LIVINGSTONES OF LANARK

Dr. David Livingstone’s Society Settler Relatives

In her book The Story of Lanark 1862-1962, Elizabeth L. Jamieson poses a surprising and intriguing question.

Did you know that the great missionary and explorer, David Livingstone, once spent a short time in Lanark? He was visiting his brother here. We do not know the Christian name of the brother, but understand he was the Livingstone of the lumbering firm of Robertson & Livingstone.

Subsequent research, done in 2008 by Donald Livingstone Clink for the Clan McLea-Livingstone Association, provides some interesting clues to the backstory of a Livingstone visit to Lanark. Drawing from the letters of Arica explorer Dr. David Livingstone, Clink wrote,

Dr. David Livingstone apparently encouraged his two brothers Charles and John to emigrate. In an 1850 letter to an acquaintance [he] indicates that his brother John was by this time residing in Lanark County, Canada West. Interestingly Dr. David Livingstone mentions that he has a number of relatives in Lanark County besides his brother John … uncles, who we are told by Dr. Livingstone in his 1857 bio, all served in the Napoleonic wars. David's brother John, in an 1891 letter, mentions the names of these Napoleonic war vet uncles as Donald, Duncan, John and Charles. Charles, it is said died in the Mediterranean during the war, but it looks like the other three Donald, Duncan and John survived. Are Donald, Duncan, John, or for that matter Alexander or William Livingstone, that settled in Lanark County, Upper Canada, in the years 1818 and 1821, the relatives that Dr. David refers to in 1850 as living in Lanark County?

Jamieson and Clink are largely, if not entirely, correct about the Lanark County connections of famed African missionary and explorer, Dr. David Livingstone. His brother John did indeed live at Lanark Village for more than two decades and he was visited by a brother, although not the famous Dr. Livingstone. Also, as mentioned in the 1850 letter, Dr. Livingstone did have “a number of relatives in Lanark County”.

The family story begins with Neil Livingston (1746-1825), born on the Isle of Mull, Argyllshire, Scotland, who married Mary Morrison (1752-1825) at Lettermore, Mull, Argyllshire, in 1774. He was the father of seven sons: John (b.1777), Neil Alexander (b.1778), Duncan (b.1778), Charles (b.1779), Donald (b.1780), William (b.1786) and James (b.1794). The family

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1 The Story of Lanark 1862-1962, by Elizabeth L. Jamieson, published by the Lanark Centennial Book Committee (1962) on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the incorporation of the Village of Lanark.
2 Livingstone, by Reginald John Campbell (1929)
moved from the Isle of Mull, possibly with an intervening stay in Perthshire, to Blantyre⁴, Lanarkshire, arriving there in about 1790.

Most, and perhaps all, of the Neil Livingstone sons may have served in the British Army during the Napoleonic Wars. Charles, seems to have been killed (c1814) in Spain during the peninsular campaign and Duncan reportedly died (1815) at the Battle of Waterloo. John, William and Neil Alexander, survived to live out their lives in Scotland, dying in 1851, 1853 and 1856 respectively. James also survived and seems to have emigrated to the United States (either directly or via Canada) and died at Delaware, Iowa in 1845. Donald emigrated to Upper Canada.

Neil Alexander Livingstone (1788-1856), second son of Neil Livingstone and Mary Morrison, married Mary Agnes Hunter (1785-1865) in 1810 at Blantyre, Lanarkshire, Scotland. He was a door-to-door tea salesman and a man of deep faith who distributed religious tracts at every call. Neil Alexander fathered five sons and two daughters born at Blantyre. The daughters, Janet (b.1818) and Agnes (1823-1895) died in the UK. Son Neil (b.1825) also seems to have lived his life in Britain and died in England. The remaining three sons were all travellers; John to Canada, David to Africa and Charles to the United States.

Neil Livingstone and Mary Morrison also had four daughters: Mary (1776-1821), Margaret (1783-1863), Catherine (1785-1879) and Agnes (b.1796). All but Catherine lived their lives in Scotland and England but in 1807, at Blantyre, Catherine married Donald McKinnon (b.1785) and in 1821 emigrated to Upper Canada.

John William Livingstone

John William Livingstone was born in 1811 at Glasgow, the eldest child of Neil Alexander Livingstone and Mary Hunter. As a child and young man, he worked 12 hour days a ‘piecer’, tying broken cotton threads on the spinning machines of the Monteith & Company mill at Blantyre, while attending a few hours of school each evening. He married Sarah Mackenzie (1815-1881) at Gorbals (Glasgow) in 1835 and in 1838 they sailed for Canada. When John and Mary chose Lanark as their destination, they doubtless did so because John had several relatives living there. The 1851 census for the Village of Lanark, Lanark County, Ontario, records that John was working as a tailor, other sources say he also worked for a time as a tanner, operated a ‘mercantile business’ and, at some point, was a partner with Robert Robertson⁵ in the Robertson & Livingstone Lumber Company.

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⁴ About eight miles south of Glasgow.
⁵ Robert Robertson, arrived in Lanark with the Society Settlers. He Married Elizabeth Gemmell in 1837. There are too many Robertson families among the Society Settlers to be certain, but he may have been b.c1808, the son of John Robertson and Janet Campbell, who arrived via the Commerce in 1820 and settled on Lanark Township C-2/L-15(E).
John and Sarah Livingstone arrived at Lanark with two children, Neil (1835-1926) and Mary (1838-1874) and had eight more born at Lanark, Harriot (1841-1841), David (1843-1854), Agnes (1845-1846), Henry (1848-1900), Sarah (1849-1924), John (1852-1940), Charles (1853-1940) and Robert (1857-1897).

John Livingstone lived at Lanark for 22 years until he moved to Listowel, Perth County, Ontario, in 1860, where he established a farm in Elmer Township cultivating,

... a large tract of un-reclaimed land, where he was very successful introducing new and greatly improved methods of farming to the country. He afterwards abandoned farming and carried on business as a chemist so successfully that he was able to retire in 1873.\(^6\)

After his retirement, John Livingstone continued to live at Listowel but travelled extensively. He spent most winters on the west coast, in British Columbia and California, and made several trips back to Scotland to visit family. He died in 1899, aged 88 years, and was buried in Fairview Cemetery, Listowel.

Dr. David Livingstone

David Livingstone, the second son born to Neil Alexander Livingstone and Agnes Hunter, was born in 1813 at Blantyre. Like his older brother, John, from the age of about eight years he worked from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily in the Monteith & Company mills and attended the Blantyre village school from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Mixing work with study, and with some financial assistance of his elder brother, David later attended Anderson's College\(^7\), Glasgow, monitored Greek and theology lectures at the University of Glasgow, and studied at Charing Cross Hospital Medical School, London, 1838-1840. He qualified as a Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons in 1840, secured a post with the London Missionary Society (LMS) the following year, and sailed to southern Africa.

In 1845 David Livingstone married Mary Moffett (1821-1862) at Kuruman\(^8\), Boer Free State, southern Africa. Mary had been born at Griqua Town\(^9\), the daughter of missionaries Robert and Mary Moffat. David and Mary had six children; Robert (1846-1864)\(^10\), Agnes (1847-1912), Thomas (1849-1876), Elizabeth (1850-1850), William (1851-1889) and Anna (1858-1939).

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6 Obituary, *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, Australia. The Herald may be in some error. Other sources say John Livingstone Sr. was a ‘merchant’ and owned a ‘general store’ and that it was his son, John Jr. (1852-1940) who was the ‘chemist’ operating his business from his father’s original store located on the north-east corner of Wallace and Main Streets.

7 Now the University of Strathclyde.

8 Between Johannesburg and Upington, northwest of Kimberly.

9 West of present day Kimberley, South Africa.
Livingstone did not prove to be a very effective missionary. His first postings, in what is now Botswana, were not a great success. Amid disputes with a fellow missionary, he left Mabotsa in 1845. He also abandoned his next mission at Chonuane in 1847 because of severe drought and the proximity of the Boers. From 1849 through 1851 he was posted at Kolobeng where he made what would prove to be his one and only Christian convert, a local chief named Sechele, who later returned to traditional beliefs. Concluding that his best contribution to evangelising Africa and ending the Arab slave trade, might be to open the continent to European traders and missionaries, by mapping its rivers and thus making them highways to the interior, Livingstone went exploring.

Between 1852 and 1856 he mapped most of the Zambezi River and became the first European to see Mosi-oa-Tunya (‘smoke that thunders’) waterfall which he renamed Victoria Falls. He was also the first European to cross the southern part of the continent, travelling from Luanda\(^{11}\) on the Atlantic to Quelimane\(^{12}\) on the Indian Ocean. His mission superiors, however, felt Livingstone was spending too much time exploring and too little time preaching. In 1856, under pressure from the LMS, he resigned and returned to Scotland.

Either by plan or coincidence, David Livingstone’s return to Scotland coincided with a visit from his elder brother, John, who made a trip from Lanark to Glasgow over the winter of 1856-1857.

*John Livingstone went to see his brother in 1856 when Dr. Livingstone made his first return to England since his departure for Africa way back in 1840.*\(^{13}\)

*The last time John saw his brother was on a visit in 1857. Livingstone was home for the first time, and all the world was speaking of his remarkable explorations and adventures. He [John] maintained a regular correspondence with him and received many letters from him.*\(^{14}\)

In May 1857, the British Government appointed Livingstone to head the ‘Zambezi Expedition’ tasked with examining the natural resources of southeastern Africa. That 1858-1864 venture proved Livingstone to be as inept at leading a large team as he was at converting Africans to Christianity. He did, however, reach and explore Lake Malawi before returning to the coast in 1862 to collect a steamboat and his wife, Mary. The steamboat proved incapable of navigating the Ruvuma River\(^{15}\), most of his team died or deserted, and Mary succumbed to malaria. Writing in 1862 his physician, Dr. John Kirk, said, “*I can come to no other conclusion* [10: Accounts that Robert Livingstone died carrying on his father’s anti-slavery crusade, fighting for the Union in the American Civil War, rather burnish the truth. Having arrived in the United States as a seaman, he was drafted into the Union Army very much against his will, deserted at least once, and was then captured in an October 1864 action at Darby Town Road, Virginia. He was sent to the Confederate Prisoner of War Camp at Salisbury, North Carolina, where he died of hunger and exposure in December 1864.](http://www.clanlivingstone.info/forum/viewtopic.php?f=5&t=1151)

\(^{11}\) Now the capital of Angola.

\(^{12}\) A port city at the mouth of the Rio dos Bons Sinais River in Mozambique.


\(^{14}\) *Sydney Morning Herald*, New South Wales, Australia.

\(^{15}\) The number of bodies dumped into the river by slave traders constantly fouled its paddle wheels.
than that Dr. Livingstone is out of his mind and a most unsafe leader”. The expedition was recalled in 1864 and Livingstone returned to Scotland.

By 1866 Livingstone had, with great difficulty, raised sufficient private financing to return to Africa, in search of the source of the River Nile. He reached Lake Malawi again and, although all his supplies had been stolen, pushed on via Lake Mweru and Lake Bangweulu. By March 1869 he was seriously ill at Ujiji, on the eastern shore of Lake Tanganyika, suffering from pneumonia, cholera and tropical ulcers. Recovering sufficiently to visit Nyangwe\textsuperscript{16} on the Lualaba River in mid-1871, he witnessed the massacre of about 400 Africans by Arab slavers and his spirit broke. Broken in body and mind he managed to travel the 240 miles (390 kilometers) back to Ujiji where, in November 1871, Henry Morton Stanley found him\textsuperscript{17}. By that date Livingstone had had no contact with the outside world for more than six years. Stanley tried to ‘rescue’ him but Livingstone had no interest in being ‘rescued’.

Still searching for the source of the Nile, he set out again, explored the Lualaba River and returned to Lake Bangweulu. On May 1, 1873, at age 60 years, Dr. David Livingstone died at Illala, southeast of Lake Tanganyika, a victim of malaria, dysentery and exhaustion. His servants Chuma and Susir removed his heart, buried it under a mpundu tree\textsuperscript{18}, and then salted his body and carried it, with his journal, more than 1,000 miles (1,600 kilometers) to Bagamoyo on the Tanzanian coast. His remains were taken back to Britain and interred at Westminster Abbey.

Charles Livingstone

Charles Livingstone, third son of Neil Alexander Livingstone and Agnes Hunter, was born at Blantyre in 1821. Like his elder brothers, he too was employed from a young age as a ‘piece’ in the Monteith & Company cotton mill. Like his brothers, Charles received his primary education at the Blantyre village school after working 12 hours a day in the mill and, like his brothers, he aspired to higher education but faced the same lack of resources to achieve it. In an 1847 letter to the LMS, when Charles was seeking a mission appointment, Dr. David Livingstone wrote,

\begin{quote}
... he had a strong desire to obtain a liberal education, but neither he nor our parents possessed the necessary means. He began, however, to make some efforts towards mental improvement after the labors of the day were over. But having myself experienced the immense difficulty of pursuing a course of study with no resources but those of indoor labour, I advised him to endeavor to obtain admittance into one of the colleges in America in which students support themselves by
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{16} Now in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in 1871 Nyangwe was a major slave trading post.
\textsuperscript{17} The Stanley expedition, which had set out in 1869, was financed by the \textit{New York Herald} newspaper. Stanley reportedly greeted Livingstone with the words “Dr. Livingstone, I presume”, but that famous phrase seems to have been an invention of the newspaper.
\textsuperscript{18} At present-day Chitambo, Lake Bangweulu, Zambia.
labour in the open air. By this means I hoped his frame might be invigorated for future service.

While my advice was on its way to Scotland, I received a letter asking counsel as to the propriety of proceeding to Oberlin [Oberlin College, Loraine County, Ohio, USA]. I had just received the quarterly allowance of £5, and answered by transmitting that sum to pay his passage, and very shortly afterwards he, being sixteen [actually 18] years of age, embarked at Liverpool. After paying his passage, landing at New York, and selling his box and bed, he had only £2.1.3.6 in the world.

Having purchased a loaf and a piece of cheese as provisions, he set out for Oberlin, a distance of 550 miles. His money, and provisions too, were all spent long before he reached his destination. He never begged. He obtained work, as soon as he arrived, in the bookbinding establishment of the college, and supported himself through the preparatory department. In the third year, he entered on the Collegiate course.

His bodily weakness prevented him from working with his hands, and rather than run into debt, he left his lodgings in the town, although his landlady remonstrated against it, and lived entirely in his own room in the College. His diet, cooked by himself and consisting of potatoes and salt butter, was not calculated to strengthen his debilitated but growing frame, and want of means to purchase books compelled him to borrow from his collegians and work hardest over them after they had retired to sleep.

When the first session was over he went to Canada in quest of a home in another brother’s house [John, at Lanark], in which to recruit his health, but had to perform most of the journey on foot.¹⁹

Charles studied at the Oberlin Preparatory Department from 1840 until 1843. Returning after his 1843 sojourn at Lanark, he graduated with a B.A. in 1845 and entered Oberlin Theological College in 1846. For his final year, he transferred to Union Seminary, New York, where he graduated with an MA in 1849.²⁰

At Oberlin, Charles met Harriet C. Ingraham (1825-1900), a fellow student²¹. They were engaged in 1847 and married c1850. They had three children; Mary (b.1853), Charles Jr. (b.1855) and Harriette (b.1857).

Over the next decade Charles worked as a Congregationalist Minister at Lakeville, New York, Williston, Vermont, and Plympton, Massachusetts. In 1856 he became a naturalized American citizen. When his brother David returned to Africa in 1858, leading the government financed ‘Zambezi Expedition’, Charles joined him. However, when the expedition returned to the coast in 1862 to collect the steamboat, he left the team, perhaps among those frustrated by David’s leadership style. Trading on his experience of Africa, in 1864 he secured an

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¹⁹ David Livingstone, Kolbeng, Bakwain Country (Botswana), to Arthur Tidman (LMS), December 30, 1847.
²⁰ In another letter David Livingstone says that Charles also studied at Andover College in Massachusetts.
²¹ Harriet graduated in 1847.
appointment as British Consul at Fernando Po\textsuperscript{22}. As with his brother David, the fevers of 19\textsuperscript{th} century Africa claimed Charles. When he fell ill at Fernando Po, he started for his home in Scotland, but died en route, on October 28, 1873, six months after his brother David had died on the other side of the continent on May 1, 1873. Charles was buried at sea off Lagos, Nigeria.

It was Charles Livingstone, not Dr. David Livingstone, who visited his brother John Livingstone at Lanark in the summer of 1843. When he did so, he would also have had the opportunity to visit a good many other family members. In the Clan McLea/Livingstone Association research, Clink poses the question,

\begin{quote}
Are Donald, Duncan, John, or for that matter Alexander or William Livingstone, that settled in Lanark County, Upper Canada, in the years 1818 and 1821 the relatives that Dr. David refers to in 1850 as living in Lanark County, besides his brother John?
\end{quote}

There can be little doubt that those named by Dr. David Livingstone were indeed the same men who emigrated to what is now Lanark County, and that they were among other relatives of the African explorer who came to Upper Canada in the same period. Moreover, with one or two exceptions, they were all associated with the Lanark Society Settler scheme of 1820-1821.

As Britain plummeted into a deep economic depression at the end of the Napoleonic Wars, thousands of weavers, mill workers and laborers lost their jobs, and nowhere was harder hit than Glasgow. By 1819 thousands of unemployed workers and their families were facing starvation and a short-lived uprising, known as the ‘Radical War’, prompted the British Government to initiate a scheme for emigration to Upper Canada. Would-be emigrants were offered free land, tools and rations for year, if they could pay their own passage to Canada. Only a few could do so. The vast majority, lacking sufficient resources, formed ‘Emigration Societies’ to raise and pool funds. With contributions from private sources, and some additional help from the government, nearly 3,000 men, women and children sailed from Greenock in 1820 and 1821. Landing at Quebec City they travelled up the St. Lawrence river by bateaux to Brockville and then overland through Perth to the newly surveyed townships of Lanark, Dalhousie, North Sherbrooke and Ramsay.

As they trudged north from Brockville, the Society Settlers followed a trail cut four years earlier to serve the Perth Military Settlement. Between 1816 and 1821 a scheme administered by the British Army provided free land and other support to more than 1,200 discharged soldiers, veterans of the Napoleonic Wars, the American War of 1812-1814, and other conflicts. The Society Settler venture was an adjunct to that undertaking.

\textbf{Donald Livingstone}

Donald Livingstone (1780-1872), brother of Dr. David Livingston’s father, Neil Alexander (1788-1856), was born at Kareena, Argyll, but had been living in Blair Atholl, Perthshire, before leaving for Canada. He was not a Society Settler and seems to have been the first of the Livingstone family to reach Canada. He arrived in 1818 via the Brig \textit{Curlew}, with wife Janet

\textsuperscript{22} Renamed Bioko Island, and now part of the state of Equatorial Guinea, off the west coast of Africa in the Bight of Benin.
McAra and three daughters, and settled in Beckwith Township. Although his name cannot be found in the settlement ticket records, his date and township of settlement suggests he was a discharged soldier, receiving land under the Perth Military Settlement scheme.

The other Livingstone relatives who can be identified, were all associated with the Lanark Society Settler scheme. Most of them settled in a cluster, around what is today McDonald’s Corners in Dalhousie Township.

**Duncan Livingstone**

Although he is also recorded in the settlement documents as a ‘military settler’, Duncan Livingstone (b.1791) arrived, with a wife and five children, as an ‘Independent’ among the Society Settlers of 1820-1821. He was granted land at Dalhousie C-9/L-7.

‘Independent’ settlers were those who had sufficient funds to pay for their own passage. They were not members of any of the Glasgow Emigration Societies, but sailed on the same ships and benefited from the same government assistance (land, tools and rations) granted to the other Lanark Settlement pioneers of 1820-1821.

**John Livingstone**

John Livingstone (b.1792) and his wife Sarah, another ‘Independent’ settler, arrived among the Society Settler group on the 1821 voyage of the *David of London* and was granted land at Dalhousie C-10/L-6(E). They appear to have arrived unaccompanied by children.

Another John Livingstone, having arrived via the Brig *Peace* in 1817 with a wife and two children, located on Beckwith Township C-6/L-13 in 1818. Although he settled in the same township and same year as Donald Livingstone (1780-1872), Dr. David Livingstone’s uncle, if there is a family connection it has not been determined.

**Alexander Livingstone**

Alexander Livingstone (1797-1840) arrived, with wife Catherine McLean, as an ‘Independent’ travelling with Society Settlers on the *Brock* in 1820. Alexander and Catherine Livingstone settled on Dalhousie Township C-11/L-5(E). There is no record of children travelling with them and Alexander seems to have died before Charles visited Lanark, but his wife, Catherine, was recorded in the 1842 census.

**Duncan, John and Alexander Livingstone** who arrived among the Society Settlers were brothers. Born on the Isle of Mull, they were the sons of Duncan Livingstone (1778-1815) and

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23 Donald and Janet Livingstone may have later moved to Goulbourn Township.
25 Ibid.
26 Or possible the Brig *Pitt*.
27 This John Livingston might be James Livingstone (b.1794), the soldier son of Neil Livingstone (1746-1825), who died at Delaware, Iowa, USA in 1845.
Christian Beaton (b.1767) of Lettermore, Mull, Argyllshire. Their father, Duncan, was the son of Neil Livingston (1746-1825), Dr. David Livingston’s grandfather, and the son who reportedly died at the Battle of Waterloo. Numerous Ancestry.com\(^ {29}\) family trees indicate that two sisters of these men also emigrated to Canada; Jean (1788-1864) and Katherine (1800-1885). They were probably Society Settler or Perth Military Settler wives, or married to men who followed Society and Military Settler relatives to Canada. Jean died at Perth, Ontario. Katherine’s may have died at Brockville, Ontario.

Catherine Livingstone

Catherine Livingstone (1785-1879), daughter of Neil Livingstone (1746-1825), Dr. David Livingstone’s grandfather, arrived in the Lanark Settlement with her husband Donald McKinnon (b.1785). They were members of the Bridgeton Canadian Society having sailed on the George Canning three children. They settled on Dalhousie Township C-10/L-9(E) in 1821.\(^ {30}\)

Also settling within this Dalhousie Township cluster were John McKinnon Sr., on C-11/L-11(E), and John McKinnon Jr., on C-11/L-8(E). Both had arrived with wives and children as members of the Bridgeton Canadian Society on the George Canning in 1821\(^ {31}\); the same society, ship and year as Donald and Catherine McKinnon. Donald McKinnon and the two John McKinnons were almost certainly closely related and thus among the “number of relatives in Lanark County” mentioned in the David Livingstone letter.

William Livingstone

William Livingstone (1799-1888) and wife Isabella Bremner (1793-1876) arrived with the Deanston Society on the 1821 voyage of the David of London, accompanied by one child, a son named Hugh. William was part of a family group headed by his widower father-in-law George Bremner Sr.\(^ {32}\) that settled on Lanark township C-9/L-6(W)\(^ {33}\). He later moved to his own grant at Lanark Township C-8/L-9(E) and then to Renfrew County. William was born at Monteith, Perthshire, and married at Kilmadock, Perthshire, but his great-grandson, Dr. Leslie David Livingstone (1888-1964) “always believed that he was related to his namesake, the explorer David Livingstone, but was unable to prove this”\(^ {34}\). There is some evidence that the family of Dr. David Livingstone the explorer had, after leaving Argyllshire, been resident in Perthshire prior to their arrival in Lanarkshire and, as William would have been living in the Glasgow area when he joined the Deanston Society, he too may have been a relative. No documentary proof of the connection has been found, however.

Hunter

Although also speculative, Hugh Hunter, who arrived with wife Mary Ham/Horn and two children, travelling with the McKinnons on the George Canning in 1821, to settle on Dalhousie

\(^ {29}\) Unreliable as Ancestry.com postings may be, the family trees cited appear to be consistent with other supporting evidence.  
\(^ {31}\) Ibid.  
\(^ {32}\) George Bremner Sr. was Secretary of the Deanston Society.  
\(^ {34}\) Ibid.
C-1/L-12, could have been a relative of Dr. David Livingstone’s mother, Mary Agnes Hunter (1783-1865). The John Hunter, who arrived with a wife and six children on the Commerce in 1820, and settled on Lanark Township C-5/L-6(W), represents another possible relative.

Because so many of the 1820-1821 Society Settler families were inter-related, and because many relatives followed them to Lanark County, as did his brother John Livingstone (emigrating in 1838), Dr. David Livingstone doubtless had even more relatives among the early pioneers of Lanark County.

- Ron W. Shaw (2016)