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From: Ian McKay.  
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Dear Mr Bell

I understand from an old friend who lives near Dornoch that you are the absolute expert on all matters concerning the local history of the area and therefore might be able to help me in researching my ancestors.

My Great Great Grandfather, Walter Mackay, was the Miller at Cyderhall in the early part of the 19th Century. Specifically he died in 1837 but we have not yet had the opportunity to examine the Sutherland Estate Records at Inverness to discover when he took the tenancy. However the present owner of Cyderhall Farm, Gordon Munro, has identified where the Mill and ~~and~~ an adjacent cottage stood just off the River Eulish just to the North of the present farm house. He also tells me that at the time I am looking at the area was occupied by a crofting community who were dispersed by the Clearances. However the 1841 Census shows that Walter's widow Catherine and her son Paul were still there then and the census entry implies that they were the owners of the house rather than tenants.

My query to you therefore is, apart from the papers relating to the Sutherland Estate, are there any other Records

which might give some details about the Gydesballe Community at that time. My interest is that I have not yet been able to establish Walter's background or his place of birth, whether he was a local man or came into the Tenancy of the Mill from outside. If there are any other references that I might consult I would be most grateful if you could point me in their direction.

There is one other matter, I have been trying to discover who holds the records (if any) of the Cemeteries where Walter and Catherine might have been buried? They died in 1837 and 1846 respectively but the local authority records only start in 1902. Do you know who holds the earlier Cemetery Records?

Any guidance you could give would be much appreciated and I enclose an envelope for any reply.

yours sincerely

Ian McKean