

stronger relief the energy, the skill, and the enterprise that brought the county to the front in spite of the disadvantages it laboured under in its lack of mineral wealth.

But Renfrew is by no means purely a manufacturing county. Its pursuits are numerous and well-balanced. Agriculture and shipping complete the trinity of its most important interests. The county falls naturally into two main divisions, hilly and low-lying, and the former is of no industrial importance. The low ground may be subdivided again into three parts, a broad flat area in the east, submerged below the waters of the Clyde in comparatively recent times; a narrow coastal strip bordering the hills on the north and west (an old sea beach in fact), and lastly the open valleys of the interior. It makes for clearness to think of the first of these districts as the home of manufactures, the second of the shipping trade, the third of agriculture. Of course in nature, divisions are never absolutely sharp; and thus manufactures and agriculture are found to some extent over all the lowlands of the shire.

### **3. Size of County. Boundaries.**

Although in many respects Renfrewshire can more than hold its own among the counties of Scotland, in size it takes a very humble place. It ranks twenty-seventh among the thirty-three counties of Scotland. The largest shire, Inverness, is more than seventeen times the size of

Renfrew; and yet it is a striking fact that Inverness contains only about one-third the population of the smaller county. Renfrewshire is an irregular oblong, the longer axis of which lies roughly north-west and south-east. From Cloch Point to the south-east extremity of the county between Carse Hill and Laird's Seat the length is a little over 30 miles, while the greatest breadth from Kilbirnie Loch to Erskine Ferry is over 13 miles. The total area, including foreshore and inland water, is about 250 square miles.

In the main the boundaries are simple and formed by important geographical features. Roughly speaking, the northern boundary is the Clyde, the eastern is the White Cart, the southern is the watershed of the volcanic hills that run from south-east to north-west, and the western boundary is the Firth of Clyde. We shall next trace the boundary in some detail beginning at Greenock. From that town to Yoker Burn the boundary is the natural and obvious one formed by the broad waters of the Clyde. Then strange to say the boundary runs up the Yoker Burn *north* of the Clyde, passes east to Temple, turns south through Anniesland and along Crow Road to Jordanhill Station, then south-west to the Clyde again at the old Marline Ford. This little, detached part of the county, left stranded on the north side of the Clyde, will later be discussed in more detail. Crossing to the south side of the Clyde the boundary strikes west along an old channel of the river. On reaching the outskirts of Renfrew the line doubles back sharply, and runs south-east, passing just to the south of Craigton Cemetery.

Thence it runs to Pollokshaws, where it meets the White Cart, which it follows for a mile. Next it swings round Cathcart, passing over a mile to the east of the village, and then bends west till it rejoins the river Cart a mile south of Cathcart. It follows the course of that stream to its junction with the Threepeland Burn, whence it runs



Wemyss Bay

due south to the crest of the hills where Renfrew, Ayr, and Lanark meet. It would be tedious to trace in great detail its north-west course from here to Caldwell. It is enough to state that it runs along the tops of the moors, keeping just a little south of the actual watershed. From Caldwell the boundary takes a sinuous course to the north end of Kilbirnie Loch, and then mounts the hills again.

The highest points of the shire are reached in Misty Law and the Hill of Stake, a drainage centre whence the streams radiate out in all directions. From the Calder Water the boundary passes to a feeder of Loch Thom and thence to the Kelly Burn, down which it runs to the pier at Wemyss Bay. From Wemyss Bay back to Greenock the county is bounded by the salt waters of the firth.

To sum up, the detailed tracing of the boundary has shown that the line is not an arbitrary one. Nature has forced man to draw his lines of demarcation in accordance with her dictates. Mountains and broad rivers are everywhere natural barriers, and even such minor separation lines as those of counties are, as we have seen, powerfully influenced by physical features. Thus the tracing of the boundaries of the shire has afforded us an excellent illustration of geographical control.

At one point, however, the geographical control seems to be set at defiance. The boundary crosses the Clyde in order to include Jordanhill and the surrounding districts, which are thus quite detached from the rest of the county. The attention of the geographer is at once arrested by this remarkable circumstance, although historians have not thought it worthy of discussion. The explanation seems to be partly geographical, partly historical. If the Clyde had always been the deep river that it now is below Glasgow, it would have formed such a formidable barrier to cross-communication that the boundary of the sheriffdom would probably never have overstepped it. But before the Clyde was deepened, the appearance of the river near Renfrew was quite different from what it now

is. Even in James Watt's day there were a dozen shoals between Renfrew and Glasgow, and in addition the river formerly split into two shallow branches. In ordinary weather, therefore, communication between both banks was easy; in other words the geographical control exerted by the river was weak. Again, historically considered, the lands north of the Clyde formed part of the ancient barony of Renfrew, for, as we shall see later, they had been given by the king with other parts of the county to Walter the High Steward. It was the same reason that made Bathgate and the surrounding territory part of the sheriffdom of Renfrew until the sixteenth century, when the office was sold by the second Lord Semple. This district was obtained by Walter the sixth Steward, son-in-law of Robert the Bruce, as part of the dowry brought him by Marjory. In legal usage the district is still referred to as a sheriffdom separate from Linlithgow.

#### 4. Surface and General Features.

The surface of Renfrewshire is extremely varied. It ranges from sea-level to a height of over 1700 feet. The loftiest part of the county is the southern boundary, which forms a high rim to the shire from which the land falls to the north-east, sometimes gradually, sometimes very steeply. The hill masses have the structure of plateaus. There is nothing in the least approximating to a *range* of hills. To endeavour to represent the hills on a map by the favourite devices of lines, or "herring-bones," would be ludicrously