that in May of 1819 alone there were 300 houses ablaze at the one time.

This resulted in an exodus of people to further south in Scotland, to Canada and to Australia to escape the cruelty and hardship of those dark years.

There have been several books written on this subject, one of them being "The history of the highland clearances" by "Alexander MacKenzie"

We can be fairly sure David and Christina were somehow affected by this state of affairs and we do know that David Bell owned a small block of land in Golspie in 1832 which in 1850 was owned by the Duke of Sutherland along with a number of other properties in the area.

They apparently moved south in search of a better life and settled in "Forres" where David died 2-10-1863 aged 73 years at the Oak Inn -Forres-, his occupation listed as Inn-keeper.

Christina died 17-5-1878 at Inverness.

Their fifth child "David" born 11-8-1823 joined the police force in the Inverness district in 1846 and of his descendants we have a fairly good record.

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### More info on 'The Mound'

There were several houses upstream from the northern side of the mound and it is presumed this is where David lived during the construction.

'The Mound' railway station opened in 1868 (pictures of which are attached,)

There was also "The Mound post office."

There is an article on the construction on page 137 in an interesting book "Golspie's Story" written by Margaret Wilson Grant.

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William Bell—of Drumblade—Aberdeen

Married

John Smith—of Alford— Aberdeen

Daughter

Elsbeth Smith

chr.22-7-1763

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Family of William Bell & Elspeth Smith

Family of Robert Murray & Isabella Smith

1. George Bell       \*\*  
b. 1781  
occ. Moundkeeper

2. William Bell  
chr.2-2-1784

3. David Bell       \*\*  
b.9-9-1790—Aboyne—Ab.  
occ. Mason—Innkeeper  
res. Oak Inn—Bridgend—Forres

m.3-2-1815  
d.2-10-1863  
bur. Cluny Hills—Forres

Christina Murray   \*\*  
b.28-10-1796—Balblair  
occ.  
res.46 Castle st. Inverness

(Parish)  
at Kirkton(Golspie)  
d.17-5-1878  
bur. Inverness

**For Davids Family go to page 3**

\*\* More detailed info available on page15

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**From Page 2**

**Children of David Bell & Christina Murray**

1. Elspeth  
b. 4-3-1816-The Mound-Golspie

2. Isabella \*\* m. 9-11-1845 Robert Tait—or Trail at  
b. 24-11-1817-The Mound d. 31-3-1912  
occ. bur. Kingussie

3. John  
b. 27-1-1819-The Mound  
occ.

4. Robert \*\*  
b. 26-5-1821-The Mound d. 6-8-1849  
occ. Mason apprentice bur. Forres-Churchyard

(To)  
5. David **page 5** \*\* m. 17-10-1848 Helen Saxton Grant \*\* at Forres  
b. 11.8.1823-The Mound d. 26-12-1884 b. 24-6-1829-Aberdeen d. 16-7-1908  
occ. Jailer bur. Banff occ. Matron bur. Banff  
Res. Banff Prison—**To page 4**

6. William Ross \*\* m. 22-9-1848 Mary Dallas \*\* at Forres  
b. 24-1-1826-The Mound d. 2-7-1900 b. 26-4-1828 d. 11-6-1851  
occ. Baker bur. Wilcuma-Melbourne bur. Forres

(To)  
7. Alexander **Page 5** \*\* m. 21-11-1851 Elizabeth Laing \*\* at Forres  
b. 11-9-1828-The Mound d. June 1854 b. 14-3-1826-Forres d. 13-12-1891  
occ. Baker Lost at sea to Aust. occ. Dressmaker bur. Forres  
Res. Forres Res. Caroline

8. James \*\* m. 30-5-1851 Jane Calder \*\* at Elgin  
b. 1-12-1830-The Mound d. 19-5-1883 b. 29-8-1829 d. 20-9-1856  
occ. wine Merchant bur. Forres occ. bur. Elgin

9. George \*\* m. 17-3-1863 Penual Panton \*\* at Urquart  
b. 13-11-1832-The Mound d. b. 30-3-1842 d. 5-1-1893  
occ. Baker Left district Nov. 1869 bur. Inverness

10. Lewis Smith \*\* m. 9-5-1903-Blythfield 1. Mary Strachan 2. Isabella Woodward  
b. 2-2-1836-The Mound d. 9-5-1903-Blythfield b. 1834 d. 20-12-1869  
occ. Baker-Inverness bur. Inverness occ bur. Inverness  
Res. Res. 80 Castle St.

(To)  
11. Peter Davidson **Page 6** \*\* m. 12-6-1863 Jane Davidson at 14 Back St. Forres  
b. 7-8-1840-Forres d. 19-8-1892 b. 1833 Brodie Cottage-Forres  
occ. House Carpenter bur. Edinburgh  
Res. 17 George 4th Bridge-Edinburgh

(To)  
12. Duncan Grant **Page 6** \*\* m. 18-6-1881 Margaret Nicol \*\* at Forres  
b. 5-4-1842-Forres d. 6-1-1912 b. 1853 d.  
occ. Plumber-Cabdriver bur. Elgin  
Res. Bishopmill-Elgin Res. 168 High St. Forres