

This is how Mrs Campbell brought up 14 bairns

FOR "Happy Family" ring Torness 1.

It's the only telephone in this hamlet between Fort- Augustus and Inverness. And if the line's engaged, it's probably a Campbell speaking to Dad.

For there are 14 in the family of Mr and Mrs Murdo Campbell-and, says a "People's Journal" man who has just been to Torness-they must be the biggest and bonniest family in Scotland.

Most of them are grown up now and away from home. But all are convinced they have "the finest mum and dad in the land," so they like to keep in touch.

That's why the one and only Torness phone bell goes on ringing.

Mother is only 48 and looks even younger.

Last week she had her birthday. and there were 15 gifts-one from her husband and one from each of the nine boys and five girls. Eight- year-old Colin, the youngest, proudly offered a sweet.

Mr and Mrs Campbell came from a place named Hope, in Sutherland. Most of the family were born at Applecross, where Mr Campbell was gamekeeper on the estate of tobacco chief Mr Arnold S. Wills. Luckily, the house that went with the job had 10 rooms.

Anne is eldest.

Twenty-seven years ago, Anne, the firstborn, arrived. She is now Mrs Albert Moir, wife of an Inverness insurance representative.

A year later, came John, now married at Dingwall and working as a machinery officer with the Board of Agriculture.

In the next three years there were born Hugh, the lorry driver; Alistair, the Invermoriston under- keeper; and Betty, now Mrs. Penman, with her home in Inverness.

Donald, the 20-year-old, is an Inverness taxi driver; Christopher (18), an apprentice joiner; Jessie (17), a children's nurse; Margaret (15) and Janet (12) go to Inverness Academy: Marcus (13) to the Technical High School.

Murdo (11), Ronald (9) and Colin (8) are at the small Bunchrubin School, half a mile up the road from their home.

Mrs Campbell has had all her babies at home. Not one died. Not one has had a serious illness.

The family was not raised according to the book. Mrs Campbell defied time schedules and fed her infants when they wanted feeding.

On porridge

Most mornings she has risen at 5.30 to put the great black porridge pot on the hob. Every young Campbell has been raised on porridge Only Anne, the eldest, rebelled. She used to try to pour her portion down the sink.

In winter the porridge is accompanied by a spoonful of cod liver oil. This was Dad Campbell's idea. He gets the job of carrying it out. For Mrs Campbell every day has been washing day. Although she has never known luxuries like gas or electric cookers, Mrs Campbell has had her baking session daily. Even the bread home-made.

Clever with her hands, she has altered the clothes one of the family to fit another. The 14 Campbells have shared four prams.

Christmas has always begun early for Mrs Campbell. When most of the boys and girls were at home she used to start collecting their gifts about September.

Said Anne: We always had a wonderful Christmas. Dad wears knickerbockers, and each of us used to hang up one of those great big heavy woollen stockings of his. On Christmas morning they always overflowing with good things How was done is still miracle to all of us."

The Magnificent Campbells have had their difficult times. Seven of the family were stricken with flu Mam included. Yet she still got up at 5.30-to attend to the needs of the others.

Dad's always busy

Dad is no less energetic. At Torness he is the village postmaster. He runs the taxi and attends the petrol pump

He has fields filled with corn, turnips and potatoes. He looks after 12 cows and about 1000 hens and ducks.

Up till a year ago the five-roomed post office house was lit with paraffin lamps. Then Mr Campbell laid out about 100 yards of piping from his home to Torness Falls. He built a small slice, installed filters made from bits of a scrapped kitchen grate.

He bought a discarded mill wheel and with the aid of a motorcycle wheel linked it up with a small generator. The post office now has electric light.

Mr and Mrs Campbell were each one of a family of four. They have three grandchildren.