



Among the Braes

STONEHOUSE IN SONG & VERSE

Compiled by John R. Young



Introduction

When recording the history of Stonehouse some years past my prime source of reference came from previous publications, newspaper articles, statistical accounts and published materials readily available through our public libraries and national archives. Two sources I failed to research or even recognise were that of memorial headstones and more recently the many poems and songs describing events and characters throughout our villages' history. In Thomas Scott's 'Willie Shaw' we find one of the earliest records of Stonehouse Curling Club and in Robert Chalmer's 'In Praise of the Avon' we recall one of only two references to a covenanting skirmish that took place at Sodom hill overlooking the Avon river and Cander water. Many ancient ballads have proved to be a valuable resource in researching our nations history including that of 'Blind Harry's' 15th century account of the life and times of William Wallace (The Acts and Deeds of Sir William Wallace). Although not always historically accurate, his ballads provide important information in supporting other historical documentation detailing his life which are at best sparse. His observations also provide an insight into the social life of Scotland during Wallace's day.

In the past songwriters and poets locally have tended to pen compositions of subjects around them; nature, social events and inhabitants of note. As time past and transportation improved, people were able to expand their horizons and imagination on the wider world beyond the safety of their own environment. Thus the early prevalence of songs and verse available to us on Stonehouse, pertain particularly to the environment around the Avon and the authors memories of days long past. Unfortunately, through time, musical tastes changed, with most of the tunes to many of these ballads being lost. Only one or two of these old songs have survived, through a few senior citizens of Stonehouse who keep the songs alive. Two of these standard bearers include Jimmy Tait, Townhead Street and the late George McInnes of Cam'nethan Street who would often enchant their listeners at A' the Airts Burns Club with 'The Glen o' Tum'lin' Waters' and 'In Praise of the Avon'.

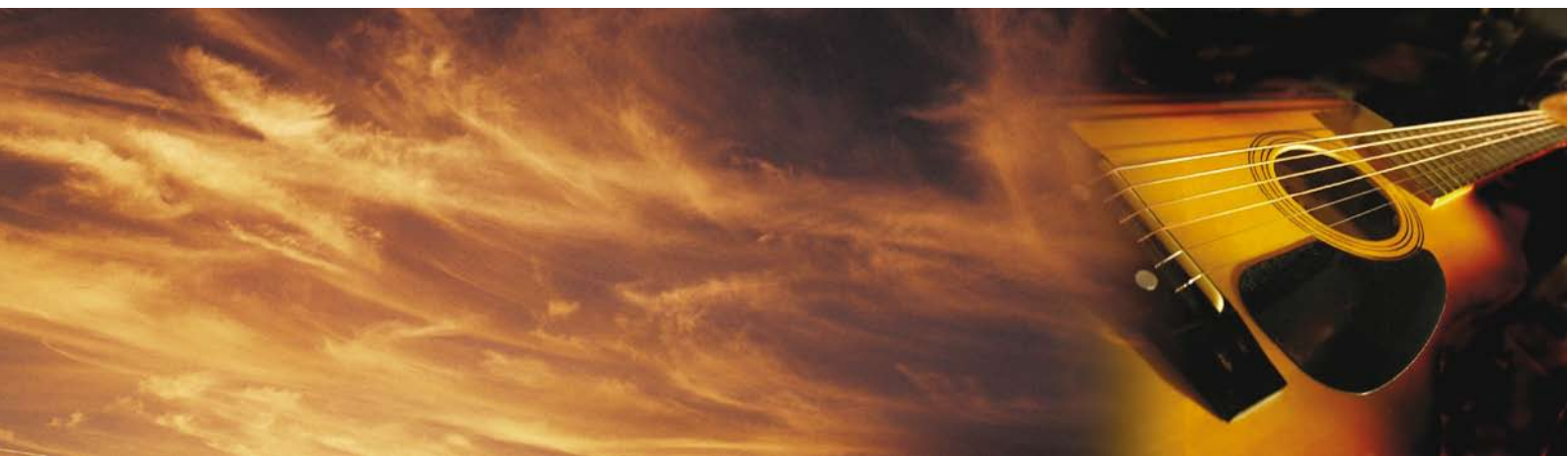
In recent years there has been a revival in traditional music and the arts, encouraging a new wave of young talent, expressing themselves through a number of media including songwriting and poetry. Stonehouse retains a strong musical community including, the Male Voice Choir, A' the Airts Burns Club, the Accordion Club, Musical Charity Nights, the Music Club and the Folk Club. A club known as the Lanarkshire Songwriters Group was formed a number of years ago and is currently based in Stonehouse, attracting talented songwriters, professional and amateur

to their ranks. This group has produced a number of recordings on CD of life, events and characters across Lanarkshire and beyond. These include CDs recall Lanarkshires' Victora Cross winners (14 Gallant Men), Clydesdale horses (Gentle Giants) and most recently a collection of songs of Lanarkshire's association with the covenanters (The Grassmarket Butchers). The group have also been involved in working within communities and schools in songwriting workshops where children have had the opportunity to research, write and perform their own songs in their own communities.

Through creative writing in song and verse, the mind is able to explore and embrace the soul in producing words that can make us laugh, cry and touch the heart. In writing of our own environment and local characters we are able to recall days gone by while appreciating contemporary writing which makes us understand and appreciate our present setting in an ever changing and mobile world. A perfect example of such was the late Gavin Stevenson of Strathaven Road, whose untimely death brought to an end a writer of great acclaim not only locally but in wider musical circles. A genius of the Lanarkshire dialect his talents were recognised by all fortunate enough to have experienced his gift for writing.

This collection is a selection of works from a more extensive compilation of songs and verse accumulated over recent years. They provide the reader with a valuable source of information and enjoyment as well as inspiration for those tempted to put pen to paper. In choosing which songs to include I have attempted to include songs which describe events, characters and the environment of Stonehouse rather than a compilation of local writers and unrelated subjects. Together this collection provides the reader with a comprehensive overview of song and verse through the ages and an entertaining reflection of rural life in our village.

John Young



“In Praise of Avon”

There's mony rivers in the West,
Ayr and Doon, and a' the rest,
Nane tae us is hauf sae blest
As oor sweet winding Avon.
Raise your voices, sing its praise,
Its placid linns, its bonny braes;
Its mem'ries dear o' ither days
We've spent by winding Avon.

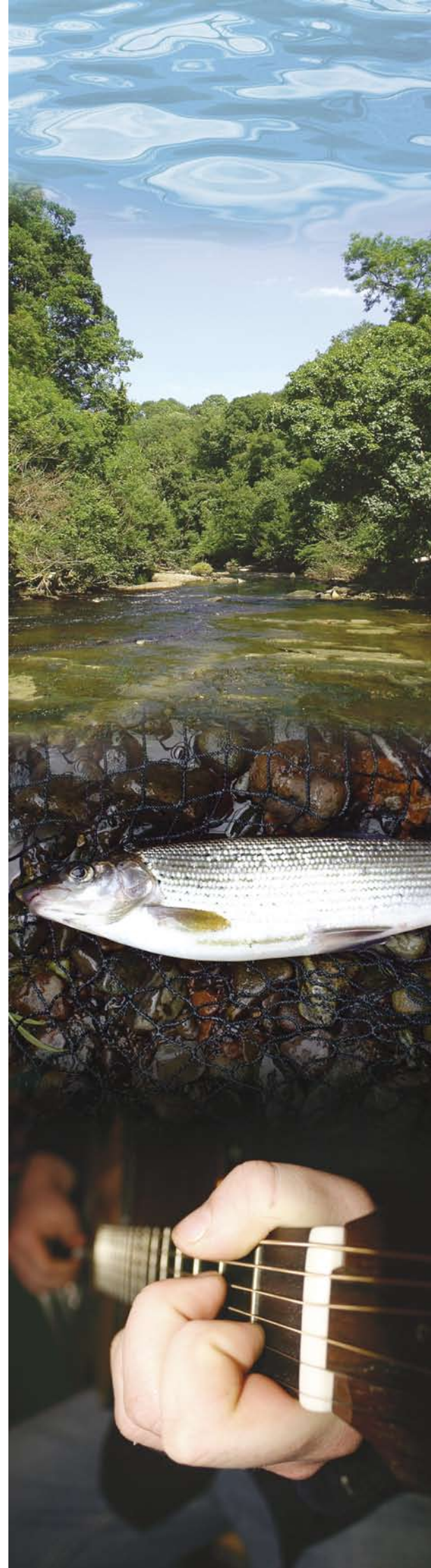
Lang syne when evil deeds were rife.
The Kirk wis torn wi' sturt and strife
Full mony a martyr gied his life
Beside the winding Avon.
Sodom Hill and Drumclog Field
Where weavers fought and wadna yield;
Where Scotland's richts were firmly seal'd
Beside the winding Avon.

Now peace reigns o'er thee cherished stream,
The fisher's love, the exile's dream
May simple joys aye from the theme
Of those who dwell by Avon.
As long as Scotia's rivers rin,
Wild woods wave, and flow'rest spring
We'll bare oor he'rts and proudly sing
In praise of winding Avon.

by Robert. K. Chalmers

A song dedicated to Stonehouse Male Voice Choir, the lyrics and music were composed by Robert. K. Chalmers, a founder member of the choir established in 1936. Robert conducted the choir for many years before his death in 1957. 'Bob' was also involved with the Silver band and often wrote under the pseudonym 'Couplaw'. His grandson, Norman Chalmers is a member of a popular traditional music band known as 'Jock Tamson's Bairns'.

Originally, the choir practised in Townhead School on Monday evenings. However, after some time the education authority informed the choir that if they wished to continue to use the school they would have to operate under the auspices of the Education Department. The choir wished to remain an independent body and so moved from the school to the Congregational Church and later to Paterson Church where they still practise and thrive today.





Bonnie Avon Side

We sing in humble strain the praise
Of bonnie Avon side.
The verdant banks an' bushy braes,
On bonnie Avon side.
Whaur spent we youth's bright sunny hours
'Mid sylvan nooks an' leafy bowers
'Mang rocks and trees, green ferns, an' flowers,
On bonnie Avon side.

We've socht the primrose soft an' fair,
By bonnie Avon side.
An' cull'd the violet rich an' rare,
On bonnie Avon side.
Pull'd sprigs o' wild brier's tinted bloom,
Inhaled the hawthorn's sweet perfume,
Or revell'd 'mang the yellow broom,
On bonnie Avon side.

We watch'd the swallows skim the wave,
By bonnie Avon side.
An' loved oor wearied limbs to lave,
On bonnie Avon side.
Plunged in its pools wi' wild delight,
Or socht for pebbly treasures white,
When days were lang, an' skies were bright,
On bonnie Avon side.

We watch'd the speckled trout at play,
Frae bonnie Avon side.
An' lingered in the gloamin' grey,
By bonnie Avon side.
Adoon the banks we loved to gang,
When grove and greenwood loodly rang,
Wi' linties' lilt, an' mavis sang,
On bonnie Avon side.

When floods had fa'en wi' steady pour,
We stood by Avon side.
An' heard the surging waters roar,
On bonnie Avon side.
Or lay beneath sol's genial glow,
An' heard the waters gently flow,
Wi' murmuring cadence soft an' low,
On bonnie Avon side.

Tho' distant far frae Avondale,
An' bonnie Avon side.
We'll ne'er forget our native vale,
Nor bonnie Avon side.
E'en should we cross the trackless foam,
In distant lands to find a home,
In thocht we'll still delight to roam,
By bonnie Avon side.

This song (waltz) may have been written by Jim Todd of Cot castle



Stonehouse

I've ken'd the Stonehouse and its' folk,
For forty years and mair,
Before a toll-road touch'd its' soil,
And carriages were rare.

Bring out the line of larger towns,
Our parish was less fam'd,
Now to put tourists on the scent,
Its' neighbours may be named.

Our eastern boundary is Dalserf,
Between us and the Clyde;
And Lesmahagow spreads a wing
Far round the southern side.

Then Avondale and Glassford west,
Where Avon runs between;
And Hamilton completes the bound,
Where smaller streams convene.

There, on a plain by Avon glen,
The village may be seen,
With higher ground encircl'd round,
Which makes it more serene.

For Avon through our parish runs,
To Cander foot ravine,
And slopes are steep and rocks worn deep,
Where these two waters join.

Earths, bones and flesh, in a deep gash,
Cut as with natures' knife,
Where germs of different strata sprint,
Spontaneous into life.

Stalks, twigs, and sprouts leaves, flowers and fruits,
With trees, and rocks, and dens,
A scenery like a granary,
Of Nature's odds and en's.

We got a star up frae the town,
For fear we might grow green,
Expecting to be swellisher,
Than ever we had been.

His splorin' ways had little weight;
And when his term was by,
He left the place misc'in us,
Then I made this reply:

The dandy gowns they wear in towns,
Hae often to be pawn'd,
And heaps o' meat that puir folks eat,
Are mix't and second-haund.

But here we get meal frae the mill,
And cheese where it was prest,
New milk and butter off the kirn,
And eggs oot o' the nest.

We pu' the berries aff the bush,
The apples aff the trees,
Fruits frae the swaird over ain yaird,
And honey frae the bees.

Oor wives and weans are a' weel clad,
No jist like city swells,
But warm and neat frae head to feet
Wi clath we weave ourselves.

Nae water pipes, but crystal springs,
To mak' our meat or drink;
Wi cosy houses and wee rents,
We're no sae bad's you think.

I'm no a native yet I agree,
Wi' a' the tramps that tell -
They ne'er were in a place they saw
The Sabbath kept so well.

And we have ground a mile from town,
By some far back bequest,
Free of expense where we go hence,
To take our final rest.

The first stane house amang the huts
Seems to have had great fame,
When so much of fair Avondale
Was called by it's name.

Our village near the centre here
Is likely where it stood
Now we've three churches, and three schools,
And many houses good.

About a mile of fertile soil,
Our Stonehouse now fill;
But gardens sweet 'tween every street
Makes't like the country still.

A bailie once was station'd here,
And messenger also;
But rogues and robbers were so scarce,
They're both off long ago.

A heartsome cross, where six streets join
As wide as a barrack square;
And through the midst the thorough line,
'Tween Edinburgh and Ayr.

And here's the steeple clock and bell,
Which rings at morn and night;
And at our side drain tiles are made,
And gas to give us light.

We've got a railway station too,
And a big horse worth hiring;
His breath is water mixed wi fire,
And puffs like rifles firing.

His misty mane floats far ahin,
He flies wi sich a violence;
And then his whistle gie's a yell,
Mak's ither soon's like silence.

Atween the stations on the line,
He'll neither shy nor patter;
His mither is the airnstone mine;
He's fed wi coals and water.

With coaches that take all inside,
And fares not ill to pay
And goes from here to any town
In Britain in a day.

He regulates our markets too,
Let meat be cheap or dear;
But a' our drapers keeps a stock
Could serve us for a year.

Forbye the daily travelling tribes,
Gaun through sae keen and sly,
That seem to think they're no weel us'd,
When we refuse to buy.

And beggars mix't wi blackguards too,
Insisting for spare cash;
And bank-men, wi their one-wheeled carts,
Tak's a' awa our trash.

Now, city swell, come on and tell,
In earnest or in joke,
What you hae there that we don't share,
Expecting smell and smoke.

Nae doubt you'll say that still ye hae
The thick end o' the whip;
But every toon that's farther doon,
To Stonehouse must look up.



Stonehouse Violet

This nicht as by the fire I sit
Tae aulden times my fancies flit,
Tae that guid team a “fitba’ dream”
The Stonehouse Violet fitba’ team.

I can’t just put a year upon it,
I’ve maybe gone “a wee bit daunert”,
But still, the lads I mind sae weel
Wha’s mair than ordinary fitba’ skill.

A lad ca’d Paton kept the goal,
A real clinker, bless ma soul,
Tae pit the ba’ by him, I ween
Ye’d need tae hae seen the whites o’s een.

In fon’ o’ him twa staunch, dour backs
As ever barred opponents’ tracks,
In Findlay and bold Donal Gaw,
A sturdier pair ye’ve never saw.

The richt hauf was a lad McCue,
An’ o’ his kind there were but few,
A brainy hauf; could read a gemme,
An’ pit his mark upon the same.

A centre-half, Dobson’s the name
Maist pivots then could pit tae shame
Altho’ his parents ca’d him Jimmy
They blundered; his name should’ been “Gimme”.

A real “robber”, this boy Jim,
Few centres got the best o’ him,
A little “temperamental”, true,
But still, a club man, thro’ an’ thro’.

A left-hauf, by the name o’ Jarvie
A wee bit inclined tae argie-bargie
An’ by the powers, he was a worker
An’ ne’er at tacklin’ was a shirker.

Ye always kent when he was there,
(He aft got in the referee’s hair),
But this I’d ne’er attempt tae hide,
A guid man tae hae on YOUR side.

The richt-wing spot belanged tae Lambie,
A rid heid, “flee’er”, an’ sure a dandy,
He came frae doon by “Larkie” toon,
His free kicks made the goalies swoon.

Once, in the “Cup” (the scene comes ready),
We drew the crack team, Irvine Meadow,
The papers forecast I mind well,
They didnae gi’es a chance in Hell.

But Steve Bunch’s lads had their ideas
An’, two sniffs o’ the Irvine breeze,
Like Irvine’s fame the’d never heard o’
They went to town, and “mowed the meadow”.

Wee rid heid, Lambie, fu’ o’ cheek,
Pit Meadow’s “gas” in a gey wee peep
Wi’ a crackin’ free kick; a real humdinger,
Which broke the Irvine keeper’s finger.

The ba’ “like ’twas propelled by jet”,
Took up a’ the slackness in the net,
This was “the” goal, events soon proved,
An’ Violet’s boys “wad no be moved”.

The grand result, the news flashed roon,
Was phoned direct tae Stonis toon,
An' when the team returned, by jings,
Were welcomed like they'd a' been kings.

But I've departit frae ma theme,
"Git oan Wull, wi' the fitba team".
The inside-right, a chap McKenzie,
Whaur he cam frae (I think was Lenzie).

His footwark, skill an' dreamlike passes,
Could mak' defenders look like asses,
A natural, an' aye a danger,
He sune became a "Glasgow Ranger".

The centre, Loudon, we ca'd Pownie,
A wee bit scarce o' hair his "crownie",
When aff his heid the crosses flew
'Twad gar opposin' goalies grue.

A local lad, the pride o' Stonis,
Nae beauty, naw, no nae Adonis,
But Pownie lad, when a's been told,
Was worth his wecht in solid gold.

A handsome chiel at inside-left,
Whase fitba' skills were neat an' deft,
A crackin's shot, his mazy dribblins,
Could tear defences a' tae ribbons.

Abune six feet, his name was Neilson,
His father was a "Glesca pleeceman".
His black hair plaistered doon an' shiny
The fans, affectionately, ca'd him "Tiny".

Tae prove I'm no "shootin' aff ma' mouth",
He was signed on by Queen o' the South.
Aye, he could shoot, I can see him now,
Pit a hat-trick by the Les-ma-gow.

Oor left-winger, noo pey some heed,
Opposin' right-backs filled wi' dreid
Could mak' tham a' look doonricht silly,
He was a proper teasin' billie.

Wee Johnnie Tennant was the name,
Knew every trick in the winger's game,
In mony a game when a' seemed lost
He'd squeeze yin in, jist at the post.

If frae a mix the ba' broke free,
Wee Johnnie had it fu' o' glee,
As if the opening he had sought
(He was a "Johnnie on the spot").

The Junior gemmes, then, were a treat,
They aye had skill (an' sometimes meat),
They ne'er had heard o' "strikers", "sweepers",
But they'd educated feet, an' peepers.

The fitba noo, alas, alack,
I'm pretty sure the game's "gaun back",
Unless it's true what I'm whiles tauld
"Yer bluids gaun thin; ye're growin' auld".

by William McCoubrey

Stonehouse Violet entered the realms of Scottish Junior Football in 1924. Before joining the Central League, the 'Violet' played in the Lanarkshire Junior League. Taking up residence at the old Station Park they won their first honours in 1935/36, winning the Hozier Cup and the Central Cup in 1936.

On moving to Loch Park in 1938 (where they resided until 1956), they won the Hozier Cup, the Central Cup and the Lanarkshire League in their first season. Though never attaining the heights of local rivals Larkhall Thistle, the Violet never the less enjoyed great success in the late 30's, 40's and 50's. This success drew the attention of many senior clubs and in the 1948/49 season the following players signed with senior clubs: Donald Gaw (Dunfermline), Dick McCue (Kilmarnock), Bobby Jarvie (Airdrie), Bobby Lambie (Cardiff City), Donald McKenzie (Rangers) and Tiny Nelson (Queen of the South).

Taken from the Hamilton Advertiser from August 5th 1977 William McCoubrey recalls his memories of Stonehouse Violet some 30 years previous in this wonderful poem.

Stonis fair

The morn's the Fair
And I'll be there
I'll have on my curly hair,
The cocks will crow,
The hens will lay,
The morn's Stonehouse Fair Day.—

I'll hae on my braw silk hat
Buttons doon ma back
Silks and satins roon my tail
An ribbons on ma hat.

Five pair o' blankets
Six pair o' sheets
Hauf a yaird o' moleskin
Tae mend ma faither's breeks.

Green peas, mutton pies
Tell me whaur ma Johnny lies
And I'll be there before he dies
To cuddle him in ma bosom

A charter of 1667 and a subsequent Barony charter in 1692 provided Stonehouse the right to hold three annual fairs (May, July and November) on the 'free ground' (common ground) known as 'Grozet Knowe' (Grossyettknowe) as it was then. This land lies on the left of Spital Road, on the incline from the railway bridge at Burncrooke road-end, up to entry at the Neuk. The little knoll opposite the Neuk being Grossyettknowe; three elderly Scots pines on the horizon mark the spot. The origins of this place name are uncertain but in trying to unravel its meaning it is probably easier to break the word up and decipher each section separately. A 'knowe' is quite simply a hilltop. The word 'yett' in Scots is a word to described 'a natural pass between hills' (a gateway). Alternatively, Grossyett may have been a corruption of the Scots word 'Groset' meaning 'an agricultural fair'.





Auld Stonis When I Was Wee

As by the fire I'm sittin dreaming
Back aure the years come memories streamin
As "Stonis" was when I was wee
It seems like yesterday to me.

Wha wad hae dreamed t'wad so expand
Wae hoosin schemes on every hand
Tho' times were lean and folks were troubled
The population's mair than doubled.

The village life as on it whirled
Was maist tae coal or weavin thirled
The colliers had a daily troke
Wi "Brumfil Pit" or "Spion Cope".

If at these pits he had nae luck
He'd try for "Allanton" or "The Juck"
And as they were a bit away
It added tae his working day.

In the weaving was a boom
The "clack clack" o' the weaver's loom
By nae means wis uncommon sound
Tae hear when ye were gaun around.

The colliers wi their drills and picks
Wi weavers seldom seem tae mix
Tho' whiles the twa dwelt side by side
They seemed tae me a different tribe.

The weavers maybe mair reserved
A bit mair time tae study served
Twa "Politics" or "Bible" led
Wad read awhile ere gaun tae bed.

The truth tae tell, frae baith their ranks
Sprang men we owe some grateful thanks
Who wae assistance o' their wives
Hae raised the standard o' oor lives.

The village, on it's western stance
Began with "Patterson Kirk Manse"
And by it's side a hoose ye'd see
Whaur steyed Auld Anderson J.P.

If you a few yairds eastwood strode
Ye micht turn aff, up Sidehead Road
The corner hoose ca'd Tinto View
Stood on the road up tae the "Broo".

An' noo we come tae "Toon Heid School"
Been added tae; but aye there still
Whaur ABC an things mair kittle
I weel mind learning frae Miss Nicol.

An maist days when in Toon Heid Street
Ye'd hear the sciffle o' school weans feet
An generally it wis near the top
At Maggie Jamieson's Wee Sweet Shop.

At playtime, when the weans got oot
Tae Maggie's shop a wheen wad scoot
"Your Choice" some Bulls Eyes or Bon Bons
Or should ye choose, twa tattie scones.

And Maggie did a roarin trade
(A broon baw bee, an ye were made)
Maggie's home baking wis a boon
Home baked scones spread wi her thoon

Doon take King Street ye micht wrastle
Haud a wees at "Paddy's Castle"
Cross the street tae Thomson's Shop
"Groceries" the very top.

Further doon; aye on ye go
Git yer divi at the "Co"
Or frae Tam Fallow buy some steak
I bet ye think it's worth the traik.

Wi yer last wee cup o' char
Try some biled peas wi vinegar
Obtainable the whole year roon
Frae decent Auld Wife Jessie Broon.

Beef huntin' try Auld Erchie Millar
Wi ony luck ye micht save siller
If "news" ye want; (and she's a talker)
Some haddies buy, frae Mrs Walker.

An if yer back, or leg, ye've hurtit
Get linniment frae Harry Corbett.
If you're "expectin" it's nae bother
Book yer turn wi Aggie Rodger.

And if ye aim tae bloom and burgeon
Buy yer breid frae Martha Surgeon
And if yer buits or shoes need renewin
Lawrie's Shop can sell ye new yins.

And tae disperse yer hunger pangs
At Baker Jackson buy meringues
If ye feel like a pint o' yuill
Ye'll get the same at The Black Bull

A taste for fruit. Noo dinna worry
A choice ye'll get from Jimmy Murray
If doon yer neck yer hair doth waunder
McGhie'll cut it for a tanner.

Tae keep yer frame from being spindly
Some pastry buy, ye'll get from Findlay.
And if some cash ye still can show
Sir McKenzie's sure tae please, as Grocer.

I clean forgot: wee frocks sae dainty
In King Street get, ca' on Miss "Minty"
And stationery, cheap and handsome
The best aroon, frae "Maggie Tamson".

If by some chance ye need a draper
Ye couldnae better Mr Walker
And next tae him, if in yae saunter
Ye'll see taw miles ahint the counter.

If in yer tummy ye've a pain
Pop in and see Auld Doc McLean
An Bella Stevenson in a shake
Will sell "Mick Carter" or "Sexton Blake".

Weel kent for catering for the poor
Was that guid butcher "Jimmy Muir"
An odd thing short, an little siller
Ye micht get "tick" frae Campbell Miller.

For toffie coppies gin ye're cravin
Ye'll get the same frae Biddy Craigen.
Or if ye should require a suit
Tailor Plenderleith can fit ye oot.
And if he canna cover yer shanks
Ye aye could try "Auld Mattha Banks".

Noo, if yer downie casts a shoe
Haston or Food will see ye thro'
An ye can heat her hauns and yammer
While they get busy wi the hammer.

Should ye require a first class joiner
Wilson or Kirkland, neer was finer.
And when yer round for "Realms Aboon"
Hamilton can always nail ye doon.

Should ye be bothered wi the spavie
The "Bucks Heid" medecine weel could save ye
Tae cure a shakin at the knees
A visit pey tae "The Cross Keys".

Or of the cratur "hae a nip"
At "Thistle Bar" or the "Auld Ship"
An if ye are a proper soak
Ye'll also try the "Royal Oak".

Tae please the weans when on your way
Be shair tae visit Dolly Gray.
For you can bet she'll hae the sweets
Tae gie them a their weekend treats.

When shoppin somethin ye forget
Nae need tae fume or tae fret
Or get yersel intae a stew
Nip in tae Jenny Pettigrew.

In New Street there's a few I've missed
Walker the Butcher heids the list
If on yer bike the tyres are done
A visit pey tae Johnnie Gunn

Or if the sun is gien ye laldy
Ye'll get a slider frae Capaldi
Frae "Malvins" buy an Evening News
An once ye've readit, air yer views.

I dinnae need tae tell ye twice
A handy shop was Allerdyce
An (if ye never tell a soul man)
A broken cup, try Irvine (Bowlman)

Ere from the Cross I turn away
I here must mention Johnny Gray,
A weel faured, honest, weel daen man
A proper christian gentleman.

An elder o' the Paiterson Kirk
Whose smile wad shine oot through the mirk
For "peying yer wey" if ye tak pains
A sweetie poke he'll gie yer weans.

Nip roon tae Angle Street, man or dame
Ye then can hae yer photie taen
I'm delvin deep in memory's poke
I think the name was Melvin Jock.

In Angle Street the corner turning
Ye'll quickly come tae Wattie Borland
Anither grocer, one o' many
Auld Wattie was guid as any.

A wee bit further on ye go
Ye'll reach the auld school "Domino"
Where many a clever Jean or John
Was taught by Sammy Anderson

An daunerin on serene and canny
Ye micht meet in wi Fit, Fit, Sammy
Jist pass the time, and dinnae tarry
Else he micht pop ye in his "Barry".

A wee bit faurer doon the street
Proceeding on yer ain twa feet
Sweet musics sound assil yer ear
A wee pipe organ sweet and clear.

And at the keyboard strong and weel
There sits an unco clever cheil
Wha'll lessons gie (for litter siller)
My fond respects tae Gavin Miller.

In childhood years I did aspire
Tae sing in Patterson's Junior Choir
And music basics skills acquired
The seniors choir these skills required.

The seeds of music Miller nourished
In adult choirs continual flourished
And for his teaching then I'll say
I owe a debt I can't repay.

A wee shop than micht surprise man
Kept by a certain Jeannie Wiseman
Whaur kiddies claes were aye a feature
Jean was a kindly, honest creature.

For folk ower prood tae beg or cadge
Jean ran an excellent menage
Wad clad a wean from heid tae feet
For maybe, hauf a croon a week.

Jean blessed the Lord for what he sent her
O Patterson Kirk a staunch auld member
And left the kirk a goodly sum
As well as an annual income.

An noo I've got roon tae the Kirks
An meenisters wi their personal quirks
And tho they aim our souls to save
They hae their faults as heel the lave

If for your sin you show revulsion
A veesit pey tae Wyper Wilson
You'll find the kirk and his abode
Some halfway up the Vicar's Road.

Some say that Robertson (Hamilton Memorial)
Is maybe a trifle mair censorial
For me I speak with neutral voice
Pey yer money, take yer choice.

The "Congregational" ye weel micht find
Is just the wan ye hid in mind
If ye don't haud wi kirks at all
Up Wellbrae there's the Gospel Hall.

Failing them, don't think my bammy
For suggesting the Salvation Army
And if with the left foot ye kick
Larkhall or Strathaven is yer trip.

If far afield yer fond o' traiken
Ye'll patronise the railway station
Even though ye hinna cash to burn
Hamilton jist ten pence return.

I'm weel aware I've missed some folk
Wi them I hadnae muckle troke
For instance, take a smeekey lum
High Miller, or Crawford oot will come

If you a suit worn tae a rag
Jist shove it in tae an old bag
Joe McLuskey'll lift it soon
And gie yer wean a rid balloon.

Tae warm yer hands or bake a scone
Some coal ye'll get from Holy John
Or should ye chance tae need a chair
John Broon, Green Street will see ye there

When I my memory put to test
These are the folk I mind the best
Maist a are now "Beyond the Veil"
Yet still a few may them recall!

by William S. McCoubray



The Spectacle €'e

We fondly stray whaur Kype sae clear, in foam jumps o'er the linn,
Wi' splash and dash frae rock to rock, 'mid muckle spray an' din;
Whaur sheltered frae the simmer heat an' wintry winds sae chill,
Stauns snug among the rocks an' trees, the auld cotton mill.

Twas there when we were laddies, in the simmer time sae sweet,
We'd rin an' play or scale the crags wi' nimble tireless feet,
We've rumble tumbled doon the brae or scampered up the hill,
Till the tapmost heicht we croon'd abune the auld cotton mill.

Or doon among the brackens green, wi' caution we would steal,
An' gaze wi' awe an' wonder at the muckle water wheel,
As slowly aye it whirl'd around, then, when we'd gazed our fill,
We keek'd in at the windows o' the auld cotton mill.

An' oft aneath the leafy trees, when a' was bricht an' fair,
We've lain upon our backs an' bigget castles in the air,
Or splashed an' paidled in the burn an' shouted wi' a will,
Till we wauken'd up the echoes roun' the auld cotton mill.

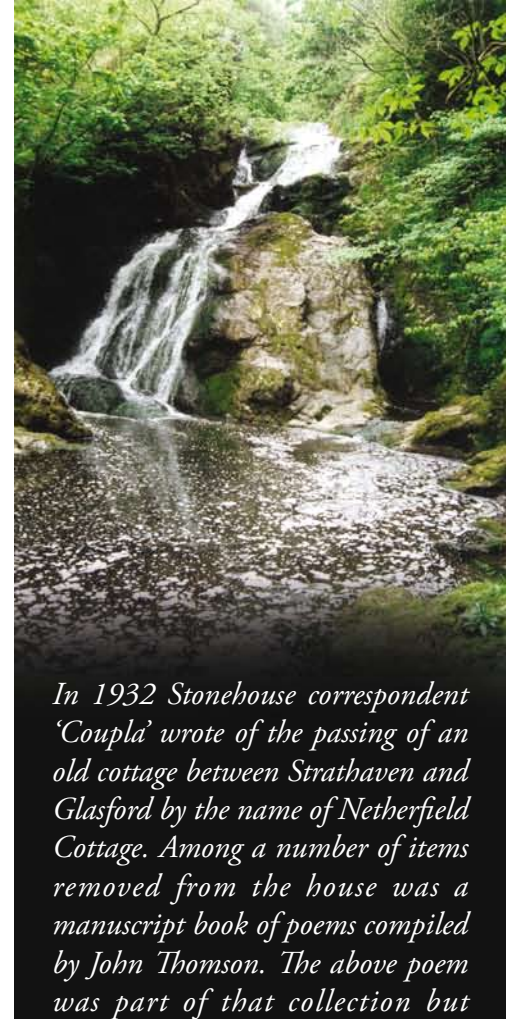
Heich up on yon o'er hanging rock, fann'd wi' the zephyrs cool,
We watched the bonnie speckled trout swim gracefu' thro' the pool,
Or peer'd in ilka shady nook, wi' care an' muckle skill,
For the birdies nests sae snug beside the auld cotton mill.

An' o' the wild flowers we ha'e pu'd, aound' that cherished spot,
The jaggy brier, the scented thyme, an' wee forget-me-not,
The violet fair an' primrose sweet, our bosoms oft wad thrill,
While buskin' up wee posies by the auld cotton mill.

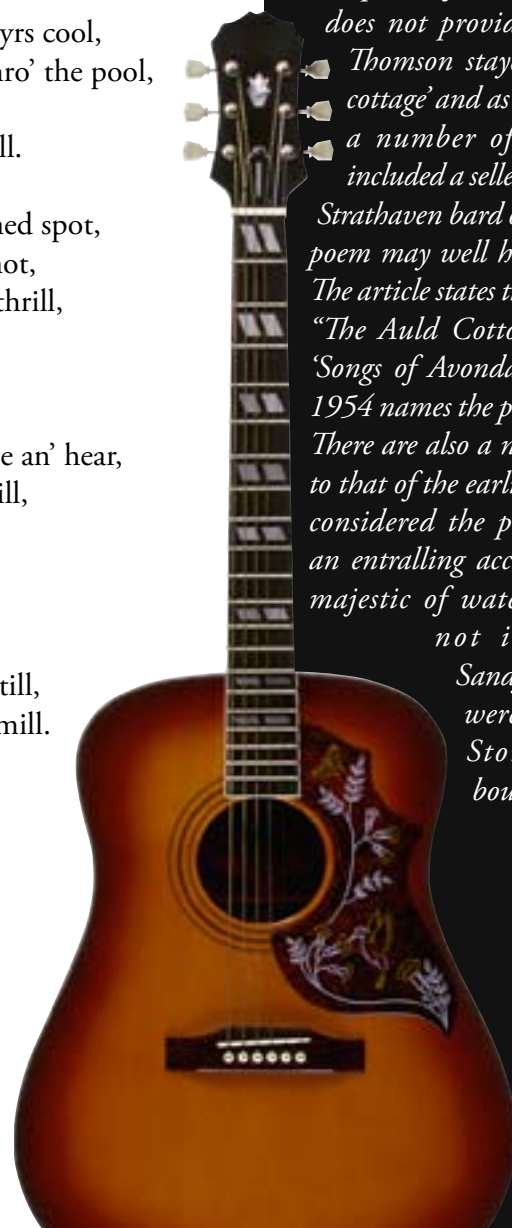
The soun' made by the waterfa' was music tae our ear,
An' when the burn cam' doon in flood, 'twas gran' to see an' hear,
An' o' twas fine on simmer nights, tae hear the mavis trill,
Sweet notes among the bushes by the auld cotton mill.

An noo thae happy youthfu' days ha'e a' sped fast awa',
While ither bairnies climb the cliffs abune the waterfa'
But aye we like to dauner there, an' think wi' pleasure still,
On the gleesome days we spent beside the auld cotton mill.

J. G.



In 1932 Stonehouse correspondent 'Coupla' wrote of the passing of an old cottage between Strathaven and Glasford by the name of Netherfield Cottage. Among a number of items removed from the house was a manuscript book of poems compiled by John Thomson. The above poem was part of that collection but does not provide the poet. John Thomson stayed at 'Limeman's cottage' and as well as composing a number of his own works included a selection of works by a Strathaven bard of which the above poem may well have been written. The article states the poem was titled "The Auld Cotton Mill" but the 'Songs of Avondale' programme of 1954 names the poem shown above. There are also a number of changes to that of the earlier report but that considered the poet has provided an entralling account of this most majestic of waterfalls. Although not in Stonehouse, Sandford and the falls were within the old Stonehouse Parish boundary.



The Cander

O Cander stream, O Cander stream,
Where glints o' happy sunlight gleam,
About thee all the fields be green
Beneath an Indian summer sheen.

Thy runnels swift, the pools so clear,
Where mirrored grasses crown thee near,
Carry a whispered message down
By hamlet and by farm town.

No hind runs swifter to the brake
Where hungry lie her calves awake,
Than thee to join the Avon's flow
Where many branches lean down low.

So out of felsite rocks and hoar
Thou com'st with thy pellucid store,
To turn a mill, an e'en arrest
Man's mind with powers thou are possessed.

If it be kindlier to the heart
That lovers seek thy dells apart,
I would not make thee commonplace
Though pilgrim-like thy haunts I trace.

Cander Water

Thou well-known tiny rivulet,
How rapidly thou'rt gliding on,
Combined with thousands of thy fellows,
Soon to swell Old Ocean's tide!

Just such is Man. Flowing
Adown life's rapid course:
Cp-mingling with his brother -
All are borne into Eternity.

And shall no drop be lost?
And will man never cease to be?
Ah, no! else marred in Heaven's decree,
And universal Nature wreck'd.
Man is immortal, wonderful thought,
That he shall live for ever!

And as each drop, we say,
Doth occupy its place
In that expanse of waters; so
Shall Man Eternity inhabit.

R.M.N. (1857)



In praise o' the kindly folk o' Stonis

Ours is a peaceful rural town,
That nestles charmingly aloof;
Fair fields enswathe her like a gown,
With nature's tints in warp and woof.

Of mighty hens we may not boast,
No heave of surf our hearing fills,
But pleasant dales where sound is lost,
And gentle undulating hills.

No acrid smoke pollutes the air,
Instead the odour of the pine;
No raucous noises anywhere,
But singing birds and lowing kine.

A flow'ry park where children play,
On sward that's velvet to the feet,
Anon with elfin laughter gay,
They navigate the polished chute.

There, seated neath a hawthorn tree,
The elders of our village sit,
Old jokes are cracked with quiet glee,
A laugh rewards the ready wit.

Rab tells his thoughts of long ago
"The warmest summer that we had,
The keenest frost, the deepest snow"
Were those when he was just a lad.

The Swallow Brae was steeper then,
Frae kirkyaird wa' to Avon brim;
The Puddocks Hole was deeper when,
He and his cronies learned to swim.

Simmer and winter aye the same,
Frae kirkyaird wa' to Avon brim,
When dark a peacock-feather flame,
Frae gas that blinked, but gled nae licht.

Then water frae Loch, Well or Spout,
Had to be carried, every drap,
Now, sweet and pure Glengavel route,
Comes aqua pure to the tap.

And as for holidays, guid sooth,
Maist o' us tripped on Shank's mare,
But noo, the puirest lass and youth,
Can bus or train or fly by air.

"Aye, aye" says Wull, "but look here,
Rab Oor elders too were grumblin' codgers,
And mair than ance we left oor wab,
For Hamilton, to jine the sodgers".

"Weel, weel, you may be richt," quo Rab,
"But this at least I will maintain,
A drive in Black Bull brake or cab,
Was faur abune your bus and train".

And so, ad-lib, they argued on,
Of this and that and the other thing,
Each one debated pro and con,
While we outsiders kept the ring.

But thro' it all, 'twas clear as day,
They loved their toon so sweet and trig,
From auld Westtoun to Cobber Brae,
From Cander Toll to Glessart Brig.

Each ancient landmark, lane and street,
Held something dear for these old cronies,
Each burn and brae and meadow sweet,
And all the kindly folk o' Stonis.

by Matthew H. Thomson

This poem above was written in 1936 by Stonehouse exile, Matthew H. Thomson of Belfast whose late brothers were Mr John Thomson, Postmaster and Mr A. MacCormack Thomson; Editor of the Hamilton Advertiser.





The Green Howm Lea

I'll meet my love on Lintoch Brae,
On Lintoch Brae, on Lintoch Brae,
An' doun the bonnie glen we'll gae
 To where the Avon flows

We'll wander owre the green howm lea,
The green howm lea, the green howm lea,
And yonder where there's nane to see
 He'll pu' for me a rose

And in my hair sae tenderly,
Sae tenderly, sae tenderly,
He'll nest the bud and syne ca' me
 The sweetest flower that grows

And then my love my lips will pree,
My lips will pree, my lips will pree,
And promise aye to shelter me
 Frae ev'ry wind that blows

Upon yon bank in ecstasie,
In ecstasie, in ecstasie,
We'll cling beside the scented tree
 While red the sunset glows

And sae 'twill be this nicht for me,
This nicht for me, this nicht for me,
Wi' Johnnie on the green howm lea
 Where Avon gently flows

by A. MacCormack Thomson

On Friday 15th October 1954 a concert was held in the Public Hall in aid of the Old Folk's Welfare Committee. A souvenir programme entitled 'Songs of Avondale' was produced, providing lyrics for the evenings entertainment. The songs were written by journalist A. MacCormack Thomson ('son of Avondale') inspired by the countryside around Stonehouse. The music was arranged by composer Neil H. Lees but unfortunately the music has been lost through time.

The Green Howm Lea was sung by Soprano Miss Elmar Kennedy.



The Hoolet

The hoolet cries frae the he'rt o' the nicht,
Oot o' the nicht's black he'rt cries he:
I'm Sib the Hoolet, I hate the licht,
Mune an' staurs in the mirk for me;
 I see what mortals canna see
 In the burnin' sun that blin's the e'e.

High on a branch o' the oaken tree
I watch the creepin' things at wark:
Foumart an' stoat, an' the fox sae slee,
Huntin, their meat in the shroudin' dark;
 The shroudin dark that nocht can hide
 Frae the een o' a hoolet roon an' wide.

Owre in the kirkyard, ghostly grey,
Shadows move as the mune slips by,
An' the he'rt o' a hoolet is sad an' wae.
An' his bleist is raxed wi' a sabbin' cry
 Whoo !
 Whoo-o-o-o !

Oot o' man's ken or in't are you
That swee like reek owre the holy stanes?
Fell shapes to gar a body grue,
Craeturs o' neither flesh nor banes:
 Whoo !
 Whoo-o-o-o !

The whirlin' warld turns warm an' bricht
As its face tak's fire frae the ken'lin' sun,
An' the chancy things o' the daurksome nicht
Are blawn awa' wi' the fresh'nin' wun:
 Are blawn awa'; an' the sun's red glare
 Fa's on an oaken branch that's bare.

by A. MacCormack Thomson

The Hoolet was sung by Bass William Noble.



The Aul' Drove Road

Frae Cowplaw 'mang the meadow sweet
To Tanhill owre the knowe,
A wee, shy path in dappled licht
Dreams deep where bluebells growe;
Wi' ilka breeze its cuddlin' trees
Nid-nod an' flirt their hair
While linties on the swingin' boughs
Trill oot a denty air

In the aul' drove road,
The aul' drove road,
The brawest bit in a' the warl'
That feet o' men e'er trod;
Twas there I met my daurlin'
By bonnie Eelin Todd:
Hoo we kissed an' clunk thegither
On the aul' drove road!

Whan simmer's sun was high abune
An' larks owre skailed their sang,
The eident bees wad bummle by
On nectar-seekin' thrang;
But no' in a' their gowden store,
Nor in the honied oor,
Was half the bliss that just ae kiss
Frae Eelin could secure (Chorus)

At gloamin', roun' their cracklin' bleeze,
The merry tinklers sat,
An' while the fragrant vapours rase
Hummed "Rabbit in the pat,"
But gin ane raised an am'rous e'e
An' gie'd a sly bit wink,
My lichtsome lass wad tilt her chin
An' sweep by gey perjink (Chorus)

In aulden times this bonnie blink
Kent cartle-reivin' hordes,
An' saw the Covenanters merch
Wi' Bibles an wi' swords;
But aye for me its memory
Is no' o' psalms or stour
But o' a rosy kintra quaen
That blossomed like a flo'er (Chorus)

by A. MacCormack Thomson

The aul' drove road was sung by Bass William Noble.



The Bonnie Lass o' Doosdale

O Doosdale braes are bonnie
When winter melts to spring,
And sweet yon summer meadows
Where the lav'rocks mount and fa',
But gie me red-gold autumn
When the clustered berries hing;
For then my lass first kissed me
At the brawest time of a'

Doon in the hollow where the burnie rins,
By the auld meal mill 'yont the rum'lin' linns,
Where the wee path buckles at the cuddlin' stane,
And wanders through the wuids like a wee lost wean,
When the mune glides high and the land's a' still,
I'll haud my tryst wi' Jean

O hasten nicht and tak' me
Doun yon drowsy glen adream,
O speed the precious moment
When I hear her gently ca';
Come saft-concealin' gloamin'
Come wi' jewelled crown a gleam;
And let me to my fond he'rt
Press the brawest lass of a' (Chorus)

by A. MacCormack Thomson

The Bonnie Lass o' Doosdale was sung by Tenor Robert Russell

The Lamp o' Memory

Had I the magic art,
The gift o' glamourie,
I'd summon back the years,
The years that used to be;
Then down a village wynd
My feet wad mak' refrain:
Dear mither, mither mine,
I'm hame, I'm hame again

O yon cosy ingle-neuk
Wi' the kettle on the swee,
The caddie an' the caunelsticks,
The laughin' cheenie doug;
A face sae gently kind,
Saft-smilin' down on me:
A dreamin', drowsy laddie
On the auld rag rug

My childhood hame was sma',
Wi' little in't o' worth,
Except ae jewel rare
Men seek owre a' the earth;
The jewel-stane o' love,
That smoothe the path for rne,
And healed wi' precious balm
My hurts when I was wee (Chorus)

I hae nae magic art,
Nae gift o' glamourie,
But aye I hae a lamp,
The lamp o' memory;
It shines on vision's screen,
And there they move fu' clear,
The dear anes I hae loved,
The freens o' yester year (Chorus)

by A. MacCormack Thomson

The Lamp o' Memory was sung by Tenor Robert Russell



Glen o' Tum'lin' Waters

There is a sang in Avondale
Abune a' sangs the best;
It flows, a liquid melodie,
Adoon a glen that's blest ;
I fain wad hear its lilt again
Oh, man, could I but airt
To the glen o' tum'lin' waters
An' the music o' my he'rt.

O the Avon an' the Caunner
At the Caunner Water mooth,
The meetin' o' the rivers
That thrilled me in my youth,
There first I kissed a roguish lass
An' learned o' love's sweet truth,
As we cuddled on the table-stane
At Caunner Water mooth.

Frae mossy spring the shepherds ken,
'Way yont o' Straven toun,
By Glessart and auld Lintoch Brig
The Avon dances doon;
Past Logan's Braes an' Kittymer
Its ripples rise an' fa'
Till they meet an' cleek wi' Caunner
Mang the wuids o' Birkenshaw. (Chorus)

Still onward rowe the daffin' pair,
As ane in wadlock noo,
Past Eve and Adam's empty neuk
In Eden o' Millheugh;
Till through the sunny howes o' Ross
They saftly, shyly glide
To their places 'mang the singers
In the Anthem o' the Clyde. (Chorus)

by A. MacCormack Thomson

The Glen o' the Tum'lin Waters was sung by Tenor Robert Russell



Rosy-Trala Tralee

There's a dear little cot at the foot o' Bogha',
Rosy-trala, rosy-tralee
And there on an evening I lightly did ca'
Rosy-trala tralee;
I peeped through a window as bright as a pin
To see if the darling dear Nellie was in,
Then knocking I entered but never let on
'Twasn't Nell I was seeking but handsome young John

Rosy-trala, rosy-tralee,
A peach of a plan as I think you'll agree

"Come on in" carrolled Nellie an' dusted a chair
Rosy-trala, rosy-tralee,
My heart gave a kick to see Johnnie was there,
Rosy-trala tralee
He gloomed in a corner and played with his tie
As blind as a bat to the love in me eye,
But my mother says that a dour-looking stirk
Can be led by a lass with a ring to the Kirk (Chorus)

Oh we laughed and we chattered while, Johnnie sat mum,
Rosy-trala, rosy-tralee
I boasted the lads I had under my thumb,
Rosy-trala tralee
But o'ch the sly rascal ne'er rose to my lure
Though lashes I fluttered and blushed like a flower,
As my mother says, when a laddie is shy
You must hunt like the spider, be caught like the fly (Chorus)

It was time to be leaving the hour it was late,
Rosy-trala, rosy-tralee
Says Johnnie "I'll see you the length o' your gate,"
Rosy-trala tralee;
I shied at a shadow and cried in alarm,
Then found myself gripped in the web of his arm
My chin he uptilted and kissed me full pat,
And whispered 'My lass you've been asking for that' (Chorus)

by A. MacCormack Thomson

Rosy Trala Tralee was sung by Soprano Miss Elmar Kennedy



The Kiss on Ivy Brae

On Ivy Brae by Overwood,
By Overwood,
Green Overwood,
I met a lass and oh so good
To gaze upon was she;
I looked her up, I looked her down,
And then I looked her round-and-roun',
And all her parts from toe to crown
Were just as they should be

Hello to you my winsome one,
My lively one,
My laughing one,
Be mine dear heart and share my full,
Come kiss and I'm your prize
She looked me up, she looked me down,
And then she looked me round-and-roun',
And what she thought from toe to crown
Was lit in sparkling eyes

On Ivy Brae by Overwood
By Overwood,
Green Overwood,
I met my lass and there we stood
And not a word said she;
But she looked up, and I looked down,
And both of us looked round-and-roun',
Then kissed and all of time was flown
For my sweet love and me

by A. MacCormack Thomson

Kiss on Ivy Brae was sung by Baritone, William Whitelaw





The flo'er o' Brankston Ha'

There's a soughin' in the plantin',
A sabbin' and a sighin'
Frae aff the restless branches
The swirlin' leaves dounfa'
And owre ayont the Plewlands
A bonnie lass in lyin',
That was to me the treasure,
The flo'er o' Brankston Ha'

O Margo was my joy,
And she was mine to cherish,
But naething I wad dae
Could haud her hero ava',
She left me at the hairst,
When mony braw things perish,
And noo on yon green hill
She's saftly happed awa'.

There's a numbness roun, the breistbane
A tichtness and a tholin',
The well o' grief is frozen,
My he'rt it winna thaw,
The husk o' me kens voices
Remote and saft-condolin'
I hear my ain voice answer,
Sae dull an' thin an' slaw (Chorus)

O whan will end this anguish,
This fever-fret o' grievin'?
This envy for the bruit-beasts
That dinna feel at a'?
Fine, fine I ken that travail
Maun follow love's conceivin';
But life was boucht too dearly
By daith at Brankston Ha' (Chorus)

by A. MacCormack Thomson



Wattie Broonlee's Braw Wee Shop

There's seeven wunners men hae made,
An' quite a few forbye,
That travellers hae clapped in books
An' lauded to the sky;
I've read a bit aboot them a',
Seen photographs galore,
But deil the scene could hand a preen
To Wattie Broonlee's store

There were beans intill't, an' peas intill't,
Pyramids o' cheese intill't,
Jennie-longlegs, bumbees, flees,
Boomin', zoomin' at their ease;
On wings o' sang they had fu' scope
In Wattie Broonlee's braw wee shop

In Wat's auld independent toun
The weaver-folk were puir,
An' mothers whiles tholed hunger's gripe
Sae men an' bairns got mair;
But aff-and-on they'd aye bawbees
To clink in faith an' hope,
An' then they gulped the whummelt smell
O' Wattie's reemin' shop

There was spice intill't an' rice intill't,
Tattie scones an' mice intill't,
Butter, haddies, treckle, snuff,
Oatmeal, peasmear, floor and stuff;
Colossus wad hae looked gey sma'
In ane o' Wattie's windaes braw

An' noo we're in the Golden Age
When a' that's yours is mine,
An' life's a social Paradise
That shames dear auld langsyne;
Except we'll say for ae bit thing
That we maun a' deplore:
There's no a dygont wunner left
Like Wattie's hamely store

There was ham intill't, an' jam intill't,
Even whiles a dram intill't,
Eggs an' sugar, ingans braw,
Bottled sweeties raw on raw;
Man everything was juist tip-top
In Wattie Broonlee's braw wee shop

by A. MacCormack Thomson

Martyrs Grave

Here lays or near this Ja Thomson
Who was shot in a Rencounter at
Drumclog, June 1st 1679
By Bloody Graham of Clavers House
for his adherence to the Word of God
and Scotland's Covenanted
Work of Reform ation - Rev xii II

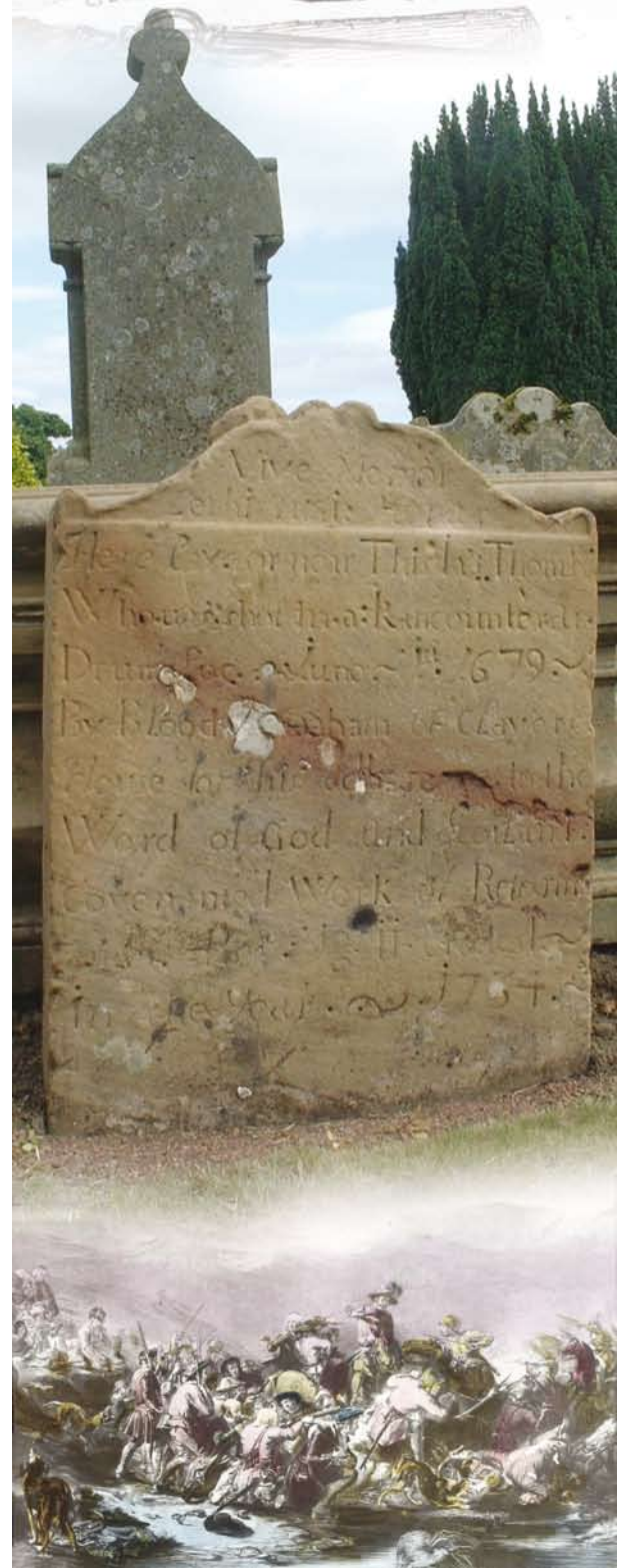
On the other side:

This hero brave who doth Iye here
In truth's defence did he appear,
And to Christ's cause he firmly stood
Until he seal'd it with his blood.
With Sword in hand upon the field
He lost his life, yet did not yield.
His days did End in Great Renown,
And he obtained the Martyrs Crown.

James Thomson was a farmer from Tanhill on the West side of Lesmahagow Parish, bordering Stonehouse Parish from which his family is said to have departed around 1780; having been tenants there for near 350 years. Little is known of this martyr, except that he died from wounds inflicted at the Battle of Drumclog in 1679. He was later interred in St. Ninian's churchyard.

The original headstone was erected in 1734 some years after his death, probably because to erect such a stone at the time, would in itself have been seen as treasonous. His descendants renewed his headstone with a tablestone in 1832. In 1955 the original stone was repaired due to damage caused by the elements of nature. James Thomson's wife along with his only son John, who was also a farmer, were captured and imprisoned at Blackness Castle, four miles from South Queensferry. Their fate is unknown.

The family of the martyr was in earlier times located in a place called Cunningair or Collingair in the parish of Stonehouse, opposite Dovesdale. It was from here that James Thomson's family was to travel to the lands at Tanhill. Many inhabitants of the village today can trace their origins from this family line. His gravestone in St. Ninian's churchyard stands as a solitary reminder of part of the village's historical past, a man who stood for a valiant cause in which so many sacrificed their lives.





The Water Cure

Stonehouse noo her fame may spread,
And farmer bodies nae mair dread
Disease in horse or horned head
Pigs, dogs, or cats -
The water cure will virtue shed
On mice and rats.

Nae man nor mither's son need fear
Disease or fever a' the year;
Nae mither noo need drap a tear
For bairnie ta'en
By Death's devouring sickle drear -
His power is gaen

The water cure has ta'em the lead,
Its virtues soon will spread abreed;
Thanks to a Stonehouse clever heed
And Sandy's skill
The cure is simple, 'twill succeed;
Expense is nil.

Water's king in every land,
'Midst arctic snows or burning sands,
It drives the engine, wheel and band,
It turns the mill,
It cures the sick. How cheap! How grand!
Just drink your fill.

Away wi' stinking sulphur fumes,
Polluting all our clothes and rooms;
Let sulphur spray be spread on tombs,
Or on the deed.
Tak' water - soon you'll snap your thumbs
And naething dread.

All honour to the Stonehouse man
Wha has developed a' the plan.
When beast or body ails, you can
Get Torrance now;
And cured are a' since he began,
Man, pig and cow.

Yours truly, Pure Water

In the early part of the 19th Century there was no running water supply in the cottage, (no taps, flushing toilets, baths, sinks, etc). All water supplies had to be collected from the nearest well. Going to the well for water was often a very social event. Groups of women would collect round the well to have a chat, while awaiting their turn.

Wells were common throughout the village and over 70 wells can be identified on the early first ordnance survey map of the village in 1859. During the latter end of the 19th Century communal taps were installed in the streets. To the best of my knowledge the first water pipes were installed in King Street, in 1894 by the County Council. It wasn't until around 1904 that water was installed into housing as a matter of course. The above poem was taken from the Hamilton Advertiser in the year 1869.



Ancient Man

The few stone coffins uncovered in the sand,
Revealing the existence of prehistoric man.

The skeletons of humans, an urn of moulded clay,
To testify another phase of man's progressive way

The centuries have come and gone and the world is born anew
The sacred thoughts of ancient man compare with those of you.

As I gaze upon the simple scene, in fancy I can see,
An open grave, a silent tomb, embracing such as we.

A. Bryson

In the Autumn of 1947 four prehistoric burial sites of the Middle Bronze Age were discovered at Patrickholm sand quarry. They were found on the West side of the river Avon, 420 feet above sea level near the Larkhall viaduct. The site was found when workmen at Patrickholm came upon some large stone slabs of a cist (stone coffin).

This excavation is particularly interesting because family groups are rare in Bronze Age cists. The date of this site can be estimated at around 2000^{BC}. The artefacts found at the Patrickholm site were donated to the National Museum of Antiquities in Edinburgh by the owner of the quarry at that time, Mr McNeil Hamilton.

The ruins of Patrickholm House still stand near the site of the cists, though continuing land improvements may put an end to the house where many past landlords of Stonehouse once resided.



Glowerious Stonis Toon

Than Gleska, Lunnon's bigger,
An' Biggar's bigger still;
But bigger faur and trigger,
In the shire o' Swinmounthill,
There staun's a witchin' ceety,
Ca'd Stonis - Eh! Puir chap!
Ne'er hear o't? Angel Peety,
Your mercy saftly drap
On this puir weed wi' wudden heid,
Sae cracket i' the soun',
Wha's never heard a single word
O' "Glowerious" Stonis Toon.

Guid gracious! whaur in myst'ry,
Puir loonie dae ye stop?
Hae ye read "Prudential" history,
Or leuked the "Standard" map?
Did you ever read the beuk, sir,
That tells about a hen
That ance hatched forth a deuk, sir
On Lunnon's muckle Ben?
"Fack", quacked the deuk wi' wildered leuk,
This Lunnon's big a' roon',
"Tut"s chucked the hen, "as big again
Is "Glowerious" Stonis toon."

"That big!" Guid gracious me, sir,
We yearn wi' teeth an' een,
When e'er a park we see, sir,
Or onything that's green.
A Stonis lad an' lass, sir,
Saw growin' in Millheugh
Wee grossets, green as grass, sir,
An' socht a "bawbee pu'."
Fruit Guy first gazed, syne cried amazed,
"The fruit's no hauflans grown."
Quo' they, "They coax us ceety folks
Frae "Glowrious" Stonis Toon."

Gey green! Great guns an' poother!
Your gumption's gey obtuse;
Man, buy the "Fire Insurer,"
An' read the Stonis news.
There, sir, ye'll see that learnin'
Sae fires ilk Stonis blade,
That Stra'ven mich be burnin'
An' deil the Fire Brigade
They'd hae to fricht the spreadin' light,
Wild ragin' roon' an' roon',
Till ance we'd seen their hose an' men
Frae "Glowrious" Stonis Toon.

by William Stewart



A Day At The Ice

Oho, boys, oho, for a day at the ice,
 When auld, snell Daddy Frost hauds a' saft in his vice;
 When the shouts of the curlers - an' shouts they're in style,
 Glegly thro' the clear air gang for mair than a mile.
 Sam Hims, cannie sowl, says thae shouts ane an' a'
 Are sweers, muchle sweers, comin' rink-breeneth in raw,
 That the Elder himsel', when his stane gangs ajee,
 Thraws his rev'ren' auld mou' hissin' oot a big D!

That, "D," Mr Hims, could be a'ways construed,
 For the lave o' the letters were 'tween his teeth glued;
 Ye heard a big "D," na, an' maybe an "A" -
 'Twas damaged' just damaged', the man meant to say!
 Noo damaged, or dagont, or dash it, ye'll see,
 Gin ye're ocht o' a scholar, aye starts wi a D.
 But na, Mr Hims, owre oor thrapples wad cram,
 His view that the "D" could be metred with ham'.

Oh dear, deary me! There are bodies ca'd men
 What think they ken a' that's ocht worthy o' ken,
 But puir shauchlin' craters, their ken's a' a sham,
 When they'd daur e'en to think that a 'D' rhymes wi' ham;
 Och, gin they'd be poets at winkin' they'd see
 "D" metres not ham-creesh, but creesh kitchen fee;
 Oh deil tak thae blethers wi' lugs aff the fang
 Wha crack like a bellman wi' tongue a yard lang.

Then ho, boys, aho, for a day at the ice,
 Where the king and the cadger are frien's in a trice,
 Where the cairter - Rough Rabbie - directin' Mess John,
 Cries "Ye buzzum lift that! Noo ye deevil, be on!
 Put yer pith tul't, an' dinna be frichtit ye fa' -
 Ach, dragont, ye rascal, ye're no here ava!
 Soop, soop there, ye wabsters! -as aesual - a "hugg!"
 Man, Glergy, at curlin' yer're jist a humbug."





Where the Shirra plays “third,” an’ the pachter, his skip,
 Wi’ his bannet scarce coverin’ his last prison “clip”
 Cries “Shirra! that’s theirs! noo, it’s fair on the tee!
 Gi’et a full “saxty days,” just the same’s ye gaed me;
 Noo, na, dinna be fear’t, gie’t a daud on the lug
 That’ll sen’t to the middle o’ - ah he’s a hugg!
 Ye hanged it, ye rascal! Man, Shirra, awa’!
 Ye’ve nae richt to hang, it’s clean contrar’ to law.”

Last Wednesday the loch held a rollickin’ corps,
 A’ dults at the curlin’ but demons to roar;
 I’ll tell o’ their playin’. o’ jokes, it’s the best,-
 But na’ - “it’s an ill bird that flyes it’s ain nest.”
 I was ane o’ the corps, saw I’ll charity show
 To the hale merry lot, an’ mysel’ chief o’ a’;
 But gin’ twerna’ that Want’s hungry weans were the price,
 I would still cry aho for a day at the ice.

by William Stewart

The origin of the game in Stonehouse, like the early origins of the game itself, are obscure as there do not seem to be any records pertaining to the formation of the first Stonehouse Curling Club. In 1820, however we find Stonehouse playing Lesmahagow at Cander Moss; six rinks participated and were beaten by Lesmahagow by 30 shots (score 187 to 157). Ten years later, in 1830, they played Lesmahagow again and were beaten in a close encounter this time by a mere 93 shots! Based on this early information it is not unreasonable to suggest that Curling has been played in the parish for around 200 years.



Tommy's Dug Out

We're living in a dug out, and working in one too,
In a communication trench they call Fish Avenue.
We stop up here for seven days and then go back to rest
And none of us are sorry to leave this "lousy" place
The beds are double shifted, the blankets are the same,
And those cursed crawling "creatures" cause annoyance and pain

Though we try all sorts of dodges to do the "blighters" in,
But no matter what we do they are always sure to win.
The dug-out we are working in is well below the ground,
Supported well with bars of steel and timber square, and round
They mean it for an aid post for the day the push will start,
As there is sure to be some boys go down before they reach their mark

It is grand to have a haven very near at hand,
Where the boys can go for shelter and get what help they can.
From the doctors and their nurses, who'll be working day and night
To save the aching pain of those who suffer in the fight.
The chalk from out this dug-out we empty on the top,
And "Fritz" has got an eye on it so we sometimes get it hot.

At the entrance to our dwelling place the case is much the same,
Cause "Fritz" is always dropping one, and I wish he'd stop the same.
So as I write these last few lines things are getting warmer,
The boys they have all agreed to call it "Tout-de-suit" corner.

A. Millar (1917 Hamilton Advertiser - poetry from the trenches)



Dear Mrs Loudon, you're a treat
In sending such nice things to eat;
It helps to make us feel at home
On Scotia's shore, among our own.
Your scones and cakes were very nice,
And unknown here at any price
Which made them all the more endearing-
Alas! Too soon they're disappearing.
It makes a funny sight to see
These hungry soldiers having tea.
Especially as around we hand
Your scones and cakes and B.C. jam
Then mugs of cocoa, steaming hot,
P???ade some lovely acid drops;
It brings us back to days of yore
When we had dainties in galore,
And caused us to appreciate
The merits of your Stonehouse cake.
And come what may we will remember
To pray for blessings on the sender,
And may you ne'er ken lack o' siller
Is the humble prayer of yours, A. Miller

A. Millar (1915 Hamilton Advertiser - poetry from the trenches)

A Mrs Loudon, 'a Stonehouse Lady' - sent off a parcel to Stonehouse men serving at the front in the trenches after reading a poem by A. M. (Millar), entitled 'Tommy's Dug Out'. In gratitude Mr Millar responded by writing the above poem as thanks for her kind donations.



“Why the Stonehouse girls are shy.”

Some masher muffs thinks we are shy!

My eye!

An’ wonder wherefore an’ why -

The kye!

Gin the cuifs had but spunks, an’ we were men, no begunks,

We’d soon prove their story a lie,

Faye aye;

We’d soon prove their story a lie.

There’s lassocks I ken o’ myself’,

Wha dwell

In Stonehouse, their names I could tell,

But, well -

Gin men wooin’ gang, losh, they winna gang wrang

Sax doors frae oor crossie to try,

Och ay,

Sax doors frae oor crossie to try.

But hoo can be bother oor fash

Wi’ trash

O’ mashers wha feed on spud bash,

Neep hash,

An’ sic like chaep stuffs, sae that dickey’s an’ cuffs,

An’ broon leather shoon they’ll can buy,

Umph ay!

An’ broon leather shoon they’ll can buy.

by William Stewart



Where the Cander joins the Avon

Where the Cander an' the Avon,
Wi' a merry, cheery din,
Kiss an' fondle wi' ilk ither
Ere they tumble into ane.
Where nature free, unstinted,
Lets her fairest favours fa',
An' decks wi' sylvan grandeur
A' the braes of Birkenshaw.
Ah, there I love to wander,
As the e'enin' shadows fa',
Were the Cander joins the Avon,
'Mang the braes o' Birkenshaw.

Were the Cander joins the Avon,
'Mang the braes o' Birkenshaw.
The sunbeams gently linger,
Seemin' laith to gang awa'.
Sweet nature's feathered songsters
Sing far into the e'en;
They draw their inspiration
Frae the bonnie, fairy scene.
O' scenes frae nature's garden
'Tis the fairest o' them a',
Were the Cander joins the Avon,
'Mang the braes o' Birkenshaw.



Paterson Church

Wild are the moors of Lanark,
As the Covenanters knew,
From Claverhouses' soldiers,
Many a time they flew.
To preserve, and meet again,
In the Good Lord's name,
Prayers of thanksgiving,
Ever was their aim.

In June of Eighteen Seventy-eight,
The foundation stone was laid
April of the following year,
Heard the opening prayer said.
A hundred years have come and gone,
Since that eventful day,
Still this lively congregation,
Their faith and hope display.

The Reverend William Taylor,
An east coast man was he,
Thirty-five pounds, Scots, no doubt,
Was his annual fee.
Eighteen fifteen saw arising,
The first manse, in Hill Road,
Alas, just two years later,
The preacher went abroad.

From Dunning, 'neath the Ochils,
William Fraser came,
Ordained in Eighteen Twenty,
Like his precesor, he then did the same,
Left the folk of Stonehouse,
To seek a new found shore,
In Eighteen Twenty-eight he sailed
To Canada, afar.

The pastoral needs were provided,
Thereafter for ten years
While Matthew McGavin,
Administered to the cares,
Before accepting a call to Airdrie,
In Eighteen Forty-one,
Then off again, Down Under,
This travelled Dundonian.

'Twas on the eighteenth of August,
In Eighteen Forty-two,
Young Henry Angus Paterson came,
The numbers, they were few.
Soon they were all flocking,
To hear this earnest man,
Who preached as well as practised
The Lord's own perfect plan.

His followers grew in number,
The building was too small,
Plans were laid to reconstruct,
To accommodate them all.
For nearly sixty years he led,
An active Christian life,
As minister, friend, companion,
Throughout these days of strife.

The turning of the century,
Saw the U. F. born,
It therefore was decided,
His name, the church adorn.
No sooner had this happened,
He was laid to rest,
This "Grand Old Man" of Stonehouse
Ranked amongst the best.



Then followed from Old Cumnock,
His successor to the charge,
Alexander B. Macdonald,
New duties to discharge.
For thirteen years his ministry,
Included the new manse birth,
Installing of a pipe organ,
Before he left for Perth.

The war was in its infancy,
As 'Paterson' welcomed J. C. Brown,
For six years he so journeyed,
When needed by the Crown.
He led his faithful congregation,
Throughout those difficult years,
Then left to work in Glasgow,
During the twenties' hopes and fears.

The Reverend Andrew Martin,
Came in June of Twenty-one,
Although brought up in Wigton,
Was one of Glasgow's sons.
A believer in the Union,
That year of Twenty-nine,
Not so his congregation,
For him, the end of the line.

For twenty two years, there followed,
Thomas Fredrick Crow,
Right to the top as Moderator,
He was destined to go.
Well loved by all who knew him,
As he went about the town,
Like "The Grand Old Man" before him,
A credit to his gown.

Nearly thirty years have come and gone,
Like David W. Roy,
Another U. F. Moderator,
Also a Glasgow boy.
Left Stonehouse in the sixties,
Edinburgh was his call,
Eleven years he served here,
Ninth minister in the roll.

In modern terminology,
We've reached number ten,
In the list of Paterson ministers,
All true Christian men.
The Reverend A. A. Small by name,
Brings us up to date,
Also a Moderator,
Another Stonehouse great.

A hundred busy years have passed,
Since the faithful met,
Many things have altered,
Some you can't forget.
Like the laying of the foundation stone,
Or the building of the manse,
The installing of the organ,
The singing did enhance.

Just recently, near disaster,
The church had gone on fire,
Like their predecessors,
Paterson folk showed they care,
By rising to the challenge,
As all true Christians do,
Rebuilt the church once before,
Just as good as new.

Mr McLeish 1981 (formerly of Beechwood Drive)



The Garibaldi Pit

Frae the toon we can see the steam and the stalk,
And in summer time it's a pleasant walk
For we pass a wild concave at Cander Braes,
Where nature puts on some of her finest claes,
And such a variety of bushes and trees -
A grand concert hall for the birds and the bees;
And each different kind, in their time of blossom,
Like a new set of gems in auld nature's bosom.
We must not say more as it's not our main story,
But they charms passers-by in the time of their glory;
And learned critics must not be too severe,
For English and Scotch, mixt, is the way we speak here,
And as we've a pretty stiff story before us,
On a different key we've omitted the chorus.

Are ye working ower at Garibaldi yet?
That's a place no, likely ever I'll forget,
For I began tae work as soon as I was fit,
And I sterted first in the Garibaldi Pit.
Garibaldi is a man of world-wide fame,
And for honour this pit was called by his name,
And tho' he ne'er aspired to wear a crown,
Few kings hae gained such excellent renown.
Famous Garibaldi, noble Garibaldi,
Royal Garibaldi - a' the world may say,
For he's done more good and received less pay
Than ony king we ken at the present day.



Taken from a small pamphlet written in 1879, the author was J. M. W. of 10 Union Street, Stonehouse (probably John Walker). The poem takes its name from Garibaldi, the Italian hero who fought to unite Italy in the mid 19th century. The Garibabldi Gates was a gateway between Cander Bridge and Canderside Toll where a small narrow gauge railway ran to the Spion Kop colliery. Reproduced in the Hamilton Advertiser in 1951 the author recalls the splendor of the scenery where the river Avon meets the Cander and then honours Garibaldi in association with the local pit.

The Old Church Tower

“Hail! Ruined remnant of a Church,
Old silent belfry, grey
With scars of age, the tooth of time
Has gnawed all else away.

“Thy voice speaks to the thoughtful mind;
This ancient house of prayer,
Revives anew those hallowed scenes
Of beauty, rich and rare.

“Our fathers worship’d in his house;
Their weekly toiling o’er,
They met within this porch of Heaven
God’s mercy to implore.

“Hark, Hear resounding prayer and praise,
From earnest hearts and true;
The faithful pastor reads the Word,
And souls are born anew.

“The father, mother, with the child,
All of the family fold,
The motley train of villages,
See, present as of old.

“This silent throng have left the fane,
And other fill their seat,
Thus on the vast procession moves,
To moulder ‘neath our feet.

“Time changes all : with keen-edged scythe
Mows sullenly ahead,
Sweeping the field of men into
The ‘city of the dead.’”

Taken from Robert Naismith’s book detailing the history of Stonehouse in 1885. The origins of the Stonehouse kirk are said to date to the 9th century but the first reference I can find dates to 1267, when Sir Roger, ‘the rector’ is recorded in association with the church of Stonehouse. Restored in 1734, the kirk fell into disrepair during the latter half of that century, around the time of the construction of the new church, in New Street in 1772.

The old kirk belfry is typical of other 17th century churches in Scotland, though the former adjoining walls of the belfry tower may have been considerably older, possibly 16th century. As Stonehouse kirk predates Glassford kirk, built in 1633.





Cam'nethan Street

I passed through a street of novel style,
Its length seemed to be a quarter in mile;
The south-side buildings are nearly complete,
And the name on the end is Cam'nethan Street.

I viewed every house, and then made a stop,
And saw there was none without a weaving shop;
And 'None here's ashamed to work for their meat,
Was pourtrayed on the wall's o' Cam'nethan Street.

I saw, as they passed each other on the road,
The general salute was a friendly nod-
Nae hats in the haun, nor cringing when they meet,
For there's nane proud or mean in Cam'nethan Street.

I learned that every man's house was his ain,
And nane had control o'er anither man's gain,
So, man-worship fell, for it wanted the feet,
And tyranny is dumb in Cam'nethan Street.

We think they are nearest the state o' the blest,
Where fueds about income can never exist,
And songs o' contentment in cadences sweet
Can be sung frae the heart in Cam'nethan Street.

See the beasts of the field and fowls of the air,
How harmony blends with equity there,
Man would be the same if he weren't to cheat
But hope has a province in Cam'nethan Street.

May they never hae pleasure in a gown o' silk,
That would sell or convert water in the milk,
Short may they reign that would over rate the wheat
Or daunt the pioneers in Cam'nethan Street.

by John Walker

Robert Naismith was a great admirer of John Walker's poetry. The poem above was composed in 1860 and first appeared in the Hamilton Advertiser. John Walker died in 1881 aged 82.



Elergy on Mrs S., Stonehouse

“From youth to age, without a stain she passed,
In maidhood, wife, and widowhood at last;
Tho’ ne’er among the flaunting idly classed,
Yet all her life was with abundance blessed.
To stay at home on Sabbath ne’er would yield,
Tho’ soldier-like, she’d fall upon the field;
So in church the fatal wound did come,
She felt the hint, and left to get her home;
Her friend alarmed, she got quick to bed,
And calmly sunk till her brave spirit fled.
Who could object to part at such an hour,
When she had seen of years fourscore and four?
Her graveclothes made, lay ready many a year,
Paid all she bought, to keep the coast aye clear
She made her will, to banish future strife,
For she prepared for death as well as life.
With her lot now we may interfere,
But she’s left much for imitation here.
Again with him she loved she’s side by side,
Who, sixty-six years back, made her his bride.”

by John Walker

A man of many talents, John M. Walker as well as being a local poet was also a tailor and repairer of clocks and watches. He published a volume of his prose and poetry in 1867, entitled “Songs and Poems, with remarks and reveries on various subjects”. The poem here was entitled, “Elergy on Mrs S., Stonehouse” who died on 13th February 1863.

The Open Door

When ye're lie'n in your wooden hut,
Fifty feet by twenty four,
Gazing at the English countryside
Thro' a left-wide-open door;
Then a longing stirs within ye,
And ye often hear them say-
"It's like bonnie Scotland,
on a hazy summers day"
But we miss the fine green hillsides,
The valleys, glens and a',
And we miss our hour at eventide
When dusk begins to fa'.
And wi' the view sae clearly seen
Oor thoughts gang back some years,
And as auld mem'ries flood oor mind,
Oor e'en will flood wi' tears.

Where back again tae schule-days
When we played by lamp-post licht,
And "stokey", that auld favourite,
Wad be the rage a' nicht;
But that wis in the winter time,
When nichts were lang and clear
Hoo different when the summer cam'
And nicht's were fine and clear
When fruit was ripe for pu'in'
And the gairdens, a' were fu',
Then Seivewright's pears and Manse's plooms
I'll gart that night wad rue.
And then there wis the gang's, ye ken,
And Raidin gairdens wis their hobby
But when auld Riddoch came in site,
Up went the cry - "the Bobby"
An' mony the lad's been nabbed an a'
An' mony a tear rushed tae an e'e,
And mony a quiverin' voice has said -
"A'll sweir it wisna me".

Ay these - the joyful' moments,
Wi' time spent a'mang the braes
Are treasured mem'ries tae the lads,
That war has sent their ways;
And be they 'neath a desert sun,
I'm sure they share the mem'ries,
An open door gave me.

by William Ewing

*Through the open door of his
billet, somewhere south of the
border William Ewing reminices
of long gone on the braes of the
Avon as he looks out onto the
English countryside.*





Gae bring tae me ma auldest claes
An' let me rumm'le thru' the braes,
Frae morn till e'en
Wi' ne'er a thocht o' schule or book
Tae luk for nests, tae wade, tae dook
An' guile the minnows wi' a hook
In Avon's sun-lit watter.

But Mither ne'er says 'George ma chiel
The day ye'r lookin faur fare weel
Tak aff ye'r bag.
Ah, no, that is a hope forlorn
For ah've turned seekly mony a morn,
But a' ah get is looks o' scorn
Frae every e'e.

So, oot ah get, and mak' tae here
Wi' little hope an' muckle fear
For tasks undone.
The tricky French that has me bate
In Latin verbs a certain fate
For baith ah'm in the middle sate
Wi' prospects drear.

This is ma hope, a day will dawn
Upon auld dreary Hamilton,
May it be sune,
When belching clouds of smoke will rise
From every schule, richt tae the skies,
Maist surely then, a Paradise
Wull open up tae me.

by Stewart Baillie

Contained within George Wilson's book "Hame" (1969) are a number of poems by the author and a number by acquaintances including this poem by his former classmate, Stewart Baillie (editor of "The Brilliant"). This poem recalls the memories of his childhood spent among the braes of the Avon.



Two boys did a nesting go,
They hunted high, they hunted low
Over hill, through field and dell,
And gave me this wee tale to tell.

They knew the home of Oliver Owl
But never saw him on the prowl.
And, far above, old Rory Rook
Defied them from his lofty nook.

But in a tree wee Greta Greenlintie
Built in a place that they saw intae,
Big Bertha Blackbird watched them nigh
And told her family not to cry.

Then Larry Lark, way up on high,
The two young friends did oft espy
And wished that they would go away
And let his wife Laurina lay.

We must not miss wee Tommy Tit
Who cheeped at them 'hop it, Hop it',
While from a branch Yum Yellow Yite
Said to his mate, 'Sit tight, Sit tight'.

Then past their ears flew bold Robert Robin,
Twistin' and turning', weavin' and Bobbin'
And showing himself a perfect dab
At lurin' them off from his pre-fab.

Said Laura Lapwing to Mary Mavis
From these two toughs may the good Lord save us,
Chirped Sarah Shelfy to Molly Mosscheeper
The worst job of all is surely 'Housekeeper'.

So the birds of the air all sang this lay
Keep away, you two, keep away, keep away,
Till they found the chums only came and went,
So they thought them kind and this message was sent.

When you come to see us please make less noise,
For that's what we fear with you big boys,
We'd like to see you come often around
If only you'd mind to make less sound.

And if you neither shout nor sing
We'll give you a treat when our families take wing,
For off to friend Budgie we'll take them with zest,
And they'll all learn to scream, 'Violet best - Violet-best'.

Then when the young birdies all perch there before us
And listen in rapture to their opening chorus,
We will say it is strange that in sport's greatest game
By 'Getting the Bird' our locals found fame.

by George Wilson

George Wilson had a great love of the village and the outdoors and would often put pen to paper in recalling his memories as a child. As a boy he would follow 'the Violet' at Holm Park, in the days when the team was comprised of solely local talent. Accompanied by his uncle Tom Jackson, they would adjourn to the 'Cross back-shop' for pies after the game. His favourite pastimes are recalled in this poem.

Willie Shaw

Once on a time, when frost and snaw
Did fiercely frae Benlomond blaw,
And clothed the hills and valley's a'
 On every side;
On sic a time gaed Willie Shaw
 Out ow'r the Clyde

Sent by the Stonehouse Curling Club
Wi' challenge baith to play and drub,
Upon the spacious frozen dub -
 Baith braid and wide,
Cam'nethan lads, or Wishaw Club
 Ayont the Clyde.

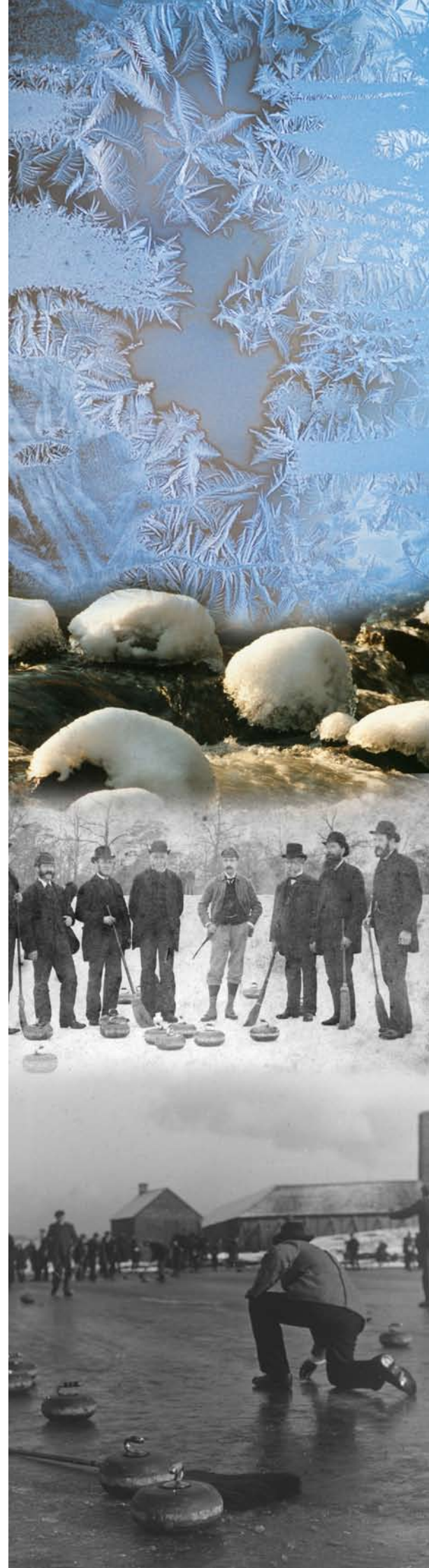
As soon's he had his message gi'en,
Quo' he, "I'm glad to see a frien';
Will ye go wi' me ow'r the green -
 I winna bide;
In truth I must be hame at e'en
 Back ow'r the Clyde.

"We'se hae ae gill or maybe twa,
I'm cauld wi' tramping thro' the snaw;
A wee drap in, I'll drive awa'
 'Gainst wind and tide,
And brave the fiercest wind can blaw
 Across the Clyde.

But ance down, ae gill forsooth
Or twa could scarcely weet his mouth,
So terrible was Willie's drouth,
 And sair to bide,
He ne'er ance thought upon the south
 Side of the Clyde.

But first ae gill and syne anither
He cried, bring ben without a swither;
"Here's to you, frien', my trusty brither,
 We'll weet our hide;
We'se hae ae hearty boose thegither,
 When ow'r the Clyde."

The time went on wi' jokes and clatter,
The whisky aye was growing better,
The storm without did roar and batter
 The biggin' side,
But Willie ne'er did mind the matter,
 While ow'r the Clyde.
They carried on till, getting late,



The whisky reaming in their pate,
And glorious was poor Willie's state,
The time did glide.
But Willie noo maun tak' the gate,
And hame ow'r Clyde.

They drew the string and rang the bell,
And ben came tripping bonny Nell;
But oh, what news hae I to tell,
And sair beside;
What black mischanter him befell
When ow'r the Clyde.

"What is to pay?" quo' Willie Shaw,
"It surely canna break us a';"
When out their purses they did draw,
Baith lang and wide,
To settle, or he gaed awa'
To cross the Clyde.

Twa shillings fell to Willie's share,
Which made the body glow'r and stare,
For oh, poor Willie's pouch was bare
And hole't beside;
Says he, "I've lost my silverware
In crossing Clyde."

They and a' did Willie curse,
And said he never had a purse,
And if his share he'd not disburse
They'd thrash his hide,
Or lash him like an auld cart horse,
When ow'r the Clyde.

At last, when better couldna be,
They a' as ae man did agree
To roup poor Willie for a spree,
And mak' him bide,
To cause them fund and mirth and glee,
Out ow'r the Clyde.

They roupit Willie, halfpins silly,
Just as they would do ony filly -
They body never look't sae silly,
And queer beside;
His face was white as ony lily
E'er grew on Clyde.

"Tippence for him," cried a chiel.
"Ow'r muckle for him, tae atwell;
His mouth is like a fishing creel -
At least as wide -
'Twad haud the biggest trout or eel
In a' the Clyde."

"A groat for Willie," cried anither;
"A shilling," bawl'd out Jock, his brither;
While some did hander sair and swither,
Bade ill betide
The day that ever brought him hither,
Out ow'r the Clyde.

They said it was a shame at least,
To see a man just like a beast,
Set up to roup, and made a jest
And scorn beside;
The like was never heard, at least
Upon the Clyde.

At last the poor wight, Willie Shaw,
Into the landlord's hand did fa',
Who over Willie's fate did crawl,
Wi' wanton pride;
So Willie couldna win awa'
Out ow'r the Clyde.

Poor Willie stood right sair aghast
While they him locket, hard and fast,
Into a room frae wind or blast,
Nae ane beside,
To comfort Willie at the last,
Ayont the Clyde.

In vain did Willie bum and greet,
In vain did stamp with baith his feet,
In vain their mercy did entreat
Or wi' them chide,
For out, alas! he couldna get
Out ow'r the Clyde.

At last he grew quite melancholy,
And sair did rue his drunken folly;
The thought o' a' his mirth, sae jolly,
He couldna bide;
To be abused like ony colly,
Ayont the Clyde.



At length when a' were fast asleep,
As Willie sair did whine and weep,
Some glimpse of hope did on him peep
 And cross him glide,
Out at the window he might creep
 And ow'r the Clyde.

Then instantly he to it flies,
While hope did glisten in his eyes,
And to his joy and great surprise
 He forced it wide;
So out he comes, and homeward hies
 Him ow'r the Clyde.

Or ere the peep of dawn was seen
Blythe Willie hame cam to his Jean,
And in below the blankets clean
 His head did hide,
And took a sleep to clear his een,
 By Jeanie's side.

by Thomas Scott

Contained within Robert Naismith's book Stonehouse, Historical and Traditional (1885), are a collection of 'Avonside Rhymes' by Thomas Scott. Born in 1775 he sought a calling in the ministry before choosing a career in teaching. Appointed as parish schoolmaster in Blantyre, he met his wife to be, Janet Johnstone while working there and was married in 1797. After a short time in private tutition in Hamilton, a vacancy provided him the opportunity to move to Stonehouse in 1801. He wasn't long in becoming an active and valued member of the community and became session clerk with the responsiblity of inspector for the poor. He lived in the parish for 45 years where he retired before dying on Christmas Day 1846 at the age of 71. The Naismith collection of verse are just a sample of a more extensive catalogue of works by Thomas Scott. This collection describes with great appreciation the environment and people associated with the village long past.



A fishy Tale

Of anglers deeds, the tales are many,
Of fishes views, there's scarcely any,
Sae in this wee tale I've set oot,
Tae chronicle the lives o' troot.

In a quiet stream, quite near Kentucky,
There swam a troot, whad been gey lucky,
Escaping minnin grub, an' worm,
Offered by anglers, each in turn.

This troot, because it had been "gifted",
Successfully had all lures resisted
An' noo, grown tae "prodigious size".
Resolved tae pit the wee ryins wise'.

Set up a school for a sma' fry,
Tae mak them cunning, wary, sly,
Suspicious o' a food they see,
An' so nae "early daith" tae dee

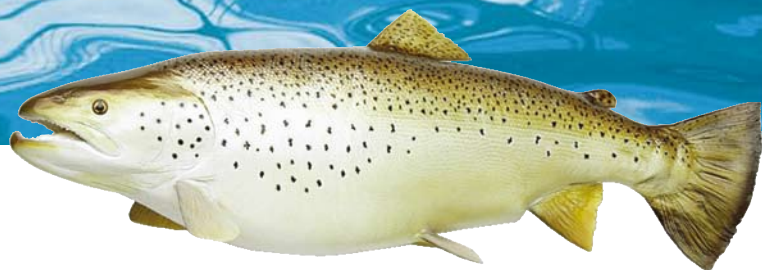
Its classes were gey well attended,
The troot their former rash ways mended,
Noo, "edicated" troot hae learned,
Wi' their future tae be concerned.

Sae every flee is well inspected,
Tae see if gut can be detected,
Un-natural, one must suppose,
A flee wi' gut growin oot its nose.

A worm, on twa three hooks impaled,
As past their nose its often trailed,
Their teacher has them learned, ye see,
Tae quietly turn the ither ee'.

An' when a spate is "rennin all",
It gies them mony a hearty lall,
Tae see the lures that spin thro streams,
"They fishes think we're daft, it seems.

Next day, when they attend their classes,
They tell their teacher, "Men are asses,
Nae minnin ere could soom sae quick,
"They'll hae tae find some ither trick."



"A thing cam' birlin thro the stream,
The deid split o' a submarine,
They shairly think oor heids are boss,
A minnin, daen its Stirlin' Moss.

An' noo anither class has formed,
Tae tell hoo fishers are adorned,
Wi' jackets coloured broon an' green,
"They're no sae sair on fishes een."

Theres some come twa three times a week,
An' whup us till we're "gey near seek",
Especially yin, (frae Aivertoon),
Splashin an' rummelin up an' doon.

His chance o' foolin us is slim,
We're near on noddin' terms wi' him,
Anither squad, (frae East Kilbride),
They gar us soon awa' an' hide.

On Sunday's they come by the dizzen,
An' torment us till we're fairly "fizzin",
An orra loon frae about Newmains,
He gars us hide below the stanes.

Frae Ayrshire tae, an' even fae Stirlin,
They "furriners" set oor minds a birlin,
"Whit ibey can they no fish at hame,
An' leave poor Avon troot alane.

Still! October's near at haun,
We'll, maybe jist, get peace tae spawn,
"Guid sakes", oor reason must be failin,
The devils will be after grayling.

Aye! Avon troot ken a' they lads,
An' pit up wi' their jinks an' fads,
Secure in their "superior knowledge",
Acquired, attendin' "Fishes College".

by William S. McCoubrey



A Lament for Avon Water

Oh Avon : fu' frae bank tae brae,
The scene fills me with blank dismay
Broon swirlin' spates, tak off yer way
Return nae mair.
Douce fishers a' kneel doon an' pray
An' dae yer share.

Thow weather derk some pity show,
For three hale months a' in a row
Ye've washed the earth here doon below
Ye ill -willed devil;
Some ither airt your gifts bestow
An' be mair ceevil.

The speckled troot bemoan their fate,
Ilk ither day a ragin' spate
If this gangs on, at sic a rate
They'll soon awa
Tae somewhere whaur the watter's quate,
Then tears will fa.

The ragin streams as on they've sped
Hae sae washed oot the river bed
An' cleaned oot ilka spawnin red
Ah! waes' ma hert ;
Guid summer fishin hopes hae fled
O' this I'm scairt

Wee bonnie troot ma hert is sair,
Tae think ma flees ye'll see nae mair,
If ye're a' washed awa I'm shair
Your want I'll rue;
Oh weather clerk my torment spare
Guid weathers due.

Guid fishers a' by ills beset
Will fume an' swear, an rave an' fret,
An' sell the rods wi' much regret
An' syne bewail
The finest pleasure man can get,
Noo, no a tail

by William S. McCoubrey

Born in Marlage, near Netherburn, he was educated at Townhead Primary, Stonehouse, and Strathaven Academy before starting in coachbuilding, working with several firms before retiring after 22 years as a foreman with a Glasgow company. Few men have contributed more to patient's morale in the past 40 years or more, than the 67 year old retired coachbuilder, who visited the hospital every Sunday to sing for the patients. His Irish-Angus parental background accounts for the friendly disposition of the man, the former have got to know through his holidays in the "Emerald Isle" and have affectionately christened Liam-an-ampanai (William of the Songs).

William had a great love of music, especially choral work, going back to his early days when he joined Strathaven Male Voice Choir, including a period with Stonehouse Male Voice Choir. He was also a member and elder of Paterson U.F. Church Choir. Music is not his only interest as he started writing poetry - mostly in braid Scots - and was in great demand at local functions as a reader.

He resided next to the River Avon at Glassford Bridge and if you got no answer, you would probably find him casting a "hame-tied flee" on some part of his beloved river with a delicacy and precision acquired in nearly 60 years of angling. Married with a family of one son, Liam-an-ampanai was a confirmed, self-confessed radical socialist and Christian, never averse to airing his political or religious views but despite his elderly years, there lay beneath a friendly exterior, shrewd, discerning, determined personality inclined to champion the underdog.

Auld Kirk Memorials

In compiling a collection of songs and poetry from Stonehouse another not so obvious source of material comes from the auld kirkyard cemetery on Manse Road. Most of these short compositions fortell of life eternal or the inevitability of death. A few recall citizens' good deeds in praise of their contribution to society and their faith in Christ. Although we do not know the author of these compositions we do know many of the masons who carved these memorials most of which were of local stock until more recent times.

Headstone of DANIEL HAMILTON and JANET JACK

THE PRECIOUS DUST BENEATH THIS LIES
SHALL AT THE CALL OF JESUS RISE
TO MEET THE BRIDEGROOM IN THE SKIES
THAT DAY, WE'LL MEET AGAIN

Headstone of JOHN SCOTT and JANE TUDHOPE

ASLEEP IN JESUS BLESSED SLEEP
FROM WHICH NONE EVER WAKES TO WEEP

Headstone of JOHN WALKER (poet)

AND CHRIST BIDS ALL BELIEVERS TRUST
THEIR BODIES SHALL RISE FROM THE DUST
WITH GLORIOUS AND IMMORTAL FORMS
AND LEAVE CORRUPTION TO THE WORMS.

Headstone of JOHN MILLAR and JANET CALDWELL

HIS TOILS ARE PAST, HIS WORK IS DONE
AND HE IS FULLY BLEST
HE FOUGHT THE FIGHT, THE VICTORY WON
AND ENTERED TO HIS REST





Gavin Stevenson

A man talented in so many respects but none more so than as a gifted poet and songwriter. Gavin was known by various names; Guy, The Stonehouse Cowboy or Flash to name but a few. I knew him as Flash but it was only at Gavin's funeral that I discovered how he came by this name. Far from being a super hero, he was said to be the quickest milk boy around these parts.

It was as a boy that Gavin's interest and longing to explore the braes o' the Avon nurtured his sense of observation and love o' nature. As a young boy his mucker was Willie Whitelaw, and together they would seek adventure in the surrounding countryside. However his love o' nature often got him into trouble. Whilst out hunting with bow and arrow hunting buffalo down at the Linthaugh, Gavin's precision, aim and directed his arrow straight up the ers o' a coo. Whilst the coo was seen jumping o'er the moon the boys were hotly pursued by the angry farmer wishing to return the arrow to its owner. The farms were jist the place for Gavin, here he wis in his element. Many a day he and Willie would return home covered in coo dung after a shoot out at the OK Coral much to the annoyance of his mither Isa with the guarantee o' a big slipper across the backside. It was doon on the farm that he learned to recognise birds and took pleasure in their ways exploring the hedges and trees for eggs.

There are many stories of Gavin's exploits as a boy and it was Gavin's sense of adventure and love of the outdoors that nurtured his talent to capture the moment and express his feelings in song and poetry. There are many singer songwriters across the country but few who have the natural ability to captivate an audience as only Gavin could in his own unique way. His songs brought both tears of emotion and laughter; a rare gift indeed. His only wish in writing was that others would sing his songs and enjoy listening but no one was better than Gavin at delivering the magic verse he crafted in his imagination. Gavin would say his songs were only 'wee stories' set to music, but it was his own brand of humour and character that made every wee story all the more special.

A joiner to trade, Gavin was also an exceptional photographer and using his keen eye for nature and events around him he amassed a considerable collection of photographs detailing his many adventures aboon the braes o' the Avon and Clyde.

Huntin the Buntin

A yellow hammer could be a fittin term fur a gutless jiner
But hardly well could that lend itsel tae a sweet wan liner
I've often heard it ca'ed the Scots Canary and though the name is tae ma like
Tae me it's aye been, and it'll aye be, the Bonny Yella Yite

It's yon wee yella heided bird I see risin fae the stour
It's the song o' bread n' cheese brought on a summer's breeze
Fae it's post afore the moor
It draws fond memories back tae a stany track
Where harebells nod amangst rabbity whins
As it winds its way ablow yon wee beech row that wis shaped wae the winds

Twis there where the finer grass starts ge'in way tae the thresh
That faurer on gies way tae heather
We sat wan night by the auld march dyke and a picture bright was formed forever
Twis as if a wish'd command that yon wee yite should land
A jewel set in a' it's splendour
Fur it stood oot fae a' the lichen grey, the wan I wis bound tae remember.

And well I recall the kindly soul that me n' Davey met up yonder
Fur as the wee yite sang yon nice auld man showed tae us a thing o' wonder
He wove us a rose fae the thresh's hert
That I wish I could lend a finer settin
Fur how yon auld man wove the rose
See me, I've near forgotten.

by Gavin Stevenson



Very much at home with nature and the outdoor life, Gavin sought solace and comfort on the banks o' the Avon with his faithful dog Sam. Huntin the Buntin' was the first song I heard Gavin sing at the Glesart Folk Club and it is most probably his most sung composition by artistes today. The buntin' of course refers to the yellowhammer a rarity in these parts but a wee jewel in Lanarkshires' outback. Here Gavin captures the birds magic and beauty in verse.

The Dedicated fisher

His social life wis next tae nane, his married life in shreds
His nights were full o' risin fish, baith in and oot o' bed
His jaiket hung wae hooks n' flees, his bunnet fu' tae boot
And the fridge wis full o' maggots tae stop them hatchin' oot.

His days wae oot-stretched erms were spent in wild exaggeration
And the stories that he loved tae spin were pure imagination
Like the brammel worms he bred hisel', he claimed were "that weel took"
That he'd had tae hide ahint a tree tae get them on his hook

His poor wife wore a distant gaze, bein' brainwashed tae a' his fuss
In contrast tae the desperate look he'd aye upon his pus
Yet he'd wonder how the fitba fans could staun fur hoors in pourin' rain
A reflection o' his state o' mind, tae things, jist no the same.

Their budgie had been grounded, and the cat too feart tae purr
Cause the craze o' tyin nymphs n' flees had stripped them o' flight and fur
And poor auld Bob the goldfish, wae skint lips swam aboot
The victim o' his housebound nights when he'd tried his new flees oot.

He'd somehow found the time wan night, n' the ootcome tae his pleasin'
So a baby boy had come tae pass, jist afore the greylin season
And the wee boy came tae ken his dad fur the good wife did insist
On a life-sized cardboard cut oot, so that he wis never missed.

Oh the ways o' them that stalk the streams are strange.
The stories tell the pleasures got fae droonin worms must shairly stem fae hell
Up past the knees, brass monkeys freeze, yet fishers seem tae fare
Are we a' that numb aboot the bum, or too far gone tae care.

by Gavin Stevenson



Gavin was a keen fisherman and spent many a happy day letting his imagination run wild whilst waiting for that wee tug on his line. The 'Dedicated Fisher' is a song which is most probably a reflection on his own life fishing the Avon water. Gavin would always recall his fishing days and some of the characters he encountered on his travels. One of those characters was Sanny Reid who like so many good fishermen told some whoppers but Gavin always said that most of his tall tales turned out to be true, like the wan about the gooseberries the size o' golf balls found at a particular pool in the Avon. Gavin was rarely seen buying a permit and would often resort to guddling trout with his childhood buddies Gilby and Johnny McCormack.



The Reason fur the Scar

They had launched him Thomas Watson, tae his faither he wis “The Brit”
 The road through life Tam rummel’t, takin heiders intae it
 His schoolin had been wasted, he’d struggled baith tae write n’ read
 Sat haundy so’s the teacher could get a good skelp at his heid.

Jist a waste o’ boots n’ feedin, a’ Tam had mastered wis tae spit
 Content tae go fur daunners n’ tae row amangst the shit
 Noo at nineteen, still unflowered and sole heir tae “The Neuk”
 He wis jist a big raw strappin laddie, who wae women’d had nae luck
 A sight that made them vomit, fae the start his chance’d been nane
 Even the rumour “Stallion Watson” Tam had started a’ in vain.

His claim tae fame took place wan night no far fae Canderside Toll
 Stonehoose wis a toon o’ nae distinction where a train’d wance stopped fur coal
 He wis oan his nightly daunner roon “The Conner” near the dam
 A wee slice oot o’ Eden where weans a’ went n’ swam
 ‘Twis a place o’ peace ‘n beauty, though lovers lay in ranks ‘n
 Mair than wan pair lassie’d been bairnt upon it’s banks
 It wis a safe reserve fur wildlife n’ the damsel flee still wung
 Well as long as it jooked the contraceptives the well-aff winchers flung.

Midsummer’s night lay close at haun n’ the air still held it’s heat
 There were cushies croonin o’ the mood fit music set fur sleep
 But that night it wis fair deserted, nae fishers, n’ nae weans swam
 Fur the TA had posted warnins they’d manoevers at the dam
 Jist afore the sodgers got there the bold Tamas came in view
 Like an ad fur wacky-baccy or somethin oot the blue
 He wis beltin oot a murdered tune wae neither tone nor beat
 Roarin like a donkey that had bugger a’ tae eat
 The big lungs streeched n’ strainin till the peace fur miles wis sent
 Gi’en it laldy at the chorus n’ the bits he really kent.

It took time tae dawn on Tamas that he'd the place a' tae hisel'
He'd tae sit tae dae his thinkin, so he settled fur a spell
But the big heid widnae function er he gied his lug a thump
The big mooth jist hung open as he pondered on a stump
Twis a movement by the brae fence that caught his ee ower by the brim
A squad o' bliddy sodjers, heh, and they were headin straight fur him.

Noo the sodjers had permission fae auld McPherson o' the ferm
Tae blaw up twa big tree stumps that stood each side o' the dam
But the captain o' the sodjers had a weakness fur a hauf
And gi'ed them scant instructions jist afore he'd buggered aff
So like lost sheep they proceeded, nane that shair o' the score
Fur not a wan amang them had used dynamite afore n' so
It came as some relief tae see there waitin by their goal
Wis somebody sent tae help them, and tae pu' them oot a hole.

Good evenin sir wan sodjer said n' Tam assessed him as he spoke
"Nae fears o' this yin jumpin me n' whuppin oot ma c**k
The cut o' cloth n' manners n' the polish 'n the style
The big high shiny forehead n' the nae-teeth-missin smile, well
Tam's charisma left them breathless, fur fae right there where he sat
He loosed wan mighty spittle that went whirlin like a bat
And yon sodjers watched in wonder at yon big thing flap 'n fa'
And Tam sat twa pun lighter fur the contents o' his craw.

Tam's total ken o' dynamite had left him wae his spit n'
Nae notion o' their mission said "Eh, ye've a right guid night fur it" n'
Here his greetin mair confirmed their hopes his presence there'd been planned
So it wis wae new-found confidence they gi'ed him full command

Tam's interest in their mission grew n' he watched them dig n' plug
And he followed a' the sodjers roon jist like a collie dug.
Gettin caught up in the excitement, Tam decided he wid coax
"Christ wan stick's jist hauf meesures man, get mair oot o' the box"
Be like doddin it wi' yer bunnet, dae it right man, Jeezis Christ n'
He convinced the raw young sodjers who were glad o' his advice.

Weel yin big stump got hauf the box n' it's neebour got the same n'
Across yon dam the wires were ran n' the charges stappit hame
A respectful distance gi'en, faces pressed hard tae the grun n'
Nae conception o; the damage ye could dae wi' fifty pun

When the mud n' mortar landed, Eden valley wis nae mair
Jist a great big gapin crater, hell the glen wis strippet bare
The parks fur miles were mawkit, hauf the braes were in the toon n'
If ye liked wide open spaces, ye'dve found ye'd plenty room.
A dazed young sodjer found his feet n' left a patch o' green
Fur miles aroon the only grass left staunnin tae be seen
He tried his best tae take yon in n' rubbed his mawkit broo
When a voice behind him brought it hame "By Christ ye've din it noo"

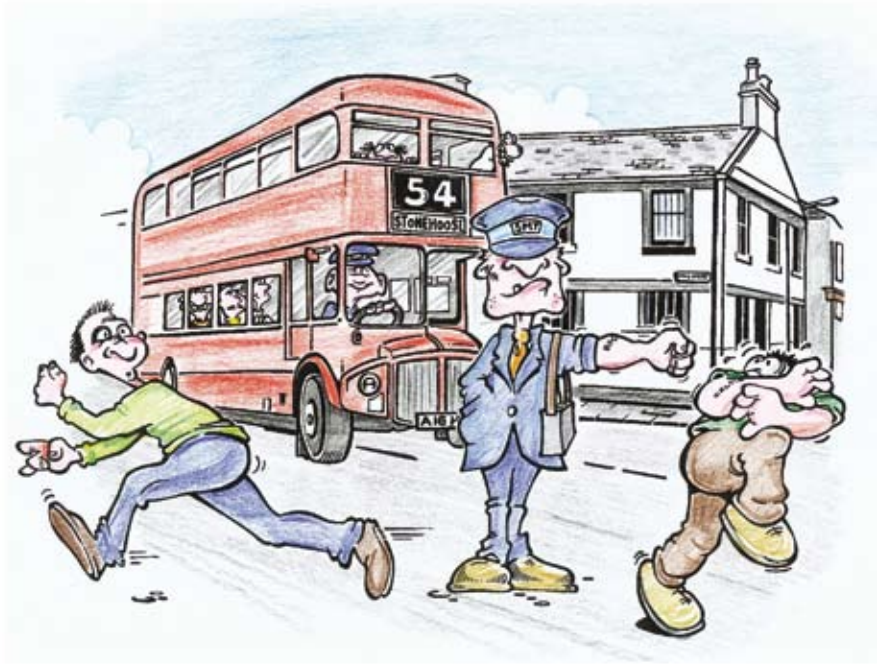
The poor sodjer burst oot greetin “But it wis you that telt us how”
“Heh haud on sur” said Tam “That’s a guid yin wantin me tae get the row
You’re apposed tae be the experts, Hell I’m jist doon a daunner” n’
He buggered aff n’ left them wae “the cock-up o’ the Conner”.

Well the captain got demoted fur the things that he’d allowed n’
The sodjers got their arses felt n’ private parts well chowed n’
It wis thanks tae the description the sodjers a’ had gi’ed
That Tam tae this day bears his faither’s bootmarks on his heid.

by Gavin Stevenson



Many peoples favourite song of Gavin's, this tale was based on a true story. At over 8 minutes in length, few would attempt to learn this Gavin masterpiece. To Gavin an ers wis an ers, but always in the best possible taste. His songs were always from the heart, from personal experience, or reflecting on a whimsical passing thought. Few were offended by his casual turn of phrase. Stonehouse born and bred, politics nor religion held any great fascination to him. He drank with any man that would drink with him - as long as they stood their round but whether or not Gavin was standing at the end of the night was another matter entirely. 'The Reason for the Scar' captures the very best in his descriptive verse and recalls the adventures of the TA in Stonehouse. Although some liberties have been taken with the actual events, this misadventure does capture an almost Dad's Army feeling to the escapades of the local TA and their training experiences. On another occasion during the war a member of the local TA even managed to get himself lost during a training exercise near Overwood Quarry on the banks of the Cander only to be rescued after a posse was raised by local villages to rescue the embarrassed soldier not two miles from his own home.



The Stonehoose “54”

Ye canny say that theres bigotry...
Up in Stonehoose or Larkha'
There's nae child calls oot “Father”
Bein Catholic's against the law
It wis with this way o' thinkin
And “The Sash His Father Wore”
That guided the conductor
On the Stonehoose “54”

On that bus that went through Stonehoose
Rode a big, bad, Larkha' man
Conductor by profession
They'd dubbed him Desperate Dan
He wis an Orangeman set on vengeance
And the name stuck in his craw n'
He punched his way to stardom
On the Stonehoose “54”.

Naebody ever rang Dan's bell
Naebody jooked their fares
And legends tell o' the fool that died
Fur smokin doon the stairs
He'd a romantic machette scar
And a heart like a shithoos door n'
Hell, ye never saw a Celtic scarf
On the Stonehoose “54”.

Oh, the bus laid on fur the chapel...
Wis his by hate n' right
Guaranteed of a Sunday
Fur their faith they had tae fight
They'd tae run like mad tae catch it
Gettin on, tae plead like hell
He'd slow it doon tae thirty
And leave the rest up tae theirsels

Then he'd punch mair heids than tickets
And ne'r get wan complaint
The SMT got their fair share
An' thought he wis a saint
He could've gained a dizen converts
Jist lettin oot a roar
He wis really ridin shot-gun
On the Stonehoose “54”.

It wis late wan night in 63'
As the queues howled at the moon
An awfa din there came fae in
The lower deck saloon
Doon n' roon yon stairs big Dan tantered n'
He shouted “Whit's the score?”
An'a wee drunk man fell a' his length
On the Stonehoose “54”.

Oh the wee drunk pled fur mercy
As he struggled tae wan knee
He said “Ye gaunny stop an’ let me aff
“I’m burstin fur a pee”
Big Dan up an’ grabbed him,
Saw the crucifix he wore
An’ the wee man wet his troosers
On the Stonehoose “54”.

The puddle that wis formin
Left the wee man startin tae pray
He’d remain a stone cold sober man
If they took Big Dan away
Well it happened there an’ it happened fast
Lightnin’ burst the door
It hit Dan on the neck an’ the bugger hit the deck
On the Stonehoose “54”.

An almighty silence followed
Till it dawned in every heid
Hey, there lay one big son-of-a-bitch
And the Lord had shot him deid
But before a cheer could utter
There wis movement from the floor
Fur there lay the worst conductor
On the Stonehoose “54”.

A story like this has nae morals
So a point it will tae serve
If ye meet it on yer travels
Gie that bus a body swerve
Fur hey, believe you me it happened
Though in the good old days of yore
If ye don’t then learn the first verse
Of “The Sash My Father Wore”.

by Gavin Stevenson



As Gavin said “when you come fae Stonehoose, yer made tae feel ye come fae Stonehoose”. Travelling on the Stonehouse 54 as a boy I can remember fights breaking out regularly most of which where related to religious bigotry fuelled by alcohol. This song relates similar experiences Gavin had on his adventures on the bus in a humorous understanding of the religious divide.



The Wee Grey Whiskered flee

Tae try and tie the foolproof fly, the fisher worth the name
Will wae fur and feather fight in order to attain
Tae crack auld mother natures' code nae price too high could be
For that mystic, magic something, and create the perfect flee.

Auld Bob McCann wis such a man and by his search wis haunted
And although his pains had been in vain, ne'er wis auld Robert daunted
The furs fae lands that passed through his hands were baith common and mundane
And he wove endless fly's a' shapes n' sizes, the products o' his brain
Nae passin pooch escaped his pinch, nae feathered fowl wis blessed
Wae plumage that wis pointless in auld Rab's relentless quest.

Here wan spring night he hit it right n' his goal at last did nail
The flee new tied he sudden spied sat naked o' a tail
His fingers thin reached tae his chin tae aid his concentration
An' his brain it frisked aroon that whisk, then hame dawned inspiration
His ain grey beard unkempt n' unpared n' till noo an untapped source
A painful hoot n' by the root his luck noo altered course
The grey grown whisker glistened n' the flee at wance transformed
Wae hypnotic light it shone fur flight, magic noo adorned
And poor auld Bob let loose a sob, fur ne'er had he supposed
That the answer'd been as easy seen below his flamin nose.

Afore the larks were aff the parks, Bob stood there by the stream n'
Nae minutes passed fae his very first cast n' his reel began tae scream
But as he fought the wan he'd caught, the shoals rushed in wae glee
And a' but squeal they tried tae steal his wee grey whiskered flee.
The water boiled and the fly re-oiled wis sent wance mair on its way
They slashed n' took at the whiskered hook like sharks on stricken prey
Knee deep in troot he hauled them oot till his line n' reel were worn n'
Still they took the whiskered hook as if there'd be nae morn.

Well fame and fortune fell Bob's way, his secret kept untold
 Though gain n' spoils meant pain n' boils, his pockets filled wae gold
 Then the pressure came fur him tae print n' gie the world his tie
 But wae his profits tae protect, he published forth a lie
 For the hackle wis jist Rhode Island Red n' the silk mere olive hue
 The master stoke wis when he wrote n' thought none wid pursue
 "The wee Grey Whisk takes awfy risk, timing and great care
 Fur it only grows inside the nose of a matin grizzly bear
 And ye've got tae strive n' pick them live n' yer moment must be true,
 It's when he's havin fun, ye must pluck n' run n' no substitute will do".

Bob's wildest dreams had ne'er forseen the havoc, pain or ruin
 As by their score's they left these shores tae seek the matin bruin
 The papers said the hills ran red n' that life up there wis tough
 Tae gain their prize, they were fallin like flies n' the bears were "aff their ruff"
 Bob wis stood in a bar six under par when he let his secret slip
 And the whole o' the fishin fraternity focused on his lip
 And hardly had his words come oot, when the first big haun appeared n'
 They whacked n' tore fae every pore, the whiskers oot his beard n'
 Bob realised wae real regret on his sair 'n naked face
 Nae single hair could be safely bare, so he set tae sail fur sea at pace.

He wis six long lonely months at sea and his beard came back tae form
 But bitter winds blew warnins as the heralds o' the storm
 The boat his bounties had bought him bucked, the clouds grew grey n' thick
 His stomach surged against the swell, poor Bob wis feelin sick n'
 He wis pooped n' pale n' hingin ower the rail n' in the light his whiskers shone
 Here did a great big shark no rise fae the dark n' wheech, auld Bob wis gone
 Noo had he gone the way he'd wished, if so twis still wae surprise
 But wae him went the wee grey whisks that made the big yins rise.

by Gavin Stevenson



At home on the Avon every fisherman has his secret fly tying story to tell and Gavin was no exception. Many would go to great lengths to protect their secret as this tale will tell.

Nae Gawn Back

Wee Jock wisnae the height of a pit boot... a cocky wee sod
But o' for the size o' him... it wis amazin' the drink that he could hod
It had aye been his custom tae first foot the Spences
And it had aye been on wee legs like sea legs... he'd struggled
Mair a squeegee line than a bee line because he wis puggled
Takin' short cuts ower fences'n dods oot his divet
And leavin big gapin holes in well kept privets

But he'd thought he'd caught the feeling a year afore
That he'd maybe jist went a wee bit ower the score
And that the Spences were sick o' the sight n'
For once in his life Jock wis absolutely right
So... not a single nip had even touched his lips
As he'd set oot tae first foot that cauld 'n dying Decembers night

Well there he wis heading stone cold sober up the Spences sparklin' path
His unopened bottle o' Bells in his pocket
When here dis his fit no' skyte apon an icy bit n'
Doon he crashed n' broke it

He wis sittin there on his arse, heid burlin'... seein' stars
When he notices the Spences light gawn oot n'
See's the shadows dartin' aboot
But he jist couldae believe whit he wis hearin'
Whispers fae ahint the curtains
"Wid ye look at the state o' that wee yin"

Poor Jock that wis as far as he got
The Spences didnae let him in
His worst foot had bugged his first foot
But then... the damage had already been done

by Gavin Stevenson





Memories O' Glessart

Two an one half tae "The Glessart" ...fur a shy nervous wean wis a moothfae
I'd been gien the honours o' payin' the fares
And had worked up...quite a drooth...fae...
Yon wis a great seat the front seat. I wis aye quite happy gien the driver a hon...
Sittin' there vroom vroomin' as we rattled along...
But..that day...I'd lost a' notion o' steerin'...and then yon big conductress
Appeared at the foot o' the stair...
A great battleaxe o' a wummin...she wis cursin' and swearin'...

When I wis five...I wis a wean...wae a wee weans ways...
I wisnae clued up and streetwise like maist weans noo-a-days
Wae a' their computer jargon and portable trannies...n'...
The minute yon big conductress loomed...
Ma well rehearsed line wis doomed...I spluttered...
Two and one halves...tae ma grannies...

There wis aye a dug at the Glessart...a breed wae a use...
A collie or a terrier that slept in the hoose
They kept bantams and doo's in well made runs and huts...
So it paid tae have a dug that wis "The Boys" fur cats and rats...
Quick off their marks and hated their guts...

Ma Grandpa wis aye footerin' aboot at something in his hut...
I loved a' the wee drawers and the tools and the smell
He made me a sledge oot an auld chair...
A queer shaped thing, but it fair went like hell...
Wan day in the hut I found a smashin' thin stick fur swishin'...
Coorse it wis only wance I'd knackered it...
I learnt he'd been makin' me a rod tae take me fishin'...

I saw ma very first waterhen at the Horsepool...I wis...
Oot a donner wae ma Grandpa and ma Faither...
But ony hen I'd ever kent had never swam nor looked like yon...
When my Grandpa'd said it wis a Waterhen
I'd thought he wis kiddin' me on...
Fur oh he wound me up tae some extent...
Wae the daft wee stories he used tae invent...
That same day we saw the Waterhen we found ma first duck's nest..
We took wan fur ma collection...n'.. two fur his tea...
Then we drew the down back ower the rest...

There wis a big drearie loud tickin' Granny clock up on the scullery wa'
And there's a thing I've never lost...especially...when there's a frost..
The smell in yon kitchen...when ma Granny made toast...

Efter teatime we a' sat in the livin' room and they played Newmarket a' night.
Ma grandpa'd been a miner n' spittin' intae the fire wis his right...
Fae the record played Frankie Lane sang "Each Star's a Pool o' Water"
And oor Lizabeth always had the sewin' machines contents scattered...

There wis a rer pair o' binoculars sat on the livin' room windae
Fur watchin' the doos...
The Glessart sits high and they gied me some view...
Ma Grandpa'd come ower'n slip me buttermilk which he kent fine I detested
And wrap up wooden sweeties that I fell for and tasted...
But oh... the bit I dreaded came...when it wis time tae go hame
And it wis something I couldnae very well miss...
I hated yon...when he chased me wae his teeth in his hon
Demandin' a big smacker o' a kiss
I recall the frosty night, I'd spied yon big low full moon...
The glesses picked oot the craturs on it's pus
And I swore blind yon moon followed me...
A' the way doon the road on the bus...

by Gavin Stevenson

Sweet memory

I should write a poem tae a McFarlanes Sugar Top
But exactly what that is might no' have reached too many ears...
When I wis wee it wis a Saturday mornin' treat fae the local baker's n'
I've been promising mysel some for years...

They are kinda sticky buns wae wee lumps of sugar on top...
And see wae Scottish Pride butter inside...they are "Ower the Moon"...
But why has it taken me this length o' time tae bring that wee
Pleasure back roon...

Well... this morning I jist said..."The hell wae it..."
And back up to Stonehouse I hauled n'...
I bought mysel a half dozen McFarlanes sugar tops...'n...ken...
They were even better than I had recalled.

But..."Eh... what's that you've got in the bag, Dad..."
Came a wee voice fae the top o' the wa'
I'll need tae make it a dozen the next time...
Cause the wee yin fair loves them ana'
Definitely something for which I hadnae planned...
But it wis bliddy sacrilige...
Cause he sleggert'a his wae raspberry jam.

by Gavin Stevenson



The Siege of Edinburgh 1544

Henry the Eighth of England
Sent Hertford up the Forth
Wae an army of twenty thousand
To try and crush the Scots
The Earl of Arran and Huntly
An' Argyle raised the clans
At Leith they were defeated
To plunder Scotia's lands

To Edinburgh advancing
They came to burn the toon
To seek our maiden Mary
To fit a Wedding goon
The people of the city
They raised the barricades
Deserted by their provost
On bended knees they prayed

The city lay deserted
The castle was besieged
A score of heavy cannon
The English brought from Leith
Scotland's prayers were answered
When dauntless to the call
A hero to the people
And saviour to us all

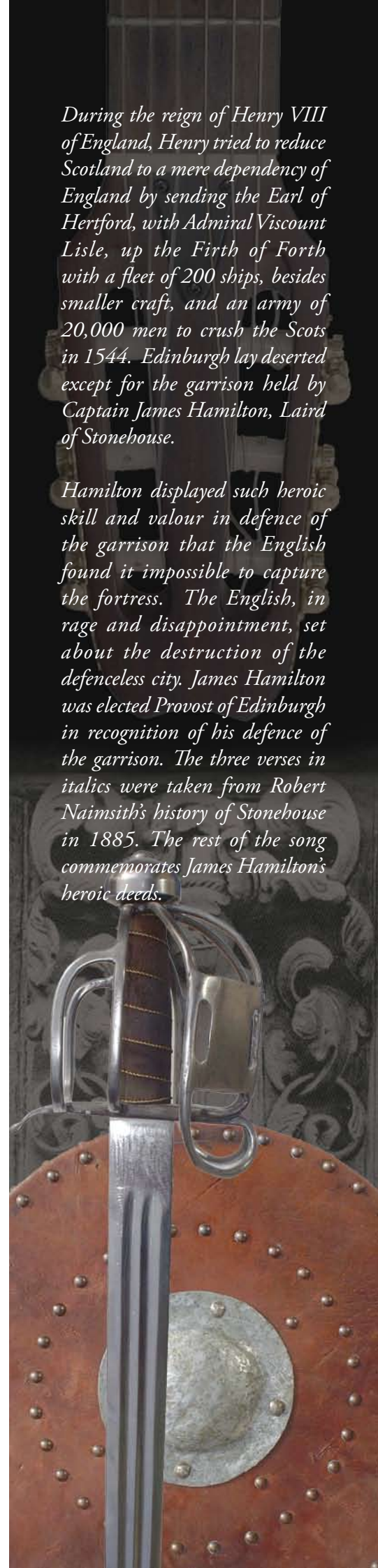
Brave Hamilton of Stonehouse
Stern captain o' the fort
Against the English army
Defended every port
Gallantly, he held his ground
Hemmed in on every side
Poured destruction on the foe
On a red and streaming tide

Till the victor saw the vanquished
Retreat, in proud disdain
Wreaking out their vengeance
And plundering the slain
So remember Scotland's hero
The Laird o' Stonehouse toon
Defender of the people
Who brought the English doon

by John Young

During the reign of Henry VIII of England, Henry tried to reduce Scotland to a mere dependency of England by sending the Earl of Hertford, with Admiral Viscount Lisle, up the Firth of Forth with a fleet of 200 ships, besides smaller craft, and an army of 20,000 men to crush the Scots in 1544. Edinburgh lay deserted except for the garrison held by Captain James Hamilton, Laird of Stonehouse.

Hamilton displayed such heroic skill and valour in defence of the garrison that the English found it impossible to capture the fortress. The English, in rage and disappointment, set about the destruction of the defenceless city. James Hamilton was elected Provost of Edinburgh in recognition of his defence of the garrison. The three verses in italics were taken from Robert Naimsith's history of Stonehouse in 1885. The rest of the song commemorates James Hamilton's heroic deeds.





The Stonis' Comancheros

The year wis 1892, fur America they wur boun'
Tam Summers fae Camnethan Street, an' his pertner Erchie Broun
Their story told, they dreamt o' gold, as they crossed the desert plains
Deep underground, no gold to be foun' so they took tae robbin' trains
Erichie an Tam, they liked a dram, but as outlaws they'd nae hope
Spent maist their days, oot on the run, tryin' tae avoid the rope

Stonis boun', mosied intae toun, they cried them the comoncheros
Janglin spurs, capes an cigurs, an twa big braw sombreros
No a nickle or dime, they took tae crime, they planned tae rob the coach
Masks to disguise, the banker they surprised, wae a pistol they approached
At Telford Brig, they stopped the rig, for the feuars half year rent
"The gold, the gold", bold Erchie cried, "or yer died in a mo - ment"

Well a fight ensued, an' the banker pu'd, Tam's mask fell tae the grun
Baith took fright, intae the night, fur the Cauner they did run
Some miners saw, an' caw'd the law, an' a posse soon gave chase
Constable James wis gied their names, when they recognised Tam's face
When they searched the land, buried in the sand, bank ledgers wur recovered
Tam stole the wrang bag, fae the bankers nag, and soon they wur discovered

When they came tae trial, they went tae jile, the sheriff sent them doon
The comoncheros wae ther' big sombreros, were the talk of Stonis toon
Safe ahint bars, they look tae the stars, as they mind o' the nights oot west
An' dream o' the days, o' the cowboy ways, for they were a' the best

by John Young

This song recalls the daring highway at Telford bridge in 1892 when a horse and coach was held up at gun point by desperados; Thomas Summers (27), Camnethan Street, and Alexander Brown (24), Hill Road. The coach belonged to an agent of the Union Bank, Trongate, Mr Cunningham, agent of the Union Bank at Larkhall, who attended the Stonehouse branch of the bank on Saturdays. Mr Cunningham was homeward bound with the half yearly rent-day of General Lockhart's tenants and feuars when he was ambushed. However, there were three bags one of which contained money to the extent of £3000 and others contained ledgers cheques. The robbers of course stole the wrong bag. The song details the events which took place and the pursuing posse who eventually were able to apprehend the local men, to appear before the sheriff!



Stonhoose Perk

Oh, it wisnae any baulder, tae the great Sir Harry Lauder
When Stonechoose boun, he ventured fur the day
Caught a train fae Stra'ven, jist alang the Avon
An when he saw the perk, ye heard him say...

Yuv' a braw wee perk, a bonnie wee perk
Wan o' the finest perks, av' ever seen
A chute that mak's ye seich, as doon it ye'll go weech
The finest perk in Scotland, tae be seen

Alec Hamilton made es' merk, when he opened up the perk
As folks fae far an' near, they came to stay
To marvel at the fleurs, an while away the hoors
As the train left the toon, ye heard them say... (chorus)

Ther's a grand bandstand, tae hear the silverband
Once the pride o' Glesga's glory days
But Stonis noo has goat it, when the local cooncil boat it
An' a' the folk's aroon, they sing in praise... (chorus)

Ther' doochin in the Avon, while the wains are misbehavin'
Wae boats, an swings, and loats o' things tae play
But noo ye smell the reich, when ye slide upon the keich
But a can still remember Harry Lauder say.. (chorus)

by John Young

On 30th May 1925 Alexander Hamilton fulfilled his dream and presented the park, bandstand and fountain to his native town. When Sir Harry Lauder visited the park in August 1942, he said, "It's a bonnie park; yin o' the nicest I've ever been in, an' something Stonechoose folk should be rale prood o' ". Despite the recent neglect of the park it still overlooks one of the most spectacular views of the Avon Valley. In 1933 the famous chute was installed, said to be the longest in Scotland, if not Europe, at the time. It was opened by Councillor Thomas Wilson, but sadly was dismantled in August 1967 because it was considered too dangerous. The bandstand was bought by Forth District Council from Glasgow District Council in 1924, later turned into a tea room in 1965 before returning to its original state in the mid 80's. This songs recalls the park in its heyday as one of Lanarkshires' foremost tourist attractions.



The Homeric

In 1913, the Kaiser launched a dream
The Columbus, would sail for empires new
At Danzig she was cast, but the dream was not to last
No maiden voyage, for the Kaiser's crew

In 1919, the finest ship ever seen
Was ceded to Britannia's White Star Line
The Homeric she was named, by the allies she was claimed
To cruise the ocean waves once again

From Southampton to New York, and West Indies
For thirteen years she sailed the seven seas
All aboard the Homeric, on this ship you'll no get sick
For Stonehouse bound, a picture house to be

In 1935, at Isle of Wight she arrived
Only memories remain, of her glory days
The lady past her best, at Inverkeithing laid to rest
And the Kaiser's dream, to rule the ocean waves

In 1936, she was bought to build a 'Flicks'
To Stonehouse toon, they shipped here by rail
John Sheeran had a dream, and invested in a scheme
Reconstructed her, with hammer, saw and nail (Chorus)

In 1937, a wee slice oot o' heaven
The Rex was launched, as folks queued doon the street
Mahogany wooden stairs, and braw big chandelairs
Once the pride, o' the Kaiser's german fleet

The folks they a' applaud her, 'een the great Sir Harry Lauder
In peace and war, the stars adorned her screen
Gary Cooper and Clark Gable, Jimmy Stewart, n' Betty Grable
The finest picture house, ther's 'er been (Chorus)

by John Young

The story of the Rex Cinema, 'Lanarkshires King of Picture Houses'.

The Stonis Cushie Weavers

Clackitie-clack o' the weavers loom
Shuttles fleein' roon a' stour filled room
Fills ther' lungs, till they fill ther' tomb
The Stonis Cushie Weavers

Wee Tam Sorbie, a beamer tae trade
Three fit' wan', the height o' a spade
Stonehouse born, ne'r finer made
A Stonis Cushie Weaver

Hargreaves, Cartwright, Crompton an' Kay
But the Stonis weavers led the way
An' cerryin' his wab, ...wee Tam Sor-bie

Twistin' turnin', the bobbins wind
Pirns are a whirlin', fine silks tae bind
Shawls sae braw, o' fair design
The Stonis Cushie Weavers

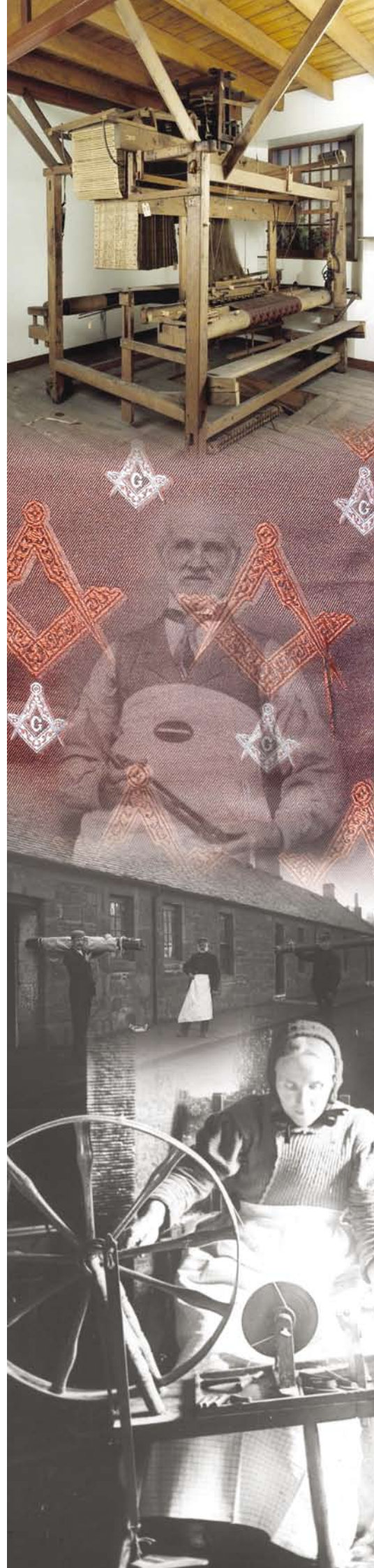
Robert an' James, fae Camnethan Street
Finer weavers, ye'll ne'r meet
On Jacquard loom, nane could compete
Wae the Stonis Cushie Weavers (chorus)

I'll spin you a yarn, oan ma' spinnin' wheel
Tell you a tale, as a birl ma' reel
Coorie roon the cruzie, in fear o' the deil
The Stonis Cushie Weavers

Clackitie-clack o' the weavers loom
Shuttles fleein' roon a' stour filled room
Fills ther' lungs, till they fill ther' tomb
The Stonis Cushie Weavers

by John Young

The last two weavers from Lanarkshire, as far as we can tell, were Robert and James Hamilton of 66 Camnethan Street. James died at the age of 84 in 1959 and completed his last 'wab' in 1939. The silk loom belonging to the Hamilton Brothers now rests in the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh. Within Rev. Robert Pollock's statistical account of 1950 he states that there were still working looms in the village but that they were principally museum pieces. The annual medical report of Stonehouse Hospital in 1903 states there were still 35 weaving shops in working order in the village.





The Crosskeys Inn

When yer feelin under par, an' yer want is fur a jar
The Crosskeys Inn's the very place to be
When yer feelin rather doon, salvation can be foun'
Wae a bottle, an' the best o' company

If yer life is no worth livin', an' ye arnie gon' tae heaven
Come an' jine yer freens, ye might as weel
If ye tire o' blarin tellies, pit oan yer big green wellies
An' hae anither dram afore the bell ... ooooooh, ooooooh

The Crosskeys Inn, the Crosskeys Inn,
There's ayes a warm welcome at the bar
So staun an' raise yer glasses, an toast the bonnie lassies
Tae the greatest little boozers, near or far

There's sounds upon the chanter, there's ies plenty banter
An' when yuv had a beer, we'll hae a sang
An' if yer no a folkie, there's ayes karaoke
In the famous backroad bar, ye can't go wrang

Hae a steak pie fae the pantry, an' a whiskey fae the gantry
Rest yer weerie bones, an' tak a phew
An if whiskey is yer pleasure, then tak anither measure
An' jine yer droothie freens an' awe git foo ... ooooooh, ooooooh (Chorus)

An when yer work is done, come in hae some fun
There's ayes a pint tae greet you on the bar
An' afore the night is over, we'll sing the wild rover
An' welcome in the mornin, wae a jar

If the Crosskeys you are boun' come in an' buy a roun'
"Forget about your worries and you strife"
If yer want is fur anither, there is-nae time tae dither
So charge yer gless, an' toast the absent wives ... ooooooh, ooooooh (Chorus)

by John Young

The Stonis Bodysnatchers

In eighteen thirty two, in truth am tellin' you
We ventured into Stonis, late wan night
Wae me, shovel an' me pick, deid bodies fur tae dig
To sell tae Dr. Knox, who'll see us right

A'neath the light o' the moon, the kirkyard we wur boun
Tae resurrect some corpses, fae their beds
Wae diggin' graves we'd plunder, the bodies six feet under
Wae an eye oot fur the watchman o' the dead

We're the Stonis bodysnatchers, Yer never gone tae catch us
An if ye see us cumin, we'll tak flight
So listen everybody, we'll disembowl yer body
We'll steal yer bairns, when darkness fills the night

Nae smell o' sweet perfume, as we opened up a tomb
To reveal a fair young maiden in her prime
Nae need fur diagnosin' she wis a' ready decomposin'
Her entrails reeked o' maggots, laced wae lime

Well the lass wis no fur liftin', her body no fur shiftin'
Her decayin' bones, weighed a ton o' lead
As an owl gasped in awe, a grabbed abloe her jaw
Gave a tug, an' pu'd awa' her head (chorus)

Drippin' maggots fae her flesh, she didnae smell tae fresh
As we laid her oan the cert an' made oor way
Aye her body it wis reekin', ye kid smell her doon in Brechin
So we bagged her up, an' made fur Linthaugh brae

In fear o' Burke an' Hare, the toonsfolk laid a snare
So we fled abloe the brae, at Geordieflit
But the corpse wis fu' o' gas, an' let oot wan mighty rasp
An' oor hidin' place revealed, we hid tae split (chorus)

Bodysnatchin' is ma trade, a work wae pick an' spade
We come an' go in the shadows with no trace
For the bodies that we sell, we're sure tae go tae hell
But until we do, we'll settle fur the chase

Aye we're the Stonis bodysnatchers, yer never gone tae catch us
You'll be chasin' us in vain, fur awe yer days

by John Young

There have been several instances of bodysnatching taking place in Stonehouse. The song above is based on some of these tales as told by the press and local worthies of the day.





Stonis fair

As a cam in by Stonis fair, tae pay ma fees an' sell ma ware
 At the Martinmas, I'll be there, on the morn o' Stonis fair o'
 When a gang tae the Grosetknowe, I'll hitch ma horse tae ma plough
 Turn the rigs, an' watch them growe, on the morn o' Stonis fair o'

Ho-ro, here we go, a better day, you'll never know
 Ho-ro, here we go, at the morn o' Stonis fair o'

On merkit day we'll paint the toon, the lassies braw about their gouns
 Gie the bairnies half a croon tae spend at Stonis fair o'
 The fermers awe fae Mains tae Law, will aye be there... rain or snaw
 Tae show their ewes an' fill their craw, on the morn o' Stonis fair o' (Chorus)

Candy stalls an' mare besides, Pinder Ord's circus rides
 Helterskelters doon we'll slide, on the morn o' Stonis fair o'
 Weans run roon wae gird an' cleek, toffee epples mak' them seek
 The smell o' schuch... o' whit a reek, on the morn o' Stonis fair o' (Chorus)

Many a wager to be won, trottin' wae ma gig in the mornin' sun
 Crack ma whip an' on we run, on the morn o' Stonis fair o'
 At the fair, we'll crown the Queen, no the bonniest lass yuv ever seen
 Warts oan yer nose, an wan big een, she wisnae o' so fair'o (Chorus)

When the night draws in we'll hae a dance, pays ma' money takes ma' chance
 A fell in way the bell o' the manse, the rose o' the Stonis fair o'
 When the day is done, I'll sell ma herd, to feed the bairns an' pay the laird
 Settle doon an' grow ma berd, for the morn o' Stonis fair o' (Chorus)

by John R. Young

In the latter end of the 19th century, 'Pinder Ord's Circus' came to the village, with performing dogs, hens, elephants, horses and trapeze artists. During the First World War trotting was popular at the shows, as was the hobby horse which came with the fairground rides. The 'bearded lady' was one of the more peculiar attractions at that time. The circus entertainers Bostock & Wombell's menagerie included camels, dancing bears and even gorillas.





Macfarlane's Sugartops

Aye ther's a grand wee bakers shop, by far the best in toon
If you go doon by Stonis Cross, Macfarlane's can be foun'
They mak' the brawest sugertops, there big and broon and roon
I buy them on a Seterday morn, a dozen for a croon

Ther' baked fresh every mornin', they ner last till night
For when ye get a taste for thon, ye canny help but bite
An' the smell wull drive ye crazy, you'll be howlin' at the moon
Wae a wee bit dod o' butter, ye can ferly skelp them doon

The taste is jist pure magic, you'll be droolin' oot yer mooth
Eatin' yon wee sugar lumps, you'll surely lose a tooth
Fur the dentist's awfa' fond o' them, an' you'll be seein' him soon
He'll pu' yer teeth, and gae ye grief, an' cherge ye twenty poun'

A miss them on a Sunday, by Monday am climbin' walls
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, am sufferin' withdrawals
By Friday am excited, at night a canny sleep
Thinkin' o' thon sugartops, a canny count ma sheep

Alang comes Seterday mornin', an' ther queuin' at the door
They've ran right oot o' sugar lumps, an' the weans are cryin' for more
So they send tae the Copper Kettle, when they a' huv' hid their tea
Noo they've goat the biggest sugar-tops, that you'll ever see
(Repeat verse one)

by John Young

Local song writer Gavin Stevenson would often drool at the thought of Macfarlane's sugertops and would always make a point of visiting the shop even after he emigrated to Uddingston. He always said he would like to write a song about the delicacy but never quite got round to it. The above song was written as a result of Gavin's fancy. Although the shop is no longer there, many will remember well the bakers shop in King Street and the fond memories it brings back to the taste buds.

The Todd and the Laird

O'er the Avon water, where the young ewes graze
The Laird and his keeper, watch o'er the braes
The cold wind blows, and the winter bites
The darkness grew, as the moon shone bright
But the hungry Todd, she holds no fears
As she stalks the ewe, through gorse she nears
The Laird o' Broomhill, the Todd he fends
But sly the Todd, liberates his hens

The hoot of an owl, the bugle sounds
The keeper calls, release the hounds
The scent of blood, the dogs give chase
But the sly old Todd with prize makes haste
O'er stoney dyke, and thicket dense
The Todd pursued, louped o'er the fence
The keeper aims, the blast resounds
But canny the Todd, evades the hounds

By hidden neuk, the Todd takes breath
No time to feast, for fear of death
The hunt resumes, o'er the frozen glen
While the hungry Todd, protects her hen
The hounds close in, upon her scent
Alas poor Todd, her breath is spent
By waters edge, the Todd is snared
The faithful hounds, have pleased the Laird

The cornered Todd, makes her escape
O'er baying hounds, the Todd she leapt
Across the frozen ice, aneath a stane to hide
The pursuing hounds, did slip and slide
The Todd lay low, as the ice gave way
The hounds to drown, did rue the day
The Laird looked down in disbelief
As Todd with hen, content the thief

The bugle called, alas nane returned
To Laird and keeper, a lesson learned
Sly the Todd, whose life was spared
At the Tods-table, escaped the Laird
If lured to venture, upon thin ice
Tak' heed this tale, beware, think twice
When hoolet calls, guard your ewes
But heed the Todd, for hen she woos

by John R. Young

This song is based on the story of 'Tods-table' (Todstable Gardens) where a tod, (fox) was said to have hidden from a pack of pursuing hounds under a stone slab now known as the Tods-table on the Avon river.





Jingler

When mornin' breaks, baith cauld and clear
 Abune the sleepy toon
An' no' a body's in the streets
 An blinds are still pu'd doon
Yet at the Cross ye may be shair
Ye'll find "The Jingler" staunin' there

When mornin' breaks, baith murk and chill
 Abune the sleepy toon
An' sodden mists creep ower the hill
 That lies ayont Westown
Yet at the Cross ye may be shair
Ye'll find "The Jingler" staunin' there

When mornin' breaks, wi' balefu' blast
 Abune the sleepy toon
An' winter snaws are fa'in fast
 An' drifts hae formed a'roon
Yet at the Cross ye may be shair
Ye'll find "The Jingler" staunin' there

When e'en has cast her sombre cloak
 Abune the sleepy toon,
An' midnight's struck on the auld toon clock
 An' folks are sleepin' soon
Yet at the Cross ye may be shair
Ye'll find "The Jingler" staunin' there

H. C.





To Mr Walker

The aged bard of Stonehouse

Dear frien', you'll think that I've forgot
Tae own, wi' thanks, your welcome note,
Where, in auld Doric verse, you wrote
 A lang narration,
About me an' my rural cot,
 At Douglas station.

Sae noo I'll try tae mak' amends
By stringing up some odds and ends
Since oor last crack; when we, as friends,
 Say gaily met;
For whatsoe'er wi' reasons blend,
 We ne'er forget.

I think I see your manly form,
Which toil and care could ne'er deform,
Still able tae surmount the storm
 O' fourscore years,
An' in true lyric verse tae charm
 Your auld compeers.

Life seems tae some a simmer day -
Tae revel in the sun's bright ray;
That only thought - of thought they hae -
 Is mere sensation,
Till age and wasted lives display
 Sad degredation.

Some search for truth wi' judgement stern
While reason soars to the eterne;
Through such the world soon will learn
 That the ideal
Is but the shadow we discern
 O' what is real.

Some think the world's near an end,
Yet clutch at gold, their dearest friend;
While mystic minded men pretend
 That war an' pain
Are leadin' blinded men tae bend
 Tae truth's bright reign.

Let up in retrospective glance,
Survey the past wi' eyes askance;
What do we see but sword an' lance,
 An' pride an' error;
While factions still seek to enhance
 Their power by terror.

From statesmen down tae lowest ranks,
Self is disguised by wily pranks;
While priests weave creeds frae ravelled hanks,
 In pious stricture,
Then rotten Banks on fibre shanks,
 Complete the picture.

Sae frien', I canna keep frae thinkin'
That retribution's only winkin',
An' may ere lang, wi' armour clinkin',
 Seek compensation,
While trade an' railway shares are sinkin',
 Through high taxation.

Then fare-ye-weel, my aged bard,
You've braved a life o' labour hard;
Sing on, but ne'er expect reward
 Till ye are dead,
An' then a tablet o' regard
 Will crown your head!

Peter Carmichael

Dr. Alexander Rae

From Dr. Rae to Peter Carmichael

P laced far from din of city strife,
E ncouraged by a faithful wife,
T o duty's call you lend an ear,
E ntranced by muses fair you cheer
R etirement's hours from year to year.

C onfirmed and known as poet now,
A garland bright adorns your brow;
R esplendent thoughts of language choice
Make those who read your lines rejoice
I n life's decline 'tis yours to know
C ontentment's bliss and love's bright glow.
H ale be your body, sound your mind,
A nd may great thinkers of mankind
E steem you as a Christian rare
L ight-hearted, true and debounair.

From Peter Carmichael to Dr. Rae

A damic bliss in ages hoary
L ay long obscured in mystic story
E ven Socrates, though wise and kind,
X antippes scolding racked his mind,
A nd Alexander, styled "The Great,"
N o earthly bliss could satiate;
D iogenes wit lantern sought it,
E sculapius dreamed he caught it,
R eligion next is foiled, yet taught it;

R eason arose from her lap deep abyss,
A nd fired A. Rae with an angel kiss,
E ntranced; he's now wed to the soul of bliss.

Contained within a collection of poems entitled 'Clydesdale Poems' by Peter Carmichael is this acrostic ode to local doctor, Alexander Rae (top left with wife) in response to an acrostic ode to Peter Carmichael himself. Peter Carmichael was a station master from Douglas whose poems were published in 1884.

