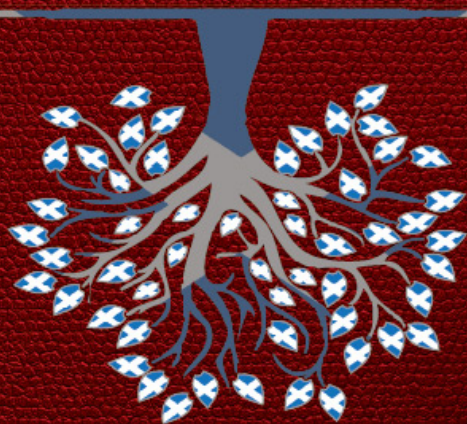


McKerley & Schippers



— BLOODLINES —
TRACES



SEQUEL TO THE BESTSELLER
Bloodlines - Touch Not the Cat



VIRESCIT VULNERE VIRTUS
(courage grows strong at a wound)

Bloodlines – Traces
sequel to
Bloodlines - Touch Not the Cat

Published in Great Britain 2016 by



Would You Believe That Publishing

www.wouldyoubelievethatpublishing.com

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ISBN: 978-90-819514-2-5

Book cover artwork by www.creationbooth.com

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Website: www.touchnotthecat.com

Introduction

The characters in *Bloodlines-Traces* and their stories could be anyone's story; anyone who can trace ancestry; anyone whose great-great-grandmother answered to the call for women's liberation; anyone whose predecessors fought for freedom, justice and equal rights for all, in a quest to improve the plight of the poor and weak in Victorian and Edwardian times.

In fact, these stories *are* what create our lives today. Had it not been for the courageous acts of war correspondents witnessing the atrocities in Gallipoli during the First World War and taking action, many more would have died in the hills of the Dardanelles and less people would now have the opportunity to read what happened to the journalists who saved their future.

We owe our ancestors gratitude for the path they paved for us, even if we feel we would have done it differently. Not only do we grow when we learn during one lifetime, we do the same while developing ourselves through generations of one family and owe it to our children to do the same for them. While the fight for justice has changed in the sense that the fine line between poverty and wealth, fame and obscurity, have different dimensions, compared to the standards of the 19th and 20th century, the battle is still the same in how we all strive to be recognized for who we are and what we are capable of. Many of those answers lie in what our predecessors did before us.

On an evolutionary level, hopefully now more than ever, humanity is gaining understanding of the need for collaboration rather than division, all themes that found words in *Bloodlines - Traces*.

Following the advice of proofreaders, a **Macpherson family tree**, was inserted, adapted from 'Cathy's notes' as used while researching her Macpherson genealogy. The adjoining '**Who's Who**' gives a short description of main characters. **Reader's Notes** can be found at the back of the book, referring to the historical sources parts of the narrative is derived from.

To conclude; we invite you to www.touchnotthecat.com which features reviews and pictures, as well as blogs on how certain chapters and characters came to life during the process of writing *Bloodlines - Touch Not the Cat* and *Bloodlines -Traces*.

Synopsis Bloodlines-Touch Not the Cat

After fleeing Ballindalloch in 1895, to escape the wrath of Laird Gordon Macpherson, gamekeeper's son Alexander Stewart finds his way in Boston, Massachusetts, thanks to the help of Irish immigrant Michael Devane and his son Sean.

The wilful laird's daughter, Katherine, stays behind in Scotland to find she is pregnant with Alexander's child, and even though her father Gordon has mysteriously vanished, and can no longer prevent the lovers from reuniting, Katherine chooses a different path for reasons of her own.

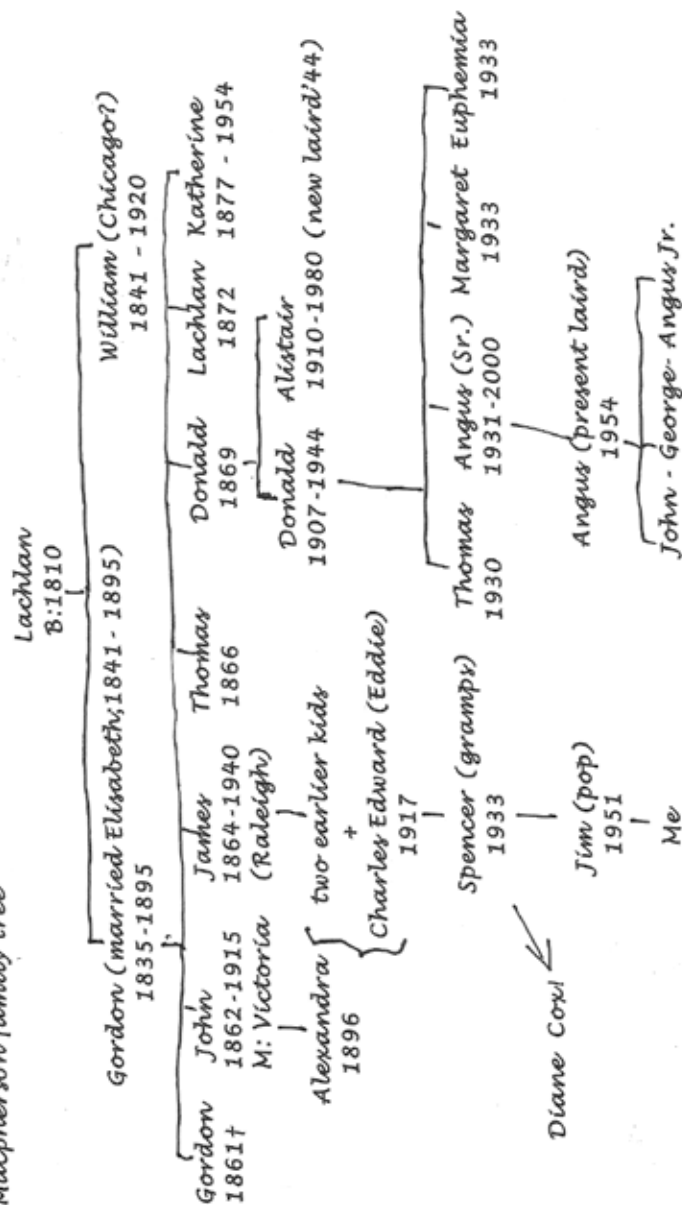
116-years later, Raleigh policewoman Cathy Macpherson succumbs to the request of her husband David Stewart, to give their marriage a second chance and joins him on his genealogy quest.

Next to uncovering the secret of the laird's disappearance, Cathy also finds clues to the true relationship between Alexander and Katherine, the lives they led, and how the consequences of their actions live on in the next generations of Macphersons and Stewarts.

Thomas McKerley & Ingrid Schippers

Bloodlines - Traces

Macpherson family tree



Who's Who: The Main Characters in Bloodlines -Traces

U.S.A. present day

Diane Cox (1949), granddaughter of **Edward Macpherson**.

Jim Macpherson (1951), grandson of Edward Macpherson, cousin of

Diane Cox, father of **Cathy Stewart**, father in law of **David Stewart**.

Cathy Stewart (1976), born **Macpherson**, Homicide Detective from Raleigh, North Carolina. Married to:

David Stewart (1969), Travel Writer

Scotland present day

Angus MacPherson (1954), Laird of Ballindalloch.

Thomas Macpherson (1930) nicknamed Uncle T. by Cathy Stewart, retired Black Watch officer, uncle of **Angus Macpherson**.

John Macpherson (1977), Account Manager for Eastern Europe with the Royal Bank of Scotland, eldest son of **Angus Macpherson**.

Maggie and Euphemia Macpherson (1933), younger twin sisters of **Thomas Macpherson**, aunts to Angus.

Victorian/Edwardian Times

Gordon Macpherson (1835- 1895), Laird of Ballindalloch from 1867-1895, married to **Elisabeth** (1841-1896)

John Macpherson (1862), eldest son of **Gordon & Elisabeth**, married to **Victoria Galbraith** (1865)

Alexandra Macpherson, only child and daughter of **John & Victoria**

James Macpherson (1864) younger brother of **John**

Katherine Macpherson (1877), youngest and 7th child, sister to **John** and **James**

William Macpherson (1841), younger brother of **Gordon Macpherson**

Edward (Eddie) Macpherson (1917) registered in the 1920 census as member of the household of **James Macpherson** (1864) in Raleigh North Carolina.

Alexander Stewart (1875), son of **Jane Black** and:

Robert Stewart (1855), gamekeeper of Ballindalloch from 1874 – 1896

Donald Simpson (1832), butler at Ballindalloch Castle from 1868 – 1903

Mary Montgomery, (1844), personal aid to **Elisabeth Macpherson** and caretaker of **Katherine and Alexandra**

PROLOGUE

***Wednesday 22 July 1896, Ballindalloch Castle,
Banffshire, Scotland***

The pain shot through her lower back.

Around her, servants were busying themselves bringing fresh warm towels and bowls of steaming water. The family doctor fumbled underneath the linen sheet covering her body.

“For Christ’s sake help me,” Katherine cried out, her face reflecting the agonising pain jolting her body.

Even though she was totally absorbed by the process of giving birth, her mind slipped to a dormant layer of anger. Katherine wished she could toss off her constricting nightgown with its long sleeves and high collar. She felt it was suffocating her and it didn’t hide a thing! With the Swiss cotton clinging to her sweat soaked body she might as well have been naked.

Carried on the wave of the next contraction a feeling of frustration rippled through her body. For a moment she wished she could disappear into nothingness, free from all she could not escape, unless she would pass away.

Had it not been for the knowledge, university was waiting for her, Katherine would gladly have given in to a call of the Grim Reaper. She was not ready to be a mother and felt guilty. Even though her life had been turned upside down, she already loved the baby, but had promised herself not to tread on her mother’s path. Trading her maternal rights for John’s consent and funding to go to Edinburgh had been a heart breaking decision, but at least her child would be raised within the family.

Katherine’s eldest brother had his own reasons for condoning his sister’s actions. To satisfy and distract his wife in their childless marriage they were to raise the child as their own, also providing a suitable heir while his sister’s outrageous decision to study medicine would certainly quell all other rumours.

It was time peace was restored and normal life resumed.

Part I

Some people are your relatives but others are your ancestors, and you choose the ones you want to have as ancestors. You create yourself out of those values.

Ralph Ellison, 1914 - 1994

It is easy to say how we love new friends, and what we think of them, but words can never trace out all the fibers that knit us to the old.

George Eliot, 1819 – 1880

CHAPTER 1

Friday 7 June 1895, Chicago, Illinois, USA

The coach bringing fifty-four year old William Macpherson to Mort Pullman's house, hobbled its way over the dusty road, causing the whisky bottle Macpherson was holding to shake its content. He had brought a twelve-year-old to share with his friend. They both needed cheering up. Ever since the strike, Mort's fame had turned into dangerous exposure. He couldn't even show himself in the streets anymore without fear of assault.

Ahead, despite the noise of the galloping horses, unruly chanting could be heard. The loudness of the din told William it had to be a large crowd. The strike had changed a lot, turning the natural division of classes into a mere shadow of its former self. George Mortimer Pullman had been successful with his Palace Car Company. With the depression of 1893 and declining business, he had seen himself forced during May 1894, to release more than one third of his factory workers, two thousand people. To further protect his precarious financial situation, he had also refused to reduce the rents of the company housing of Pullman Town. It had made the people revolt. With the backing of the American Railway Union, the workers in Illinois went on strike, the boycott rapidly spreading nationwide with Pullman refusing to go to arbitration.

Across the country, Pullman cars were not being worked. It was dire as almost 250,000 were on strike throughout the USA. Hostilities increased. Thirty strikers had been killed in a Chicago riot. Marshals and thousands of army troops tried to keep the trains running. The situation was deteriorating.

A heavy object crashed on the carriage roof, causing Macpherson's fiery temperament to utter a stream of muttered curses. He sensed they were now slowing and could hear the tumult closing in. The carriage was only moving at snail pace and the noise of the crowd was becoming louder. William drew the curtains and latched both doors. They were now under siege, the crowd slapping and kicking the carriage. The noise of the throng was scaring the horses, their nervous high-pitched neighing alarmed William. They came to an abrupt stop.

Crack! A pistol fired, followed by the loud hail of Paul, the elder of the two coachmen. "I will shoot dead the next man, woman or child who touches this carriage. Be on your way."

A few seconds of eerie silence followed. William nudged the curtain just enough to observe the crowd retreat reluctantly. A drone emerged from the crowd, softly at first but soon swelling to angry shouts. 'Pullman out, Pullman out.' The carriage started moving,

gathering pace. William leaned back, stretched his legs with a sense of relief, yet cursed under his breath. Didn't they know what was good for them? Hadn't Pullman contributed to the lives of working class families? The ingenious method to raise Chicago was all Mort's invention. He saved the whole town from certain flooding by Lake Michigan, protecting the livelihood and homes of thousands and thousands of people. Mort Pullman had also changed the face of travel, designing the sleeper railway car, making train journeys more comfortable and less time consuming. A man who had improved the world, deserved better than to end up a prisoner of his own being.

Maybe it was the recognition of injustice, which fortified the kinship between Macpherson and Pullman over the years. William Macpherson had tried to create a rewarding life, based on the belief his well-being was down to sheer endeavour, rather than the wealth of his family. As God was his witness, it had not been easy leaving Scotland, but he *had* been successful establishing the whisky import and distribution business.

Unrewarded love had cast a shadow over all he had achieved. William's thoughts shifted to his older brother, even though it was a place he did not gladly go. Gordon had it all; the title, the land, the wife, all derived by birth right, and took it all for granted.

It would have been only natural for Elizabeth and William to wed. From childhood they shared an unspoken bond of two souls destined to be one. Yet their parents had thought differently. Elizabeth was to be the future laird's wife. Now it was William's fate to recognise she was lonely, married to a man who only knew how to live his life through cultural inheritance.

Had it been God's test to challenge William's resilience, or punish him for his sins, he would have understood. Why Elizabeth should suffer eluded him completely. She had always conducted herself like the perfect wife. Yet after ten years of marriage, Gordon had retreated into his own living quarters, suggesting it was best for Elizabeth, so his irregular working hours would not intrude on her wellbeing.

William knew, that if it had not been his brother's duty to produce heirs to Ballindalloch, the marriage would have been one of rational convenience only. He wondered if Gordon ever sought pleasure in anything. His brother habitually seemed to face life in earnest, without a glimpse of humour or zest, making William and Gordon complete opposites.

The carriage shuddered. A wheel had crunched over a deep rut in the track. William found himself struggling, when the carriage careened at an alarming pace.

"Are you okay Mister Macpherson? I am sorry," bawled Paul from above.

"Get on with it man," William shouted.

After what seemed an eternity, the familiar creaking of the iron gates being opened to Pullman's house, somewhat calmed his tested nerves. Sanctuary for a few hours!

Perhaps he should leave Godforsaken Chicago, defy his brothers warning and return to Ballindalloch. Elizabeth's letter burning in his pocket certainly gave him good reason.

CHAPTER 2

Sunday 7 August 2011, Brooklyn, New York, USA

Diane Cox made herself comfortable in the lazy chair facing the flat screen television, waiting for the next rerun of Grey's Anatomy. She'd already seen the series, but allowed herself her secret fancies and felt it was a perfect legitimate way to pass a Sunday afternoon. Deciding on a scoop of ice cream to enhance the experience, Diane eased herself from the chair when the voice of an anchor man came on air. She glanced out of the window looking onto Willow Street.

All was quiet as usual. Brooklyn Heights was a luxury for Diane. Bobby, her late husband, had a successful career in pharmaceuticals with Pfizer and even ran for Borough President for the Republicans. He had passed away in 2006 after a short illness, leaving her with financial security including her fully paid up home. Her kids were scattered over North America getting on with their own lives. She had considered moving to smaller low maintenance accommodation. Dawn, her dearest friend, had recommended the new East River State Park complex.

The words coming from the television now drew her attention;

'A policewoman from Raleigh, North Carolina, literally stirred up some dust in the Scottish Highlands yesterday at an estate by the name of Ballindalloch. The Castle is situated ...'

Slowly Diane sat back down, eyes glued to the screen. A helicopter view zoomed in on a yellow digger, half way buried in the remains of a wall and the image of a young woman appeared in the left upper corner of the screen. The commentary highlighted how American tourist and prime suspect Cathy Stewart had been arrested. The broadcast finished with a light-hearted quip on building relationships with Scotland.

When the programme turned to the weather chart, Diane got up and walked to her laptop on the lounge table. Opening the browser, the screen flared up immediately. On Sundays she often left her computer on with Skype open. She was a keen Facebook user, primarily to keep up to date on what her kids and grandchildren were up to.

She Googled 'Ballindalloch' and almost immediately hits appeared, giving similar information to what she had just seen on television. Diane sat deep in thought for a while, gathered herself, went to her bedroom, and opened the closet holding her winter coats, the top shelf packed with boxes. In too much of a hurry to get a stepladder, she pulled over her dressing table chair, ignoring the thought of Dawn who recently suffered a nasty fall standing on a stool. Diane hauled herself to reach the top shelf. Impatiently she removed some items and tossed

them on the bed behind her, until she found what she was looking for. Carefully, she removed a leather bound photo album, holding it reverently in both hands.

Grey's Anatomy would have to wait.

CHAPTER 3

Thursday 11 August 2011, Ballindalloch Castle, Banffshire, Scotland

"I've had an interesting discussion with Mr Brocklebank." Detective Inspector Peter Duckett confronted Thomas Macpherson.

Born and raised in Govan, Glasgow, in a working class housing scheme, Duckett was a street fighter. In the 1980s Govan was a place where life was a question of survival. His father worked in the shipyards, and his mother stayed at home to raise their five children. Peter was the oldest. By the time the last of the children left the house, his mother was an alcoholic. Peter's two brothers followed the shipyard path, and his sisters worked in the city; one at a bakers shop, the other at an accountants practice. His parents separated in 2002 and divorced two years later.

Duckett was staring across the library table into the senior man's eyes. Subconsciously rubbing his chin, the tall broad shouldered policeman waited for a reaction. Three walls with glass door-enclosed shelves, packed with books from floor to ceiling, made the room seem tranquil and private. A bay window offered a splendid view of a flower garden.

Uncle Thomas, as he was known within the inner circle of the Macpherson family, sipped his tea and smiled slightly at the inspector.

"Drink your tea Inspector before it gets cold." The handsome and agile looking veteran seemed totally relaxed.

"Mr Brocklebank told me you actually directed Mrs Stewart to the exact spot of the castle wall, she should...shall we say... remove? Isn't it so Mr Macpherson?"

"I have no idea what you are referring to," Thomas replied, taking his time to cross his legs.

The detective pursed his lips. "I know your background Mr Macpherson, a distinguished career in the military. Black Watch, right? A Colonel no less, served your country all over the world!"

"*Our* country," Thomas corrected.

"You know well enough what I refer to sir. What you did five days ago was out of character. The media reports must have tarnished your reputation. What puzzles me is how you knew the specific spot in the castle wall."

Curtly, Thomas Macpherson interrupted. "Why are you concerned with the reputation of an eighty-one year old man, who just wants to live his twilight years in peace? Look inspector, all I did was to try and help Mrs Stewart get out of the digger, as I feared for her safety."

"What is your relationship with Mrs Stewart? It seems you get along well. You were seen late on the Saturday morning going upstairs together. Was this in preparation for what was to come?"

"No it was not, we were both heading back to our rooms."

"So you didn't go to Mrs Stewart's bedroom?"

"At my age inspector, I don't think so."

Frustrated, Duckett ran his fingers through his wiry brown hair and stood up. "Let's get back to what happened later. Billy, Mr Brocklebank, phoned Mr Christie and told him you were striding in front of the JCB, shouting 'over here lass'; directing her in other words."

"Billy can get excited. I take it you also spoke to Kenny?"

"What is your relationship with Kenny Christie?"

"Stop playing games Mr Duckett. You know fine well we served together in the Black Watch. He was my right hand."

"Exactly! And it seems to me, he is still your confidante, so he would tell *me* whatever *you* asked him to say. How did you know the body was there Mr Macpherson?"

Thomas remained silent and simply shrugged his shoulders.

Duckett tried again. "The whole thing was planned. We know Mrs Stewart barged in on John Durie's home early in the morning, asking the curator questions on the disappearance of Gordon Macpherson. He showed her some old newspaper clippings from 1895. In the afternoon, by sheer coincidence, she hijacks a JCB and with your help slams into the castle dungeon. And guess what? There are the bones of what will be surely identified as Gordon Macpherson. The poor bugger finally unearthed, after a hundred and eleven years. It was all planned wasn't it? We know you met Mrs Stewart after she returned from Grantown Museum. Mr Macpherson, can you deny any of this?"

"You're from Glasgow are you not?" Thomas inquired casually. "What are you doing here son? Shouldn't you be chasing drug runners, murderers and other nasty people? Why are you interested in a damaged wall and some old bones?"

Feeling insulted, Duckett glared at Thomas. "You must know Mr Macpherson there is still a high media interest. All I'm trying to do is tidy up some loose ends. Off the record, I think this family could do a better job at being so called sophisticated. You must have known all along Gordon Macpherson was under your feet. Christ maybe you've known for bloody years! You convinced Mrs Stewart to do your dirty work."

Thomas Macpherson looked Duckett straight in the eye. "You have a vivid imagination. This meeting is over." Thomas left a dismayed policeman without even a simple goodbye.

CHAPTER 4

Friday 7 June 1895, Ballindalloch Castle, Banffshire, Scotland

Elizabeth Macpherson lay in her four-poster bed, almost disappearing in the huge quantity of bedding covering her thin body. In spite of all the layers she was shivering. Her feet and hands felt as cold as ice. It was early afternoon judging by the daylight streaming in through the French windows. A blackbird sat on the ledge and seemed to be eyeing her, adjusting the angle of its head with abrupt swift movements.

A wave of tiredness flooded Elizabeth, making her feel much older than her fifty-four years. She knew her time was due and felt at peace with it. If there had been chances to change her circumstances, she'd let them slip. She had become too good at hiding her real condition. She knew she should try and fight, but felt too exhausted from being taken for granted, even if everybody always praised the way she supported her husband, her children, had taken care of the young Alexander, and was there to help the sick and poor in the local community. *But they never asked what I wanted.*

Perhaps the only person who had known what really moved Elizabeth was Mary Montgomery. At sixteen, Mary had joined the Macpherson household when Elizabeth and Gordon were just married. Mary had quickly moved from chamber maid to personal aid of Lady Macpherson. She witnessed all children being born and intuitively knew exactly what was going on, quietly supporting Elizabeth to meet her obligations. 'You are my working half,' Elizabeth had remarked once, embarrassing Mary who in her down to earth way felt it was only her duty.

Yet truth be told, Mary *was* taking care of Elizabeth, to such an extent Gordon and the children were oblivious to the severity of her condition. Elizabeth felt in some respect it was better. Why upset her children unduly? All were busy with their own lives.

The only thing she wanted to settle before leaving the earthly plane was the matter of Katherine. Her youngest and only girl had shown to be independent and of bright-witted character. Elizabeth felt it was exactly these characteristics that could endanger the family balance, and felt guilty. She had seen her daughter's struggle with Gordon, had understood her reasons and never said a word. It was too embarrassing. As mother, she needed to set an example. How could she reprimand Katherine on behaviour she could well understand? Elizabeth cringed at the thought. She pulled up her knees to her chin and wrapped her arms around herself, wishing she could remove the shame from her

consciousness. A new coughing fit sent red hot flames through her chest.

Had she possessed her daughter's wilfulness, Elizabeth would have eloped with William and settle down somewhere far away. Yet it had not been part of her character to oppose the hand that supplied her. She had always been a compliant wife, except for one time. In a way she felt it was a sign from God that the union had been immediately blessed with a child. For Gordon, it had been a devastating acknowledgement of what he had always denied. In his own protective way, he cared for his Elizabeth, yet knew she preferred the attentions of his brother. As a result, Gordon had retreated into complete emotional silence.

Now, with the friendship between Alexander and Katherine, Elizabeth felt it was time to allow the couple their space and freedom.