

# GLASGOW RIVERS AND STREAMS: THEIR LEGENDS & THEIR LORE. By T. C. F. BROTCHE



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THEIR LEGEND AND LORE

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Clyde's First Bridge.  
*One mile from the source.*

# GLASGOW RIVERS AND STREAMS THEIR LEGEND<sub>AND</sub> LORE

By T.C.F. BROTCHE F.S.A. [SCOT.]  
AUTHOR OF "THE BATTLEFIELDS  
of SCOTLAND" "SCOTTISH WESTERN  
HOLIDAY HAUNTS" ETC. . . .



WITH 60 SKETCHES BY THE AUTHOR



GLASGOW  
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## PREFACE

THE following chapters embody the results of a summer's wayfaring among the green hills and grey moorlands which lie around Glasgow town. These wedges of wild nature and old romance thrust themselves into the heart of a very workaday world. They sweeten its atmosphere, and remind us of wide-spreading spaces where sunshine and shadow dwell, where the only sounds are the "half wail, half wile" of the peesweep, the cry of the lonely whaup, and the soft music of hidden waters. Among these solemn wastes where earth and sky seem to meet in perfect harmony, we find the crystal cradle of the Clyde, and of the rivers and streams to which she beckons, as a mother to her wayward children. As they hurry to the everlasting shelter of her ample bosom, they tumble down through red scaurs, and through shadowed glens, valleys akin to those of which Stevenson sang,



where "birds are on every tree and in every corner of the overhanging woods, pealing out their notes until the air is full of them." They pass grim embattled towers and ancient mills, they form into deep pools where the children of old-world villages are to be seen on the summer afternoons looking for yellow-bellied trout, still reaches over which tree and cloud weave dissolving patterns of light and brightness, places of tender beauty where it is good for a man to be alone with nature and himself. Such scenes abound in the outer fringes of Glasgow town.

There are few cities so richly framed with the picturesque, or the call of whose highways and byways better deserves a generous response from the Rambler and the lover of nature. Singularly pleasant are the paths which lead the wayfarer to the dreamy solitudes amidst which are to be found the sources of our rivers and streams. "I have no dearer wish," said Burns, "than to make pilgrimages through Scotland: to sit on the fields of her battles: to wander on the romantic banks of her rivers: and to muse by her stately towers and venerable ruins." The city Rambler may easily realise the poet's fond desire, for our gates look out

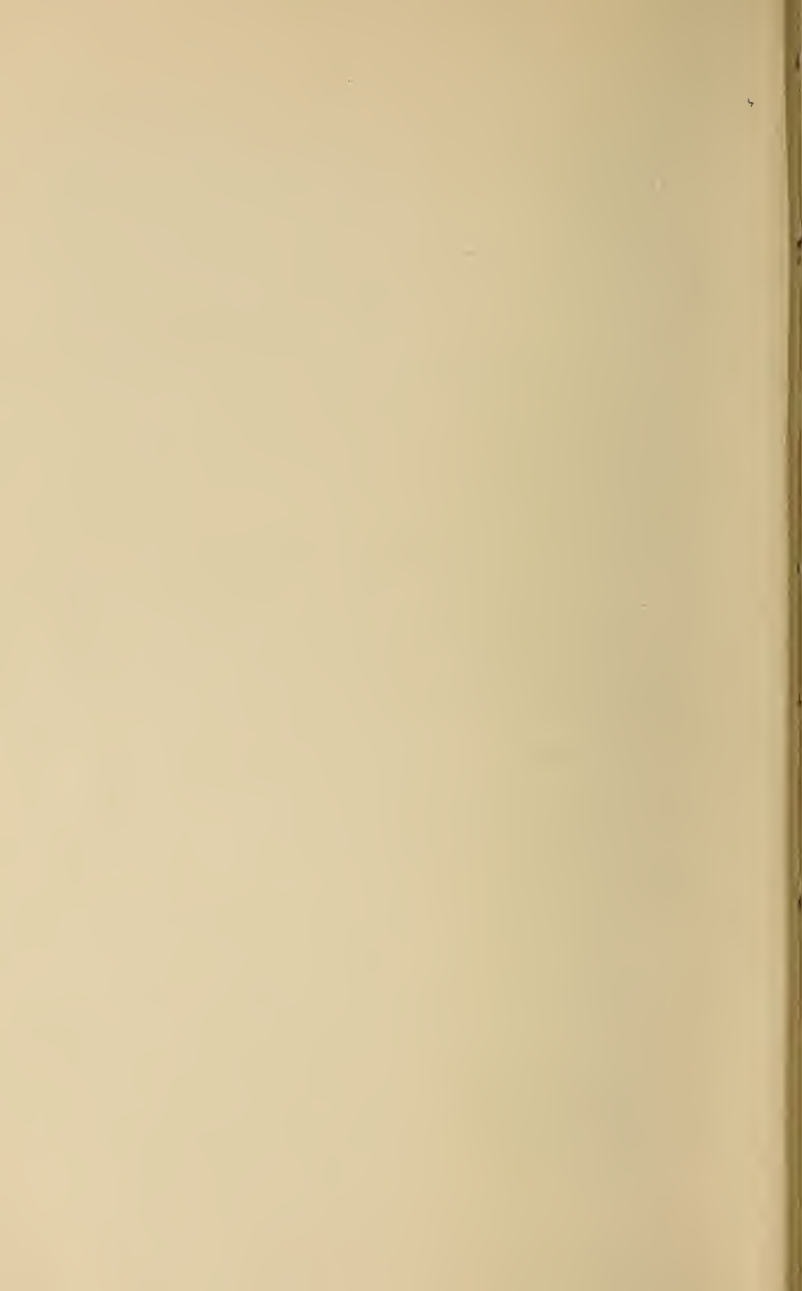
upon haunts of ancient peace and war and upon waterways redolent of Scottish legend and romance.

I have endeavoured to suggest the historic and literary charm which clings to these storied streams. They are charged with splendid pictorial possibilities, and much antiquarian lore and folk memory still linger on their banks. I sincerely hope that as these pilgrimages interested me, they may also prove interesting to other wayfarers in this "the land we love the most."

Several of the chapters were published in the *Glasgow Evening Times*, and for permission to reproduce these I am indebted to the proprietors of that newspaper. I have added much to the material, carefully sifting the facts, and conscientiously verifying the references. My debt to Scottish writers in general and Glasgow authors in particular is a large one. I trust it is fully acknowledged in the footnotes.

T. C. F. B.

GLASGOW, 1914.



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## INTRODUCTION.

### WATER LORE.

*“ A running stream they darena cross.”*

IN the literature of anthropology and folklore we find an extensive, if rather scattered, mass of curiously interesting material connected with the divinities of the waters and with the belief in sympathetic magic. Study of the superstitions and customs which mankind in all ages and in all countries has associated with the fountains of the woods and the rivers of the plains, is startling in its revelation of the homogeneity of the human race. As we dip into the subject the more fascinating, and certainly the more suggestive, becomes the atmosphere which gathers around it. We are carried back to the very sources of human history, and standing there we discover that the framework of our own age and its institutions and beliefs has its roots in savagery and paganism. Superstition may

be a dangerous guide in practice, and admittedly the evils which it has wrought are incalculable. But while it has been maleficent to our fellows, can it not also claim to have been occasionally beneficent? Has it not often conferred a benefit on society by furnishing the ignorant, the weak, and the foolish with a motive for good conduct: and once the harbour lights are passed and the ship is in port it surely matters little whether the pilot steered by a Will o' the wisp or by the stars?

Folklore brings us face to face with the crude beliefs of primitive man, beliefs which have been handed down to us through countless generations, and which even this restlessly progressive age has failed to entirely banish. We cannot blink the fact that the generation of those who believed firmly in the power of the "evil eye" of the witch, and who feared to disturb the revels of the fairies on their rings and mounds is only just passing away. Allow me to give an example of the extraordinary persistence of a belief in the virtues of the hallowed wells. A friend and I were visiting <sup>1</sup> the crypt of Glasgow Cathedral, and when standing by the shrine of St. Mungo we observed a poorly-clad woman with a

<sup>1</sup> In autumn 1912.

child in her arms pass by and seat herself on the stone ledge of the saint's well. Our curiosity was aroused. She was young, but care and sorrow had obviously broken her spirit and left their traces on the features. After seating herself she evidently engaged in prayer, then prepared to leave. My friend, a fatherly old gentleman, approached the woman, and laying his hand on her arm asked kindly, "Why do you come here, my good girl?" "Oh, sir," she said, "I just come to wush. My man's no vera guid to me, and when he's bad I come to the guid well and wush, and aye efter I wush he's (the husband) kinder to me." The woman was distressed, and this forbade further inquiry. In all probability she was ignorant of the real nature of the mysterious practice in which she had been engaged. The Glasgow case affords us a striking instance of the survival of a belief. The blend of the pagan and the Christian rites is significant. Throughout the Middle Ages pilgrimages to hallowed wells were approved by the Church. Nevertheless, the custom had a pagan origin, and undoubtedly the sacred spring was visited long before it was appropriated, and perhaps enclosed, by the ecclesiastical fathers. In the pages of the classical writers

we have many allusions to the divination of wells with garlands, to the flinging of nosegays into fountains, to the veneration paid to the nymphs of springs and streams.

Diana, the "mistress of mountains and forests green and lonely glades and sounding rivers," had a famous sanctuary on the banks of the lake of Nemi overlooking the Roman Campagna, and Ovid describes her shrine as hung with "fillets and commemorative tablets." The abundance of cheap votive offerings and copper coins which the site has yielded in our day speaks volumes for the piety and numbers, if not for the opulence and liberality of the ancient Italian worshippers.<sup>1</sup> Another mythical personage of some importance was the water-nymph Egeria, in whose sacred river married women sacrificed : and to this day the spring of the nymph retains medicinal virtues.<sup>2</sup> Such customs are world-wide, and alike common to savage and civilised man. Another ceremony observed by the peoples of antiquity, and traces of which still linger at home and abroad, is the marriage of a river-god or spirit to a woman. Thus, to take a few instances, the

<sup>1</sup> Frazer, *Early Hist. of the Kingship*, p. 12 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> R. Lanciani in *Athenæum*, Oct. 10, 1885.

god of the great Victoria Nyanza Lake in Africa was propitiated by the Baganda every time they undertook a long voyage, and they furnished him with girls to serve as his wives. This custom lasted until King Mwanga was converted to Christianity.<sup>1</sup> Again, in one of the states of Upper Burma, there is a certain lake inhabited by a powerful spirit to whom four maidens were annually dedicated in marriage, a custom that was observed as late as 1893.<sup>2</sup> These are types of folk-tales of which versions are to be found from Japan in the east to Senegambia, Scandinavia, and Scotland in the west, with variants among the red men of America.

In other versions we have a serpent or satyr, a water-horse or a kelpie who takes possession of the lake or river and only allows the water to flow or the people to make use of it on condition of receiving periodically a human victim, generally a virgin.<sup>3</sup> These tales are not mere inventions. We may

<sup>1</sup> Sir Harry Johnstone, *The Uganda Protectorate*, 1902, ii. p. 677.

<sup>2</sup> *Early Hist. Kingship*, p. 179.

<sup>3</sup> For a list of these tales with references to authorities see Frazer, note on Pausanias, ix. 26, 7: further examples are given in the third edition of his wonderful work, *The Golden Bough*.

reasonably assume that they are echoes of real customs when primitive man, overawed by the mystery of the flowing stream, sacrificed girls or women to be the wives of the water-spirit. The kelpies and the water-bulls, the uruisgean, and the brownies of our Scottish lochs and streams are familiar features in our national folk-tales and superstitions. We see them in perspective, dim and shadowy. To our forefathers these guardians of the flood were a grim reality, and their memory still haunts the shores of many a lonely mountain tarn and wandering moorland stream. The magic pen of Scott throws a halo over the celebrated "Coir-nan-Uruisgean" or Goblin's Cave where Loch Katrine washes the base of Ben Venue.<sup>1</sup> There "fays resort, and satyrs hold their sylvan court," and, says Sir Walter, "tradition has ascribed to the uruisgean a figure between a goat and a man; in short, however much the classical reader may be startled, precisely that of a Grecian Satyr." In the Coolin Hills of Skye<sup>2</sup> there is a wild corrie of similar name to the Perthshire one, "Coir-nan-Uraig," and local tradition describes the monster

<sup>1</sup> *Lady of the Lake*, Canto III. xxvi.

<sup>2</sup> Macculloch, *Folklore of Skye*, p. 239.

that inhabits it as of fearful shape, half human, half goat, with long hair, teeth, and claws. Loch nan Dubhrachan between Isle Ornsay and Knock is haunted by a water-horse, an object of terror especially to women, as the grisly beast is said to prefer carrying off young girls. We can detect in this tale an echo of the sacrificial rites of a long-vanished age. The women of the district are afraid to venture near the loch, but we may suppose they little dream whence sprang the feeling of awe. We find manifestations of the same fearful creatures all over Scotland.<sup>1</sup> Burns, whose instinct for folklore is very marked, speaks <sup>2</sup> of the wintry seasons when “water-kelpies haunt the foord, An’ ’nighted travellers are allur’d, To their destruction.” The rivers of Aberdeenshire <sup>3</sup> abounded in water-spirits. A Braemar kelpie stole a sackful of meal to give to a woman for whom he had taken a fancy. As the thief was disappearing, the miller caught sight of him. He threw a fairy-whorl at the retreating

<sup>1</sup> A sea-spirit called Shony was wont to be annually propitiated in the Lewis islands. Martin, *Des. West. Isles of Scotland*, 1695, pp. 28, 29.

<sup>2</sup> “Address to the Deil.”

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Gregor, *Folklore Journal*, 1889. Cf. Mackinlay, *Folklore of Scottish Lochs*, c. x.



figure, which broke a leg, and the kelpie fell into the mill race and was drowned. Such was the fate of the last kelpie seen in Braemar. A stream some four miles from Skibo Castle in Dornoch Parish had its water-spirit,<sup>1</sup> a female "dressed in green with yellow hair like ripe corn" beautiful to look upon, but the horrid being "had no nose."

On the river Spey in Cromdale there is a pool which in bygone days was haunted by a water-horse,<sup>2</sup> the terror of the surrounding haughs. In this case we hear again the note of human sacrifice. The water-horse appeared at certain seasons. It fed with the cattle, permitted itself to be mounted by the herdsman, but then quick as an arrow it plunged into its pool. The man was seen no more, and the horse disappeared for a year and a day. On one occasion a maiden ventured to ride the creature, which plunged headlong into the deepest part of a lochan, and "this was the last that was seen of the water-horse of Poll nan Craobhan." Hugh Miller tells us<sup>3</sup> of "the frightful goblin" or water-spirit of the Conon in Ross-shire which "took

<sup>1</sup> Campbell, *Tales of the West Highlands*.

<sup>2</sup> *Folk Tales and Fairy Love*, p. 309 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> *My Schools and Schoolmasters*, c. x.

a malignant delight in luring into its pools or overpowering at its fords, the benighted traveller.” The boding voice of the wraith of the Canon could sometimes be heard rising above the roar of the waters uttering the warning, “The hour’s come but not the man”:<sup>1</sup> and a south-country tradition quoted<sup>2</sup> by Scott says that while a little stream was swollen into a torrent the discontented voice of the water-spirit was heard to pronounce these words. At the same moment a man urged on by his fate, or *fey*, arrived at a gallop and prepared to cross the water. No remonstrance was of power to stop him—he plunged into the stream and perished. A faint memory of the kelpie or water-spirit was perhaps revealed to me when making my way to the source of the Luggie. When approaching Torbrex, I met in with a little flaxen-haired laddie, and as he was going in my direction I spoke to him. The Luggie near Torbrex plunges into a sylvan dell, and on passing this dell my little companion remarked that a “big hairy beast used to live doon there and it used to droon folk.” On

<sup>1</sup> So said Meg Merrilees to Dirk Hatteraick on the eve of her death at his hands. *Guy Mannering*, c. liv.

<sup>2</sup> *Heart of Midlothian*, Note B.

my asking who told him that, he said, " My granny, but she's deid." I should have liked to learn more about that big hairy beast of the Luggie, but my informant had no more to tell. It may have been a childhood's bogey, an inspiration of the old granny : on the other hand, it is conceivable that I had stumbled across a trace of the grisly river-spirit, so feared and detested by our ancestors in the long ago.

Water is endowed with many virtues. Fire and water were the joint agents in quelling disease, and the worshippers of yore mingled their rites when they kindled the fires on Beltane day, or made a pilgrimage to the sacred spring before sunrise on the first Sunday in May. In his notes to " Tam o' Shanter," Burns remarks that it is a well-known fact that witches or any evil spirits have no power to follow a poor wight any farther than the middle of the next running stream. Robert Bruce washed in the well near Prestwick, called Kingsease to this day—a memory of its sanative qualities. Water drawn from under a bridge over which the dead were carried, as well as water flowing south, reputedly possessed special powers.<sup>1</sup> The Kinloch-

<sup>1</sup> Dalyell, *Darker Superstitions*, pp. 84, 87 ; Henderson, *Folk-*

leven charm stone described by Dr. Stewart of Ballachulish was "dipped in water from a running stream, and the patient was made to drink of this water,"<sup>1</sup> and presumably recovered. The Clach Dearg or Stone of Ardvoirlich, a ball of rock crystal, was held in much repute,<sup>2</sup> and people came from great distances to obtain water in which it had been dipped. The belief in this charm survived till about 1860. In our own district of the West of Scotland there is the Lee Penny that, thanks to *The Talisman* of Sir Walter Scott, is the most widely known of all the Scottish charm stones which impart a particular virtue to water.<sup>3</sup>

The Holy Wells and their waters are of absorbing interest. The votive offerings at Diana's Shrine described by Ovid have their counterpart at our Scottish wells. With a view to propitiate the saint or tutelar divinity towards the devotee or as a token of gratitude for the benefit derived by the patient from the use of the waters, votive offerings

*lore of Northern England*, pp. 106-107; Eve Simpson, *Folklore in Lowland Scotland*, p. 47; and Burns's note to his "Halloween."

<sup>1</sup> *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, 1889-90, p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 1892-3, p. 438.

<sup>3</sup> Dalyell, *Darker Superstitions*, p. 157; Napier, *Folklore of West of Scotland*, p. 95; *N.S.A. Lanarkshire*, p. 586.

of all kinds were left at our wells. The saints do not appear to have been very hard on the worshippers, and a common pin was often regarded as sufficient. Rags and portions of wearing apparel were also used by the pilgrims. There is a spring called Fillan's Well near the ruined Kirk of Killallan—some three miles from Houston and Kilmacolm—to which country women brought their rickety children and bathed them in its waters. On the bushes which shade its crystal fluid they were wont to leave some bits of cloth as an offering to the saint. In the same way the old citizens of Glasgow hung their offerings on the tree which shadowed the ancient well of St. Tenew's, the site of which is now known as St. Enoch's Square: and there is the haunting romance enshrined in the old ballad which tells us of the love virtues of "the lanesome Wells o' Wearie."<sup>1</sup>

I have attempted in these necessarily brief notes to indicate the wealth of folklore that clings to the rivers and streams and fountains of our native land. Differences may exist as to the precise value of this inheritance. That it has a certain definite scientific value can scarcely be doubted. The stories of the

<sup>1</sup> Near Arthur's Seat, Edinburgh.

satyrs of Greece and the kelpies of Scotland ; of the offerings at Diana's sanctuary, and the humble pin dropped into St. Fillan's Well ; of the water-god of Lake Nyanzi, and the uruisgean of the Skye lochs are more closely akin than may at first appear. They have their roots deep down in human history, deep enough to establish their general affinity, and to forge at least another link in the chain of evidence of a common origin between the East and the West.





## I.

### TO THE SOURCE OF THE WHITE CART.

IN its brief pilgrimage from the wind-swept moorlands of Eaglesham to the "meeting of the waters" at Inchinnan Brig, the White Cart traverses a beautiful and fertile land. A silver thread on the moss-clad heave of the shoulder of Eldrig becomes a wimpling streamlet off Raahead, and emerges a clear and sparkling burn from the woodland shades of ruined Currachfaulds, some three miles as the crow flies from Eaglesham.

On a fine summer afternoon a ramble over and about these places will yield keen enjoyment to the lover of nature. To the wayfarer, who cares to direct his footsteps thither, I promise him, or her, the full charm of freshness and the open air, of hills and meadows, and deep country paths, where you hear naught but the wild birds' cry, and where the winds blow the sun blaze into kisses, places which are shady and cool, and where stillness lingers forever. True, these things are but "the homely round of plain delights." But they are

good to seek, and in the quest thereof we may perchance get a fleeting glimpse of that peaceful vista of the Elizabethan poet, "which all men seek and few men find." <sup>1</sup>

The immortal Nicol Jarvie, Magistrate of Glasgow, and honest man, praise to his memory, on his immortal tour to the clachan of Aberfoyle, found himself upon the banks of a narrow, deep, and silent river. "That's the Forth," he remarked, and he did so—adds Mr. Francis Osbaldistone—"a puir thochtless callant, Mr. Hammorgaw") "with an air of reverence which I have observed the Scotch usually pay to their distinguished rivers."<sup>2</sup> The Clyde, the Tweed, the Forth, the Spey are named by those who dwell on their banks with a sort of respect and pride."

The White Cart is not included in Scott's famous quartette. But the genius of Burns provided against any such omission, and he is but a feckless Scot who cannot trill "The Weaver's March," which tells us so pleasantly and daintily how the gallant wabster lived<sup>3</sup>—

"Where Cart rins rowin' to the sea,  
By mony a flow'r and spreading tree."

<sup>1</sup> Sir Henry Wotton, ed. 1685, cf. *The Compleat Angler*, c. xxi.

<sup>2</sup> *Rob Roy*, c. xxviii.

<sup>3</sup> Burns is said to have written "The Gallant Weaver" specially for the pleasure of hearing Bonnie Jean sing it to him. It may be recalled that in 1786 when Jean's parents broke off the marriage between the poet and her, she was packed off to Paisley; and in the course of a month or two news reached Mauchline

The Stygian-like pools of the Cart in its lower reaches are painfully familiar, and we are not desirous of cultivating their acquaintance. They represent the Cart in its decrepit old age: we want to gaze upon its rampant youth. It would be interesting to inquire how many have sought its birthplace among the dusky moorland heights of Lanarkshire?

The Cart may not have magnitude, but we do not measure beauty by bulk, or river by breadth, nor is the artistic charm of hills to be ascertained by the aneroid. The White Cart has its romantic revelations. So on this hot summer day let us bid farewell to "the stony sermons of the streets." The blue hills are beckoning to us, and, in fancy, we hear the eerie notes of the peaseweep and the whaup.

Let us begin our quest for the far-away source at Waterfoot, that fairy-haunted spot beloved of the artistic fraternity. Christopher North's lovely Earn merges into the Cart here, yet the two combined suffice only to make just such a burnie as would "wimple ower a linn." The leonine Christopher spent his boyhood days by the banks of the Earn; and looking back over the vanished years the old man recalled the summer days of long ago, and as the fond memories of youth crowded upon that she had been dancing "The Weaver's March" with a certain Robie Wilson, "a wabster gude." In after years Burns wrote this song and doubtless had a quiet pleasure in putting it into Jean's mouth.

him he penned loving lines on the voices that were still, but which for him yet mingled with the gentle murmur of the Earn and the Cart.

Waterfoot is a place of cool stretches of woodland and green meadows. Fishers smoke their pipes and lazily watch their lines floating on the bosom of the youthful Cart. The sunlight filters through sylvan shades and plays on the ancient mill and the old grey bridge. It is a place where one drinks to the full of the charm of woodland walk and river path, a place wherein one may learn to forget the grimy bricks and mortar and the noisesome traffic of the town. So to Eaglesham.

Three miles along a country road which marches with the Cart brings the wayfarer to Eaglesham,<sup>1</sup> a quaint upland village, which is rapidly making a name for itself as an inland health resort. It is a pleasant habitation, where the winds blow fresh and free, and where you may look down upon miles of heaving lines of wood and hill and green field, a health-giving spot, where the sun and the sharp moorland air will quickly mottle the pallid countenance with the pattern of the fern.

Eaglesham is no modern, shoddy suburb, but a place of a respectable antiquity. It boasts of a

<sup>1</sup> Eaglesham was a prebend of Glasgow. The rectors or prebendaries of Eaglesham were chaplains to the Altar of St. John the Baptist in the Cathedral. Their Manse stood in the Drygait. Renwick, *Glasgow Protocols*, vol. i. *et seq.*; Crawford, *Hist. Shire of Renfrew*, ed. 1782, p. 219; O.S.A. vol. ii.; Lugton, *Old Ludgings of Glasgow*.



Eaglesham.

finely-preserved moot hill,<sup>1</sup> and the endowment charter of Paisley Abbey, granted by Walter, the High Steward, about 1170, bears the signature of a Montgomery of Eaglesham.<sup>2</sup> In the Acts of the Old Scots Parliament we find mention in 1672 of the granting of "a yearlie fair and weiklie mercat at the Kirktoune of Eaglesham," which, "lying on the Kingis high way, is a most fit and convenient place for keeping mercats."

My sketch shows the little kirk,<sup>3</sup> with its quaint, Dutch-like steeple, and the village straggling in haphazard fashion up the steep brae which leads to moorlands and hills. On a stone beneath the shadow of the old kirk one may read a brief record of the "Killing Times," for "Here lye Gabriel Thomson and Robert Lockhart, who were killed for owning the Covenanted Testimony by a party of Highlandmen and Dragoons, under the command of Ardencaple, 1st May, 1685." These two martyrs were shot at Cowplie, a farm at the foot of Mellowther Hill, some three miles south of the village, and it is interesting to note that James Wodrow, father of the man who chronicled the sufferings of

<sup>1</sup> This may have been either a fortified Motehill, or a Moothill, *i.e.* meeting place. Christison, "Scottish Motes," *Rhind Lectures*, 1894.

<sup>2</sup> Chartulary of Paisley.

<sup>3</sup> Built by Lord Eglinton 1790-2, previous to which "an old Popish chapel" was used for public worship. *O.S.A.* vol. ii. p. 120.



the Covenanters, was born at the hill of Eaglesham in 1637.<sup>1</sup>

Leaving Eaglesham by the Strathaven road, we cut off the king's highway about a mile beyond the village, and, dipping down to the left, strike the Cart again at the ruined mill of Millhall and



Mains below Polnoon.

the dam of Polnoon. In a clump of trees on a knoll a couple of hundred yards from the dam are to be seen the mouldering vestiges of the ancient keep of Polnoon. The storm and shine of six centuries have well-nigh obliterated the erstwhile home of the powerful chiefs of Montgomery. They were a bold and enterprising race. John de Montgomery,

<sup>1</sup> Gibson, *Tombstones of the Covenanters*, pp. 114, 117; Carslaw, *Covenanting Memorials*, pp. 31, 34.

master of the manor of Eaglesham *circa* 1360, obtained by marriage with the heir of Sir Hew Elginton the baronies of Eglinton and Ardrossan,<sup>1</sup> and from that marriage there sprang the present possessors of these estates.<sup>2</sup> A more or less reliable, but persistent, tradition has it that it was this same individual who at the battle of Otterburn, in 1388, took Percy prisoner, and with the ransom or poind money built the castle of Polnoon or "poinoon" as the name suggests.

The exploits of the Montgomeries are commemorated in the ancient Scots and English ballads of "Chevy Chase" and "Otterburn," but there is a serious lack of uniformity in the ballads, which does not exactly bear out the tradition regarding Polnoon. In the English versions printed by Percy in his *Reliques*, Sir Hew Montgomery is killed ("Chevy Chase"), and is taken prisoner ("Otterburn"); in the Scottish (Herd's is the earliest, 1766; the earliest English version is *circa* 1550 in the Cottonian MS.) he takes Percy prisoner.<sup>3</sup> The fact seems to be that Hugh was really slain, and

<sup>1</sup> Crawford, *Renfrewshire*, p. 213.

<sup>2</sup> On May 24, 1576, King James VI. confirmed to Hugh Montgomery, son of the Earl of Eglinton, and his affianced spouse, the tower, fortalice, and manor of Polnune, and other lands in the barony of Egleshame. *Reg. Mag. Sig.* 4, No. 2572. Note, *Glasgow Protocols*, vol. viii. p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Scott, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. i. pp. 345, 368; Eyre-Todd, *Scottish Ballad Poetry*, pp. 217, 224.





THE CART  
above RAAMEAD

that Percy was captured by Lord John Montgomery, Hugh's father. In any case the wayfarer should visit the Knoll of Polnoon, for its sadly time-worn and battered remains of the Castle of the Montgomeries are saturated with the spirit of Scottish romance.

Polnoon Dam is one of the most picturesque of spots, and I cordially recommend it to the attention of the young Glasgow artist or photographer on the outlook for good "bits." Viewed from the little bridge of Millhall, it presents a perfect feast of tender Corot-like colour, and a charming composition that cannot fail to tempt the brush and camera alike. Dunwan and Ardoch burns meet a few hundred yards above Millhall, and their waters form the dam.

It is a brief, but pleasant, ramble to follow the united streams down past ruined Polnoon and the old Milltown of Mains, to where they join the White Cart, a mile north of the dam. Meantime Cartshead is our objective. It is good going on the modest highway that leaves the dam of Polnoon and strikes due east to Millhouse farm, where the Threepland burn adds its quota to the Cart. So through scented folds of land and over high tree-crowned ridges from which we catch pleasant glimpses of the fresh greens and greys of a countryside that is famed for its humplucks of butter and its acidulent soor-dook.

The second road to the right past Millhouse takes us twice over the Cart—here but a purling brook—and so past Currachfaulds and to the old-world farmhouse which owns the philologically stimulating name of Rawhead (a Celtic or Teutonic root ?)—a memory (perhaps) of the days when the ancient Pictish tongue was spoken on the moorlands of Cart-head.<sup>1</sup> The typical Scot who farms Rawhead is an Armour, and of the good stock that gave Burns his “bonnie Jean.” On his lands, and away up on the shoulder of Eldrig Hill, the Cart has its source ; the guidman of Rawhead warned us that it would be “a deeficult job gettin’ there, and when ye dae get there ye’ll find little else than a wheen sheuchs”—a grimly iconoclastic descriptive note.

An old field path leads from Rawhead to the Cart, now, as our sketch shows, the most modest of brooks, but clear as crystal, and the home of many fat trout. A couple of miles over bent lands and through peat hags brings the wayfarer to the “sheuchs.” There are four of these channels—“cleuchs” or “sykes,” and taking our bearings by the south, the third of the four leads us to the

<sup>1</sup> Raw in Gaelic is applied to circles of stones. At the close of the eighteenth century a very large cairn called Herlaw stood near Rawhead. Thousands of cartloads of stones were taken from it, and many urns with fragments of human bones were found and destroyed. *Hist. E. Kilbride*, p. 213 ; Christison, *Early Fortifications in Scotland*, p. 316 *et seq.*

source of the White Cart, a little babbling spring,  
a gleaming eye of silver and green, set like a jewel  
on the dark shoulder of Eldrig.



GABLE STONE • RAAHEAD •

## II.

### TO THE LONELY LONG LOCH.

THE Levern is one of the minor streams of the West country. So modest is its bulk and so brief its pilgrimage that it has never aspired to the name of river. From its source in the moorland solitudes ayont the Pad of Neilston to where its waters mingle with the White Cart beneath the shadow of " Cruikston Castle's lanely wa's " <sup>1</sup> is little more than a journey of twelve miles, a summer afternoon ramble for the wayfarer who can breast the steep hillsides and the trackless mosses, slaps and stiles that stretch beyond.

In its upper reaches we are in the midst of ancient silence, a place of solemn hills and brown wastes of heather, where there are no trees and few birds, and where " the weird sound of its own stillness " gives to the city man a refreshing sense of abiding peace, after the eternal din of the palpitating town. It is good to lie on the green mossy banks of the

<sup>1</sup> This song by Tannahill was published in the *Scots Magazine*, Sept. 1808.

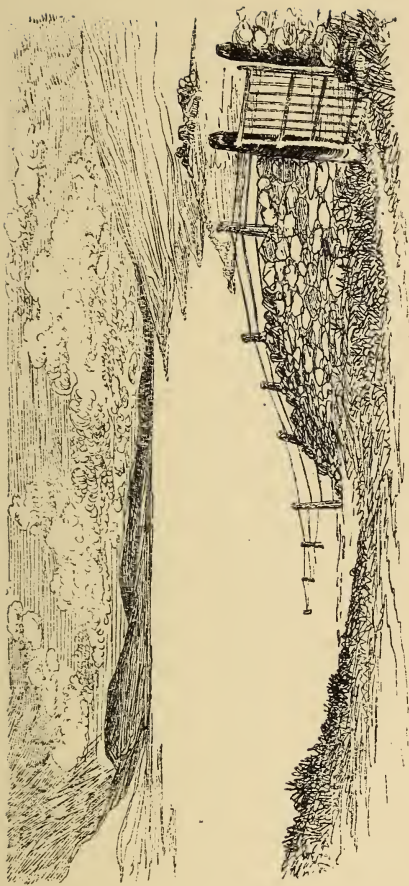
solitary Long Loch and watch the sunshine weaving gigantic patterns on the distant hills, and to note the wagtail and the dipper flash across the limpid waters where silvery trout lurk, and where the soft summer breeze stirs the shimmering surface into wavy laughter.

The tentacles of the most wonderful of all car systems, that of Glasgow, are flung to all the airts. On the south they reach that upland hive of industry, Barrhead, and there the wayfarer may do as we did, make it the starting point for his or her ramble to the moorlands of Neilston.

At Barrhead we are at the entrance to the curious geologic gap, or valley, through which there ebbs and flows by road and rail the great flood of industry from Glasgow town to the south. Geologists tell us that this gap—which extends from Barrhead to Loch Libo—represents “a fracture” in the crust of our old earth. But the analysis of the geologist is not in harmony with the Rambler’s synthetic vision. Time has healed the fracture, and in these days we wander through a green and pleasant valley, a sheltered vale set in a framework of fertile hills.

Barrhead is aggressively modern. It takes its name from the solitary farmhouse which stood in 1773 upon the land now occupied by the product of commercial enterprise.<sup>1</sup> Like other things modern

<sup>1</sup> The first house of Barrhead village was erected about 1760. In 1800 the population consisted of 40 families. *Glasgow Free Press*, 18 Sept. 1827.



The Lonely Long Loch.



the product is blatant and oppressive. But it still keeps in its heart an interesting relic of other times, the mouldering remains of the fortalice of Raiss. The grim wall of the ancient tower nods across the Levern to the railway line, whose coming it has seen and whose going it will doubtless see.

History has not much to tell us regarding Raiss. What it does say carries us far back on the pathway of the years. From an early period it was in possession of the Stewarts of Darnley. The Paisley monks had the tithe of its mill multure, in redemption of which Alexander the High Steward, *circa* 1250, granted them two chalders of meal out of Inchinnan. Alexander Stewart of Raiss was witness to a charter in 1443; and a family of the name of Halrig seem to have held the tower in the closing years of the sixteenth century.<sup>1</sup> So late as 1782 the greater part of the keep was standing, but with the founding of Barrhead in 1760 the ancient structure served as a convenient quarry for the iconoclastic builder. My sketch shows the remnant that has survived the attack of the vandals, and if the civic authorities of Barrhead entertain the slightest respect for this fine relic of a mediæval Scottish fortress they ought to expend a little time, and even money, in the work of preservation. Its neglected state is a sad commentary upon Barrhead's civic æstheticism.

<sup>1</sup> Crawford, *Renfrewshire*, p. 240.



Leave Barrhead by the road that bears to the right and skirts the railway. A pleasant tramp of a little over a mile takes us to the mills of lower Neilston. The highway is good going, and a generous tribute to the watchfulness of the road authorities,



OLD  
TOWER  
of  
Barrhead RAIS.

whoever they may be. We have the Levern as a companion on the way. The tint of the water speaks eloquently of the tang of the thread mill ; yet on a summer afternoon the glancing sunshine helps wonderfully in adjusting the balance between nature and industry. The ancient and the modern dwell amicably together at Neilston. Writing about

eighty years ago a gossipy local chronicler remarks that "there is perhaps no country parish in Scotland that abounds so much in thriving and populous villages as Neilston,<sup>1</sup> and all has arisen owing to the introduction of manufacturing establishments on a great scale, and whose main movements are impelled by powerful waterfalls or by steam engine machinery."

Neilston disputes with Rothesay the honour of having had the first cotton mill in Scotland. We are told that in 1791 there were only two small cotton mills in the parish, one of these at Dove-cot-hall, the other at Gateside, the number of workers being 600. In Alexander's great mill, which the wayfarer passes, there are double that number of girls employed (many of whom travel daily from Glasgow); and that is only one of several mills in this busy upland village.

The village stands on the brow of the great escarpment overlooking our highway. It is a clean little place, windswept and essentially healthy. It looks down on Glasgow, and on a clear day the stately fabrics and thoroughfares of St. Mungo's town may be clearly traced from the High Street of Neilston.<sup>2</sup>

Old memories cling around Neilston. The barony was held by the Crocs of Crockstoun (Crookston)

<sup>1</sup> *Levern Delineated*, 1831.

<sup>2</sup> In 1780 the village contained 55 houses "wherein are 52 weavers' looms employed by the Paisley manufacturers." Semple, ed. 1782.

Castle, and Robert Croc, one of the witnesses to the foundation charter of Paisley Abbey, gave the patronage of the Kirk of Neilston to the monks of that establishment.<sup>1</sup> The Kirk of Neilston claims to occupy the highest situation of any ecclesiastical edifice in broad Scotland. It is a quaint little structure, and comparatively modern. It dates from 1762, and students of epitaphiana will find not a little to interest them in the records of frail mortality scattered around the old kirkyard. These, if somewhat commonplace, point a useful moral. That which adorns the stone of "Mr. George Airston" is typical of several :

"Remember man as thou passest by,  
As thou art now, so once was I,  
As I am now so must thou be,  
Therefore prepare to follow me."

The highway and the railway go hand in hand through the Libo Gap. Bidding farewell to the barrack-like mills and Neilston Station, we strike the Cowdon Burn, one of the tributaries of the Levern, which joins the latter at the railway depot. We are on one of the pleasantest of country roads, tree-bordered, and quiet. The burn that wimples on our right takes its name from the lands of Cowdon, which, according to Crawford, "gave first title of Lord to Sir William Cochrane, afterwards Lord of

<sup>1</sup> Robert Croc is described as a "special friend of our house," 1180. *Reg. Mon. de Passelet*, p. 78; Robert Croc of Neilston appears in a deed about 1214. *Ibid.* p. 23.

Dundonald," and he adds, "an ancient family of the Sprewls did possess the forementioned lands for many years." <sup>1</sup>

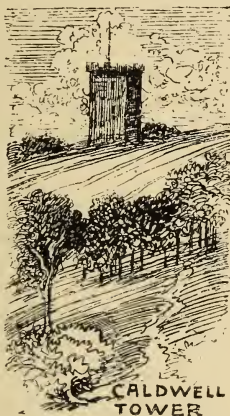
This is interesting to the Glasgow man. M'Ure, the city's first historian, speaks of John Spreul, a "learned man designed in the year 1507 magister artium, brother of the house of Cowdon, a very ancient family in Renfrewshire, where he was born." Truly it was a venerable family. Hamilton of Wishaw's *Accompte of the Sherifffdom of Renfrew* (Maitland Club) tells us that "Walter Spruile wes Seniscall to Malcolm, Earle of Lennox," *circa* 1294. "Thir Spruiles," he adds, "are severall tymes mentioned in the cartulary of Paisley."

The lands of Cowdon passed by purchase in 1766 to the Mures of Caldwell. Cowdon Ha', the erstwhile residence of the Dundonalds and "Thir Spruiles," stood on an eminence to the left, as we head for Libo Loch. With a pardonable parochial enthusiasm, the reverend gentleman who penned the New Statistical Account asserts that "Loch Libo presents a scene of unparalleled beauty" and "excels in picturesque scenery Rydal Water in Cumberland," while Miss Aird, the author of "Home of the Heart," eulogises the lochan as—

"A scene for poet's song or painter's eye ;  
A living picture glow'd in ev'ry hue,  
As e'er was painted on Venetian sky—  
As ever Titian or Paolo drew ! "

<sup>1</sup> Crawford, p. 182.

all of which, like that estimable mariner Captain Cuttle, we duly "make a note of," but at the same time take the liberty of adding Mr. Weller's opinion that "they're a-comin' of it rayther strong." Undoubtedly beautiful, however, is the modest sheet of water, and when the summer sun is glinting over the hills of Libo and kissing the surface of



the loch they hold in their bosom, we cordially agree with the lady who says it is "a scene for poet's song or painter's eye."

Blaeu, the indefatigable Dutch cartographer, who, in 1654,<sup>1</sup> issued his "Picture of Renfrewshire," makes the Laveran—Levern—take its rise in Loch Libo, and the mistake is repeated in the map attached

<sup>1</sup> Shearer, *Old Maps of Scotland*, p. 56: Prof. Hume Brown says "in Blaeu's map (1662) we have a representation of Scotland which has been improved upon only in comparatively recent years." *Early Travellers in Scotland*, p. xxvi.

to Crawford. The waters of Lugton, one of Ayrshire's streams, has its source in Libo, issuing at the south end of the loch and flowing past Caldwell Station. At one period coal was extensively wrought, and the remains of the old pits may yet be detected on the south-west bank. The Rev. John Monteath, writing in 1790,<sup>1</sup> remarks "there is just now a coal pit working at the west end of Loch Libo with a steam engine upon it, the property of Mr. William Mure, Esq., rented at £60 per annum." A few years after these words were penned the waters of the loch burst in upon the miners underground, seven in number, deluged the pit, and drowned the poor fellows. One of the unfortunate men who perished was the servant of the Rev. Mr. Monteath, who had gone from Neilston to fetch coal, and had ventured down the pit. The eight bodies were never recovered, and to this day they rest in their grim tomb by the side of the little loch.

Peeping over the trees on our right is the old Peel of Caldwell, an excellently preserved fourteenth century relic, and all that remains of the Castle of Caldwell, the home of the Caldwells of that ilk, about 1350, and latterly of that other old West of Scotland race, the Mures of Caldwell.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *O.S.A.* vol. ii.

<sup>2</sup> William Caldwell was Chancellor of the Kingdom in 1349, and an heir female of the Caldwell family married Gilchrist More, a son of Lord Abercorn, the Lord High Chamberlain. This Gilchrist was the original ancestor of the ancient family



The first road to the left past Loch Libo wanders uphill through the picturesquely-situated village of Caldwell. Pass the village by the fine highway which leads to Neilston and take the old country road that branches off on the right. It is "a path among the hills." A couple of miles' stiff walking, during which we rise over 700 feet, brings the pedestrian to Commore Dam, when we are again



in touch with the Levern and the king's highway to Stewarton. We cut off the main road about a quarter of a mile from the dam, and keeping to the old road on the left, pass, on the right, the bien-looking farm of Harelaw. It gives a name to the Harelaw Dam, which lies hidden among the hills about half a mile beyond the steading. Our path crosses the Levern, a brawling brook, as it bids the dam adieu and scuttles across the scaurs for Commore.

of the Mores or Mures of Caldwell. *Judicial Records of Renfrewshire*, p. 296.

At this point I should advise all but the most experienced ramblers to retrace their steps and make for Neilston. It is a pleasant road, and perhaps sufficiently long for one who may not be feeling fit. Those desirous of reaching the solitary Long Loch have a tough walk before them. Leave the road at Moyne Farm, and skirt the dam on its southern edge. The track is rough at the best, and where it can be followed a mere sheep pad ; mostly it is bog and marsh, which leads us through a moorland wilderness round the steep shoulder of the scaur that shuts out the Long Loch from the rest of the world. And it is in this lonely spot that we come on the cradle of the Levern. It is an upland solitude, a bare and unblessed moorland, devoid of all human life and of all sound save the " half wail, half wile " of the peesweep or the eerie scream of the curlew.

We step across the Levern where it bids farewell to the lonely loch, and, keeping to the moor on the north of Harelaw Dam, a tramp of a mile takes us on to an old grass-grown road, a relic of the days of the post horn and the coach. From this ancient track, which passes under the shadow of Neilston Pad, we look down on Neilston village, on the spires of Glasgow town, and on to where Dungoyne is silhouetted against the northern horizon. The homeward way is clear.





Levern's Source.

### III.

#### THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE BLACK CART.

THE Black Cart, sable brother to the White, has its birthplace in a rich and smiling valley, sharply in contrast to the bleak, windshorn uplands whereon the White Cart springs into life. The famous streams are misnamed. In limpid purity the Black Cart is a crystalline water compared with the clouded hues of its moss-borne comrade. It ought, in all fairness, to have been endowed with the virginal nomenclature. Nature intended it so, but the perverse ingenuity of man has willed it otherwise.

Verdant-topped hills, soft and yielding in outline, rise in gentle undulations from the feathery tree-fringed shores of a silvery lake. Through the summer screen of foliage—we look upon the triple islets clothed in a garb of luscious green and seeming to the eye as if they were flashing emeralds set on the burnished surface of the sun-blown lake. Light wafts of scented air come to us from wide-stretching meadowlands. The sun filters through a dark-barred web of branches, and the oaks, the beeches,

and the elms cast long shadows on the fresh and grassy land.

It is a place of pleasant sounds. The low of a distant cow, the clink of a scythe-blade, the note of the lark overhead, pleasant sounds indeed and whispering gladly of summer and green fields and open country. Listening to them, the city man forgets for a space the harshness of the eternal



Where Black Cart rises.

bricks and mortar. In such a valley of ancient peace, a sleepy hollow if you like, we find the birth-place of the Black Cart, and where it slowly bids farewell to the placid lake, there surely once upon a time, when the world was young and man was bold, the great god Pan must have sounded his pipes "down by the reeds in the river."

No pedestrian feat is necessary for the wayfarer who would seek this sheltered and pleasant vale. By the Glasgow car to Paisley, and the Paisley car to Thorn, the roadside clachan on the brow of the

steep that looks down on the sad-coloured vista of Johnstone town, and at Thorn we are on the king's highway and three miles from Howwood. It is a good country road, with many good view points, giving glimpses of distant hills and a pretty pastoral landscape, with the Black Cart woven like a silver thread through a shelving region of meadow and pasture, cornfield and copse. The highway, the railway, and the river move shoulder to shoulder from Thorn,<sup>1</sup> past Quarrelton and Milliken Park, to the straggling village of Howwood.

It is a good road, a comparatively modern road, and I fancy it owes its existence to that fine old-world country gentleman, Major James Milliken, who died about 1776, "regretted by all the poor folks of the district for his kindly heart and good works he had done." These "good works" embraced a fair amount of road-making, and the Howwood road, I think, may be included. The "kindly heart" makes pleasant reading, and throws a fragrance over the memory of the old major.<sup>2</sup>

It is a road to which many memories cling. Johnstone, with its 12,000 of a population, presents a

<sup>1</sup> In 1782 Alexander Speirs of Elderslie "planned off a piece of ground for building a new town at the Thorn, where the roads from Kilbarchan and Quarrelton coal-work to the town of Paisley meet. At this place is held a cow fair upon the second Thursday of July, called the Thorn Fair." Semple, ed. 1782, p. 261; cf. Wilson's *Agricultural Survey of Renfrew*, 1812, pp. 20, 22.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. xv. *O.S.A.*: Ramsay's *Views*, c. xi.

fair example of the rapidity of modern growth. In 1781 it was the most modest of villages, the census giving ten inhabitants ! The district possesses an interesting story.

The principal portion of the estate of Milliken originally formed the barony of Johnstone, and an ancient family of the surname of Wallace held it for centuries. This branch was descended from the Wallaces of Elderslie, by Thomas, a younger son of the John Wallace who flourished in the reign of Robert III. In the seventeenth century the lands of Johnstone were acquired by Ludovic Houston. Hamilton of Wishaw, writing in 1710, describes it as "a very pleasant house and desireable place not far from the Black Cart." Major James Milliken took over the estate in 1733 from George Houston, but in the deed of sale George "reserved the title of 'Johnstone' to his family, and transferred the name to Easter Cochrane." The Major christened his acquisition Milliken, and so it is known to this day.

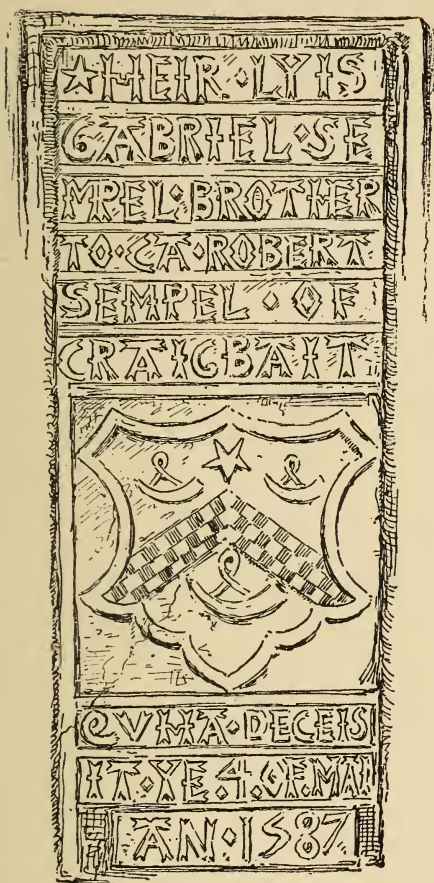
The Castle or Place of Cochrane stood on the south side of our road, near Quarrelton, and the handsome modern edifice of Johnstone Castle. In Semple's day, 1782, "a part of the castle of Cochrane was standing, and one of the vaults was used as a cart house !" In passing it is interesting also to recall that the barony of Cochrane anciently belonged to the Cochrane family, the Earls of

Dundonald. Thirdpart, on our right and on the Cart, and about a mile from Howwood, was an old inheritance of the Crawfords, a branch of the family which for over four hundred years possessed the Castle and Barony of Auchinames, near Kilbarchan.<sup>1</sup>

Howwood is a village with a wide main street, the houses presenting a variety of outline, pitched on the hillside at many angles, and cheerful enough on a summer afternoon when the trees and fields are musical with the song of sweet-throated warblers and when the sunshine is weaving patterns on the little cottages and lending a charm to the dream-like quiet of this country place. And the village has one solid claim to the rambler's regard in its fine hostel, a cool caravansary on a hot day, wherein the passing wayfarer may find rest and peace from a dusty world, and refreshment and a pipe to emphasise the privilege.

As we leave Howwood the highway dips and crosses the Black Cart at a spot beloved of the amphibiously-inclined youth of the village. The handsome gateway guarding the policies of Castle Semple stands on the left a little past the bridge, and he, or she, who cares is welcome to enter

<sup>1</sup> John Knox, the great Reformer, was descended from the Knox family of Kilbarchan parish. The remains of their old castle are still to be seen on the hill above the famous Clochodrick Stone. For the story of this strange stone see my *Sylvan Scenes near Glasgow*, pp. 78, 79.



Gabriel Sempel's Stone.



therein. Doing so we find a pleasant path that winds leisurely along the banks of the Cart, now with the stream, now climbing a rounded eminence, now loitering among ancient trees, through which we catch a glimpse of a little temple on the hill, a relic of the M'Dowall regime and now over a century old.

Along our pathway in March, 1560, there came the Duke of Chatelherault and four thousand men for the purpose of suppressing the old Catholic laird of Castle Semple and thereby asserting the peaceful principles of Protestantism. Pitscottie tells us that "the Duke took the place before the French auxiliaries, who lay in Glasgow, could come to the assistance" of old Sempill. The fact that it required such an army to do so is surely significant of the importance of the ancient castle of the Sempills.

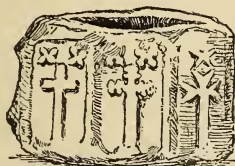
The huge untenanted mansion that greets the wayfarer's gaze to-day—a good mile from the entrance gate aforesaid—was built in 1735. The lands of Castle Sempill passed in 1727<sup>1</sup> from their ancient guardians, the Sempills, to Colonel William M'Dowall, a scion of Garthland, Wigtownshire, a family whose genealogical tree carries us back to "Dowall of Galloway, who lived about 230 years before the birth of our Saviour, killed Nothatus the Tyrant, the sixth King of Scotland, and

<sup>1</sup> Crawford, pp. 149, 152.



established Reutherus, who had the better right to the throne."

The M'Dowall reign at Castle Semple lasted barely a century, the old estate being broken up in 1808, and parcelled out to different purchasers, when the mansion and pleasure grounds were acquired by John Harvey. They are now, we believe, in the hands of trustees. The nobly-designed mansion house is fast hastening to a premature decay, and the blight of neglect seems to have settled all around.



OLD FONT IN THE  
CHAPEL RUIN, CASTLE  
SEMPL

On the magnificent sweep of lawn at the front of the house latter-day people have established a hen-run, and the useful if prosaic barn-fowl has a monopoly of the scene. Withal it is a beautiful one, thanks to the ancient trees which stand in rows and sometimes solitary; beeches, ash and elm, variegated plane, fir, larch, and silver birch form a great lattice work, beyond which gleams "the loch of Castle Semple," more familiar to-day as Lochwinnoch.

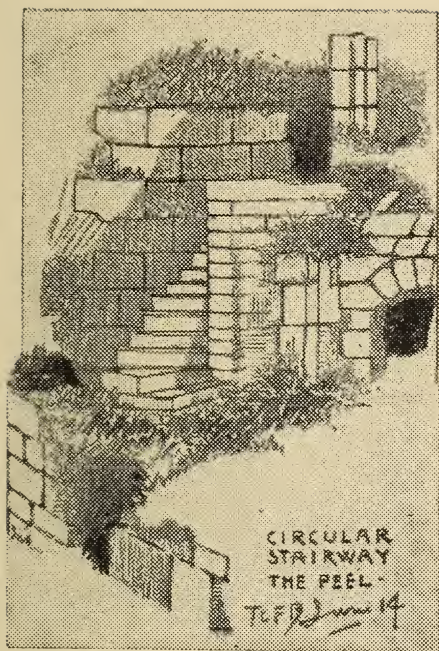
Although they cannot claim the high antiquity of the M'Dowalls, the Sempills have a respectable

ancestry. In the chartulary of Paisley during the reign of Bruce, Robert Semple is witness to the donation of the Kirk of Largs, which Walter, the High Steward of Scotland, gave to the monks of Paisley "for the health of his sowl and for the sowl of Marjory Bruce his spouse, anno 1318." They were great fighting men, and we hear of them wielding the sword on the fields of Sauchieburn, Flodden, Pinkie, Langside, and Culloden.

On the opposite side of the loch are the lands of Beltrees, and the Sempills of that ilk were a noted intellectual family. Francis Sempill of Beltrees, who survived till about 1685, is credited with the authorship of "Maggie Lauder," "Hallow Fair," and "She raise and loot me in," Scottish fare of a most substantial type. To him also is ascribed the "Blythesome Bridal," wherein the marriage supper is described with amazing humour and minuteness, and in a dialect which to an Englishman, and indeed to many living Scotsmen, is a sealed book.

Let us take a swatch of this good old Scot,<sup>1</sup> who in his heyday must many a time and oft have wandered where we are rambling, around Castle Semple and by the shores of Lochwinnoch. After

<sup>1</sup> His father, Robert Semple, was the author of the famous "Habbie Simson, the Piper of Kilbarchan," a poem which gives us a curious and amusing glimpse of Scottish village life about 1600. Douglas, *Scottish Poetry*, pp. 43, 44; Henderson, *Scottish Vernacular Literature*, c. xii.; Eyre Todd, *Scot. Poetry Seventeenth Century*, 251 *et seq.*



CIRCULAR  
STAIRWAY  
THE PEEL -

T.C.F. *June 14*

# 36 BIRTHPLACE OF THE BLACK CART

enumerating lang-kale and pottage and guid saut herring to relish the ale, he proceeds—

“ And there will be fadges and brachan,<sup>1</sup>  
 Wi’ fouth o’ guid gabbocks<sup>2</sup> o’ skate,  
 Powsowdie, and drammock, and crowdie,<sup>3</sup>  
 And caller nowt-feet on a plate ;  
 And there will be partans and buckies,  
 And speldins<sup>4</sup> and haddocks enew,  
 And singet sheep-heads and a haggis,  
 And scadlips<sup>5</sup> to sup till ye spew.

“ And there’ll be lapper-milk kibbucks,<sup>6</sup>  
 And sowens and farles<sup>7</sup> and baps,  
 Wi’ swats<sup>8</sup> and weel scrapit painches,  
 And brandy in stoups and in caups,  
 Scraped haddocks, wilks, dulse, and tangle,  
 And a mill o’ guid sneeshin’ to prie :  
 When weary wi’ eatin’ and drinkin’  
 We’ll rise up and dance till we dee.”

The description overflows with good humour and good Scotch, and it shows the author as a wag of the first water, endowed perhaps with more vigour than grace, and revelling in the idea of the mountains of good cheer which his memory and his imagination suggested to him. Clearly, so far as marriage suppers are concerned, we have degenerated from the days of our fathers. The modern tea and trimmings are but feckless fare compared with the “ meal-kail and castocks with skunk to sup till ye rise,” of the times of which Sempill (or

<sup>1</sup> Colewort, sweets and thick gruel.

<sup>2</sup> Mouthfuls.

<sup>3</sup> Sheeps-head broth, meal and water, and curd.

<sup>4</sup> Dried haddocks.

<sup>5</sup> Fat broth.

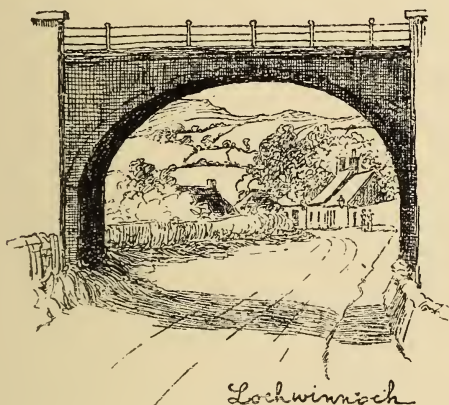
<sup>6</sup> Curded-milk cheese.

<sup>7</sup> Thin cakes.

<sup>8</sup> New ale.

is it Scott of Thirlstane?) writes in the “Blythesome Bridal.”

A few hundred yards to the north of Castle Semple and on a gentle grassy knoll in the heart of the woodlands stand the mouldering remains of the Collegiate Church of Sempill. It is an interesting structure, historically and architecturally. John, first Lord Sempill, founded it in 1504, the



establishment consisting of a Provost, six chaplains, two boys, and a sacristan.<sup>1</sup>

Within the quaint chancel and under a Gothic tomb of exuberant workmanship reposes the dust of the founder. Looking upon the memorial we get a breath of the dule and sorrow of Flodden's stricken field. Lord Sempill was in that gallant

<sup>1</sup> Macgibbon and Ross, *Ecc. Arch. Scot.* vol. iii. p. 354.

“ Scottish circle deep that fought around the king,”  
and he gave his life blood to rear that rampart—

“ which the boldest dared not scale :  
Every stone a Scottish body,  
Every step a corpse in mail.”

On the panel of the cusped half arch is the inscription—“ John, Lord Sempil ande his ladyi, D . . . Margarita.” The memorial slab which I sketched stands in the central church. It was erected in memory of “ Gabriel Sempel,” who died in 1587, and it gives an excellent idea of the style of lettering at that period. The ancient font will repay inspection. It is possible that it may at one time have formed the base of a cross? A few yards from the church are the beautifully-embowered old world fish-ponds,<sup>1</sup> where in the summer days of long ago the jovial monks doubtless went a-fishing for the Friday refection.

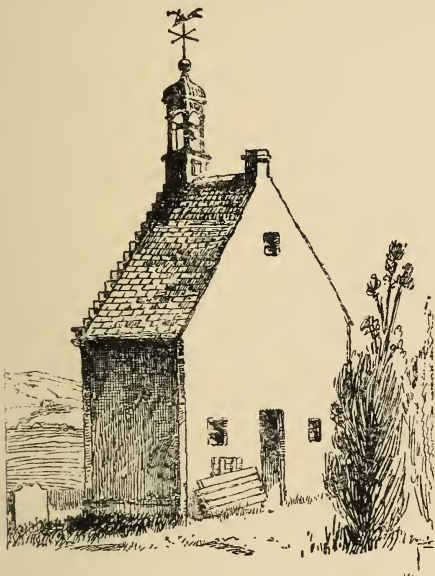
From our ancient habitation it is a pleasant walk of some couple of miles by the loch side to where, in Crawford’s quaint phrase, “ stands the vilage and church of Lochwhynoch,<sup>2</sup> a chaplainry in old times depending upon the Abby of Pasly.” At the entrance to the village we pass the little God’s acre where the fathers of the hamlet sleep, and

<sup>1</sup> Crawford, p. 154.

<sup>2</sup> Lochwinnoch derives its name from St. Winioch (a contemporary of St. Kentigern), who probably had a cell by the shores of the loch.



where stands the curious architectural relic of the old kirk. In 1780 the kirk, of which the mutilated fragment I have sketched is all that remains, is described as "commodious and well-built, having



A Lochwinnoch Relic.

two wings, one upon the south and the other upon the north, a good bell, and a town clock."

Standing in the old kirkyard we look across the loch to the crumbling walls of The Peel.<sup>1</sup> The ruin is on the shore, but when the keep was built in 1540 that spot of land was an island in the centre

<sup>1</sup> Built by the Semples as a refuge in time of war.

of the waters. The draining operations<sup>1</sup> of recent years have materially altered the landscape, and The Peel now sits on a green and level haugh.

Calder, a murmuring stream<sup>2</sup> when it mingles with Lochwinnoch at the west end of the village, comes brawling down the hillsides, into which it has cut for itself the most romantic of rocky channels. Their sylvan beauties aroused the muse of Alexander Wilson, the Paisley weaver, who became the Ornithologist of America. Wilson resided at Lochwinnoch for some years before he emigrated, and in his now almost forgotten verses on Calder Banks the gentle Sandy laments the neglect to which the scenery had been doomed :

“ Say, ye blest scenes of solitude and peace,  
 Strayed e’er a bard along this hermit shore ?  
 Did e’er his pencil your perfections trace ?  
 Or did his muse to sing your beauties soar ?  
 Alas, methinks, the weeping works around,  
 And the lone stream that murmurs far below,  
 And trees and caves with solemn hollow sound  
 Breathe out one mournful, melancholy No.”

The neglect of which the Scoto-American poet sung has not been banished by the passing years. But Nature has dealt bountifully with this smiling valley.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The loch was materially reduced in area by draining in 1773-4.

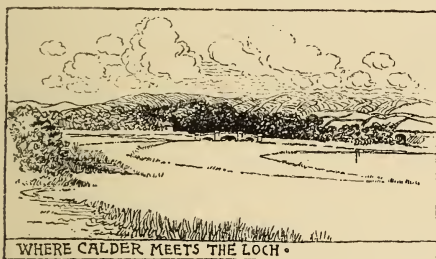
<sup>2</sup> The salmon from the Clyde were wont to pass through Lochwinnoch and deposit their spawn in “ the Calder near Bridgend.” Crawford, p. 155.

<sup>3</sup> Lochwinnoch is a healthy place. It can boast of at least one cast of longevity almost rivalling that of the celebrated Old Parr. The writer of the *O.S.A.* mentions a picture “ done



Its rich beauties do not ask for aught. Their marvellous wealth of colour on stretching haughs and hillsides fenced with oak would scorn the alien touch of man. The summer haze throws a glamour of romance over the umbrageous landscape and its silvery lake, and "the inward eye that is the bliss of solitude" may see the cowed figures of the ancient monks flitting among the ancient trees. The gentle spirit of the past has surely sunk to rest in this peaceful vale, and, sleeping there, awaits the coming of the gallant knight who will wake her with a kiss.

from the life by J. Cooper in 1739 with the following inscription—  
'Margaret Patton born in the parish of Lochnugh near Paisley in Scotland living in the workhouse of St. Margarets, Westminster, aged 138 years.' "



#### IV.

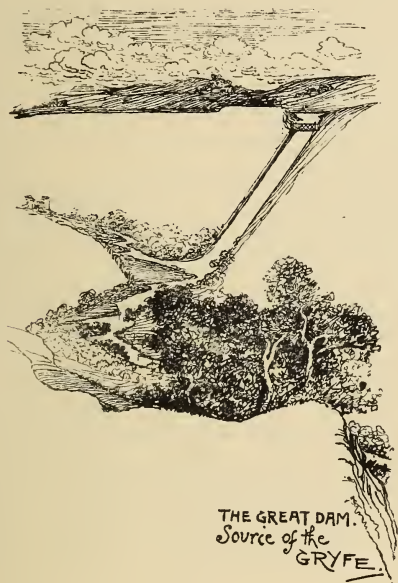
### THROUGH PICTURESQUE STRATHGRYFE.

STRATHGRYFE, so named from the river Gryfe, is one of the many picturesque valleys which lie on the borderland of Glasgow. It is broad and fertile, and it deeply etches the Kilbarchan hills, the volcanic-born barrier that shuts out the coasts of Clyde from the dwellers in mid-Scotland.<sup>1</sup> The vale through which our streamlet flows is barred on the west by the swelling mountain-range on whose northern base there has risen the aggressively modern Greenock and its grey-tinted neighbour, Port-Glasgow.

We find the birthplace of the river in a loch, whose blue expanse is encircled by billowy heights clothed with rough mountain grass interspersed with stretches of heather. Here and there in the lirk of the hills we note bein and cosy-looking farm-

<sup>1</sup> Cairncurran Hill (908 ft.) to the south and overlooking Gryfe Reservoir is a fine example of an extinct volcano. The projecting lava plug which filled up the vent when volcanic action ceased forms a tableland standing out distinct and high above its surroundings. Murray, *Hist. Kilmacolm*, p. 282.

houses wherein the rambler will hap upon the warm bed and covered table. From the ramparts of the great dam on the Gryfe Reservoir, we look far down the Strath. It is framed with undulating hill-lines. The soft slopes are sculptured by innumerable brooks which, through vast geologic ages, have scooped



deep channels and miniature glens for themselves. Their waters gleam pleasantly to the eye on a summer afternoon and the tender music of their wimple charms the ear.

These uplands of Renfrewshire are redolent of pastoral calm and seclusion. Their far-spreading

heights dissolve into spaces of dreamy solitude, into grey moorlands utterly devoid of human life, weird places to which in days long past the witches of Kilmacolm hurtled through the air and footed it on the heath, while the Devil himself, a touzy shape, perched on a hoary boulder, played lustily on a pair of pipes.

From the platform of Houston Station and bearing north-east, we note the towers of Walkinshaw peeping over an umbrageous and verdant stream. The Gryfe, a reed-bordered stream, skirts the highway at this point. Half a mile further on we come to where, in the words of old Hamilton, who wrote in 1710, "the Grief bath its influx into Black Cart at the Walkinshaw, a very pretty dwelling which has been long the inheritance of Walkinshaw of that ilk, chief of his name." We know that the Walkinshaws held the estate till 1683, in which year Gavin Walkinshaw sold his patrimony to "James Walkinshaw, merchant in Glasgow," and second son of John Walkinshaw of Barrowfield. And in 1769 it passed into the hands of the Millars of Paisley, one of whom was Andrew Millar, the famous London bookseller.

Decent, God-fearing burghers were the Walkinshaws, and but for a little amiable weakness on the feminine side, the family would have lived and passed away as many other respectable mediocrities have done "unwept, unhonoured, and unsung."



The Meeting of Cart and Gryfe.

The fates had decreed otherwise, and the name of Walkinshaw has been rendered memorable in history, thanks to the charming Clementina<sup>1</sup> who yielded herself to the embraces of Prince Charlie, and left her bonny Glasgow home to be his mistress. The King of France conferred the title of Countess of Albertstrof on the fair and frail Clementina. She had at least one daughter to the Prince, and she in 1784 was acknowledged by her Royal father as Duchess of Albany,<sup>2</sup> a strange leap in the social scale, surely, for the granddaughter of the Glasgow merchant, but I somehow fancy that old Walkinshaw would not derive much joy from the honour.

The "pretty dwelling" aforesaid still stands. It is a curious bit of architecture, suggestive somewhat of a quartette of gigantic pepper-boxes welded together. Withal it is a pleasant place, venerable in aspect, and inspiring a certain feeling of respectful awe. It is set on a bank of shaven turf, terraced, and encircled by noble trees and variegated hollies of goodly size. A magnificent avenue, like the dim aisle of some vast Gothic cathedral reared by a cyclopean race, leads from the ruined boathouse at the confluence of the Gryfe and Cart up to the mansion.

But the seeds of dreary decay have settled upon

<sup>1</sup> The youngest of the ten daughters of John Walkinshaw of Barrowfield and Camlachie. *Glasghu Facies*, vol. i. p. 606.

<sup>2</sup> Burns writes of her as "The Bonnie Lass of Albany."



the building. Great yawning cracks extend from basement to roof, the result of underground workings; and grass and weeds have taken the place of gravel on the stately terraces and jessamine-framed walks. Commerce and modern enterprise in the shape of a coal mine have appeared on this retired spot, and, as is their wont, they have laid



A Sylvan Aisle.

a dismal blight upon its old-world beauties. In the pregnant colloquialism of the bright little lad, son of the mine overseer who now occupies the home of the Walkinshaws, the Millars, the Alexanders, and latterly the Cunninghames (of Craighends), the ancient and historic house of Walkinshaw is “a waster.”

Where the Gryfe and Cart, in Hamilton’s homely

phrase, "meet and mix themselves," is one of the most peaceful of sylvan scenes. The loitering streams wander through a rich pasture-land of low-lying fields. June, like a cunning alchemist, has passed her wand over them, and the verdant sward is seamed with bars of living gold. Buttercup and daffodil are in full midsummer bloom. Foamy meadowsweet and the wild pansy "prinkt with jet," flaunt gaudily in the stately glades that lead down to the reeds by the river, where the tasselled sedges with the fiery spiked orchis fringe the waters, and where on this summer afternoon there are feathered songsters on every bush, and from every corner of the overhanging woods they peal out their flute-like notes until the whole scene "brims like a cup with sunshine and the song of birds."

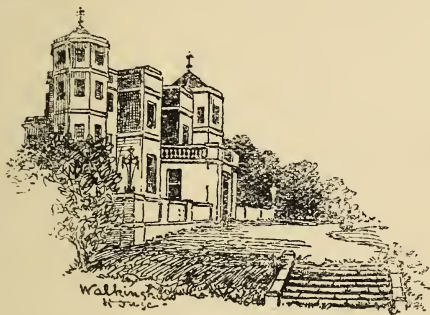
It is a picture of summer's glorious prime, when ramblers and wayfarers and artists and poets and others of God's own folk, "longen to go on pilgrimages" <sup>1</sup> to the highways and the leafy woods and the green fields, and the moorlands, where they may seek, and will find, the soft motion and music of nature, and the solitudes where sunshine, and health, and sweetness for ever abide !

Not quite as straight as an arrow, but almost so, the pleasantest of country tracks leads us from Houston Station to the noted modern health resort, yclept Bridge of Weir. It is a delightful by-way,

<sup>1</sup> Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, prologue.



not exactly a dull clod of a road, along which we pass unsuspected nooks of local history. Feverish motor cyclists whiz past us as we tramp out the miles (there are five between the points noted), but, believe me, walking is the one and only way of extracting all the honey of romance from this, or any other, district. The Gryfe marches with us



all the time, twisting and turning in a rather uncomfortable fashion, but, as if conscience struck, always coming back to its old companion.

I can promise you some hard work on this sunny, and at times shadowed, avenue, with its steady upward rise from 20 ft. above sea-level at the starting point to 180 at Bridge of Weir. But it has its reward in its charming and old-world "bits" for the artist and photographer; in its wayside flowers and their attendant sprites for the botanist and entomologist; in the ancient village of Houston<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In a Bull of Pope Honorius 1225-7 mentioning the churches of Strathgryfe there is included the church "of the town

with its ancient Mercat Cross,<sup>1</sup> which we pass on our right ; and so to the Bridge of Weir, where the Gryfe and its rocky channel and old mills have provided an abiding fascination for Dick Tinto and his comrades ; and where the wayfarer may have bread and cheese and ale, and feel for the nonce that of all mortals the pedestrian is most blessed.

To Kilmacolm the highway, the railway, and the river march shoulder to shoulder along the grassy slopes of the tree-crested ridge of Strathgryfe ; and three miles or so from Bridge of Weir the road runs through Kilmalcolm—popular etymology prefers Kil-ma-com—which, according to a chronicler of 1710, is “ a gret perish and severall considerable heritors the first being the Earle of Glencairn.”

The Kilmacolm<sup>2</sup> of to-day is a product of railway ways and railway days. Streets of detached and handsome villas, and many even imposing residences, scattered along the bosky shoulder of the strath, have sprung up within living memory. When the first railway train on a summer day in 1869 steamed into the newly erected station, Kilmacolm was a sombre little country village of three hundred souls. The village has vanished, the last thatched house

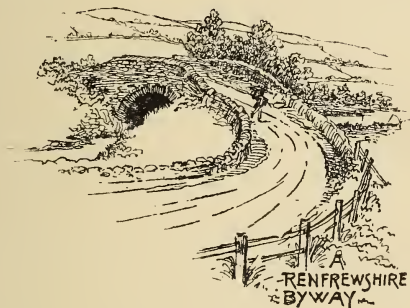
of Hugh ”—Hugh’s-town, hence Houston. *Reg. de Passelet*, p. 411.

<sup>1</sup> See my *Sylvan Scenes near Glasgow* for a drawing and description of this fine cross.

<sup>2</sup> Kilmacolm is an ancient place. In a deed of 1202-1207 “ the church of Kilmacolm with its lands and teinds ” is confirmed to Paisley Abbey. *Reg. de Passelet*, p. 113.

having shuffled off some half-dozen years ago, and in the old inn,<sup>1</sup> which like all respectable relics of the good old times stands in the shadow of the old kirk, we may meet with old men who played in the village street in the sunny days of boyhood, and from whom we get some sense of the poetry that lingered around the old place.

Kilmacolm has memories "thick as leaves in



Vallombrosa." In the spring of 1556 the reverend and godly John Knox journeyed from Calder House to Kilmacolm "before the Pasche," as he tells us in his history,<sup>2</sup> and "ministrat the Lordes Table"; and it is interesting surely, and a memory worth cherishing, to know that this was probably the first occasion on which "the rycht use of the Lordes Table"—to quote the words of the great reformer

<sup>1</sup> Built about 1780 as a weaving factory by the Earl of Glencairn. It was the third slated house in the village. The factory failed and the house became an inn. Murray, *Hist. Kilmacolm*, p. 148.

<sup>2</sup> Knox's *Hist.* i. p. 250.

—according to the Protestant form was “ ministrat ” in Scotland.<sup>1</sup>

A century after these doings, Kilmacolm was in “ a sad state,” if we are to believe the parish minister of that day. Witches and warlocks were haunting its moors and mosses, where they met the devil himself, “ a black, grim man,” says the reverend puritan who records these matters. Happily, one witch, Janet Wedrow by name, was captured. Of her guilt there could be no doubt, for the diligent “ pricker ” found on her body the devil’s mark “ inflicted by the devil’s own fingers.” The civil powers proved but broken reeds, and they ordered poor old Janet to be released.<sup>2</sup> She returned to Kilmacolm and at once renewed what the reverend chronicler terms her “ hellish pranks.”

The village must have been in a ferment in 1720, for in that year the Presbytery “ had up the minister of Kilmalcolm,” against whom there was read out the terrible indictment that “ on the month of June last he was not only seen very late in a tavern of Kilmalcolm, but dreadfully disordered with drink, and sitting on his knee one Jean Fleming, a widow ; yea, kissing her again and again with immodest gestures.” The reverend and amorous gentleman

<sup>1</sup> The four communion cups used on that occasion were lent by the Earl of Glencairn. They were long preserved at Finlayston, the Earl’s residence, but they have disappeared. *O.S.A.* vol. iv. p. 279 ; Murray, pp. 30, 31.

<sup>2</sup> *Witches of Renfrewshire*, p. 120.

was severely rebuked, and, we may suppose, did his best to lead a less picturesque and slightly more placid existence than the one which had so rudely alarmed the members of his flock.

These are old-world memories, pleasant enough, and showing us that the folks of long ago had the same qualities and were guilty of the same frailties as those which we find among the enlightened generation of to-day.

Leave Kilmacolm by the fine highway which dips down to the Gryfe, and strike off by the old toll-house with the sculptured stone in the wall, and breast the hill road that takes us past East Green Farm; but do not pass the farm without paying your devoir at the ancient castle of Duchall, which stands in the most romantic of dells a little beyond East Green. To Duchall there came in July 1489, King James the Fourth and a mighty train of artillery,<sup>1</sup> and hagbutters on horseback, and spear-men on foot. Among the weapons was the famous Mons Meg—it now looks grimly down from the ramparts of Edinburgh Castle on to Princes Street and the new town of Edinburgh—and another “gret gun.” The two of them “dinged doon the walls,” and as a memorial of the siege, the second cannon was christened, and lives in the pages of Scottish history as “Dowchale.”

<sup>1</sup> “Item, given the gunnaris to drinksilver quhen thai cartit Mons be the Kingis commande, 18 sh.” *Treasurer's Accounts*, 10th July, 1489.

King Jamie came to Duchall ten years later on a much more pleasant errand, to meet the sweetly pretty Marion Boyd <sup>1</sup> (a daughter of the Boyd of Bonshaw), and it was within the walls of Duchall that the fair, though rather frail, Marion, bore a son to the King.<sup>2</sup> Much of deep interest clings to that old romance. "Marion Boyd's barne" is known in Scottish annals as Alexander Steuart, Archbishop of St. Andrews, who fell fighting by his royal father's side in that "desperate ring" on Flodden's stricken field.<sup>3</sup> Older memories still cling to the mouldering walls of Duchall.

In the pages of the valuable chronicle—1201 to 1346—compiled by the good monks of Lanercost Priory, a translation of which has just been published by Sir Herbert Maxwell, there is preserved a weird story of Duchall Castle. It is curious and interesting as a contemporary example of the extraordinary credulity of a monk-ridden age.

The occurrence took place at Duchall in 1296. In the quaint phrase of the old monkish scribe

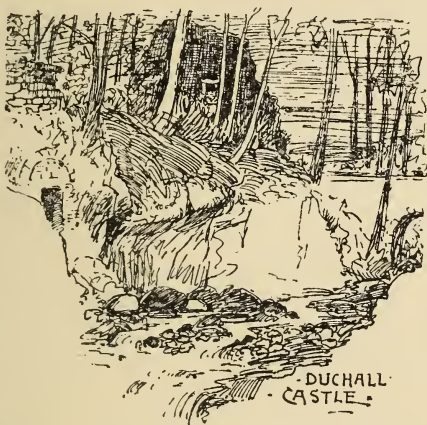
<sup>1</sup> Afterwards wife of John Mure of Rowallan. *Exchequer Rolls*, vol. xii. p. xl.

<sup>2</sup> The treasurer's accounts particularise a present made by the king when at Duchall to "the noris that fosterit Marioun Boydis barn." *Ibid.* xii. p. xl.

<sup>3</sup> "Of all the flowers of the forest that were there wede away surely none was more lovely, more precious, than this Marcellus of the Scottish Church." Dean Stanley's Rectorial Address at St. Andrews, quoted with approval by Principal Shairp in his *Sketches in History and Poetry*.



“ something terrible and marvellous happened then in the west of Scotland in Clydesdale,” a few miles from Paisley, in the house of “ Sir Duncan de Insula ” or Delisle : the De Lyles held Duchall for several centuries. A certain wicked fellow died “ most wickedly ” and “ long after his body had been buried ” his ghost haunted Paisley Abbey, and then proceeded to Duchall, why is not stated. Says



the monk, it “ assumed a bodily shape, whether natural or aerial is uncertain, but it was hideous, gross, and tangible, and used to appear at noonday in the dress of a black monk ” and settle on the turrets of Duchall Castle. When men shot at the apparition with arrows or thrust it through with picks, “ whatever was driven into that damned substance was burnt to ashes in less time than it takes to tell it, also it so savagely felled and battered

those who attempted to struggle with him as well-nigh to shatter all their joints."

The Appearance came in the midst "of the family as they sat one night around the hearth," "throwing them into confusion with missiles and blows." They all fled except the eldest son. He attacked the spirit, shrieks and moans were borne to the affrighted watchers around the demon-haunted house, and when the morning broke and the people who had fled returned they found the young knight dead and the corpse horribly torn.<sup>1</sup> To this day wild shrieks and stranger whisperings are often heard around the shattered keep, and it may be that the demon shape still lurks in some long forgotten and buried vault among the covered mounds of Duchall. Who knows?

Ghost and daemon vanish before the sunshine and free airs that meet us on the highway to the dam of Gryfe. It is three miles of a typical country road, cheerful and picturesque, where we pass cottages with brown-faced children playing at their doors, and brown-faced men and rosy-cheeked women watching them; where we pass innumerable wimpling burns and innumerable little bridges; and bien farmhouses and steadings entombed in trees; a road of pleasant surprises and splendid vistas, which leads us up the little green glen down which, and flashing like silver, in the summer shine,

<sup>1</sup> Maxwell, *Lanercost Chronicle*, pp. 118, 119.



comes the bright waters of our Gryfe, a modest stream hereabouts, but carrying in its gentle whispers the story of sylvan dells and queer places among



Keeper's House, Gryfe Dam.

the far-away hills. And, resting gratefully on the green slopes of the great dam of Gryfe, we gaze down the long strath and on the best of all vistas, the grassy braes, and the yellow broom of a Scottish countryside.

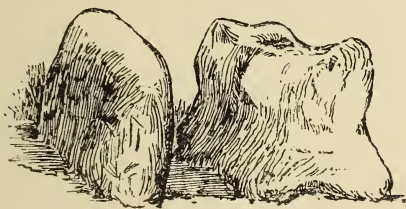
## V.

### BY THE MEETING OF THE WATERS.

THE wayfarer who, perchance, has followed these rambles has been with me to where the White Cart rises among the windswept moorlands which lie on the borders of Renfrew and Lanark shires ; has lain on the mossy banks of the lonely Long Loch in the bosom of the purple hills and listened to the wimple of the Levern in its brief and crystalline childhood ; has wandered by the beautiful shores of Lochwinnoch down to the sylvan dell wherein the Black Cart's birthplace is found ; and has stood on the great dam at the head of Strathgryfe and watched the silvery Gryfe babbling into joyous life amidst the cool depths which fringe the base of the embattled heights.

It is good to know these places with their vast silences, good to know the dusky moorlands, good to know the swelling uplands, where the sunshine glints over a wide landscape, as the clouds ride high, and the full-throated lark, far above us, is sharply defined against the clear light shed on such

favoured spots. From the most of these places the railway keeps a respectful distance, but they are all open to the pedestrian, who may be free of an afternoon, and who is not afraid of the lonely miles which within a couple of hours will lead one into the very heart of the lonely hills, by river paths and quiet lanes, where the rural sights and sounds seem like wedges of wild nature and old romance thrust into the heart of our workaday world. The Levern links with the White Cart and the Gryfe



The Chariot of St. Conval.

with the Black, and the two Carts become one at the meeting of the waters by Inchinnan Brig. And one of the pleasantest of quiet afternoon rambles may be had around this picturesque place of the gathered streams.

From Renfrew the king's highway to Inchinnan is imbued with all the charm of a woodland walk. Stately beech and ancient elms fringe the road, and their umbrageous covering throws grateful shadows, tempering the summer shine which filters through the green lacework overhead. Turn aside

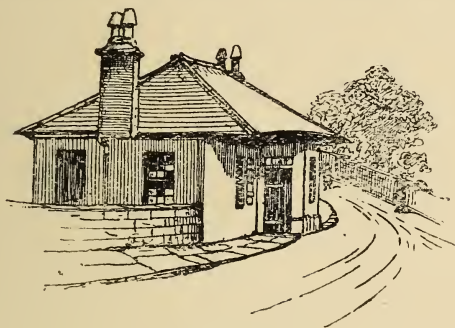
at the second gateway on the right, and pay your devoir at the strange relics which these immemorial woods keep in their bosom. The courtesy of Lord Blythswood permits a right of way past the little gatehouse to wayfarers who care to linger around the rude symbols that mark the holy places of long-vanished generations. There are few, if any, more revered memorials of the past to be found among the borderlands of Glasgow town than the hoary monolith and the weather-worn boulders which rest within the Blythswood woods. They stand in a little hollow almost hidden by the tapestries of nature. The path leads to them through a green jungle of underwood, where "dark foliage interweaves in one unbroken roof of leaves."

The origin of their erection is one of the secrets of the ages. But tradition has poured a flood of monkish romance over the grey stones of Inch-innan's saint, and later Scottish history links them with one of the great figures of our country's story. My sketch gives a good idea of these ancient monuments. The rounded monolith on the left is the *Currus Convalli*, or chariot of St. Conval.<sup>1</sup> Its story takes us back to the very dawn of Christianity in our island. List to the old tradition.

St. Conval was the son of an Irish king. He was a disciple of St. Kentigern, and although born within

<sup>1</sup> The other stone is obviously the pediment of a cross, and the socket for the shaft can still be discerned. These holy stones have (probably) stood there for twelve hundred years.

the purple he preferred the service of the Church. Standing one day on the shores of Ireland he prayed to be borne to the regions beyond the seas, and, says the second Lection of the saintly anchorite, a marvellous thing happened, "the stone on which the saint was standing stirred, and as if it had been a light boat floated over the sea, conveyed the



Inchinnan Toll.

saint safe to the bank of the river Clyde, and there staying its course is called to this day the carriage of St. Conval." In centuries long past the holy stone, or shrine, of St. Conval was the scene of devout pilgrimages.<sup>1</sup> And it was at these stones that in the summer of 1685 the daring but unfor-

<sup>1</sup> Like other mystical stones it had healing virtues, and water poured over it was believed to restore or preserve eyesight. We read in the ancient chronicles of "ane halie" man Con-wall was by name :

"In Inchinnane schort gait bewest Glasgo  
His bodie lys quhair I myself hes bene  
In pilgrimage and hys reliques hes sene."

*Buik of the Cronickis of Scotland.*

fortunate Archibald Earl of Argyll was captured prior to finishing his career on the scaffold of the "Maiden" in the High Street of Edinburgh.

Half a century prior to this historic incident the two stones were the starting post for the Bell Race of Paisley, which was appointed—"to be startet at the gray stane callet St. Conval's stane, and fra that rycht eist to the lytile house at the calsaend of Renfrew, and fra that the hie king's way to the Walnuik of Paislaye and quhat horse comes first over a scoir at Renfrew shall have ane dowbell angell, and the horse and maister yairof that first comes over the scoir at the said Walnuik of Paislaye sall have the silver bell in the said burghes airmes yair upon for yat yeir."

In passing, it may be noted that the older of the two silver bells preserved at Paisley bears the date 1620,<sup>1</sup> although as far back as April 27, 1608, the Paisley Council Records have an item, "Act anent the silver bell," when "it is concludit that ae siller bell be mad of four unces weight wit all diligence for a hors race yeirlie."

The White Cart has shifted its quarters since the days when St. Conval's Stone marked the ancient ford. The river is now a few hundred yards west of the venerable memorial, and the rambler crosses the White Cart by the swing bridge which overlooks the canal-like "cut" made about 1835 by

<sup>1</sup> Metcalfe, *Hist. of Paisley*, p. 206.





Ruin achieved by Cart's Flood.

the Town Council of Paisley. The second bridge, on which stands the quaint old toll of our sketch, is also over the channel of the White Cart; the third, and longest, bridge spans the waters of the Black Cart and Gryfe. The latter river runs with considerable force hereabouts, and during the extraordinary floods of last November<sup>1</sup> its waters rose to an unprecedented height, invaded the toll-house to the depth of several feet, and put the good man and his wife into sore distress. A little further down, the angry flood attacked its right bank and scooped out a great gash. At high tide the old right of way is now far in the bed of the stream.

My sketch was done at low water. It serves to show the ruin achieved by the floods, and the remains of the old riverside path can be seen in the foreground. Blythswood House shelters among the trees to the right of the river. The present mansion was built in 1810, succeeding the old house of Renfield, which in 1710<sup>2</sup> is described as "standing among pleasant orchards and gardens." Poor John Wilson, the unfortunate teacher poet, whom the scholastic authorities of Greenock forbade the use of the muse on pains of dismissal, speaks in his too little known poem "Clyde" of—

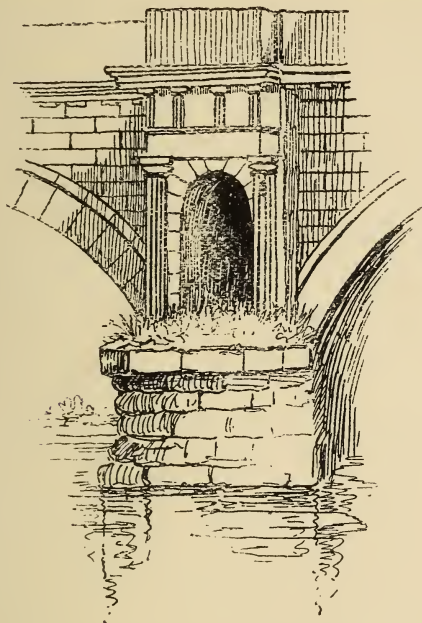
"Where the proud bridge on stately arches rides,  
And from his height surveys the slumbering tides  
Of tranquil Cart."

<sup>1</sup> 1912.

<sup>2</sup> Crawford, ed. 1782, p. 33.



The "proud bridge" of Wilson's day collapsed in the 1809 flood after a career of exactly half a century, having been built in 1759.<sup>1</sup> Its foundations are



A Buttress, Inchinnan Brig.

still visible at low water a few yards beneath the present elegant structure, which dates from 1809-12, when it was erected at a cost of £17,000. To meet

<sup>1</sup> It had "ten large arches of good cut stone where vessels of forty tuns burden passes through below." As it cost only £1450 we need not be surprised at its brief tenure of life. Crawford, *Hist. Renfrewshire*, p. 41; *Report Agriculture Renfrew*, 1812, p. 184; M'Clelland, *Inchinnan*, pp. 178, 181.

the cost a toll was put on. Over a thousand per annum was drawn at the old toll. It continued in use till about forty years ago, when, the debts being cleared, the toll gates were removed and passengers and vehicles passed without payment.

The architecture of the bridge will repay inspection, the detail, which I sketched from the little island <sup>1</sup> on which the old toll stands, indicates the fine classic atmosphere of the design. In his very good monograph the Rev. Mr. M'Clelland asserts that the Inchinnan bridges are "the finest specimens of architecture" in the parish and "the costliest and best in the whole county of Renfrew," a statement that I fancy is perfectly justified.

Let me quote an amusing story which is told of the pre-bridge days when travellers crossed the Cart and Gryfe by the fords at low water. It concerns the minister of Lamington who, accompanied by his faithful minister's man, had journeyed on horseback from the lonely upland parish to assist his brother of Inchinnan. As the couple forded the waters at Inchinnan they admired the modest stream that wimpled over a pebbly bed. On the fine Sabbath morn, the beadle was early astir, doubtless to sharpen his wits for sermon tasting, of which he was a noted expert, although profoundly ignorant of the law of tides. Strolling down to the river, he was amazed to see the waters

<sup>1</sup> The Abbot's Inch. Crawford, p. 41.

rushing back in the opposite direction to what he had last seen them. A terrible fear gripped his heart. The "day of judgment" had arrived, and the waters were hastening to deluge the land. The poor man fled to the manse, awakened the minister, and in awe-struck tone related the awful news.



The Cart above Inchinnan.

The minister promptly reminded his horror-struck follower that the last judgment was to be by fire, and then turned and resumed his nap, while the appeal to The Word, let us hope, calmed the fears of the "man."

The wayfarer follows the road which runs from opposite the old toll-house<sup>1</sup> south and towards Paisley. It is two miles exactly from Inchinnan

<sup>1</sup> Built 1810.

Toll to the bridge which crosses the river at the policies of Walkinshaw. The highway is pleasant going through the flat meadowlands which form a verdant border to the Cart. In summer weather it is an altogether delightful road, fringed with a wealth of wayside flowers and foliage and the air sweetened by the breath of the wild-rose and honeysuckle. On our right we pass the farms of Point-house—an old place-name—and Yonderton where we can see one of the few thatched houses remaining in Renfrewshire. And so to Cart's bridge, which we cross, and leaving the highway take the path by the river leading back again to Inchinnan.

It is a most interesting by-way. Unexpected vistas of blue mountain and green meadows full of scented grasses and clovered hay meet the rambler: the Cart is a loitering stream, but of almost majestic, and certainly unsuspected, breadth as it winds hither and thither before passing the knowe on which stands the Kirk of Inchinnan. The grey church tower peeps over the treetops at the smiling fields and listens to the gentle music of the river. For seven hundred years a church of St. Conval has stood on that holy mound by the banks of the Cart.<sup>1</sup> Knights' templars gathered within its clois-

<sup>1</sup> David I., 1124-1153, granted "to God and to the church of St. Kentigern of Glasgow in perpetual alms the tithe of his chan (rent payable in kind by the owner) due to him annually from Strathgriua" (Strathgryfe) which included Inchinnan. Lawrie, *Early Scottish Charters*, pp. 361-2.

ters so many long centuries ago that their very memory has faded into the mists of the years, and but a few mouldering stones in the kirkyard are all that is left to tell us that such scenes once were.<sup>1</sup> When the ancient kirk was pulled down in 1828 the floor was found to be literally paved with skulls, relics doubtless of those fighting mail-clad pioneers of a Christian faith.<sup>2</sup> On a summer eve the kirk knowe by the meeting of the waters at Inchinnan is a spot of rare beauty, and a spot such as must have inspired the wild sweetness of the old poet's lines :

“ Under the greenwood tree,  
Who loves to lie with me  
And turn his merry note  
Unto the sweet bird's throat :  
Come thither, come thither, come thither.” <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> We can only give an approximate date to these remarkable stones. The cross-shafts with the Celtic interlaced work are probably of seventh century date ; the recumbent cross-slabs, tenth or eleventh century. Romilly Allan, “ Early Christian Mon.” *Trans. Glas. Arch. Soc.* V. iv. part ii.

<sup>2</sup> The Templars were introduced to Scotland about 1153 A.D. by David I. Temple near Gorebridge, Midlothian, was their headquarters, and among their vast possessions were the lands of Inchinnan.

<sup>3</sup> Amien's song beloved of White of Selborne.



Walkinshaw Brig.

## VI.

### TO KELVINHEAD.

THANKS to the rare magic of the muse, the Kelvin takes its place among the Scottish fluvial divinities. The spirit of poesy lingers for ever on its banks, more lovingly perhaps in the far-away upper reaches where the sun casts blue shadows on the hillsides, adown which a wimpling burn comes seeking with tremulous whispers the workaday world of men. Romance and poetry all but vanish "where Clyde and Kelvin meet." The sparkling stream of the pastoral lands has become a grey and turgid flood. The soiled waters flow between mathematically precise banks, whereon vast skeleton shapes of steel and iron blot out the sky and the clang of hammers and smoke of furnaces brazenly remind us that the dreariness of trade is the price we are paying for a much-vaunted commercial greatness. Yet I have spoken to men, old men, whose boyhoods' memories are associated with a clear flowing Kelvin at the Glasgow Pointhouse,<sup>1</sup> men who in the "summer

<sup>1</sup> In 1734 the Smithfield Iron Company was established at Pointhouse. John Robertson, merchant in Glasgow (after whom



days o' auld langsyne" played on the green banks and sheltered among the overhanging trees by the quaint old inn which once upon a time nodded across the Clyde to Govan's ancient hostel of the Water Row—another fine old relic shaken off by an iconoclastic age hotly desirous of getting on.<sup>1</sup>

In the process of growth the Kelvin at its confluence with the Clyde has bidden farewell to the beautiful, and its ugliness and odours provide a fit setting for the rusty grey hulks that plough its waters and flaunt their financial claims to consideration. We are indebted to an unknown poet of a past generation for an exquisite cameo which preserves for all time the original pastoral simplicity of Kelvinmouth :

" Lo, Partick Castle,<sup>2</sup> drear and lone,  
 Stands like a silent looker-on,  
 Where Clyde and Kelvin meet ;

Robertson Street is named), was a partner in that company about 1780. He bought the estate of Plantation, Govan, in 1783 ; owned a cluster of houses at the Pointhouse ; and put on the first regular ferry from the Kelvin mouth at Pointhouse to Govan. *History of Govan*, c. xi.

<sup>1</sup> Removed in 1912 after standing for three centuries—to afford a few yards of roadway to a high level ferry ! It was a strange old thatched crow-stepped gabled building. " Johnne M'Nair in Ferrie Bot inn of Govane " is mentioned in 1593. For many curious and interesting traditions connected with this ancient hostel see my *History of Govan*, pp. 51, 52, and cs. vii. and xxiii.

<sup>2</sup> Built by George Hutcheson (one of the founders of the hospital of that name) in 1611. It stood on the ground now occupied by the Messrs. Henderson's Shipbuilding Yard. Laurence Hill, *Hist. Partick Castle* : privately printed ; Macgeorge, *Old Glasgow*, p. 113 ; cf. Chalmers, *Caledonia*, vol. iii. p. 629.



The low rank grass waves o'er its walls,  
No sound is heard within its halls,  
Save noise of distant waterfalls  
Where children lave their feet." <sup>1</sup>

The Halcyon bird of peace must have had its abode on the Kelvin in the days of which the unknown speaks so tenderly, but Vulcan has put it to flight.

Looking back across the years we see a shady little river flowing through a deep ravine on the outskirts of a growing city—a stream whose crystalline waters sparkled like a silver thread among the woodland verdure, a place of pleasant scents, and the pleasanter sound of children's voices at play. And by the river's bank, and peeping out from where the foliage screens the verdant brae, is the old Pear Tree Well,<sup>2</sup> beloved of the Glasgow lovers of long ago: a spot where a poet might dwell, and where one at least did wander to some purpose.

It is to a humble Paisley surgeon, who just about this time last century settled in the High Street of Glasgow, that we owe the beautiful lyric of "Kelvin Grove." <sup>3</sup> Thomas Lyle, like many other sons of the muse, found his tender flower of genius wither away on the barren soil of adversity. He was born at Paisley on September 10, 1792, studied

<sup>1</sup> *The Glasgow Magazine*, 1828.

<sup>2</sup> Also remembered as the Three Tree Well. A writer in 1850 describes the situation of the well as "most romantic and beautiful." Its site is now covered by a huge embankment.

<sup>3</sup> Originally published in 1820 in the *Harp of Renfrewshire*.

at Glasgow University, and took his diploma as a surgeon in 1816, subsequently practising in the city for ten years. In 1826 he went to Falkirk, but returned to Glasgow in 1853,<sup>1</sup> where he died on April 19, 1859. Lugton in his *Old Ludgings of Glasgow* notes that among the houses cleared away in 1901 on the west side of High Street, near George Street corner, was the tenement No. 283, "where Dr. Thomas Lyle, author of the charming song 'Kelvin Grove,' " resided during the last years of his life.<sup>2</sup> To the Kelvin the surgeon poet gave a "local habitation and a name" that has endeared it to Scotsmen the world over when he penned those exquisite lines :

"Let us haste to Kelvin Grove, bonnie lassie, O,  
Through its mazes let us rove, bonnie lassie, O.  
Where the rose in all her pride  
Paints the hollow dingle side,  
Where the midnight fairies glide, bonnie lassie, O."

Lyle seems to have lived in obscurity, and he had but a meagre practice. He died in obscurity, and few if any gave a single thought to the genius that had passed. But "Kelvin Grove" will keep his name green and fragrant as the upland meadows through which his beloved river meanders to-day on its pilgrimage to the deep waters of the sea. In that little ballad he has gone back to the "eternal

<sup>1</sup> He was for a time District Surgeon to the Barony Parochial Board.

<sup>2</sup> *Old Ludgings of Glasgow*, p. 72.

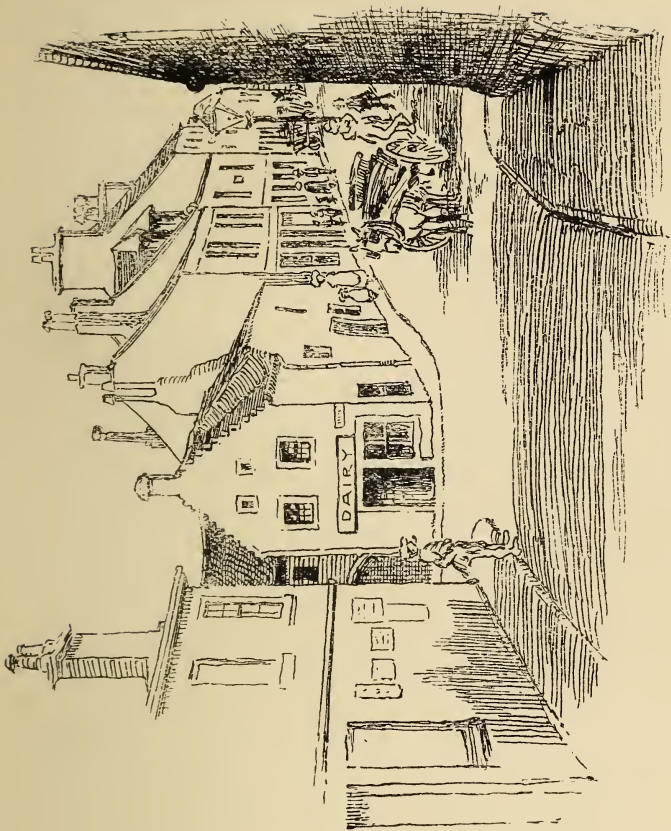
verities " of human passion and human nature, and doing so he speaks to " the great heart of man."

The source of the Kelvin is to be found far up on the shoulder of the Kilsyth Range and overlooking the deep but pleasant valley which crosses the waist of Scotland from the Clyde to the Forth. Along the brow of the southern escarpment of this fertile vale the Roman engineers, sixteen hundred years ago, ran the alignment of the great wall<sup>1</sup> whose mouldering lines can still be easily followed across several counties. Those who care to come with me to Kelvin's fountainhead and to see many things and places that are worth seeing will find the modern highway, railway, and canal all marching shoulder to shoulder with the survey laid down by those wonderful men of old Rome, and it is surely a tribute to their far-seeing genius that the engineers of to-day have accepted their lead.

Put a biscuit in your pocket and take a return ticket at Queen Street to Kilsyth on the first afternoon you have to spare. I promise you a pleasant ramble. There is not much from Glasgow to Kilsyth that is not familiar to the most of city folks ; but as you pass Sumerston<sup>2</sup> it is well to remember that across the Kelvin—the railway rarely deserts

<sup>1</sup> The southern boundary of Kilsyth Parish runs nearly parallel to the Roman Wall for upwards of six miles.

<sup>2</sup> The line of the great wall crosses the public road leading from Sumerston railway station to Milngavie. Macdonald, *The Roman Wall*, p. 117.



Corner of Market Street, Kilsyth.

our river—on the sloping ground to the right there has been laid bare the great Roman Fort of Balmuily,<sup>1</sup> the excavations affording splendid evidence of the truth of Roy's observation of a century and a half ago, that "Bemulie" was "one of the most considerable stations on the wall."<sup>2</sup>

Kilsyth is a quaint old place, whose erstwhile charms have been rudely disturbed by the planting of grimy coal mines<sup>3</sup> on the green haughs and braes which at one period must have lent a singularly beautiful setting to this country town. Despite man's efforts to blot the landscape the spirit of beauty lingers around the township. There are picturesque nooks and corners where thatched roof and crooked gable whisper to us of the placid days when the hum of the weaver's shuttle was all that broke the stillness of a sleepy summer afternoon; and there are one or two old-fashioned caravan-series where buirdly farmers and canny weavers pledged each other in deep draughts of cool yill

<sup>1</sup> In 1912-13 the Glasgow Archæological Society conducted extensive excavations at Balmuily, Mr. Millar, lecturer in Roman History at Glasgow University, taking charge of the work. His Reports are embodied in the *Transactions* of the Society. It may be noted that Gordon saw at Balmuily "the remains of a prodigious Fort very like the ruins of an old city. Under the ground here are several arched vaults with hollow squared stones by way of conduits for bringing in of water from the River Kelvin." *Itinerarium Septentrionale*, 1726, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> *Military Antiquities*, 1793, p. 159.

<sup>3</sup> Lord Kilsyth opened a pit at Bush in Kelvin valley in 1670. *O.S.A.* vol. xviii. p. 241.

on the market days of long ago, and where the Rambler of to-day will find a snug bar and good ale, after which he may be inclined to believe that Shenstone spoke with considerable and not altogether unpalatable truth when he told us that more than oft he found "his warmest welcome at an inn." My sketches show one of these old-fashioned hostelries and also the steep that is characteristic of this town that is set on a hill.

Many memories grave and gay cling to the little town. Perhaps the strangest of all is the one which we find recorded on a stone<sup>1</sup> in the old kirkyard, which tells us that

"Beneath this stone are buried the remains of Jean Cochrane, Viscountess of Dundee, wife of the Honourable William Livingstone, of Kilsyth, and of their infant son. Their deaths were caused by the falling in of a roof composed of turf, of a house in Holland. Mr. Livingstone was with difficulty extricated. The lady, her child, and the nurse were killed. This occurred in the month of October, 1695. In 1795 the vault over which the church at that time stood having been accidentally opened the bodies of Lady Dundee and her son, which had been embalmed and sent from Holland, were found in a remarkable state of preservation."

There are several accounts of this curious event. The Rev. Robert Rennie, who in 1795 actually witnessed the sacrilege that took place on the opening of the vault, says that "every feature, every limb

<sup>1</sup> Erected in 1850 by Sir Archibald Edmonstone, Bart., of Duntreath. The Edmonstones purchased the estate of Kilsyth in 1784. Nimmo, *Stirlingshire*, vol. ii. p. 201.

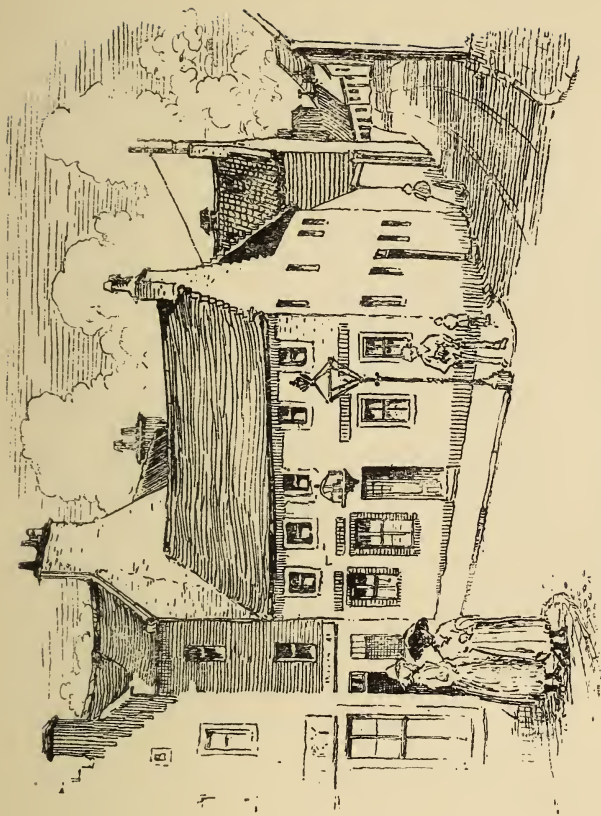


is as full, nay the very shroud is as clear and fresh and the ribbons as bright as the very day they were lodged in the tomb. What renders the scene truly interesting as well as striking is that the body of her son and only child, the natural heir of the titles and estates of Kilsyth, lies at her knee. His colour is as fresh and his flesh as full as if in the perfect glow of health. The body of Lady Kilsyth is equally well preserved, and it would not be easy for a stranger to distinguish whether she is dead or alive.”<sup>1</sup> Crowds of people came from far and near to see what is termed “the marvel,” and, remarks the reverend gentleman who chronicles these strange happenings, “to the shame of the custodians of the graveyard, the beautiful lifeless forms after lying in undisturbed seclusion for a hundred years were made a public show and money taken at the churchyard gate for getting in to see.”

There are other and less gruesome memories. Cromwell and his Ironsides in 1650, coming from the “crowning mercy” of Dunbar, passed through the town, and encamped on the heights of Arnbrae. The Protector was wont to leave his mark behind him wherever he went, and at Kilsyth, in a field on the shoulder of the Muckle Ben, is to be seen a shattered fragment of what at one period was the Castle of Kilsyth and the home of the great

<sup>1</sup> *O.S.A.* vol. xviii. pp. 299, 300; *Hist. of Kilsyth*, c. xi.; Nimmo, *Stirlingshire*, i. p. 321.





The Wee Maut Still, near Kilsyth.

Livingstone race,<sup>1</sup> which Cromwell's engineers undermined and blew up with gunpowder.

The grim old Englishman is said to have had his headquarters in a quaint thatched house, which stood till last year,<sup>2</sup> by the roadside at Arnbrae. Like so many other relics around Glasgow, the old house has been demolished, the stones being wanted to build "a threshing mill"!

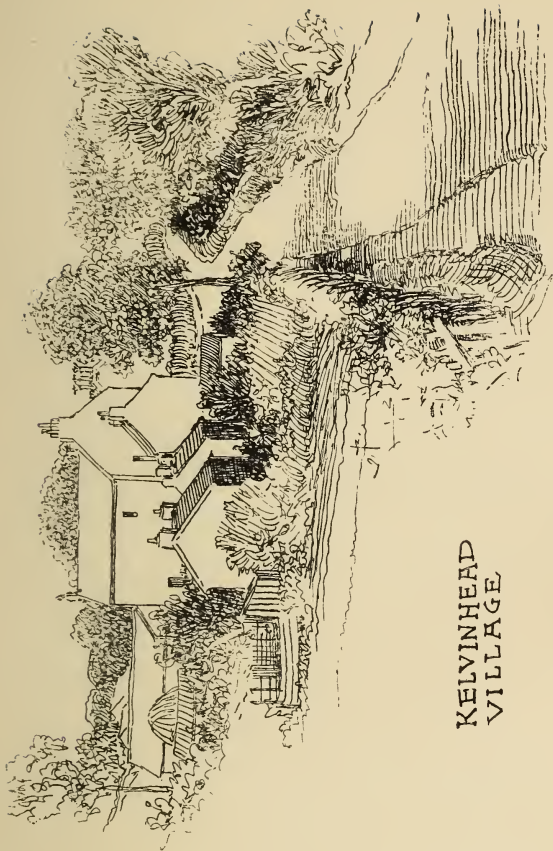
Leaving the town by the broad highway, we should, had we lived in the old coaching days, have stopped, of course, at the Duntreath Arms, a remarkably fine example of an old coaching inn, where in the stirring pre-railway times the landlord kept from six to twelve post horses and four post-chaises—leaving Kilsyth and this digression behind us, we have a pleasant two or three miles' ramble along the pleasantest of country roads to Kelvinhead village. And at Kelvinhead you are at the watershed, and may stand on a slight eminence near the Glasgow and Edinburgh Canal,<sup>3</sup> a few hundred yards from the clachan, and note the Kelvin, a purling brook a foot wide, flowing due west, while—fifteen feet away—the Bonny springs from a babbling little well, and flows due east.

Kelvinhead is a charming country hamlet lying

<sup>1</sup> In 1586 Alexander Livingstone of the Callendar family was parson of Kilsyth. The family figures largely on the page of Scottish history.

<sup>2</sup> 1912.

<sup>3</sup> Constructed 1769-70.



KELVINHEAD  
VILLAGE

on the wooded slopes of the great hills, and just such a quiet backwater as one might associate with the source of the poet's "bonny Kelvin" of long ago.<sup>1</sup> The birthplace of our river will be found about a mile north of Kelvinhead and near the rural and attractive hamlet of Banton.

A little beyond Banton and on the lands of Meadowside are the ruins of the farmhouse of Tamrawer, where, in 1739, "Robert Grahame, Esq., a spirit truly patriotic, set vigorously to work in the cultivation of potatoes," and thus introduced to Scotland the delicious and mealy tuber which has become such an essential item in the national menu.<sup>2</sup> Raleigh had brought the potato to Britain a couple of centuries prior to this, but difficulties opposed its reception in Scotland. The zealots of the day condemned the new plant, declaring it "a sinful root" because no mention of it was made in the Bible. A chronicler of 1790 describes the "amazing benefit that accrued to the nation," and remarks, "had they known this they would have hailed the

<sup>1</sup> Writing in 1790 the Rev. Mr. Robert Rennie praises the size and quality of the Kelvin trout. At Kilsyth he had "seen them two, three and even four pounds weight," and in a footnote he adds that "before the Partick mill-dam was erected over the Kelvin salmon in spawning time came up as far as Kilsyth, and were to be found in every pool." The Kelvin has sadly changed since those halcyon days. *O.S.A.* vol. xviii.

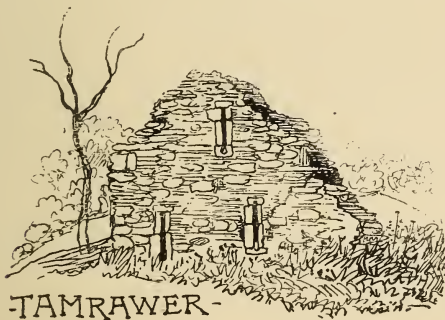
<sup>2</sup> Although the first appearance of the potato as a field crop in England was about 1730, nine years earlier than in Scotland, its introduction into Britain is supposed to have been in the year 1584.

auspicious event and erected a monument to Mr. Grahame on the spot." We still await that monument, the only memorial of this benefactor of the race being the crumbling relic which I sketched.

From Tamrawer we look down on the beautiful Kelvin Valley and on the still waters of Banton Dam, which cover the battlefield where,<sup>1</sup> on a summer day of 1645, Montrose and his Highlanders routed Baillie and his covenanting Lowlanders ; and on Dullatur Bog, with its grim story of the fully accoutred trooper who, when the bog was drained, was discovered sitting on his dead horse<sup>2</sup> just as when the treacherous marsh had engulfed him as he fled from the fight that has given Kilsyth an honourable place on the page of Scottish history.

<sup>1</sup> The memories of that fight survive in the local place-names Bullet and Baggage Knowe, the Drum Burn, the Slaughter Howe, and so on.

<sup>2</sup> Waldie, *Walks along the Roman Wall*, p. 53.

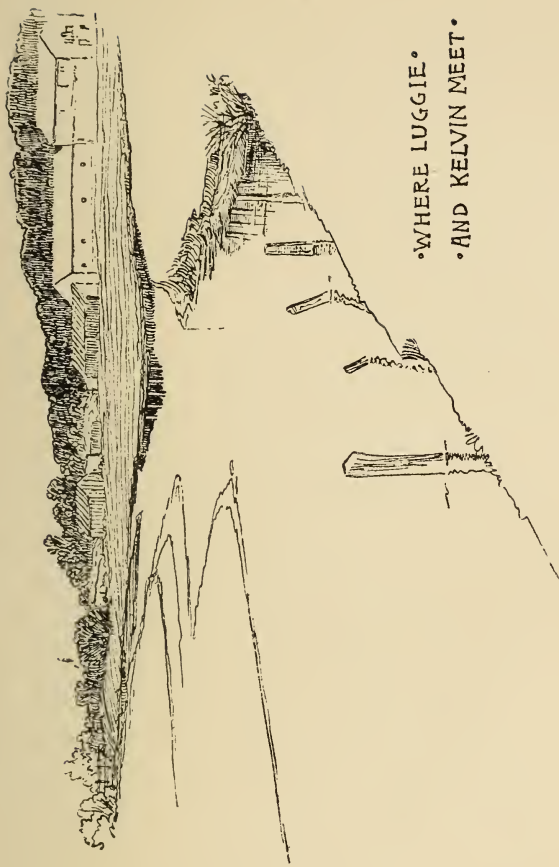


## VII.

### THE MODEST LUGGIE.

THE Luggie and the Kelvin salute one another almost beneath the shadow of the steep breastwork on which the venerable town of Kirkintilloch has been reared. The meeting of the waters is a place of faded beauty. Doubtless at a not remote period the Luggie was a winsome little burn and warranted poor Gray's assertion that "fairer stream rolled never golden sand into the sea." But that must have been in the good old times of which the poets prattle and of which more mundane men fondly dream. Modern industry and its knights have little respect for the silvery brook and the pebbled beach, and the noisome, turgid pool where our little stream mingles with its classic parent is a silent but impressive tribute to the power of commerce.

Withal the Luggie has its charms, and these it will coyly reveal to the rambler who cares to spend a summer afternoon by its banks. From the source in the moorlands of Torbrex its course, all told, is but a brief ten miles. To reach the silvery eyelet



•WHERE LUGGIE.  
•AND KELVIN MEET•



on the purpling heath is the pleasantest of tasks for those who inherit the wayfarers' love of the open road: for the bosky dells where light and shadow wield the wand of faery: and for the weird moorlands where the spirit of silence reigns for ever. All these and other hidden beauties lie in the keeping of the Luggie, and the highways and byways which lead to them also possess a subtle charm which beckons the wayfarer onward.

The ancient and the modern rub shoulders on the High Street of Kirkintilloch. It is a place of old memories.<sup>1</sup> Picturesque crow-stepped gabled houses greet the eye, houses which witnessed Prince Charlie and his Highlanders march past on that dismal trek that closed on the stricken field of Culloden. Tradition has it that the clans passed through the town<sup>2</sup> with flags flying and pipers playing, and an equally persistent tradition tells how the stragglers of the host, acting on the "good old rule, the simple plan," took with them a fair amount of the honest burghers' movable property.

But the memories of the High Street go much further back than the '45. They link the town with the Bruce and with the red tragedy that took place on a February day of 1306 in the Church of

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that Joseph Train, the antiquary and friend and correspondent of Sir Walter Scott, was on excise duty for a time at Kirkintilloch. Some of the relics he picked up there are to be seen in Abbotsford.

<sup>2</sup> Watson, *Hist. Kirkintilloch*, pp. 187, 190.

the Minorite Friars at Dumfries. The Comyns held the lands of Lenzie and Cumbernauld<sup>1</sup> prior to the slaying of the Red Comyn, after which deed Bruce granted to the Flemings—one of whom was with him in the Minorite Friars—the “whole barony of Kirkintilloch with its pertinents.”

Centuries before the dawn of Scottish history as we know it the Roman engineers had selected Kirkintilloch as the site of one of the great forts of the great wall, and it may be that the grassy turfed lines in the public park of to-day were constructed by Roman hands.<sup>2</sup> And the Cowgate, through which we pass on our way to the “sweet Luggie” of David Gray, leads up past the famous “Old Aisle” Kirkyard, the church of which “was founded by Thorald, proprietor of the barony of Kirkintilloch and Cumbernauld and High Sheriff of Stirlingshire, about 1140.”

Within the sacred precincts of the “Auld Aisle” there sleeps “one whose name was traced in sand; he died, not knowing what it was to live.” The

<sup>1</sup> About 1170 Kirkintilloch was constituted a burgh of barony by William the Lion in favour of William Camin, Baron of Lenzie and Laird of Cumbernauld. Nimmo, *Stirlingshire*, i. 29; Watson, *Hist. Kirkintilloch*, 11 *et seq.*; O.S.A. ii. 278.

<sup>2</sup> Gordon, Horsley, Roy, and Maitland agree regarding the Peel of Kirkintilloch, as it is called, being of Roman origin: our latest authority, Dr. George Macdonald, believes the Peel marks the site of the medieval castle of the Cumins, and he arrives at the definite conclusion “the Peel is not Roman.” At the same time he admits the claim of Kirkintilloch to be regarded as the site of a Roman station. *Roman Wall*, 174 *et seq.*

Luggie owes all its fame to the genius of David Gray.

Born, like Burns, in a humble "but and ben," on the banks of our stream,<sup>1</sup> Gray's brief span of life was little more than "a piece of childhood thrown away." He died in his twenty-third year, yet he left behind him some poems which afford a glimpse of a rare gift of poesy, a gift that one writer describes as "the truest, purest, tenderest lyrical note that has floated to English ears this half-century." Like so many Scottish lads, Gray tasted of the "poortith cauld," and he withered and sank before the chilling blast. "A true poet cut off before his prime" is Mr. Eyre Todd's sympathetic note in his *Glasgow Poets*.

"A vision stirred my spirit, half awake,  
To fling a purer lustre on those fields  
That knew my boyish footsteps; and to sing  
Thy pastoral beauty, Luggie, into fame."

And as he wished, so it be. He sang his little brook into fame,<sup>2</sup> and in the eloquent words of Monckton Milnes, "the Luggie is now numbered with the streams illustrious in Scottish Song."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A sketch of Gray's birthplace will be found in my *Sylvan Scenes near Glasgow*, p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> . . . "For fairer stream  
Rolled never golden sand into the sea,  
Made sweeter music than the Luggie, gloom'd  
By glens whose melody mingles with her own."

"The Luggie," opening stanza.

<sup>3</sup> From the inscription composed by Monckton Milnes (Lord Houghton) and engraved on Gray's monument in the "Auld Aisle" Kirkyard.

Gray has now his niche alongside of those singers whom the gods loved—Keats, White, Pollok, and Bruce. He passed away in December, 1861, at Duntiblae, the wayside clachan which we pass on our right at Waterside, the old-fashioned and picturesque village on the Luggie, a little over a couple of miles from Kirkintilloch. The late William Free-land <sup>1</sup> was a Kirkintilloch man, and in a poem on his native place he tells us of Gray :

“ I heard him sing ; I saw him shine  
The moon of love, the sun of truth ;  
He thrilled me with his tender line,  
The beauty of his mortal youth.”

Gray's works are not known as they ought and deserve to be. Time may be expected to heal this fault, and confer upon the young poet of the Luggie the honours which all genius demands, and which belong to Gray as one of the brightest constellations in the sparkling firmament of Scottish song.

The young artist and the photographer will find much to interest their art at Waterside. There are some remarkably fine “ bits,” combining the township with its garden patches chequering the grassy slopes, the old ruined mill, and the still waters of the ancient dam. Under the cloudless summer sky it is as fair a pastoral as one could wish to gaze upon, and I fancy the author of the local Baedeker is correct when he says that “ this walk is the pride

<sup>1</sup> On *The Evening Times* (Glasgow), 1876-1900. Died 1903.

of the district." I know of districts that would cheerfully part with a comfortable slice of their revenue to possess it.

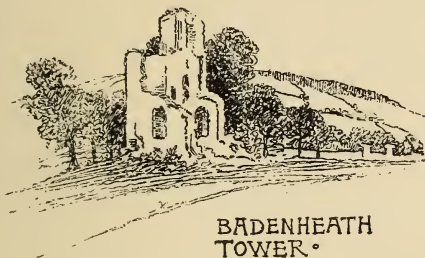
Waterside is a quaint and quiet nook, a little haven of rest, where one can escape from the advantages of civilisation as represented in tramways, telegraphs, and electric light. It is a place where surnames are said to be few and nicknames therefore necessarily common, somewhat after the principle honoured by Dandie Dinmont in his dealings with the celebrated terriers, Auld Pepper and Auld Mustard, Young Pepper and Young Mustard, and Little Pepper and Little Mustard. Such things argue a fixity of tenure to which the larger towns of these times are strangers.

A fragment of romance clings to the nomenclature legend, and will bear repeating. It links this little Sleepy Hollow with the clansmen who were nameless and landless. Following the Act of 1603,<sup>1</sup> which prohibited the name Macgregor, three of the clan settled for a time in Stirling, thence migrating to Waterside. The wild men proved to be not only quiet but industrious. They multiplied exceedingly, hence the prevalence in the district of the name of

<sup>1</sup> Act of the Privy Council dated 3rd April, 1603: by a subsequent Act of Council death was denounced against Macgregors who did assemble in greater numbers than four; and finally by an Act of Parliament, 1607, c. 26, these laws were extended to the rising generation. To the Earl of Argyle was committed the execution of these severe and unjustifiable measures.

Stirling, which the three clansmen had assumed out of gratefulness perhaps to the town which had afforded them shelter in these far-away days of strife and bloodshed.

From Waterside a stretch of over a couple of miles by the banks of the Luggie, and we come to Badenheath,<sup>1</sup> the erstwhile home of the Boyds of Kilmarnock.<sup>2</sup> This old fifteenth or early sixteenth



century tower is but a mere fragment of its former self. The little that is left of the turrets and corbelling suggest that at one period it must have been superior to structures of its class. It has been built of fine, regularly coursed masonry, which has proved too strong a temptation to the needy builders of later and presumably more enlightened times. My sketch shows its sadly ruined state, the result

<sup>1</sup> A late fifteenth century keep. Macgibbon and Ross, *Cas. and Dom. Arch. Scot.*

<sup>2</sup> Sir Thomas Boyd of Kilmarnock, who shared the captivity of David II. after the Battle of Durham in 1346, was the father of William, ancestor of the Boyds of Badenheath. Robertson, *Hist. Ayrshire*, vol. ii. p. 331.



largely of having been used for years as a free quarry, to the great advantage of many neighbouring byres and dykes.

One of the Boyds of Badenheath<sup>1</sup> fought under his father, Lord Boyd, for the Queen's cause at the Battle of Langside in 1568, and this gentleman made his will "at Badinyath the xiii. day of July 1611 yearis," in which he left "ye zeerlie proffeit of four akeris of landis in Kirkintulloch" to the "puir folks." From the Boyds the fortalice or peel of Badenheath passed, *circa* 1670, to the Coupers, one of whom in November, 1708, married Margaret Thom, a relative of the Rev. William Thom, minister of Govan, the celebrated wit and eccentric, about whom there is much in the Anecdotage of Glasgow city.<sup>2</sup> And at Badenheath the wayfarer will find it of service to take to the highway for the next couple of miles. It is a pleasant road. Cross the Luggie, and, turning to the left, go straight through Mollinburn, where there is a hostel and good ale, and so by a shady, old-world road past North Myvet Farm down to the Luggie ford, seven miles from Kirkintilloch and only three from the fountain-head.

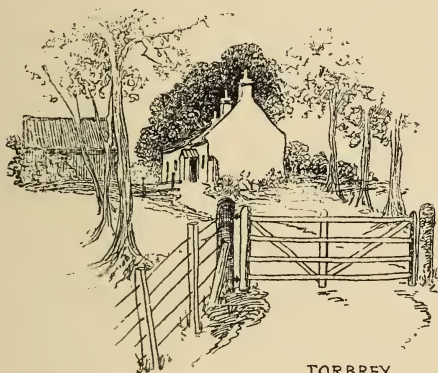
From the ford the banks of our stream may again

<sup>1</sup> Crawford mentions having seen a charter "granted by Robert III. to William Boyd, apparent heir of Boyd of Badenheath in the year 1405." *Renfrewshire*, ed. 1782, p. 163.

<sup>2</sup> Alison, pp. 133, 138.



form our highway for the short distance to Luggiebank hamlet. The water is still drumlie—thanks to Glenhove and Lenziemills—but the setting is singularly picturesque, and the Rambler begins to taste the joy of wandering amid wood and water and wilderness. The bed of the stream at Luggiebank lies deep down in a bosky gorge, and looking from the bridge which carries the Carlisle and Stirling

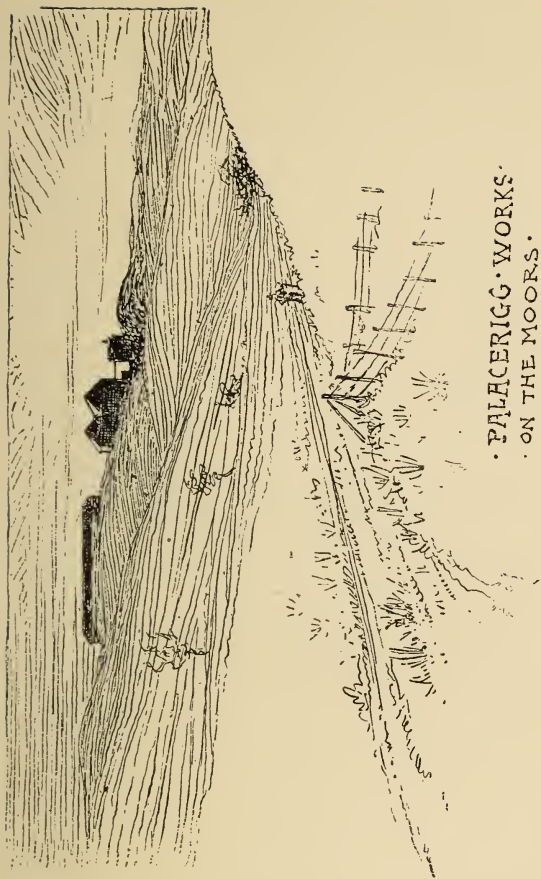


highway at a respectable altitude over our Luggie, we catch a charming vista of the tree-clad banks and bends and reaches of the streamlet.

Leave Luggiebank and its prettily situated and flower-bedecked villas by the road which bears to the left downhill past Glenhove Farm, and down still over the Cameron rivulet, down to the cool depths where the Luggie serves an unexpected and thriving chemical work, which, despite its utilitarian

purpose, presents a grouping and a colour which I cordially recommend to the attention of the younger artistic fraternity of the brush and the camera. A rising highway of half a mile takes us to Tannoch Farm, from whence an old field-path leads to Torbrax and the moorlands stretching from that picturesque farm-town, away to where the summer sky rests on the far distant hills. The Luggie, a wimpling burn, a foot wide, skirts the brae on which Torbrax is set, hurrying and scurrying with reckless haste, to lose its virgin beauty in the dell by the mill. On these wan moorlands Glasgow's civic fathers have chosen to establish their peat works connected with the Palacerigg Farm Colony. The building, square and commonplace, strikes a repellent and cold note on the wide spaces of the moor; and looking at it, silhouetted against the eastern sky, it seems to intensify the sad colours of the withered heath and bent.

The Rambler is on a more pleasant quest than that of gazing upon a grey-hued and cheerless shed. Down by the Luggie's side there linger patches of livelier green, between which our little brook goes bickering blythely, forgetful, apparently, of the fact that at this point it has the honour of forming the county boundary, and at the old Rowan Tree on the moor, which the Rambler who seeks the source must pass, one has only to take a single step from Dumbartonshire to Lanarkshire. Far up



• PALACERIGG WORKS •  
• ON THE MOORS •

on the moors, and where the eye rests gratefully on saffron grass and green moss, and where the ear lists to the trickling of unseen waters and to the strange music of secret birds, there will be found the source of the modest Luggie, a silvery patch on the dusky face of the lonely moorlands.



## VIII.

### TO THE GLAZERT'S SOURCE.

THE Glazert is a small stream, a mere water child of the mountains, but, at times, with strength to be comparatively wild. So modest is this joukin burn that I know those who have walked by its side—it rarely attains to the dignity of a “bank”—and never condescended to ask its name. There are others who will have it that the Glazert has no real source, that it only commences to have a name and habitation when the Pow—local pronunciation, Pu’—the Finglen and the Kirkton burns join forces beneath the glen of Campsie and become one. Were we to admit that amiable fiction then our little Glazert would have but a brief career of something over four miles until it loses itself in the Kelvin at a spot not many yards removed from the junction of the Luggie with the same classic parent.

Strictly speaking, the Glazert is entitled to more dignified treatment. The brawling brook which tumbles adown the rocky steps of Campsie Glen

is really the Glazert. True, locally the good folks term the former the Glen burn ; some writers call it the Kirkton burn. Let us be just to the one-time sparkling salmon stream,<sup>1</sup> and for the nonce confer upon this tributary of the Kelvin the picturesque majesty of possessing a birthplace. At least it is a lovable fancy and 'twill please the spirit of the fells. No fewer than nineteen burns are said to discharge themselves into our modest Glazert. Withal, it is not a river, and by the dwellers on the banks of the noble Clyde it might be regarded as a trifling brook. Still, it is not insignificant. Its birthplace in "a vale uplifted high among the mountains," lies within wa king distance of our great city, yet around it there is that awe of solitude and elusive glimpse of fear which impress the mind so powerfully when wandering among the far-distant mountains and glens of the highlands and islands.

If you have a half-holiday and wish to escape the din of the town, and at the same time indulge in a modest ramble, I promise you, that if you care to take a return ticket to Campsie Glen Station, and from there follow the Glazert up the beautifully-wooded glen on to the uplands of the windswept fells you will get your heart's desire. The railway

<sup>1</sup> Writing in 1795 the Rev. Mr. Lapslie says, " the Glazert in former times was a great deposit for salmon spawn, and an uncommon quantity of fry " was produced yearly, for recruiting the Clyde fisheries. *O.S.A.* xv. p. 320.

sets you down in the heart and centre of one of Scotland's loveliest straths.

On our left and on the southern side of the valley, and set amidst the bosky woodlands like a glittering jewel on the breast of some dusky maiden stands Lennox Castle, a noble example of the art of David Hamilton, the Glasgow architect.<sup>1</sup> This handsome pile was commenced in 1837 and finished in 1841. Possibly the best view of it can be got from the "auld Craw Road," to which, later on, our ramble will lead us.

The records of the Lennox family go far back on the pathway of Scots history, back indeed to those dim days when our ancestors united into one nation at the bidding of Malcolm III.—familiar to the schoolboy as Canmore the Great, or Head King. The early ancestors of the Lennox race were Northumbrian chiefs. One of them served under Malcolm,<sup>2</sup> and he and his descendants became and still are the principal heritors or owners of land in Campsie. During the long period of three hundred years they were prominent in Scottish society as Earls of Lennox, or in the beautiful old Scottish phrase, the Levenachs, as our district was then more properly termed. In 1150 the chief seat of the Earl was Dumbarton Castle, and we read of

<sup>1</sup> Nimmo, *Stirlingshire*, i. 317.

<sup>2</sup> Napier, *Partition of the Lennox*, pp. 2 *et seq.*; *The Scottish Nation*, 646-653.



his successors having castles, and giving grants to their relatives of lands and castles at many places from Loch Lomond eastward to Kilsyth, one of these being "Camsie Castle," afterwards called Balcarrach Castle.

Lennoxtown takes its name from the old Lennox race. It is a place where peace and industry seem united in tolerably equal proportions. As we journey towards the Clachan of Campsie,<sup>1</sup> we see on our right down the strath the church tower of the Parish Church of Lennoxtown. It was erected in 1829, and occupies a commanding position near the centre of the village, Its first minister was the late Rev. Dr. Norman Macleod of Glasgow. In 1836 Dr. Macleod was translated to the city. His more popular son of the same name, who is affectionately remembered for his long association with *Good Words*, sleeps in the north-east corner of the kirkyard of Lennoxtown. And our little Glazert, getting up the appearance of a very respectable stream, slips past Lennoxtown, a brown torrent speckled with foam.

The industries of Lennoxtown date from 1785, when the Kincaid printfield was erected upon a farm rented from the laird of Kincaid at the modest sum of "three pounds an acre!" But long before

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to recall that Lunardi on one of his balloon voyages ascended from St. Andrew's Kirkyard in Glasgow upon 5th December, 1785, and descended on the farm of Easter Muckcroft in Campsie.

this period the staple industry of Campsie was the manufacture of "Campsie grey," a cloth which as early as the time of James VI. had attained considerable name and fame throughout Scotland.<sup>1</sup>

The venerable clachan of Campsie<sup>2</sup> stands like a drowsy sentinel at the gate of the glen beloved



of Glasgow picnic parties. For centuries there was a chapel or church on the spot now occupied by the mouldering ruin of the post-Reformation kirk. Campsie belonged ecclesiastically to Glasgow. Its parson was chancellor of our Cathedral.<sup>3</sup> He had a manse at the Clachan, and also one in the Drygate of Glasgow.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *O.S.A.* xv. p. 357.

<sup>2</sup> The Church of Campsie is among the prebendal churches of Glasgow enumerated in a bull of Honorius III. in 1216. *Reg. Epus. Glasg.* No. 111, p. 94. Cf. *Book of the Cathedral*, p. 382.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 211.

<sup>4</sup> "In that place called the Limmerfield where the ruins of fine buildings are yet to be seen." M'Ure, *Hist. Glasg.* 1736, p. 50.

Among the more famous parsons of Campsie were Bishop Lamberton and Cardinal Beaton, notorious for his seizure of the reformer, George Wishart, whose trial and execution are familiar, as is also the subsequent assassination of the cardinal. The Clachan Kirk was a place of some note in Catholic times. In 1275 Bagimond or Bayamont, the Pope's commissioner, valued the Church possessions in the Levenachs at £406 yearly for revenue, and in the "Old Extent" valuation the Crown rents and profits are estimated at £1442. Generations of long dead and forgotten Campsie folk sleep in this quiet God's acre on the shoulder of the everlasting hills. Many quaintly carved tombstones are to be seen peeping out of the long rank grass of what is now a sadly-neglected spot. Time, neglect, and vandal hands have combined in defacing many of these records of the forefathers of the hamlet. Apparently it is nobody's business to look after the old kirkyaird, and its present condition <sup>1</sup> is by no means a credit to the district.

My little sketch shows the old and elegantly-designed mausoleum of the Kincaids of that ilk. It is the most imposing memorial in the venerable kirkyard, and, judging from the date on a panel, was erected in 1715. Built into it are a couple of quaintly-lettered stones of 1604-6, each recording the demise of "ane honorabil man," scions of the

<sup>1</sup> August, 1913.



THE SHEPHERD'S  
COT - on the CAMPYIE Fells

Kincaids of Kincaid. The Kincaids are a very ancient race.<sup>1</sup> We find them among the feudatories of the Earls of Lennox in the thirteenth century. They obtained a charter of their Campsie lands in 1280,<sup>2</sup> and their descendants have held the same lands ever since.

From the old kirkyaird we look upon the fringe of woodland on the edge of the little valley that wanders up and into the very heart of the fells. Old writers call it the Kirkton Glen; others, the Glen of the Glazert. The popular designation is Campsie Glen, a name that must carry fond memories to thousands of people at home and in the lands across the seas.

Ever since the railway whistle awoke the echoes of the strath in 1851,<sup>3</sup> Campsie Glen has formed one of the most favoured haunts of those who in the summer days go a-picnicing from Glasgow town. And justly so, for its beauties are various and many. Its lower slopes are clothed in luscious green. Through the dark lattice work of branches that guard the entrance we look into cool depths and deeply shadowed hollows amidst which the Glazert plashes. The sunshine lingers on the steep slopes

<sup>1</sup> The "Laird of Kincaid" for valuable services in recovering Edinburgh Castle from the English in time of Edward I. was made Constable of that castle.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. Stirlingshire*, ii. p. 98.

<sup>3</sup> The Campsie branch from Lennoxton to Killearn was opened in 1866, and from Killearn to Aberfoyle in 1882.

of the Fells, whose massive ribs shimmer away into the opalescent summer sky. Far up on the bracken-clad hillside we see a solitary shepherd's cot, a pleasant dwelling in this the most bountiful of nature's seasons, but a weird place surely when



the wintry blasts come roaring over the mountains and sweeping down the Crow Road.

The Glen is full of interest to the geological student with its remarkable dykes of felspar and its strata of limestone and slate-clay. Equally interesting also is it to the disciples of Dick Tinto, some of its wilder ravines and corries being worthy of the brush of Salvator Rosa himself. And to



the youthful lovers whose tender fancies send their footsteps wandering by "brooks that sing in brambly ways," the sylvan dells of the little glen with the wimpling burn and the gentle vesper of the birds, are such as will tempt them "to dream away a summer's day."

The path that leads up and through the glen partakes of the neglect of the old kirkyard. In the higher part, indeed, it is dangerous, and the scramble over the huge water-worn and tossed boulders gives one at times a breath of the perils of mountaineering. It is certainly almost impossible for a lady to negotiate the upper reaches of the glen, and it seems a pity that the district authorities do not give a little attention to a matter which the public would deeply appreciate.

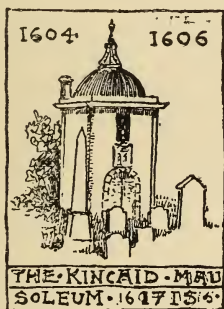
At the top of the glen a few yards of stiff climbing takes one on to the old Crow Road at or about the celebrated "Jamie Wright's Well"; and again we note with keen regret that vandal hands have defaced the lettering of the singularly neat memorial. It passes ordinary comprehension why anyone should desire to destroy these harmless relics, but apparently there is a class of person who must derive a species of pleasure from such fatuous actions. A brisk tramp of a little over a mile brings us in sight of the "Auld Muir Toll."<sup>1</sup>

The Glazert, which has so far faithfully followed

<sup>1</sup> A great smuggling haunt in the old days.



the highway, first on our right and then—passing under the road—on our left, turns sharply in the latter direction, and leads our footsteps over the gorse and uphill. The source will be found at the foot of a rocky scalp, far up on the shoulder of the Fells, and almost overlooking the back of the old tollhouse. It is set in the midst of a region of gorse-clad hummocks. Through a gap in the Fells we catch a glimpse of Glasgow, showing dimly through the shimmering summer haze that rests on the distant landscape. It is wonderful indeed to be within sight of the busy haunts of men, and yet around us there is naught but the peaks sweeping upward to the sky, and the cry of a solitary whaup is the only sound that breaks the stillness of the bare and unblessed moorlands.

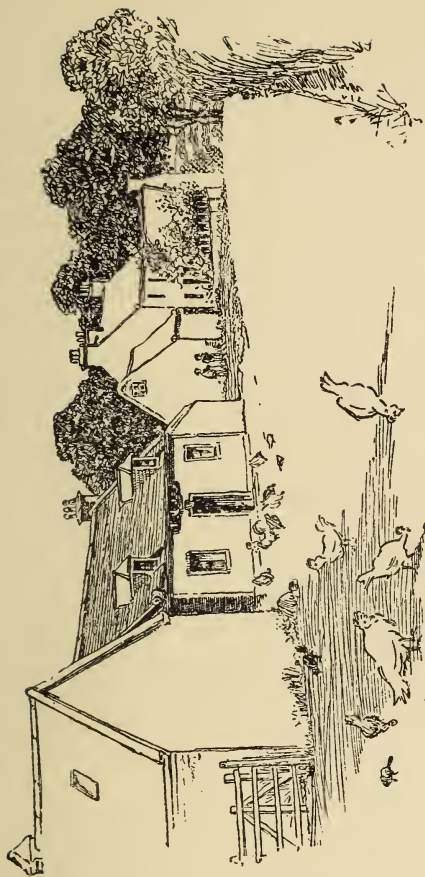


## IX.

### BY COACHING WAYS TO EARN'S SOURCE.

THERE are still some of the old coaching ways to be found among the borderlands of Glasgow town. One of the best I know is the old Kilmarnock road which leaves the Red Lion a mile out of Newton-Mearns, and passing the quaintly-steepled, Dutch-looking kirk of Mearns, bears south over the uplands and moors until it joins the modern highway four miles and two furlongs from the Newton. It is a fine road, narrow as was the wont of the old road-makers, but with a surface and build that defies the elements, qualities which induced a ruddy-hued passing coachman to remark to me that "it bates the new road hollow."

To the wayfarer on these summer afternoons, it will prove the pleasantest of roads, pleasant because of its coolness and quiet as it dips into a shady hollow, or winds among the kindly shadows of old trees through whose green lacework we get glimpses of the woodlands in all their summer glory of flowers and fragrance.



The old Red Lion  
a Coaching Inn

In these days of "nameless splendour everywhere," with their fleeting suggestion of autumnal breath, our old road is decked in its best, just as it must have revealed itself to our ancestors, who in the summers of long ago took the Diligence coach at the Avondale Arms<sup>1</sup> in the Gallowgate of Glasgow and were "carried at great speed"—according to an ancient advertisement—to Kilmarnock. And these good folks must have had famous times on the old road—rollicking times in the summer days when the burly coachman changed his team<sup>2</sup> at the Red Lion or Star and Garter, both good old inns, with snug bars, behind which there stood a buxom landlady, behind whom were stimulating rows of green bottles and gold labels, and Dunlop cheeses and rounds of red beef and piles of fresh bannocks, with—in the snell wintry days—a roaring fire of peat and logs piled half-way up the chimney.

What a motley crowd of ghostly and romantic figures accompany the wayfarer along the old highway, poets and wits, and soldiers and statesmen,

<sup>1</sup> This fine old-fashioned inn stood at 182 Gallowgate until 1873. The wall of the East Port rested on the gable of the inn, and the following cheerful invitation, the inspiration of some nameless bard, greeted the wayfarer—

" All ye that Pass throw Gallow Moor  
Stap intill Helen Whitehead's Door ;  
She's what will cheer Man in due course  
And entertainment for his Horse."

*Glasghu Facies*, ii. p. 838.

<sup>2</sup> The first stage coach to Kilmarnock (the Camperdown) was started in 1787. M'Kay, *Hist. Kilmarnock*, 5th ed. p. 103.

and coachmen and crinolined ladies posting to or coming from the great city, laughing and gay, sorrowful and sad, before grim Fate sent them all posting "to the mools." And their ghosts cling to the old road, lending it the old-world fragrance and flavour which all wayfarers love, and which the most of honest men seek.



Mearns Castle.

The romance of old ways and old men weaves a delicious halo around The Mearns. The Kirkton is a peaceful old-world spot, redolent still of the days when herdsmen and dairy folks—whose country occupations gave to the district the old British name of "Meirinas"—stabled their horses and gigs at the Red Lion, and thence went afoot to the neighbouring kirk. It is an ancient place, wherein "the forefathers of the hamlet sleep."

For seven long centuries a kirk, or, in pre-Refor-

mation days, a chapel, has stood there. In the days of Bruce, Maxwell of that ilk granted to the monks of Paisley six merks of silver yearly from his mills at Mearns<sup>1</sup> for the support of a chaplain to celebrate divine service "for the living and the dead and in honour of the Virgin Mary" in the parish church of Mearns. Long before his day William the Lion "confirmed" to the Paisley monks the church of Mearns;<sup>2</sup> and among those who swore fealty to Edward I. in 1296 is "John Petit of the Meirnes."<sup>3</sup>

The quaint kirk building of my sketch is of eighteenth century date: and in the manse which we see peeping through its leafy screen the genial and big-hearted Christopher North spent "the golden days of boyhood." On a tree-clad knoll to our left stands the hoary keep of Mearns, for the building of which James II. in 1449 gave a license to the Lord Maxwell "to big a castle on ye Baronie of Mearnis in Renfrushir," and to surround it with strong walls and ditches and iron gates, and to erect on the top of it warlike appliances.<sup>4</sup>

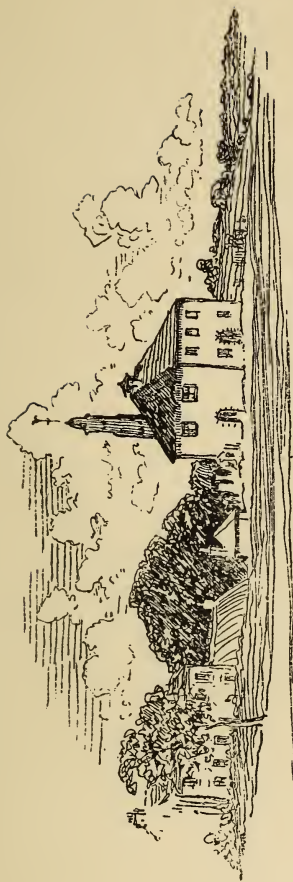
Then there is that picturesque caravansary the

<sup>1</sup> *Chart. Paisley*, Nos. 62, 63.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 59.

<sup>3</sup> Prynne, iii. 663; cf. Chalmers, *Caledonia*, vi. 850.

<sup>4</sup> In 1648 Sir George Maxwell of Pollock sold the barony and castle of Mearns to the Stewarts of Blackhall, whose ruined keep—now a byre!—stands on the banks of the Cart near Paisley. The family is represented by Sir Michael Shaw-Stewart of Greenock. Crawford, 205.



The Kirkton of Mearns.



old Red Lion, which was "biggit" nearly two centuries ago by one of the Howies of Lochgoin;<sup>1</sup> and you may read his name and that of his spouse over the doorway of the snug hostel.

From the Kirkton of Mearns the pleasant old road takes the wayfarer due south, and if he be possessed with imagination he will meet the happy shade of a fine young countryman, an erect and graceful man some five feet nine in stature, broad in the shoulders, symmetrical, muscular, and strong, and with remarkably black, keen, and expressive eyes (reminding him of Burns), posting in hot haste towards Glasgow and his University.

Thus it was that in August, 1817, Robert Pollok hied him to the great city, full of hope and brimming over with the dreams of conquest and fame. And the old highway is fragrant still with the memory of that young figure. The old Star and Garter, alas! no longer a welcoming inn for "man and beast," saw him pass and, doubtless, cheered him on the quest on which so many young hearts have gone forth.

And if you be of the cheerful disposition of all wayfarers, you may<sup>2</sup> at the Star and Garter "farm"

<sup>1</sup> On the door lintel of Lochgoin farmhouse is the date 1197—Dr. Hay Fleming suggests that POSSIBLY we ought to read 1597—and the Howie family have been there for seven hundred years. The house is a treasure trove of Covenanting relics. For sketches of these and descriptive notes of a visit to Lochgoin, see my *Sylvan Scenes near Glasgow*, pp. 112, 121.

<sup>2</sup> 1913.

forgather with a dear old lady who will tell you that the bronze portrait on the monument which you will pass at the junction of the coaching way



with the modern motor-scarred road is that of "a real Pollok face and the real Pollok hands," and she ought to know these anatomical details by heart for she herself is a scion of the poet's race.



Three miles or thereabouts take us along the old road to where another way branches off to North Moorhouse, the birthplace of the poet, and—a little

further on—to Mid-Moorhouse, where the famous *Course of Time*, pace his somewhat hypercritical feminine biographer,<sup>1</sup> was conceived and written. At the bein farm of North Moorhouse, much altered and enlarged since Pollok's day, a bonnie Scotch lass will point out the very place (now a mundane "pantry") in which the poet was born.

Some five hundred yards up the brae and we reach the mouldering ruins of Mid-Moorhouse. Pollok's father removed from North to Mid-Moorhouse in 1805, when the poet was seven years of age, and when he was one-and-twenty his first, or one of his first, attempts at verse was an "Ode to Moorhouse," in which he tells us lovingly of the garden of his boyhood's days, speaking of the old trees—"four trees I pass not by"—as if they were human friends :

" Tall trees they were  
And old, and had been old a century  
Before my day. None living could say aught  
About their youth : but they were goodly trees :  
And oft I wondered as I sat and thought  
Beneath their summer shade, or in the night  
Of winter heard the spirits of the wind  
Growling among their boughs, how they had grown  
So high in such a rough, tempestuous place."

Two of the "tall trees" still remain—one, an elm, towering in might and majesty above its neighbours, one in the sere and yellow leaf of its life ; between them, decaying roots show where the other couple

<sup>1</sup> Miss Rossaline Masson, *Famous Scots Series*.

once flourished. Rank grass waves over his boyhood's garden, and a cowshed has been built within the ruined walls. Iconoclasm could scarce go further. Pollok died on the 18th September, 1827, at Southampton, and his tombstone in the kirkyard of the English seaport tells all who care to read that this is "The grave of Robert Pollok, A.M.,



author of the *Course of Time*: His immortal poem is his monument."

Surely the home of a Scottish poet and the scene of such a great poetic effort is worthy of a better fate than that which has befallen it? The ruined gable—of my sketch—might well be preserved, the cowshed removed, and a brass or copper memorial plate affixed to what remains of the justly famous, but sadly neglected, spot. I recommend it to the kindly attention of some of our patriotic city clubs.

From the ridge at Moorhouse the eye wanders

over leagues of moorland and upland, a wide sweep of wan, bleached grass and heath, with patches of a lovelier green around distant farms: ridged hollows fringed with fern and flowers, with the gleam of some wimpling burn stealing down the hillside: over woods rich with the gorgeous russets which tell of autumnal air: over the great shadowed hollow of pearly blue in which Glasgow town shelters, and so to the far-away Campsie and Kilpatrick hills, with the majestically designed mass of Ben Lomond and the delicate cone of Ben Ledi silhouetted in opalescent tint against the summer sky.

From the solitude of these moors the clink of a whetted scythe floats faintly to the ear, a pleasant note of summer and the open fields: the distant bark of a shepherd's dog and the figure of a solitary angler by the Earn's side are the only signs of life in these wide spaces of moor and glen and meadow. We follow the Earn—a clear and sparkling trout stream at this early stage of its career—past Logan's Well, and join the old road again at the little toll-house whose occupation vanished a generation ago. The way dips down into the hollow where the Black Loch burn comes murmuring down its pebbly channel to meet the Earn in the sedgy meadow beneath Brownside farm.

Certain amiable geographical draughtsmen and compilers of gazetteers will have it that our Earn has its birthplace in the moss-hued waters of the

Black Loch. But they know better in the countryside than to make this mistake. The Black Loch sends forth the Black Loch burn, and in the words of a stalwart farmer who "lived boy and man for half a century in the district," and "my faither the same before me," the Black Loch burn was never the Earn "in their day." I accept this as sound evidence on behalf of the individuality of the Earn. Those who do likewise will find the source, as I did, a clear silvery spring at the foot of Glenouther Rig, on the borders of Ayrshire, a couple of miles beyond the Black Loch, and five miles two furlongs by the coaching road from the Kirk of Mearns.



Earn's Source.



## X.

### THE BONNIE ALLANDER.

THE rambler who cares to devote an afternoon to tracing the Allander Water to its source may look forward to a pleasant experience. From its birth-place in the Kilpatrick Hills to where it joins the Kelvin, a short distance north of the Roman Fort of Balmuildy, is a modest stretch of six and a half miles. Taking Milngavie as the most convenient, and certainly the most interesting, starting point, the wayfarer will have five miles—and perhaps a bittock—to traverse before he or she reaches the small but beautiful Lily Loch, where our stream springs into life.

Our way lies through a broad valley, where tree-clad slopes melt into sunny meadowlands and green knowes: quiet nooks, where doubtless “fairies linger still”; and from the woodland aisles and bird-haunted hollows we wander into the heart of great hills, into sombre solitudes of gorse and bracken, and over moorlands rich with their mantle of gorgeous purple. Amidst these the ponderous



mass of Duncomb<sup>1</sup> stands like some landlocked Ailsa Craig, a grim relic of the primeval fires of a long-vanished age.

To the little Allander, Milngavie owes a deep debt. The name of what the cheerfully optimistic author of the local "guide" describes as "a great residential suburb," is, according to the same authority, of comparatively simple derivation. For centuries there stood a meal mill on the Allander (its successor still stands in the heart of the township), and to it were thirled the surrounding farms. The mill belonged to the Montrose family, who of yore held the castle of Mugdock; and according to persistent local tradition the builder of the mill was one named Guy—hence the mill o' Guy, which by the fastidious modern has blossomed into Milngavie.<sup>2</sup>

Old Timothy Pont,<sup>3</sup> in his *Picture of Scotland*, issued from Amsterdam in 1654, shows "Milguy"; and the same place-name, plus an "l," is used by the "Reverend Mr. George Sym," who penned an

<sup>1</sup> 1313 ft.

<sup>2</sup> In 1790 the population was 150; it is now about 5000. The village was raised to the dignity of a burgh in 1875. The local derivation of the burgh's name will scarcely satisfy the keen philologist. No record exists of the miller Guy, and I suspect he is a myth.

<sup>3</sup> His father was minister at Dunblane and at St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh, in 1574. Timothy was the first projector of a Scotch atlas and personally surveyed the kingdom. His maps were first published by Blaeu. Shearer, *Old Maps of Scotland*, 58.

irritatingly brief and prosaic account of his parish in 1793.<sup>1</sup> And the Allander is also responsible for the presence of various bleach and dye works and laundries, which in their turn have been responsible for destroying the virgin purity of the moorland burn.

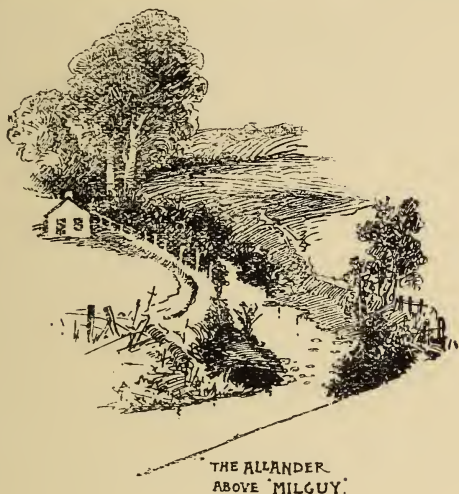
“ Millguy ” is set amid pastures and cornfields, and can boast of such fine vistas of hill and dale as will deter the wayfarer from lingering within its bounds. A pathway above a dam leads us from the township by the *left* bank of the Allander. The Rambler who loves the sedgy streams where summer winds go whispering through the reeds may pause for the nonce and ask which bank is right and which left ?

If we take the philosophic De Quincey for our guide, then he will tell us somewhat pompously that “ in military tactics, in philosophic geography, in history, etc., the uniform assumption is that you are standing with your back to the source of the river and your eyes travelling along with its current.” In that case the bank of the river which lies upon one’s right is the right bank *absolutely* and not *relatively* only.<sup>2</sup> Presuming we accept that conclusion, then, as I have said, we leave Millguy by the *left* bank of our stream—an interesting although perhaps not a vital point.

<sup>1</sup> O.S.A. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *The Opium-Eater* (World’s Classics), p. 97.

The Allander above Millguy is a bonnie burn, loitering here and there in quiet backwaters and anon swiftly eddying through a narrow channel into deep and dark pools, where trout were wont to hide before the era of the bleach and dye works. Among the wide-spreading umbrageous trees on the richly-



wooded slope to our left, we catch a glimpse of the quaint, yet stately, house of Clober, overlooking a romantic old-world garden—a place of perfect summer beauty and summer enjoyment. It is a notable house.<sup>1</sup> Mr. James Macgregor, merchant in Glasgow, erected the oldest portion in 1773. This Mr. James Macgregor was the father-in-law of James

<sup>1</sup> *Old Country Houses of Glasgow.*

Watt, the celebrated engineer, and the still-existing Clober Bleachfield, by the Allander banks, was planned by Watt, and during its construction he superintended the making of the water courses and the erection of the machinery—an association that lends an abiding interest to our little stream.

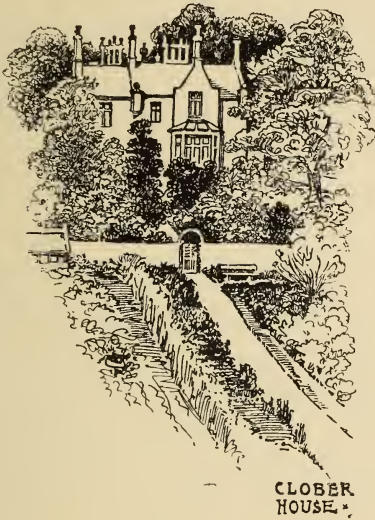
Beyond the green fields and nestling in the woods sheltering the highway that leads to the famous Drymen road is the old place of Mains and Balvie. For fully five hundred years scions of the Douglasses of Mains<sup>1</sup> have owned the barony of Mains ; Balvie came to them in 1819. In 1373 Balvie passed from the Galbraiths of Craigmaddie to the Logans, cadets of the famous Restalrig (Edinburgh) family : Mains, *circa* 1370, came to the Douglasses through the marriage of the son and heir with one of the Galbraiths. At one period the Galbraiths were a great family in the shires of Dunbarton and Stirling. In 1296 Arthur de Galbrait of Craigmaddie was one of the Scottish barons who swore fealty to Edward I.<sup>2</sup>

A century after Scottish independence had been won, the Craigmaddie family “ended with a lass,” and the lands passed to other races. The mouldering remains of their ancient keep may still be seen nodding across Craigmaddie Moor to that hoary

<sup>1</sup> *Old Country Houses of Glasgow.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ragman Roll.*

remnant of the past, the Auld Wives' Lifts.<sup>1</sup> So to our hostel, a bein caravansary, as my sketch shows, which stands by the roadside about half a mile north of the little brig that carries the king's highway to "the Hieland hills" of Aberfoyle, over



the babbling Allander Water. According to the genial landlord, the title-deeds of the "Halfway"

<sup>1</sup> This remarkable group of naturally poised and enormous blocks of sandstone occupies a hollow in the centre of the Moor. The top stone measures 22 ft. by 11 ft., the north stone 20 ft. by 8 ft., and the south block 14 ft. by 10 ft. Some well defined cup markings are on a rock to the west of the "lifts," while at the edge of them and over 600 ft. above sea-level is a raised sea beach with fine white sand and shells. *Some Sylvan Scenes near Glasgow*, pp. 41, 43.

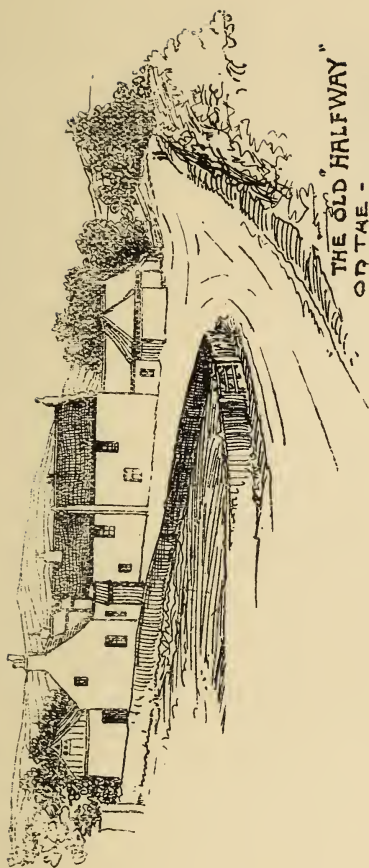
go back three hundred years. The "Halfway" stands ten miles four furlongs from the Cross of Glasgow, and in the coaching days it was the half-way stage for travellers to Aberfoyle and "the Highland line."

Honest Nicol Jarvie and Mr. Andrew Fairservice put up at this hostelry on that immortal journey to meet Rob Roy at the clachan of Aberfoyle. It was then "a most miserable alehouse," but capable of supplying a sound meal.<sup>1</sup> Did not the guidwife tell our three travellers that "the guidman had been at the hill"? and followed this information by placing before her hungry guests a steaming "broiled moor fowl, ewe-milk cheese, dried salmon, and oaten bread," which they washed down with some very indifferent "tipenny" and "a glass of excellent brandy"—a feast that enabled them to resume their journey "with renovated vigour." Rob himself was wont to give the inn a call when he "had been at the hill"; and doubtless the rubicund "Maister Duncan Galbraith o' Garschattachin," who told the Bailie to "damn the annual rent" and drink off a bumper, was many a time and oft in the old "Halfway."

Soldiers, drovers, Highlandmen, gentlemen, highwaymen, dukes, and reivers, coming from and going to the great city, all looked in for a dram before tackling the "wild and open and dreary

<sup>1</sup> *Rob Roy*, c. xxvii.





"THE OLD HALFWAY"  
ON THE -  
DRY MEN ROAD



road," on which poor Osbaldistone saw naught and heard naught but the "monotonous and plaintive cry of the lapwing and the curlew," which the Bailie told him were "the peasweep and the whaup."

From the hostel we have "a good three miles" to the waterworks of Burn Crooks. The road takes one through the bosky policies of Aucheneden, which suffered so severely by the terrible storm of a couple of years ago<sup>1</sup> that a sawmill—erected for the special purpose—has been endeavouring for well-nigh a year to clear off the awful wreckage wrought by the howling winds among the giants of the forest. There is a magnificent view as the pathway winds upward and over the moorlands. Peak after peak of the Kilpatricks and the Campsies are silhouetted against the skyline, closing up the view to the north and west, while on the east the eye wanders over miles of the richly-wooded and well-formed lands that stretch across the waist of Scotland to the shores of the Forth.

Leave the road at the waterworks and follow the stone dyke which bears due west over the hills and down into the valleys, pointing all the time to the impressive peak of Duncomb. It is stiff going, the humplocks of gorse and the steepness of the scarcely-visible pad taxing to the utmost the pedestrian ability of the wayfarer. Looking back

<sup>1</sup> 1911.

from the swelling heath and over the waterworks an excellent view is to be had of that curious crack in the hills yclept The Whangie.<sup>1</sup> Geologists account for it in one way : the tradition of the countryside in another, and, I think, in a much more interesting fashion.

It seems his Satanic Majesty was holding a meeting of his warlocks and witches among the Campsie Fells. He had another gathering to attend at Dumbarton. The Campsie meeting had put his sable highness into excellent humour, and as he winged his way over the Kilpatrick Hills for Dumbarton Rock he whisked his tawny tail, and his flight altitude being somewhat modest, the tail struck the shoulder of Aucheneden Hill, and—The Whangie is the result ! <sup>2</sup>

Beneath the shadow of the mountain mass of Duncomb we come unexpectedly upon a silvery sheet of water, resplendent with lilies and bordered by a verdant setting of rushes. A veritable gem on the dark bosom of the moorlands is the Lily Loch, a lonely place in the great hollow that the ages have scooped at the base of the hills. And as the sunshine weaves a changing web of lights and shadows over the moorland wastes the poet,

<sup>1</sup> The chasm of the Whangie is 346 feet in length, 40 feet in depth, and from 5 feet to 10 feet in greatest width.

<sup>2</sup> Local tradition retailed to me by the landlord of the Half-way, a native of the district.

the artist, and the dreamer who wander thither will catch a fleeting glimpse of the Spirit of solitude which abides for all time in the great shadow of Duncomb.



## XI.

### THE CLYDE'S BIRTHPLACE.

WRITING in the early eighteenth century the quaintly gossipy Dr. Pennecuick tells us <sup>1</sup> that “ the famous Tweed hath its first spring or fountain nearly a mile to the east of the place where the shire of Peebles marches and borders with the stewartry of Annandale—that is Tweed’s Cross. Both Annan and Clyde have their first rise from the same height, about half a mile from one another, where Clyde runneth west, Annan to the south and Tweed to the east.”

The ancient folk-rhyme coined by some unknown makar of long ago, epitomises the hydrographical topography of the district in a couple of pithy lines :

“ Annan, Tweed and Clyde  
Rise on ae hillside.”

In 1764 the gifted but unfortunate John Wilson published “ The Clyde,” a descriptive poem of great

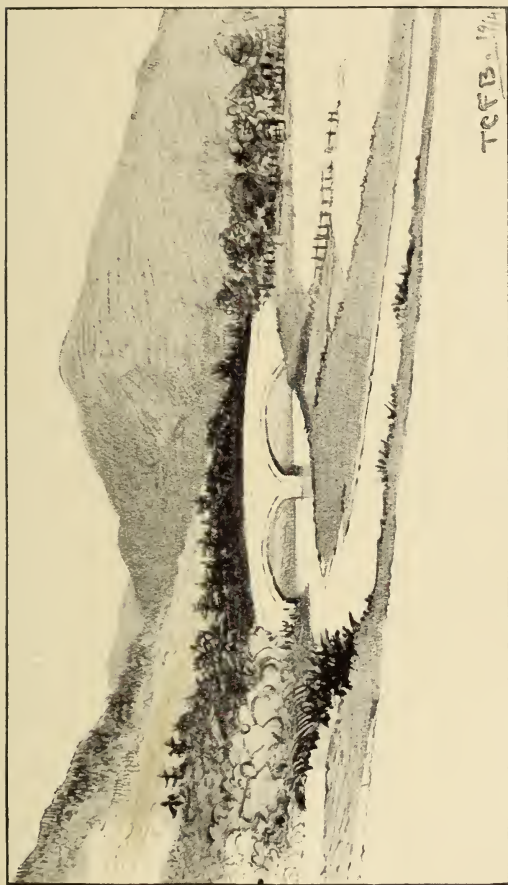
<sup>1</sup> *Shire of Tweeddale.*

merit, and he has left us this picture of the infant Clyde :

“ From one vast mountain bursting on the day,  
Tweed, Clyde and Annan urge their separate way.  
To Anglia's shores bright Tweed and Annan run,  
That seeks the rising, this the setting sun :

Clyde far from scenes of strife and horror fled  
And through more peaceful fields his waters led.”

The Rev. Mr. James Maconochie, who penned his account of Crawford parish in 1792, remarks that “ the three principal rivers in the south of Scotland, viz. the Clyde, the Tweed, and the Annan have their sources in the hills which divide us from Tweedsmuir.” A cynical and doubting age has refused to accept the evidence of tradition or poets, and statistical writers and the inquisitorial chroniclers of to-day have adduced well-defined rules and regulations to prove their predecessors in the wrong. The poetry of folk-memory makes but slender appeal to the iconoclast. The glorious fraternity of wayfarers needs pay scant heed to the growlings of these mental berserkers. Squabbles of the pragmatic precisions are a poor exchange for the romance and legend which form our richest inheritance from the vanished past. Let us seek the birthplace of the Clyde, and let us find it on the shoulder of the hill of the three streams. And to this vale “ uplifted high among the mountains ” we go in excellent company, for as companion on our solitary way



Lamington Brig.

*"Clyde far from scenes of strife."*





we will have an ancient makar, who, perchance, may speak to us of summer days of long ago when he—in the flesh—foregathered on Huntlee Bank with our “True Thomas,” the “day-starre of Scottish poetry”: and the shade of the timid but lovable dreamer who conceived “The Clyde,” may whisper to us the story of how he was offered the mastership of Greenock’s grammar school, the managers making the Gothic proposition<sup>1</sup>—to which poverty forced the poet’s assent—that he should abandon “the profane and unprofitable art of poetry making”: and we may also carry with us the cheerful notes of their modern successor who in a flash of quaint humour<sup>2</sup> describes a mischievous companion using the cork of a hock-bottle to “cork the source” of the mighty Clyde and “see what happened.”

It is said locally, however, that the little brook which goes brawling down the hillside past Little Clyde farm is really not The Clyde referred to in the ancient rhyme: and I had pointed out to me by a shrewd native of the district, a burn only a few yards south of the brook<sup>3</sup> referred to, and which comes down the next southmost glen, as the real Clyde.<sup>4</sup> He told me that prior to the coming

<sup>1</sup> This is a fact. The incident happened in 1767, and poor Wilson never afterwards touched the forbidden lyre.

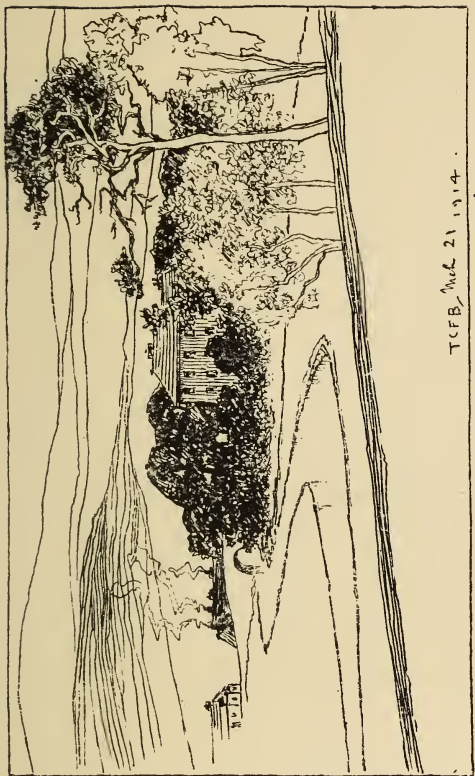
<sup>2</sup> Neil Munro, *The Clyde*, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> See Map.

<sup>4</sup> Information received from Mr. James Hope, whose knowledge of the interesting features of the Beattock and Elvanfoot district is invaluable.

of the Caledonian Railway in the "forties," this burn was known as the Little Clyde, and that it flowed west and joined the Daer Water above Elvanfoot. Its course was diverted by the railway engineers as it seriously interfered with the enlignment of the way, and it now flows south and joins the Evan.

Though rather outwith the scope of a volume that professes to tell of the hidden paths which lie within the compass of the city pedestrian with an afternoon to spare, yet it is impossible to overlook the venerable mother of all the Glasgow streams and rivers. So be it that if you have a whole day to spare and wish to look upon something worth seeing, and whose memory will be fondly cherished, then take the 6.25 a.m. train from Glasgow Central to Elvanfoot, where you will land about nine to find—if your barometer is a true prophet—a "vagrant morning wide and blue" with adventure and the purpled hills a-calling. And at Elvanfoot the wayfarer is on the heaving ribs of the brown Lowther Hills and looking down on a swiftly flowing mountain stream, and to your query a passing shepherd answers—not without a note of pride in his voice—"that's the Clyde." Away to the right is the road to Leadhills village, where in 1790 were—and still are—the "most famous and ancient lead mines in Scotland": and where on a cheerless August afternoon in 1803 there arrived Dorothy Wordsworth with "Coleridge weary" and William dyspeptic.



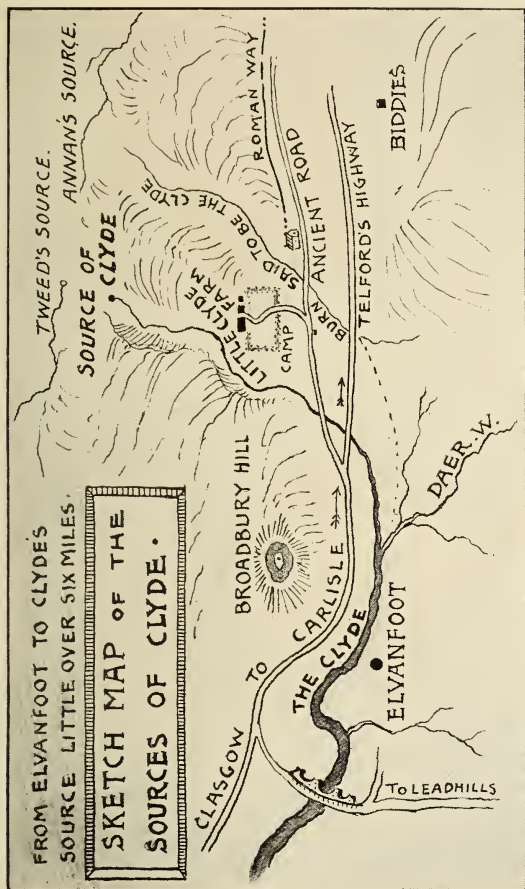
T C F B, *Mich* 21 1914.

The Clyde at Elvanfoot.

The three travellers "did not then understand Scotch inns," but despite a "dirty parlour," offensive to the feminine instincts of the observant Dorothy, the fire and the gentle aid of twilight "burnished up the room into cheerful comfort": and rested and inspired by the creature comforts Dorothy went a-wandering to the inn kitchen for a gossip with the landlady whose "manners did not please her," but whose kitchen had a shelf with a few books which somehow reminded the visitor of Chaucer's Clerke of Oxenforde who at his bed's head had "twenty books clothed in black and red." From Elvanfoot our path lies onward and upward, an old old road worn by the toiling feet of many centuries, a highway that in our grandfather's time was cut into deep ruts and broadening hollows by the stage-coaches, the "flying machines" which carried the travellers of a past generation from Glasgow to Carlisle and thence to London town. Telford's genius was responsible for this road, and he again was indebted for its "line" to the genius of the old Roman engineers.<sup>1</sup> We pass ancient habitations and forgotten landmarks<sup>2</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> The mouldering rampart of a Roman Camp can still be traced near Little Clyde farm. It lay on the line of the Roman Way or Street from Carlisle north. "Having passed the Avon near its conflux with the Annan, it continues along the ridge between these rivers till it falls in with the sources of the Clyde at a place called Little Clyde," and so on past "Elwinfoot to Crauford and Camp Water." *Roy. Mil. Ant.* p. 104.

<sup>2</sup> On the summit of Bodsbury Hill which we pass on the left and about a mile from Elvanfoot, is a circular entrenchment





green mounds, camps reared by a people whose very memory is lost in the mists of eld, places where in far-away days men worked and children played. We pass the meeting-place of the Powtrail and the Daer Waters with Clyde's Burn, and we follow the silver thread of Clyde's Burn up the little valley where we come upon the grey, weather-scarred farm-house of Little Clyde,<sup>1</sup> a pleasant walk in the prime of summer, but an eerie spot surely when the wintry blasts come howling out of the dark and misty corries of the Lowther Hills. So to the source.<sup>2</sup> It will be found a gleaming eyelet of blue which beckons to us from the brown wastes ayont the farm. Sitting by the cradle of the Clyde we are in the midst of a land of wild and solitary beauty, a splendid Scottish landscape of mountain and moor, a fitting birthplace for our great western waterway.

and a well which has been scooped out of the solid rock. Information from Mr. James Hope.

<sup>1</sup> As the wayfarer turns to the left to go up the brae to Little Clyde farm he will observe a green trackway going south over the shoulder of the hills. That was the ancient coaching way before Telford constructed the present road. The ancient track is practically on the line of the Roman Road. It is interesting to mention that Mr. Thomson the farmer of Little Clyde is a descendant of Sergt.-Major Ewart, the hero of the celebrated fight for the standard at Waterloo. Ewart was a herd at Clyde's source, and his birthplace, Biddies farm, can be seen on the distant hillside up the valley and south from Little Clyde.

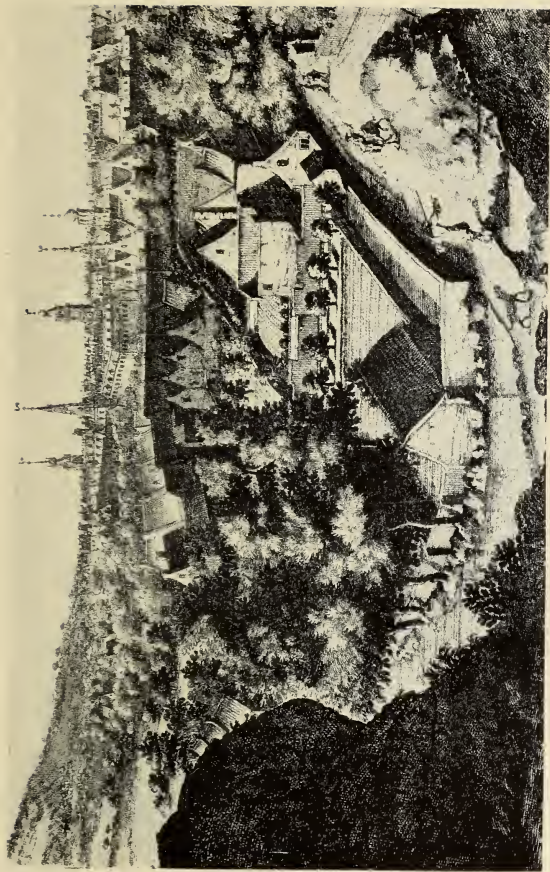
<sup>2</sup> The length of the river from the source to Greenock, where the Firth of Clyde begins, is 100 miles: and the total fall or difference of level between the points is about 2000 feet.



## XII.

### GLASGOW'S BURIED STREAMS.

A GREAT city is not the haunt wherein we can hope to find the wimpling burns of which poets, and artists, and wayfarers fondly dream. The arctic eye of commerce looks askance at the humbler waterways of nature, and as the octopus of industry advances over the verdant countryside she absorbs and then hides them from human ken. Such has been the fate of many pleasant streamlets which at one period spread a network of silvery threads in and around Glasgow town. It is difficult to realise that but a little over half a century has elapsed since the city could boast of its "brooks that sing in brambly ways." On their banks in the summer evenings of long ago the old Glaswegians were wont to ply the rod. The waters were limpid and the crimson-speckled trout plentiful. The changing years have brought changes to everyone and everything, and the modest tributaries which flowed into the Clyde at Glasgow have also come under the spell of transition. They still flow and



Slezer.

The Molendinar in 1680.

*Theatrum Scotiae.*

*This is the earliest view known of the Molendinar. The gardens of Glasgow's prebendal manse in the Drygait are seen sloping down to the stream, Glasgow College is in the middle distance, and the Tolbooth Steeple on the left in the background. The present Bridge of Sighs is almost on the site of the little bridge in the foreground.*



the mother of the rivers still receives the quota of water from the Molendinar, the "Burn called Glasgow," and other minor streamlets. But their pristine glory has departed, and the pellucid streams fished by a vanished generation of Waltonians are now debased to the rôle of ordinary city sewers. It is a sad fate surely, for the classic Molendinar : and the Molendinar is a stream that ought to be beloved of the gods and the people of Glasgow. We may bury it from sight, but its memories linger forever amongst us. On its banks was planted the germ from which Glasgow sprang : and we cannot doubt that the saintly Ninian when he came a-wandering to the Clyde valley in the fourth century, established his cell by the Molendinar because of the placid beauty which he found. There Kentigern, we know, had his cell overlooking the "Mellendonor," and the stately cathedral of Glasgow was doubtless reared on or near the saintly spot. It is recorded by Jocelin and the monkish chroniclers<sup>1</sup> that St. Kentigern and St. Columba met on the banks of the historic stream. Of the meeting Bishop Forbes remarks,<sup>2</sup> "that at the Mellendonor close to the cemetery of St. Ninian, these two great heralds of Christianity should meet on a spot

<sup>1</sup> "St. Columba the abbot came to the stream which is called Malyndinor," and he met Kentigern and "saw angels fluttering round about him and a shining dove descending upon him and a golden crown on his head." Stevenson, *Legends of St. Kentigern*, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Historians of Scotland*, v. p. lxxxix.

already sanctified by the traditions of the people, is one of those little incidents which we wish to be true and which we have no certain reason for believing not to be so."

It is a stream of long and honourable lineage, and the privilege of residing on its banks was highly esteemed in past times. The old houses of the Drygait and Rottenrow had most of them gardens extending down to the Molendinar Burn.<sup>1</sup> One of these possessions in the High Street<sup>2</sup> is described in a charter of 1463 as the tenement of John Wilson with a garden and fields to the burn, *rivolum de Malyndoner*. In the ancient title-deeds of property on the east side of the Saltmarket it is expressly stipulated that the owners shall have "free ish and entry" by the closes leading to the burn<sup>3</sup> and that they shall also have the privilege of "fishing therein." In the *Glasgow Courant* of 1755 there is an advertisement of a piece of ground at the Spoutmouth to be let, and one of the inducements held out is its vicinity to the Molendinar as "suit-

<sup>1</sup> On the north side of the Drygait were four manse, Kadyr, Tarbolton, Cardross, and Ashkirk: on the south side five, Eaglesham, Peebles, Cambuslang, Stoto, and Douglas. A small streamlet called the Gyrth Burn joins the Molendinar near Drygait, a little south of the Cathedral burying ground. This burn crosses M'Leod Street a few yards west of Provand's Lordship; and it is mentioned in a deed of sale of lands north of the Rottenrow in 1574. It is now a sewer. Renwick, *Glas. Prot.* 7. 66.

<sup>2</sup> *Old Glasgow*, pp. 120, 121.

<sup>3</sup> *Glasgow Past and Present*, i. p. 31.

able for bleaching!" When M'Ure wrote his *History* in 1736 the Gallowgate extended no further than the East Port.<sup>1</sup> Beyond that was a narrow country road, bordered by pleasant green hedges, leading to the old village of Camlachie. Between the East Port and the Cross, the street was crossed by the Molendinar Burn. Like its neighbour on the west, the St. Enoch's Burn, it flowed on the surface and there was a considerable descent to it, with stepping stones in the stream for foot passengers. When in spate, people had to cross on horseback. The burn was a favourite place for watering horses and cattle, and Dr. Buchanan, who wrote as late as 1856,<sup>2</sup> says he had conversed with old people who remembered it in the halcyon state. In its course from its source at Hogganfield Loch—to which the Riddrie car will help you on the way—the Molendinar was wont to make itself very useful by turning several mills. As it approached Glasgow it drove the ancient Town Mill<sup>3</sup> and the Subdean's Mills<sup>4</sup> near the Cathedral. After quitting the old mill the burn

<sup>1</sup> The Port crossed the road practically on a line with the lane to the west of the Saracens' Head buildings.

<sup>2</sup> *Desultory Sketches*, p. 664.

<sup>3</sup> On 4th February, 1446, the burgesses and community agreed to a yearly payment of two pounds of wax to the keeper of the lights around St. Kentigern's tomb for liberty to build a mill on the south side of Gardyngad Hill on the burn which is called Malyndoner. *Glas. Chart.* 1175-1649, Pt. ii. pp. 25, 26.

<sup>4</sup> "The mills belonging to the laird of Minto called the subdean's mills." *Ibid.* 1175-1649, Pt. i. p. ccclviii.



ran at the bottom of the Drygate gardens, crossing in a hollow what is now Duke Street—a pleasant garden long ago—then meandered down to the Gallowgate houses, at the back of which it received the waters <sup>1</sup> of the “ Burn called Poldrait,” a tributary which seems to have taken its rise on the Gallow Muir. In these far-away days there was a small wood close to the Molendinar at the Spoutmouth in the Gallowgate. This planting was known as “ Kentigern’s Trees,” and is so referred to in records as late as the Reformation.

Near the foot of the Saltmarket the Camlachie Burn joined the Molendinar, and like the latter it is now covered in and answers the purposes of a common sewer. At one time, however, it presented a scene of rare sylvan beauty. A century ago the Camlachie Burn,<sup>2</sup> from Carntyne down to the Green, was fringed with ash trees, which afforded a pleasant walk and a shady retreat to the citizens who resorted there on the summer evenings for pleasure and recreation. The waters were pellucid and abounded in silver eels, and in 1798, when the York and Cheshire Militia lay in Glasgow, the soldiers in their leisure moments indulged largely in fishing and are said to have caught many a goodly basket of these toothsome fish. The combined waters of the Molen-

<sup>1</sup> Map of Glasgow in 1650.

<sup>2</sup> The ancient nomenclature is very varied. In 1665 Cumlachie Burne; 1684 Burne of Camlachy; 1688 Burne of Camlauchie; 1690 Watter of Camlachie, and so on. *Glas Chart*.



dinar and Camlachie Burns<sup>1</sup> fall into the Clyde opposite Jail Square at the east end of the Green.

Old M'Ure remarks upon "another rivulet called St. Enoch's Burn which hath its rise above a furlong west from the High Church and falls close without the west port of the city, and falls into Clyde a little west from the great bridge of Glasgow. This rivulet had three stone bridges upon it within the town." St. Enoch's Burn in the old maps is designated the "burn called Glasgow." It struggles from the Cowcaddens down the west side of Buchanan Street, flows practically below West Nile Street and Mitchell Street, and crosses Argyle Street at the foot of Mitchell Street. In M'Ure's day one of the stone bridges he mentions carried Argyle Street—then and for long after a rural country road<sup>2</sup> leading to the villages of Grahamston and Anderston—or Dumbarton Road, as it was then called, over St. Enoch's Burn.<sup>3</sup> On the north side of the Clyde also, and taking its rise in the springs around Pink-

<sup>1</sup> Camlachie Burn rises in Provan Hall Loch. It flows under the Monkland Canal at Millcroft Bridge, and about there in old days it got the name of The Towrow Burn.

<sup>2</sup> *Stuart's Views*: see Plates XX. and XXI. executed in the Foulis Academy, Glasgow, in 1758 and 1761, in which Argyle Street is a country road with leafy hedges and a range of tall trees on the north side from Anderston to where the Central Station now stands. Dr. Gemmell, *Early Views of Glasgow*, 1913, p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> On the 28th June, 1662, "it was concludit that ane handsome little brig be put over St. Tennoch's Burne, and that the casay be brought in therfra to the West Port." *Council Records*.

ston, runs the Pinkston Burn, under the Cowcaddens and New City Road, where it is joined by the Woodside Burn, the combined streams falling into the Kelvin about the old Hillhead Ford at Woodside. So pure was Pinkston Burn in the thirties of last century that Mr. Gillespie, the proprietor of a bleaching establishment at Anderston village, laid down a watercourse from that stream to his works !

There is a triumvirate of burns which flow into the Clyde on the south side of the river—the Polmadie Burn opposite the Provost's Haugh on the Green, the Sandiefield or Blind Burn almost facing the confluence of the Molendinar and the Clyde, and the Kinning House Burn,<sup>1</sup> which enters the Clyde adjacent to the Springfield Lane. This rivulet assumes different names. In some maps we find it called the Shiels Burn, in others the Kinning House Burn. M'Arthur's plan of 1768 terms it the Shaw Burn : and in an old document belonging to Sir John Stirling Maxwell it is designated the Mile Burn, but the name Mile Burn really belongs to a brief rivulet which joins the Clyde at the western

<sup>1</sup> The Kinning House Burn has its source in the springs of the old Shawmoss between Strathbungo and Haggs Castle : the Blind Burn rises in the mossy subsoil east of Victoria Road and north of Queen's Drive : the source of Polmadie Burn lies south of Rutherglen, and its tributary Mall's Mire Burn rises a little to the east of Cathcart Kirk. " Mall " used to be a familiar Scotch synonym for Mary, and tradition has it that Queen Mary on her flight from Langside had great difficulty in bringing her horse through the muddy lanes near this burn, hence Mall's Mire. The derivation is doubtful.

boundary of the General Terminus. The Kinning House Burn, as it may be christened, forms for a considerable distance the boundary line of Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire, and as a "march" it derives an importance quite out of proportion to its insignificant bulk and character. Such is the brief story of the buried streams of Glasgow town. With the exception of the Molendinar and possibly the Camlachie Burn, they are all unimportant and very humble waters. The Molendinar is on a different plane. Romance, legend, and history are associated with its story, lending it an interest which the others lack, and which even the trumpet notes of commerce fail to displace. Glasgow has changed vastly since the times when it was considered a privilege to have one's house on the banks of the Molendinar. We have polluted and then buried the historic stream and its humbler confrères: and in doing so have we not perhaps buried something else—that subtle breath which the woodland path and the wimpling burn give forth to all who care to woo them? However much it may represent industrial activity and commercial greatness, the evolution of a limpid stream into a foul sewer seems a questionable exchange. It is certainly far short of being either an elevating or inspiring spectacle.

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