Discordant Voices: Vancouver's Scots Community and the Janet Smith Case, 1924

by

Harry McGrath

Dip. Lib., University of Wales, 1978
B.A. (Hons.), University of Stirling, 1976

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Approval

Name:	**Harry McGrath**
Degree:	**Master of Arts (History)**
Title:	***Discordant Voices: Vancouver's Scots Community and the Janet Smith Case, 1924***
Examining Committee:	**Chair**: Roxanne Panchasi Associate Professor

Jack Little
Senior Supervisor
Associate Professor

Willeen Keough
Supervisor
Associate Professor

John Thompson
External Examiner
Professor Emeritus
Department of History
Duke University

Date Defended: March 7, 2014

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Abstract

On July 26, 1924, Scottish nanny Janet Smith was found dead in a house in Point Grey, then an independent district south of Vancouver. Chinese houseboy Wong Foon Sing was accused of her murder and the Janet Smith case quickly became a focus for the existing racial tensions in the Vancouver area. This thesis uses primary sources to investigate the reaction of Vancouver's Scottish community to the death of Janet Smith. It locates the Janet Smith case within recent historical scholarship that separates the Scottish diaspora experience from the British diaspora experience, while also countering hagiographical treatments of the Scots abroad. The thesis examines two seemingly paradoxical Scots reactions to Janet Smith. First, the unity of the Scottish community's response, symbolised initially by the leading role played by the United Scottish Societies, collapsed under the strain of internal divisions. The Janet Smith case highlighted a fragmented sense of Scottish identity in Vancouver and revealed different civic, provincial and national visions within the city's Scottish community. Second, this internal disunity existed alongside an unconscious broad range of shared assumptions about power and where it should lie as the Scots patrolled the borders of their ethnic authority against a critical threat from "other". In this respect they succeeded in preserving a system of "inclusion" and "exclusion" beyond the Janet Smith years.

Keywords: Janet Smith; Scottish; Chinese; race; ethnicity; Klu Klux Klan; Scottish Societies

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Chapter 1.

The Janet Smith "Murder"

On July 26, 1924, twenty-two year old Janet Smith was found with a bullet in her head. The Bakers, in whose house she died, had met her in London, England and hired her as a nanny. Smith was born in Perth, Scotland, but her mother was Norwegian and her father of "Irish, English and Scottish ancestry".[1] One author has described her as a "salad of racial genes"[2] but, as far as the Scottish community in Vancouver was concerned, Janet Smith was no salad. She was not only a "Scot" in an uncomplicated sense, but an innocent, angelic, "lassie."

The Bakers' house was in the then-independent district of Point Grey. The Corporation of Point Grey was established on January 1, 1908, and had previously been a part of the Corporation of the District of South Vancouver. Point Grey had its own police force and the first investigator to arrive on the scene was one of its members. Constable Green of the Point Grey Police conducted an investigation of dazzling incompetence before declaring the death a suicide. Remarkably, the Vancouver coroner agreed with Green but the Scottish community was outraged and demanded a second enquiry. The body was exhumed a month later and, this time, it was concluded that Smith had been murdered.

[1] Scott Kerwin, "The Janet Smith Bill of 1924 and the Language of Race and Nation in British Columbia," B.C. Studies, 121 (Spring 1999), 86.

[2] Kerwin, "Janet Smith Bill," 86.

Suspicion fell on Wong Foon Sing, a Chinese houseboy, and he was promptly kidnapped and roughed up in a failed attempt to elicit a confession. In March 1925, Wong Foon Sing was kidnapped a second time and taken to a house on 25th Avenue, Vancouver where he was held for two months. Released in May, he was immediately arrested and charged with the murder of Janet Smith. His second kidnapping resulted in charges being laid against the President and the Secretary of the United Council of Scottish Societies, David Patterson and Jessie Strachan, respectively, as well as Point Grey Police Commissioners H.O. MacDonald and H.P. McRaney, Police Chief John Murdoch, Detective Sergeant Percy Kirkham, and insurance agent A.S. Matthew.

From Janet Smith's death in July 1924 until the trial of Wong Foon Sing, the star-crossed pair and everything that attended them dominated the news in all the Vancouver daily newspapers and periodic journals. There were issues of class, race and gender that the newspapers found irresistible. The Bakers were related to millionaire industrialist Major-General Alexander Duncan McRae who lived at the Hycroft mansion and were members of the high society in Vancouver.[3] As such, they were susceptible to accusations of moneyed conspiracy and class exploitation.[4] The suspicion that a Chinese man had murdered a white woman, and perhaps had had some kind of romantic relationship with her, gave the city's anti-Asian racism a personal dimension. Finally, the almost universal insistence of the white population on Janet Smith's sexual and moral purity coalesced with prevailing notions of Asian perfidy and resulted in the

[3] Hycroft is now the University Women's Club of Vancouver.

[4] The labour movement, for instance, thought that nannies were no better than white slaves and objected to Wong Foon Sing being paid more than Janet Smith. See "Janet Smith and 'Little Yellow Men,'" *Labour Statesman* (October 10, 1924), 1.

Janet Smith Bill, the intention of which was to prevent White females and "Oriental" males from working together in the same premises.[5]

The Vancouver newspapers were also seduced by a wealth of what would nowadays be called "tabloid fodder" - drug running in the Baker firm, raucous crowds at the hearings, politicians under fire, a "clairvoyant" who told stories of a wild party at the Baker house the night Janet died, and so on. Janet Smith's resting place might have been chosen to contrast with the clamour that followed her internment. Her remains are in a quiet corner of Mountain View Cemetery on 41st Avenue in Vancouver. The inscription on her grave stone reads, "On earth, one gentle soul the less; in heaven one angel more." But the inscription on the Royal Scottish coat of arms, "Nemo me impune lacessit", which translates as "No one provokes me with impunity", better represented the mood of some sections of the Vancouver Scottish community as they as they set out to bring someone to account.

In *To the Ends of the Earth: Scotland's Global Diaspora,* T.M. Devine criticizes what he terms "The Burns Supper School of Scottish History" and accuses authors such as Arthur Herman and Duncan Bruce of promoting notions of Scottish exceptionalism.[6] Devine argues that, as a relatively small country in a union with a much larger neighbour, Scotland is strongly tempted "towards boosterism and ethnic conceit about past achievements as a spurious compensation for the risks of inferiority and

[5] Kerwin,"The Janet Smith Bill," 86.

[6] T. Devine, *To the Ends of the Earth: Scotland's Global Diaspora* (London: Allen Lane, 2011)

A. Herman, *The Scottish Enlightenment* (London: Fourth Estate, 2002).

D. Bruce, *The Mark of the Scots: Their Astonishing Contributions to History, Science, Democracy, Literature and the Arts* (London: Kensington Publishing, 1998).

provincialism." This is especially so, Devine argues, "when the Scottish impact on the British Empire is under consideration."[7]

The Scottish diaspora in Canada has a strong and enduring tradition of Scottish boosterism, with a focus on the achievements of the Scots. A seminal essay collection published in the 1970s declared that "the history of Canada is to a certain extent the history of the Scots in Canada."[8] It was criticized by one Scottish historian for not containing a single negative reference.[9] More recently, books like Ken McGoogan's *How the Scots Invented Canada*[10] have given Canada a Hermanesque makeover. There is some evidence in social media that the conflation of Scotland and its descendents in Canada continues even though both countries are increasingly multicultural. For instance, on August 3, 2013, Scots-Canadian journalist John Ivison tweeted from the Glengarry Highland Games: "Thousands of Canadians at Glengarry celebrating Scottish culture. They were completely comfortable doing so because it's their culture too."[11]

Paradoxically, Devine also identifies Canada as "one country where the successful Scot has been recently tested and challenged by serious historical enquiry."[12] However, the research that he cites is focussed almost entirely on the question of whether or not Scots in Canada were disproportionately represented in the industrial

[7] Devine, *To the Ends of the Earth,* 12.

[8] W. Stanford Reid, ed., *The Scottish Tradition in Canada,* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976), ix.

[9] Edward J. Cowan, "The Myth of Scotch-Canada" in M. Harper and M. Vance eds Myth, *Migration and the Making of Memory: Scotia and Nova Scotia c.1700-1990,* ed. Margery Harper and Michael Vance (Halifax: Gorsebrook Research Institute, 1999), 51.

[10] Ken McGoogan, *How the Scots Invented Canada* (Scarborough: HarperCollins, 2010).

[11] Ivison, John (@IvisonJ). "Canadians at Glengarry celebrating Scottish culture. They were completely comfortable doings so because it's their culture too." August 3, 2013, 6:12 a.m. Tweet.

[12] Devine, *To the Ends of the Earth*, 158.

elite of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and the degree to which Scottish migrants in Canada acted in concert with each other. The work of Douglas McCalla on the ethnic background of selected business groups demonstrates that the extent of Scottish influence varied from place to place within Canada and was concentrated in particular industries such as banking.[13] Devine's conclusion that "vast majority of [Scots] were not members of these relatively small charmed coteries" is an interesting but limited response to the application of the "Burns Supper School" to the history of the Scots in Canada.[14]

Challenging Scottish boosterism is a sub-theme in Devine's study of the diaspora. Its overarching aim, as the title suggests, is to separate the experience of the Scottish diaspora from the experience the British diaspora, and to assess the degree to which that is possible. He states that: "By focussing on the Scots, this volume, while maintaining the broader [British] context, has the wider aspiration of trying to demonstrate that the individual nations of Britain still do merit specific consideration in their own right as part of the broader British dynamic."[15]

The constitution and circumstances of the Scottish community in Vancouver in the 1920s provide both a potential antidote to "boosterism and ethnic conceit" and an ideal opportunity to examine the Scottish experience partially separated from the British one. First, when a young "Scottish" nanny died under mysterious circumstances in a Vancouver mansion and a Chinese houseboy was accused of murdering her, the

[13] Douglas McCalla, "Sojourners in the Snow? The Scots in Business in Nineteenth-Century Canada", in Rider and McNabb, ed. *A Kingdom of the Mind* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006).

[14] Devine, *To the Ends of the Earth*, 162.

[15] Devine, *To the Ends of the Earth*, xvi.

Vancouver Scottish community led the response. Second, the proportion of Scots to general population in the city was relatively high and the Scottish community was formed into numerous Scottish societies. The community's subsequent reaction, which included kidnappings, torture, anti-Asian racism, and the encouragement of the Ku Klux Klan, could hardly be further from the Burns Supper School. Third, the response of the Vancouver Scots was activated and represented by the newly formed United Council of Scottish Societies, which gave the impression, evidenced by the routine use of the word "Clan" in popular literature concerning Janet Smith, that the Scots acted in unison.

However, the notion that the Scots were undermined by their own disunity can also be seen as a narrow, internal perspective. A broader reading of the Janet Smith case suggests a Scottish community united in patrolling the borders of ethnicity against a sudden and critical threat to the community's sense of its own power and authority. Willeen Keough has argued that:

> Ethnicity is an ongoing process of negotiation – a site of contentious intercultural dialogue between groups through which difference is created, redefined and maintained. The concept of dialogue [includes] the potential for dissonance, for the conversation of ethnicity involves expressions of inclusion and exclusion whereby a given group essentializes its own cultural difference vis a vis that of an 'other' group or groups.[16]

The Janet Smith case saw the Scottish community in Vancouver reinforce its view of itself as part of the Canadian "nation building" project, genitors and pillars of the Vancouver civic establishment, and defenders of British justice. And while the Chinese community in Vancouver had long been regarded as "other", the death of Janet Smith

[16] Keough, Willeen. "Ethnicity as Intercultural Dialogue Eighteenth- and Nineteenth Century Newfoundland." *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies*, 31, No 1 (Spring 2005), p18.

provided an opportunity for the Scots to describe cultural difference in ways that gave full and public expression to notions of Chinese exclusion. While internal disunity eventually undermined the Scottish community's response to the Janet Smith, the Scots also unconsciously exercised a broad unity when it came to restating their own claim to power.

1.1. Methodology and Sources

The "imprisonment" of Scottishness in the British social life of the city and the subsuming of Scottishness in Britishness in the study of the history of Vancouver creates problems in identifying primary sources. Though the United Council of Scottish Societies, as spokespersons for the Scottish community, should be an obvious "Scottish" source, it has left behind no records other than short newspaper quotations on the issue of justice for Janet Smith. The vast majority of the Scottish societies which made up the United Council's membership left behind no records of any description.

It is not surprising, perhaps, that the "Scottish" records that have survived concerning the case are those of some of the men of the community; men controlled not only the most powerful ethnic associations, but the parts of the media that could be considered peculiarly Scottish. The three main primary sources available are described below:

1. *The Beacon* was a magazine that was written and printed by Reverend Duncan McDougall who ministered to a working class, Highland-emigrant congregation in the Free Presbyterian church located at Guelph and 11th Street in Vancouver. McDougall was instrumental in bringing the Janet Smith issue to the attention of the wider Scottish community. He wrote extensively on the case in his magazine and attempted to link it to a number of radical causes that he promoted.

2. *British Columbia Monthly Magazine* was under the editorship of a Scot named D. C. Chalmers, and it was closely linked to the Scottish Society of Vancouver, a literary and historical society founded in 1921 with Chalmers as an executive member. Chalmers published several commentaries on the Janet Smith case that were relatively moderate in tone and often countered some of McDougall's wilder assertions.
3. The minutes of the Vancouver St. Andrew's and Caledonian Society contain entries concerning the Janet Smith case. Two of the accused kidnappers were members and their defence was a matter of some urgency to the society.

Though this thesis is primarily a study of ethnicity, the nature of the Janet Smith case makes it inevitable that it will intersect with issues of gender, class, race and religion. There is a growing awareness of the need to look more closely at the part played by women in "The Scottish Empire" but the problem of locating Scottish voices in the Janet Smith affair is exacerbated when trying to assess the part played by Scottish women.[17] The presence of the Scottish women at the trial and inquests, and on the balcony of the Legislature during the debate on the Janet Smith Bill, would seem to be indicative of a pressing female interest in the affair. It is likely that Scottish women identified on a personal level with Janet Smith, and Scott Kerwin has argued that fear of miscegenation was also a motivation for these women.[18] It is possible, too, that the Janet Smith case, in providing an opportunity for the Scottish women to promote the separation of Chinese men and White women in the workplace, also empowered them to address the issue of their own "separate sphere" and move closer to the powerful Scottish fraternities from which they had been excluded. Finally, the affair provided an opportunity for the Scottish women to flex their political muscle in a very public way, the provincial franchise having been extended to females only six years earlier. Although all the sources were produced

[17] Bruce P. Lenman, "The Scottish Empire," accessed March 17, 2005, http://www.historyscotland.com/bookreviews/scottishempire.html

[18] See Kerwin, "The Janet Smith Bill," 86.

by men, what they have to say and what they fail to say about Janet Smith is sometimes enlightening as far as gender relations in the local Scottish community were concerned.

In class terms, the Scottish Society of Vancouver appears to have had an elite membership, and the *British Columbia Monthly* was pitched at a similar readership; the St. Andrew's and Caledonian Society is more middle class in composition; and McDougall, as mentioned, ministered to a working-class Highland congregation in East Vancouver. However, one of the Scottish Society's members was a well known butcher and some of its members were also St Andrew's members; further, McDougall's magazine does not seem to have been aimed exclusively at the members of his own parish and it may have been his way of attempting to connect with what he considered to be a more intellectual, middle class audience. Robert McDonald's observation that before the First World War there was a "middling" class in Vancouver which confounded easy notions of class separation[19] also confounds simplistic attempts to separate Scottish groups in the city by class. In religious terms, all three primary sources derive from the relationship between "Scottishness" and Presbyterianism, though the fracturing of the Presbyterian tradition complicates the relationship and defies the easy synonymy observed by Devine and others. McDougall was a working minister in the Free Presbyterian tradition; the *British Columbia Monthly* was a direct descendent of the magazine of the first Presbyterian College in Vancouver and it promoted a self-consciously "liberal" Presbyterianism; and the St. Andrew's and Caledonian Society, despite having a Presbyterian minister as a permanent executive member and a solidly Presbyterian membership, does not seem to have been particularly concerned with

[19] McDonald, *Making Vancouver*, xix.

religious matters even though experience of that religious culture was part of its ethnic identity.

The Janet Smith case has been rendered in simple narratives. It was a murder mystery, a quest for justice, a law and order issue, or a story of racial prejudice. In reality, it was a complex case which highlighted a range of political and social concerns. These concerns were engaged by a Scottish community which has also been portrayed in simplistic, clannish terms but had its own complex and multi-faceted concepts of identity. There were competing agendas and identity-rifts in the Scottish community that were exacerbated by the Janet Smith case. The Reverend McDougall viewed the case through the lens of Free Presbyterian theology of election and punishment and used it to emphasize racial issues and bolster racist causes such as the Ku Klux Klan, which was steeped in Scottish origin myths; the *British Columbia Monthly*, drawing on a self-consciously moderate Presbyterian tradition allied to notions of "British" justice and bolstered by "a limited and selective iconization"[20] of Scottish history and literature, used the Janet Smith case to oppose extremism; and the St. Andrew's and Caledonian Society saw the case as a threat to the dominant role of some of their members in the civic affairs of the city and were prepared to break the law in defence of those members.

Behind these different motivations lurked differences in notions of "Scottishness." This thesis will demonstrate that these differing notions of Scottishness existed in the Vancouver community well before Janet Smith but that the stress that the case placed on the community served to highlight them. Each of the primary sources explored in the thesis drew on different Scottish myths and combined them with civic, provincial and

[20] Pittock, *Invention of Scotland*, 82.

national visions in their new country. In the end, the complex nature of the Janet Smith case, added to the complex and fragmented sense of Scottish identity in Vancouver, proved too much, and the community alliance collapsed even before it was obvious that the case would remain unsolved. The Janet Smith case, though sometimes cited as an example of a Scottish community working in unison, actually underscored the essential disunity of the Scots in Vancouver, a disunity that extended not only to competing notions of how they should separate as "Scots" but how they should assimilate as Scottish-Canadians. The early stages of the Janet Smith affair, however, saw the Scots in Vancouver united against what they saw as a critical attack on their authority.

1.2. Patrolling the Borders of Ethnicity

May 7, 1925, saw a very public, if one-sided, conversation around ethnic inclusion and exclusion. In the middle of a heat wave, Vancouver staged its own version of the court scene from Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Wong Foon Sing was presented at Point Grey Municipal Hall in Kerrisdale for a preliminary hearing on a charge of having murdered Janet Smith. According to the *Vancouver Sun*, the prisoner "appeared healthy physically when he took his place in the dock. It had been several weeks since he underwent the severe treatment at the hands of his abductors which fractured his skull, broke several ribs and made him deaf in one ear."[21] The *Daily Province* reported that, "His big brown eyes traced the courtroom again and again as he apparently searched for someone he knew."[22] He would have eventually spotted such a person as there were four other Chinese men in the courtroom – Wong's brother, his

[21] *Vancouver Sun* (May 8, 1925), 1.
[22] *Daily Province* (May 8, 1925), 1.

uncle, a reporter for the *Chinese Morning News* and an officer of the Chinese Benevolent Association[23] - this despite the fact that Chinese spectators had been banned entirely from the previous two inquests. Many of the other spectators in the courtroom were "women members of the Scottish societies." These women, according to author Edward Starkins, were "a group that had gained a reputation for its unruly behaviour."[24]

Those who could not gain entry to the small courtroom situated "a little below the level of the ground" watched through the windows "although it was evident they could hear nothing."[25] Wong Foon Sing could hear but did not understand, and the first session of evidence ended with an observation by the defence that no effort had been made to translate for the accused. The services of the Provincial Police interpreter, Foon Sien, were rejected by defence lawyer J.H. Senkler on the grounds that he "was associated with the provincial police in the first kidnapping of the accused before the second inquest."[26]

After several days of evidence, Magistrate G.R. McQueen found that the houseboy should stand trial and he was committed to Oakalla Prison for five months until the Fall Assizes. Local newspapers found different ways to support the judgement. In the *Province* the first report of the decision to try Wong shared a column with the news that Janet Smith's mother had been seriously ill and her father was showing signs of

[23] *Vancouver Sun* (May 12, 1925) 1. These four spectators allowed the *Sun* reporter to declare that, "The Chinese element […] was strongly represented."

[24] Edward Starkins, *Who Killed Janet Smith?* (Vancouver: Anvil Press, 1984), 158.

[25] *Vancouver Sun* (May 8, 1925), 1.

[26] *Vancouver Sun* (May 8, 1925), 1.

strain as a result of the death of their daughter.[27] The *Vancouver Sun* ran a particularly virulent editorial with the headline "Keep Canada White". The editorial observed that "the brown and yellow inhabitants of Asia have become products of a downward economic evolution," and "Socially, the Oriental is a menace in Canada because for straight biological reasons his blood will not mix with ours."[28]

Wong Foon Sing was led out of the courtroom by Point Grey policeman Percy Kirkham who was later to join him at the Fall Assizes, charged with involvement in Wong's kidnapping. Authors Ian MacDonald and Betty O'Keefe have observed that "perceived prudence took precedence over weak prosecution",[29] and Wong's chances of release were certainly not enhanced by the degree to which the trial was carried out in social and physical spaces that were dominated by the local Scottish Community. The courthouse was in "Kerrisdale" (after "Kerrydale" a private house in Scotland), he was before Magistrate McQueen, and the majority of the seats were occupied Scottish women. An "affluent, well-planned area,"[30] Point Grey had one of the highest proportions of Scots to total population - 3, 642 to 13,736 – of any municipality, township or subdivision in the province, and only 614 "Chinese and Japanese."[31] Finally, the civic

[27] *Province* (May 12, 1925), 1.

[28] *Vancouver Sun* (May 12, 1925), 10.

[29] Ian MacDonald and Betty O'Keefe*, Canadian Holy War: A Story of Clans, Tongs and Bigotry* (Surrey: Heritage House, 2000), 121.

[30] Patricia Roy, *Vancouver: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: Lorimer, 1980), 68.

[31] Dominion Census 1921.

authority and local police force, from the Reeve to the constabulary, were dominated by Scots.[32]

1.3. The Scots and the Chinese in Vancouver

Vancouver in the 1920s was one of the places in the world where a significant Scottish community existed along with a significant Chinese one, albeit in different spaces and cultures. The works of Peter Ward and Patricia Roy have established the nature and extent of the anti-Asian feeling that existed within the white community in British Columbia before the Janet Smith years. However, they do not single out the Scots in any particular way.[33] It was white Anglo-Protestant "British Columbians," Roy argues, who wanted to make theirs a "white man's province" and eventually did so with the 1923 Chinese exclusion act. The act was driven by an enthusiastic electorate "bound up with the universal ideas of the place of race in economic, social and political relations."[34]

Popular analysis of the effect of the Janet Smith case on the Chinese community in Vancouver has been positively spun in a way that downplays the enduring nature of race as a system of difference and power inequity in the city. The murder took place only a year after the exclusion act, and the narrator in Sky Lee's novel, *Disappearing Moon*

[32] Anecdotal evidence of the "Scottishness" of Point Grey was provided by James Balfour Buchanan who was born in that district in 1924. He observed that "everybody in the place seemed to be Scottish." James Balfour Buchanan interview, "Scottish Voices from the West: the SFU Centre for Scottish Studies oral history project." Interview conducted March 8, 2004.

[33] Peter Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy Toward Orientals in British Columbia* (Montreal: McGill, 1978).

Patricia Roy, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914* (Vancouver: UBC, 1989).

[34] Roy, vi.

Café, states that the ensuing developments represented a turning point in the fortunes of the Chinese community in Vancouver, marked especially by the defeat of the Janet Smith Bill.[35] This view was echoed by columnist Eric Nicol in 1984 when he argued that "the spectacular and continuing drama so thoroughly engaged public attention that it changed forever the comfortable Vancouver social order, which had been English for civilizations (sic), Scottish to police it, and Oriental to do the dirty work." Nicol recognized that "the long suffering Japanese and Chinese had to wait a good many years to achieve their present status as fellow cosmopolites," but argued that "at least a little of the bigotry was buried with Janet Smith."[36]

If the effect of the Janet Smith case on the Chinese community has been a matter of some debate, there has been no serious analysis of the effect of the case on the Scottish community. This situation is passing strange, given the assumption at the time that the case was a "Scottish" issue, an assumption that has been carried forward in popular narratives. The supposed involvement of "clans", Nicol's observation that the Scots and the English conspired in different roles to sustain the "social order" before the changes ostensibly wrought by the Janet Smith case, and some episodes in Sky Lee's fiction provide the subsequent inferences of a peculiarly Scottish involvement.[37] Scholarly analysis, however, suggests that the Janet Smith case did little to reduce "bigotry". Roy's argument that anti-Asian feeling continued up to the Second World War

[35] Sky Lee, *Disappearing Moon Café* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1990).

[36] Eric Nicol, "Who Killed the Scottish Nightingale?" *The Province* (July 15, 1984), 3.

[37] After the death of Janet Smith, Lee's characters worry about being attacked by the "White" community as they were in the race riots of 1907. The only attack that takes place, however, is on a Japanese peddler by a Scottish woman: "This huge white woman in a green dress with big flowers on it jumps out of the car. She starts beating him with her heavy purse…She yells something like, 'Yeurr stunkee, yeller, slime, snake! Mark me werrds, ye willna' gitawa witit'."

renders Nicol's claim problematic at best. The Chinese Exclusion act did not prevent calls for further action after 1923. For instance, in 1925 the Advisory Board of the Farmers' Institute proposed "the need for a survey covering all fields of (Asian activity) and including city, country and unorganized territory."[38] Also, as we shall see, the Ku Klux Klan of Canada generated some support for the notion of repatriating all "Orientals" in 1927. Finally, the Janet Smith case failed to release the Chinese from the Chinatown area of Vancouver, around Pender Street, where they lived as a "consequence of custom and informal suasion," according to one analysis,[39] or as a deliberate attempt by the city council "to seal the limits of the Chinese claim to Vancouver at Pender Street" according to another.[40] The effect of the Janet Smith Case on the dominant Anglo-Protestant group in Vancouver has, however, been considered more closely. One historian provides a shopping list of changes which he considers the case wrought – loss of prestige for the police and the legal authorities, the reduction of the influence of "old families" in civic politics, the creation of an "east" and "west" divide in city voting patterns, a crushing blow to the reputation of "high society" in Vancouver – while concluding, somewhat peculiarly, that these changes would have taken place eventually anyway, even "if Janet Smith had lived on, unregarded and unknown."[41] The absence of any analysis of the effect of the Janet Smith case on the Scottish community is made even

[38] The report eventually appeared in 1927 as a *Report on Oriental Activities within the Province/Prepared for the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia by the Bureau of Provincial Information and the Dept of Agriculture* (Victoria 1927). In the introduction to the report the author quotes with approval a unanimous resolution of December 17, 1924 which included the observation that, "'This House go(es) on record as being utterly opposed to the further influx of Orientals into the Province; and, further, that the House places itself on record as being in favour of the enactment of such amendment to the "Immigration Act of Canada" as is necessary to completely prohibit immigration into Canada.'"

[39] Roy, *Illustrated History,* 63.

[40] Kay J. Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada 1875-1980* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991), 126.

[41] Alan Morley, *Vancouver: From Milltown to Metropolis* (Vancouver: Mitchell Press, 1969), 194.

more striking by the fact that the community's reaction to the case appears to be the only example in the history of Vancouver of the Scots attempting to act overtly as a united political pressure group.

1.4. The Scots in Canada

The talk of limiting and excluding that permeated the public debate concerning the Asian presence in Canada in general, and British Columbia in particular, was in marked contrast to the sense of possessing and belonging that characterized the Scottish presence in Canada from the earliest attempts at settlement. The process of Scottish inclusion and Chinese exclusion which sustained the power inequity between the two communities in Vancouver and informed the Janet Smith case was of long gestation. The first serious attempt to settle Scots in Canada resulted from a charter granted in 1626 to Sir William Alexander of Menstrie for the development of a "New Scotland" or Nova Scotia. The settlement was short lived but established not only Nova Scotia but New Galloway, Clyde, Firth of Forth and so on.[42] Later Scots settlers adopted this principle to the point where one author felt it necessary to "prepare a toponymical roster" of Scottish place names in Canada though he shows no awareness of re-naming as a colonial process intended to remove traces of aboriginal territories and stake them out.[43]

At the same time as the Scots were giving familiar names to Canadian locations, individual Scots were emerging as leaders in various professions, especially from

[42] Jenni Calder, *Scots in Canada* (Edinburgh: Luath, 2003), 23.

[43] Watson Kirkconnell, "Scottish Place-Names in Canada," in *Scottish Tradition in Canada,* ed. W. Stanford Reid, 311.

Confederation onwards. The emergence of John A. Macdonald from Glasgow and Alexander Mackenzie from Logierait in Perthshire as the first two Prime Ministers of Canada was an especially powerful force in what became an enduring, if now contested, "Great Scots who Built Canada" mythology. This mythology received perhaps its greatest boost from the trans-continental railway facilitated by Macdonald and a railway syndicate made up primarily of Scots or those of Scottish descent. Backed by other powerful myths, like that of dispossessed and impoverished Highland Scots struggling ashore in Nova Scotia and the "self made Scot" rising in Canada through hard work and perseverance, this made for a seemingly irresistible "Scottish" claim to the new land.

The Scots in Vancouver drew strength from this national Scots-Canadian mythology and similar myths concerning Scottish involvement in civic and provincial development. Thus, a persistent element of Scottish collective memory identifies two "Fathers of British Columbia."[44] One is Simon Fraser, who established trading posts in the interior and canoed down the river that now bears his name, and the other is James Douglas who became the first governor of the colony of British Columbia in 1858. Neither was born in Scotland (Fraser in Vermont and Douglas in the West Indies) though their common identity as "Scottish" Fathers of the province is an interesting example of the issue of consanguinity which, as we shall see, remained an essential element in attempts to describe a common "Scottishness" in Vancouver in the 1920s. In addition, Fraser's river journey is also sometimes portrayed as having been made possible by peculiar 'Scottish' characteristics – courage, perseverance, determination and

[44] See Barbara Rodgers, "Simon Fraser-Explorer," in *The Greater Vancouver Book: An Urban Encyclopedia,* ed. Chuck Davis. (Surrey: Linkman, 1997) 31-32.

indomitability in desperate circumstances.[45] These types of interpretations of Canada's past, as we shall see, informed the self-image of the Scottish community in Vancouver in the 1920s.

1.5. "Scottishness" in Vancouver

Jean Barman has observed that, "between the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the beginning of the First World War in 1914, British Columbia underwent a demographic transformation."[46] Mass Scottish settlement in Vancouver was part of this transformation. Donald Smith of Forres (later Lord Strathcona) drove the last spike in at Craigallachie, and the railway brought both Scottish settlement and the nation-building rhetoric that supported it when it was extended from Port Moody to Vancouver. Civic development gathered around the railway and the origins of civic politics in Vancouver echoed Scottish participation in the origins of national politics. The first election for mayor after the incorporation of the city on April 6, 1888, was contested by Malcolm MacLean from Tiree and Richard H. Alexander from Edinburgh. MacLean, who won the election by seven votes, was a real estate agent, and Alexander was the manager of the Hastings Sawmill, which was the biggest employer in the city. MacLean was also the first President of the St. Andrew's and Caledonian Society of Vancouver, formed soon after city incorporation. Alexander was a founding executive member of the Society.

[45] Stephen Hume, *Simon Fraser: In Search of Modern British Columbia* (Vancouver: Harbour Publishing, 2008).

[46] Jean Barman, *The West Beyond the West: A History of British Columbia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 129.

Though neither makes any particular reference to Vancouver, the publication of two tomes, Michael Fry's *The Scottish Empire* and Tom Devine's *Scotland's Empire 1600-1815*, in 2002 and 2003 respectively, created a seismic shift in Scottish attitudes to their own Empire history.[47][48] As the titles suggest, both books are based on the premise that the Scottish experience of Empire was, in certain ways, different from the English one and cannot simply be regarded as part of an undifferentiated "British" experience. Fry goes as far as to suggest that the Scots and the English initially had entirely different "ideas" of Empire – an Empire of trade (Scottish) and an Empire of settlement (English) – and that sometimes these ideas would collide as they did at the Battle of Seven Oaks in the Canadian North-West.[49] Devine argues that the Scots were "not only full partners in this grand design [of empire] but were at the very cutting edge of British global expansion", and that this situation had a profound effect on Scottish identity.[50]

Murray Pittock has argued that settler colonies like Canada were part of an "international Britishness" but that "Scottishness" did not simply disappear, though "Scottish particularism had its limits strictly set" and "Scottish difference was imprisoned in the [British] body."[51] Pittock's notion of "Scottish difference" in a British "body" seems to contradict Cowan and others who have argued that Scottish-Canadians were, essentially, assimilators and "whether attending balls or Burns suppers, there was an element of the carnivalesque involved; one or two annual wallowings in Scottish culture,

[47] Michael Fry, *The Scottish Empire* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2002).

[48] T.M. Devine, *Scotland's Empire 1600-1815* (London: Penguin, 2003).
[49] Fry, *Scottish Empire*, 97.
[50] Devine, *Scotland's Empire,* 360.
[51] Murray G.H. Pittock, *Scottish Nationality* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 82.

bathos and nostalgia enabled people to act like normal human beings [...] the rest of the year."[52]

Both the "Scottish difference" and "Scottish-assimilation" arguments complicate what T.C. Smout called the "obvious yet invaluable point about dual allegiances [Scottish and British]."[53] Smout derived this "obvious" point from Anthony Smith's study of ethnic revivals in Europe, which demonstrated that "adherents [of the ethnic revival movements] possess concentric loyalties – to their own ethnic communities and to the states in which they have been incorporated for so long a period."[54] The fact that individuals could feel both Scottish and British was already complicated by the fact that they could see themselves as any number of other things as well. The Scots of Vancouver might be expected to add civic, provincial, national and empire identities to class, gender, race, sexuality and so on. Identities, Linda Colley has argued, "are not like hats. Human beings can and do put on several at the same time."[55] Indeed, Smout himself, while using "British" to describe his own identity as an English born, long-time resident of Scotland, eventually admitted that it was more complicated than that and settled for the observation that identity was "a nest of Russian dolls."[56]

[52] Edward J. Cowan, "The Myth of Scotch Canada," in *Myth, Migration and the Making of Memory,* 62.

[53] T.C. Smout, "Problems of Nationalism, Identity and Improvement in later Eighteenth-Century Scotland," in *Improvement and Enlightenment,* ed. T. M. Devine. (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1989), 3-4.

[54] Anthony Smith, *The Ethnic Revival* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 55.

[55] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging a Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1992), 6.

[56] Murray Watson, *Being English in Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), 167.

1.6. The Janet Smith Case and Scottishness

The subsuming of "Scottishness" in "Britishness" in Vancouver history is the major reason for the dearth of studies of Scottish experience and Scottish identity in the city. There are a number of ways in which the Janet Smith case provides a unique opportunity to address this deficiency.

First, writing on the case to date is unencumbered by the hagiographical tradition that, as Devine, Cowan and others have pointed out, has frustrated previous attempts to look closely at Scottish-Canadian identity. In fact, the most recent attempts to understand Janet Smith actually portray the Scottish contribution to the case in the opposite way. Eric Nicol has labelled the prime Scottish movers in the Scottish community as a "McKu McKlux McKlan",[57] and the title of MacDonald and O'Keefe's recent book on the subject, *Canadian Holy War: A Story of Clans, Tongs, Murder and Bigotry*, speaks for itself.

Second, the Janet Smith case put "Scottishness" in the Vancouver political arena. Pittock's argument that "Scottishness" did not simply disappear in the settler colonies is true of Vancouver though before the murder of Janet Smith it was considered to be restricted to the social and benevolent life of the city. *A Pocket Guide and Directory of the Scottish Organizations in Greater Vancouver*, published in 1931, lists a total of twenty-six Scottish societies.[58] When The Vancouver Burns Fellowship was organized in February 1924, it seemed close to apologizing for appearing "in a field already prodigally

[57] Nicol, "Scottish Nightingale", 3.

[58] *The Scots Directory: A Pocket Guide and Directory of the Scottish Organizations in Greater Vancouver* (Vancouver: Council of Scottish Societies of British Columbia, 1931).

represented by the wealth of Scottish societies."[59] The reasons for the "prodigal" number of Scottish societies when there were far fewer English, Welsh and Irish ones is a matter for further study, but a striking feature of the Vancouver Scottish societies is the number of them that existed to celebrate the place in Scotland from which their members, or their ancestors, had emigrated to Canada and the almost universal existence of a stated social, nostalgic or benevolent remit. In other words, the Vancouver Scots sustained and celebrated not just a general "Scottishness" but a specific, local, place of origin. There were so many Scottish societies, in fact, that a United Council of Scottish Societies formed in 1923 to coordinate activities. This umbrella group was formed just in time to become the public face of the Scottish community's reaction to the Janet Smith case, in addition to simply keeping track of lectures, concerts and community gatherings. From time to time Scottish societies in other parts of Canada had been cajoled to unite and be something more than simple social organizations. In 1902, for instance, Alexander Fraser addressed the Caledonian Society of Montreal and called on the various Scottish societies of that city to pull together so that "the Scot" could better discharge his duty "to infuse his character into the life of the people of Canada", thereby filling the void left by what Fraser considered the absence of any discernible "Canadian nationality."[60] In Vancouver it was the Janet Smith case that summoned the Scots to unite for a "higher" purpose.

Third, the Janet Smith case provides the opportunity to examine "Scottishness" interacting with an ethnicity that the Scots perceived as "other." Colley argues that the development of a sense of British identity owed much to the constant warring and

[59] "Vancouver Burns Fellowship," *British Columbia Monthly* (March, 1924), 5.
[60] Alexander Fraser, *The Mission of the Scot in Canada* (Toronto: MacLean, 1903), 11.

opposition to the French and the sense of togetherness such opposition afforded.[61] In some of the literature on the Janet Smith case that has already been mentioned, the affair is seen as a face-off between the Scots and the Chinese in the city. This was exemplified by the two Scots-inspired kidnappings of the Chinese houseboy, the promotion of the Janet Smith Bill by the United Council of Scottish Societies and in Wong's court appearance after he was arraigned for murder. Outside of the Janet Smith case, the Scots and the Chinese were rarely treated as differentiated ethnic groups within a broader racialized White\"Oriental" divide. When they were, they invariably appeared at opposite ends of a spectrum of belonging. In 1927, for instance, White nationalist Tom MacInnes argued that "Canada, of course, is rightly intended for the Scotch and the French who made it" and that the Chinese were part of a group that was "indigestible" and had to be excluded.[62]

[61] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging a Nation,* 5- 6.
[62] Tom McInnes, *Oriental Occupation of British Columbia* (Vancouver: Sun Publishing, 1927), 7.

Chapter 2.

Janet Smith, the Reverend McDougall and the *Beacon/Bisector*

The Reverend Duncan McDougall ministered to a Scottish Highland emigrant community at the Highland Church on 400 Block, 11th Avenue E.[63] It was McDougall to whom Smith's friend, Cissie Jones, communicated her suspicions concerning the Chinese houseboy, and it was he who subsequently passed the details of that conversation to the newly formed United Council of Scottish Societies in August 1924 and demanded that it act. According to one source, Cissie Jones "poured out her angry suspicions [to McDougall] about the Chinese houseboy. She was convinced he had killed Janet."[64] Ian MacDonald and Betty O'Keefe speculate that Jones may have sweetened the pot for the anti-Catholic minister when she revealed that "the event had transpired in the Baker's home and they were a Catholic family."[65] One year later McDougall was the main speaker at Janet Smith's memorial service at Mount Pleasant Cemetery, and he was at the centre of a campaign for justice for the Scottish nanny conducted in the pages of his own magazine. If it were not for his involvement, it is likely

[63] In the *Beacon*, McDougall gives specific directions to the church describing it as, "Opp. Florence Nightingale School. Half block east on 12th from Kingsway and 12th, then one block north."

[64] MacDonald and O'Keefe, *Canadian Holy War* (31.

[65] MacDonald and O'Keefe, *Holy War,* 32.

that the perception of Janet Smith's death would have remained as a suicide and the "Janet Smith case" would not have played out the way it did.

In the absence of church documents, any definition of the nature of the Highland Church community depends, to some extent, on inference and anecdote. McDougall published a magazine called the *Beacon* from December 1924 until April 1930, except for a short period when it was managed by two leading members of the Ku Klux Klan of Canada who renamed it the *Bisector*. A California-based bookstore that specializes in works on social movements describes the *Beacon/Bisector* as "very scarce" and provides a succinct review of its contents: "It published articles concerning British-Israelism, anti-evolutionism, anti-Russellism, anti-Catholicism and opposition to oriental immigration, white slavery and the narcotic drug traffic. It supported the Bone Dry Canada Political Party and most notably gave very extensive favorable coverage to the activities of the Ku Klux Klan."[66]

Although the *Beacon* was not primarily concerned with narrow community issues, it did carry notices of services in the Highland Church. The main service at 11:00 am on Sundays was in Gaelic and it was followed by Sabbath School. On Sunday evenings there was Bible Class at 6.30 followed by a service in English. In the September 1925 edition of the *Beacon*, McDougall refers to his ministry as "being there for Highlanders, and others as well of every creed." This was in response to a letter in the *Vancouver Sun* "complaining that as the editor of the *Beacon* is minister of a church which was built for Scottish Highlanders of every creed, he has no right to expose as he is doing, the

[66]"Beacon/Bisector." Antiqbook, accessed July 10, 2013, http://www.antiqbook.com/books/bookinfo.phtml?nr=260536289&l=en&seller=bibman

infidel teaching in the United Church of Canada."[67] In the same September edition, McDougall defended himself against an anonymous complainant who felt that "the contents of this number is (sic) nothing less than religious blaguardism by wee frees." McDougall's defense was both indicative of his style and a cornerstone of his belief system. "Evolutionists have tried many curious methods of proving that their ancestors were monkeys," he observed, "but the writer of this legend has found such a novel and convincing method of proving what his ancestors were, that we could not be so cruel as to contradict him. We commend his method to all Evolutionists."[68]

Some biographical information on McDougall is available as a result of a book he authored entitled *The Rapture of the Saints* described as "A Documented Expose of the Future AntiChrist Story from the Lectures by the Author at the Alma Academy, Vancouver, B.C." In the book, McDougall dismisses the notion that there will be a secret rapture of the saints sometime before the second coming of Christ, a position supported by the Jesuits and therefore anathema to him.[69] The book was revised and annotated as recently as 1970 and provides a synopsis of the author's background. McDougall is portrayed as:

> One of Scotland's well-known Gaelic scholars [who] graduated at Edinburgh University in Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Gaelic, taking Gaelic medals, Blackie Prize and MacPherson Scholarship (twice). A devout Christian, Mr McDougall was ordained to the Ministry of the Free Church of Scotland, a denomination which has long been known for its firm adherence to the teaching of the Holy Scripture and its repudiation of

[67] *Beacon* (September, 1925), 1. McDougall had no time for church unity and, in the same editorial, declared himself, "well aware that infidel modernism is just as rampant, as blatant, and as arrogant in the United Church in Scotland as in the United Church in Canada."

[68] *Beacon* (September 1925), 1.

[69] For a shorter version of the argument see, "Will There Be a 'Secret Rapture'?" *Beacon* (October 1926), 1.

> modernistic and higher critical views. For six years he was Lecturer in Christian Evidences to the Vancouver Bible School, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Finally returning to Scotland, he was appointed Minister of the Free Church in Dunoon, a post he held until his retirement.70

The work of the Vancouver Bible School at 1601 W. 10th Avenue is advertised in the *Beacon* and the sermons delivered there by McDougall are occasionally carried in the same source.[71]

McDougall's ministry at the Highland Church is also remembered anecdotally. An audience member at a Sons of Scotland gathering informed this author that, "The Reverend McDougall married my parents who came from the Island of Skye. They got married at the Highland Church and most of the people there were Highland Scots. I just want you to know that they [her parents] always told me that the Reverend McDougall was a very kind man and was very good to his people."[72] By contrast, an enquiry to the Presbytery of Westminster produced the observation that "Rev. D. McDougall was quite the fiery preacher, suggestive of racist and anti-Jewish sentiments. The church has never had any connection with our denomination."[73] The length of Reverend McDougall's ministry is a matter of conjecture, though he was at the Highland Church in December 1924 when he first published the *Beacon* and was still there in April 1930 when publication ceased. It seems likely that the "six years" that he lectured at the Vancouver Bible College was about the same length of time that he ministered at the Highland Church.

[70] http://www.historicist.com/articles2/saints.htm#aboutTheAuthor, accessed June 25, 2004.

[71] For instance, "Evolution on Trial," *Beacon* (December 1924), 6.

[72] In conversation with the author after a talk delivered to the Sons of Scotland, Glengarry Camp, Oddfellows Hall, New Westminster, October 23, 2003.

[73] E-mail from the Clerk of the Presbytery of Westminster, October 30, 2003.

Though there is no obvious way of gauging circulation statistics for the *Beacon*, it not only survived for six years but there are some indicators that it thrived for most of that time. When the first edition appeared in December 1924, it contained only one advertisement – a general one for "Neighborhood Grocers". By April 1924 the *Beacon* had six advertisers and by May 1924 twenty-six, albeit sixteen of these were chiropractors.[74] The influx of advertisers coincided with, or occasioned, an expansion and general upgrading of the *Beacon*, and McDougall was soon boasting of new printing methods, changes of format, special promotions and sold-out editions. In only its sixth month in publication, McDougall's magazine adopted a new format "which had been keenly urged by friends who are keenly interested in the success of our work." The size of the page was decreased to "regular magazine size" and the number of pages increased from twelve to sixteen.[75] Six months after that, the *Beacon* had grown to 24 pages and new subscribers were promised "the privilege of sending in the name and address of a friend to whom a sample copy of the *Beacon* will be sent free of charge for three months," in the hope that "the light of the *Beacon* should spread from coast to coast and …that the circulation will be more than doubled during the coming year."[76] The December, 1925 edition featured a special investigation into drug trafficking with a "a large quantity of copies" printed for free with the intention of placing them throughout British Columbia and "other parts of the Dominion upon request."[77] By September 1926

[74] A possible explanation for this is provided in an article published in the *Beacon* by chiropractor David Shankie. In it he reveals, "that the Chiropractor does not prescribe drugs of any kind." It could be that the chiropractors wanted to associate themselves with the many articles on the "drug menace" that appeared in the *Beacon*. David Shankie, "Chiropractic" *Beacon* (August 1925), 23.

[75] "Changes in the Beacon," *Beacon* (May 1925), 1.

[76] *Beacon* (November, 1925), 1.

[77] *Beacon* (November, 1925), 1.

the *Beacon* was thirty-six pages long and included several "special articles" by authors other than McDougall.

The first edition of the *Beacon* appeared in December 1924. It was twelve pages long and included articles on the "dope menace", race course gambling and the "perils of rum-running." The cover page declared it, "A Monthly Journal Shedding Light on Dark Places". In his first editorial, McDougall situated the failure to resolve the Janet Smith case close to the heart of these dark places:

> In making our bow to the public of Vancouver, we can only justify the appearance of the *Beacon* by the reflection, not a very consoling one, that there is ample scope for the labours of a paper such as this. The daily press contains a disquieting record of the prevalence of crime in our midst, and even more disquieting are many moral and social factors of which the press takes no cognizance. The Grand Jury has brought in a scathing indictment of our police system, which has allowed so many major crimes to be committed among us with impunity, but it would be foolish to suppose that the inefficiency of the police system alone is to blame. Other bodies such as the Scottish Societies in the Janet Smith case, have attempted to co-operate with the police, but the negative results have only served to advertise their own helplessness. We shall be glad to throw a lifeline, or help launch a lifeboat, to rescue those who are already on the way to shipwreck; but our sphere is to let the light shine out to guide those who are seeking to steer a safe course over life's sea, and point them to a haven of refuge.[78]

When McDougall spoke at Janet Smith's grave during the aforementioned memorial service in January 1926, he "compared justice in British Columbia with conditions formerly existing in Turkey" and implicated men in the province who had "the mark of Cain" on them and pointed out that the people at the graveside were bonded by their desire that "justice be vindicated." He was not one of the people who had been summoned to court for Wong's kidnapping, but "had he been summoned he would have

[78] *Beacon* (December 1924), 1.

regarded it as an honour." Finally McDougall offered a prayer "that truth would prevail and justice would be done."[79]

McDougall's performance at the graveside was the culmination of a year spent using the columns of the *Beacon* to explore his own notions of truth and justice in the Janet Smith case, and sometimes contextualizing it within the radical causes that he supported. Even when he indicated that "we are not giving out anything new about the case this month," the failure to find Janet Smith's killer would still occasion some dark sermonizing. For instance, he attacked those "Church people who seem to think that the Beacon should confine itself entirely to religious matters," and those who took no notice of "a murder committed at your doors." These people would have to be prepared for God saying to them, "I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when you spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea when you make many prayers, I will not hear: YOUR HANDS ARE FULL OF BLOOD."[80]

When there was a new development in the Janet Smith affair, it was usually reported in the *Beacon* as a lead story and often at great length. The kidnapping of Wong Foon Sing quickened an already lively pace in the story, though McDougall initially suspected that the houseboy had absconded. For instance, in the April 1925 edition of the *Beacon,* an article entitled "The Janet Smith Case: Why Did Wong Foon Sing Disappear?" explores notions of Chinese duplicity, class corruption and official complicity that he thought he detected in the Janet Smith affair. He had evidence (that he was

[79] "Memorial Service Held By The Scottish Societies At Grave Of Murdered Janet Smith," *Province,* (26 June 1925), 1. McDougall is pictured with several of the leaders of the Scottish community standing by Janet Smith's grave which, at the time, was marked only by a wooden cross with "Janet K. Smith" written on it.

[80] *Beacon* (August, 1925), 12.

withholding until the appropriate time to reveal it) that the "Chinaman" Wong could have been arrested immediately on a charge of perjury had he not disappeared. Again, it had come to McDougall's attention that Wong's employer, Baker, had made a mysterious phone call at 2.00 in the morning announcing Janet Smith's death and that the operators of the telephone company, of which Baker's brother was a director, had been warned by the company "against repeating anything they hear over the phone." It was not really strange that Wong had disappeared and, in fact, "The strange thing to our mind would be if he did not disappear"; furthermore, "the fact that the Empress of Australia sailed shortly after midnight the night that he disappeared, makes it possible that he is now beyond the reach of British Law." If this was so,

> He must have had the connivance both of a number of his own countrymen who are now looking excitedly for him in Vancouver, and a number of those aboard the Empress who have been searching for him on board since she put out to sea. It could not be suspected that a search instituted under such circumstances would meet with much success. A further search ought to be made before the ship reaches her destination in which the Orientals on board should have as little part as possible.

In the meantime, McDougall believed that the authorities, especially special investigator Jackson, appointee of the Attorney General, had lost interest in the case. Indeed, "Mr Jackson, as Chairman of the Game Conservation Board suddenly developed a keen interest in the transfer of muskrats from the Fraser Valley to Quatsino Sound, and mountain goats from the interior to the west coast of Vancouver Island, which appear to require all his attention – so much so that according to the report in the *Sun* the other day he has just now returned to Vancouver for a rest."[81]

[81] "The Janet Smith Case: Why Did Wong Foon Sing Disappear," *Beacon* (May, 1925), 3-5.

The Janet Smith case melded seamlessly with the other issues that McDougall explored in the pages of the *Beacon*. He reported regularly on what he saw as rampant drug abuse and unfettered gambling in the city of Vancouver and linked those to stories of raucous parties involving Janet Smith's employers. He detected Roman Catholic perfidy everywhere, including the household of the Catholic Bakers, and highlighted the "menace" of "Oriental" immigration. All of these issues were seen as a threat to the ordered, God-centred, society demanded by proper bible study and true Protestantism, and the authorities were often seen as complicit in the creation of a general chaos.

For a time, the Janet Smith case offered McDougall the opportunity to demand order and hold the authorities to account. The houseboy's return to China put an end to the efficacy of the Janet Smith case in that respect: "Wong Foon Sing is gone – gone with the official sanction of the Attorney-General; and so ends the Janet Smith case. With the one material witness safely out of the country, it seems useless to attempt to pursue the matter further."[82] McDougall's shrug of resignation is perhaps made even more poignant by the fact that he had recently discovered the "real" killer. In February 1926 he had reported the confession of a "young man" and the knowledge of "a discovery made by Mr. Jackson, K.C., in the course of his investigation, which would have warranted the immediate arrest of Wong, not for murder, but for perjury – a discovery that was never brought out in court."[83] With the departure of Wong, McDougall lost the opportunity to confirm the perfidy of the civic authorities and use Janet Smith's death to address issues that, in his view, had been allowed to fester under their watch.

[82] *Beacon* (April, 1926), 1.

[83] "The Janet Smith Case Again – A Confession," *Beacon* (February, 1926), 1. By "perjury" McDougall seems to have meant the withholding of information.

However, with Wong's departure, McDougall was able to set the Janet Smith case in a broader context. The same issue of the *Beacon*, April 1926, that reports Wong's 'escape' also prints the first of a series of articles by McDougall entitled "Who are the Celts? Are they Part of the Lost Ten Tribes?" He narrowed the argument put forward by the British-Israel Alliance, "who hold the view that the British nation are a part of the lost ten tribes of Israel," and concluded that "the Celts as a part of the [British] nation, were not an Aryan, but a Semitic race; and the affinity of their language with Hebrew is exactly what we would expect to find."[84] McDougall uses his own "creative interpretation of scripture, language and history" to discover that the 'true Israelites' were his own reformed Highland Celts. With the Janet Smith case unresolved, gambling dens flourishing, alcohol and drug abuse unmitigated, and white Protestant society under threat from Catholics and "Orientals", McDougall finally found an organization that could make sense of the situation and do something about it. British Israelism, he believed, "was just the Ku Klux Klan in action."[85]

McDougall had already introduced his readership to the Klan in the May 1925 edition of the *Beacon.* He not only dedicated page one to a subject other than Janet Smith but, unusually in the early days of the magazine, gave it over to an author other than himself. The lead article was "The Ku Klux Klan in Canada," by Lionel Ward. Ward explained the "foundations" of the Klan and its faith in God, but adapted it for a Canadian market: "[A Klansman] must be loyal and true to the country of this birth or adoption, and strive and work at all times constitutionally and in harmony with the Constitution of the

[84] "Who Are the Celts? Are They Part of the Lost Ten Tribes? The Philological Basis," *Beacon* (May, 1926), 6.
[85] *Beacon* (April, 1926), 18.

Empire and the Laws of the Dominion to preserve for all others those inalienable rights and privileges which he prizes so highly himself, and which are the inherited right of every citizen of Canada whether by birth or adoption"[86]

The emergence of a Canadian version of the Ku Klux Klan appears to have re-energized McDougall's pursuit of the issues he had previously highlighted in the Janet Smith case. An application for damages to the Point Grey Authorities of a William Walker, who owned the house on 25th Street, Vancouver in which Wong Foon Sing was held captive, provided McDougall with a final opportunity to fulminate on the Janet Smith case.[87] In the December, 1926 edition of the *Beacon*, he upbraided the Vancouver Bar Association, which "remained ominously silent when Janet Smith was murdered," but "let out a howl of indignation when it was known that the Chinaman, who knew more than anyone else about the murder, had been kidnapped."[88]

The same edition records a "Great Klan Meeting in First Church" at which the issues of the Janet Smith case, the Ku Klux Klan and anti-Asian racism conflated. McDougall opened the report of the meeting by thanking the Reverend Richmond Craig for allowing the Klan to meet in the church, despite his initial reservations. His "honest change of opinion" McDougall contends, "reflects nothing but credit on him," and is also "an indication of the swinging of the tide of public opinion in favor of the Klan, as its policy and methods are coming to be better understood." The meeting had been held on November 19, and the speakers were named as Batzold and England, "both imperial

[86] *Beacon* (May, 1925), 1.

[87] Walker's argument was that the house that he had unwittingly rented to the kidnappers was now notorious with a consequent reduction in value.

[88] "An Echo of the Janet Smith Case," *Beacon* (December, 1926), 7-8.

officers of the Klan". Batzold was the Reverend Charles E. Batzold who first appears in the records as a Methodist student minister at what is now the Squamish United Church in 1894-95.[89] In all reports of his public appearances as a Klan leader in Vancouver from 1926 to 1928, he is referred to as a minister of the United Church. A.J. England was also a Canadian, as indicated by his promotion of a Klan membership restricted to Canadian citizens. In the years of their self-appointed Klan leadership, Batzold and England, with McDougall as their publicist, set out to rid the local Ku Klux Klan of its American associations and the easy dismissal that these linkages elicited. Also in attendance were "other officers in their white robes with scarlet facings," all of which made for "an imposing array on the platform." In McDougall's account, there was an overflow crowd and "the large auditorium of the First Church was packed to its utmost capacity, with people sitting in the aisles of the gallery and crowds standing in the doors and in the porch, unable to gain admittance." The crowd was also, he claimed, "in sympathy with the aims of the movement," attested to by "the frequent applause which punctuated the speeches throughout."[90]

Batzold was the first speaker and immediately set out to distinguish the Canadian Klan from the organization of the same name in the United States. He "outlined the constitution of the Klan as a patriotic, Protestant, Fundamentalist movement, wholly Canadian but pledged to maintain the integrity of the British Empire, having no official connection, though maintaining the most friendly relations, with the

[89] "The History of Squamish United Church." Accessed May 15, 2007, http://www.squamishunitedchurch.org/history13.htm

[90] "Great Klan Meeting in First Church," *Beacon* (December, 1926), 25.

movement along similar lines in the United States."[91] Batzold had just been to England where he had been "cordially received" by various "Protestant and patriotic societies" and, using his experience in North America, he was able to advise these groups as to how to close loopholes in their constitutions, thereby excluding "elements that were inimical to the objects and purposes of the societies."[92] England addressed "the moral conditions in Vancouver and throughout Canada" and "the appalling increase in the number of houses of immorality and dives of all kinds" which had flourished "under the eyes of the police during the regime of the present Mayor of Vancouver." Given the return of Wong Foon Sing to China, England was able to bring his speech to a climax by demanding, "If our police forces are trustworthy and efficient, WHO KILLED JANET SMITH?" and appealing for the support of the crowd "in waging war on all this vice." The subsequent question period "dealt mainly with the 'peaceful penetration' of the Chinese into all avenues of local trade," and the questions were answered in a way "that left no doubt as to the attitude of the Klan towards this 'yellow peril'."[93]

McDougall, Batzold, England and the "Canadian" Klan in Vancouver have been neglected in the few studies that exist of local Klan activity in the 1920s. Julian Sher mentions McDougall only once as "a church leader [who] published a newspaper in Vancouver called the *Beacon* which was clearly allied to the Klan."[94] Martin Robin calls him "one of a few stray clergymen" who were active members of the Klan.[95] In both

[91] *Beacon* (December, 1926), 25.
[92] *Beacon* (December, 1926), 25.
[93] *Beacon* (December, 1926), 25.
[94] Sher, *White Hoods,* 36.
[95] Martin Robin, *Shades of Right: Nativist and Fascist Politics in Canada, 1920-1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 20.

citations, McDougall is with Batzold.[96] The packed hall at First Church was reportedly preceded by a parade which, at least according to McDougall, drew a considerable crowd: "On Saturday, August 4th [1926] the Canadian Knights of the K.K.K. staged their first parade through the streets of our city – a parade unique in the absence of any semblance of gambling devices. The flags and floats had a silent and select significance and symbolism that must have touched the souls and consciences of all loyal British subjects."[97] There were several features of the parade that made it Canadian – the flags (including "the Bull-Dog, a symbol of British tenacity to defend the glory of our flag and the honour of our Canadian institutions", and the uncovered faces of the Clansmen, "not afraid to follow the Master" because "as Empire builders the Klan wants men and women of high ideals, who hide not their light under the dark robes of ignorance and superstition, but stand in the sunlight."[98]

Despite McDougall's assertions of large audiences and crowded parade routes, it is difficult to ascertain how influential his Ku Klux Klan of Canada was in carrying forward the issues that McDougall first raised in relation to the Janet Smith case. McDougall would eventually become estranged from Batzold and England after they scammed him in a false bond exchange, took over the *Beacon* while his wife was ill, and changed its name to *Bisector*. Upon regaining control of the magazine, McDougall's view of the activities of his erstwhile allies had radically altered. For instance, he reported on a meeting hosted by Batzold and England in which only six people were present.

[96] Perhaps symbolic of this neglect is Sher's misspelling of McDougall as "MacDougall" and rendering of "Batzold" as "Ratzold". See Sher, 36.

[97] "Klan Notes," *Beacon* (October, 1926), 15.

[98] *Beacon* (October, 1926), 15.

While Ku Klux Klan activity in Vancouver has been briefly recognized, the literature has concentrated almost exclusively on a short-lived synthesis of romantic Scottish myth and American activism that played out in the early 1920s in Shaughnessy's Glen Brae mansion. Glen Brae was built in 1910, in the Scottish baronial style, by lumber tycoon William Lamont Tait. American Klan members took up residence in the mansion on October 30, 1925, after parading up Granville Street, but, according to journalist Chuck Davis, "the sheeted twits were out of Glen Brae in less than a year, even though their rent was only $150 a month."[99] Davis attributes this quick exit to a local bylaw prohibiting mask wearing (which may also explain the "uncovered faces" at the Canadian Klan parade), but it seems it was also a result of the immigration problems faced by their leader, Luther Powell, and the mistaken belief that the Klan was solely an American group with an alien agenda.

Though short lived, the Glen Brae Klan did attract considerable local attention. which may have made it more difficult for McDougall's Klan to obtain coverage other than in the pages of the *Beacon*. On November 23, 1925, the Legislature in Victoria debated the proposal to ban the Ku Klux Klan from British Columbia that had been introduced by Labour member for Burnaby, Francis A. Brown. The Klan, he said, was "a fraudulent, alien, terrorist, organization" that appealed to "the mentally deficient" and "has had an appeal for the decaying American civilization behind the organization."[100] In the debate that followed Brown's motion, Attorney-General Manson pointed out that much had been said against the Klan in the United States "and he was not prepared to

[99] Chuck Davis, "The History of Metropolitan Vancouver," accessed June 9, 2005, http://www.vancouverhistory.ca/archives_GlenBrae.htm

[100] "Ku Klux Klan Comes Under Criticism," *Province,* 12 November, 1925, 17.

accept it all as true, any more than he was prepared to accept it all that had been said in favour of it. Since the organization of the Klan here seems to be largely in the hands of persons from the South who were not citizens of Canada…this was an occasion when he did not want truck nor trade with the United States."[101] The fact that Powell was in Canada on a thirty-day immigration permit, and had requested to plead his case to the Legislature, a request "too preposterous to be considered"[102] according to Premier Oliver, seems only to have added to the notion that the initial appearance of the Klan in Vancouver was a kind of cross-border farce. McDougall made no mention of Powell or of Glen Brae even after he began the regular 'Klan Notes' feature in the *Beacon*.

Julian Sher states that "newspapers throughout B.C. and including the major dailies like the *Sun*, the *Province* and the *Morning Star*, popularized anti-immigrant myths and "'yellow peril'" scare stories, as well as giving the KKK activities front page coverage."[103] While the first part of his claim is certainly true, for anti-Asian immigrant stories were common in these papers in the 1920s, the second part is debatable. Mainstream media interest in the Klan waxed and waned. There was considerable coverage when Powell and the other Americans first arrived, and again when F.A. Browne moved to ban the Klan, but these instances were exceptional.

The Glen Brae Klan's proposal to remove all Asians from British Columbia did, however, garner some coverage that was difficult for McDougall's Canadian Klan to match even though it advocated the same thing. *The Province* reported that the resolution would be forwarded to Prime Minister W.L. Mackenzie King, the federal

[101] "House Debates Ku Klux Klan Problem," *Province,* 25 November, 1925, 14.
[102] "House Ignores Powell," *Province,* 16 November, 1925, 1.
[103] Julian Sher, *White Hoods,* 36.

cabinet, and the House of Commons, "urging the enactment of such statutes as may be necessary."[104] The same newspaper also reported that the Klan motion had come to the attention of the New Westminster District Labour Council, although the newspaper headline – "Throw K.K.K. Motion in Waste Paper Basket" – was somewhat at odds with the text which revealed that the Plumbers Union "had endorsed the principle of the resolution at its last meeting." Eventually, however, the council decided to defeat the Klan resolution because many other delegates "protested against any consideration being extended to the proposals of 'men who hide behind masks'."[105]

The division in the New Westminster District Labour Council is symbolic of the conflicted attitudes of some white British Columbians concerning the Klan's anti-Asian agenda. Later in the same report the Council proposed to approach the authorities "in an effort to have Oriental tailors conform to the sanitary requirements of the city, the early closing by-laws, and the eight hour day," and their decision to ignore the "men who hid behind masks" implies a dismissal of the Klan's American roots rather than their anti-Asian arguments, which the Plumbers Union, at least, clearly found attractive. The tendency to dismiss the Klan despite the "anti-Oriental" common ground is replicated elsewhere. For instance, the *Labour Statesman,* which was published by the Vancouver and District Trades and Labour Council, focuses its argument on the Klan's Americanism

[104] "Exclusion of all Asiatics is Sought," *Province*, 5 February, 1927, 1.
[105] "Throw K.K.K. Motion in Waste Basket," *Province,* 16 February, 1927, 24.

and anti-Labour philosophy while using Klan-like language when addressing the "problem" of "Oriental labour".[106]

Burnaby Labour member Frank Browne's resolution to ban the Klan was part of a more complex platform. His speech "dealt with a variety of matters other than the proposed activities of the Klan on Canadian soil." One of these issues was the Janet Smith case, which he saw "as an indication that our administration of justice favors the man with the long purse," and another was the question of "an effective solution to the Oriental question": a minimum wage law for men because, "with such a law in force employers would take white men in preference to Orientals."[107] Both the issues and the language used to describe them are reminiscent of the pages of the *Beacon*. Again, in the debate that followed Browne's resolution, Major Burde, Member for Alberni, is reported in the *Province* as having observed, "If it was simply an organization to promote religious intolerance then there was no place for it in British Columbia. If the Klan, on the other hand, should free the province of Orientals, then he favored it."[108] Mr Burde said that he was not a member of the Klan, but he had been told "that there were five members of the organization in the legislature."[109] While Burde's assertion of this degree of Klan involvement in provincial politics cannot be substantiated, the fate of Batzold and England after they were sundered from the KKK of Canada created some interesting associations in civic politics. According to McDougall, "Mr Batzold takes the platform on

[106] The language of the labour movement was as violent as that of the Klan. For instance "Janet Smith and the 'Little Yellow Men,'" published in the Labour Statesman, contains the observation that "Hundreds of Chinese are employed in homes of many wealthy residents whose women fawn over the little yellow men and treat white women – when they employ them - with scorn." *Labour Statesman,* 10 October, 1924, 1.

[107] "Ku Klux Klan Comes Under Criticism," *Province,* 12 November, 1925, 17.

[108] "House Debates Ku Klux Klan Problem," *Province,* 25 November, 1925, 14.

[109] *Province*, 25 November, 1925, 14.

behalf of Mr. W.H. Malkin while his henchman [England] acts in South Vancouver as campaign manager for L.D. Taylor."[110] Louis Dennison Taylor was Mayor of Vancouver seven times. William Harold Malkin served as mayor in 1929-30.

The *Beacon* was published for the last time in April 1930 and its editor, as far as can be ascertained, returned to Scotland. There are clearly some Scottish elements in the story of Janet Smith, Duncan McDougall and the Ku Klux Klan of Canada. The murdered girl and the free Presbyterian minister who took up her cause were both born in Scotland. McDougall reviewed at least one book that celebrated the supposed romantic Scottish roots of the Ku Klux Klan, and he expressed his belief in the special mission of the reformed Highland Scots in the series of articles in the *Beacon*, linking them to the lost tribes of Israel. There also seems to have been an expectation that the Scots would be supportive of the work of the Klan, as evidenced by the anger displayed when St. Andrews Church refused to allow them to meet there.[111] There was a high proportion of advertisers with Scottish names in the *Beacon,* and the printing of the magazine eventually became the work of "The Caledonian Press."

At the same time, the *Beacon* was not a parish magazine and, apart from carrying a small advertisement with service times, it was never concerned with the practical business of McDougall's ministry at the Highland Church. For this reason, it is not clear what degree of support the *Beacon* had in McDougall's own parish community. And, while McDougall was involved with the wider Scottish community on special occasions, such as when he preached the sermon at Janet Smith's graveside, he did not

[110] "The Ku Klux Klan and the 'Death Threat'," *Beacon,* October, 1928, 4.
[111] "Shades of St. Andrew!" *Beacon,* December, 1927, 24.

seem to have taken any direct part in the efforts of the United Scottish Societies to solve the case other than drawing Cissie Jones's suspicions to their attention. In the final analysis, McDougall was part of a process which sought to use the Janet Smith case as a springboard from which to launch the Canadian Klan's vision of a white, Protestant British Canada. This required law, order, the tethering of the Catholic Church and, in local terms, the exclusion of all Asians and the repatriation of those that were already in the province.[112]

[112] The Highland Church is now the Shree Mahalakshmi Hindu Temple and, according to a *Vancouver Sun* report on July 17, 2004, the Temple is heavily involved in a plan to create "an interspiritual centre and shared house or worship" in Southeast False Creek

Chapter 3.

Janet Smith, *British Columbia Monthly* and the Scottish Society of Vancouver

A column by 'The Wayside Philosopher' in the June 1925 edition of *British Columbia Monthly* magazine argued that the Ku Klux Klan was inimical with Canadian values. The author contended that in the United States, "where 'home' has lost a large part of its meaning; where human life has lost some of its greatness; where marriage is a matter of convenience, not of principle; where graft and corruption flourish and money is God and King – even the Klan might be of use. Here in Canada, we neither require, nor desire, the Klan. The common sense of the race, sanctified by a true conception of our relationship to God, is our only needed guarantee of permanence."[113] Given the date on which the column was published, it was likely aimed at American Klan members who had taken up residence at Glen Brae mansion in Shaughnessy rather than at the Reverend Duncan McDougall's Canadian Klan, the existence of which would not be announced for another year. However, neither version of the Klan in Vancouver would have had much argument with the last sentence in which racial stereotyping ('common sense') and the suggestion of a special relationship with God would both be familiar.

The author was almost certainly D.A. Chalmers, who had been a clerk in a law office in Dundee, Scotland, and had worked on the *Perthshire Advertiser* and as "an

[113] Wayside Philosopher, "The Klu (sic) Klux Klan," *British Columbia Monthly,* June 1925, 4.

official shorthand writer" at the Supreme Court in Edinburgh. He migrated to Canada after being recruited by the General Superintendent of the Presbyterian Church in Canada "to undertake church work on the Prairies." In 1909 Chalmers arrived at Westminster Hall in Vancouver and attended theological lectures in the morning while working as a member of the *Vancouver News-Advertiser* staff in the afternoons.[114] Chalmers later claimed that he refused to apply for admission to the ministry because of "the influence of obstinate questionings and a disposition to take pastoral work very seriously," and instead began an involvement with the college's publication, *Westminster Hall Magazine*. He became business manager of the magazine in December 1911 and managing editor in April 1912. He remained editor through various name changes. In December 1912 *Westminster Hall Magazine* became *Westminster Hall Magazine and Further West Review*. In November 1915 it became *Westminster Review* and, in January 1918, the *British Columbia Monthly*, a name it retained until it ceased publication in December 1927. [115]

When the Janet Smith affair exploded into the public consciousness, it was Chalmers who spoke for the magazine. In commenting on Janet Smith, Chalmers had at his disposal both the editorial section of the *British Columbia Monthly* and the regular column penned by "The Wayside Philosopher Abracadabra." That Chalmers was "The Wayside Philosopher" is suggested by the way in which the writer often repeated, or elaborated on, the views expressed in the main editorial column. For instance, "Editorial Notes" and "The Wayside Philosopher" columns in the *British Columbia Monthly* of

[114] The *News Advertiser* was absorbed by the *Vancouver Sun* in August, 1917. http://www.vancouverhistory.ca/chronology1917.htm, accessed October 17, 2004.

[115] Information about Chalmers comes from "Seven Years' Magazine Pioneering: The Editor and his Training for the Task," *British Columbia Monthly* (October, 1918).

September 1924 compared the two Janet Smith inquests in very similar terms and rejected the second inquest's conclusion that she had been murdered.[116] Two years before the Janet Smith case, the "Wayside Philosopher" had welcomed a visit to British Columbia by "a delegation sent out by the Irish Protestants," and proclaimed himself "proud to have Irish blood mixing with Scottish to make a whole which is thoroughly Canadian." The peroration insisted that Ireland must remain in the British Empire even if the majority there were "priest ruled".[117] This rhetoric echoed McDougall's anti-Catholicism despite the fact that the *British Columbia Monthly* was the mouthpiece for the elite, and self-consciously moderate, Scottish Society of Vancouver in which Chalmers was also involved. A brief overview of the society's origins and membership demonstrates the gulf that existed between it and McDougall's activities.

The Scottish Society of Vancouver was "organized" on January 6, 1922, and it held its first meeting on February 16, 1922, "when a company of nearly two hundred members and invited guests enjoyed a programme which augured well for the usefulness of the Society as a social institution."[118] The first President of the Society was Magistrate H.C. Shaw, born to Scottish parents on Prince Edward Island and described as "a Presbyterian, and apart from his professional work, a man of literary interests."[119] At the first meeting, Shaw outlined the objects of the Society, which

> Had been founded by a number of Vancouver citizens of literary, musical and artistic tastes, who were especially interested in the expression of these on the lines of Scottish national development. They hoped, by

[116] *British Columbia Monthly* (September, 1924).

[117] "The Wayside Philosopher," *British Columbia Monthly,* February, 1920, 13.

[118] G Duncan, "A Scottish Centre," *British Columbia Monthly,* October-November, 1921, 11.

[119] D.A. Chalmers, "Successful Inauguration of the Scottish Society of Vancouver," *British Columbia Monthly,* March, 1922, 16.

> means of lectures, concerts and other entertainments, to afford members sufficient opportunities for the gratification of such tastes, and to increase provincially the interest already felt everywhere in Scotland, its scenery, people, their history, national work, and influence.[120]

Membership would be limited to those "who had such sympathies and desires," for it would not "add to the Societies [sic] strength or usefulness to receive into membership persons not interested in such work."[121] While these rather grandiose objectives did not seem, in principle, to exclude non-Scots, invitations to the first meeting were restricted by the executive committee, which "recognized that many hundreds of people of Scottish birth or extraction have only to know of the Society's aims as quoted by the President to become candidates for membership."[122]

Vancouver citizens with 'literary, musical and artistic tastes' were not only a cultural elite but an occupational elite, with many drawn from the higher education sector. The two vice presidents of the Scottish Society of Vancouver in its inaugural year were Principal W.H. Smith and Professor B. Henderson; the rest of the executive committee consisted of Messrs. R.A. Hood, D.A. Chalmers, Douglas Symington, James I. Reid, Alexander Morrison, Professor John Davidson, J.G. Forrester, W.R. Dunlop, R.W. Douglas, J.B. Stevenson, Robert Cram and Robert Bone. A.Y. Tullis was the honorary treasurer and George Duncan the honorary secretary. Several of these men were leading figures in the Scottish community in Vancouver in the 1920s. W.H. Smith was principal of Westminster Hall, the Presbyterian College, having been born at Piedmont Valley, South Dakota, and educated at Pictou Academy, Dalhousie University

[120] Chalmers, "Successful Inauguration," 16.
[121] Chalmers, 16.
[122] Chalmers, 16.

and the Presbyterian College, Halifax;[123] Henderson was a professor of philosophy at the University of British Columbia; Dunlop was "an accountant by profession"; Duncan was a Barrister; Hood was in the financial and real estate business and a member of the Canadian Authors Association; James Inglis Reid was a butcher and owner of a Scottish butcher shop of the same name on Granville Street, which continued under the ownership of his son until 1984.[124]

The *British Columbia Magazine* reflected the cultural tone of the Scottish Society of Vancouver, and its genesis made it almost inevitable that the interests of the society and that of the magazine would eventually merge. Its predecessor, *Westminster Hall Magazine,* was "an organ of the undergraduates of Westminster Hall," but the newly incarnated paper promised that it "will devote an increasing number of pages each month to articles on topics of interest to all. These will be written by some of the leading citizens of the province, and will be at once informing and enjoyable."[125] Its first issue was "produced in the face of considerable difficulties" with "copy gathered up in haste"; but, nevertheless, advertisements had been solicited and two thousand copies distributed "among the benefactors of the Hall and the other leading Presbyterians of the Province."[126]

[123]. http://www.vancouverhistory.ca/chronology1927.htm, accessed October 21, 2004.

[124] Reid's Butcher's Shop became something of an institution for Scots in Vancouver. A e-mail from Ann Wyness, James Inglis Reid's granddaughter informed the author that the shop was passed to her father, also James Inglis Reid and survived until 1984 when the building it was in was bought by Cadillac-Fairview. The shop's motto was, "We hae meat that ye can eat" based on Burn's "Selkirk Grace".

[125] *Westminster Hall Magazine,* July, 1911, 20.

[126] *Westminster Hall Magazine,* June, 1911, 20.

With Chalmers' accession to the editorship in April 1912, the idea that the magazine would be at the service of the undergraduates at Westminster Hall diminished as the scope and purpose of the magazine widened. The previously-mentioned name changes were introduced by the editor to try to reflect an expanded purview. In January 1918 the editor stated that the magazine would henceforth be known as the *British Columbia Monthly* and announced, "By the help of qualified and experienced writers, men strong of heart and brain, and earnestly active in public welfare affecting City and Country, Church and State, we believe the work of this already well-established journal can be extended so as to make it more the representative 'Social, Educational, Literary and Religious' medium for the best in independent British Columbia journalistic and literary life."[127] The editorial page of the *British Columbia Magazine* carried the slogan, "Devoted to COMMUNITY SERVICE, FEARLESS, FAIR AND FREE THE MAGAZINE OF THE CANADIAN WEST Promoting Social Betterment, Educational Progress, and Religious Life; but Independent of Party, Sect or Faction."

Chalmers was assisted in the work of the *British Columbia Monthly* by another founding member of the Scottish Society of Vancouver, Robert A. Hood.[128] As well as being in the financial and real estate business, Robert Allison Hood was fully involved in the Scottish community. He was an active member of the St. Andrew's and Caledonian Society, Scottish Dramatic Society and the Central Presbyterian Church. He was also a long time member of the Canadian Author's Association, and he wrote at least one novel, *The Case of Kinnear,* that was set in Scotland.

[127] D.A. Chalmers, "A New Name: British Columbia Monthly incorporates Westminster Review," *British Columbia Monthly,* January, 1918, 5.

[128] For more information, see Robert Allison Hood Fonds, UBC, Rare Books and Special Collections.

Scottish news was prioritized in the *British Columbia Monthly.* For instance, the magazine made a particular effort to commemorate soldiers from a Scottish background who fell in the First World War and quoted at length Harry Lauder's loss of his own son and his observations concerning the disproportionate contribution of the Scots to the war effort.[129] With the formation of the Scottish Society of Vancouver in 1922, and the elevation of Chalmers and Hood to the first executive committee, articles on the Scottish community became even more frequent, especially as they pertained to the activities of the society.

In the October/November 1921 edition of the magazine, another founding member of the then-nascent Scottish Society of Vancouver, George Duncan, revealed that Chalmers "has asked me to say a few words…on societies in general, Scottish societies in particular, and the 'Scottish Society of Vancouver' in chief particular." Duncan argued for the benefit of societies as forums "to understand and take an interest in my comrade's ideas" and, as this was to be a 'Scottish' society, added a lengthy observation on the nature of Scottishness. Scotsman, Duncan argued, had always formed themselves into societies, a habit that left them open to accusations of "clannishness". In this, the Scots resembled the early Christians, whose love for each other was seen by the Romans as "evidence of a combination that might have serious political dangers." However, Scottishness was "not a bond that severs him [the Scotsman] from unrelated peoples," and the Scotsman "never forgetting or losing his sense of origin, readily adds another nationality to his possessions." A Scottish society in

[129] "Harry Lauder and the Immortal Hope," *British Columbia Monthly,* August, 1918, 21-23.

Canada would, therefore, have "no limit to the membership for almost every Canadian one meets will tell you of at least one Scottish ancestor."[130]

Duncan's notion that there would be "no limit to membership" was a relative one, in both senses. The membership of the society would be just wide enough to accommodate native-born Scots and Canadians of Scottish descent. Membership, in fact, was limited by the perception of consanguinity. A Scottish society "starts with the strong tie of blood" and "we hope that it will interest [...] Scotsman who are Canadians and Canadians who are Scotsmen."[131] When the first office bearers were elected in January 1922, the method to Duncan's argument quickly became apparent. The first executive committee was just such a mix of native-born Scots and Canadians of Scottish descent. First President Shaw, born on Prince Edward Island, immediately moved to establish the blood relationship that linked him to others in the society. His acceptance speech indicated "that he had not a drop of blood in his veins that was not Scottish, and expressed his appreciation of the honour done to him by the Society in electing him first president."[132]

This elite group of Scots gathered for its first full meeting as the Scottish Society of Vancouver at the Citizens Club, Vancouver, on February 16, 1922. The *British Columbia Monthly,* as mentioned, reported the activities of the society in detail and interspersed them with reflections on the nature of "Scottishness". At the first meeting, vice president W.H. Smith expressed the hope that the organization "could make a valuable contribution to the life of this portion of the Empire by reproducing here the

[130] G. Duncan, "A Scottish Centre," *British Columbia Monthly,* October-November, 1921, 11-12.
[131] Duncan, 12.
[132] "The Scottish Society of Vancouver," *British Columbia Monthly,* February, 1922, 9.

devotion to Scottish national ideals". One of these ideals was to investigate "the spirit of democracy" for "wherever Scotsmen have gone they had stood for the higher democracy."[133]

The conflation of Empire promotion, notions of Scottishness and Canadian-Scottishness and the celebration of Scottish song and literature exhibited in the first meeting of the society was common in the reports of the activities of the Scottish Society of Vancouver. The Society's programmes included lectures on Burns, Scott, Stevenson and kailyard writer Ian Maclaren, and poetry written in Scots after Burns' death. Later the music and literature remit expanded to encompass Scottish history and the society heard presentations on Bonnie Prince Charlie, the early Celtic Church in Scotland and the Covenanters.[134] At the same time, readers were reminded that the society existed for "Scotsmen, whether Canadian or home grown," and speeches were recorded "to express adequately [the] sense of the excellencies of the Scottish character and the virtues of the Scottish race." The Society also celebrated the Empire connection and even welcomed the occasional panjandrum.[135]

Most issues contained at least one article on some aspect of nation building, including suggestions for a Canadian national anthem,[136] the promotion of Canadian

[133] D.A. Chalmers, "Successful Inauguration of the Scottish Society of Vancouver," *British Columbia Monthly,* March, 1922, 16.

[134] "A Winter with the Scottish Society of Vancouver," *British Columbia Monthly,* April 1925, 2-3. The talk on the Covenanters was delivered by James Inglis Reid which, according to his granddaughter, "fit with a side of his character that the family talked about."

[135] "The Growth of the Vancouver Scottish Society," *British Columbia Monthly,* December, 1922, 16.

[136] "A Canadian National Anthem," *British Columbia Monthly*, March, 1922, 1.

literature, the creation of a Canadian national consciousness,[137] and ways of strengthening the Canadian "imperial kinship" in the British Empire[138]. At the same time, the magazine opposed suggestions that were seen to weaken the Empire connection, like a new Canadian flag or the idea that Canada could stand alone as a nation.[139]

A recurring theme in the pages of *British Columbia Monthly* (as in McDougall's *Beacon*) was the issue of "Oriental" immigration and employment. The concern was therefore not a new one for the magazine when it came time to consider the Janet Smith case, and had been an issue for discussion from the earliest days of the *Westminster Hall Review*. In January 1912 the *Westminster Hall Review* published a resolution submitted and carried by the Ministerial Association of Vancouver, "a small minority dissenting." It stated that "British Columbia has already more Orientals than she ought to have" and that "they are different, and cannot assimilate with Canadians. And a foreign mass undigested will be fatal to national life."[140] Under Chalmers' editorship, the issue of Asian population in British Columbia provided column inches for a number of authors, although a relative softening is detectable. In 1921 Principal W.H. Smith published an article in the *British Columbia Monthly* entitled, "Is Oriental Immigration in Canada Desirable?" The question left the possibility of a "yes" answer and was indicative of the fact that Shaw clearly regarded himself as a moderate on the issue. However, the potential of a "yes" response was not realized as he concluded that the existing restriction on immigration "is necessary for Canada, and in the best interest of the

[137] See, for instance, H.D. Ranns, "Creating a Canadian National Consciousness," *British Columbia Monthly,* December, 1926, 5-6.
[138] "Canadians and the Empire," *British Columbia Monthly,* November, 1926, 2.
[139] "Could Canada Stand Alone as a Nation?" *British Columbia Monthly,* August, 1925, 1-4.
[140] *Westminster Hall Magazine* January, 1912, 26-28.

immigrant." The "mathematical proportion" of Asian immigration, Smith believed, should be "comparatively small" and even that should depend on whether or not "the Oriental [can] actually become part of our race in the sense of intermarriage." With immigration restricted, however, "those now in the country should enjoy the full rights of citizenship," and "the real task of Canadian life is to take the Oriental already here and build him up into our common life." An extensive programme of evangelization would be required to effect this consummation, and its success would depend on life style changes among some Anglo Saxons who were setting a bad example by engaging in gambling and drug trafficking.[141]

The *British Columbia Monthly's* analysis of the Janet Smith case followed the self-consciously moderate tone already adopted by the magazine on other matters and tried to contextualize it around its oft-expressed desire to build a stronger British Columbia and Canada within the British Empire. It started from the same premise as every other "Scottish" source by insisting on Janet Smith's innocent and blameless character. Even the reading of some immoderate items from her personal diary in court did not materially affect this issue. One reporter did say that "It is regrettable that the reading of picked extracts from the deceased's diary tended to defame her pure and unsullied memory," but quickly added that these "did nothing but show that she was a well-balanced girl, fond of having a good time, capable of some self-analysis and lucid enough to put down on paper the expressions of her thoughts."[142] The *British Columbia Monthly's* phrasing, while slightly more guarded about the diary, was equally positive in

[141] Principal W.H. Smith, "Is Oriental Immigration in Canada Desirable?" *British Columbia Monthly,* September, 1923, 5.
[142] "Wilfully Murdered in New Jury's Verdict," *Point Grey Gazette*, September 13, 1924, 1.

its assessment of Janet Smith's character. She was "an innocent and attractive" nursemaid and "while having a lightsomeness of disposition common to her years," the evidence proved that she was "a young Scotswoman of blameless character."[143]

As the Janet Smith affair progressed, the *British Columbia Monthly* moulded it to a worldview that had already formed in its columns. This included "British" notions of justice for all, equality before the law and the nature of the relationship between province, country and Empire. It did not, however, include any particular analysis of Janet Smith's "Scottishness" other than, as mentioned, a determined insistence on her blameless character. This failure to consider Janet Smith's Scottishness was certainly not because of any aversion to racial stereotyping in the *British Columbia Monthly*. The essential nature of the Scot was common to most of the reports of the activities of the Scottish Society of Vancouver and featured in numerous articles, especially when they were written by members of the society. While these analyses of Scottishness were always positive, other "white races" did not fare so well.[144] The Irish, for instance, suffered from "a national Irish character and disposition, volatile, emotional, chameleon-like in its changes, in which the highest idealism is mingled with incongruous personal

[143] "Editorial Notes," *British Columbia Magazine,* September, 1924, 1-2.

[144] The only exception to this was when Scots were encountered who still lived in Scotland. In 1927 W.R. Dunlop returned to Britain for a visit. In Plymouth he met a Scottish engineer whose "homely burr", bizarrely, "seemed like the welcoming voice of Mother England." He then "visited the House of Commons in some fear; for I had heard with becoming sorrow of the doings of some Scottish members in recent years. When I went in it was Scottish night when the Secretary for Scotland was warding off a fusillade. Accent and idiom shewed here and there a lack in the niceties of classic speech…" W.R. Dunlop, "Impressions of the Homeland," B.C.M. (March 1927) 5-6. Dunlop had gone to school in Hamilton, Scotland and had previously revisited his old school and, finding some changes, had questioned, "if there is much in the change that can improve on the soundness of Scottish education in the higher class schools in the 'Seventies and 'Eighties." W.R.Dunlop, "The Old Academy," *British Columbia Monthly,* June 1923, 13.

characteristics,"[145] while one of the "peculiarities" of the French "is the curious strange shyness with which they conceal their inmost feelings, especially their virtues, and the delight they take in appearing light-hearted and shallow, in boldly exhibiting their vices."[146] The First World War positioned Germans for even harsher judgment because they had "forever disgraced the white races in the eyes of the world."[147]

One factor that may have limited this type of racial stereotyping in the case of Janet Smith was that, while the essential nature of the Scot was often considered, it was always in a masculine context. The Scottish Society of Vancouver was a fraternity which studied male Scottish authors and male figures in Scottish history.[148] The "Scotsman" represented higher democracy, greater industry or superior morality. Executive members writing in the *British Columbia Monthly* on issues unconnected with the affairs of the society followed the same gender pattern when explaining their own view of Scottishness. Robert Bone, for instance, held it to be "well known that the Scot, in his native land, has to work hard to make a living for himself and family and consequently an industrious spirit has been developed. Besides this, he has strong religious tendencies, which influence his every action. His home life is marked by sincerity, reverence and deep affection, and these same qualities are evident in his community life. His religious

[145] "The Irish Question," *British Columbia Monthly,* February, 1920, 13.

[146] H.Chodat, "The Fundamental Traits of French Character," *British Columbia Monthly*, February, 1920, 3.

[147] *British Columbia Monthly,* February, 1921, 1.

[148] The Scottish Society of Vancouver was, of course, not the only Scottish fraternity in Vancouver. Several of the other Scottish Societies were men-only and some of them had separate ladies auxiliaries. Interestingly, the Vancouver Burns Fellowship when it formed in 1924 was not a fraternity. Membership was "open to all" and fees were $2.00 for gentlemen, $1.00 for ladies. Their modern day equivalent – The Burns Club of Vancouver – is the only Scottish fraternity left in Vancouver. See "Vancouver Burns Fellowship," *British Columbia Monthly* December, 1924, 5-6.

tendencies have contributed to a high moral standard of living, and helped to produce a nation of strong, healthy and energetic people."[149]

When it came to Janet Smith and Scottish femininity, the men of the Scottish Society of Vancouver and the *British Columbia Monthly* had little to add to the general community assessment of Smith as an "angel." The issues highlighted by the Janet Smith affair were seen as belonging to a bigger world than the social sphere in which the "Scottishness" of the Scottish Society of Vancouver, and indeed all the other Scottish societies in Vancouver, operated. In its initial consideration of the case, the magazine laid down the principle it was to follow in all its expositions on Janet Smith, that it is "our glory that all persons should have equal treatment and equal regard, equal protection at the hands of the law." By "our glory" editor Chalmers meant the glory of British law, and he returned to the theme each time there was some new development in the case. He was sceptical of the conclusion of the second inquest that Janet Smith had been murdered because, "Murder seems from the reported evidence equally motiveless and people do not indulge in homicide without an urge under British law."[150]

Chalmers' call for equality under the law proceeded from the recognition of Janet Smith's humble circumstances and the desire "that the public must be shown that her death was as well inquired into as if she had been one of Vancouver's wealthiest or most popular ladies."[151] In this statement, he echoed what McDougall has said on the same subject but, unlike MacDougall, the principle of equal justice held fast when it came time to consider the situation of Wong Foon Sing and the apparent involvement of the police

[149] Robert Bone, "Sports and Games," *British Columbia Monthly,* 5.
[150] "The Wayside Philosopher," *British Columbia Monthly,* September, 1924, 16.
[151] "The Wayside Philosopher," *British Columbia Monthly*, August, 1924.

in his two kidnappings: “Whether or not the blunders up to this moment [the first kidnapping] were due to ignorance, carelessness or graft, here we have a deliberate invasion of a man’s rights. If Wong were properly subject to detention, he should have been regularly arrested and placed in gaol to await his trial. This was the only proper course to pursue. If Wong were not subject to detention, he had every right to go about his business unhindered.” The “high handed outrage” that was perpetrated on Wong “by the very force that should have protected him from outrage and to which every citizen must look for proper protection,” was followed by a second kidnapping which was “a good illustration of what might, and does, happen where Klan methods take the place of properly enforced laws.” In his conclusion, Chalmers separated himself not only from McDougall, who had declared that he would have been proud to have been a kidnapper, but also, as we shall see, from the St. Andrews and Caledonian Society, some of whose members were implicated:

> It would be decidedly regrettable if it could be established that Janet Smith had been murdered (in our opinion decidedly not the case) and the guilty party or parties escaped…It would be ten times more regrettable that the kidnappers of Wong, on either occasion, should escape arrest and punishment. Whoever kidnapped Wong on the second occasion, even if they did not injure him, should get the heaviest sentences the law allots to that crime. No personal integrity, no social standing, no political influence, should be permitted to reduce their punishment. Once and for all it must be borne home to all that only by proper authority and in proper manner must justice be dispensed and the rights of any man curtailed…For rich and poor, banker and beggar, the powerful and the penniless, the mighty and the feeble, there must be the same undeviating administration of law, and the very least among us must be as secure in the lawful exercise of his constitutional rights and privileges as the most influential person in all our fair province. Unless this is so, British justice is a farce and Christianity a failure.[152]

[152] “The Wayside Philosopher: The Wong Kidnapping Case,” *British Columbia Monthly,* July, 1926, 4-5.

Chalmers' attempt to underpin the Janet Smith affair with the principles of British justice as they should have applied in the "fair province" of British Columbia, conflated with ideas concerning connection to Empire, especially in the matter of how this justice was to be policed and enforced. From the earliest considerations of the Janet Smith case, the *British Columbia Monthly* was unhappy with the performance of the Point Grey Police. This attitude echoed McDougall's except that the minister interpreted police inefficiency as another indication of a general corruption that afflicted all the authorities engaged in the case. *The British Columbia Magazine* viewed the force as ill-trained, ill-equipped and "bungling," and reflecting "so badly on the community that the best justification for giving it [the Janet Smith case] the fullest publicity is that thereby anything similar in 'police investigation' may be made practically impossible in town or country in all future time."[153] This, when coupled with the suggestion that the case had been affected by "financial considerations," required a solution that was to be found if "the chief authorities might very well ask Scotland Yard, London, to loan the Province the use of one of their most experienced men. After all what is the use of inter-Empire connection if, in such cases, there cannot be reciprocity? Besides such action would only be in keeping with an extension of the 'Metropolitan' idea."[154]

The metropolitan idea that Chalmers referred to was the ongoing pressure for an amalgamated police force that had been increased by the Point Grey Police force's failure to solve the Janet Smith case. For Chalmers, a metropolitan police force with, when necessary, help from Scotland Yard was essential, not just for the Janet Smith case but to address other issues as well. It was an essential step towards moulding

[153] "Editorial Notes," *British Columbia Monthly,* September, 1924, 1.
[154] "Editorial Notes," *British Columbia Monthly,* October, 1924, 2.

British Columbia into a peaceful, just and well-ordered corner of the British Empire. It was also a bulwark against the influence of the United States for, "Whatever the power of money may seem to be in some criminal cases south of the line, we believe that Canadians, wherever born, would strenuously resent even the suggestion that any immunity from crime can be secured by either wealth or position."[155]

The *British Columbia Monthly* used the language of "Britishness" and of Empire when considering the Janet Smith case. The language of "Scottishness" was restricted to expressions of innocent femininity. It may be problematic to use Chalmers as the voice for the general membership of the Scottish Society of Vancouver, but articles by other members of the society in the *British Columbia Monthly*, particularly Principal W.H Smith on Asian immigration, suggest that the self-consciously "moderate" tone adopted by Chalmers in the Janet Smith matter was not just a personal one. In the magazine, "Scottishness" was promoted in and restricted to the social sphere while the law and order issues related to the death of Janet Smith and the kidnapping of Wong Foon Sing needed the language of Britishness and Empire to explain and resolve them. The "British" magazine clearly trumped the "Scottish" society as it sought to distance itself from both Reverend McDougall and the rogue officers of the Vancouver St. Andrews and Caledonian Society.

[155] "Editorial Notes," October, 1924, 2. The Wayside Philosopher was particularly slighting of the United States. It was a place where "graft and corruptness flourish." The Janet Smith case seems to have represented a drift towards the conditions that obtained across the border at least in the view of the B.C.M. Wayside Philosopher, "Conditions in the United States," *British Columbia Monthly,* September, 1925, 9-10.

Chapter 4.

The Janet Smith Case and the Vancouver St. Andrew's and Caledonian Society

If a segment of the Scottish Society of Vancouver represented the intellectual elite of Vancouver, the Vancouver St. Andrews and Caledonian Society (VSACS)' as we shall see, counted some of the political and civic elite of the city in its membership. On September 4, 1925, VSACS passed a resolution on the Janet Smith affair outlining two sets of circumstances and proposed action:

> WHEREAS one of the aims of this Society is to see that justice is maintained inviolate and that no wrongs are to be perpetrated without a fight, particularly towards any worthy Scotsman or Scotch woman; and whereas more than a year ago Janet Smith, a young and innocent Scottish lassie, was murdered and a cruel and foul attempt made to cast the stigma of suicide on a respectable Scottish family;
>
> AND WHEREAS certain members of this Society who have conscientiously devoted their time and energy untiringly in an effort to discover the murderer or murderers have been charged with the abduction of Wong Foon Sing, the Chinese houseboy who worked in the house where Janet was murdered, and as a result their efforts to solve the crime have been temporarily checked;
>
> NOW, therefore, be it resolved that this Society goes on record that every assistance and support possible be given to the said members and that a subscription list be started for the purpose of defraying their legal costs.[156]

[156] City of Vancouver Archives (CVA) Vancouver St Andrews and Caledonian Society Minutes (VSACS). Add MSS 453, Volumes 1 and 2 (Locations 562-F-2 and 562-F-3), September, 1925.

The VSACS resolution is instructive in a number of ways. First, it was proposed and passed more than a year after the death of Janet Smith and a year to the day after the opening of the second inquest into her death and the verdict of wilful murder.[157] The reason for this long delay is not immediately obvious, as the VSACS could have declared itself on the Janet Smith affair at any of the thirteen regular meetings and numerous executive meetings it had held since her death. As early as August 14, 1924, the Janet Smith case was brought to the attention of the VSACS by the Scottish Ladies' Society when letters from it were read at a VSACS meeting "in connection with the death of Janet Smith, Point Grey." The reception of the letters is recorded in the society minutes, but their contents are not explained or addressed and the meeting contents itself with a general commitment "to lend full support in the investigation of the death of Janet Smith."[158]

The recording of the society's support for a murder investigation, even in such a generic way, was at odds with the content and tone of the rest of the VSACS minutes. Two meetings before the first mention of Janet Smith, there had been a motion to replace the chairman of the Piping Committee for the Highland Games who had not reported to the society or answered a request from the football club for the use of one of its rooms "to entertain the team from the Fleet."[159] The next meeting, on August 1, 1924, suspended all business "because of the large amount of detail work to be transacted in

[157] The fact that the resolution was passed exactly one year after the opening of the second inquest (September 4, 1924) seems to have been a coincidence. The society held its meetings on the first Friday of every month, which in this case was September 4, 1925.

[158] CVA, VSACS, August 4, 1924.

[159] The minutes record, "most of the members staying over for the smoker put up by the Football club, which was heartily enjoyed." CVA, VSACS, July 4, 1924.

connection with the [Highland] games the following day."[160] The meeting on August 14, at which Janet Smith was first mentioned, was a "Special General Meeting" called "to deal with matters requiring immediate attention." Most of these matters, however, had arisen at the most recent Highland games organized by the society, including a letter of protest from the Elks Relay Team against the "Ex High School of South Vancouver", a complaint from the 72nd band "that they had 17 men turn out at the games, and only received sixteen medals" and several other letters relating to the Games that were "referred to the Secretary for action". As well there was protracted discussion on whether or not the tug-o'-war trophy should go to the Vancouver Police, "as there was no other competition this year at the Games," and the demand for "a full and complete apology" to the Society from "the Dancers who assaulted the Judge of Dancing on the day of the Games".[161] In contrast to the attention given to these pressing issues, the response to the Janet Smith affair was somewhat muted. The fighting dancers, in particular, took precedence over Janet Smith for some time to come.

This seeming reluctance to get involved in the Janet Smith case, however, could not continue. David Patterson, the head of the Council of United Scottish Societies, was making headlines in all of the city's newspapers with his repeated calls for action and justice. Patterson was one of the St. Andrew's and Caledonian Society's representatives to the United Council and, therefore, affiliated with both organizations. His appointment as the St. Andrew's delegate to the Council of Scottish Societies took place at the end of the meeting of November 7, 1924, the same meeting at which "a resolution was presented by the Council of Scottish Societies dealing with the

[160] CVA, VSACS, August 1, 1924.
[161] CVA, VSACS, August 14, 1924.

employment of Orientals with white girls in private homes."[162] After his secondment, Patterson reported back regularly to the St. Andrew's and Caledonian Society. He was "granted a rebate on the rent of rooms"[163] for the United Council and asked for financial assistance for his work on the Janet Smith case.[164] The minutes, however, do not record the details of his work. This is a remarkable omission, especially as Patterson had been elevated to President and chief spokesman for the United Council. The VSACS meeting that appointed Patterson to the United Council was much more concerned with the issue of Colin MacMillan and William Bell, who were to be summoned to appear before the executive and explain why they "had a key made to the Society's rooms without permission of the Secretary."[165]

The general tone and emphasis of the VSACS minutes before September 1925, then, suggest that the society was more comfortable dealing with Highland games problems and the misdemeanours of individual members than it was talking about the Janet Smith case. While a simple observation at one level, this actually proceeded from the very heart of VSACS culture. The VSACS, as we shall see, was a fraternity primarily concerned with the social life of its members, and easily unnerved by politics and female initiatives. The Janet Smith case, to some degree, was being driven by the women of the Scottish community and was hence not given priority. The letters read in connection with the case in August 1924, and the resolution presented on the employment of "Orientals" with white girls in private homes in November 1924, were both initiatives by the Scottish Ladies' Society. In the past, the VSACS had been less than enthusiastic when

[162] CVA, VSACS, November 7, 1924.
[163] CVA, VSACS, December 23, 1924.
[164] CVA, VSACS, July 3, 1925.
[165] CVA, VSACS, November 7, 1924.

approached by the women in their association. For instance, a previous application by the same Scottish Ladies Society for affiliation with VSACS had met with a summary dismissal. “We as a committee,” the minute records, “made it clear that we had nothing to offer them,” and “that they could control their own affairs and we could control ours.”[166]

If the society was keen to stand apart from the “ladies,” it was equally keen to avoid politics. This was made clear in a discussion recorded in the minutes six months before the death of Janet Smith, when some speeches were made at a meeting that were not to the liking of at least one member. The details of the speeches are not recorded, but “Mr Wilson, in his remarks, criticized the committee, particularly in the choosing of speakers for the occasion, [and] intimated that a political atmosphere prevailed. Mr McLellan replied and stated that he was fairly convinced it was the most successful affair the society ever held and felt sure that politics did not enter into the speeches that evening.”[167] It is unlikely that a society that felt the need to cleanse its speeches of politics would have taken easily to the political furor that the death of Janet Smith had created.

With the resolution of September 4, 1925 (see above), the tone of the VSACS minutes changed completely as far as the Janet Smith affair was concerned. The society finally acted with purpose on the matter and the resolution was, at once, authoritative and aggressive. The volte-face was occasioned by the fact that two VSACS members were now directly involved in the case. Chief John Murdoch and Commissioner H.O. MacDonald of the Point Grey Police were two of the three men charged with involvement

[166] CVA, VSACS, March 1, 1912.
[167] CVA, VSACS, January 4, 1924.

in the kidnapping of Wong Foon Sing; the other was police sergeant Percy Kirkham. At the VSACS meeting, MacDonald "outlined briefly the position of the Members of the Point Grey Police Force, and asked that Percy Kirkham, a member of that force, be included in the Defence fund."[168] Kirkham, though apparently not a member of the St. Andrew's and Caledonian Society, was included in the subscription list that was opened for the defence of all three men and a committee was appointed "to look after collections". Immediately "Mr Jacob Johnston, Mr A.S. Matthew, Mr Wm. Bruce donated the sum of $25 each towards the defence."[169]

The aggressive tone of the resolution may have been inspired, in part, by the fact that the members who had been charged were no ordinary drones. The charge of kidnapping against a commissioner, a chief of police and a sergeant in the same police force would have been remarkable at any time, but the presence of Murdoch on the charge sheet provided an additional dimension as far as the Scottish community was concerned. John Murdoch had come to Canada from Dunfermline, Scotland, and had joined the Point Grey police force at the age of nineteen. He had risen quickly through the ranks and, at thirty-nine, was given the permanent appointment as chief largely because he was seen as being tough on the Janet Smith case.[170] Murdoch was also something of a folk hero in the Vancouver Scottish community. He was a perennial heavy events champion at the Highland Games and a competitor in the hammer throw at the Olympic Games in Paris in 1924. His exploits were followed in the local papers, especially the *Point Grey Gazette*, and he represented all that was to be revered in a

[168] CVA, VSACS, September 4, 1925.
[169] CVA, VSACS, September 4, 1925.
[170] "Murdoch Chief of Point Grey Police," *Point Grey Gazette*, May 9, 1925.

Scotsman by the games-driven VSACS.[171] That men such as he were to face the Fall Assizes was clearly more than the society was prepared to endure and, in response, it formed a resolution, the wording of which revealed more about VSACS than, perhaps, it intended.

The first remarkable thing about the VSACS resolution on Janet Smith was the declaration that "one of the aims of this Society is to see that justice is maintained inviolate and that no wrongs are to be perpetrated without a fight, particularly towards any worthy Scotsman or Scotch woman." There was, in fact, no such aim in the constitution of the society. In fact, the "objects" of the society, as set out in its Constitution and By-Laws in 1887, were "the attending of medical and other relief to such natives of Scotland, and their descendants, as may from sickness and other causes, have fallen into distress; the encouragement of the national costume and games; to cultivate a taste for Scottish music and literature; and of binding more closely together all Scotchmen, and those of Scottish descent."[172] The VSACS redrafted its constitution in 1905, elaborating on all of the original elements and adding: "To develop an appreciation of Canadian Citizenship" and "To promote the general welfare and unity

[171] *Point Grey Gazette* kept track of Murdoch's athletic achievements and ascension through the ranks of the Point Grey Police Force, sometimes combining the two in its headlines. See for instance: "Sgt. Murdoch Wins Eighth Place – Hammer Throw Olympic Games in Paris," *Point Grey Gazette*, August 2, 1924. p16. The *Gazette* also revealed that there was at least one other resolution in support of Murdoch, MacDonald and Kirkham. It reported that the "outdoor staff" at Point Grey Municipal Hall resolved, "that we extend our sincere sympathy and support in their present trouble and we assure them that we look forward in confidence and hope to their early exoneration from the charges preferred against them; also that we as citizens interested in the administration of justice appreciate and wish every success to their efforts to solve the mystery of the death of Janet Smith and see that justice is done." "Extend Sympathy to Accused Police," *Point Grey Gazette*, July 18, 1925, 1.

[172] *Constitution of the St Andrews and Caledonian Society of Vancouver,* (Vancouver, 1887), CVA PAM 1887-18.

of the race."[173] When the resolution on Janet Smith was passed in September 1924, VSACS was still bound by the Constitution and By-Laws of 1905 that made no mention of the violation of justice and the fight that any violation would provoke.[174] The rather benign sounding promotion of general welfare and unity had been sharpened to a point.

When the VSACS had formed its first Constitution in 1886, it may have envisaged some kind of balance between the various objectives that it had set for itself, but with the success of its first Highland Games in 1893, "games, gatherings and festivals" were immediately given primacy. Secretaries recorded members looking forward to the games, planning for them and holding lengthy post-mortems concerning problems that had arisen on the day they took place. This is not to say that the first objective on the list, that of providing assistance to needy Scots, was completely neglected. As Eric Heath has pointed out, the VSACS "did provide financial and other assistance to ill, injured, destitute and grieving Scots," but the minutes were less fulsome on this than they were on the games.[175] Occasionally, money might have been forwarded for funeral expenses, as in the case of "the death of Alex Howell"[176] in March 1890, but letters requesting assistance were usually noted as read in the minutes without the details or the discussion recorded. When discussion was recorded, it was usually because of an unwelcome request for assistance by a Scot deemed to be

[173] *Constitution and by-laws of the St Andrews and Caledonian Society of Vancouver – Revised 1905* (Vancouver 1960), CVA PAM 1960-200.

[174] The only other redrafting of the Constitution and By-Laws of VSACS appears to have taken place in 1960. One of the most significant changes was that "Qualification for Membership" was reworded to read, "Persons of either sex, natives of Scotland and or of Scottish parents over the age of eighteen and of good moral character shall be eligible for membership." CVA PAM 1960-200.

[175] Eric Heath, "You Don't Have to be a Scotchman – Sport and Evolution of the Vancouver Caledonian Games, 1893-1926" (MA thesis, Simon Fraser University, 2005).

[176] CVA, VSACS, March 21, 1890.

incurably indigent. This was the case with Ian Ross, from whom the Society received a communication on November 1, 1889, "giving a history of his life and asking to be assisted in obtaining employment." Ross was well known to the VSACS, and there followed "considerable discussion in which he was shown to be unworthy of the societies' [sic] notice." The Society had helped him on previous occasions "to no purpose", and "it was moved that the society does not deem it advisable and that the secretary advise him accordingly (carried)."[177]

The commitment in their constitution to poor relief and the organization of Highland games did demonstrate, however, that the St. Andrew's and Caledonian Society believed in action more than reflection. This was evident, too, in the society's languid approach to another of its objectives: "the cultivation of a taste for Scottish music and literature." This part of its remit, which was the main object of several other Scottish societies, including the Scottish Society of Vancouver, does not seem to have to have ignited the interest of the VSACS members. There is a noticeable absence of lectures concerning Scottish music and literature, a fact which seems to have worried at least some of the members. On October 13, 1905, a discussion ensued "on the best method to *cultivate interest in Scottish history and literature* in younger members", but it was felt that "it would be easier to evoke the interest of the younger people if that of the older people was gained first." From here, the object of "cultivating interest in Scottish history and literature" seems to have been quietly neglected.[178]

[177] CVA, VSACS, November 1, 1889.
[178] CVA, VSACS, October 13, 1905.

The VSACS, then, appears to have taken on a new aim - "to see that justice is maintained inviolate" - that was specifically adapted to the nature of the problem confronting it in the Janet Smith case. In fact, the statement that follows, "that no wrongs are to be perpetrated without a fight," brings the resolution closer in spirit to the motto rather than the stated aims of the VSACS – "Nemo me impune Lacessit" or "No one provokes me with impunity." In the years before the murder case, several organisations in Vancouver had felt the force of this commitment. The Hotel Vancouver, for instance, came to regret the day that it served inferior food at the St Andrew's Ball and allowed uninvited spectators on the balcony above the ballroom. Again, the directors of the Vancouver Recreation Park were subjected to some vitriol when they cleared the Highland Games early so that a baseball game could begin.[179] In both instances, partial remuneration for poor service was the weapon of choice for the society. The Janet Smith case, however, provided a more serious provocation, and the resolution recognized two violations of "inviolable" justice: a failure to solve the murder Smith case; and the arrest of VSACS members who had been trying to do so. Given that solving Smith's murder had failed to ignite the interest of the membership before September 1925, it was evidently the second violation, that against the arrested VSACS members, that finally incited the Society to action.

The two "wrongs" in the VSACS resolution were presented in such a way that the relative importance the society placed on them was made clear. The fact that "any Scotsman or Scotch woman" was to be defended may suggest priority by the order in which they were listed. The second section of the resolution provides further evidence

[179] CVA, VSACS, September 6, 1907.

that it was the problems faced by their male members more than resolving the Janet Smith case that the society was really concerned about. The action suggested in the third section, the opening of a subscription list on behalf of these members (and not a renewed call for justice for Janet Smith) placed the focus entirely on the kidnapping charges faced by Murdoch, MacDonald and Kirkham. This concern for some of the males who made up the membership of the VSACS was consistent with the masculine culture of the Society as manifested from its earliest days in Vancouver.

From its nascence, the VSACS emphasised a combination of brotherhood and consanguinity in the context of Scottishness. The first meeting on September 10, 1886, was visited by "two brethren", Messrs. Bowie and Rankin, from the already existing Mainland St. Andrew's and Caledonian Society in New Westminster. They "both spoke in sympathy with the new Society and expressed a hope that all the Scottish Societies in British Columbia would co-operate with one another in forwarding the good they were intended to do." In return, "a hearty vote of thanks was unanimously given to Messrs. Bowie and Rankin for the kindly and brotherly interest they had shown in us, in coming such a distance over bad roads, on such a dark and stormy night to be present at our installation meeting."[180] There was even more brotherly obligation at the next meeting when a Mr. Russell addressed the new society, "impressing upon the officers and members the necessity of amity and brotherly love to ensure success."[181] Some years later, the Society's bard, Robert Alison Hood, rendered all this fraternity in the "Gathering Song of the St. Andrew's Society," which, presumably, was sung at the beginning of meetings:

[180] CVA, VSACS, September 10, 1886.
[181] CVA, VSACS, September 17, 1886.

Brithers in exile here we meet together
Tae foster fond mem'ries o' the land o' auld lang syne
The land o' the thistle, the broom and the heather
The nearest, the dearest tae your heart and tae mine:
Frae Solway tae Pentland, frae Islay tae Berwick
Heilandmen and Lawland are gathered here tonight
There's Fifers frae Anstruther and Shetlanders frae Lerwick
A' knit in bonds as brithers wi' a common birthright.

Chorus:
Sons of St Andrew stand loyal together
Bred in the land o' the broom and the heather
Let no disunion of rank or of station
Mar our communion as sons of one nation;
Perish all difference, of creed or of party
Let every greeting be cordial and hearty
Men o' the land o' the broom and the heather
Sons of St Andrew stand loyal together.[182]

These notions of brotherhood stemmed naturally from the conditions of membership, for "None but Scotsmen or their descendents" were eligible, and prospective members were instructed to include "place of nativity" on their applications.[183] That the society was open to Scotsmen and their descendents implied a common bond of blood in addition to that of malenesss and Scottishness. The framers of the Society's constitution had not detected any tension between "place of nativity" and "descent" but they soon had to face a test case which provided an early example in the history of the VSACS where "race" was an issue. On October 8, 1887, an investigating committee which had been struck to look into the nationality of one P. Fay "was held over until the next meeting".[184] By October 20, 1887, it had been discovered that, though Fay was born in Scotland, his father was an Irishman. Then, "after a considerable discussion pro and con as to what constituted one eligible to become a member of the

[182] UBC Rare Books and Special Collections Robert Allison Hood Fonds.
[183] CVA, "Constitution of the St Andrews and Caledonian Society, City of Vancouver" (Vancouver 1887) PAM 1887-18
[184] CVA, VSACS, October 8, 1887.

society, the discussion dropped."[185] P. Fay appears in later minutes as a member of the VSACS and so his application must have been approved at some point.[186] The debate around him, however, exposed the limits of the "Brithers Together" song (and, indeed, Burns' "A Mans A Man For A' That," which was often referred to at meetings) well before Wong Foon Sing discovered that the VSACS's common humanity did not apply to him. By contrast to the dithering over Fay, the following year "Thos. MacKinnon moved and W.Rae seconded the election of Joseph Campbell (carried)."[187] At a meeting one week later Joseph Campbell "informed the society that he would play the bagpipe on night of 30 Nov gratis."[188] Campbell's piping echoed down the years to Murdoch's hammer throwing and caber tossing as the essential Scottishness of the accused kidnappers remained unquestioned. As a result, the Society was quick to mobilize in their favour.

The VSACS resolution on Janet Smith, then, was informed by notions of fraternity and consanguinity and these inspired the membership to come to the assistance of their brother Scotsmen. These elements produced a kind of certainty of community and purpose that, in the case of Janet Smith, allowed accused kidnappers to be described as "conscientious" and "untiring" pursuers of justice. The perception that the accused members' efforts to solve the case had "been *temporarily* checked" was indicative of a belief that they should not be exposed to the very justice system that they were trying to uphold.

[185] CVA, VSACS, October 20, 1887.

[186] The 1888 and 1889 Vancouver Directories list only one Fay. Patrick Fay's occupation is recorded as "Roman Catholic Priest".

[187] CVA, VSACS, November 1, 1888.

[188] CVA, VSACS, November 8, 1888.

This confidence may also have stemmed from the belief that, as VSACS members, they were not only white citizens of Vancouver but leaders in the civic development of the young city. In a newspaper article in 1921, T.A. Prentice argued that, of all the organizations which played a part in the development of Vancouver, VSACS "stands out in bold relief." It was not only the oldest society in the city but, "its history during the thirty four years it has been in existence is in a measure the history of Vancouver. The two are twinned and intertwined, and the Scottish stalwarts who carried St. Andrew's banner throughout these years are the same pioneers who have done so much to make the city what it is today."[189] Prentice's espousal of the synonymy of the VSACS and the city of Vancouver had a metaphorical dimension in the story of the society's early accommodations in Vancouver and a literal dimension in the nature of its early leadership. Initially, the society met in Gold's Hall in Vancouver, but the minutes of August 1887 reveal that a committee of members was searching for "the cheapest hall available".[190] This search was successful and the August 1887 and September 1887 meetings took place in Gray's Hall for a price later revealed to be $16 for those two months.[191] By April 5, 1888, however, there was some kind of problem with Gray's Hall and the Hall Committee reported that "they had made arrangements with M.A. MacLean for the use of his office for the present."[192] M.A. MacLean, from Tiree in Scotland, was the first President of the VSACS and the first Mayor of Vancouver. The original directors who met with MacLean in his office included R.H. Alexander, the manager of the Hastings Sawmill, who was defeated by MacLean in the mayoral election; J.M. Stewart,

[189] T.A. Prentice, "Vancouver Scotsmen Muster Behind Banner of St Andrews in Steady Drive for Civic Development," *Vancouver Sunday Sun*, January 23, 1921, 20.
[190] CVA, VSACS, August 24, 1887.
[191] CVA, VSACS, October 6, 1887.
[192] CVA, VSACS, April 5, 1888.

the city's first police chief; and Andrew C. Muir, the city's first lawyer.[193] The Society met in the mayor's office until October 18, 1888 (after which it moved to Wilson Hall), but the vision of the members crowding into the mayor's office for their meetings is a defining one and a good illustration of Prentice's idea that the history of Vancouver and that of the society were conjoined.

The early VSACS minutes contain some additional suggestions that the members were well aware of their mission as leaders of civic development in the city. For instance they met in MacLean's office at 8:00 pm on April 19, 1888, "to discuss and find out the best means to get up sports and games on 1st July". After considerable discussion, it was decided that "as there is no enclosed space in the city that games and sports could be played that we march with the Citizens as a society that day." The members of the VSACS would descend from the mayor's office to march, but they wanted to distinguish themselves, and "wearing a scotch cap on that day was discussed and concluded that a plain dark blue 1st quality 'Balmoral' be worn with imitation metal thistle."[194] On May 10, the minutes recorded that an order was sent to the "old country" for "70 caps finest quality also 70 metal thistles and six silver ones".[195] The six silver ones, presumably, were for office bearers – a distinction within a distinction. Prentice, writing in 1921, demonstrated that these distinctions, and the notion of civic leadership that occasioned them, were still pertinent only three years before the death of Janet Smith.

[193] CVA, VSACS, September 10, 1886.
[194] CVA, VSACS, April 19, 1888.
[195] CVA, VSACS, May 10, 1888.

If the members of the VSACS who passed the resolution to support its accused kidnappers in September 1925 saw themselves as "the same pioneers who have done so much to make the city what it is today," it seems likely that that consciousness influenced both the wording and the tone of the resolution and was behind the confident assertion that the work of their members on the Janet Smith case had been only "temporarily checked." The trial of MacDonald, Murdoch and Kirkham began on November 11, 1925, on four charges – kidnapping, assaulting, confining beyond the reach of the law and illegally imprisoning. On November 13 the jury found them not guilty on the first two charges but disagreed on the other two. After a further explanation by the judge of the nature of the last two charges, and a five-minute retirement, all defendants were freed on all charges.[196]

With the release of its members, the VSACS lost interest in the Janet Smith case with remarkable rapidity. David Patterson, President of the United Council of Scottish Societies and the VSACS representative on that council, had first asked for "finances to defray legal expenses" for his work in connection with the Janet Smith case on July 3, 1925.[197] On October 2, for reasons that are not explained in the minutes, he resigned from VSACS.[198] On January 8, 1926, David Patterson returned, now as the ex-president of the Council of Scottish Societies and an ex-member of the VSACS, and "appealed as one affiliated with the St. Andrew's and Caledonian Society for consideration of claims of Mrs Jessie Stratton and himself for payment of legal expenses connected with the Janet

[196] Macdonald and O'Keefe, *Holy War*, 103.

[197] CVA, VSACS, July 3, 1925.

[198] CVA, VSACS, October 2, 1925. At the same meeting a motion to form a Ladies Auxiliary was defeated by 21 votes to 11 – perhaps another indication that VSACS was keen to put the Janet Smith years behind it.

Smith case." Patterson and Stratton, the secretary of the United Council, were now facing charges themselves concerning the kidnapping of Wong, but their plight did not receive the same attention as that of the three policemen. On the contrary, the matter of the Patterson/Stratton application was referred to the Executive to take action because, remarkably, "the average member was not conversant with the details of the subject."[199] The open discussion and emphatic resolution of the policemen's application had no echo here, and there is reason to suggest that the "average member" was not so much uninformed as uninterested. This seemed to be confirmed when, at the meeting on January 13, 1926, another letter was received from Patterson and the cryptic hand of the secretary records it simply as "filed".[200]

The Janet Smith case tells us more about the VSACS than the society's minutes tell us about the case. It is somewhat surprising that, as the most powerful and longest established Scottish society in the city, the VSACS did not have more to say about the Janet Smith case, especially as it has often been portrayed as a rallying point for the Scottish community in Vancouver. In fact, the society was reluctant to become involved at all, perhaps because of its emphasis on fraternity, society and sports, and a concomitant antipathy towards politics and initiatives from the "Scottish ladies". It was only when its own members were implicated in the kidnapping of Wong Foon Sing that the VSACS acted with any vigour and brought its authority to bear on the case. When the threat to its members passed, the society quickly retrenched and declined all further invitations to get involved in the Janet Smith case. It recommitted itself to fraternity, games and social intercourse, spurned a proposed Women's Auxiliary, and avoided

[199] CVA, VSACS, January 8, 1926.
[200] CVA, VSACS, January 13, 1926.

political issues. The arrest of its members in the Janet Smith case, however, put the VSACS under stress, albeit temporarily, and the resolution it produced in these circumstances revealed various elements in the culture of the Society that, together, provoked the muscular response implied in its motto.

Chapter 5.

Conclusion

Analysis of the reaction of the Scottish community to the Janet Smith case is restricted by the paucity of primary sources available. Those that have survived, however, represent a range of "Scottish" reactions to the case. The Reverend Duncan McDougall, previously a fringe figure ministering to a working-class congregation at the Highland Church in East Vancouver, was able to present himself as a spokesman for the entire community in a speech at Janet Smith's graveside. He used her death, and the failure to solve it, to support wider radical causes, including the Ku Klux Klan. The cultural elite of the Scottish Society of Vancouver and the *British Columbia Monthly,* which acted as its mouthpiece, approached Janet Smith from an established tradition of self-conscious moderation, concerned as they were about ideals of British justice which certain aspects of the case appeared to violate. The Vancouver St Andrews and Caledonian Society's reaction to the case seems to have been fuelled by the belief that it was part of the civic elite. Its response, both in terms of the kidnapping of Wong by some of its members and the strident tone of its society minutes, echoed some of the aggression evident in the annual Highland Games, which was its most pressing concern both before and after the Janet Smith case.

All the primary sources examined in this study were produced by white, Scottish men. None questioned the prevailing anti-Asian sentiment in British Columbia, though

their proposed solutions to the perceived problem of “Oriental” immigration differed. McDougall’s Ku Klux Klan favoured the immediate repatriation of all Asians; the *British Columbia Monthly* carried articles supporting the prevention of any more Asian immigration, combined with a duty of care to those who were already residing in British Columbia; and, while the minutes of the VSACS do not directly reference the “Oriental question”, the overlooking of physical abuse of a Chinese man by some of its members speaks for itself.

While the Scottish community is often seen as acting in concert on Janet Smith, the case actually highlighted existing rifts in the community. The *British Columbia Monthly* was firmly opposed to McDougall’s radical activity and repeatedly called for British justice to prevail on all aspects of the case, including the Wong kidnappings. The VSACS seemed reluctant to take up the case at all and only did so when some of its members faced the kidnapping charge. After these members escaped conviction, the VSACS was keen to move on as quickly as possible and it refused to provide legal support to defend subsequent charges against a woman and a man who was, by then, a non-member. The Janet Smith case, in fact, was a rather tawdry episode in the history of the Scottish community in Vancouver and one that it was keen to shake off. As a local test-case which separated, to some degree, the Scottish diaspora experience from the general British one, Janet Smith serves as a powerful antidote to the “Burns Supper School of Scottish History” as applied to Canada and suggests that Scottish communities within the British Empire, so often portrayed as clannish, were as prone to fissure and fracture as they were to communing. The case underscored the fact that the Vancouver Scots expressed their Scottish identity most comfortably in social situations, though even then the number of societies that existed in the city suggests that the

community was prone to breaking down into component parts. It also highlighted contending identities within the Vancouver Scottish community with “Scottish” co-existing with “British” as well as emerging civic, provincial and Canadian national identities. All of these, in turn, were situated within Empire loyalties, though even in this respect there were different interpretations of the meaning of Empire. McDougall envisaged an Empire where the racist philosophies of the Ku Klux Klan would flourish; the *British Columbia Magazine’s* Empire was a moderating force with justice available to all; and the VSACS celebrated Empire in terms of military and sporting achievement.

Though these differences were enough to undermine the unity that Vancouver’s Scottish community displayed in the early days of the Janet Smith case, they existed within narrow parameters. A broader reading sees the community reaction proceeding from a series of assumptions about race and power. There was a general consensus concerning the “problem” of Asian immigration in British Columbia. In fact, the Janet Smith case provided the Scottish community with a very public opportunity to patrol the borders of its ethnic authority against what it saw as a critical threat. In this respect the Scots succeeded in reinforcing a system of “inclusion” and “exclusion” and preserving it well beyond the Janet Smith years.

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