

BRIMMOND

AND ITS SHADOW.

A RECORD OF THE EXCURSIONS HELD BY THE

Stoneywood Parish Church Literary Guild

DURING 1908—1910.

The following descriptions are written with the two-fold object of providing a Souvenir of the Excursions and of supplying the felt want of a Guide Book for Newhills and the surrounding district.



PUBLISHED BY THE GUILD

AUGUST, 1910.

ABERDEEN :
PRINTED BY GEO. ROBB,
ADELPHI.

**THE LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH**

INDEX.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION,	5
HISTORY OF NEWHILLS,	7
DONSDIE,	12

Local Excursions.

1.—BRIMMOND,	17
2.—TYREBAGGER,	19
3.—BISHOP'S LOCH,	20
4.—FAIRLEY,	21
5.—PERSLEY,	23
6.—KINGSWELLS,	25
7.—BLACKBURN,	27
8.—SCOTSTOWN MOOR,	28
9.—ELRICK HILL,	30
10.—DYCE,	31
11.—CLOGHILL,	33
12.—HAZELHEAD,	34

City Excursions.

1.—NIGG,	36
2.—MARISCHAL COLLEGE,	36
3.—MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS,	37
4.—ART GALLERY,	37

Country Excursions.

1.—DUNNOTTAR CASTLE,	38
2.—BENACHIE,	38
3.—MONYMUSK,	39
4.—CRUDEN BAY,	39
NOTES,	40



INTRODUCTION.



IN September, 1907, the Kirk Session of Stoneywood Church resolved to form a branch Guild in connection with the congregation, the two leading features of the Guild being its Fellowship and Literary sections. The work of the Fellowship section has consisted for the most part of Sunday evening services, which during the last three winters have been largely attended and much appreciated.

The Literary section, which has held its meetings on Wednesday evenings during the winter months, has also had a record of steady progress, until the membership has risen to fully 200.

At the close of the first winter session a proposal was adopted to continue the Literary Guild during the summer months as a Field Club, for the purpose of visiting objects of interest in Newhills and neighbourhood. During the past three summers the members have thereby been able to acquire much useful knowledge of the history, geography, geology, zoology and botany of their native district, and they have also learned something of more distant places that might otherwise have remained unknown to them.

From a social point of view the excursions have been useful, since many pleasant friendships have been made that were not likely to have been formed in ordinary daily life; while their value as a recreation has been considerable, especially as most of those who took part in them are engaged in indoor occupations.

Experience has shown that the last Saturdays in May, June, July and August are the most suitable dates for the work of a Field Club of this kind. Due regard has to be paid to the most fitting month for making each particular journey.

There were generally about 50 ladies and gentlemen present at the excursions, a number that was found to be within easily managed bounds.

The "Commissariat"—necessarily an important item in all outings—was undertaken by members in turn, and so well was it looked after that the charge to each one present did not exceed sixpence for each outing.

Where it became necessary to leave the high roads, every care was taken to respect the interests of those concerned, and when it was desirable to go through private grounds, permission was asked beforehand, and was generally very readily granted.

The weather conditions were, happily, almost always of the most favourable kind. Some of the routes were found to be rather arduous, but none were beyond what a fairly good walker could comfortably overtake during the long afternoons of summer. Opinions varied as to which outing was the most enjoyable; those taking part will agree that none were declared unsuccessful. A series of photos was taken each year, and the views were mounted on slides and shown on the screen at the beginning of the following winter session.

Every corner of the parish has now been visited, and its various places of interest have been seen. As a result it is hoped that a much better knowledge prevails of the wide territory, of the varied activities, and of the important interests that lie within its bounds.

The following pages may serve to show how well fitted as starting points for exploring the neighbourhood of Aberdeen are the villages of Bucksburn, Bankhead and Stoneywood.

DESCRIPTION OF NEWHILLS.


HISTORY.


NEWHILLS became a parish in 1666, having been formed out of the then large parish of Old Machar. In pre-reformation times the Cathedral at Old Aberdeen served not only as the See of the Bishops of Aberdeen, but as the parish church for what is now Old Machar, New Machar, and Newhills. At the remote parts of this wide territory small chapels were set up for the use of the inhabitants, viz., at Monycaboch (New Machar), Clubsgoval (Parkhill), and Craibstone. The last named, known as St. Mary's of Stoneywood, was therefore the original place of worship in Newhills, and although the building itself has vanished, the tiny Churchyard connected with it is still in use. It was erected about 1360 by Michael Cock of Moray, who appears to have died before its completion, and it is of interest to note that the present Cathedral in Old Aberdeen was begun to be built about the same time. King David, when granting the lands of Waterton, Clinterty, &c., to his physician, Donald Bannerman, in 1367, made it a condition that the latter should complete this chapel and perform a weekly mass there for the soul of King Robert the Bruce (King David's father). This building doubtless fell into decay at the Reformation in 1560, when the reformers had to devote their energies to populous centres, and when small outposts had to be abandoned. The only time that mention of it is again made is in 1649, when the Kirk Session of Old Machar passed a decree "That none sall burie in the Chappell of Stiniwood under the payne of church censure."

The long distance that the inhabitants had now to walk to church in Old Aberdeen must have been a serious drawback, as is disclosed in the session records of that church. One entry mentions the case of a resident near Cloghill, who, being summoned one day in dark November to "satisfy" before the session, replies that he should like to be excused till the days were longer, so that he might make the journey by daylight. Another entry in 1627 reveals how the "indwellers" of the small hamlet of Clinterty were summoned in a body to explain the irregularity of their attendance. A third example in 1640 was that of Dr. Scroggie, the "Aulton" minister of that time, who being charged by the Presbytery for failure in duty, was justified by some because "his numerous and vast parosh was not to be paralleled in these places."

A century went past before an attempt was made to remedy the evil. In 1662 George Davidson, who followed the then dignified occupation of packman, felt his sympathy stirred for the welfare of the people, his calling giving him, doubtless, an exceptional knowledge of what was being desired by them. He took means to get a church erected, and he settled an endowment to maintain it. The lands of Newhills, which he gave to support the church, have now become so valuable that the living ranks as one of the best in Scotland, although in those early days the lot of the minister was so hard that he found himself unable to pay the feu-duty of $1/4\frac{1}{2}$.

The church then built did service till 1830, and its ivy-clad ruins standing in the kirkyard form a noted land mark in the parish. The tomb of George Davidson, who died in 1663, may be seen on the wall near the Back Wynd entrance of the West Church of Aberdeen. Not only was the district set apart as a new ecclesiastical charge, but it was also separated from Old Machar in civil affairs, and became in every respect a new parish.

It will, however, always be of interest to remember that the grey towers of Old Machar Cathedral were for long ages the centre of religious and civil life to the inhabitants of what is now Newhills.

MODERN DEVELOPMENT.

During the two and a half centuries of its existence as a parish, there have been few striking events to chronicle in connection with Newhills. If its course has been uneventful it cannot, however, be said to have been unprogressive. From small beginnings its population has risen to over 6000, and its valuation has been even more remarkable in its growth, until to-day it exceeds £30,000.

The moor and moss that made its surface so featureless of old, have slowly evolved into fertile plains and tree-clad valleys. Farming rapidly came to occupy a leading place in its life, and still continues to be its most valuable asset. In this respect it requires but to be mentioned that field draining was first introduced into the north at Hope Farm in this parish, and that the growing of turnips was started at Waterton before farmers in other parts of the north cared to venture upon such an apparently rash experiment.

In the domain of Industry, many and various have been the ventures attempted; but of all that have risen and declined, two alone seem destined to remain. Papermaking, in connection with which the Don plays a large part, has successfully held its own amid all the stress of modern competition. Stoneywood Paper Works, belonging to Messrs. Alex. Pirie & Sons, Ltd., have existed since 1770. At these mills the highest grades of paper are made. The annual output from its six machines is 8000 tons, and there are 1000 hands employed. Mugiemoss Works, the property of Messrs. C. Davidson & Sons, Ltd., were founded in 1796. Here the main production is wrapping paper. It supports three machines, and there are about 500 employees. A third paper mill stood in the hollow between Bankhead Station and Waterton House, and was known as the Bagery Mill, because bags were made at it. It was demolished a quarter of a century ago, and its large dam was filled up, so that a level field now hides all traces of this hive of industry. The

curious mound at the Firhill is the earth excavated at the forming of the dam.

Granite quarrying is the other important industry, and it, too, has flourished for more than 100 years. At Dancing Cairns and at Sclettie the big hills of granite chips testify to the extent and the long continuity of the work carried on. The number of hands employed is over 120, and both quarries, as also that of Dyce, are worked by Messrs. A. & F. Manuelle, London.

PLACE NAMES.

The place names of the parish are somewhat confusing, and a short note explaining them may be of assistance.

Newhills is the name of the civil parish, but for ecclesiastical purposes the greater part of the villages goes to form the Quoad Sacra parish of Stoneywood, the division being the Inverurie Road, as far as the "Forrit" Brae.

The village of Stoneywood (formerly and still sometimes known as Woodend) is thus the least important part of the parish of that name.

For purposes of lighting, water, sewerage, and cleansing, the villages form a special district apart from the rest of Newhills, and this is known as the Waterton Special District; but it differs considerably from the Estate of Waterton belonging to Messrs. Pirie.

Stoneywood and Waterton may be said to largely overlap each other. In ancient times Stoneywood was the estate name and was a barony, and it stretched westwards to include Walton and Clinterty, while Waterton was then merely a section of the estate. Now-a-days the position is reversed, and Waterton has become the estate name, and Stoneywood is but a part of it, but instead of stretching westwards it turns southwards as far as the Grove. It may be added that of the two names, Waterton appears to be considerably older than Stoneywood.

Bucksburn is the name of the leading village and of the chief railway station, while it is also the postal address for the greater part of Newhills. (Formerly the confusion was all the more when Buxburn was the name of the station and Auchmull that of the post office). Bankhead is used as the name of a railway station, and generally the name implies the surrounding village, but for purposes connected with the Seaton estate a large part of the village is known as Sclettie. It may be added that the old name for Bankhead was Milnhill. Similarly it is difficult to distinguish between what is Mugiemoss and what is Lower Bucksburn.

The area for School Board elections is the whole of Newhills, but in County and Parish Council elections there are two wards, the north and south, divided by the Inverurie Road.

Kingswells, Kingshill, Kingsford and Countesswells are names doubtless reminiscent of the time that the Stocket was a Royal Forest, when the Kings of Scotland (Robert the Bruce and earlier) were not by any means strangers to the district.

Kepplehills and Newhills are confusing in early histories. The former appears to have been a district name of a larger area, the latter an estate name of smaller area. The Church having been built on the lands of Newhills which had been bought as an endowment, the whole of the new parish came to be called after these lands. Various writers have assumed that the name Newhills originated with the new parish, but writings of an earlier date show that it was in existence before then. Gardyne and Kingshill were two other names used to denote the Kepplehills district, but they do not seem to have been long in use.



❧ DONSIDER ❧



THE landward part of the parish will be fully dealt with in describing the various excursions, but as the Donside district did not come within the scope of the outings, a brief outline of it will now be given. The line of houses stretching for nearly two miles from the Aberdeen boundary at Scatterburn, towards Dyce, is almost continuous, but there are in reality three villages—Bucksburn, Bankhead and Stoneywood.

In Bucksburn, which is the leading village, there are situated the following:—

Newhills United Free Church, erected in 1843 (Rev. A. J. CHRYSTALL, Minister).

St. Machar's Episcopal Church, erected in 1880 (The Very Rev. Dean WISEMAN, D.D., Rector).

Bucksburn Higher Grade Public Schools (Mr. M. G. GERRARD, M.A., Headmaster).

Bucksburn Post-Office. Bucksburn Station. Bucksburn Hall.

Newhills Parish Council Office. Newhills School Board Office.

The Drill Hall of G Company 6th Gordon Highlanders. Bucksburn Police Station.

The Free Masons' Hall (Lodge St. John 795). The Foresters' Hall.

The Nurse's Home. The Northern Co-operative Coy's. Branch.

Mugiemoss Football Ground. The Grove Cemetery.

Most of the leading professions and trades are also located here.

In Bankhead the following are the chief places of interest:—

Stoneywood Parish Church, erected in 1879 (Rev. J. R. ALLAN, Minister).

Bankhead Station. Bankhead Post-Office.

Newhills Tennis Club. Newhills Bowling Club.

In Stoneywood there are the undermentioned :—

Stoneywood Station. Stoneywood Post-Office.
 Stoneywood Public Schools (Mr. C. FRASER, M.A., Headmaster).
 Stoneywood Works Hall (formerly the Schools).
 Stoneywood Cricket Ground. Stoneywood Quoiting Pitch.
 The Admiralty Wireless Telegraphic Station.

The following are the private houses of note :—

Stoneywood House, built in 1850, belonging to Messrs. PIRIE, and occupied by Captain LINDNER.
 Waterton House, built a century ago, belonging to Messrs. PIRIE, and occupied by Mr. H. A. D. WATHEN.
 Mugiemoos House, attached to the works there, and occupied by Mr. T. DAVIDSON.

In the district there is a varied list of Societies and Institutions, of which some have already been indicated, and the following may now be added :—

The Young Men's Christian Association. The Young Women's Christian Association.
 The Scottish Mothers' Union. The British Women's Temperance Association.
 The Morocco Mission. The Savings Banks. The Newhills Emergency Committee.
 The Foresters. The Oddfellows. The Shepherds. The Rechabites.
 Boys' Brigade. Cadet Corps. Troop of Boy Scouts.
 Horticultural Club. Ornithological Club.
 Brass Band at Stoneywood Works. Choral Union.
 Various Medical Clubs. Several Political Clubs.

Advanced Instruction is given at Bucksburn Evening School
 Continuation Classes.

The following are the benevolent funds. These could, with advantage, be added to :—

The Edward Fund (about £100 annually).
 The Burnett Fund (about £20 every 7 years).
 The Morgan Fund (about £5 yearly).
 The Brown Trust (for Missionary purposes chiefly).

From the foregoing it will be seen that the villages are well equipped with the amenities expected under present day conditions. Some things, however, still require to be added. Business men feel the need of a branch of one of the Aberdeen banks. In public affairs, a more distinctive suite of Board Rooms would add dignity to the district. Should the villages be grouped into a Burgh, this want may then be more easily satisfied. A Public Library and Reading Room is another felt want amongst young people. A Children's playground in each of the three villages has for long been regarded as desirable. The formation of a properly made continuous pavement in Stoneywood and Bucksburn, similar to what has already so effectively been done in Bankhead, would be a great improvement to the two villages.

Perhaps some wealthy son of the parish will, in time, arise to confer some of these benefits upon it.

The facilities for travel are well attended to. The Railway Company provide an excellent suburban service of trains, instituted in 1887, and the Suburban Tramway Company run cars regularly throughout the day, the system having been started in 1905. It would be of advantage if the latter Company could extend its system to Stoneywood, and if it could connect Blackburn by a motor car service.

The features of interest in the Donside district specially suitable for the attention of a Field Club are not numerous. One or two things may be mentioned in connection with Stoneywood Works. The uppermost building, now used as a sizing room, was formerly the Mansion House of Stoneywood, and is likely to have been built about 1671. Although now so old, its stout ashlar walls appear to have a long existence in front of them. This old house has a notable history, mainly in connection with the Moir family, who owned Stoneywood from 1671 to 1784, during which time the estate passed from father to son through four generations. The second of these was member of

parliament for Aberdeenshire for 15 years during the time of the Union. It is, however, the last of the four, James Moir, who has left the greatest mark in history, chiefly because of his doings in the Jacobite cause, of which he was a very ardent supporter. He raised a battalion known as Stoneywood's regiment, and in various other ways made himself very acceptable to Prince Charlie. After Culloden he hid for some time in the kitchen of this building, till warned by a friendly Hanovarian officer that he had better seek refuge in flight. The Moir family parted with the estate more than a century ago, after holding it for nearly 120 years. It is understood that some of the furniture then disposed of is now in the possession of Mr. Alexander Morris, Marlepool. The coat of arms of the Moir family has been built into the walls of the office at the Works.

The river at Stoneywood Works is very rocky, and, as may be seen, it has been deepened to prevent flooding. This became necessary owing to the great floods in 1829, when a number of the work-people were rescued with extreme difficulty, and after most of the buildings had been swept away. On the opposite bank of the river will be noticed various cuttings, which are all that remain of an ambitious project to carry a lade for two miles from here to Grandholm Mills.

Among notable men who have started life at Stoneywood Works may be mentioned the names of James Macdonell, a celebrated leader-writer of the "Times" newspaper, and Sir Alexander McRobert, who is still a prominent figure in India.

Sclattie appears from very early times to have been a place of note, and many references are to be found as to its Mansion House, which stood at what is now the back of the quarry. The house appears to have been ruinous about 1725, but as it was occupied as late as 1800, it must have been repaired. Its last proprietor was Dr. Scroggie, who was Principal of King's College for over 50 years, and who lived to be nearly 90 years of age. Some traces of its garden, and a dressed gate-post, are all that remain of it.

The old Grove House was erected by the Rev. Dr. Brown, after he retired from the active ministry at Newhills.

A prominent feature in the former life of the district was the Greenburn Market Stance, in which for over a period of 200 years there were markets held. These markets were continued until about 30 years ago. The market stance was then made over as a cricket field, and is now used as such by the Stonewood Club, which, it may be mentioned, has had an existence of at least 60 years.

During the flourishing period of the markets, there was a considerable village at Greenburn, one of its houses being the district inn, but most of the village has now disappeared.



LOCAL EXCURSIONS.

*No. 1.***BRIMMOND.***May, 1908.*

BRIMMOND is the leading physical feature of Newhills, and it was natural that the first local excursion should be to its summit.

The place of meeting was the entrance gate at Craibstone. After passing a little distance along the avenue, in which there are some fine old trees, the footpath branching off to the left, near the bridge, is followed. This leads up a beautiful little glen through which runs the Gough Burn. A neatly kept footpath crosses and re-crosses the burn by a series of concrete bridges.

Leaving the policies at the Upper Lodge, the public road is followed to the "Auld Kirk," the well-known ruin around which so much of the former life of the parish has centred. During the active existence of the Church from 1662 to 1830, nine ministers in succession occupied the charge, and the lives of these men, as recorded in the histories of the parish, form interesting reading. A weird interest attaches to the ruin from the fact that in 1715 the minister of the time, the Rev. Robert Burnett, committed suicide by hanging himself with the bell rope. In the small tool-shed there are various mementos carved in the roof by the men who, in Resurrectionist times, kept watch here. Most of the tombstones of note are those of former ministers, and none are of very great age.

Passing Kepplehills School, formerly the parish school, the shooting range of the local territorials will be seen. On the left is the small farm of Watchmanbrae, so called because it was the abode of the watchman who kept guard over the beacon on the top of Brimmond. This beacon was erected in 1627 by the Aberdeen Town Council, to be fired as one of a chain of signals to summon the aid of the county in time of war.

Arriving at the top of the hill, a great extent of country is in view. The sea can be seen for many miles, reaching from the sands

of Forvie well-nigh to Stonehaven. Turning inland there are the mountains of Lochnagar, Ben Avon, Benrinnes, Benachie, Buck-of-Cabrach, Tap o' Noth, Mormond, and many others. On the plains the greater part of Aberdeenshire is spread out to view, embracing a wide variety of wood and river and field, of town and village and castle. The summit of the hill was the place where Queen Victoria's Jubilees of 1887 and 1897 were celebrated locally, on which occasions great bonfires were lit in presence of large crowds.

The descent was made by the Jubilee Road, by the side of which road, behind the farm of Ashtown, there are numerous tumuli or burial cairns, associated, no doubt, with some pre-historic fight. Passing along a row of fine old beeches, a scene of beauty is reached at Jollie's Howe, where the surroundings are of the most pleasing kind. A little detour is made into the thick woods in order to see the Robbers' Cave, said to have stretched in old times far underground, but now closed up, except at its awesome mouth. Continuing the pretty walk through the Chapel Wood, the next point of interest is at Chapel of Craibstone. Here in the small enclosure stood St. Mary's Chapel of Stoneywood, in the Roman Catholic period from 1365 to 1560. The tiny churchyard is still used at rare intervals, but the claim to use the churchyard seems rather a doubtful one. A modern chapel, erected near its old time predecessor, is used for monthly services, conducted by Mr. Proctor, the missionary appointed by the Brown Trust.

The final stage of the journey was made by Craibstone House, long the seat of a noted Aberdeen family called Sandilands, whose coat of arms stands over the doorway. There is a tradition that, in the hollow behind the house, a battle was fought in the Covenanting period. The original name of this estate was Auchterrony, but this was changed about 1320 to commemorate its earliest known owner, John Crab, a noted Aberdeen burgess. The estate belongs to Scott's Trustees, who use the income from it to support Scott's Hospital, in Huntly, a building founded by Dr. Alexander Scott, who owned Craibstone in the early half of last century.

Negotiations are in progress for acquiring Craibstone House and Farm, to be used in connection with the Aberdeen Agricultural College as a students' residence and experimental farm.

THE gathering point in this outing was Dyce Station. Passing along the "Lang Straucht," and then through fields, the first halt was at the reservoir of the Waterton Special District Committee. The original supply of water came from Johnny Ririe's well, situated in an adjoining field between two large trees: this well, which is now covered over, was a resort at one time for the making of smuggled whisky. A number of years ago the water system was augmented from springs near Parkhill House, and the supply is forced up by turbines from the pumping station at Goval.

From the reservoir it is but a short walk to the Standing Stones of Dyce, one of the most complete Druidical circles in the north. These circles are generally associated with our heathen Celtic forefathers, and may have been their places of worship or of burial, or a combination of both, as with modern country churches. In the Dyce Circle the chief object of interest is the Altar Stone. The age of these stone circles is likely to be not less than 2000 years.

From near this point a road goes over Tyrebagger Hill to connect Dyce and Blackburn. It runs through a picturesque little "Pass," the rocky sides of which, spread with heather, fern, and birch, look like a miniature highland glen.

Arriving over the crest of this hill-road, a splendid picture of mountain and plain opens out, embracing a complete view from top to base of Lochnagar and of Benachie. A short walk by the footpath to the left, and then a scramble up the hill, leads to the "Tappie." This is a stone tower built by the late Dr. Henderson of Caskieben, to allow visitors to see over the trees. Although the view is not so complete as from Brimmond, it is still very fine, and the immediate surroundings are much more varied. Near by, and still on the broad summit of Tyrebagger Hill, there is a cultivated plateau with a small farm, an ideal summer abode, shut in as it is on all sides by woods. At the edge of one of the fields is a strong mineral spring, the Pitdourie Well, a first of May wishing-well. The custom was to visit it then, and while putting a pin in the bank, to utter a wish, which was sure to come true within the year.

By visiting the eastern brow of the hill, a fine view is had of the sea and intervening country. Thereafter a short journey back to the Bishopston side discloses an excellent prospect of the Grampian range.

From the last point the return journey was made by a footpath along the wooded slope near the turnpike. This path continues through the hollow of Mountjoy, a mild sunny valley, well adapted for a sanatorium. In this hollow some good specimens of tumuli were examined. From Corschill the rest of the way homewards was by the Inverurie Road.



No. 3.

BISHOP'S LOCH.

September, 1908.

AS in the former excursion, the start was made from Dyce Station. At Mains of Dyce there was shown near the farm steading the last traces of the old mansion house of Dyce, the seat of the Skenes of Dyce. This family came into the property in 1628, by the marriage of Gilbert Skene to Marjory Buchan of Auchmacoy, who was heiress of the lands, and their descendants continued through seven generations to own it, till 1815, when, on the death of the last of the line, it passed to his nearest relations, who are now the Gordons of Parkhill. Besides owning Dyce, the Skenes acquired Parkhill in 1710, and about 1732 they transferred their mansion house there. Behind Mains of Dyce, on the banks of the Don, is the family burying-ground of the Skenes and Gordons. A stone shows the walls to have been built in 1689, and they were further heightened in 1837. The Skenes appear to have been among the early adherents of the Quaker movement, and as it was not unusual for Quaker families to have a private burying-ground, the origin of this one is thus accounted for.

The Parkhill bridge over the Don, as a date-stone upon it shows, was built in 1803, when the Oldmeldrum turnpike was made. At first the bridge was a wooden structure, which was replaced by the present stone erection about 1845.

Proceeding round the outside of Parkhill grounds, a halt was made at the quarry, where a prospect of the country for miles round is to be had. Various objects of interest lie near at hand. At Parkhill House there stood a Roman Catholic Chapel called Clubsgoval, all of which has vanished except a fragment forming part of the garden wall. In a field to the north is a place known as Cope's Butts, where Sir John Cope exercised his troops on the march against Prince Charlie. Near Parkhill House is a field where a

number of springs rise. The water is collected and brought to the pumping station at Goval, and from there is forced by turbines to the reservoir, nearly two miles distant. The turbines, it may be mentioned, are driven by an ingenious method of using the Goval burn. Near Parkhill Station a very ancient silver chain was unearthed in 1864, and near the same place a stone cist was found in 1881. The chain is now a valuable object of interest in the museum in Edinburgh. The journey being resumed by the pretty Den of Parkhill, the Bishop's Loch was soon in view. The loch is partly surrounded by trees, which set it off effectively, and it lies so low that no water is seen passing out of it. The numerous springs already referred to are no doubt the result of the water from the loch filtering through the sandy soil. The name of the loch arises from the fact that the Bishops of Aberdeen had at one time a palace on a small island here. The foundations of this building and of the small chapel attached to it can still be easily traced.

Bishop Hugh de Benham, the last of the prelates known to have resided in it, was said to have been done to death within its walls in 1282.

The later stages of the journey were made by Grandhome. Some very fine beech avenues lead up to Grandhome House, and the house itself occupies a splendid position on the river Don. The ownership of the estate can be traced back for nearly 600 years, and since 1680 it has been possessed by the Paton family—the present proprietor being the seventh of his line. Some parts of the building are very old, and, like other old houses, it rejoices in a haunted room. In the grounds is a dovecot, without which no estate used to be considered complete, and there was also a mausoleum, but it has been demolished.

From Grandhome House the party was conveyed over the Don by boats, and the way was then by Stoneywood House homewards.



THE place of assembly was Newhills Church. This building was erected in 1830, and was designed by the celebrated Aberdeen architect, Archibald Simpson. Near at hand is the Manse of the minister (Rev. Dr. Smith). On the farm of Derbeth, close by, is a

small cottage, which was the Convalescent Home for seven years before the erection of the present Home. This cottage was formerly an inn, and it stands on one of the disused roads which are a feature of this neighbourhood, showing it to have been counted once of more importance than is now the case. Much inconvenience exists at the present day from the fact that the only proper road suddenly ends on coming to the policies of Fairley. A continuation of this road for fully a quarter of a mile is required to join it to the road on the other side of the policies. One advantage to the tourist is that he has to find a way by going through the pretty Den of Fairley. At the mouth of the Den is the Fairies' Knowe, said to be a pre-historic cairn still unopened. Fairley House (Captain Brooke) looks out attractively from its surrounding trees, and Cloghill House (Major Campbell) stands also in a well chosen situation. At a short distance from this point the highroad is left in order to journey along the top of the Consumption Dyke. This dyke is 500 yards long, 33 feet broad, and 6 feet high, and along the middle of it runs a well paved footpath. Doubtless this striking erection was formed to get rid of surface stones when the land was reclaimed. Not far away from the end of it is the Quakers' Churchyard, in which are interred various members of the Jaffrays of Kingswells, and several of their Quaker friends.

Passing on to almost the extreme western end of Newhills, and regaining the high road, the Long Cairn is reached. This cairn, measuring 108 feet long and 38 feet broad, is one of the most famous of its kind in the north. Some years ago a cist or stone coffin was found in it, showing that it has a pre-historic origin. From its extent it evidently stands to commemorate some famous warrior of a long ago age.

The whole extent of the back of Brimmond has now to be traversed, and although the two miles seem long ones, yet there is much to relieve the tedium of the way.

The Doupin' Stane at last brings the northern journey to an end, and the road bends homewards. In describing this stone it is necessary to dip a little into history. Long centuries ago (about 1319) the city of Aberdeen, as a reward for its help to King Robert the Bruce, received the gift of a wide stretch of land that had belonged to him as a hunting forest. The land which he gave to the town stretched from the town walls as far inland as the back of Brimmond. In order that the citizens might safeguard their property, it became at an early period (1525 or before) the custom

to hold an annual tour of inspection round the borders, and this was known as the riding of the marches. Boundary stones duly numbered were set up at intervals, and many of these still exist. As times of stress made it necessary to raise money, the town gradually parted with the land, and all that the feu-duties bring to it now is about £70 yearly. Had the lands still been in the possession of the city, the annual rent to be derived would be about £50,000. Even now, when some old-time special burden on the lands comes to be paid every twenty years or so, there is a sum of £5000 to the good, a small compensation, however, for what has been lost.

The Doupin' Stane (No 31) is at the most remote boundary, and here it became customary to install new burgesses of guild amid great hilarity, and by a process more enjoyed by the onlookers than the victims.

With the loss of the lands, the ceremony of riding the marches has become an empty one, and it is done now only at long intervals, the last occasion being in 1889.

The Stoneywood Guild, it may be mentioned, installed five of its members at the Doupin' Stane, according to time-honoured method.

The journey onwards was by the steep road leading to Tulloch Farm, near to which, on the side of Brimmond, the main source of the Craibstone Burn was visited. The course of the stream was then followed through Jollie's Howe, past the Chapel to the Inverurie Road, and thence homewards.



No. 5.

PERSLEY.

July, 1909.

PERSLEY Bridge, where the party gathered, stands at the extreme eastern corner of Newhills. It was built some twenty years ago, and not only is it attractive in itself, but its surroundings are also highly effective. Close at hand is a small castellated building, which looks more ancient than its story warrants, for it dates only from about 1800, and it was built to lodge the apprentices at Woodside Works. Woodside House is over the high bank of the river, and stands in a well chosen position. Passing the quarries, the scene as the Den of Persley is entered is very fine. The mill lade running through the Den was, in its day, counted a great achievement, and it cost a large sum to excavate. Presently, at some little distance on the right,

Woodside Works come into view, and then Grandholm Mills. In the early years of last century both were busy hives of industry, but they entered into a long course of litigation with each other, which ultimately ruined both, and the village of Woodside shared in the desolation which followed. Later on they both started on a new lease of life, and they have again become the breadwinners of a great many people of both sexes. Messrs. Crombie have built up a large woollen business at Grandholm, and Messrs. Pirie use Woodside Works as an adjunct to their paper works. Lower down, at Gordon's Mills, stands the now disused carpet factory, which belonged to Messrs. Hadden, and close at hand are the Donside Paper Works, owned by the proprietors of the "People's Journal," the paper made here being used to print this well-known newspaper. The salmon cruives at this point give a very singular appearance to the river.

Meantime, various mansion houses have been passed, including Persley (Mr. Ross), Danestone (Mr. Crombie), Balgownie (Trustees of Duncan Forbes), Balgownie Lodge (the late Mr. Crombie, M.P.), and Seaton Cottage (Dr. Matthew Hay). At Seaton the Don makes a curious zig-zag, and appears as if it had started on a new journey inland. Seaton House, on the opposite bank, occupies a stately position, surrounded by many natural advantages. Mr. Hay, its proprietor, owns large and valuable parts of Newhills. The view of the Cathedral to be obtained here is exceedingly good, and is the one favoured by artists and photographers. The Brig o' Balgownie was naturally the centre of much interest. Built about 1320 by Bishop Cheyne, this noble specimen of pure gothic bids fair to remain the most noted architectural feature of Aberdeen. From the new bridge a good idea may be had of the curious exit which the Don makes as it leads out to sea.

Proceeding next to Oldmachar Cathedral, an inspection was made both inside and outside of this interesting old pile. The present building, the third successive cathedral that has stood here, was begun by Bishop Alexander Kinninmond II. in 1370, and took 180 years to complete. Before the reformation, when it suffered much from the mob, it was much larger, and it had then three towers, but the largest of them has long since fallen down. Many features of interest happily remain, and let us hope that these will long be preserved to mark the pious labours of the men of long ago. In the surrounding churchyard are tombstones to a long list of distinguished people.

As the journey through Old Aberdeen was continued, the many features of interest in that quaint old town were noticed in passing, particularly the Cruickshank Botanical Gardens, the Snow Church-yard, and the Aulton Market Stance. The last place to be visited was King's College. This venerable building dates from 1506, and was erected chiefly through the influence of the saintly Bishop Elphinstone, the most noted of a long line of eminent prelates. The chapel, in which the Bishop's tomb stands conspicuously, is a cherished object of regard to all sons and daughters of the University. The famous Crown, Cromwell's Tower, and the Library were visited in turn, and the valuable collection of paintings was shown. So many objects of interest centre round the old College that a visit to it will always be remembered as a notable event.



No. 6.

KINGSWELLS.

August, 1909.

HAVING assembled at Bucksburn School, the direction taken was by Bucksburn Howes, one of the beauty spots of the parish. Bucksburn House (Miss Jelf Sharpe) stands at the far end, and near to it is an artistically placed ruined meal-mill, in which is a date-stone showing it to have been erected in the historic year of 1745.

Arriving at the cross-roads, a scene of rare beauty meets the eye in looking backwards, for nothing could be more pleasing and varied than the combination of wood and field, of hill and sea, that is spread before the onlooker.

On reaching the Springhill Road a good view will be had of Auchmull House, which is close at hand, standing amid fine old trees, and sharing in the splendid view to be had here. Even now, although its fortunes have fallen, the old house carries its years well, and one is pleased to recall that, in centuries gone by, great men have dwelt in it, and that it was then so rich as to have its park of deer (hence the names Bucksburn, Harthill and Roeden). Dr. Donaldson, a professor in Marischal College, who died in 1793, would probably have been the last of the proprietors to reside here.

On reaching the water-shed, Springhill House (Miss Maclellan) stands on the left, and the southern slope of the parish comes in view. On the right is Sheddocksley House (Captain Fraser), well

sheltered amongst trees. By a curious freak three of these trees produce the word “**Ink.**” as may be seen from Scattie Quarry.

Reaching the Stocket Road, Summerfield Fever Hospital, belonging to the Aberdeen District Committee of the County Council, is on the left; and in front the great array of buildings is Oldmill, the property of the Aberdeen Parish Council. Till a few years ago a Reformatory, built in 1857 by Dr. Watt, stood here. At some distance along the Stocket Road, on the right, stands Whitemyres House. A dip into the “switchback,” as the connecting road to the Skene turnpike is called, gives interest to the journey, and shortly thereafter the hamlet of Kingswells is reached.

Kingswells U. F. Church and Manse (Rev. T. B. Robertson, minister), which are the chief buildings here, were erected in 1859. Kingswells School was attended in early life by Dr. Gordon Stables, who refers to it in some of his writings (“Ploughshare to Pulpit,” &c.) A new public hall and a police station are the other public buildings. Kingswells House stands in view a little further on. This house and estate belonged for several centuries to a noted family called Jaffray, who were among the earliest converts to Quakerism, and among the most influential of its members. Several of the family were Lord Provosts of Aberdeen, and one was a member of parliament in Cromwell’s time. He attained to considerable distinction in his day, and was one of the four commissioners sent over to Holland to treat for the return of King Charles II. In the small churchyard, already noticed in a former excursion, he rests with others of his kinsfolk. It may be added that one of the Jaffray family held the Grandhome estate for a time before the Patons bought it. During his occupancy Grandhome was known as Dilspro, as may be seen by the flat tombstone to his memory in front of the West Parish Church, Aberdeen.

The return journey was made city-wards, and the first halt was at Maidencraig. Here there are the ruins of a meal-mill, destroyed some 20 years ago by a fire, and still attached to the walls is the water-wheel, said to be the largest in the north. If the walls were covered with ivy, a new beauty would be added to the wooded stream, which is already very effective.

Soon the imposing front view of Oldmill comes in sight, as also the handsome viaduct leading to it.

Pausing at the point where Newhills meets Aberdeen, a short journey was made along a bye-road to get a glimpse of Hazelhead House (Mr. Rose’s Trustees) and Burnieboozle House (Mr. Couper), which, situated amongst extensive woods, form the outposts of

Newhills in this direction. It may be recalled that Mr. Rose of Hazelhead was one of the first trustees of Stoneywood Church.

The Church of Craigiebuckler, although inside the city boundary, was of interest, since it fulfils to this, the south side of Newhills parish, what Stoneywood does on the north.

Passing the famous Rubislaw Quarries, the journey from Bayview was made by car.



No. 7.

BLACKBURN.

January, 1910.

A DESIRE having been made to try the experiment of a winter excursion into the country, it was agreed to make a journey to Blackburn during the New-year holidays. Assembling at the Red Smithy, the road was along ground already made familiar. At Corsehill, attention was called to the way in which the boundary between Dyce and Newhills zig-zags over the turnpike. Near the top of the steep road is the "Accommodation Road" by which, in the days of toll bars, those who could not or would not pay toll were able to escape payment by making a detour. The toll of Tyrebagger at the top of the hill was one of the best paying near Aberdeen. Every year the post of toll-keeper was put up to auction, and the highest bidder was appointed. In the case of Tyrebagger, the rent offered was about £100, and the toll-keeper had, during the year, to recover from passengers as much as pay this sum, and as much more as would afford him a living. A board showing the legal rates was posted at each toll—the rates being: for a cart 4d., for a flock of sheep $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per head, for a cab 6d., and so on. Tolls were abolished about 40 years ago; the gates or bars were then removed, and the houses turned into ordinary dwelling-houses. From the toll, a wonderful view opens out, showing a great stretch of hill and valley, making a visit here a never-failing source of pleasure. At this season, the hills in their winter garb looked specially noteworthy.

Progressing down hill, the hamlet of Clinterty is the first object on the left, and the quarry of the same name on the right. Next, on the right, is Caskieben House, the residence of Mr. D. V. Pirie, M.P. Formerly Cordyce was the name of this place, and Caskieben applied to what is now Keith-hall, the change having been made on the

purchase of Cordyce by one of the Johnstons of the older Caskieben, who wished to perpetuate the name when the Keiths instituted Keith-hall.

A short journey and the modern village of Blackburn is reached—a veritable sleepy hollow, lying in a highly favoured situation. The three parishes of Newhills, Dyce and Kinellar meet at the stream which divides the village. The school is in Newhills, but it is a combination one between this parish and Dyce, and it also serves for children on the other side of the burn, although Kinellar has not joined in the combination. Blackburn U.F. Church (Rev. Jas. A. Jaffray, minister), is on the Kinellar side of the village.

On the return journey, the route by Little Mill is followed, leading almost to the Doupin' Stane, which was visited on the fourth excursion. The presence of two meal mills in this quarter is explained by the law which, in former times, required the tenants of farms to give their custom to the mill on the lands of the proprietor under whom they held their farms.

The next part of the journey was along the "Accommodation Road," passing the extensive quarries of Tyrebagger on the way. Arriving back at the Toll, it will be seen that the view seawards is, in its way, almost as fine as the inland view. We can enter into the feelings of travellers in the long cold journeys of stage-coach days, who hailed this part of the road with particular welcome, as bringing them into view of their long-wished-for destination.



No. 8.

SCOTSTOWN MOOR.

April, 1910.

A SPECIAL car conveyed the members from Bankhead terminus direct to Bridge of Don. Passing up the south bank of the river, the Don was crossed at Brig o' Balgownie. As the journey by road was continued, there could be seen on the right the golf links at Balgownie and at Murcar, while further along the coast there appeared, at Blackdog, the small hill with the watch-tower upon it, said to have been erected during the scare of an invasion by Napoleon. On the left a field was pointed out where, three years ago, a stone cist was discovered, the cist being now in the museum of Marischal College.

The grounds of Denmore House (Mr. Thomas Adam) on the right, and of Scotstown House (Mr. Fellowes Gordon) on the left, soon come into view, followed by the beginning of Scotstown Moor. A visit was made to the buildings of the Aberdeen Camp for Ailing Children, and from this point a general idea of the extent of the moor was obtained. It may be explained that when the Bishops of Aberdeen, as the need of money for church building schemes came to be pressing, were forced gradually to sell or feu the wide territories that had been gifted to them, they had the foresight to reserve mosses and moorlands for the benefit of the surrounding communities, for the purpose of providing fuel, grazing, and other advantages. Scotstown Moor was the reserve set aside for the good of the inhabitants of Old Aberdeen and the district round about. On the abolition of the office of Bishop, the Crown took possession of the rights held by the Church, and in the case of Scotstown Moor they left the oversight largely in the hands of the Town Council of Old Aberdeen. When this burgh came to be merged in the City of Aberdeen, the Town Council of the latter claimed the superiority, but the proprietor of the neighbouring estate of Perwinnes (Mr. Gordon of Parkhill) also laid claim to it. So far there has been no definite settlement reached, but fortunately the freedom of the public meantime has not suffered in consequence.

A good view of Scotstown House was obtained in passing the outskirts of the policies on the way to Whitestripes.

On the farm of Whitestripes, situated in the middle of a field, there was shown the next object of interest. This was a solitary flat tombstone in a small enclosure, the reading on the stone being as follows :—

Heir lyes

Jams Cassie of Whitestripes

departed 4 Spr. 1647.

Margrat Morison his Spos

dep. 17 A. 1647.

They may have been buried here through having probably died of the plague, which was raging at the time. James Cassie, who was proprietor of Whitestripes, was one of the heritors of Old Machar appointed to take a collection in the parish in 1624 for the restoration of Dumfermline Abbey.

Grandhome Moss was of interest for the reason that part of it was the moss from which tenants on the Stoneywood estate used to obtain their fuel, a right which some farmers still exercise.

Before reaching the farm of Cothill, some interesting circles were pointed out among the trees near the road, two of these circles being on the right, and the other, a more modern erection, on the left. At this point a splendid view of Newhills is to be had.

On the other side of Cothill, near the quarry, there was until recent times a large cairn known as Dilspro Cairn, on which a look-out tower stood in former days.

Mention is made of church services having been held at the cairns of Scotstown, Dilspro and Selattie during a time of plague in 1647, when it was deemed unsafe to hold regular services in the Cathedral at Old Aberdeen. If these cairns were used as gathering places of the people, it may be possible to explain the name Dancing Cairns as having had its origin from the festive nature of the assemblies there!

Passing the extensive quarries at Persley on the left, and Mugie-moss Works on the right, the outing was ended at Persley Station.

During the afternoon a short botanical lecture was delivered by Miss Jackson, Infant Mistress, Stoneywood School, her subject being "A Talk on Flowers."



No. 9

ELRICK HILL.

May, 1910.

THE foot of the well-known "Forrit Brae" was the rendezvous. Several members preferred to go by the Greenburn from Bridgefoot, in order to see the "Grotto," the name of a pretty wooded part of this stream, where the picturesque ruins of the Craibstone Meal Mill add to the interest. Others took the road by Walton, and in doing so they traversed what was the old highway before the making of the present Inverurie turnpike in 1800. The old road passed from Aberdeen by the Grove, up by Greenburn and Walton, in a line towards the Toll of Tyrebagger. The road branching off towards the Cricket Field was the old Banff highway. When the members combined at the Chapel, the route lay along the main road, and then by the "Accommodation Road" to Tyrebagger Quarries. Here the road to the left was followed, and in a few minutes the top of the quarry hill was reached, where a good idea of the operations of the granite industry was obtained. The next thing of interest was a visit to the small croft near by, to see one of the three main sources of the Craibstone Burn. Ascending the road to the Quarry Cottage, another of the sources was reached. This source is used as a well,

and in its depths there lives a large trout of unknown age, the feeding of which created no small amusement to those present. From the Cottage the view down the valley is most attractive, and the scenery close at hand is equally pleasing. Till lately a miniature mountain railway, in connection with the saw-mill, ran up the face of the hill. The formation of the lower part of Elrick Hill, as seen from this point, is very unusual, and plainly indicates that it had at one time been influenced by strong glacial pressure.

The ascent was now made of the upper part of Elrick Hill. This hill lies between Brimmond and Tyrebagger, and although considerably lower than either of these, it yet affords a very good range of view.

On its conical top there is a small turf circle of great age, not now readily made out amongst the long heather; but whether used as a place of defence, or merely as a shelter for cattle, it is impossible to tell. A number of roedeer were seen during the afternoon, and so unused were the younger of them to the sight of human beings, that one lay still until stroked by a member of the party.

On the way homewards a visit was paid to the Robbers' Cave, and the journey was continued by the Chapel Wood.

During the afternoon a short geological address by the President, Mr. M. G. Gerrard, M.A., was given, the subject being "Granite Formations."



No. 10.

DYCE.

July, 1910.

THE village of Dyce, from which the start of this excursion was made, is of quite modern erection, and it stands on what, till quite recently, was moorland. When the railway opened in 1854, the station was placed on the farm of Nether Kirkton, but on the formation of the Buchan section in 1861, the station was removed to its present site. The village then came into existence, although there had formerly been a hamlet—Old Dyce. Two Church Halls, an Institute, and the Schools are the buildings of public interest, and there is also a chemical factory. There is also a splendid Skating Rink and a Curling Pond. The U.F. Church (Rev. Mr. Anderson), standing outside the village, was erected in 1870, and the Established Church (Rev. Mr. Cox), not far distant, was built in 1872. In this neighbourhood will be seen a well preserved section of the Aberdeen-Inverurie Canal. The canal was begun in 1795, opened in 1807, and

demolished in 1850, to make way for the railway. After entering Newhills, its course lay along the outer policies of Stoneywood, on by Lock Cottage (where there was a basin and lock), then by Waterton Farm, Bankhead, Bucksburn, and the Grove (near to which another section can be seen from the train).

The first halt of the outing was at the "Auld Kirk" of Dyce, the ruin of what used to be known as St. Fergus Church. This old building seems to have been erected in 1544, and is thus interesting as being one of the few pre-reformation churches in the north. Its builder was doubtless Alexander Galloway, rector of Kinkell, and architect of the Old Greyfriars Church, Aberdeen. The old church did duty till 1872, when the new one was built, so that many are yet living who used to worship here. The chief feature of interest here lies in two sculptured stones, which are accounted so venerable as now to be under the direct control of Government. One of them probably dates back to Druidical times, and the other, having a finely carved cross, to an early period of Christianity. Across the river is another ruined church, that of St. Meddan's, which, till 1703, was the parish church of Fintray. Cothal Mills, also on the other side, were worked by Messrs. Crombie before they acquired Grandholm. Near by are the small properties of Goval Bank, Cothal House, and Fae-me-well, as also the Manse of Dyce.

The journey was now continued along the Don for some distance, and the next halt was at the Liddel Monument. This erection is situated in a field beside Pitmedden Station, and it stands to commemorate a celebrated man of learning, Dr. Duncan Liddel, whose virtues are recorded in Latin on a tablet. Dr. Liddel, who was a native of Aberdeen, passed many years teaching in continental universities, and on earning a competence he returned to spend his last years in the city of his birth. He purchased the estate of Pitmedden, and when he died in 1613, he bequeathed it to form bursaries for students at Aberdeen University. There are also tablets to his memory in the West Church and the Town House of Aberdeen. He wrote a considerable number of books himself, and a good many volumes have been written by others concerning him, and only a few months ago a small work having reference to him was issued by the Aberdeen University Library. Altogether, he seems to have been a man who left a distinctive mark on his day and generation.

Journeying through the policies and gardens of Pitmedden House, belonging to Mrs. Thompson, the last halt was made at the out-look

tower, situated a little to the back of the mansion house. The tower commemorates the time when the late Mr. Thompson, as Lord Provost of the city, welcomed Queen Victoria on her first visit to Aberdeen. It may be well in passing to bring to notice the advantage which would ensue were a properly formed high-road made from Dyce, by Pitmedden and Kinaldie, to Kintore, along the line of the railway, as thereby the steep hills by the Tyrebagger route would be avoided.

The homeward journey was made by Overton School, then by Dyce Quarries, from which a splendid view of the neighbouring country is to be had.

During the afternoon Mr. Lawrence gave a short zoological paper, his subject being "Wild Field Animals."

Mr. Grant, on the occasion of the Sunday School Picnic at Pitmedden, gave a short address to those of the Guild members who were present, on the subject of "Plants."



No. 11.

CLOGHILL.

August, 1910.

THE Clashbog Well, a name peculiarly familiar to all who know anything of the district, was the gathering place at this time. The Convalescent Home, built in 1882, and since extended by the addition of a Sanitorium, was the first object of interest. Few institutions can claim a greater record of work successfully done than this modest building, assisted as it is by the fine atmosphere at this high level, and by the fir and pine woods which are open to its patients.

Arriving at the foot of the Kirkyard Brae, there lay in front the stretch of moorland, which is all that remains to show what the face of the neighbouring country-side was like before the work of reclaiming it was done. If agriculture was once more to become prosperous, we should no doubt see this rough waste soon also blossom into fertility. The great pile of stones on the far side of the moor bears testimony to the laborious work undergone by those who were the pioneers in the farming world.

From this point the road towards the back of Fairley was taken, until the Cloghill district was reached.

A visit was then made to the source of the Bucks Burn, situated in a hollow on the southern slope of Brimmond. The journey was continued to the top of the hill, to enjoy the splendid panorama laid out before the sightseer. The last stage of the homeward journey was by the pretty Den of the Gough Burn. During the afternoon Mr. Robert Neil gave a Natural History paper touching on local subjects.

The following is an extract from the quaint pages of John Spalding's "History of the Troubles in Scotland," showing the superstitions of a bye-gone age:—"Ye heard before of apparitions and visions seen here at the hill of Brymman, four miles from Aberdeen, on 10th February (1643). William Anderson, tenant in Craibstone, told me he saw a great army, as appeared to him, both of horse and foot, about eight hours in the morning, being misty, and visibly continued till sun-rising; syne vanished away in his sight with noise unto a moss hard beside!"

Nor did superstition apply only to the far past. Only a generation or so since, a curious belief existed that in the neighbourhood of Wagley—where it is said a man was outrageously killed—a floating light was occasionally to be seen roaming the surrounding fields. It used to be the custom for the boys to watch—always, of course, at a safe distance—for the appearance of the "Wagley Lichtie," as the wandering spirit was called.

The cold verdict of Science has dispelled all idea of the supernatural from objects of this kind, by explaining that the Ignis Fatuus or Will-o-the-wisp is but a marsh gas, which, in rising from the ground, becomes phosphorescent. It would be interesting to know why the cottage, which used to stand here, was known as Wagley Castle.



No. 12.

HAZELHEAD.

AN interesting excursion can be engaged in by following the boundary line between Newhills and the City of Aberdeen. Owing to the nature of the ground this excursion could not be made a general one, but if undertaken by small parties at a time, it will be found very enjoyable.

Making Persley Station the starting point, the first object to visit is Dancing Cairns Quarries. The large piles of waste stone, and the

deep wide holes, often filled with water, testify to the extent of this industry, which has been a feature of Newhills for more than a century. A new industry for the making of adamant slabs has been working here for some time. It will be a matter of surprise to see how extensive are the operations for stone-breaking carried on here by those employed under the Aberdeen Distress Committee. At the present rate it will not be astonishing if, in the next 20 years, the most of the hills of stone are entirely used up.

Auchmull House, a building of much interest and considerable age, will be passed at the end of the quarry. The parish boundary follows the line of the Scatter Burn, then runs up to Cairnery Quarries, thence to Mastrick, and, skirting the Summerfield Hospital, makes almost a straight line to Burnieboozle House. It then turns westwards to the Countesswells Road, next turning northwards till it reaches the Free Moss.

It is interesting to notice that, along a considerable part of the boundary line, ample space has been reserved for future high roads. Crossing the Free Moss (the possession of which is disputed between Hazelhead and Countesswells), there is a well-defined line till the U.F. Church at Kingswells is reached. With the aid of the map, no difficulty will be found in tracing the route.



CITY EXCURSIONS.

*No. 1.***NIGG.***May, 1908.*

JOURNEYING by train to Aberdeen, the route was by the harbour. Near at hand was the training ship "Clyde," an old timer, lying in the midst of a busy scene of modern shipping. Next followed the Fish Market, a visit to which is only interesting when made in the early morning. Then followed the great trawling fleet, which lay moored for the week-end rest. Girdleness Lighthouse and Walker Park were the next objects of interest. The roofless Kirk of Nigg was passed, and then came the Bay of Nigg—the happy hunting-ground of Aberdeen picnic parties. The chief place of attraction—the object of the excursion—was the salmon hatchery at Nigg. Great was the interest excited by inspecting the different processes and stages of development, and an entirely new world was opened up to the members.

*No. 2.***MARISCHAL COLLEGE.** *January, 1909.*

THIS interesting building had its origin about 1593. Its world-renowned frontage, opened recently by King Edward VII. and Queen Alexandra, naturally claimed chief attention. Among other parts of the College Buildings visited were the Mitchell Hall, the Portrait Gallery, the Museums, and the Council Rooms. Most of those present climbed the Mitchell Tower, and enjoyed the excellent view to be had from it.

A pleasant hour was spent going over the extensive collection of antiquities and curiosities in the museum, and particular attention was given to objects that had been collected in Newhills. Among other things was the stone cist, with skeleton and urn, found at the sand pit near Red Smithy in 1866.

It may be stated that the belfry of Old Marischal College was transferred to Stoneywood Works in 1840, where it still stands.

ABERDEEN MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS.*No. 3.**January, 1910.*

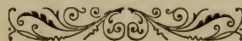
THESE buildings, comprising the Court House, the Town Hall, and the County Hall, were erected in 1871. The various rooms were inspected with great interest, particularly the court rooms and the portrait galleries. Most of the members climbed the tower, and, as the day was clear, a fine prospect of the town and the country round about was enjoyed. Afterwards the Guild visited the offices of the "Aberdeen Journal" and "Express," and had the pleasure of seeing there the many interesting features that go to the making of a modern daily newspaper.

*No. 4.***ABERDEEN ART GALLERY.**

THE excursion mapped out for the coming winter is a visit to the Art Gallery in Aberdeen. The Committee have recently shown considerable enterprise in their desire to bring together a collection of paintings worthy of the city. The bi-annual exhibition of works of art, done by local painters, is always a source of pleasure. The Macdonald collection, and other permanent bequests, fill up a catalogue of respectable size.

Mention also has to be made of the really excellent collection of statuary which has been got together, chiefly through the generosity of the citizens.

With this excursion it is hoped to combine a visit to the Municipal Electrical Works.



COUNTRY EXCURSIONS.



No. 1.

DUNNOTTAR CASTLE.*August, 1908.*

TAKING train to Stonehaven, the Guild journeyed through the town, and then by the coast to this famous ruin.

Historically, the castle is remembered in the first instance because Sir William Wallace recovered it from the English in 1298, then by the siege made by Cromwell's troops in 1651, and lastly by the imprisonment of covenanters in 1685.

Previous to the siege, the regalia of Scotland had been removed from Edinburgh for safety here. When it seemed that the castle must fall, the regalia was cleverly removed by the wife of the minister of Kineff, and was hid for over ten years under the pulpit of that church.

Numbers of the covenanters who died were buried in the churchyard of Dunnottar, where a tombstone commemorates them. The restoration of this stone was done by Robert Paterson, who, while at work, attracted the notice of Sir Walter Scott, and the incident gave the famous novelist his inspiration for the novel "Old Mortality."



No. 2.

BENACHIE.*June, 1909.*

THE outward journey was made by train to Pitcaple. After passing the church of Chapel of Garioch, the first object to command attention was the "maiden stone." Its age cannot be definitely fixed, nor the sculptured figures upon it be deciphered, but probably the work was done not less than 2000 years ago. The route was continued by Pittodrie House, for over four centuries the ancestral home of the Erskines. Thereafter, the ascent was by the track, supposed to have been a paved highway made by the Romans to connect their camp at Pitcaple with the fortress at the top of Benachie. The stone walls and huts and well of this fort are still in good state, and add much to the interest of a visit. An excellent view of Aberdeenshire and its enclosing mountains was had.

The descent was from Craig Shannoch, past the ruined castle of Harthill, and on to Oyne.

THE means of transit was by train to Monymusk Station. On arriving there the first procedure was a visit to Monymusk House, well known in connection with Sir Arthur Grant, Bart. This fine old pile, along with the large well-kept gardens, was a centre of much interest to the visitors. In the grounds are a druidical circle and a sculptured stone.

The journey was continued from here to Old Paradise, passing on the way the grounds of New Paradise and the Castle of Pitfichie. This interesting old ruin was the home of the Hurry family, and the last of the family to own it was General Sir John Hurry, second in command of the covenanting army which Montrose defeated at the battle of Alford.

Old Paradise, situated on a pretty stretch of the Don, was laid out in 1719, and is one of the most interesting and beautiful spots in the north, Queen Victoria having twice paid it a visit. Across the river is Tillyfour House; also Lord Cullen's School, built nearly 200 years ago by the first of the Grants of Monymusk—he having been a Lord of Session, which accounts for his title.

On the return journey a halt was made at the village, which is a model of its kind. Here is the church of the parish, an ancient building with a fine Norman doorway. At this place there existed, long centuries ago, a settlement of Culdees, one of the very earliest of Christian brotherhoods, and later on there stood a priory.

It may be noted that the second laird of the Grant family planted as many as fifty million trees during his proprietorship.



A VISIT to Cruden Bay has not yet been realised, but as it is the intention to visit it as the next country excursion, a short note may be added respecting it.

The bay itself, with its broad sand-covered beach, is an ideal of what a bay should be. On its right horn, at the village of Whinnyfold, a ledge of rocks juts out to sea, forming a trap that has been the doom of many a vessel. On the left horn stands Slains Castle, an imposing pile belonging to the Earl of Errol. In the centre is the large Hotel of the Great North of Scotland Railway. A considerable village, Port Errol, is situated on the left side of the bay. The famous Bullers of Buchan and many of the caves used for smuggling lie near at hand, as also one of the sunken wrecks of the famous Spanish Armada.

A hand-list of Books and Maps, entitled "NEWHILLS BOOK LIST," bearing on the foregoing local descriptions, has been placed in the Aberdeen Public Library and the Aberdeen University Library. Those who wish to follow up the history of Newhills and neighbourhood with greater detail will find in this list particulars of the literature on the subject as far as it is known. Should any omissions of books be discovered, it is hoped that these omissions will be made known to the Librarian, so that the names may be added. It is also hoped that any who bring out new books bearing on the subject will include the names in the hand-list, so that it may continue to be an authoritative reference for future students.



A bound collection of papers, entitled "NEWHILLS MISCELLANY," containing documents likely to be of interest to a future historian of the parish, has been placed in the Aberdeen Public Library. Those who possess books or papers likely to add to the value of the collection are invited to send them to the Librarian of the Aberdeen Public Library to be added to the Miscellany.



Full lists of the office-bearers of the Guilds, and particulars of the rules and the programme of work, will be found in the Year Book of Stoneywood Church (1909-10 edition), a copy of which is in the Aberdeen Public Library.