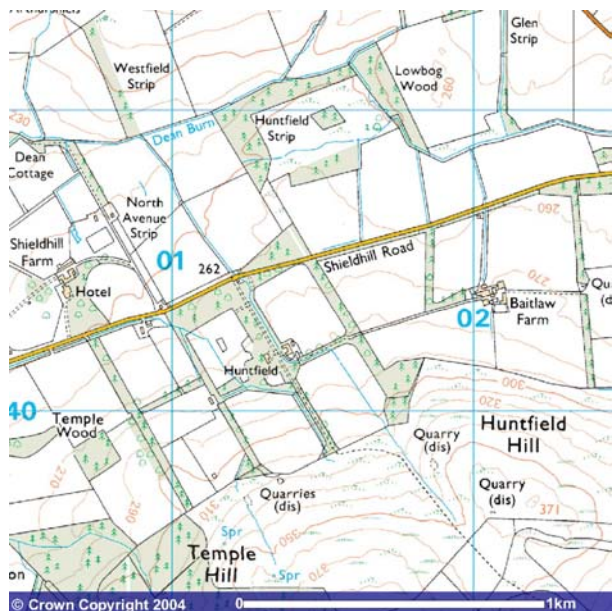
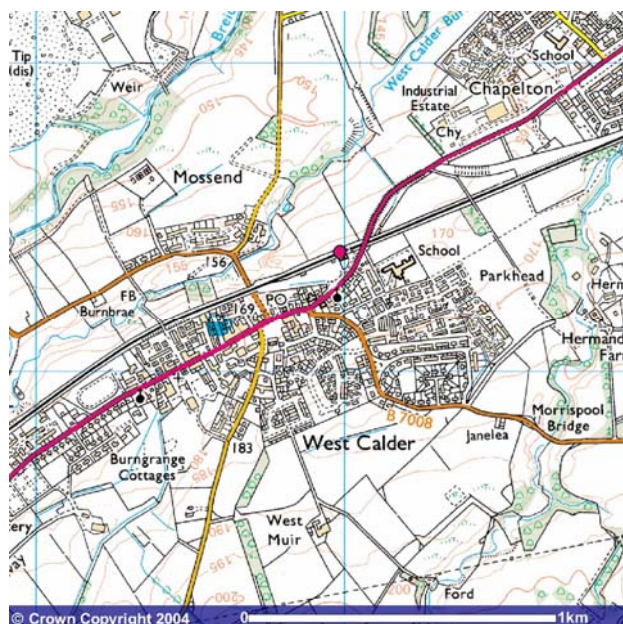


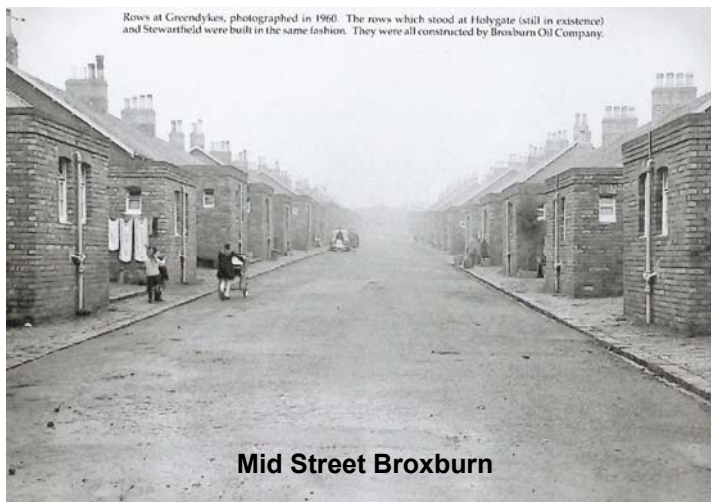
## Neil McLean Smith

Neil McLean Smith was born at Huntfield Farm, Liberton Parish, Lanarkshire in 1854 and died in Nanaimo, B.C. Canada in 1925. Huntfield Farm is located about 5 kilometers Northwest of Biggar where James Hepburn (future son-in-law) was born. Neil married Agnes Neilson of Bothkennar, daughter of David Neilson and Jane Kerr, on Dec 31, 1874 in West Calder. The 1881 Census finds Neil and his wife at # 3 East Street, Mossend, West Calder with three young children. They had lost their first child,



John, at six months of age and the next summer their oldest daughter, Jean, would die of scarlet fever at 5 years. The Census listing has David aged 2 years and Margaret 5 months. Neil is listed as a shale (coal) miner and probably worked at the Limefield mine owned by Young's Paraffin Light and Mineral Oil Co. Ltd.,

At the time of the 1891 Census the family of nine was in Broxburn, Uphall at 260 Mid St., where Neil's occupation is listed as "fireman in shale mines". They had been there for a couple of years as their two-year-old daughter, Elizabeth, was born there. Robert was 3 months when the Census was taken. Their fifth son, James, was born in Oct 1892 in Broxton. Neil is listed as an underground fireman on the birth register and he undoubtedly worked for the Broxburn Oil Works, which owned all of the houses on the street. The oil referred to is lamp oil or kerosene, extracted from shale coal.



The family's next move was to Old Monkland, now a suburb of Glasgow, probably in 1893. At the birth of their sixth son, John, in January 1894, the family was living at No. 10 Boghall and Neil was by then a Colliery Oversman (supervisor). Mary was born there in 1895. They were still in Old Monkland and Neil was doing the same work when the last of their 13 children, Georgina, died at the age of four months. They had a family portrait taken that spring of 1898, just weeks before her death.



The Smiths in 1898

L-R: Bob, Neil, Agnes, Alexander, John, David, Elizabeth, Mary, Margaret, Agnes (Neilson), Georgina, James

The Smith's next move, about 1904, took them 2 km West to Shettleston, where they lived at no. 14 Gladston Place. The last home that the Smith's had in Scotland was at 18 South Versalius St. in Shettleston.

About 1909 Neil was having some heart problems and it was recommended that he seek a change of climate. The older Smith boys had discussed moving to Canada so in the end Neil and Agnes emigrated to Nanaimo, British Columbia, with their nine surviving children. According to Margaret the six men went ahead in 1909 and traveled across Canada by train. The furniture went by sailing boat around the Horn about the same time and the ladies followed in 1910. Neil and some of his children went to work in the local coal mines. Their first home was located on Selby St but within a short time



they moved to 275 Nicol Street in south Nanaimo.

The terrible flu epidemic of 1918 was running its course there and my wife's mother, Mrs. Smith, was stricken and died before word could reach us that she was seriously ill.

Neil Smith joined the Hepburn family at Keating at the end of the first year that they were there with a fruit farm. He went into partnership with James along with two of his sons but none of them had much experience and the farm eventually had to be sold.

Neil continued to live with the Hepburns after the demise of the fruit farm, helping James build a house near Cedar, BC on the Nanaimo River. Neil died in his sleep at that house on May 19, 1925.

He was discovered by his grand daughter Jessie who was 4 at the time who had been sent to find out why he didn't come down for breakfast.



275 Nicol St. – Bob and Mary on the porch - 1915

