

THOMAS DRUMMOND (1793-1835)

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This article is one in a series about prominent British and Irish field-bryologists of the past. The author would be very pleased to learn of any information which supplements its content.

A Social and Biographical History of British and Irish Field-bryologists is also available on-line at <http://britishbryologicalsociety.org.uk/>

Bryological career in Britain

Drummond found many uncommon or rare bryophytes in his native county of Angus (Forfarshire), supplementing the discoveries of George Don (1764-1814) who had preceded him.

His best finds of mosses were *Grimmia unicolor* at Bachnagairn, Clova in 1823, several records of *Stegonia latifolia*, *Timmia austriaca* near Airlie Castle, and *Neckera pennata* at Fotheringham. In addition, Drummond found the liverwort *Pleurocladula albescens*, probably with William Jackson Hooker, Robert Kaye Greville and George Walker-Arnott when they visited Angus in 1824. Of mosses, his discoveries in Angus include *Grimmia decipiens*, *G. ovalis*, *Hylocomiastrum umbratum*, *Hypnum callichroum*, *Kiaeria glacialis*, *Meesia uliginosa*, *Neckera pumila*, *Oedipodium griffithianum*, *Orthotrichum speciosum*, *Polytrichastrum sexangulare*, *Pseudobryum cinclidioides*, *Pseudoleskeella catenulata*, *Pterygoneurum ovatum*, *Pterigynandrum filiforme*, *Pylaisia polyantha*, *Tayloria lingulata*, *T. tenuis* and *Tortula viridifolia*.

Drummond produced *exsiccatae* of mosses as *Musci Scotici* (1824-5). Ulster Museum, Belfast has three volumes of *Musci Scotici*, which include specimens from the north of Ireland. Drummond prepared this collection for the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society.

Drummond also contributed information for William Jackson Hooker's *Flora Scotica* (1821). His plants are at the Natural History Museum in London, at Kew, and Oxford. His letters are at Kew.

[Portrait by Sir Daniel MacNee PRSA at Hunt Institute and Royal Botanic Garden, Kew, reproduced in Alison M. Coates (1969), *Quest for Plants*]. [Biographical details in William Jackson Hooker's letters to Sir John Richardson at Kew.]

Family background and biography

Thomas Drummond was baptised on April 8th 1793 at Inverarity, Angus. He was a younger son of Thomas Drummond, gardener at Fotheringham, Inverarity, and his wife, probably Elizabeth (*née* Nicoll). Thomas and Elizabeth had married at Inverarity on March 18th 1786. Their eldest son was James Drummond (1786-1863), who like his father and younger brother also became a gardener. Like his brother, James moved to Ireland, where he took charge of the Royal Cork Institute's botanical garden. James emigrated to Australia in 1829. James and Thomas junior had a sister Margaret, born in 1788.

James and Thomas both followed their father's occupation of gardening. Initially they would have worked with him on the estate at Fotheringham, but in 1814 at the age of twenty Thomas took over the management of the late George Don's nursery at Doo Hillock, Forfar. Forfar was only four miles north of Fotheringham, so Drummond would almost certainly have known Don.

Drummond managed Doo Hillock for ten years, during which time he married Isobel Mungo (born 1795/6 in Arbroath) at Forfar in 1820. Isobel was a daughter of Ann(e) (*née* Anderson) and John Mungo (1771/2->1851), a gardener at Glamis, about four miles west of Fotheringham and south-west of Forfar. Thomas and Isobel had three children – Ann (who married Andrew Rough, a farmer at Glamis in 1844), James and Isabella (born 1824/5).

In 1825 Drummond sailed as assistant naturalist on a two-year expedition to the Arctic, his wife and children presumably remaining in Scotland. He returned to Britain in October 1827, and in 1828 moved with his family to become the first curator of the Belfast Botanic and Horticultural Society's new botanical garden. However, he fell out with the management there and returned to Scotland in 1830. He soon sailed for North America and Canada, where for several years he collected many plants, seeds and birds, especially in Louisiana and Texas. He died in Havana, Cuba in February or early March 1835, aged about 42. The circumstances of Drummond's death are unknown, as a letter to William Jackson Hooker from the Consul in Havana mentions particulars given in an earlier letter which has been lost.

By 1841 and 1851, Isobel was living with her father at Glamis, and in 1841 a four-year-old John Drummond was also living in the same house. Whose son was he?

Thomas and Isobel's son James trained as a nurseryman, but Charles Lyell (1767-1849) of Kinnordy, Kirriemuir, Angus paid for him to attend the Dundee Academy, and he subsequently entered the priesthood, serving at Pondicherry in the East Indies. His son, James Ramsay Drummond (1851-1921) became a civil servant and amateur botanist in India, and worked at Kew from 1905. His son, James Montagu Frank Drummond (1881-1965) became Professor of Botany at Glasgow and Manchester. Thus, a botanical interest persisted through at least five generations of male Drummonds.