

GREENOCK STREET NAMES - THEIR HISTORY AND ROMANCE

BY

GARDNER BLAIR

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

SIR HUGH SHAW STEWART, BARON  
ET OF GREENOCK AND BLACKHALL, &c.

"Old legends of the monkish age,  
Traditions of the saint and sage,  
Tales that have the rime of age,  
And chronicles of old."

TO THE MEMORY OF OUR ILLUSTRIOUS TOWNSMAN JAMES WATT

## INTRODUCTION

HAVING been asked to write a short introduction to this little book on the Street Names of Greenock, I comply with pleasure, sharing as I do with my countrymen the love of old-time records.

I suppose it is some tinge of Celtic blood, running in the veins of West Country folk, that keeps warm within us an abiding interest in the traditions of the past. The depth of this interest constantly impels us to "verify our references." Written records, when trustworthy, are invaluable, but oral tradition should not be neglected. I remember hearing a distinguished man, now dead, insisting upon the importance of securing direct information regarding past events from the lips of living men, because all the members of a given generation, dying out within a few years of one another, with them disappears all possibility of obtaining first-hand information regarding events which came within their experience. The writer of these notes has wisely availed himself, when possible, of first-hand information, and where this has been out of the question, he has carefully culled from the most reliable chronicles a collection of details which cannot fail to be of interest to all connected with Greenock and its neighbourhood.

A street is defined by Dr. Johnson as "A way, properly a paved way, between two rows of houses." According to a Greenock historian,\* there were as recently as in A.D. 1718 only four slated houses in the town, so that the contemplation of the streets alone will not carry us back to very early days. But it is different with the street nomenclature. Here we find family names taking us far back into the past: famous statesmen and great captains, not to mention kings, are commemorated side by side with local celebrities: the East and West Indies meet: Trafalgar and the Nile mingle with humble place-names. All might provide material for an epic poem.

Our author, however, is modest. While inviting our attention to the streets of Greenock and the names they bear, he is content to play the part of a torch-bearer by whose light we may peer into the dim obscurity of past ages, and in the glimpses thus afforded we may partially recall the "other times and other manners" of mortal men who lived, and loved, and fought, and wrought, and suffered, and died in days gone by

HUGH SHAW STEWART.  
ARDGOWAN, August, 1907.

\* Historical Sketches of the Town and Harbours of Greenock. By Dugald Campbell. Vol. I.

## PREFACE

MANY ideas come drifting o'er the mind - for we cannot always choose our thoughts - and it is only occasionally they end in something better than mere idle fancies. After reading an essay by Isaac Disraeli in *The Curiosities of Literature*, in which he gives the history of a few of the street names of London, the thought occurred that I might do something of the same description for the street names of Greenock, and so rescue from possible forgetfulness many interesting stories and legends. The idea crystallised, and a series of articles appeared in the columns of the *Greenock Herald*, which, after redaction, are issued in the present form.

Various histories have been published in connection with Greenock, but the subject with which I now deal has hitherto not received the attention which it merits.

All authorities available have been consulted in the compilation of the work, and from several gentlemen interested in antiquarian subjects I have received valuable information. Sir Hugh Shaw Stewart considerably gave me access to different documents, and also supervised the information relating to his family.

This assistance is all the more valuable when Sir Hugh's connection with street names is remembered, for, when an entirely new street is opened, the Superior, according to the Act of 1877, has the privilege of giving the thoroughfare its name, subject to the homologation of the local authorities; on the other hand, it may be mentioned that the Municipality has the power of naming a street enlarged from an existing lane or bye path.

Several solicitors in town were good enough to place old title-deeds at my disposal, while to all others who assisted in my labours I tender grateful thanks: to make distinction would be invidious.

Many of the street names I have left untouched, simply because their designations are so apparent that no explanation is required, or perhaps it is they have no story worthy of narration.

The history of our town may not stretch any considerable distance into the past, yet many traditions have gathered round our streets and some of the buildings thereon situated which merit a better fate than untimely oblivion. If some of the old stones that I wrote of could speak, what stories might they not tell! Right from the time when there were a few houses huddled together on the seashore up to the present day, what could they tell you of how our ancestors lived and had their being - but 'tis a vain dream! Yet I have done that which lay within my power and consulted the most reliable sources open. It may be thought during the progress of the book that I have been too prone to wander from my immediate subject, but surely a little license is permissible for the sake of awakening the echoes of other days! I must confess, along with Goldsmith, that I love everything that's old - old friends, old times, old manners, old books, old wine; and surely I will imbue my readers with just a sensation of the same predilection.

GARDNER BLAIR.

## CHAPTER 1 - THE SHAW STEWART FAMILY

In the early history of Greenock, a certain amount of chaos existed regarding street nomenclature, for as the town was comparatively small one hundred and fifty years ago, and the population not so dense as it is now, everyone was presumed to be able to find his way without trouble. With the march of Fears, the exigencies of business requirements, and the greater number of strangers that visited these shores, difficulties were experienced under the existing conditions that might well have been avoided, and, accordingly, the Town Council took the matter into consideration.

The business was fully discussed, and the following is an excerpt from the minute of meeting of Town Council, 8th August, 1775, resolving to name the streets "Same day the meeting, considering that it is necessary that the streets in the town have names to distinguish them from each other, therefore they agreed that the streets after described should be called as follows The Large Street, from the Row end to the Mide Quay, to be called Shaw Street ; from the Mide Quay to the Bridge, Dalrymple Street ; from the End to the Square, Cathcart Street ; the street from the Square westward, Hamilton Street ; from the Square to the Mide Quay, William Street ; from the place where the Poultry Mercate is kept to the Flesh Mercate and westward, Mercate Street [now called Market Street] ; and the street leading from the Laigh Street to the head of the Long Vennel, Charles Street."

Not a few of the thoroughfares are indebted to the Shaw-Stewart family for the names they bear, thus illustrating the friendly relations that have always existed between the landowner and the people of Greenock. It seems to have been a tradition with the family of Ardgowan that in the friendliest feudal spirit they should consider the estate as but an extension of their hearth. Included in this list are Sir John's (Schaw) Brae, Octavia Terrace, Springkell Street (after the estate of that name, Sir Michael, fifth Baronet, having married a Maxwell of Springkell), Shaw Street, Cathcart Street and Square, Houston Street, Hamilton Street, Sir Michael Street, Dalrymple Street (Margaret Dalrymple, Lady Schaw), Mearns Street (the estate of Mearns was acquired by Sir Archibald Stewart, Knight, of Ardgowan, in the seventeenth century) and Nicolson Street (the Nicolsons of Carnock have been represented by the Stewart family, through marriage, since early in the eighteenth century).

The origin of the names of Ardgowan Street (east and west) and Ardgowan Square is obvious. The word Ardgowan is generally held to signify the hill of the smith-ard, hill ; gowan, smith-probably from the fact that in olden times one of these craftsmen there plied his art, which then, owing to the demand for fine armour, was of more importance than now. The common tradition that the word means "the hill of the daisies" is more poetic, but will scarcely bear the test of strict investigation.

The first House of Ardgowan, the ancient stronghold of the Stewart family, was built against the old tower of Inverkip, which was granted to the ancestor of the present laird by King Robert III. The present House is within a stone's throw of the Tower, and commands an unrivalled view of the firth and the Highland hills towering over the Cowal, Loch Long, and the Holy Loch districts. In one of the rooms a silver tablet may be found bearing the following inscription:

House of Ardgowan. Begun 10th April, 1798; finished 13th November, 1801.

The garden begun 10th April, 1798; finished 1799.

The offices begun 1801; finished 1804.

The whole built by Sir John Shaw Stewart, Bart., of Greenock and Blackhall.

Above this tablet hangs a portrait of Sir John Shaw Stewart, and the arrangement of the house and gardens speaks eloquently of the artistic perception with which he must have been endowed.

Sir Michael Street was named after the grandfather of the present Laird, and Octavia Terrace after his mother. The names of the other streets might be separately attributed to their various owners, but perhaps it is better to give a short account of the Shaw Stewart Family, and trace the manner in which the broad lands of Ardgowan came into their hands, than to deal with each street in detail.

The origin of the family of Ardgowan and their male descent from Robert III., King of Scots, second King of the Stewart line, is clearly traced by written documents. These are preserved in the family charter chest, and include three charters granted by Robert III to John Stewart, designed his well-beloved son, and to the heirs of his body, of three estates, still belonging to the family, and which have ever since descended from father to son, or from uncle to nephew, although till the year 1790 there was no entail of these estates.

The first charter is that of the lands of Auchengowan, in the parish of Lochwinnoch. It is dated at Linlithgow the 10th day of July, in the year of grace of the King's reign, 1390. These lands were feued out to various vassals about the year 1640, but the superiority still belongs to the family. Being the first grant to John Stewart, he was afterwards

designed John Stewart of Auchengowan.

The second charter was that of the lands of Blackhall, in the parish of Paisley, and is dated at Dundonald the 12th day of December, in the sixth year of the King's reign 1395. The first mansion house there was originally a Royal residence. It is now a ruin, but part of its site is occupied by Mr. Riddell, the well-known dealer in Clydesdale horses, and tenant of Blackhall Farm.

The third charter is that of Ardgowan, in the parish of Inverkip, and is dated at the Castle of Rothesay the 5th day of May, 1403, and of the King's reign the fourteenth year. Carnock Street is named after the estate in Stirlingshire, which accrued to the Ardgowan estates at the beginning of the eighteenth century through marriage with the Nicolson family.

An illuminating sidelight as to the condition of the country at the time the Stewarts acquired the first of their estates is given in connection with their relations to the Church of Rome. In the family Pedigree Book there is a note saying that in 1402 the above-mentioned John Stewart gave a grant of the fourth part of the lands of Finoachun, in Cowal, to the Church of Dunoon "for the safety of his soul and for the souls of his ancestors and successors." This is more than the customary tithe, but apparently more was wanted than salvation for one soul, and the quotation is interesting also as showing the immense power of the Church in those days.

The Shawes are one of the oldest families in Scotland, and were originally de Chatto or Schatto on the Scottish side of the border. The family descended from Shaich, a son of Macduff, Earl of Fife. Greenock was not the original family estate. The original home of this branch of the Shawes was Sauchie, and they acquired the barony of Western Greenock in the reign of King Robert III by intermarriage with the daughter and heir of Galbraith of Greenock. It would seem that after this they were promiscuously designed of Sauchie and Greenock.

William de Shaw (note the nobiliary and territorial de) swore fealty to Edward I. in 1296. In 1409 the monks of Melrose received from Malcolm de Galbraith, Lord of Greenock, a grant in exchange for a tenement in Kinross, they also paying twenty merks to his kinsman, James de le Schaw. In 1415 Thomas de Schatto confirmed to the Monastery at Melrose a grant of certain lands. (These three items alone are worthy consideration of the Clan Chattan, and of any others who have supposed the Shaws of Greenock-and of Sauchie-to have come from the Highlands.)

Greenock belonged to the Galbraiths, a Lennox family. Malcolm de Galbraith of Greenock had two daughters, one of whom carried Nester Greenock to Shaw, and the other Easter Greenock to Thomas Crawford of Auchinames. The descent of Easter Greenock is obscure, but it eventually vested in Sir John Crawford, Bart., of Kilbirnie, whose eldest daughter married, in 1659, Sir Archibald Stewart, afterwards first Baronet of Blackhall (paternal ancestor of Sir Hugh), and his youngest daughter married, in 1664, the Hon. Patrick Lindsay. Easter Greenock was sold in 1669 by the said Patrick Lindsay and his wife to Sir John Shaw, Knight, afterwards (1687) first Baronet of Greenock. By this purchase the ancient Barony of Greenock, after being divided for more than two hundred and fifty years, was reunited; and of new erected into one free Barony by the charter of King Charles II., July 11, 1670. The charter bears to be granted to him for his good services to the Royal cause, and it was ratified by Parliament on September 6, 1681.

Sir John Shaw, in his father's lifetime, had led two hundred of his tenantry in the service of the King, and at the battle of Worcester he was Lieutenant-Colonel of the regiment of horse commanded by the Earl of Dunfermline. He obtained the honour of knighthood on the field from His Majesty. Sir John, who died in 1694, was buried in the Abbey Church of Holyrood. The second Sir John, his son, was a zealous supporter of the Revolution, and raised a regiment at his own expense in King William's service. He was an officer in the troop of gentlemen Volunteers, and fought against the insurrectionists commanded by the Earl of Mar. In Hogg's "Jacobite Relics," he is thus described at the battle of Sheriff Muir:

"Sir John Schaw, that great knight,  
With broadsword most bright,  
On horseback he briskly did charge, man;  
A hero that's bold, none could him withhold,  
he stoutly encountered the targemen."

Besides six sons, he had a daughter, Margaret, by his wife Helenor, eldest daughter and co-heiress of Sir Thomas Nicolson, Bart., of Carnock, Stirlingshire. By a somewhat unusual entail, executed by Sir John in 1700, Margaret (and not her brother), the third and last Baronet's daughter, Lady Cathcart, in her issue became heiress of the estate of Greenock.

This deed of entail was subscribed at Edinburgh in presence of sixty-three witnesses-thirteen Peers, thirteen Baronets and Knights, and the rest judges, &c., all of whom subscribed their names, and were entertained to a banquet. A lucky document this for the Stewarts, and an equally unluckily one for the Cathcarts, the heirs of line of Sir John. Margaret Shaw married, about 1714, Sir John Houstoun, of Houstoun, third Baronet, and had one son, Sir John (to whom she made over the estate of Carnock on his marriage), and two daughters, the eldest of whom, Helenor, in 1736, married Sir Michael Stewart, third Baronet of Blackhall. They had two surviving sons, Sir John and Houstoun, the latter of whom succeeded to Carnock. The elder son, Sir John -the first Shaw Stewart-succeeded to the paternal estates of Blackhall, Ardgowan, &c., in 1796, but already (1752) he had succeeded to the Greenock estates of his maternal grand-uncle, Sir John Shaw. Sir John Shaw Stewart died without issue in 1812, when his title and estates devolved on his brother Houstoun's son Michael, fifth Baronet, and Lord-Lieutenant of the County. The latter was succeeded by his eldest son Michael, sixth Baronet, some time M.P. for the County. He was succeeded in 1836 by Sir Michael Robert Shaw Stewart, born in 1826. In December, 1852, he married Lady Octavia Grosvenor, daughter of the second Marquis and sister of the first Duke of Westminster, the issue of the marriage being five sons and two daughters. Sir Michael died on Thursday, December 10, 1903, at Ardgowan. His son, Michael Hugh Shaw Stewart, eighth Baronet, who prefers to be known as Sir Hugh Shaw Stewart, married Lady Alice Thynne, daughter of the Marquis of Bath, on 14th November, 1883. Lady Octavia resides at the family estate at Fonthill, Wiltshire, where lived at one time William Beckford, the author of "Vathek," an Arabian tale of gloomy and imaginative splendour. The famous tower he built there fell in 1825. Fonthill was bought by Lady Octavia's father, the second Marquis of Westminster, and by him bequeathed to the late Sir Michael, his son-in-law.

To return to the family of Shaw. The third and last Sir John Shaw of Greenock, who died at Sauchie Lodge in 1752, maintained his feudal jurisdiction with old exactness. On the occasion of proclaiming fairs and similar occasions, he was wont to cause the banner which had been borne by his grandfather at Worcester to be carried before him and his feudal Bailies and heads of trades while perambulating the town of Greenock.

It seems that although the Shaws had jurisdiction of Wester Greenock, they did not receive any special charter for the Town of Greenock till the year 1635, which charter was ratified by an Act of Parliament by Charles I in 1641.

The first pier or landing stage (according to Campbell's "Sketches of Greenock") was built by John Shaw of Greenock shortly before he received the charter of 1635. It seems, however, that the prosperity of Greenock dates from the year 1707. Before that time there was no pier - only a rude landing stage which Sir John Schaw had provided for his barge in the bay. In 1707 the work of constructing a harbour was commenced, and three years later was completed at a total cost of £5,555. The harbours at the foot of William Street are therefore the oldest in Greenock, if not on the Clyde.

Cathcart is supposed to be derived from kerkert or caer-carl-the castle on the Cart, the river of that name at Paisley. Some authorities prefer caeth-cart-the strait of Cart, the river in the parish of Cathcart running in a narrow channel. The surname was first assumed by the proprietors of the lands and barony of Kethcart in the reign of William the Lion, who succeeded to the Crown in 1165.

There is a tradition in the Cathcart family that either Sir Alan Cathcart, the companion-in-arms of Robert the Bruce, or his son, attended Douglas to Spain on his way to the Holy Land with the heart of the Hero of Bannockburn, in consequence of which the Cathcarts have a heart on their coat of arms.

In the centre of Cathcart Square may be seen a horse-shoe set into a stone, with the dates 1635-1894. In the former year the town was erected into a Burgh of Barony, and in the latter year the horse-shoe was placed in position. About three feet from the corner of the kerb at the west side of Bank Street there is a well. It is about forty feet deep, and when the ground above was being repaired in the summer of 1899, it contained about twenty-five feet of water. When the Lyle Fountain was gifted to the town in 1879, the oldest well in Greenock was abolished, and so passed away an ancient landmark, for it was there that our ancestors gathered in the evening of the day and of their lives, and discussed, in their own quiet way, the men and manners of their times.

Macaulay, in his history of England, gives us an interesting glimpse of our town and of its commercial importance in the seventeenth century. In chronicling the movements of the Earl of Argyll's troops upon it in 1683, in connection with the abortive attempt of the Duke of Monmouth on the throne of James VII., the historian observes that :-

Ayrshire was Cochrane's object; but the coast of Ayrshire was guarded by English frigates, and the adventurers were under the necessity of running up the estuary of the Clyde to Greenock, then [1685] a small fishing village consisting of a single row of thatched hovels, now a great and flourishing port, of which the Customs amount to more than five times the whole revenue which the Steuarts derived from

the kingdom of Scotland. A party of militia lay at Greenock, but Cochrane, who wanted provisions, was determined to land. Hume objected. Cochrane was peremptory, and ordered an officer named Elphenstone to take twenty men in a boat to the shore. But the wrangling spent on the traders had affected all ranks. Elphenstone answered that he was bound to obey only reasonable commands, that he considered this command as unreasonable, and that, in short, he would not go. Major Fullarton, a brave man esteemed by all parties, but particularly attached to Argyll, undertook to land with only twelve men, and did go in spite of a fire from the coast. A slight skirmish followed. The militia fell back; Cochrane entered Greenock and secured a supply of meal, but found no disposition to insurrection among the people.

It is also safe to assume that the party visited the well in Cathcart Square, which was one of the oldest in town, and must have been the watering place of the various crafts that visited "the single row of thatched hovels." Speaking of these streets reminds me that the oldest house, or indeed building, of any kind in Greenock appears to be that tenement on the north side of Shaw Street, at the foot of Cross-shore Street, which has over the threshold of one of the doorways the date 1716, cut clearly into the stone. It shows out prominently, being displayed in golden lettering. There is little to be gleaned regarding the building, the feu contract giving no information of value to the historian, it merely being mentioned that John Speir, merchant in Greenock, was granted permission to erect a tenement and weir and two little houses upon the north side of the High Street in the town of Greenock. The weir seemed to have served the purpose of keeping the tide away from the property; but John Speir, merchant in Greenock, made it 180 feet long, instead of 108 feet long, and thereby incurred the anger of several people interested. Now John Speir and the weir are gone, but the old houses yet remain. It is also noteworthy that this was the first slated house in town.

## CHAPTER II - INVERKIP AND FINNART

The pedestrian who wends his way along the street which owes its name to the neighbouring village of Inverkip, and the motorist who uses the country road of the same name as a route for going somewhere in a hurry, seldom think of the ancient traditions of the clachan of Inverkip. In a quiet, sequestered nook at the mouth of the Kip Burn, a few peaceful dwellings occupy part of the site of the rude huts of our forefathers; for it is generally assumed that the greater part of old Inverkip was situated higher up the hill than the present village. Feuing at no time has been extensively encouraged in this delightful retreat, with the result that it maintains a calmness, a repose that is refreshing, and, unfortunately, far from common in these bustling days of the twentieth century.

In several old documents the name of the village is written "Inverkip," when obviously the proper way is "Inver-kip" - at the mouth of the Kip. The same derivation is discernible in Inverness, Inveraray, and many other Scottish towns and villages. There is a legend in connection with this corrupted spelling which may be recalled. There lived at one time a dominie in the village who had certain convictions as to how the name of Inverkip should be written. So sure was he of the correctness of his views, that he called upon the then Laird of Ardgowan, and by importunity and argument eventually made him a convert. The rest was easy, for in all official documents the name appeared as Innerkip, and for a time won a place with the people. So it remained until the true etymology was restored; but still the ancient name is used by many of the older generation, while the Innerkip Society does its best to perpetuate the error. So goes the story, and there seems no reason to doubt its probability.

Of the two roads existing between Greenock and Inverkip, the upper or north one is the older. The greater portion of the ground on which the lower road is formed must have been for many years a swamp land, flooded in wet weather by the Ravenscraig Burn. Accordingly, that which might now be called the High Road was the Auld Kirk Road, and the one that has been trod many a time by our ancestors on their way to public worship before the Old West Kirk was erected.

Three miles out from Greenock is the ruin of what is popularly known as Cresswell or more properly Chriswell Castle, and round which many legends centre. The lands in the Parish of Inverkip were granted by the Crown in 1591 to Robert Stewart, brother of James Stewart of Ardgowan, who built the now ruined castle, using as a quarry the chapel and appendages that once stood in the vicinity.

The fact that the family of Ardgowan is descended from the Royal House of Stewart must be responsible for the old legend, which said that the Stewarts would be Kings and Queens of Britain so long as Chriswell Castle remained intact. It is useless seeking a reason for such legends, but, like many others, this one eventually proved true. Owing to increasing communications with Inverkip, the desirability of forming a better road than the high one was considered necessary, and in its formation was led through the Castle of Chriswell.

Shortly afterwards the Stewarts entered on a sea of troubles that finally swept them out of the land of their origin. Old

folks nodded their heads and looked wise, and so was the legend fulfilled. The walls of the castle that remain - a few crumpled gables on each side of the highway-are fully four feet in thickness, but no dated or carved stones can be seen, all having evidently been removed at some previous date.

What gave the castle its name was the Chapel of Christ's Well, or Chrystiswell, which appears to have been founded in the year 1404, about the time the lands of Ardgowan were conferred on John Stewart. In these days of long ago, many cures were wrought by faith alone, and probably the pilgrim would spread to his brother the virtue of Christ's Well, near by the village of Inverkip. The well still exists, and when repaired a few years ago was found to be of considerable depth, and lined with stone. Part of this stone had given way, and the water was being sullied and so made unfit for use, for the dwellers at Chriswell Farm employ the once holy water for ordinary domestic purposes.

Over the well once stood a chapel, and in the vicinity would be the presbytery of the priests. But all that now marks the situation of the once popular resort of pilgrims are two common red bricks, partially covered with grass, in the corner of a field. Surely the well that was once the quest of many is worthy of some memorial to notify its site!

Continuing along this delightful road, almost arched with the branches of the glorious trees that line each side, the pedestrian arrives at Homestoun Brae, where a pause of a few minutes is amply repaid. Turning in the direction of Ardgowan, one of the sweetest of landscape views may be seen. There is nothing to disturb the peacefulness of the scene. About a hundred feet directly down a wooded declivity, the traveller may hear the Kip Burn singing merrily. Over the waves of the branches the smoke of the Home Farm is seen ascending; while perhaps just a glimpse of a chimney may be had hinting of the cosiness within. More trees-and we have Ardgowan House standing with the look of a guardian over the happy vale; while beyond, the sea and the hills of Argyllshire. It is a subject dear to memory and pregnant with many a thought!

The town or village of Inverkip is frequently mentioned in the history of Scotland in the thirteenth century, in the wars with the Danes and with the English in the time of Robert the Bruce.

In 1307 the Castle of Inverkip, which is now spoken of as the Tower and is situated on the lawn at Ardgowan, was held by an English force. Shortly before the battle of Loudon Hill, Sir James Douglas attacked and defeated Sir Philip Mowbray, who, with a thousand men, was marching from Bothwell into Kyle, and Sir Philip, with much difficulty, escaped to the Castle of Inverkip from the angry Scots. In Barbour's "Bruce" the escape of Sir Philip is mentioned in the following quaint language:

"Therefore the wayis tuk he then  
To Kilmarnock and Kilwynnyne  
And till Ardrossane efter syne,  
Sync throu the Largis, him allane  
Till Ennerkip the way he tane,  
Rigcht to the castell that wes then  
Stuffyt all with Ingless men,  
That him resaiffyt in daynte."

In the year 1455, Donald Bullach, Lord of Isla, a chief of formidable power, not only in Scotland but in the north of England, animated by hereditary hatred against the Scottish throne, conducted a naval raid along the western coast of Scotland, and thence holding his progress to Bute, the Cumbræes, and the fertile Island of Arran. He burned down several mansions in Inverkip around the church, harried all Arran, levelled with the ground the Castle of Brodick, and wasted with fire and sword the islands of the Cumbræes. Is it not fortunate that we have only the echo of those "old forgotten far-off things and battles long ago?"

These are amongst the earliest references to Inverkip, and show how far back it may trace its history with authenticity, while probably many older but unverified legends might be given.

Terrace Road owes its name to the terraces which at one time led down from the old Mansion House to the sea, several of which yet remain in front of the Well Park. At one time the thoroughfare was known as Mansion house Street. Two old guns, taken from the Russians during the Crimean War, are mounted on the topmost terrace, and have an awe-inspiring effect, but that is all, for they serve as hobby-horses for children!

A railway company, requiring ground for the extension of its line, has no soul for the poetry of the past nor historic associations, and many a fine old building is obliterated in the advance of the iron way. Such was the fate of the old Mansion House, situated immediately beyond the east wall of the Well Park. It was once the residence of the Lord of the Manor, and before its demolition served as an estate office. It was razed in 1886 to permit the Caledonian Railway



Company to extend its line to Gourrock, and the legend of its ghost and all its ancient glories were changed into memories of the past. Mansion house Lane describes the alley which led to the old mansion, which was built about the year 1630, and was in a good state of preservation when pulled down. The old well (hence the name Well Park) was once a spring, then a draw well, and bears the legend 1629, which is the oldest figured date in town. The well has four stone pillars supporting a pyramidal stone covering, and in addition to the date there may be traced the monograms of Sir John Schaw and his wife. It is wonderful to think of the old well and its stone covering having been there unprotected for close on three centuries.

Many derivations have been suggested as the meaning of the word Greenock, but that which says it signifies the Hill of the Sun is not generally known. Grian means the sun and cnoc a hill, and in addition to being like the word as it is now pronounced, it is exceedingly probable that it is the correct one. It is given in "The New Statistical Account of Scotland" (1842), and it is explained that the "name is derived from the hill on which stood the Mansion House of Greenock, which is never in the shadow, while the rest of the town is much overshadowed, especially in winter."

It will be perceived that quite a number of the streets owe their names to the Shaw Stewart family, and it will generally be agreed that the majority of these are at once euphonious and quite distinct from the street names of other towns. Before finishing this chapter of the history, there are other two street names that should be included in this category. The first of these is Finnart Street, one of the most beautiful of the many fine thoroughfares in the west end of the town, which derives its name from the farm of Finnart. The ruins of the old farmhouse may be seen in the field west from the south of Forsyth Street. The farm was so designated after the estate of Finnart, which at one time pertained to the Shaw Stewart family. The word is not peculiar to the district, and, judging from the etymology, one estate has been named after another, simply for euphony's sweet sake. It seems that Finnart is derived from Fionn - white, and aird - a point; therefore, the interpretation of the word, which is of Gaelic origin, is "the white point."

The first mention of the lands of Finnart in connection with this locality is when James Stewart of Ardgowan (he who was dispatched by the Scottish Regency during the minority of James V. in command of a body of troops to assist Christian II, King of Denmark, in his Norwegian wars) obtained, 10th April, 1527, from Sir James Hamilton of Finnart, the Superior, a precept investing him in certain lands.

Later, Alexander Schaw (son and heir of Sir James Schaw of Sauchie, and direct ancestor of Schaw of Greenock), on 31st December, 1540, obtained a charter of the lands of Fynnart from King James V. These lands previously belonged to Sir James Hamilton of Fynnart, son of the Earl of Arran, who was Lord High Treasurer of Scotland in the reign of King James V. He was forfeited in 1540, when the lands of Fynnart were bestowed by King James on the said Alexander Schaw.

Patrick Street is named after the late Mr. Patrick, a member of the firm of Messrs Patrick, McEwan & Carment, W.S., Edinburgh, who, when the street was formed, and at the present day, transact a portion of the legal business in connection with Ardgowan and the other estates of the Stewart family. It is a coincidence that one of the chapels of the Roman Catholic section of the community is situated in this street, although the Patrick we speak of had no connection with the Saint that is associated with Ireland. Only associated, it will be remembered, for St. Patrick was a Scotsman, and was born on the north bank of the Clyde, not far from the town by which his name is commemorated! Some authorities prefer to consider Patrick Street being so called in honour of Sir Hugh Shaw Stewart's great-uncle Patrick Shaw Stewart, Member of Parliament for Renfrewshire (elected 1841), who was a favourite son of the fifth baronet and brother of the sixth baronet.

### **CHAPTER III - THE CHURCH - THE OLD WEST KIRK**

Several of the street names have various ecclesiastical traditions, many of them reaching far into the past. The appellations in connection with the Old West Kirk are amongst the most ancient, and, considering the honoured part the edifice has played in local history, it is perhaps fitting that this chapter should so commence. The church is officially referred to as the North Parish Church, but the kinder designation still clings, like the ivy, in spite of all that officialdom may do. Of this I am glad, for it helps the people to bear in mind the day when Protestantism dawned in this island, the Old West Kirk being unique in that it was the first Protestant church built in Scotland after the Reformation. The charter is dated Holyruid-hous, 18th December, 1589, and is given to Sir John Schaw. In it King James says that he is "movit with the earnest zeill and grite affection our lovit Johnne Schaw of Grenok hes ay had to Goddis glory and propagatioun of the trew religioun." The church was opened on 4th October, 1591, at a total cost of 3,000 merks Scots, or 2166 13s 4d sterling. The foundation stones were boulders taken from the shore, while the walls were also formed of rough material. The church has been extensively repaired on various occasions, till now little of the original walls remain. The kirk is also remarkable in being the only Protestant church in Scotland honoured with a Royal charter and confirmed in the privileges of the same by a special Act of Parliament.

The little thoroughfare known as Kirk Street owes its name to its proximity to the picturesque old church. Time was when pleasant fields and sunny bays environed the old kirk in place of sombre streets and harbours, while now great vessels in course of construction in the adjacent shipyard may be seen poking their noses up to the moss-clad tombstones! Those were the days when the fishermen would come sailing up the estuary of the West Burn on the Saturday evenings, glad to regain once again these quiet waters and pastures green, where they might have a short season of repose.

The character of the Glebe - the word itself signifies earth or soil - has changed since those days; but the feuing is more remunerative than the fields of golden grain, and so the teinds of the parish minister are quite secure! Teinds is the name given in Scotland to tithes.

It might be mentioned these originated at a remote period. At the Reformation, John Knox contended that after allotting some provision for the displaced Roman Catholic clergy, the remainder of the teinds should be used for the support of Protestant ministers, for universities and schools, and for the poor. Through the opposition of the aristocracy, the arrangement was but practically carried out. At the union between England and Scotland in 1707, the Lords of the Court of Session were appointed to be commissioners of teinds, and power was given them to determine "the transporting of kirks, as the population moved from one locality to another, "the consent of three-fourths of the heritors in point of valuation being necessary to warrant the removal. The Glebe at one time pertained to the Old Kirk, but the ground passed into the possession of the West Parish Church in Nelson Street at a time when the "Old West" was abandoned to the rocks.

The church was disused in 1841, after having been for two hundred and fifty years the parish church, and for a hundred and fifty years the only one in Greenock. It was restored and reopened on Christmas Day, 1864, through the liberality of the inhabitants. In 1872 a sum of £2,396 13s 3d was raised locally in order to create the North Parish - quoad sacra - and that is the reason the Old Kirk received its now official designation.

The manse of the Church was recently demolished to make way for the extension of Messrs Caird & Co.'s shipyard. It was a curious building, with medieval gables of corbie steps, and the date of its erection, 1625, engraved on the lowest. Many a time must the minister of the Old Kirk have stood at his door and looked over the happy fields and the expanse of firth and seen the sun sinking to rest in all its glorious splendour! Many inspirations for counselling the people must he have found in such a sight! It is pleasant to think of the days when the minister exercised a patriarchal jurisdiction over the parish; when everyone knew that the manse was close to the kirk; the glebe, with the cow, completing the picture of rustic felicity. It may be observed that all parish ministers appear to be entitled to a glebe, with the exception of ministers in Royal burghs proper, who cannot claim a glebe unless there be a landowner's district attached, and even in that case, where there are two ministers, it is only the first who has a claim.

The Rev. Robert Steele, who was the inducted minister of the parish in 1792, was familiarly spoken of as "the Bishop," due to the kindly traits eulogised in the previous paragraph. He married a Miss Boyd, and in this we find the origin of the name Boyd Street. It was during the term of office of Bailie Hugh Crawford that an Act of Parliament was obtained to permit the feuing of the Glebe. As a reward for his services, Crawford Street was so called in his honour.

### **THE MID PARISH CHURCH**

All this while the population of the town was steadily increasing, and, in 1759, Lord Cathcart gave a present of a suitable site for the purpose of erecting thereon another church. On the 6th April, 1759, the foundation stone was laid, and in the year 1761 the church was pronounced "a substantial, safe building, and immediately occupied as a place of worship." The model of the Mid Parish Church is that of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, London, and the portico, with the four pillars of the Ionic order, gives it at once a simple and majestic appearance. The steeple was not completed till 1787, and though a hundred and forty-six feet high, it is less than was originally intended, as the funds declined with more rapidity than the steeple was erected. The estimated cost of the edifice, exclusive of the steeple, was 657 10s 2d, which must be considered extremely moderate, even taking into account the lower wages and the greater purchasing power of money in those days. The church has accommodation for 1,600 worshippers, and is generally considered one of the handsomest in town. It is the official church of the Corporation, where the Councillors are "kirked" after an election. On account of its proximity to the Mid Kirk, Church Place is so named. The old church in the Square is closely associated with the life of the burgh, for it is from the balcony in front that all official proclamations are read, including the notices of the accession of the monarchs of these islands.

The manse pertaining to the church was situated in Manse Lane, but in these latter days it gave place to a spirit store, and now a music-hall has been erected on the site of what was once a country parsonage!

The Magistrates were bound to use the ground granted by Lord Cathcart for the purpose of erecting a manse, under pain of forfeiture. The house was built in 1765 and about the year 1813 the manse and gardens were sold, owing to the increasing traffic of the town and the general unsuitability of the locality as a residence for a minister.

The feu for the new manse was given off in Houston Street by Sir Michael Shaw Stewart for a payment of a grassum of £200, and it was not until 1855 that a feu contract was executed. It might be mentioned that in 1785 the minister's stipend, including sacramental elements and a free manse, was, £111. In 1829 it was increased to £295. In the present year of grace it is £400.

### **SAINT BLANE**

About the eighth century there dwelt in Scotland a fraternity of monks known as Culdees, and it is said, this sect had a chapel in Kilblain Street, where they worshipped St. Blane. The prefix Kil is found in many name-words in Scotland, and signifies a cell or chapel, so Kilblain Street, being interpreted, thus signifies the Chapel of Blane. It is worth while recalling that each settlement of the Culdees was governed by its abbot, and was practically independent of the central body. The "pure Culdees" are familiar in poetry and legend, but are unknown to history. At one time distinguished above their fellows for learning or piety, they gradually became more remiss. The changes introduced to the Scottish Church by the influence of Queen Margaret and her son, King David, effected a great and beneficial revolution. Along with other sects, the Culdees conformed to the stricter discipline enjoined. The chief houses of the old rule disappeared in Benedictine and Augustinian monasteries, while their last appearance in Scottish history is in connection with the unsuccessful attempt of the prior and brethren of the Order of St. Andrews, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, to maintain their ancient prerogative of assisting at the election of a Bishop of the primatial see.

At different times human remains have been dug up in George Square, and it is surmised that this was the graveyard in connection with the chapel.

The ecclesiastical character of the locality has been maintained up to the present day, for within a stone's throw of the west-end of Kilblain Street one may count close on a dozen churches. Indeed, so noticeable is this fact that George Square is sometimes referred to as "Mount Zion!"

When the ground at the north side of Kilblain Street was being cleared at the beginning of 1906 for the extension of Hastie's Engineering Works, a discovery was made bearing out my contention of a chapel once having been located in this neighbourhood. In the course of demolishing the house that stood at the corner of Kilblain Street and Nicolson Street, the workmen came upon a piscina built in the wall. It accorded exactly with the usual shape of such relics of "the old faith," and was one of the few links with Greenock and its half-forgotten past. The piscinas were generally in the south walls of old chapels, but this may have been used simply as a useful stone found on the ground. Unfortunately, it was smashed to pieces by one of the workmen, who was only disappointed at not having found any treasure in the stone! A few photographs were taken on its immediate discovery, and these are all that remain of what was undoubtedly a valuable relic.

### **SAINT LAURENCE.\***

The story of Saint Laurence as here given is taken from *Les Petits Bollandistes*

For many years a chapel dedicated to Saint Laurence has been situated in the East-end, and when the thoroughfare from Lauriston Street to Crescent Street was opened up, it was naturally called Saint Laurence Street, the road being that which led to the chapel. Indeed, the district is closely associated with the name of the Saint. The East India Harbour occupies the place where once was the sandy bay of St. Laurence, and this designation it received from the old chapel that stood in the vicinity. About the year 1760, the chapel here was in a good state of preservation, but no particular information seems to have been handed down regarding it. It was demolished about a hundred years ago, but the name of St. Laurence was given to the chapel that was erected not far from the site of the old one.

The original chapel stood on the site at the west corner of Virginia Street, which belonged to the heirs of Roger Stewart. When the foundations of his house were being laid, a number of human bones were found, which indicates that a burying ground must have been attached to the chapel. Between Rue-end Street and Stanners Street was a church which was at one time the oldest in Greenock not connected with the Establishment.

It was built as an Old Light Anti-burgher meeting-house in 1746, and after fulfilling its purpose for many years was rebuilt in the year 1828. At the Disruption of 1843 it was secured by one of the Free Church congregations, who

worshipped there till the members erected a new church in Lynedoch Street, opposite Well Park; and it was subsequently purchased by the Caledonian Railway Company, who, on altering their arrangements in connection with Cathcart Street Station, re-sold it to the Rev. William Gordon in 1855. After alterations, it was opened as a Roman Catholic place of worship on 12th August of the same year. For the next forty-six years it served the requirements of the Catholics in the district, inadequately enough during its latter period, for the congregation had increased considerably. As is usual with the building of any church, much talk precedes the event, but the expression of the people concentered when the present handsome Gothic chapel of red sandstone at the corner of Carnock Street and Dellingburn Street was opened on the 3rd November, 1901. It was designed by Messrs Pugin & Pugin, of London, and has accommodation for one thousand worshippers. It is due largely to the energy of its late pastor, the Rev. Michael Fox. D.D., that the Catholics of the East-end owe their magnificent church.

If Spain boasts of having given birth to the martyr St. Laurence, Rome is glorified in having served as the theatre of his triumph. History is silent regarding his infancy and education, and, from the quiet and obscurity of the country, he burst upon the world already environed with the aureole of sanctity.

Sixtus, being raised to the Pontificate in 257, ordained Laurence deacon of the Church of Rome. In this office he had charge of the gold and the other treasures. Shortly afterwards, the Emperor Valerian published his bloody edicts against the Church, and among the first to suffer was the Patron of Laurence. When being taken to the place of martyrdom, St. Laurence asked him that he also might have the privilege of martyrdom, and so render his testimony to the faith. Saint Sixtus offered consolation by observing that he was far from being neglected, and the faith of Jesus Christ would call him to greater combats than his. He was already old, and a light proof would he all that he would be asked to undergo, but Laurence, who was young and vigorous, would be afforded the opportunity of a triumph much more glorious. Sixtus went to shed his blood for his faith, but in three days he would follow him. After Sixtus had given the kiss of peace, they separated, Laurence, as instructed, giving to the poor the treasures with which he had been entrusted.

The Emperor heard about the admonition of Sixtus, hailed Laurence before his tribunal, and demanded the production of the treasures. St. Laurence requested the term of three days to gather them, which the tyrant accorded. He then collected all the lame, the halt, and the blind, to whom he had given alms, and with this suite proceeded to the palace of the Emperor, addressing him thus - "August Prince, behold the treasures of the Church which I bring unto you treasures eternal, which ever augment, and never pass away."

The Emperor was indignant at such audacity. He commanded his skin to be torn with scorpions, and, to frighten him the more, brought into his presence all the instruments of punishment which they used upon the martyrs. Instead of dismaying Laurence, it merely fortified him in his resolution to die as one who believed in his Church. The Emperor next had him whipped with rods, but the answer to this was: "Know now, unhappy one, that the treasures of Jesus Christ so make me triumph that I do not feel your torments." Worse followed. The Emperor had him suspended in the air, and burned his sides with red-hot swords. The Saint despised such torments, and this tranquility served to reanimate the tyrant. He attributed a victory so miraculous to the enchantments of the devil, and then threatened him with fresh punishments. Again came the quiet, confident answer: "By the grace of God, I do not fear the torments, for they cannot be of long duration: do boldly that which thou can'st to make me suffer."

The Emperor was so beside himself by this new defiance, that he had the martyr beaten with leaded whips in a manner so cruel that he thought his life was departing, and Laurence raised his eyes to heaven and asked God to receive his soul. But he heard a voice saying that he was not at the end of his pains, and that he had yet many trials to suffer.

He was then stretched on a wooden horse, where his limbs were dislocated, which was followed by again having his skin torn with scorpions and with other instruments of punishment But the Saint mocked his executioners, and asked for grace to bear his tribulations.

The Emperor continued to threaten, saying that he would leave him all night to the torturer, but Laurence replied that it would be for him a bright and happy day, when there would be light without obscurity. Then he was struck on the mouth with stones, but that again served to strengthen him in the faith. At last the tyrant, not able to delay his fury, prepared a bed of iron in the form of a grille, and, stretching out the saint martyr, they lit under him a little fire, so that he might be roasted slowly and so that his death would be as cruel and as tedious as possible. It was a torture intolerable, but the Emperor, in place of having compassion, insulted him and pressed him with more rage than ever to sacrifice to his gods. But St. Laurence, always constant, exclaimed: "Know, miserable, that thy fire is nothing more than refreshment for me, and that it reserves all its ardour to burn thee eternally and without consuming thee." Then, turning with a smiling face, he said to his executioners: "Do you not see that my flesh is burned enough on one side? Turn the other." When they had turned him, he said to his judge, "My flesh is sufficiently roasted. Ye will now be able to eat me."

At last the time of his victory arrived, and thanking God for having so happily opened the gates of heaven, his spirit fled, and he went to receive that crown which surely was his due.

Such was the death of the martyr St. Laurence. Prudentius, the first of the early Christian verse-makers, writes of his victories and his struggles, and said Laurence dated the death of idolatry, for from that time Paganism commenced to fall into decadence, and the name of Christian became victorious.

### **CHAPELTON**

At the time the Culdees had a place of worship in Kilblain Street; legend says that a chapel existed in the thoroughfare that is known as Chapel Street. All things pass away, and in the fullness of time the chapel was nothing more than a memory; but traditions were sustained, and the district became known as Chapelton. At one time a farm there bore such a name, so, when the street was opened, what fitter appellation could be found than Chapel Street? Before the Mid Parish Church was erected many good people in the East-end gathered for divine worship in a loft in the Royal Closs, and it was there that the celebrated preacher George Whitefield gave a sermon on the text: "Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there?" He was one of the founders of Methodism, and died in Boston, U.S.A., in 1770.

True to the traditions of the locality, a Chapel of Ease was erected in the neighbourhood about the year 1774. It was a plain building surrounded by trees and a wall, while close by was the manse. It was originally only a chapel of ease to the Mid Parish, but a few years later it was raised to the dignity of the East Parish Church. The building, after being some eighty years in existence, was found to be unsuitable, and the congregation removed to the present church in Regent Street, which was opened in the year 1853, under the ministry of the late Rev. James Hutcheson.

The Greenock Grain Mills now occupy the site of the old church, but the antiquarian will still find the old manse building adjoining the mill.

### **SAINT ANDREW\***

The story of Saint Andrew as here given is taken from Les Bollandistes

It is quite obvious that the names of Saint Andrew Street and Saint Andrew Square have been given in honour of the Patron Saint of Scotland, and it is worth while noting that of the Patron Saints of the countries comprising the United Kingdom, Scotland alone has chosen from amongst the Apostles of our Lord. Let us see how this came about.

St. Andrew was the first of the Apostles who followed Christ, and in this he showed others the manner in which they might find the truth. He was born in the quiet village of Bethsaida, in Galilee, which also became famous through its connection with Christ. In his early life, Andrew found employment as a fisherman, as did also his brother Peter and his father, fishing daily in the Sea of Galilee. So their peaceful life continued, until one day, having heard of the prophesying of St. John the Baptist in the desert, Andrew set forth to seek him, and, having learned of his doctrine, he prayed to be received amongst the disciples. St. John agreed, and commenced to sow in his heart the seeds of that eminent sanctity for which he was afterwards celebrated. As John was the precursor of Christ, Andrew naturally preferred the sun to the aureole, and so left John. Afterwards, Andrew led his brother to the feet of Christ.

Andrew nor Peter did not forsake their vocation at this time, but about fifteen months later Christ was passing by the shore of the Sea of Galilee, where they were throwing their net into the sea from their boat, when He said unto them: "Follow me, and I shall make you fishers of men," and the same moment they quitted their nets, their ship, and their work, to lead henceforth the life of Apostles of Christ.

It is not necessary to detail the events of St. Andrew's life that are dealt with in the Scriptures, but, apart from this, his history is not so well known as it might be. St. Andrew travelled in many countries, preaching unto the heathen, making an infinite number of conversions, founding churches, creating priests, ordaining bishops, establishing the necessary rules for each ecclesiastical community, and doing other good works, many of which are recorded in the Gospels. In asking the pagans to forsake their doctrine of superstition, Andrew preached even more eloquently in his daily life than he did with the words of his mouth.

After a number of journeys in all directions, illuminating the darkness with the word of the Gospel, Andrew returned to Achaia, and in the town of Patras, the capital, commenced to speak against the idols and persuade the people to recognise Jesus. Ægenas, who was Proconsul of the province, having been informed of this, exercised diligence in getting to Patras in order to stop the progress Andrew was making with the people. As soon as Andrew knew that he

had arrived, he did not wait until he was compared, but, in his zeal for the glory of God, went first to remonstrate with him.

"Is it not necessary, Ægenas, that you, who have received the power to judge other men, should know about your judge who is in the sky, and that knowing him you should abandon the impious worship of these idols to which a foolish superstition attaches you?"

"Are you, then, that Andrew," said the Proconsul, "who wishes to destroy the temples of our gods and persuade everyone to adopt this new religion condemned and proscribed by the laws of the Emperors?"

"These edicts," retorted Andrew, "were published because the princes did not understand the grand mystery of the healing of souls, nor know that the Son of Man was come to disarm the demons and our enemies, and to lead them into captivity."

"Such pretentious discourses," replied Ægenas, "did not prevent the Jews seizing Jesus and attaching him ignominiously to the cross."

"It is true," said Andrew, "but what is more noble and more glorious than that cross? He was nailed to it for the love and the redemption of suffering humanity. It was his great charity that brought him to that pass, and I myself bear testimony of it, having often heard from His own mouth the predictions of His death and the assurance which He gave, that such immolation was necessary for the salvation of the world."

"It matters little," sneered Ægenas, "whether he was crucified of his own free will or in spite of himself. It is enough that he was crucified because the people would not adore him, and how can one recognise as a God a crucified man?"

The Proconsul, irritated by this discourse, cast the Saint into prison, hoping that the punishments which he would have to endure would cause him to change his opinions. Hardly had he done this, however, when a great multitude from the town and the environments assembled, seeking to destroy Ægenas because of his action. They tore open the gates of the prison, and set Andrew at liberty, but their designs filled him with sadness and he demanded to be heard. He told them how the Saviour had endured patiently the torments of His Passion, and that He charged them, by His blood and by His death, not to change the peace.

The first movements of sedition having been appeased, Ægenas on the following day compeared Andrew before his tribunal. "I am persuaded," he observed, "that the night will have given you good counsel, and that by now you will have changed your solutions"

Instead of changing them, I wish to draw all the world to Jesus Christ and abolish the cult of idol worship. That is the reason why I have preached so frequently in this province; and I have the consolation of having undeceived many and gained them for my Saviour."

"That is why I complain," replied Ægenas; it is for that that I wish thee to renounce thy superstition in order that you may repair the evil done by thy predictions. The temples of our gods are deserted, their cult is abandoned, and their rites are without honour. Having the author of such disorder before me, it is necessary that I order him to apply the remedy, and that he renders to the gods the veneration which is their due; otherwise, the punishment of the cross is assured thee."

"Oh! How long wilt thou persist in thy blindness and obstinacy? Do you think I fear the torments with which you threaten me? On the contrary, I welcome them; but that which makes me suffer is to see you so far from the ways of truth. The more I shall suffer the more glorious shall be the crown I shall receive from my Saviour. And I shall be to Him the more acceptable because I have endeavoured to imitate Him in His patience and sufferings."

Ægenas would not understand such philosophy, and treating Andrew as a man beside himself, condemned him to be stretched on a wooden horse and whipped. The sentence was executed with all sort of inhumanities. The body of Andrew was sadly torn, his sufferings being greatly augmented by the cold, which entered his wounds, causing him pain almost insupportable. In place of diminishing his courage, it inspired him with a new ardour-so much so that, being led before the Proconsul, he spoke with more eloquence and force than ever of the good fortune he had of dying on a cross for Jesus Christ.

Ægenas, seeing that he gained nothing of the inflexible Andrew, commanded that he be crucified, but to make his punishment the more tedious he ordered the executioners to attach him with cords instead of nailing him to the cross,

in order that he might not lose any blood.

A crowd of people seeing this done, cried out: "Who has suffered this just man to see death?" But Andrew, who did not consider further than that he was suffering in the name of his Master, raised his voice and conjured them not to binder his martyrdom. He was two days hanging on the cross, during which he did not cease to exhort the faithful, and to scorn, nay, welcome a passage of torment in order to merit eternal felicity. The people were extremely vexed to see him suffering so long, and a deputation went to the Proconsul in his palace, and pointed out the barbarity of torturing a man who was chaste, pious and modest, and who had taught them so beneficial a doctrine.

Ægenas, fearing sedition, promised that he would grant their wishes, and came to the place of punishment. As soon as Andrew perceived him, he cried: "What do you want here? If it is to believe in Jesus Christ, I assure you that he will accord you mercy; but if it is to make me descend from the cross that I will not do, for I wish to have the consolation of dying for my Master. I see Him already, I adore Him, and His presence fills me with joy! My only regret is your obstinacy in the superstitious worship of idols."

Notwithstanding this, Ægenas commanded the executioners to detach him, but they explained that it was impossible to do so, for when they approached the cross their strength failed and their arms became as it were crippled.

Then Andrew prayed to be received in heaven, as he was now "all full of the knowledge of Your greatness which my suffering has given. You are my dear Master, to whom I am known, whom I have loved, and whom I desire to contemplate. It is in You that I am what I am, and the time has now come when I re-unite myself to You as the centre of all my hopes and the object of all my affections."

Having spoken these words, he was, in view of all beholders, environed with a light the brightness of which they were not able to endure, and half-an-hour afterwards, as the light commenced to evaporate, so did the spirit of the martyr steal away to the heavens, to receive there the crown of immortality.

A lady named Maximilia, wife of a Senator, having noticed from where she was that the end had come, took the body from the cross with the aid of her domestics. She embalmed it with precious perfumes, and interred it in a place which she had destined for her own sepulchre.

Ægenas was irritated at this action, but, not daring to maltreat her, he resolved to complain to the Emperor. When he was hearing witnesses in order to prepare his accusation, he was seized by a furious demon (says the old commentator), which entered into his body, and in the public square was he strangled. It was probably a fit of some description. All the inhabitants of Patras who were not already Christians were so frightened with this event that they embraced the Christian religion without delay. The martyrdom of St. Andrew took place on the 30th November, 62, under the rule of the Emperor Nero.

Constantine the Great afterwards had the body of Andrew removed to Constantinople, and placed in the Church which was built in honour of the Apostles. It is not known how long the relics rested there, but at a later date they were transferred to Amalfi, near Naples, where they are said to rest at present, with the exception of certain bones which were distributed amongst other churches.

There seems to have been something peculiar in the form of the cross on which he suffered. It was commonly thought to be a cross decussate, or two pieces of timber crossing each other in the centre, in the form of the letter X, and hence usually known by the name of St. Andrew's Cross. It is said that St. Andrew did not deem himself worthy to be crucified on a cross similar to that of his Master.

Before the remains of St. Andrew were removed from Constantinople, legend says that a Greek monk named Regulus or Rule dreamed that God wished him to carry certain portions of the relics to the then almost unknown West. In fulfillment of his vision, Saint Rule and his companions took shipping, and eventually were wrecked on the east coast of Scotland, in the vicinity of the town that is now known as St. Andrews. It seems to be by reason of this legend that Scotland is so fortunate in the choice of her tutelary guardian.

In St. John's Gospel it is recorded that, when our Saviour wished to feed the five thousand, Andrew said unto him, "There is here a little boy who has five barley loaves and two small fishes, but what is that amongst so many?" It has been insinuated that this explains why Andrew is the patron Saint of Scotland!

Then there is the tradition in connection with the cross decussate that appeared in the sky, which is referred to in Skene's "Celtic Scotland." It is to the reign of Angus, son of Fergus, about the year 760, that the foundation of the

Monastery of Kilrimont or St. Andrews properly belongs. According to the earliest form of the legend, the King of the Picts, Angus, son of Uirguist by name, with a large army, attacks the Britannic nations inhabiting the south of the island, and cruelly wasting them, arrives at the plain of the Merse. There he winters, and being surrounded by the people of almost the whole island with a view to destroy him with his army, he is, while walking with his seven comites, surrounded by a divine light, and a voice, purporting to proceed from St. Andrew, promises him victory if he will dedicate the tenth part of his inheritance to God and St. Andrew. On the third day he divides his army into twelve bodies, and, proving victorious, he returns thanks to God and St. Andrew for his victory. Wishing to fulfill his vow, he is uncertain what part of his territory he is especially to dedicate as the principal city to St. Andrew, when one of those who had come from Constantinople with the relics of St. Andrew arrives at the summit of the King's Mount, which is called Rigmund. The King comes with his army, and at a place called Kaiteman is met by Regulus, the monk, a pilgrim from Constantinople, who arrives with the relics of St. Andrew at the harbour called Matha. Skene, in "Celtic Scotland," says that this legend must be taken for what it is worth, but it may also have been from this that St. Andrew was adopted as the National Saint for so permitting the King to triumph over his enemies. St. Andrew thus succeeded his brother St. Peter, whom the Pictish King Nectan (710) had appointed to protect the kingdom.

St. Andrew, as well as being the Patron Saint of Scotland, occupies a similar position in Austria, Avranche, Baeza, in Andalusia (because that town was stormed by the Mohammedans on the 30th November, 1227), Bordeaux, Borgogne, Brabant, Brunswick, Holstein, Luneburg (Hanover), Minden (Westphalia), Orange (Vaucluse), Pegaro (Italy), Russia, Sleswick, and of Wells and Rochester in England.

The fishermen and the fishmongers recognise him as their especial guardian.

#### **CHAPTER IV - HISTORIC CHARACTERS.**

##### **LORD LYNEDOCH\***

\* The information in this chapter is derived from a memoir of Lord Lynedoch by John Graham Murray.

Thomas Graham of Balgowan, Perthshire, was married in 1743 to Lady Christian Hope, daughter of Charles, first Earl of Hopetoun, and Thomas, afterwards Lord Lynedoch, and the hero who gave his name to Lynedoch Street, was born in 1748 at Newton of Blairgowrie, the mansion-house of a property then belonging to Mr. Graham. Amongst the tutors that young Graham had the benefit of was James Macpherson, of "Ossian" fame, with him passing the autumn of 1760 in study at Moffat. In 1774, Graham married Mary, second daughter of the ninth Lord Cathcart, and this seems to be the chief connection that the future Lord Lynedoch had with the town of Greenock. After seventeen years of happy wedded life, his wife died when in pursuit of health on board ship off the coast of Hyeres, on 26th June, 1792. They had no children.

The lairds of Lynedoch had not originally all of the estate of Balgowan, and the remaining portion was not acquired by Graham till about the year 1785. The estate is situated in a picturesque part of the valley of the Almond. He was so partial to Lynedoch that the house and grounds of Balgowan came to be comparatively neglected, while excambions of land were arranged so as to enlarge the estate in the direction of Lynedoch and diminish it on the side of Balgowan.

Graham began his military career as an opponent of Napoleon. The fact seems startling, but it is true. When Lord Hood, Admiral of the British Fleet in the Mediterranean in 1793, sailed from Gibraltar for the South of France, with the object of assisting the Royalist population of Toulon, he was accompanied by Graham. He landed with the British troops, about 5,000 in number, and, later, acted as aide-de-camp to General Lord Mulgrave. It is unnecessary to detail the history of the siege, but in it Graham played a notable part until it was raised by Napoleon, which act the Last of the Conquerors always regarded as his first historical achievement.

Inspired with military ardour, Graham obtained permission to raise a regiment of foot, afterwards the 90th Regiment, he being appointed Colonel on the 10th February, 1794. It was officially known as the Perthshire Volunteers, but familiarly as "Graham's Grey Brecks," from the colour of their uniform. In the following month of April, Colonel Graham was elected Member of Parliament for Perthshire, so with politics and military matters he contrived to have a busy and a useful life.

The 90th Regiment soon saw service, but its Colonel was not with it during the early part of its career. He was with the Austrian army in the north of Italy, and was besieged in Mantua, with Wurmser, but volunteered to run the gauntlet of the French lines and carry a message to the Austrian General Alvinzi.

In the General Elections of 1796 and 1802 he was returned for Perthshire without opposition, but resigned on the dissolution of Parliament in April, 1807, as his pro-Catholic views did not find favour with the majority of his



constituents.

Although forsaking an active political life, it afforded the hero of this sketch a fuller opportunity of devoting himself to matters military, and as a patriotic soldier he earned undying fame. In Moore's famous retreat to Corunna, Graham acted as his confidential aide-de-camp, and it is admitted that he executed in an efficient manner all the duties with which he was entrusted. At the midnight funeral of the General, the story of which has been so eloquently told in verse, Graham was one of the witnesses. He returned to England with the fleet from Corunna, and was shortly afterwards promoted to the rank of Major-General.

In 1810 General Graham was appointed to command at Cadiz, and this gave special satisfaction to Lord Wellington, who wrote to the British Ambassador at Cadiz, his brother Henry, saying that he would find Graham a most able and active officer.

On the heights of Barossa on 5th March, 1811, Graham gained his great and signal victory over the French, and although he had the normal support of Spanish troops, the brunt of the work was borne by the British soldiers. In this action the French had about eight thousand men engaged. Their loss in killed, wounded and prisoners was some three thousand, two general officers, six pieces of cannon, an eagle, while nearly five hundred prisoners were taken. The loss on the British side was between one thousand one hundred and one thousand two hundred, of whom two hundred were killed. Graham and his troops received the congratulations of the Commander-in-Chief (Wellington) for their victory-one of the hardest actions in the course of the campaign.

In 1813 Graham was again engaged in the Peninsula, and it was admitted that the manner in which he brought his troops through all obstacles to the point of concentration near Vittoria contributed largely to the success of this campaign. Graham was in command of the troops on the first unsuccessful attack on San Sebastian, but later he was able to report to the Marquis of Wellington of the storming and capture of the place. The war was continued into French territory, and Graham established himself there with the troops of the allied British and Portuguese who had so frequently distinguished themselves under his command - thus being the first to unfurl the ensign of Great Britain on the soil of France.

Shortly afterwards, Graham left for England, where on the 8th November, 1813, a formal vote was moved by Lord Castlereagh, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, first to the Marquis of Wellington, and then "that the thanks of the House be given to Lieut.-General Sir Thomas Graham, Knight of the Most Honourable the Order of the Bath, for the eminent services performed by him in the course of the late military operations in Spain particularly for the ability, enterprise and perseverance with which he conducted the siege and capture of the town of San Sebastian."

On the 3rd May, 1814, he was created a peer of the realm, with a pension of £2,000 a-year, taking as his title Baron Lynedoch of Balgowan.

In 1829 he was appointed Governor of Dumbarton Castle, then a post of some distinction and little profit, but the greater part of his life after the war in the Peninsula was spent in travelling at home and abroad.

In 1843 Lord Lynedoch was in his ninety-sixth year, but to the last maintained his active and temperate habits. On the morning of the day on which he died, 18th December, he insisted upon rising and dressing, but it was the final flicker before the end! His remains were taken from London to Lynedoch, and interred in the Mausoleum at Methven, all in the district able to do so taking part in the funeral procession.

In reviewing his life, the Press of that day said that Lord Lynedoch left behind him a name which would be held in honoured remembrance while loyalty was considered a virtue and military renown a passport to fame.

### **THE EARL OF ELDON**

The beautiful thoroughfare in the west-end of the town known as Eldon Street takes its name from the Earl of Eldon, seemingly from no other reason than that as a statesman he bulked prominently before the people of these isles for many years. To have risen, without advantage of birth, property, or connection from a comparatively humble situation to the summits of rank and wealth has been the fortune of many an ambitious mortal, but at the same time to have assisted at the formation and direction of national opinion and feeling is that of which all men cannot boast. Yet such was the story of the life of John Scott, afterwards Earl of Eldon. He was born in Newcastle in 1751, and died in 1838; had a brilliant reputation as a lawyer, but was not credited with much ability as a statesman in his position as Lord Chancellor. Although of a somewhat peculiar, and even parsimonious, nature, he was capable of noble and generous deeds. In short, although an old-fashioned Tory, he was an affectionate and dutiful son, a true and tender husband, a

kind and liberal father, and a cordial and grateful friend.

Lord Eldon had one direct transaction with this community which is worthy of notice. In 1829 he received no less than nine hundred petitions from various parts of the country against the proposed Roman Catholic Emancipation Bill. Amongst the number was one from Greenock, and in presenting it to the House of Commons, he observed "that this was a proof of education in Scotland, and in particular in Greenock, that in a petition so numerously signed (five thousand names) the signatures were all written and only three marks."

Not always was Eldon Street the comfortable thoroughfare for pedestrians that it is to-day. At one time it was close by the shore and the only road to Gourock, and, if high tides prevailed, Greenock's western neighbour was cut off from civilisation until the weather moderated. About the year 1740 the roads in this district, as in other counties in Scotland, were maintained under the Acts of Charles II and George I, called the Statute Labour Acts, by which the justices of the Peace were authorised to call out the tenants, cottars, and servants, with their horses, carts, and implements, for six days yearly, to make and repair the highways within the county. As these Acts were everywhere found ineffectual, turnpikes were introduced into Scotland in 1750, and vested in trust in the proprietors of the land. It was about this time that the road from Glasgow to Greenock was made. The statute labour was reserved for the cross and parochial roads in the county, which were in such a state as to be almost impassable and altogether unfit for carriages. In fact, vehicles were then little used, for so late as the year 1770, lime, coal, grain, etc., were usually carried on horses' backs.

The turnpike roads were largely maintained by the dues obtained at the toll-bars, one of which was situated in Eldon Street, at Cardwell Bay, the Old Toll House being still standing. The following figures will give some idea of the tribulations that afflicted those who travelled in carriages in those days. What would the users of vehicles say at the present day if they had to draw up every few miles and pay so much for using the roads? The rates given were those levied in the vicinity of such towns as Greenock:

For every chaise drawn by two horses	1s 6d
For every chaise drawn by one horses	0s 8d
For every horse not in a carriage	0s 3d
For every cart drawn by one horse	0s 6d
Other carts according to size, from	9d to 2s 3d

From Whitsunday, 1810, to the same period in 1811, the income from toll-bars in Renfrewshire was £10,300, but this large sum proved inadequate for the support of the roads, the interest of debt, and the expense of management. The effect of the mail coaches, which were exempted from paying toll, in injuring turnpike roads and impairing the income for their upkeep, was a sore point with the Road Trustees. They endeavoured to obtain a repeal of the Act granting this exemption. Of the mail coaches which were daily dispatched from Glasgow at the beginning of last century, two ran to Greenock and returned the same day; one to Ayr; and there was a daily arrival in Glasgow of a mail coach from that town. Changed times from to-day, when trains are dispatched every hour to and from Glasgow, Greenock and Ayr. A post gig ran between Greenock and Largs. These, it was estimated, passed over a hundred and eighteen miles of turnpike roads within Renfrewshire, occasioning, it was calculated, a loss of toll duty to the amount of £1,022 per annum, or nearly a-tenth of the whole revenue of the county tolls. "It was not," said the Road Trustees, "from a view of the aggregate loss that the extent of the evil was to be estimated. The great weight of the carriages and the velocity with which they travel injure the roads to an extent which the toll chargeable for them, though paid, would not compensate." The statute labour on public and parish roads was converted into money in 1792, and so were the people relieved of an obnoxious service.

It seems an old story to the days when toll-bars existed, yet they were not abolished in Renfrewshire until the year 1882, in terms of the Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878. The receipts from tolls in the county, including the various Road Trusts, for the year ending 15th May, 1882, amounted to £17,596, exclusive of the statute labour assessment. This was the last year of the Renfrewshire tolls.

It is worth while considering the sum received at the present day for the upkeep of the county roads, the total amount being nearly double that received under the toll-house system. Yet the extra amount is quite easily expended, for, in addition to the extra mileage, there is also the excellent condition in which the roads are now kept to be remembered. No one ever now hears of a cart sticking in the mud between Glasgow and Greenock, yet such was not an uncommon experience in "the good old days." As for figures, the sum received during the year from Whitsunday, 1905, to Whitsunday, 1906, for the upkeep and management of roads and bridges in the county was as follows:-

From assessments	£22,403	17	9½
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From Government under Agricultural Rates, &c. (Scotland) Act, 1896, in respect of occupiers' rates	1,694	7	2
Subvention from city of Glasgow and burghs of Rutherglen, Govan, Partick, and Kinning Park	5,000	0	0
From Government Department towards cost of maintaining roads	1,413	6	2
Compensation for improvement and restoration of roads	88	17	9
Rents of old toll-houses	25	0	0
Wayleaves from telephone and railway companies, etc	104	13	6
Compensation from railway companies,	164	2	1
Gravel and road metal sold	122	8	6
Hires of steam road roller and stone breaker,	79	14	6
Solum of metal magazine sold,	5	10	10
Miscellaneous,	2	5	10
Total,	£31,104	4	1½

### LORD BROUGHAM

Although Lord Brougham and Lord Eldon were generally unable to sympathise with each other's public views, their names will go down to posterity in this community as linked together in one street. At the commencement of Eldon Street Brougham Street terminates, and thus hand in hand through the ages, as it were, do the great Chancellors go. Brougham Street, as may naturally be surmised, commemorates Lord Henry Brougham, who was born in the city of Edinburgh in 1778, and, after an eventful life of ninety years, died at Cannes in 1868. He was educated at the High School and the University, and in 1800 was admitted as a member of the Scottish bar. It may be mentioned that in 1802 he helped to found the Edinburgh Review, contributing largely to its early issues. Perhaps he was the best-known advocate of his time, and even if he never had a very large practice, he distinguished himself by many speeches of vigour and ability. His most famous and most popular appearance was in defence of Queen Caroline in 1820, and from that date onwards he was the idol of the people. It was perhaps for this reason that Lord Brougham's name was chosen for the thoroughfare it now adorns. Of his Lordship, his detractors remarked, in depreciation of his many and varied abilities, that if he knew a little about law, he would know a little about everything!

### SIR THOMAS BRISBANE

General Sir Thomas Brisbane, who was born at Largs House, Ayrshire, in 1773, has his memory perpetuated in this community by the name of Brisbane Street. It is worth while remembering that he was the first person who sailed from the Clyde with all the requisite instruments for ascertaining his position at sea with anything like precision. Amongst them were several chronometers, a circular tool by Troughton, divided in gold, and a sextant by Dolland. The General and Quintin Leitch, then master of the brig Clyde, communicated by signal during the whole voyage, and through life a warm friendship existed between them. Sir Thomas was Governor-General of New South Wales from 1821 to 1825, and died in the year 1860. Brisbane, the capital of Queensland, was named in his honour.

### LORD NELSON

No less than four street names in town owe their designations to Lord Nelson of the Nile. In the first place there are Nelson Street (West) and Nelson Street (Glebe); then Nile Street and Trafalgar Street, after two of his famous victories.

More than a hundred years ago Great Britain was at war with France, and France was at war with the world. To-day peace reigns abroad, and seldom if ever has our country been on such friendly relations with the French nation. A century ago, the glory of Napoleon was at its zenith, and few at that period could resist the power of his genius, which was such as to make him dictator of the greater portion of the Continent of Europe. On the sea Napoleon never ventured to tempt his star of destiny, and his admirals were singularly unsuccessful in securing that command of the ocean highways so necessary to those rulers who seek to establish a powerful and independent empire. Yet such was the dread Napoleon's name inspired, that Britain accorded the man credit for greater genius than he perhaps possessed, while the feelings of the populace were so strained that they were willing to believe any wild rumour of the

invasion of their land.

The most conspicuous instance of the bravery of our forefathers was at the well-known battle of Armady, when an alarm had been given that some French frigates were coming up to burn our town, when the whole of our forces, consisting of volunteers, etc., were shipped on board a frigate, and the private ships Neptune, St. Andrew, and Mercury. The public rejoicings when any great battle was fought were also proof of how deeply the inhabitants felt for the honour of the country.

The illuminations for the battle of Trafalgar, which closed the glorious and eventful life of Lord Nelson, were as universal as they were deserved. It is a fact, says "Weir's History," not generally known, that it was in the arms of a Greenock seaman - a seaman who had been in nearly all his victories - that the hero was conveyed to the cockpit after receiving his death-wound on the quarter-deck of the Victory.

The noble fellow presented himself at the Theatre in Mansion house Lane, a few months after the battle, and stated the fact to the audience as an apology for his calling on the orchestra to play "Rule Britannia." This statement was followed by a terrific outburst of patriotic enthusiasm, the sailor even venturing to tell the story of the glorious fight in the bay and the details of Nelson's death. A similar scene occurred at Covent Garden Theatre at a later time, only with a greater variety of interesting incident.

At this troubled period, few places evinced greater loyalty than Greenock. Volunteers were raised, the Mass Regiment formed, and in addition to this Artillery and Rifle Corps were raised. About five hundred men were also known as the Clyde Marine Volunteers.

### **THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON**

Although the town cannot boast of any connection with the soldier who defeated the General who is spoken of in the same breath as Alexander and Cæsar, the local authorities showed their interest in Imperial affairs in having Wellington Street so named. It is worth remembering that the Duke was one who favoured Catholic emancipation, and, in conjunction with Peel, introduced a Bill in this connection in 1829. The Earl of Winchelsea published a letter accusing him of a design to introduce Popery, and the result was a duel in Battersea Fields-the only hostile encounter of the kind Wellington ever engaged in. The Duke intentionally fired wide, the Earl into the air and honour was satisfied!

Under his advice, the Lords rejected the Reform Bill of 1831, and the Duke only refrained from active opposition afterwards and allowed the measure to pass, because Lord Grey threatened to create a sufficient number of Peers to carry it. The hero of Waterloo was hooted by the mob for his conduct, and the windows of Apsley House were broken, so that later he had them protected with iron shutters. The Duke was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral, near the remains of Nelson, and all European nations were represented at the funeral, with the exception of Austria.

No relics of Wellington that I know of are preserved in the immediate vicinity, but there are several pertaining to Napoleon. At Ardgowan Sir Hugh Shaw Stewart has a life-size portrait of Napoleon, which was specially painted for the Emperor's mother by Lefevre, and by her presented to Sir Hugh's grandfather, the sixth Baronet, on one of his visits to Rome, where she resided. In a recess in the bottom of the frame there is a lock of the great soldier's hair (a curl of brownish colour); while, in addition to a cocked hat worn by him throughout his campaign of 1807-including the battles of Eglan and Friedland (where it was struck by a musket ball) and at the conclusion of the Treaty of Tilsit, there is also a wine bottle in a wicker case, found in the carriage in which Napoleon made his flight from the field of Waterloo.

### **CHARLES JAMES FOX**

A few of the streets that are named in honour of famous statesmen are so called because Sir John Shaw Stewart was friendly with many of the historic characters that lived in the later years of the eighteenth century. In this category Fox Street may be placed, after Charles James Fox, one of the most advanced reformers of his day. One of the lanes in the east-end was called after Fox, but the Superior afterwards considered that he might better honour his friend by bestowing his name on a more salubrious thoroughfare. Thus was the name given to Fox Street long before it was opened up, for it merely existed on the feuing plan when it was baptised.

It may be that the eccentricities of Fox were hereditary, for Lord Holland, his father, was a curious combination of contradictions. While loving his wife and adored by his sons, he was what the world generally calls "a bad man." Once Charles James avowed his intention of destroying a watch. "Well," said his father, "if you must, I suppose you must." Lord Holland's system of teaching the habits of dissipation left many marks on the gambler who affronted good King George the Third and who helped to corrupt George the Fourth. He was a great lover of literature, being equally at

home in Greek or Latin as he was with the British classics, being able, it is said, to repeat the greater part of "Paradise Lost" from memory. When Fox was congratulated on the success with which he played difficult balls at tennis, he said, "The reason is I am a very painstaking man." So it was throughout his life in whatever he did, it claimed his energies for the time being.

### **SIR ISAAC NEWTON**

It is a far cry to Sir Isaac Newton, who lived between 1642 and 1727, yet it was after him that Newton Street received its name. The discoverer of the law of gravitation was a profound philosopher and astronomer, and at first sight it does seem strange that a Greenock street should bear the name of so learned a man. Yet the explanation is quite simple-when it is known! On the south side of Newton Street, between Kelly Street and Robertson Street, may be seen a narrow, perpendicular building, which is almost obscured to the passer-by owing to the number of tenements that have been built there of late. This was erected by William Heron in the year 1819 for the purposes of an observatory, the Superior granting the ground free of the customary feu-duty, subject only to a small rent, in consideration of the benefit which the observatory was to be to the public. It was originally a one-storey building, but it now consists of three storeys and is used as a dwelling-house. Various instruments were fitted up in the observatory, and by means of these the correct time was ascertainable, which was indispensable for those vessels using chronometers. The last time James Watt was in town he visited the building, and pronounced it to be well equipped for its purpose, "having all the usual appurtenances of a properly furnished observatory" It may be added that the first observatory in Greenock was situated behind the Mid Parish Church; it was attended to by Colin Lamont, who was the first teacher of navigation here.

### **ROBERT WALLACE OF KELLY**

It is to a gentleman once resident in this neighbourhood that the country owes the advantages of a penny post, and in his honour, Wallace Square is so named. Mr. Robert Wallace of Kelly, M.P., as chairman of the committee appointed to consider the advisability of the penny postage, gave his casting vote in favour of its adoption, and so accelerated a consummation which was bound to be attained sooner or later.

Kelly Street is named after the estate which belonged to Mr. Wallace, situated in the vicinity of Wemyss Bay. It passed out of his hands during his lifetime. Mr. Wallace had been unfortunate in business, having lost heavily by failures in the West Indies, but it is gratifying to think that his friends were not unmindful of his excellent public services. A sum of money was subscribed sufficient to purchase an annuity of £500, and Mr. Wallace was thus enabled to spend the evening of his life in comparative comfort. In his retirement he resided in the cottage on the Esplanade situated almost opposite Bagatelle, the residence of the late ex-Provost W. W. B. Rodger, and there a useful career came to a peaceful end.

## **CHAPTER V - NOTABLE TOWN'S-FOLK**

### **JAMES WATT**

The most illustrious son of which our town can boast is probably James Watt, the great engineer, who was born in William Street on the 19th January, 1736, notwithstanding the eminence to which he afterwards attained, the streets that are named in his honour are not the most important. They are Watt Place, at the commencement of Terrace Road, and Watt Street, behind the memorial buildings in Union Street. At any rate, if his name has not been dignified by the thoroughfares that owe their appellations to this source, we may console ourselves with the fact that his memory has not been altogether neglected in town.

Although the improver of the steam engine was not born in the lap of luxury, he had a careful up-bringing, for his father was a small Shipowner and a Town Councillor of the burgh.

There are few finer memorials than the Library in Union Street, the foundation stone of which was laid in 1835. The site of this was gifted to the trustees by Sir Michael Shaw Stewart. James Watt, of Ashton Hall, the inventor's son, contributed £3,000 towards this memorial to his father. On a tablet on the foundation stone of the building is the following inscription: "To receive and preserve for the contemplation of succeeding generations, a marble statue dedicated by the inhabitants of Greenock to the memory of their illustrious townsman, James Watt, and to afford accommodation for a Scientific Library founded by him (in 1816) and for the Public Library of Greenock." The building was opened in 1837, and the statue deposited in 1838, the inscription on the pedestal, from the pen of Lord Jeffrey, being: "The inhabitants of Greenock have erected this statue of James Watt, not to extend a fame already identified with the miracle of steam, but to testify the pride and reverence with which he is remembered in the place of his

nativity, and their deep sense of the great benefits his genius conferred on mankind."

The Watt Monument Buildings were erected for preserving the commemorative statue by Chantrey; for preserving the books of the Watt Scientific Library, founded by Watt by a donation of £100; for containing the books of the Greenock Library, instituted January 1, 1783, and a repository for the mathematical books, the bequest to his townsmen by the mathematician William Spence, who was born in 1777 and died in 1815. In 1876 a building similar in architectural design was erected on the Watt Monument ground at a cost of £6,400, bequeathed by Mr. James McLean, sawmiller, "to be used for the instruction and improvement of the inhabitants of my native town, and the further furnishing of said building, and providing lectures on scientific, philosophical, literary, and other improving subjects, and providing a stock of suitable objects for the museum and works of permanent value for the library, and aiding in the maintenance and support of the said institution in other respects in a state of efficiency." It contains a portrait of Watt after that by Sir W. Beechy, a small likeness after the sketch by Henning, and other memorials of the inventor. In the vestibule of the Municipal Buildings is a marble bust by Chantrey, presented by the son of the engineer.

There is also a monument in the Cemetery composed of stones brought from various parts of the world, but the scheme was never completed. This "united effort of the whole civilised world," as one of the promoters termed it, was an abortive affair, for in place of useful stones coming in from all parts of the globe (as was anticipated), only a few were received, and these together make a dismal-looking pile. It was proposed to cap the whole with a time bell, but this also is wanting.

The origin of the name of the James Watt Dock in the east end of the town is obvious.

The house in William Street in which Watt was born was demolished about 1796, and although at various times a monument at that place has been spoken of, nothing has been done to mark the spot till recently. A fund was started by Mr. Andrew Carnegie with a contribution of £10,000 for the purpose of erecting a suitable memorial on the birthplace of Watt, and this is now completed. The building, of which Mr. David Barclay, Glasgow, is architect, is of two flats in the old Scottish style of architecture, showing a statue of Watt at the north-east corner. The site is limited in extent – 45ft. by 28ft. - and the accommodation within the building consists for practical purposes of two large rooms, to be utilised as class-rooms for the teaching of navigation and engineering, and probably for a collection of Watt relics.

Watt died in 1819, and was buried in Handsworth Church, Birmingham, but he was honoured with a monument in Westminster Abbey. On it Lord Brougham describes him as, "One who enlarged the resources of his country, increased the power of man, and rose to an eminent place among the most illustrious followers of science and the real benefactors of the world."

### JOHN GALT

In olden days the West Burn was a stream of considerable importance, and what should be more natural than the road that ran alongside should be termed West Burn Street. Before the days of steam many industries sprang up upon its banks, and its waters were useful in turning the wheels of various kinds of mills. In a report to the Presbytery it is described as "a greit burnes or watteres impassible in winter," but that was when it drained the hillside of the waters that Loch Thom now absorbs. The estuary of the burn also served as a harbour for the fishing fleet, and it must have been a bonnie picture to see the fishercraft sheltering under the lee of the Auld West Kirk. To many the stream was known as the Kirk Burn, and it was not uncommon to hear dwellers living in that locality referring to their homes as being situated in Kirkton. The once busy, once useful burn now finds its way to the sea in dreary subterranean passages.

On the gable of a building adjoining the main thoroughfare, in West Burn Street, may be seen a bronze tablet with the legend: "Here John Galt dwelt at his death, 11th April, 1839," for it was just when the flowers were thinking of blooming that the poet-novelist passed away. The building is now used by Mr. Alexander Ramsay as a drapery establishment, and in some of the upper rooms are preserved the old mantelpieces and grates, as they were in the days of the novelist. At Rosneath Street, on the Esplanade, there is a granite fountain in his memory, above which there is an artistic bronze medallion of his head, accompanied by the dates of his birth and death.

Not a success, yet not a failure, Galt was a strenuous worker, and a few biographical details dealing principally with his life in Greenock may not be out of place.

John Galt was born at Irvine in 1779, but his family came to Greenock when he was ten years old, and it is customary to refer to him as a member of this community. "A broad, gawsy Greenock man," says Carlyle; and, again, "he has the air of a sedate Greenock burgher." When his family removed here, the increased advantages of the town, in libraries

and other affairs, gave his literary instincts greater scope and enabled him to gain the information for the writing of the novels that ultimately proved to be the precursors of what is now known as the "Kail-yard school of fiction." Along with his friends, William Spence, the mathematician, and others, Galt spent his Greenock years "in a fury of excitement," having as relaxation walking tours, "undertaken earnestly for the acquisition of knowledge." The future novelist left town when he was five and twenty years of age, and the thirty-five years that remained were an adverse fight with fortune. According to his own exhaustive bibliography, he published no less than sixty volumes, indicating a mighty spirit of activity; It is pleasant to think that Galt was able to write that "much of my good nature towards mankind is assuredly owing to my associates at Greenock."

When it was proposed to enlarge the harbour of Greenock, Galt had the scheme of a genius to submit, and although not yet carried out, it may be some day. "In the firth opposite to Greenock," he writes, "there is a large sand-bank, often dry at low water. When it was proposed to enlarge the harbour, it occurred to me that this bank might be converted into land, and I have still a cheap and feasible plan to do it, but, unfortunately, the bank belonged to the Crown, and was too sacred to be improved." It may be added that the sand-bank was gifted to the Town Council by Crown Charter on 30th September, 1816. Galt sorrowfully observes that his schemes were of too grand a fabric to obtain any attention, because there were none of his contemporaries capable of appreciating their importance. In 1821 "The Ayrshire Legatees" was published, and then Galt came into his own with a series of novels of Scottish life and character, which are invaluable as a record of the modes and customs of his times. After a busy life in various parts of the world, he retired to Greenock, where three years of suffering were borne with fortitude and patience. As previously stated, he died on April 11, 1839. "A kinder or less complaining spirit never sank to rest," says one who knew him well. He was buried in the ground in Inverkip Street-a flat tombstone marking his resting place.

"The Annals of the Parish" is considered to be the most representative of the art of Galt. It is not generally known that the "Annals" deal with the daily life in the village of Inverkip in the days of the author.

In a note to that work the author observes: "One Sunday, happening to take a walk to the neighbouring village of Inverkip, I observed that, from the time I had been there, some progress had been made by Sir John Shaw-Stewart in turning it inside out. While looking at the various improvements around, my intention of writing a minister's sedate adventures returned upon me, as if the mantle of inspiration had suddenly dropped upon my shoulders, and I resolved to make the schoolmaster of the village the recorder of a register."

### GABRIEL WOOD

The pleasant thoroughfare in the west-end of the town, known by the name of Wood Street, owes its designation to him who has earned the title of "Greenock's foremost philanthropist." It is needless to say that it is not only by the street that bears his name that the memory of Gabriel Wood is kept fresh to this day, but also by the magnificent home for ancient mariners which he founded.

The institution (the foundation stone of which was laid on 17th October, 1850, the place being opened on 17th October, 1854) was erected for the reception of fifty aged and decayed seamen, natives of the counties of Renfrew, Ayr, Dumbarton, Argyll, and Bute; it also being a condition that any applicant for admission must have attained to the age of fifty years and be of good character. The handsome building is of the Elizabethan style of architecture, is situated at the west end of Newark Street, with a splendid prospect of the western hills and the great waters on which the inmates have passed so many years. The old fellows must have many thoughts crowding on their memories when they gaze on what might be termed the highway to all the countries of the world, and think of the days when they were strong and went down to the sea in ships. Many a time they must remember when –

"The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,  
Merrily did we drop  
Below the hill, below the kirk,  
Below the lighthouse top."

It is a comfortable "anchorage" in all respects, situated in its own beautiful grounds, where the old fellows may smoke the pipe of peace and exchange strange stories with each other. For "they that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep."

It would be well, then, to trace the career of the founder of the institution, so that all may know something of the man who was endowed with heart and money to conceive so commendable a scheme. It is a proud reflection when we remember that he was a native of this town. He was the second son of Gabriel Wood, a merchant of Greenock, who married a Miss Stuart, who by the way was connected with the Stuart family, Baronets of Castlemilk. The founder of

the Asylum in Newark Street was born on 19th May, 1767, and early in life entered the civil service of his country. After a youth of diligent study, in March, 1796, he set sail with Sir Robert Liston, His Majesty's representative to the United States, having obtained the appointment of Vice-Consul for the State of Maryland, then including the city of Washington. In 1806 Sir Gabriel returned to England for promotion, and was there detained by the death of Pitt and the subsequent accession of Fox, by whom he was nominated Consul instead of Vice-Consul.

On the death of Fox, Lord Grenville assumed the reins of Government, and it was deemed expedient, owing to the vast disbursements in the West Indies, to send out some experienced person conversant with Colonial business, who might superintend and control the expenditure in the Army and other departments of the public service. Sir Gabriel was selected, and, being appointed Commissary-General of Accounts, he proceeded to his post, at which he continued until 1811. In that year his services were required in the same capacity at the Mediterranean headquarters of the British forces, which was perhaps the most important position that was to be had in his department at that time. Napoleon was scouring the face of Europe pretty much as he liked in those days, and it rested largely with Nelson whether the star of the Corsican was to wane or to wax. We all know that the hero of Trafalgar did his share of the work, and it may be assumed that the Greenockian showed efficiency in his own province.

Sir Gabriel was next appointed to proceed to Canada as Commissary-General of Accounts in British North America, then the most considerable station of the army abroad. The climate did not agree with him particularly well, and after seven years' residence he solicited permission to be relieved of his duties. Accordingly, he arrived in England in 1823, and, in consideration of his long and efficient services to the Army and the country, was recommended by the Government to the notice of His Majesty George IV, who conferred on him the honour of knighthood in April, 1825

After a long and busy life, the worthy old gentleman passed quietly away at his residence, No. 3 Circus, Bath, on the 29th October, 1845, in the seventy ninth year of his age.

It was late in life that he married Louisa Augusta, eldest daughter of General Fanning, the event being solemnised on 28th June, 1830. This lady and her sister-in-law most loyally fulfilled the trust reposed in them, cordially co-operating with the executors of Sir Gabriel in carrying his wishes into effect.

The original sum bequeathed by Sir Gabriel was £38,000; Lady Wood bequeathed £3,200 in Russian bonds; Miss Frances Ann Wood bequeathed various heritable properties in Greenock and Gourrock; a sister of Lady Wood, a Mrs. Cumberland, left a sum of £3,500; and another sister, Miss Fanning, contributed £3,000.

As for the man himself, we have a glimpse of his character and ambitions in the address that was given by the Rev. James McKechnie, the chaplain of the Asylum, at the celebration of the jubilee held in October, 1902. In the course of his remarks Mr. McKechnie observed that "Greenock doubtless had more famous sons, men of wider repute and higher eminence, than Sir Gabriel Wood, but none whose memory better deserves to be gratefully cherished. He is our foremost philanthropist. It is not only in the extent of his munificence, though that was great, but in the wise and happy direction it took, that we recognise his claim to that title. No class of men have a harder life than seamen. Disqualified by years from undergoing the hardships of life at sea, disqualified by lack of training and other circumstances from engaging in work ashore, the aged seaman is indeed in an unenviable plight. In resolving to devote his wealth to the erection and endowment of a home for such men, Sir Gabriel Wood was moved by the happy thought, creditable to his judgment no less than to his heart. He was overtaken by death before he could carry out his benevolent intentions, but these were loyally and adequately given effect to by his widow, Lady Wood, and his sister, Miss Frances Wood, two ladies to whom the institution owes a debt of gratitude second only to that due to Sir Gabriel himself."

### **JEAN ADAM**

It requires no great perspicuity to discern that Main Street is one of the chief thoroughfares of the burgh, and hence its name. The street is situated in Cartsydyke, a barony that was annexed by Greenock in 1840, through the instrumentality of Provost Macfie.

Jean Adam, the author of "There's nae luck about the hoose," was born and resided in the house at 36 Main Street. The property now belongs to the Caledonian Railway Company, but some time ago was destroyed by fire and was never repaired. Jean's father was a shipmaster in Cartsydyke, says "Weir's History," and she was born there about 1710. She supported herself by keeping a school, and eked out her living by taking engagements as needlewoman in neighbouring families. Jean's fugitive verses were admired by her friends, and, acting on their advice, she collected her poems and had them published by subscription in a small duodecimo volume, printed in Glasgow in 1834 by James Duncan. The book was dedicated to the Laird of Cartsydyke, and the subscribers numbered 123.



The patron did not think so much of the poems as the writer, and, once when visiting her house at evening worship, he offered up a fervent petition that the Lord would prick the bladder of Jean's pride and let His word escape." Unfortunate poetess! The work was not a success, and, after a weary life of unhappy poverty, Jean died in Glasgow in 1765. She was buried at the expense of the Town's Hospital, where she had found a refuge from a world that is not always kind to those who court the Muses.

In connection with There's nae luck about the hoose," it may be mentioned that there are some authorities who do not recognise Jean Adam as the author of the song. A copy of the words was found amongst the papers of William Julius Mickle on his death, and for this reason the authorship of Jean is questioned. I do little more than record the dispute, which is not yet settled, although it is now generally admitted that the writer was the poetess of Cartsdyke.

### THE "LIGHTHOUSE" TENEMENTS

A little further east from Jean Adam's home are some old dwelling-houses, the appearance of which recalls the era when steam was an unknown factor in the art of marine propulsion and fishing the great industry of the burgh of Crawfurdsdyke. As may be imagined, it is a long day since the feus of these houses were given off, being originally granted by the Crawfurds of Cartsburn chiefly to fishermen and shipmasters in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

In referring to the writs and charters relating to these properties, one obtains many illuminating sidelights on the curious customs of our forefathers. Amongst them we may reckon anchorage dues and personal services, and in connection with the latter it was required that the feuar "pay and perform three days' service of one servant to our service within the said three merk land of Craufurdsburn when required, if the same be required, within the year allenary, and freeing, relieving and disburthening me and my foresaids of all public burdens that shall happen to be imposed upon our said three merk land, proportionately within the rest of our vassals and tenants." This was to be arranged in the Baron Bailies' Courts.

The Superiors granted anchorage rights on condition of the feuar "paying me and my foresaids yearly anchorages for all such vessels great or small as they shall have coming into the harbour of Craufurdsdyke, as any other vassals are in use to pay."

The tenements were acquired by the Caledonian Railway Company in 1865 for the construction of the railway works, and were originally eight in number, but with the exception of those still in existence and numbered 1, 2 and 3 (reading from left to right) on the photograph reproduced herewith, the buildings were demolished, and their sites are now occupied by the Cartsdyke mineral depot.

The tenements numbered one and two on the picture were acquired by the Company from Malcolm Carmichael, by conveyance dated 27th March, 1867. The windows in tenement number one are the interesting characteristics of the property. Originally there appears to have been three such windows in the tenement, but the topmost one has been partially closed up. These windows, being in the gable, were illuminated by the light from the fire at night, and this beacon was used as a guide by the fishermen approaching the old harbour.

When these tenements were built it is difficult to state precisely, but in 1705 they belonged to Archibald Yuill, skipper in Greenock, and afterwards, in 1775, became the property of David Blair, shipmaster, in which family the property remained down to 1845, when it was sold by them to Carmichael.

The tenement marked number two on the picture was acquired by the company from Mrs. Mary Weir or Houston in 1886. The oldest writs are a disposition by Matthew Ramsey, cooper, in Crawfurdsdyke, to Robert Arthur, skipper there, dated 17th April, 1701, and a charter by the Laird of Cartsburn to Arthur, dated May, 1701. The property underwent a series of transmissions to residents in Crawfurdsdyke till it became Mrs. Houston's property.

Such is the brief story of these relics of the past; but pausing to glance at them passing along the street, we cannot but think of the many stormy nights on which fishermen have strained their eyes to locate the kindly beacon that shone from the windows of this old gable, and being found, how gladly must they have run their craft into the shelter of the harbour.

The beacon windows are in the gable to the east, that is the left hand side of the picture, the lowest immediately to the right of the bay being clearly shown, the middle one also being visible, while the topmost is now covered up.

### **JOHN LAIRD**

Notwithstanding the fact that shipbuilders and shipbuilding have occupied a prominent place in the annals of our town, there is only one street that derives its name from this connection. The late Mr. John Laird, one of the famous Birkenhead shipbuilders, once lived and owned a large amount of property here, which has since passed into the possession of the Corporation. A portion of this property was situated in the vicinity of Laird Street, and hence the name. Mr. Laird was descended on the father's side from the Lairds of Kilmacolm, who had been farmers there for generations; and on the maternal side from Robert MacGregor, the Scottish chief and outlaw, immortalised by Sir Walter Scott in his novel of "Rob Roy." The street was formerly known as "Lord" Street, which seems to have been a synonym for "Laird" at one time.

### **ANDREW BOGLE**

No street in town owes its appellation to any supernatural phenomena, as one might at first imagine from some of the names. Bogle Street is called after a worthy merchant, Mr. Andrew Bogle, who evidently had some connection with the firm of Messrs James Bogle & Co., and who in 1792 took a tack of the Cartsburn Cotton Mill from the Superior for a period of ninety-nine years. Messrs McAlpine, Steel & Marquis acquired right to the tack by purchase from Messrs Bogle & Co.

### **WILLIAM ALEXANDER**

It is a common error to consider the name of the street north from the Mid Parish Church commemorative of a British King, but this is quite pardonable! William Street was laid off about 1751, and was named after William Alexander, the first feuar there, whose house still stands on the east side of the street, to the north of the Provident Bank Buildings. This street was at one time called New Street. Up to within thirty years ago the first house erected in this street was a popular howff, and was known as the Museum Tavern. It is now utilised as a model lodging-house. The Town Council first met in a small hall in this street that was used as a Post Office. In 1829 the Post Office was removed to Watt Place, afterwards to Church Place, in 1862 back to William Street to where the Provident Bank office now is, the bank business being conducted in the flat above; in 1876 to the west side of Customhouse Buildings; in 1882 to Wallace Square; and in 1898 to the present premises in Cathcart Street.

### **ADAM JOHNSTON**

At the time Johnston Street was laid off it partook more of the nature of a lane leading to the sea shore, although even at the present day it retains most of its pristine beauty. The street was named after Adam Johnston, who built the mansion known as Seabank, which, by the way, was its original name. The feu contract is dated 29th July, 1805, and is entered into between Sir John Shaw Stewart, of Greenock and Blackhall, Baronet, on the one part, and Adam Johnston, Deputy Collector of Customs at Greenock, on the other part. It "witnesseth that the said Sir John Shaw Stewart, in consideration of the sum of three hundred and eighty-one pounds two shillings and twopence sterling, paid to him by the said Adam Johnston in name of grassum, and which he hereby grants receipt, renouncing all exceptions on the contrary, has sold and disposed of that piece of ground on the east side of Johnston's Street, laid down in a plan of the Wester Barony of Greenock, drawn by Thomas Richardson, land surveyor in Glasgow." Then follow the dimensions of the ground feued and the boundaries thereof, but the contiguous streets appear to have been nameless in those days, for in the feu contract space is left for the names of whatever the streets bounding the feu might be called. The holder of the ground has power to build "dwelling-houses and office-houses, provided always that they be covered with slate or tyle," but he is debarred from erecting a soap or candle work, tanwork, glasswork, or barking-house; and if such be done, said ground to be forfeited by the holder. The property is now the possession of Mr. James H. Hill, of the Greenock Grain Mills, and the occupants of Seabank are the Messrs Wright, of the Alexandra Theatre.

### **DAVID MOFFAT**

About the year 1868, Mr. David Moffat, manager of the Greenock Foundry Company, took a good deal to do with various schemes in the east-end of the town, all of which tended towards the improvement of the condition of the working-man. Mr. Moffat was concerned in the society which built the houses known as Octavia Cottages, and possessed and occupied the first erected. At a public meeting he made some rather hard remarks about the manner in which the Superior gave out new feus, and Sir Michael afterwards took him to task in a friendly spirit, pointing out the responsibilities and difficulties of the landowner. When the street was feued, Sir Michael was asked what the name should be, and he suggested Moffat Street, for he knew full well the good work Mr. Moffat had done in town, and, personally, was above having any animus against him for what he had said. As president of the Carlsdyke Working-

men's Total Abstinence Society, he showed his interest in the temperance movement, and was perhaps the pioneer of street-corner advocates of the principles of total abstinence. Mr. Moffat left town for Newcastle, where he was superintendent of tug steamers on the Tyne, and died there not so many years ago.

### **BRUCE AND SINCLAIR**

There is one thoroughfare in town that has a history that is as curious as it is facetious. When Bruce Street was opened up there lived in it two feuars, named respectively Bruce and Sinclair. As they were the two most important individuals in the street, it was generally considered that it should be called after one of them. Bruce thought that the street should be named in his honour, but Sinclair imagined that he had a better claim than his rival. Bruce believed that possession was nine-tenths of the law, and painted the name of the street as he thought it should be at the corner thereof - "Bruce Street." The invincible Sinclair did not think this was justified, and the following evening he obliterated the obnoxious name and substituted "Sinclair Street." This sort of conduct continued for some time, until eventually the residents protested, as they could never tell in what street they were dwelling! As a last resource, the contending claimants took the matter before the Lord of the Manor. With the dividing wisdom of Solomon, the Superior declared that the street should be known as "Bruce Street" and the houses therein should be designated "Sinclair Place." Thus was satisfaction secured.

### **JOHN HARVIE**

In addition to Bruce Street, there is Harvie Lane, which also had two claimants for the honour of bestowing the name on this artery to the town. For a long time this lane or close, says Williamson, was variously styled "John Harvie's Closs," after John Harvie, flesher, whose feu on the east side was given off by Sir John Schaw in 1686, and "John Rae's Closs," from John Rae, hammerman, whose feu was on the west side. It also went by the name of "Tanwork Closs," from a work of that description formerly there. In what way the flesher and the hammerman adjusted their rival claims I am unable to say, but John Harvie seems to have carried the day, and had the close called after him, the name of John Rae's Closs being now nowhere met.

### **JOHN HUNTER**

At one time Hunter Place was not the comparatively salubrious locality that it is at the present day. Most of the old dwellings have given place to warehouses, and here also the Corporation have their Electricity Works, The name was given in recognition of the services of John Hunter, who occupied the position of Town Councillor and Magistrate for several years, and did useful service as Dean of Guild and convener of the Sanitary Committee. Through his perseverance, many old houses that were a scandal to this neighbourhood were cleared away, and the whole vicinity improved thereby.

### **WILLIAM FORSYTH**

A century ago the town seems to have been enjoying a building boom of a mild description, for about the year 1805-06 several feus were taken from Sir John Shaw Stewart. In the first place, it may be mentioned that Ardgowan House was erected at this time; Seabank House, Johnston Street; the building now used as the Tontine Hotel, and others that might be enumerated. The subjects known as Rosebank, in Forsyth Street, at the north-east corner of Union Street, were also erected at this period by a merchant named William Forsyth, who thus had the honour of giving his name to that thoroughfare. The feu contract is dated 18th October, 1805, and is entered into between Sir John Shaw Stewart on the one part and William Forsyth, merchant in Greenock, on the other part. The said Sir John Shaw Stewart, in consideration of the sum of twelve hundred and sixty-nine pounds six shillings and eight pence paid to him in name of grassum, grants that piece of ground on the east side of Forsyth Street, lying on the north side of Union Street, as laid down in a plan of the barony of the Western Barony of Greenock, drawn by Thomas Richardson, land surveyor in Glasgow. After the dimensions of the feu are given, the deed declares that it should not be competent for the said William Forsyth or his foresaids to build upon the said piece of ground or any part thereof, without first obtaining the consent of Sir John Shaw Stewart or his heirs, a soap or candle work, tanwork, glasswork, or barking-house. Intimation was also to be given to the Superior when the said William Forsyth intended commencing building operations, so as to prevent him from encroaching beyond his proper boundaries. A trifle suspicious!

The two witnesses to the deed are George Robertson, merchant in Greenock, who has already been referred to in connection with Robertson Street; and Robert Stewart, writer in Greenock. William Forsyth shortly afterwards removed to Liverpool. Mr. Robert Lusk acquired and resided in the house. This gentleman was a brother of Mr. Andrew Lusk, who migrated to London in 1845, of which city he became Lord Mayor, and later was created a Baronet of the United Kingdom. The subjects are now the property of the heirs to the late Mr. William Steel, builder.

## **ANNE BEARHOPE**

One of the busiest and certainly one of the most precipitous, thoroughfares in town is that known as Ann Street. At one time a great part of the ground in this locality was leased by Anne Bearhope for use as a market garden, and when Ann Street and Bearhope Street were opened up, she divided her name between the two thoroughfares. This is probably the correct derivation of the history of these street names, but there is another which may be recalled if for nothing else than the opportunity it affords of telling a good story.

According to some authorities, Ann Street was named in honour of Queen Anne, and when the names of the streets were being repainted during the time the late Mr. Hew McIlwraith was convener of the Streets Committee, the final "e" in the name of the street was deleted. When Mr. McIlwraith was revising the list of the names of the streets he paused when he came to Anne Street. "Anne Street - Anne Street?" he said, in his brusque and emphatic way. "Queen Anne, of course. What's Queen Anne done for Greenock? Queen Anne, Knock out that 'e.' My mother has done far more for Greenock than Queen Anne, and she was one of the first owners of property in the street." His mother's name was Ann.

Mr. Hew McIlwraith was the founder of the firm of McIlwraiths & Walker, writers, William Street, and was a prominent figure in local affairs for nigh half a century. After serving as a Magistrate, he became an official of the town, being the first assessor to the Dean of Guild Court, which post he held from 1866 till his death in January, 1895.

## **CHAPTER VI. - PROMINENT MAGISTRATES**

### **ABRAM LYLE**

It has been denied that Greenock possesses the same advantages in public parks and recreation grounds as other towns, but a little reflection will show that this idea has a tendency to be misleading, for the case is just the reverse. In the east-end there are Wellington Park, Auchmountain Glen, and the Whinhill; a few minutes' walk from the centre of the town there is Well Park; while in the west-end of the town there is the Lyle Road, thus showing that the people in each part of Greenock have convenient "gardens," where they may pass a quiet summer evening. On one occasion, Professor Blackie observed that the finest walk in the world was from Gourrock Pier to the Cloch, and he thought it equalled only by the walk from the Cloch to the pierhead! With additions and improvements, it is the same view that rewards the pedestrian from the heights of the Lyle Road, and, while it has been universally admired, there are some enthusiasts who maintain that it is absolutely unrivalled. It certainly is strongly reminiscent of the famous Alpine scene that yearly attracts thousands of tourists to the Swiss township of Lucerne. The view to be obtained here may even be sweeter than that at Lucerne, but each is excellent in its own delightful way.

The Lyle Road was formed in the year 1878, during a period of business depression, following on the failure of the City of Glasgow Bank. This event caused much distress in the West of Scotland, and paralysed trade for years afterwards. In those days Provost Abram Lyle occupied the chair of civic chief, and it is interesting to note that the idea of having a road round the Bingans originated in the mind of his good lady. The streets were full of idle men willing to work, but unable to find anything to which they might turn their hands. Provost Lyle was much exercised in his mind regarding this unhappy state of affairs, and often talked of the matter in his home. During one of these conversations, Mrs. Lyle exclaimed, "Why not put the unemployed to the making of a drive round the Bingans?" And there we have the origin of this popular promenade. The cost of the road amounted to £16,482 12s 4d, and there is no doubt whatever that it provided necessary labour for decent artizans, while the town acquired at a moderate cost a really splendid boulevard.

There are few gentlemen who have given their names to more than one thoroughfare in town, but Lyle Street derives its name from the same source as does the Lyle Road, from the fact that Mr. Lyle was the first to take off ground and build tenements in the neighbourhood.

Mr. Lyle was widely respected in the district, and his death at his residence, Oakley, Eldon Street, on the 30th April, 1891, in the seventy-first year of his age, was deeply lamented by the community; while many old folks missed their weekly pensions which he was in the habit of bestowing. The working-men never had a better friend, for being one himself; he knew what trials and misfortunes were. He was the builder of his own fortune, the foundation-stone being laid in the cooperage in Nicolson Street, and the fabric afterwards raised on sugar and shipping, for he was a partner in the Glebe Sugar Refining Company and the founder of the Lyle Shipping Company. In many undertakings, Mr. Lyle had an active interest, and was a director of the Glasgow and South-Western Railway Company and other commercial enterprises. Although endowed with a considerable share of the wealth of this world, he did not hesitate in disbursing it, nor did he greatly advertise the fact. A donation of £1,500 towards the funds of the Greenock Infirmary conferred on

him the honour of being a life director, while his endowment of a Lyle cottage at Quarrier's Orphan Homes, Bridge-of-Weir, gave evidence of his practical concern in this benevolent colony for children and sick folk. An act that perhaps redounds more to the credit of Mr. Lyle than any of the above mentioned benefactions was the paying in full of the debt of £7,000 that was left by his father. In clearing himself of this cumbrous legacy before proceeding with the foundation of his own fortune, Mr. Lyle was not merely honouring the memory of his father, but establishing that reputation for integrity for which he was afterwards noted.

Mr. Lyle entered the Town Council in the year 1858, and at all times proved a capable adviser in municipal affairs. He was Provost during the period 1876-1879. Among the events that marked his reign were the commencement of the forming of the James Watt Dock, of which undertaking he had the honour of cutting the first sod; while a large amount of property was acquired in order that a site might be found for Municipal Buildings in the centre of the town. It will be remembered that the foundation-stone was laid on 6th August, 1881, by Provost Dugald Campbell. The elaborate iron fountain in Cathcart Square was presented by Mr. Lyle to the people at a cost of between £800 and £900

#### **GRAHAM BRYMNER**

The Improvement Trust of Greenock did good work in its day, and was responsible for the eradication of many disreputable rookeries in town. The first convener of the Trust was Bailie Graham Brymner, and as he was identified with the amenification of Brymner Street, it was considered appropriate to name it in his honour. Bailie Brymner was a son of Alexander Brymner, who was accountant in the Greenock Bank (the same premises as now occupied by the National Bank of Scotland) at the time it was robbed by English thieves, and some £30,000 stolen from its safe. His brother, Douglas Brymner, at one time merchant in Greenock, went to Canada, and was appointed official statistician to the Government. His younger brother, Mr. John Brymner, now resides in Edinburgh. An active member of the Harbour Trust, Bailie Brymner contributed largely to its finances, for he was a partner in the Clyde Shipping Company, and manager of the Company here. The present Greenock manager of the Company, Mr. Allan Swan, is a nephew of the deceased Magistrate.

#### **D. A. CAMPBELL**

It is to a former Magistrate of the town that we owe the name of Campbell Street-Duncan Alexander Campbell. About the middle of last century he was a prominent figure, and was a partner in the Greenock Distillery Company. He married a daughter of Mr. William Macfie, sugar refiner, who was Provost of the town in the years 1835-1838.

#### **ALAN KER**

A prosperous ship-owner, who had his being in the early days of the nineteenth century, gave his name to Ker Street, being the first feuar in that locality. The Alan Ker Public School was the first of the seamen's children's schools, and when the building was taken over by the School Board, on the passing of the Education Act, some thirty years ago, the School Board named the building after the gentleman who had gifted it to the town. He ever had the cause of seamen at heart, and it was largely owing to Mr. Ker's efforts that the Seamen's Friends' Society was instituted, at a meeting held in January, 1820. Mr. Ker died suddenly in Glasgow on 57th May, 1829, and in Williamson's history he is referred to as one who had filled with honour and distinction the office of Magistrate; an enlightened and liberal educationist; a partner in numerous commercial concerns; and one who had always at heart the promotion of the best interests of the community, and seamen in particular. He is buried in Inverkip Street graveyard.

#### **JOHN DUFF**

One of the most ancient bye-ways of the town was Longwell Close, but the dwellings there were condemned as unfit for habitation under the Artizans Dwellings Act, and the picturesque old ruins were cleared away to make room for the houses that were erected by the Improvement Trust. The street was formed during the period that Bailie John Duff (whose father, Mr. James Duff, had been Provost of the burgh) held the convenership of the Trust, and as a mark of honour it was named after that gentleman. Accordingly, Longwell Close is now known under the abbreviated title of Duff Street. About half way down the street may be seen a round flagstone inscribed "The Long Well, 1682," and which serves to mark one of the sources from which old Greenockians drew their water supply before the inauguration of the Shaw's Water Works.

At the eastern side of the street, before the relics of other times were cleared away, there was a little cottage, which was inhabited during the early years of last century by an old seaman named Kerr. It was alleged that in his young days he had carried many a cargo of slaves from the West Coast of Africa, to wherever he could find a profitable market. In this way he amassed a large sum of money, but it had to leave him somewhat suddenly, and thereby hangs

a tale.

One of his favourite plans was to load bricks and coal, or other innocent cargo, at this port, and so get his ship's papers made out properly for any Government official that wished to make an examination. After the bold buccaneer had left Ireland on the horizon, he generally jettisoned part of his cargo, and so lightened his ship in the hope of making a speedier run. On arriving at the West Coast of Africa, and after selling the remainder of the freight, he shipped as many of the unfortunate natives as he could lay hands on, then hied for the sugar plantations of the Indies and Brazil. Kerr was once chased and captured by a British man-o'-war. As the ship "chanced" at the time to be full of negroes, he was court-martialed by His Majesty's captain, and, so the story goes, condemned to be hung at the yard-arm of the warship. But he evidently managed to "square" the commander of the frigate, for both Kerr and his ship were missing the day after sentence had been pronounced. He then ceased trafficking in "black birds" (as he called them), not from conscientious scruples, but because he was almost ruined by the "backsheesh" necessary to save his neck.

### THE SHANKLANDS

There are few families who can claim the distinction of having been connected with the governing body of the town in which they live for a period of close on fifty years, yet such is the proud position occupied by the Shanklands. It was therefore only just and fitting that this long and honourable record of public work should be recognised in some tangible form, and in Shankland Road is preserved the name of a family that has done well by the town. Only last year Bailie James H. Shankland retired after a service of seven years ; but the family is still represented at the Municipal Board in the person of Bailie D. Cowan Shankland, who joined the Town Council in November, 1902, and who will, I trust, some day, have the honour of occupying the chair of the civic chief. It would be unique in the history of municipalities to have three Provosts of the same family in the course of two generations.

The street that perpetuates the name of Shankland was so called in honour of the late ex-Provost Robert Shankland and of ex-Provost Dugald Shankland, although no one will grudge the younger members of the family their share of distinction.

The father of the two brothers who were afterwards to become Provosts of their native town was a man in a small way of business, and it was entirely owing to their own commercial capabilities and their integrity that the Shankland brothers achieved the honourable position to which they ultimately attained. It is honourable to be a self-made man, when one can look back to the beginning and never wish a single act recalled. "That relieves the Almighty of an immense responsibility," was Douglas Jerrold's jibe to an arrogant fellow who was boasting of how he had risen in the world, but the kindness that marks the true gentleman was ever characteristic of the two brothers I speak of.

After ten crowded years of municipal work, Mr. Robert Shankland died on the 22nd October, 1889 (in his second term of Provostship), in his sixty-third year. It is but rarely that a civic chief is stricken down while in running harness, and Mr. Shankland being a gentleman much respected made the loss seem all the greater. He was well over fifty years of age when he entered the Council, but he gave to the community many of the best days of the most valuable decade of his life. In the affairs of the Harbour Trust, his voice was listened to with attention and respect, for he ever had clear views on the various questions that came up for discussion.

One of the most important undertakings that has ever been engineered in Greenock was the great docks in the east end of the town, and an account of his connection with these may not be inappropriate.

The James Watt Dock was opened on the 5th August, 1886, amid the general acclamation of the community. It took about eighteen years from the inception to the completion of the work, at a cost of £800,000, so that it may be imagined that those in authority must have had many anxious thoughts in connection with it. Mr. W R. Kinipple, C.E., was the engineer who carried out the plans, and the result was a dock that was unequalled-when it was opened. It could then dock the largest ships built; but now the leviathans that are launched would not find the entrance wide enough nor water sufficient to float; still, it serves for the majority of vessels.

Mr. Kinipple handed to Provost Shankland on that memorable opening day a lever handle-made of ivory, surmounted with a gold crown resting on an assine and elaborately chased silver bell - for opening the caisson gate. The lever was handselled, and the docks were wedded with the sea! It was peculiarly fitting that the first craft that entered should be the Otterburn, a new vessel just added to the fleet belonging to the firm of which the Provost was a member. The Otterburn, which proceeded to load coal for San Francisco the same day, was built by Messrs Robert Steele & Co., a firm that did much in its day to develop the resources of the town, and give Clyde-built ships the high reputation they possess. The day was perhaps one of the proudest in the life of Provost Robert Shankland, and certainly one of the most memorable in the history of the town of Greenock.

Although long past the Psalmist's allotted span, ex-Provost Dugald Shankland still attends to his daily business in his office in Cathcart Street, and I trust he may long be spared to go in and out amongst us. With a retentive memory, Mr. Shankland has a rich fund of reminiscence to draw upon, and a chat with him is always interesting. It was away back in 1866 that Mr. Dugald entered the Town Council, and after thirty years of public life and serving as Councillor, Bailie and Chief Magistrate, he retired from active service in 1896, to enjoy that leisure to which he was so amply entitled. In October of 1896, in the Municipal Buildings, he was presented with his portrait in oils, which now hangs in the Provost's room in the Municipal Buildings alongside that of his brother, Mr. Robert Shankland. At the same time, Mrs. Shankland was presented with a replica of her husband's portrait, as a mark of the esteem in which he was held by the Town Council and the community in general.

Like his brother, Mr. Shankland took-and continues so to do-an active interest in the affairs of the Harbour Trust, although not now directly connected with the business of the Board. In many ways that need not be detailed, Mr. Shankland has shown his interest in different philanthropic schemes, while he has filled various positions of trust in St Andrew's United Free Church, of which congregation he is an esteemed member and senior elder.

### **GEORGE ROBERTSON**

About the year 1803, Bailie George Robertson erected the mansion that is now known as the Tontine Hotel. In those days the house stood in the country, it being quite isolated from buildings of any sort. When Robertson Street was opened up it was decided to name it in honour of one of the most far-seeing townsmen that we have ever had ; in fact, to the gentleman to whom we are largely indebted for our copious and excellent supply of water. It may be mentioned that Mr. Robertson was a native of Bute, and had been in business in Rothesay, but early in his career he came to Greenock and engaged in the Newfoundland trade. If not the founder, he was at least the leading partner of the firm of Hunter, Robertson & Co. For some years towards the end of the eighteenth century, Mr. Robertson was Senior Magistrate of Greenock, under the charter granted in 1751 by Sir John Schaw.

It appears, on the authority of Weir, Greenock's earliest historian, that, in 1820, Mr. Robertson was coursing in his native island with his friend Mr. Robert Thom, civil engineer in Rothesay. While following the hounds, they passed the works constructed to supply the Rothesay cotton mills with water-power. Incredible though it may seem, Mr. Robertson mentioned to Mr. Thom how much Greenock suffered from an insufficient supply of water, and he asked Mr. Thom whether a supply for Greenock could not be obtained by means similar to those adopted in Rothesay. After hearing from Mr. Robertson what sources of supply were available, Mr. Thom indicated that he thought a suitable scheme might be devised. Mr. Robertson afterwards spoke to Sir Michael Shaw Stewart (the great grandfather of the present Laird), and several others, on the subject. They thought well of the proposal, and in the end Mr. Thom was asked to survey the moor to the south of Greenock with the view of utilising the Shaw's Water, a rivulet which then discharged a considerable volume of water into the frith through the valley leading to the Kip.

In due time Mr. Thom completed his survey, and those who were not in the secret were agreeably surprised to find that not only could water be obtained sufficient to supply the domestic wants of the population, then about 25,000, but also to furnish power for manufacturing purposes. The friends whom Mr. Robertson had consulted at once took steps to obtain Parliamentary powers to construct the works, and under an Act passed in 1825, the promoters were incorporated under the name of the Shaw's Water Company, with a capital of £31, 000.

The works were completed and ready for use on 16th April, 1827, and in this way are we indebted to the original proprietor of the Tontine Hotel building for the splendid water supply that we now enjoy. Mr. Robertson died in the house in the Square on 7th March, 1828, in the seventy-third year of his age, and was buried in Inverkip Street graveyard.

## **CHAPTER VII.- LITERATURE**

### **CHARLES STREET**

Only a few of the streets have literary connections that come within the scope of this history, but those that fall to be dealt with are of some importance. Even at the best, the literary lore of Greenock or other commercial towns is seldom pretentious.

The name Charles was that of the ninth Earl of Cathcart, but the reason that the story of Charles Street has been withheld to this point is that it is worthy of attention in connection with the life of Burns' Highland Mary.

It is generally believed that Mary Campbell was born in the parish of Dunoon, at a little farm known as Auchamore,

about the year 1788. It is not with the birth, but rather with the circumstances attending the death, of this heroine of Burns that I would concern my readers. Mary had come to Greenock, accompanied by her younger brother Robert (who was to be apprenticed to Peter Macpherson, a ship carpenter, a cousin of Mary's mother), in order to be in readiness to accept a new situation for the term beginning at Martinmas in the family of Colonel Mclvor, in Glasgow, but secretly, perhaps, with the further design of taking a fond farewell of Burns when he should depart for the West Indies ; for Burns has expressly said that Mary crossed the sea to meet him, Robert Campbell became seriously unwell, and he was assiduously nursed back to health by his sister, who in turn was seized with a sudden illness. Her friends believed that she suffered from the cast of an evil eye, and recommended her father to go to a cross-burn-that is, a place where two burns meet, select seven smooth stones from the channel, boil them with new milk, and then give her the milk to drink. They were Highland folk and superstitious, and, it must be remembered, willing to believe in such old-wife remedies. The drink was duly given, but proved of no avail. Her illness was declared to be fever, of the malignant species then prevalent in the town, and in a few days Mary Campbell passed away at the early age of eighteen, on the 20th of October, 1786, She is buried in the Old West Kirkyard, and a suitable monument was erected over her grave by some admirers of the poet in 1842.

The house where Mary died was situated in a tenement at 31 Upper Charles Street, but it is no longer in existence. She was the possessor of several poems and letters sent by Burns, but her friends destroyed them, being under the impression that by so doing they were protecting her character! It was this Mary, all readers of the poet will remember, who inspired the lines commencing "Thou lingering star with lessening ray," and no purer or more beautiful thoughts ever sprang from the mind of any writer. The late Mr. Hugh Anderson, draper, was a grand nephew of Mary, while the late Mr. J. C. Douglas, clothier, both of this town, could also claim direct connection.

The offices of the Greenock Telegraph newspaper are situated in Charles Street, having been in the same locality since 1863. It is worthy of note that this was the first halfpenny evening newspaper published in Great Britain. It was founded by Mr. Erskine Orr and Mr. John Pollock, both Greenock gentlemen.

### **THE BROAD CLOSS**

In the days when the Broad Closs was formed, it was wider than most existing thoroughfares, and hence the name that now seems to have been given in derision. On the west side, about half-way down, is the building that was known as the Star Hall, and it was here that all the fashionable assemblies were held about ninety years ago. It was here also that the Greenock Intelligencer was printed by Mr. John Malcom, who afterwards became Inspector of Poor under the Parochial Board. The journal was a singular medley, representing at once extreme Radicalism and extreme Toryism. A periodical called the Greenock Observer was also printed in the Star Hall. In its early days, the Greenock Herald was published there, but the offices of this journal have been in the premises at 40 Cathcart Street since the year 1853. The hall was used as a Roman Catholic place of worship, and was the first chapel that the members of this denomination had for meeting in Greenock. The town is now well enough supplied with prisons, but in its early days a little thatched cottage at the bottom of this close was sufficient to serve the purpose of a house of detention. Here the jongs were wont to rattle on the cottage walls as a terror to would-be doers of evil, while the branks and other instruments of torture might be found within.

### **CHAPTER VIII - ROYALTY**

Not many of our street names can claim any relationship with Royalty, but that does not say that Greenock is lacking in loyalty. During the South African war its patriotism was evidenced by the large number of Volunteers who left for the front, and in the days that are to come it is unlikely that the community will lag behind when the country calls for the service of brave men. The fact remains, however, that there are few thoroughfares in town named in honour of Royalty. Considering that Queen Victoria graced the throne for sixty-four years, it is astonishing that locally there is not one street name to commemorate her personal virtues and what undoubtedly was the most beneficent, as well as the longest, reign in the history of these Islands.

### **GEORGE SQUARE**

This place was at one time referred to as Kilblain Square, but when it was being properly laid out, about the year 1789; it was thought fit to name it in honour of George III. This was a reign of mighty deeds and noble men, and if we cannot respect George for his ability, says Thackeray, we may at least admire him for his integrity. Was it not his moderation, his frugal sympathy, and God-fearing life that tended to improve the morals of the country and the whole nation at a time when such an example was urgently required? It was during this reign that our country had to undergo the revolt of our American colonies-to submit to defeat and separation ; to shake under the volcano of the French revolution ; to grapple and fight for life with her gigantic enemy, Napoleon; to grasp and rally after that tremendous struggle; the old



society with its comely splendour had to pass away ; generations of statesmen to rise and disappear; Pitt to follow Chatham to the grave ; the memory of Rodney and Wolfe to be superseded by Nelson and Wellington's glory ; the old poets who united the people to Queen Anne's time to sink into their graves; Johnson to die, and Scott and Byron to arise; Garrick to delight the world with his dazzling dramatic genius, and Kean to leap on the stage and take possession of the astonished theatre; steam fell to be discovered; Kings were beheaded, banished, deposed, restored; Napoleon was but an episode, and George was alive through all these varied changes. "George be a King!" were the words of his old mother ever croaking in his ears; and a king the simple, stubborn, affectionate, bigoted man tried to be-even if he did think everyone a scoundrel who did not agree with him. The old King had a pathetic end. Not only was he sightless, but he became utterly deaf. All light, all reason, all sound of human voices, all the pleasures of this world were taken from him. Some slight lucid moments he had, in one of which the Queen entered the room and found him singing a hymn, accompanying himself at the harpsichord. When he finished he knelt down and prayed aloud for her, for his family, for the nation, concluding with a prayer for himself that it might please God to avert his heavy calamity, but, if not, to give him resignation to submit. He then burst into tears, and his reason fled. Pity the King in his lonesome latter years!

### **REGENT STREET**

During the protracted indisposition of George III, the Prince, who was afterwards George IV, acted as Regent of Britain. It was at this period that Regent Street was formed, and the authorities thought to show their loyalty by so naming this thoroughfare, which, by the way, for a short time was known as Prince Regent Street. The road that is now known as the eastern part of Regent Street was once spoken of as the Back Walks, so far in the country did it once seem to be. About forty or fifty years ago there was no West-end, so far as villadom was concerned, and in Regent Street, in the neighbourhood of Well Park, many of the doctors and wealthiest people resided.

### **PRINCES STREET**

Most towns boast of a Princes Street, which is apparently in honour of the early days of George IV. As George III was austere and virtuous, so was his son frivolous and godless. Yet George IV was good-natured, if voluptuous. The most favourable comment that may be made on his career is that he was eager to hear all that could be said on behalf of prisoners condemned to death and anxious if possible to remit the capital sentence. He was kind to his servants, and there are many stories that might be recalled illustrating this trait. There are no great stories to be told of Him - they are mean and trivial, and they characterise the man. The battle of the giants went on, but George busied himself in maintaining his reputation as the first gentleman in Europe.

Malmesbury tells us the beginning of his miserable marriage story-how the Prince reeled into chapel to be married ; how he hiccupped out his vows of fidelity ; how he pursued the woman whom he married ; to what a state he brought her; with what blows he struck her; and what the treatment of his daughter was. There was no stronger satire on the proud English society of that time than that it admired George.

### **THE ROYAL CLOSS**

The Royal Closs, or Royal House, was the property of the Fishing Company, or Royal Company, established under the Act of the first Scottish Parliament of Charles II., held at Edinburgh on 15th January, 1661, entitled "Act for the fishings and erecting of companies for promoting the same." The original design of the company was the curing of herrings. The word closs, originally closse, signifies a piece of ground surrounded by a wall or hedge, and so was the enclosure of the Fishing Company. The eastern entrance to the closs, situated in Bogle Street, has a stone above it bearing the date 1676. Many gentlemen refused to enrol, fearing that the merchants who behoved to manage all would cheat the other partners; others refused to enter a society where so many noblemen were engaged, by whom they were afraid to be overawed. Yet the stock soon increased to £25,000, and the company had a more or less successful career.

Charles II. was chairman and subscribed £5000, but whether he actually paid the money is another matter. The Merry Monarch was careless in this respect. None of the subscriptions were for sums less than £100. The company, which was dissolved in the year 1684, had as its motto:-"Let herrings swim that trade maintains," and later it was considered an appropriate one for the town. The present municipal aphorism, "God speed Greenock," was suggested by the late Mr. John Adam, Town Chamberlain, about the year 1877.

Speaking of herrings, it may be mentioned that the first red herring cured in Great Britain was at Gourrock, in the year 1688.

When the Greenock Library was instituted in the year 1783, it was situated in John Wilson's Grammar School, in the

Royal Cross. Wilson was the author of "The Clyde," a poem that was described as an elegant work when published. It may have been owing to his literary reputation that he obtained the position of librarian, but certainly he was not granted the supervision of the school for any such reason. The Magistrates and Minister of Greenock, before they permitted Mr. Wilson to commence his duties, stipulated that he should "abandon the profane and unprofitable art of poeemaking." To avoid the temptation of violating his promise, which he esteemed sacred, he took an early opportunity of committing to the flames the greater part of his unfinished manuscripts. It was a cruel sacrifice, and there are few poets who hold their promise more sacred than their work! Although abiding by his bond, Wilson thought it was hardly fair for the authorities to have exacted such conditions. Writing to his son, who was attending Glasgow University, he observed that instead of being caressed for his profusions he was "condemned to bawl himself to hoarseness to wayward brats, to cultivate sand and wash Ethiopians for all the dreary days of an obscure life; the contempt of shopkeepers and brutish skippers."

In connection with the story of the Royal Cross, Crawford, in his "History of Renfrewshire," gives some particulars which are worth quoting. He observes that there was, "about the year 1670, a Company erected which employed a considerable stock of money for curing herrings; and because His Majesty King Charles II, put in a share of the stock of the Royal Company, they built a large house at Greenock and made that place the seat of their trade, where they had large cellars for keeping their salt and herrings till exporting. By this erection none except that Company were allowed to cure herrings before the 20th of September yearly; which, being represented to the Government as a very hard restraint upon the merchants, the Company was dissolved in 1684, and their houses at Greenock, being exposed to roup, were purchased by the Magistrates and Town Council of the city of Glasgow. In 1812 the property afforded a rent of £290 per annum." This gives the history of the short-lived Company in brief, likewise indicating how the Royal Cross received its name.

## CHAPTER IX - LOCAL AFFAIRS

Notwithstanding the numerous street names in honour of various members of the Shaw Stewart family, prominent Magistrates, and notable townsmen, there are many with designations that are of distinctly local origin; that is, the names they bear have been suggested by some immediate circumstance, and those were used by the inhabitants long before they received the hall-mark of the authorities.

### BANK STREET

At the beginning of last century it may be surmised that there were fewer banks in Greenock than at the present day, and the existence of the Renfrewshire Bank was sufficient to give the name to Bank Street. The building is still referred to as Bank House, and looks down stolidly, with all its plainness, on Cathcart Square. The bank was established in 1802, and it then occupied the low flat of a house in Hamilton Street, opposite Harvie Lane. In 1810, however, its prosperity warranted it having a home of its own. Accordingly, a feu was secured by Alexander Dunlop, as manager of the Renfrewshire Banking Company, from Sir John Shaw Stewart, and in 1815 a second portion of ground was feued, which is now used as a garden. In 1843, the company got into difficulties, and the concern was merged with the Greenock Bank, while John Dunlop, the sole surviving partner of the old concern, disposed of the building to David Sinclair. This gentleman held it up to the year 1868, when it was acquired by Duncan Hendry, a Magistrate of the town, who sold it in 1872 to the Rev. Michael Condon, of St. Laurence's Church, who acquired it on behalf of the Franciscan Sisterhood. The Sisters now conduct a private secondary school in the premises of the old bank.

As we have seen, the first prison was situated at the foot of Broad Close, but the first building erected for that purpose here was situated in Bank Street, behind the Mid Parish Church. It was built in 1810, the architecture being that which is known as castellated - two towers facing the front and battlements above. It contained a debtors' prison, as well as a place where criminals laboured at the uncongenial tasks that were provided for them in those days. It also had two iron cells for troublesome prisoners, and in one of these were ring-bolts in the floor which could be connected to the wall by a chain. It would be quite unnecessary to denude of his boots any gentleman who might happen to be put in this cell! It may be mentioned that the keep, or as it was called, the massymore, of the old Mansion house was utilized as a prison by the authorities. The prison was demolished in 1886 to make way for the continuation of the Caledonian Railway Company's line from Greenock to Gourrock, the company paying £9000 to the town of Greenock for the subjects. The building had been superseded some years previously by the prison in Nelson Street, West.

A good story may here be told of the closing of the doors of the Renfrewshire Bank. On the morning on which this occurred, Mr. L. Burwell, who was well known at the time as the proprietor of a travelling bazaar, called upon the late Mr. Joseph Blair at his printing office, and declared Greenock to be one of the most prosperous towns he had ever entered. "Egad," said he, "it's not yet nine o'clock, and, do you know, Blair, I have drawn thirty-six pounds. Egad, you have a thriving town and no mistake." Shortly after ten o'clock, he knew that the Renfrewshire Bank had come to grief,

and the poor man had paid in change nineteen shillings for every pound of the thirty-six.

### **BAKER STREET**

One of the necessities of the olden times for retail bakers was a mill where they might have the wheat ground, for then the flour was not imported ready for use. The original mill of the Barony was that owned by the Hills, which was formerly situated in the vicinity of Princes Street, and driven by the waters of the West Burn. This being inadequate to meet the demands made upon it, the bakers amalgamated, and erected a mill on what is now Baker Street, where each subscriber might have what wheat he required made ready. The old mill is still standing, and was in later years used as a sugar store by Messrs Alexander Scott & Sons.

### **FROM THE ISLANDS**

It may be stretching a point when I include the names of the streets that have been derived from various islands under the heading of those having names of local origin. It will be admitted, however, that the town at one time did great business with the West Indies, and it is owing to the fact that there was a constant service of ships from these parts that many of the streets received such designations. As an evidence of the vast trade done in this port, it may be mentioned that Greenock was the third port in the kingdom for Customs' duty, its receipts ranking after London and Liverpool. Prior to the days of the James Watt Dock, it was a common sight to see as many as thirty or forty merchantmen anchored at the Tail of the Bank, waiting for berths in the harbours, while the quays of each harbour were generally lined with vessels two or three deep. Yes, those were the good old days for Greenock! If you asked any negro in the West Indies where he was born, the invariable answer was, "In Greenock, sah!" and a well-known locality was mentioned. It is thus easy to determine the origin of the names of Antigua Street, Jamaica Street, and Tobago Street.

It may be noted that Archibald, the third son of Sir Michael Shaw Stewart, the third baronet, purchased an estate in Tobago in 1770, and was killed in 1779 in repulsing some American privateers, who had landed and burnt two plantations.

At one time Roxburgh Street was known as Alexander Street, but it received its present appellation from a sugar estate of the same name in Tobago, which belonged to a gentleman named Archibald Stewart.

An island in the Atlantic Ocean gives its name to Madeira Street, with which island local merchants once did a considerable business in wine.

### **DELLINGBURN STREET**

Before the advent of steam, streams were of more importance in providing motive power than they are at the present day, and the road that was contiguous with the water generally went by its name, thus emphasising the importance of the water and the locality. We have an illustration of this in Dellingburn Street. At one time it was referred to as "The Ling Burn," but in saying "The" and "Ling" quickly, the name soon became metamorphosed to Dellingburn. "Ling" is an Icelandic word signifying heather, but which long ago passed into colloquial Scotch. It is a far cry from "The Heather Burn" to the Dellingburn Street of today.

### **CAPTAIN STREET**

It is entirely appropriate that a seaport town such as Greenock should have a street bearing this appellation. Captain Street was so called from the fact that on the site of the Buchanan Night Asylum stood a house which was occupied by three generations of seafaring men, and was commonly referred to as the Captain's House on the Captain's Brae. The first shipmaster to occupy it was Captain Taitt, the second Captain Wright, and again Captain Taitt - the grandfather, uncle, and father respectively of Captain R. G. Taitt, harbourmaster of this port, who, by-the-by, was born in "The Captain's House."

### **STANNERS STREET**

This is another thoroughfare bearing a name that has passed almost beyond recognition. It was at one time spoken of as Standards Street, from the fact that it was in a shed here that the official inspection of weights and measures was made. The standard weights were used in this examination, and commonly the street became known as Standards Street, which was easily changed to the shorter designation of Stanners Street.

Stanners Street was the commencement of the avenue that terraced up to the old Cartsburn Mansion house. This was a fine mansion that was demolished within memory of the present generation. There is a tradition that William of Orange landed in St. Laurence Bay and passed a night in the mansion house, in the morning embarking for Ireland. The tradition is confirmed by different old Greenockians, who probably had the story handed down from their fathers.

One of its tenants was James Watt, the father of the great engineer, and who was one of the baron bailies of the town. During his term of office, a ship set sail from the Tail of the Bank on the Sunday, and not wishing to have the sin of breaking the Lord's Day on his jurisdiction, the worthy Watt had the barque recalled.

### **INGLESTON STREET**

The street that has the dubious honour of having one of the most corrupted names of any of our thoroughfares is Ingleston Street. About ninety or a hundred years ago there was a bottle work in town, and when the business was started, a number of experienced artizans came from England to instruct the natives. After the English fashion, they built little cottages for themselves in Ingleston Street, and from this fact it was called English Town Street. But that was a long name for any thoroughfare, and so with use and wont it was generally recognised that the name Ingleston was more suitable than the original appellation.

### **PROSPECTHILL STREET**

Those who reside near the top of Prospecthill Street will readily admit that an extensive view of the Firth of Clyde and the Highland hills may here be obtained. It will therefore be easy to imagine it a delightful country district before any tenements were erected. Probably it was for this reason that Mr. Andrew Lindsay, a partner of the firm of Messrs Macfie, Lindsay & Co., of the Cotton Mill Company, and also one of the subscribers to the Shaw's Water Company, chose the locality as his residence, and erected a villa which was known as Prospecthill House. Therefore, it was not difficult, when the thoroughfare was opened, to find an appropriate name.

### **MOUNT PLEASANT STREET**

This thoroughfare seems to have received its name from a mansion that long ago had to make way for modern tenements. Certainly a pleasant view may be obtained from the south-end of the street, and with but one house there, surrounded by trees; it must have occupied a delectable situation. Thus we have Mount Pleasant House giving its name to Mount Pleasant Street.

### **ROSNEATH STREET**

It seems that Rosneath Street received its name on account of it looking towards the village of Rosneath, on the other side of the river. Rosneath, by the way, is famous for two giant silver-firs, named respectively Adam and Eve, which, unlike our first parents, are still unfallen!

It is curious that Sir Walter Scott mistook Rosneath for an island, as such a conversion was quite unnecessary for the purposes of the novel. In the "Heart of Midlothian," one of the characters says to Jeanie Deans "As to lodging, they would soon be in a house of the Duke's in a very pleasant island called Rosneath, where they intended going to await shipping to take them to Inveraray." In answer to a question, Jeanie observed "that she was under apprehensions, and insisted upon going round by land were it ten miles about." Her companion was "sorry he could not oblige her, as Rosneath happened to be an island."

### **CROSS-SHORE STREET**

In the space between the north end of Cross-shore Street and Broad Close, the ancient Market Cross of the burgh was situated. So the name Cross-shore Street was given on account of the proximity of that thoroughfare to the Shore and the Cross. The Cross was formed on the ground with white pebbles, most probably delineating the cardinal points of the compass within a circle. Attached was the date of its creation, 1669. All poiding sales formerly took place, and public meetings were usually announced here.

In "Catriona," one of the delightful Scottish stories of Robert Louis Stevenson, Stewart the Writer explains to David Balfour one of the customs of the country in connection with the Market Cross: "Ah, but there is a way to evade that arrestment. Sound law, too. It would be a bonny thing if, by the escape of one ill-doer, another was to go scatheless, and the remeid is to summon the principal and put him to outlawry for the noncompearance. Now, there's four places where a person can be summoned: at his dwelling-house; at a place where he has resided forty clays; at the head

burgh of the shire where he ordinarily resorts; or lastly (if there be ground to think him forth of Scotland), at the cross of Edinburgh, and the pier and shore of Leith, for sixty days. The purpose of which last provision is evident upon its face: being that outgoing ships may have time to carry news of the transaction, and the summoning be something other than a form, Now, take the case of Alan. He has no dwelling-house that ever I could hear of; I would be obliged if anyone would show me where he has lived forty days together since the '45; there is no shire where he resorts whether ordinarily or extraordinarily; if he has a domicile at all, which I misdoubt, it must be with his regiment in France; and if he is not yet forth of Scotland (as we happen to know and they happen to guess), it must be evident to the most dull it's what he's aiming for. Where, then, and what way should he be summoned? I ask it at yourself, a layman."

"You have given the very words," said I. "Here at the cross, and at the pier and shore of Leith, for sixty days."

"You're a sounder Scots lawyer than Prestongrange, then!" cries the Writer. "He has had Alan summoned once; that was on the twenty-fifth, the day that we first met. Once, and done with it. And where? Where, but at the cross of Inveraray, the head burgh of the Campbells?"

All this was concerning Alan Breck, the man whom Stevenson makes out to have been unjustly accused of the Appin murder.

### **VIRGINIA STREET**

Virginia is one of the original thirteen States of the North American Union. One of its staple industries was sugar-growing, and in this way Greenock held a considerable connection with Virginia, and hence the name Virginia Street. The first permanent settlement in Virginia was made by one hundred pioneers sent out by Sir Thomas Gates and company on May 13, 1607, the promoters having obtained from James VII. a charter to plant two colonies there the year previous. Virginia took a leading part in the war of independence, and insisted upon the right of the colonists to manage their own affairs. The American Civil War of 1861-1865 was more disastrous in its consequences to Virginia than any other State of the Union, its territory being continually overrun, and besides numerous important battles and subsidiary engagements which took place there, over three million dollars' worth of property was destroyed.

### **RUE-END STREET**

The name of this thoroughfare appears at first sight to be tautological, but when the story of the name of Rue-End is explained, the difficulty disappears. Rue, as everyone is aware, is the French word for street, but the word, as it originally read in this locality, was row. In the days when Greenock was an airy fishing village, it was here that the row of fishermen's houses terminated, and, naturally, the folks in the clachan always spoke of "The Row-end." Time rolled on, and the road by the breast gave place to a paved and causewayed street, but the old appellation still remained. The manner in which it was changed came about in this way. The name of the street was being repainted, and the artizan, thinking he was better informed than most people, transformed the old name into Rue End Street - because there the street ended. As an evidence of the probability of this story, it need only be mentioned that there are few marine villages in Scotland without a "fisherrow" name in some guise or other.

### **THE ESPLANADE**

The name Esplanade explains itself. All will admit that Greenock Esplanade is one of the finest promenades in the West of Scotland, as well as having command of a magnificent view of sea and hill. The building up of such an extent of road might have been a serious item of expenditure save for the lucky chance that Greenock was increasing her dock accommodation at the time. Nor need it be forgotten that the Harbour Trust were fortunate in finding such a convenient free coup. The foundation-stone of the Albert Harbour was laid on 7th August, 1862, and until it was opened on the 23rd of July, 1867, all the soil taken from that place went to assist in the formation of the Esplanade. In this way, that which might have proved an encumbrance came to be exceedingly valuable. In the days when the promenade was known as Clyde Street, the tide came about twenty yards further in than the present south wall, parts of the old wall being yet left at various points.

### **SUGARHOUSE LANE**

For close on one hundred and fifty years sugar refining has been one of the staple industries of the town. Since its inception it has undergone many vicissitudes, and although not now occupying the position it once did, there are several considerable firms employed in the business. Sugarhouse Lane owes its name to the fact that one of the first sugar refineries in town was built at the north end of this thoroughfare in the year 1765. It was erected by a gentleman named Mark Khull for a company, of whom several were resident in Glasgow, and was generally considered an

extensive undertaking at the time. The premises of the Brewers' Sugar Company, Ltd., now occupy the site of the buildings. A second sugarhouse was built, or, rather, a substantial dwelling-house was altered for this purpose at the south end of Sugarhouse Lane in the year 1788. All the partners belonged to the town. The house was for two pans. After being burned in the years 1793 and 1795 it was greatly enlarged to cope with the increase in trade. In 1830 it was the property of Messrs McLeish, Kayser Co.

### **THE VENNEL**

As an illustration of the close connection that once existed between this country and France, we have the Vennel, a street name that is found in many Scottish towns. The word signifies a long, narrow street or lane, and is probably the locality in which the French sailors found a shelter when they came to this port.

### **POTTERY STREET**

The Clyde Pottery Company was inaugurated as far back as 1816, and to this fact Pottery Street owes its name. The company made all kinds of goods, from the commonest to the finest tea and breakfast services. In connection with this work, a mill was erected above Cartsdyke for the purpose of grinding flints, etc., and which gave employment to about seventy persons. It is only within recent years that the Pottery had its doors closed for the last time.

### **UNION STREET**

The name of Union Street is *sui generis*, and is used in this chapter simply as a matter of convenience. The street was formed about the beginning of the nineteenth century, and the name relates to the union of Great Britain and Ireland, which took place in the year 1801. Before it was properly laid out, it was spoken of as the High Road to Gourock, and led through fields of waving grain.