

100 YEARS IN YORK



by W.A.Porter

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The St Andrew Society of York is profoundly grateful to those Advertisers and Sponsors whose generosity has helped defray the costs of producing this book to celebrate the Society's 100 years in York.

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“ONE HUNDRED YEARS IN YORK”



The Centenary of the St Andrew Society 1994

by W.A.Porter

Derived, with gratitude, from the archives of the late Alex Forster,
the personal recollections of Society members,
and invaluable work of collation
by former Society President Graeme Miller

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ILLUSTRATIONS : Centenary tapestry by Graeme Miller - front cover; Centenary Year President - p5; High Ousegate in Victorian Times - p6; On the streets where they lived- p8; General Wauchope - p14; Robert Burns - p40; Dinner, Royal Station Hotel, 1937 - p42; Bridging the Years- pp 52, 58, 65, 68, 70, 74; back cover - Graeme and the tapestry; and the shop at No 19.

Foreword

Sharing a culture.....

SCOTTISH culture and heritage is something we should be able to identify, understand and enjoy, and share with those who would wish to share it. We do this with passion because the Scots are passionate people.

Here in this beautiful city of York, the St Andrew Society has been doing this successfully for 100 years and has become a tradition in its own right. It now has its own heritage. It is fitting that this is recorded for posterity.

It brings me immense personal pleasure to note that on Friday 7th December, 1894, Sergeant Major MacKenzie 'proposed' that this Society be formed, and one hundred years later another son of Cabar Feidh is again playing a prominent part in keeping Scottish culture alive.

The St Andrew Society of York is as vibrant today as at any time in its history. Forging ahead in fact - through our Gaelic Society where we share in the language and songs of Eden; in the Askham Bryan Scottish Country Dance Group where we first learned the 'York Centenary Reel'; at our Ceilidhs, Quizzes and 'Bools.' Through all this we enrich our lives and help pass on to the next generation the priceless traditions which have been handed down to us.

Throughout these last one hundred years, the Scots have played a major role in York, enriching the community by their labours in many fields, and by their generosity in supporting the President each year in a variety of deserving causes.

The St Andrew Society of York is deeply indebted to Bert Porter for writing this most readable book and for spending so much time researching the material. His background of professional journalism comes shining through the pages to make compelling reading for anyone interested in York's history.

I heartily commend this book to you. May it become well-thumbed.



Pat MacKenzie

**Pat G. MacKenzie,
President**



High Ousegate, York, as it was when the "resident Scotchmen" met to form a St Andrew Society. The entrance to the Coffee Rooms, where they met, is near the end of the street, on the right between the protruding flag and pennant.

Chapter 1

A Troubled Time

Today it is just another shoe shop in a busy York street. One hundred years ago, however, the premises at 19 High Ousegate were occupied by the Coffee Rooms, a refreshment house where the upper crust discussed profit and loss, where business transactions were sealed by handclasp. The establishment did not extend a welcome to the city's hoi-polloi.

It was there, at 8 pm on Friday 7th December, 1894, that a small but influential group - described in the local newspaper as "a meeting of resident Scotchmen" - convened to explore a notion that a Scottish society should be formed in York.

The unusually high proportion in the city's population of Scots or people of Scottish descent owed much to the frequency with which Scottish regiments were installed at the Infantry Barracks in Fulford. Indeed, only that autumn the streets of York had been filled to bid a sad but good-natured farewell to the 1st Battalion Royal Scots, soon to be replaced in the city by the Black Watch. It was scarcely surprising, then, that the group which met that night in York's Coffee Rooms should include Sergeant Major Mackenzie of the Black Watch.

Poverty Reigned

The year just approaching its end had been a troubled one in the still gas-lit city. Poverty reigned. While pampered Victorians in neat suburban houses turned their backs on the misery of the masses, the poor in the inner city sank to new levels of penury.

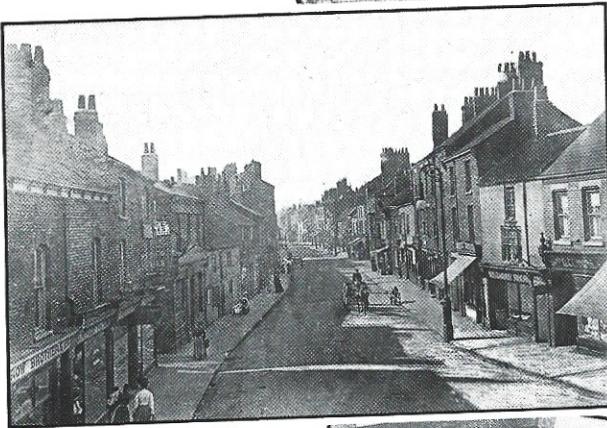
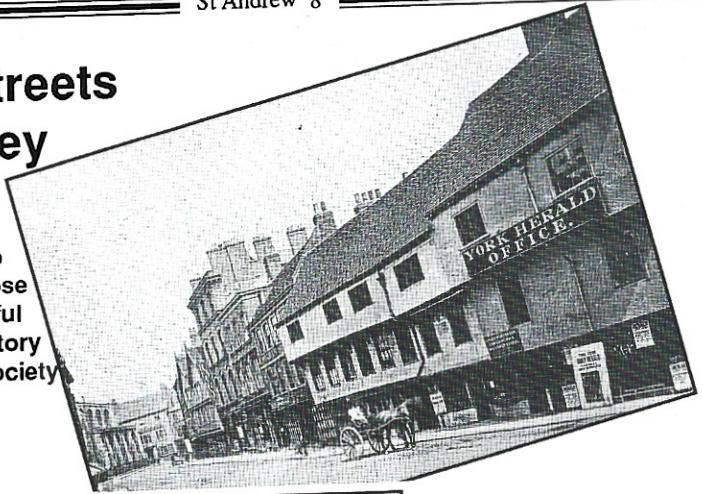
The city was in debt to the tune of £458,000 - the equivalent of £50 million today. Ratepayers were in uproar - not without reason, perhaps - over a proposal to increase the town clerk's salary by £100 to £700 a year. This insensitive proposal came at a time when the average wage of ordinary folk was just over £1 a week. The rent of a mean terraced house absorbed about a third of that and what was left ensured that the majority lived well below the breadline.

The Waif and Stray Society had just opened its first home in the York area, in a cottage at Appleton Roebuck, to care for eight boys aged between five and 10. A seven-year-old boy had been sentenced to four strokes of the birch for stealing a piece of discarded iron piping from the yard of the Windmill Hotel in Queen Street. At Pickering, two performances had been given of a "humorous extravaganza" to raise funds to purchase coal for the poor. The show, written by a Mr J.T. Guffick, was entitled "Beauty And The Beast", and was based on the well-known nursery tale.

City plumbers were on a two-months strike over their employers' refusal to add a halfpenny to their hourly rate of 7d. Yet, there were some with money to burn. The management of Clifton

On the streets where they lived.....

Pavement - home to the *York Herald* whose columns were helpful in building up a history of the St Andrew Society in York.



Walmgate, one of the city's meanest streets, where poverty reigned and typhoid was rampant.

Dressed for a special occasion, but these children grew up in the stinking slums of rat-infested Walmgate, where the lot of the majority was a struggle for a basic existence



Lunatic Asylum had been taken to task for allowing 22 paupers at their institution to incur bills amounting to £ 632 for "intoxicating liquors, tobacco and snuff" while expending only £124 on meat to feed them!

Typhoid Rampant

Typhoid was rampant in rat-infested Walmgate where raw sewage stank in yards and in the street. The local newspaper issued a warning about the prevalence of rabies, the extent of the menace being considered sufficient to justify enforcement of muzzling regulations.

For those who were not obliged to struggle for a basic existence, there were novelties and bargains to be had. Almost opposite the Coffee Rooms in High Ousegate, where the "resident Scotchmen" were in session, R. Buckle & Co., "high class ladies tailors", announced that they had taken the sole agency in York for the Sellick Patent Cycling & Walking Skirt.

Their advertisement declared: "We have thoroughly tested it and are of opinion that it is, without doubt, the best of its kind ever introduced. There is no surplus material under-seat when on the saddle, and it hangs perfectly straight, giving a taller effect to the figure. For walking, it is specially adapted, and cannot be detected from the ordinary skirt. We shall be pleased to show and describe it if you will favour us with a call."

Just along the street, at 3 Low Ousegate, grocer Walter Willson was having a sale. Whole hams could be had for five pence a pound, or "6d sliced." Large tins of salmon could also be purchased for 5d and wax candles were available at 8d for a 3lb packet.

Shrewd Scots

Councillor J.M. Gardiner, who took the chair at the Coffee Rooms gathering, also had a shop in Low Ousegate where his winter clothing sale offered a saving of "two pennies in the shilling". The sale also carried his personal guarantee of "no accumulation of old-fashioned goods." The city has long had its share of shrewd Scottish merchants!

At Arthur's Music Warehouse in Davygate 6d would have purchased a "Book of Scotch Songs" or a "Book of Scotch Reels and Flings", while Grays' Wholesale Depot at 35 Coney Street was selling pianos and organs from 15 Guineas or 10s 6d a month "till paid for". The cheapest seats at the Theatre Royal could be had for 6d. T. Tailor, a "Scotch baker and confectioner" at 14 Monkgate, was advertising "breakfast rolls every morning at 8 o'clock." A dozen eggs were selling at one shilling. James Maxwell, outfitter at 29 Coney Street, claimed: "My suitings are almost exclusively Scotch Tweeds from the best makers at Langholm, Galashiels, Hawick and Dumfries."

In the wider world, Japan had defeated China after a short but bloody war and Cecil Rhodes was meddling in South African affairs.

Captain Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish artillery officer in the French Army, had been sentenced to life imprisonment on Devil's Island for allegedly betraying military secrets to Germany.



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The Blackpool Tower had just been completed and Oscar Wilde had recently begun his sentence in Reading Jail.

Scotland's celebrated Robert Louis Stevenson had died on the Pacific island of Samoa on Monday 3rd December - four days before the Scottish exiles' meeting at York's Coffee Rooms.

Founding Fathers

That was the world in which a Black Watch Sergeant Major, with city councillor and merchant James Gardiner, met the Rev Alexander Stirling, the Presbyterian minister in York, Mr J.E. Taylor, the brothers John H. and James W. Forster, and several other York businessmen to discuss the possibility of forming a Scottish society in the city.

The desire to establish such a body must have been strong, for the weather - ranking with the worst in the city's memory - did not deter the founding fathers of what was to become a hugely successful Scottish club.

Even as "the Scotchmen" debated, workmen cleared street debris left by a gale which had wrought havoc in York earlier in the day. Few streets escaped damage as slates and tiles flew around, stacks fell and windows blew in. Part of the tower of St Martin's Church collapsed on to Coney Street near the city's newspaper offices. The tangled mess of canvas and metal which had been vendors' stalls forced Parliament Street's market into the safety of the Drill Hall in St Andrewgate.

Coy History

History is coy about the details of that first meeting in the Coffee Rooms, though a report in the "Yorkshire Herald" a week later gave a brief inkling of what took place:

"The purpose of the meeting was for the formation of a St Andrew's Association in York. Councillor J.M. Gardiner occupied the Chair. Sergeant Major Mackenzie proposed that the society be formed. Mr J.E. Taylor seconded the proposal and the proposition carried.

"It was decided that Councillor J.M. Gardiner and the Rev A. Stirling convey to the Lord Mayor of York (Alderman W. McKay) the wish of the meeting that he become the President of the St Andrew's Society of York. It was also decided that a further meeting be called for Friday 14th December, 1894, at 8 pm for the purpose of drawing up the rules of the Society and the appointment of a committee of management."

First President

Unfortunately, the newspaper appears not to have reported the second meeting, though it is known that Alderman William McKay, elected Lord Mayor just a few weeks previously, and enjoying strong Scottish antecedents, accepted the invitation with alacrity. He went on to serve as the Society's President for almost 20 years - from 1894 to 1897 and from 1898 to 1914.

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WHERE PEOPLE MATTER

Alderman McKay was the first in a long line of York-based Scots to occupy this position - a line of 51 which has included two aldermen, four chartered accountants, a deputy headmaster, a lecturer, four managers/consultants, a police officer, a general, a dentist, three insurance officers, a veterinary surgeon, two chemists, 12 engineers, eight doctors, eight ladies, a minister, and an Archbishop of York.

From records close to that time, it is clear that the Society had a three-fold set of objectives:

"CHARITABLE - to afford assistance (by obtaining situations and otherwise) to persons being natives of Scotland or of Scottish extraction.

"SOCIAL - to promote social and friendly intercourse and good fellowship amongst Scottish people in York and district.

"LITERARY - to promote reading and study of the works of Scottish authors and to institute and hold concerts, readings and discussions with this view."

Three trustees, elected annually, managed a benevolent fund, the purpose of which was stated to be to "help Scotch people of respectability who may require pecuniary assistance for the time being."

And so the St Andrew Society of York was born, albeit in troubled times and with just a hint of insularity which is thankfully absent today.

Chapter 2

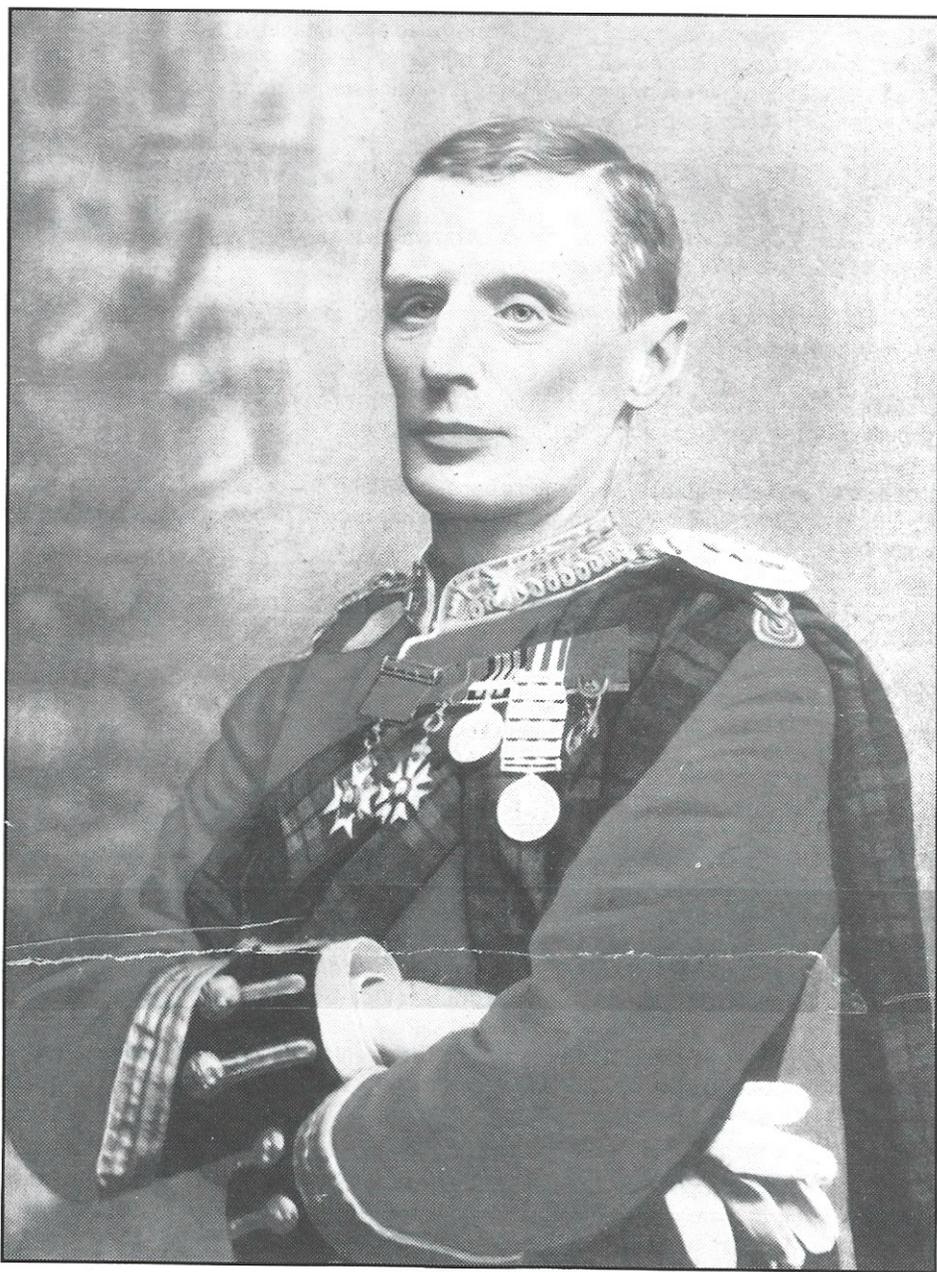
Days of the Fledgling

For the earliest reference to the Society's infant years, the researcher is again indebted to the Yorkshire Herald. Brief though its notice was, the publication carried a news item about the Society's first dinner on Monday 2nd December, 1895. It was held at the Queens Hotel in Micklegate, with Lord Mayor William McKay attending in his Presidential role, Councillor J.M. Gardiner as Chairman, the Rev A. Stirling as Chaplain, Dr J.M. Bryson as Croupier (Vice-Chairman) and 30 members.

In the year 1897-98, the Society had as its second President the distinguished Colonel (soon-to-be General) A.G. Wauchope, C.B., C.M.G., of the Black Watch. Sadly, it was to lose him as a casualty of the Second Boer War at Magersfontein.

In a biography, written by William Baird, FSA Scotland, in 1900, the Colonel was said to have been in the habit of marching his men out nine or ten miles in all sorts of weather to keep the regiment up to fighting standard.

The biographer wrote: "*Frequently have we seen him swinging along at the head of his men, sometimes on horseback, but more often on foot, over roads inches deep with mud.*"



General Wauchope - affectionately known as "Red Mick" - described by his biographer as "a gallant fighter and true-hearted Scottish gentleman."

Red Mick

"Like most favourite officers, he had his pet name. He was familiarly known in the Black Watch as Red Mick. One day the regiment had been ordered out for a march, and in passing a group of the men the Colonel happened to overhear one of them say 'Red Mick will be going to ride today.' The regiment was in due time drawn up on parade, and addressed by their commander as to the order of march. Then, looking the man who had made the remark straight in the face, he finished up by saying 'but today Red Mick will walk.'"

After three years residence in Edinburgh Castle, the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Highlanders (Black Watch) moved to York in the autumn of 1896, gaining much popular favour in the city during their 18 months there. Colonel Wauchope took a deep interest in the benevolent institutions of the city, and especially in the Scottish community. His presidency of the St Andrew Society did much to increase its membership and influence.

The biography recorded: *"He was a Scotsman and proud of his country. The stirring speeches he made before the St Andrew Society are still remembered with delight; and as an evidence of the regard in which his memory is still held, the Society is about to erect a tablet in the Presbyterian Church to the memory of the officers and men of the Black Watch who have since fallen in battle."*

"It was noticed also that the same chivalrous feeling of relationship existed between him and his men as existed formerly between a Highland chief and his clan. His interest in them and their families was ever showing itself in kindly visits to the married quarters of the barracks, in order to look after the welfare of the women and children, so as to increase their comfort.

"Fetes and social meetings were not unfrequent, and at Christmas time it was his custom to have a well-laden Christmas tree, on which were suitable presents for the children, while the mothers had welcome little gifts of money distributed to them. All this, says the Rev Alexander Stirling, minister of the Presbyterian Church, was at his own private expense, and must have cost him not less than £ 50 on each occasion."

In July 1898, Colonel Wauchope was selected to command a brigade in Lord Kitchener's expedition to reconquer the Sudan. This meant that he was obliged to sever the close bonds with his men.

A brother officer wrote: *"The send-off he received at York will never be effaced from the memory of those who took part in it. I have never seen Scotch soldiers exhibit any such emotion, or give way so thoroughly to their feelings. They knew whom they were losing; they realised their loss and gave vent accordingly."*

Wauchope's biographer wrote: *"At the same time, the circumstances, if touching, were not without a dash of the ludicrous; but they show how warmly attached the Black Watch were to one who from the rank of subaltern had risen steadily to be their colonel, and was now to leave them for the command of a brigade. Many a man among them wished he had the chance to accompany him."*

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"The regiment was at the time camped out for summer quarters at Strensall Camp, about five miles from York. On the evening of a hot July day, when Colonel Wauchope was to leave for the Sudan, there was an open mess among the officers, and the health and prosperity of their departing colonel was enthusiastically drunk. He was to go south by the midnight train at York, and as the evening hours sped on, the regiment as usual retired to their tents to rest for the night, after tuck of drum. They did not, however, retire to sleep, for no sooner were the wheels of the colonel's carriage heard than there was a general move.

"The men were stripped and in bed but in an instant every tent was astir and, like a swarm of bees, the whole regiment broke loose. Every tent belched forth its quota of excited men, and without taking time to dress they had surrounded the carriage, cheering and enthusiastically shaking hands with their departing chief. Many of them, with only their nightshirts on, ran after the carriage a considerable distance, still cheering as they went along. It was such a send-off as few officers ever experienced."

Gallant Scot

The legend on a regimental photograph at the Black Watch headquarters in Perth says this of General Wauchope:

"Of all the many distinguished soldiers who have fallen in the course of the Second Boer War, there is not one whose loss has created a greater gap than the gallant fighter and true-hearted Scottish gentleman whom, practically speaking, the whole Highland race knew and adored as 'Andy Wauchope'. It added not inconsiderably to the sorrow his death inspired that his valued life was thrown away in one of those tactical extravagances with which the earlier phases of the war abounded. But we may be sure that to Wauchope himself no ending to his grand fighting career would have been more acceptable than death in action at the head of a Highland Brigade.

"Apart from his record as a soldier, General Wauchope was a figure of great interest to the general public. Having succeeded on the death of his elder brother in 1882 to the family estate of Niddrie in Midlothian, comprising some valuable coal mining property, he turned his attention to politics, and was within measurable distance of beating Mr Gladstone when the latter contested Midlothian in 1892. As a politician, Wauchope was, as might have been expected from his features and his work as a soldier, a little arbitrary perhaps, but the essence of uncompromising honesty, combined with utter fearlessness and the natural shrewdness of the canny Scot, accentuated by considerable culture and wide experience."

Shortly before his departure for South Africa, Colonel Wauchope presided over a Scottish concert at the Festival Concert Rooms (long gone now but then adjoining Thomas's Hotel in Museum Street.) From a concert programme which has survived the years, it had all the hallmarks of a peerless entertainment. Colonel Wauchope, who never tackled projects by half measure, evidently ensured that the Black Watch played a full part in the proceedings, with no

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fewer than six bagpipe selections by Lance-Corporal D.G. Wright and Piper Ackroyd as well as Highland dancing demonstrations by the corporal. A programme of songs and humorous recitals was offered by Society members John Procter, Samuel Masters, William Cockburn, and the Misses Joy McLean and Marion M. Cameron.

Bold Advertisers

Advertising in the programme, Arthur's Music Warehouse in Davygate was not shy about reminding the audience that all the music used during the concert was available at the Warehouse! Whoever Arthur was, his mind was clearly concentrated on the bawbees which he might prise from Society sporrans.

Another adventurous advertiser, William Grant, who had a watchmaker's business in Lord Mayor's Walk, offered "a guid watch for little siller", while a rival, J.W. Stevenson, watchmaker, goldsmith and silversmith at 5 Davygate, was selling "Parisian diamond goods" from one shilling to £2. Not to be outdone, a third jeweller and Society member, James B. Inglis, tempted members with free samples of the "Koh-i-Noor plate powder and polish" which he made on his premises at 4 Coney Street.

The Society's office-bearers in that year included Alderman William McKay and J.G. Menzies of Escrick Park as Honorary Vice-Presidents, Councillor Gardiner as Chairman, and Dr Bryson as Vice-Chairman. Serving on the committee were James McDonald, J.W. Kay, Mr Turner, Rev A. Stirling, J.H. Forster, J.B. Inglis, J. Johnstone, R. McIntosh, A. McLaurie, and Colour Sergeant W. Mcleod Black. The Secretary and Treasurer was John Henry of 11 Richardson Street, York.

A charity concert at the Festival Concert Rooms on 30th November, 1899, featured the Glasgow Select Choir. A third concert at the same venue on Wednesday 26th November, 1902, featured the Black Watch pipers in strength as well as songs by Society members Macfarlane Brockett, J.B. Preston, James Fleming and the Misses Mary Finlay and Lizzie Hunter, and dancing by Piper D. Wilson.

The intrepid advertisers were still helping to keep the Society solvent, while employing new superlatives to describe their wares. William Grant was now selling "reliable watches at unheard of prices" and W.H. Campbell extended a "clan greeting" from his Micklegate toy shop where dolls were a "speciality" and mail carts and dolls carriages were "newly arrived." For "splendid value", R. Johnston & Sons of the Holgate Bridge Firewood Stores were selling loads containing 16 bags of chopped wood at 10s 8d, small oak blocks for drawing-room fires at 9d per coal bag, and chips for fire lighting at 3d per coal bag. Society member James Maxwell was reminding readers that his Scotch Tweeds at 29 Coney Street were moderately priced - "Good Fit! Good Style! Good Material!"

First Rules

The first known copy of the Society's rules, together with a list of office-bearers, was printed in 1909 between what was, for the times, rather adventurous mauve covers which are quite hideous to the modern eye.

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Alderman McKay was still at the helm as President and had the support of no fewer than seven Vice-Presidents - J.M. Gardiner, J. Hamilton, D.S. McKay, D.L. Pressly, Dr Ramsay, Dr Swanson and H.A. Watson.

Occupying the Chair was A.M. Wisely, assisted by Vice-Chairmen J. Bain, Dr Bryson, W. Clues, Councillor J.B. Inglis, J. Johnston, J. Maxwell, R. McIntosh, A.C. Mitchell and G.H. Pollock. The Trustees of the Benevolent Fund were Dr Bryson, J.M. Gardiner and Councillor Inglis.

The Rev J.A. McIlvride was Chaplain, and what was now known as the Council, controlling the Society's affairs, comprised W. Adamson, R.S. Gray, D. McPherson, Dr Campbell, A. Hutchison, W. Moffatt, H. Dobson, J. Webster Kay, G. Phillips, J.M. Dron, W. McGregor and M. Turner.

Murdoch Mackay was Honorary Piper, P.G. Rodger was Treasurer, and the Secretary was F.Duncan, 8 Grove View, Clifton.

The subscription was 2s 6d, with membership open to "natives of Scotland, or sons and daughters, either one or both of whose parents belong to that country."

Incredibly, the subscription remained at 2s 6d until 1947 when it was doubled. In 1971 it went up to £1. Ah! The bargains enjoyed by our parents and grandparents! The rules, slightly amended from time to time, were reprinted in 1932, 1947, 1964, 1976 and 1988. In the early days, the Society's President served rather as a figurehead, attending only at the annual dinners.

War Clouds

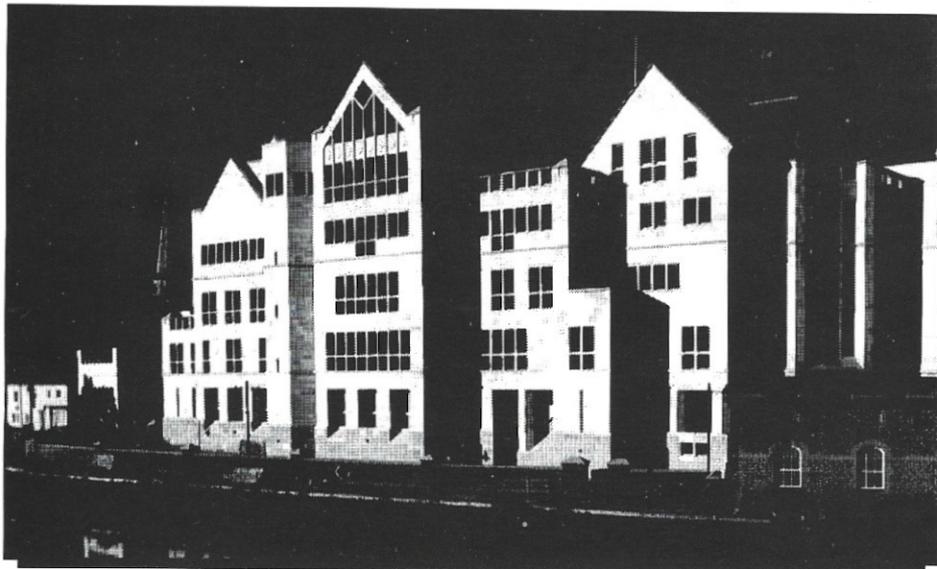
The Annual Dinner at the Davy Hall on Friday 28th November, 1913, was to be the last before tensions in Europe exploded into the bloodbath of the First World War. The dinner venue, next to W.P. Brown's shop in Davygate, was a square hall with a gallery, owned by the Barton family of confectioners. It served for a spell as a branch of Martins Bank before its occupation by what is now the Liberty shop.

In line with tradition, there was again a strong military presence, though on this occasion by the Royal Scots Greys who were stationed in York between 1910 and 1914.

The gourmet menu and toast list were to be repeated in 1921 and 1922, the Society's activities being largely suspended during the hostilities and for some time afterwards.

Cock-a-Leekie soup was followed by "Biled Cod wi' Sauce an' Tatties". Then came the Haggis, followed by the principal sustenance of the evening - "Hieland Stirk, Jiggots o' Mutton, Scotch Kail, Chappit Tatties and bashed Neeps."

There appears to have been no question of Society members selling themselves short. For what was already an ample repast then went on to plough through "Pheasants wi' Gravy", "Auld Kirk Trifles an' Jellies", and "Bannocks o' Barley an' Kebbucks o' Cheese wi' Celery."



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Unfortunately, there is no record of the price members paid for this memorable banquet, but it clearly was not an occasion for the pre-war equivalent of Weight-Watchers!

Musical Extravaganza

Musical selections were played throughout the dinner by a small orchestra from the Band of the Royal Scots Greys, with songs by a quartet of Society members - G. Horner, F.W. Wilson, T. Lane and Arthur Fryer. The latter, a York Minster chorister, went on to reach the grand old age of 95.

The orchestra's programme of music included "The Bullfighters", a march by Kottaun; "Falka", a Chassaigne overture; "Sizilietta", an intermezzo by Von Blon; "The Thistle", a selection by Middleton; the barcarolle from Offenbach's "The Tales of Hoffman"; a cornet solo rendering of "Little Grey Home in the West"; "Risette", a waltz by Fall; "Veronique", a selection from Messager; and "Secrets", an Ancliffe intermezzo.

After the loyal toast came that to "The Imperial Forces", proposed by Councillor J.B. Inglis and responded to by Lt Whitehead of the Royal Scots Greys following a duet, "Watchman! What of the Night," from Messrs Wilson and Fryer.

The musical items which then ensued included a rendering of "Afton Water" by founder member J.W. Forster, father of the late Alex Forster, Deputy Headmaster of Archbishop Holgate's Grammar School in York, who was the Society's excellent Toastmaster for many years and its principal historian.

Lastly, came a toast to "The Ladies", proposed by the Rev J.A. McIlvride, fetching a response from the Lady Mayoress.

Kitchener's Boys

Though the Society's activities were severely curtailed during the war years, a concert was held to raise funds to send cigarettes to Royal Scots Greys serving on the front line in France. The £17 collected (about £800 today) was used by James Forster to purchase great quantities of Players, Gold Flake, Capstan, Black Cat, Park Drive, BDV and Woodbines. These were packed off to France, though not before young Alec Forster had denuded them of their cigarette cards!

When the Greys went off to France - having been stationed in York from 1910 to 1914 - the city became the depot of the 5th Cavalry Reserve. "Kitchener's Boys", mostly Scots, arrived in their hundreds. At first, they marched in silence to Sunday service at the Presbyterian Church, their band having left with the regiment.

Alex Forster recalled a few years ago: "*One of the boys, after a 48-hours leave, brought back his bagpipes and persuaded another to do the same. They found a third piper but he had no pipes. My father was asked if he would lend his set. A big drum and a kettle-drum were acquired, I suspect from the adjacent infantry barracks. And so a mini pipe band led them to church.*"

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"At the end of the war, the regiment returned, not to York but to Redford Barracks in Edinburgh. As far as I know, the pipes went there too. Certainly, my father did not get his back, but when the Society resumed its activities they bought him a new set, with which he piped in the haggis until 1939.

"I believe that mini band of long ago was the origin of the piping section in the regimental band, which is now part of the band of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards. When my father died, the pipes were passed on to a life-long friend with whom he had served his time in a tailor's shop in the little Berwickshire village of Leitholm."

In 19 years the fledgling Society had grown to adulthood with a membership approaching 200. But even as they made their merry ways home after that unforgettable evening in the Davy Hall, war clouds were looming over Europe.

The Reichstag had passed a bill authorising the German army to be strengthened to more than five million men in the event of war. Austria was under pressure in the Balkans and Italy was harassing the Turks in North Africa.

In nine months the world would be at war.....

Chapter 3

A Second Start

THE passage of time withholds from us any knowledge of how Society members fared during the torn years of war. It seems likely, however, that the fighting qualities of the Scot - even when domiciled in an English city - would have seen the sons of many enlist in the colours. That many did not return from Flanders and the Somme there can be no doubt.

When next encountered, the Society is sitting down at its annual dinner in the Davy Hall on Wednesday 30th November 1921.

Alderman J.B. Inglis is presiding over a meal which is a facsimile of that remarkable feast enjoyed at the same venue eight years ago.

Arthur Fryer and George Horner are back again as members of a quartet which also includes Messrs A. Jones and E. Wilkinson. Alderman R.H. Vernon Wragge, J.P., is proposing the toast to "The Imperial Forces", and Messrs Jones and Fryer follow up with a duet entitled "Battle Eve". The military response comes from Major McPherson. Another civic personality, Alderman E. Walker, JP, proposes the city toast, with responses from the Lord Mayor (Alderman W.H. Birch) and the Sheriff (Councillor A.R. Fox).



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Salute - Failte Thighearna Thulaich

The Clan Davidson is of ancient origin and according to the historian Charles Fraser Mackintosh is the fourth senior cadet of the old Clan Chattan federation based in Badenoch during the 12th to 15th centuries.

To preserve the Clan's history and traditions, assist in family genealogical research, and foster friendships and gatherings of Clan members both at home and abroad, a Clan Dhai/Davidson Association was formally founded in 1909 by the last Clan Chief, Duncan Davidson the 6th of Tulloch, who died without issue in 1917.

In 1933 the then Lord Lyon King of Arms granted the Association its own matriculated Arms (above). Due to the outbreak of hostilities in 1939 the Association became dormant. In May 1991, a public meeting revived the Association and set about locating a new Chief. The Lord Lyon accepted the new Association as a continuation of the old Clan Dhai/Davidson Association but with a change of name to Clan Davidson Association and as such is entitled to the Arms.

Accepted names in the Association are: Davidson, Davison, Dawson, Davis, Davie, Davey, Day, Dye, Dyson, Dea, Dean, Deane, Desy, Deason, Daw, Dow, Dhai, MacDhai, MacDhaid, Mackedie, Mackay, MacDavid, MacDade, MacDavitt, MacDagniet, Slorach, Slora, Slorie, Storey, Kay, Keay, Key and Keys.

Clan Davidson societies are active in Canada, USA, Australia, and New Zealand, and are growing in membership with like-minded people who are proud to preserve their historical links.

Further details will be gladly supplied by the Hon. Secretary, J.A. Davidson, "Lyndhurst", Owlwood Lane, Dunnington, York, YO1 5PH (0904 489137)

Davidson Day is 24th May.

Winter Events

That winter the Society published a calendar of events which began with an opening social at Old Priory Adult School on 5th October. There was a Hallowe'en social at the Royal Station Hotel on 2nd November, a St Andrew's Day Dinner and Dance, and what was billed as a "social or reading" at the Old Priory School on 4th January. The school was also the venue for a Burns Night and Scottish Concert on 25th January, another "social or reading" on 8th March and an annual meeting in April.

Alderman J.B. Inglis, who would be Lord Mayor in the following year, was in his first year of a four-year term as Society President, to be followed by a second term between 1927 and 1930.

Chairman of the Council was J.W. Forster, now boasting a new set of bagpipes! He held this office until the outbreak of World War 2, as well as being the Society's piper from 1930 to 1938. A case of making the piper pay for his supper (and his pipes!). He had originally been a Council member in 1902, at a time when all had to retire annually.

Another recent appointment was that of Harold Hutchison of Fulford as Secretary. Harold held the office until 1927 and between 1937 and the outbreak of war, resuming office in 1946.

Outings for 1922 included a "Chara Drive" on a June evening, a July afternoon drive to Knaresborough, another social at the Royal Station Hotel in October, a Hallowe'en whist drive and dance at The Grand, Clarence Street, and a St Andrew Day dinner on 30th November.

In 1924 chicken replaced pheasant on the Annual Dinner menu but otherwise there was no diminution in the calorific value of the meal! The toast list assumed a pattern similar to that of today - the loyal toast, followed by "The Society", "Our Native Land", "The Land We Live In and Our Guests", and "The Ladies."

In that year, also, the Society gained the Archbishop of York as its President. The Most Rev. Cosmo Gordon Lang served in that capacity until 1927.

National Pride

About that time, too, the printed dinner menu began to exhibit unabashed national pride in the form of prefaces on the inside cover of the grandly printed and tartan be-ribboned document.

That for 1925 read: *"It was suffering that hardened and ennobled the temper of the Scot. It was from those ages of oppression and lawlessness that he drew the rugged fidelity, the dogged endurance, the shrewdness, the caution, the wariness, the rigid thrift, the noble self-dependence, the patience, the daring, that have distinguished him ever since."*

Phew! And again in 1926 when the compiler borrowed unashamedly from Buchan - "It is the chief glory of Scotsmen that, next to God and their parents, they love their country and their countrymen."



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"It is their chief merit, that they study from their youth till their grey hairs, all that honours their ancestry and kindred; hence every Scotsman is a hero for the glory of Scotland, wise for the glory of Scotland, and virtuous for the glory of Scotland."

The show that called itself the St Andrew Society of York was well and truly on the road!

Chapter 4

Strength to Strength

DURING the 20s, the Society's membership soared. At its annual meeting in the Lantern Tower Restaurant, High Ousegate, on 18th April, 1923, membership was reported to have grown from 92 to 135 in 1921-22 and to 171 in the current year, despite having lost 21 members during the past 12 months.

The social gatherings had all been well attended, each carrying its own financial burden, except a whist drive and dance which was subsidised to reduce ticket prices. The Annual Dinner, at which the principal guest had been Sir Alexander MacDonald of the Isles, was stated to have met its own expenses, for the first time in the Society's history. James Forster, Chairman, commenting on the gratifying annual report, declared it was not a case of *"patting each other on the back, but rather a precise report of a strenuous year's work in which the Council had endeavoured to draw the members more closely together."* The enormous increase in membership spoke well for the popularity of the Society amongst the "Scotch" folk in York, he added.

The Treasurer, H. Grant, reported a balance in hand on the year's working of £10. 5s. 10d compared with the previous year's 8s 9d. H. Brodie, who audited the accounts, declared that the Council, "like true Scots", had been very economical on every occasion.

In the following year, the Society returned to the Lantern Tower to hear that membership had soared to 211, despite losing 27 members during the year. Social gatherings had again been an unqualified success but efforts to form a debating section had been less so.

Developing Debates

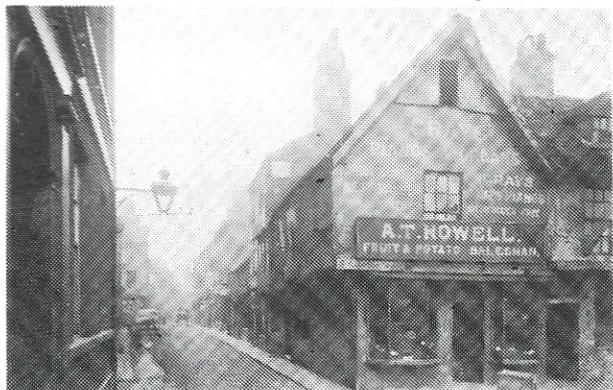
James Forster said: *"The Council attempted to develop the debating side of the Society, by arranging for a number of papers to be given after the Council meetings each month and although not so readily attaining the success deserved, there is every hope of those meetings ultimately achieving success."*

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James Forster suggested that members should be brought together more frequently - a view which won the support of the Council and resulted in a series of small dances and whist drives on the first Monday of each month at the Feasegate Restaurant, located on the site of the present Feasegate entrance to British Home Stores. When that restaurant closed, meetings were switched to the Crescent Cafe in Blossom Street (now part of the site of the Odeon cinema). The highly popular pianist on these occasions was Ted Neale.

The 1924-25 programme included three lectures given in the Creamery Restaurant in Pavement, now part of Lloyds Bank. About this time, the Society began to issue tickets for the larger functions. A Burns Supper, for instance, was priced at 5s and a New Year's Dance at 4s at Terrys Ballroom and Restaurant in 1926. It was in that year that "Burns Supper" replaced "Burns Concert" as the Society's means of celebrating the bard's life and works. Another innovation, children's parties, produced tiny tots events at Terrys in December 1925 and at St George's Hall, Castlegate, in October 1926.

Orpheus Choir

After attending a practice of Glasgow Orpheus Choir while on holiday in Scotland, James Forster and his brother John, founder of York's Old Priory Choir, forged a lasting friendship with Sir Hugh S. Robertson, the famous conductor.

This connection resulted in several visits of the illustrious choir to York's Festival Concert Rooms. Ticket prices for the concert on Saturday 12th February, 1927, ranged from 2s 4d unreserved to the best reserved seats at 5s 9d. The wide-ranging musical programme embraced madrigals, songs, part songs, negro dirges and spirituels, and folk and choral pieces.

The Society became affiliated in 1925 with the newly-formed Yorkshire Scottish Association. Some of its objectives make curious reading today. These were its stated aims:

- *To strengthen the Scottish National Consciousness.*
 - *To maintain helpful intercourse between Scottish societies in Yorkshire.*
 - *To eliminate giving financial and other help to undeserving applicants by preparing a blacklist and by any other possible method.*
 - *To assist individual societies in securing suitable speakers for dinners and artistes for concerts.*
 - *To encourage and foster the remembrance and love of Scottish literature, art and traditions*
 - *To assist in forming Scottish societies in towns where a Scottish society does not exist.*
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At the York Society's annual meeting in 1927, membership was reported to have reached 227 and the balance in hand had gone up to £ 44. 13s 8d.

An Englishman without brief for the Scottish race might have been provoked into believing that a Celtic invasion was in the making.....

Chapter 5

“Bubbly Jock an' Hotch Potch”

THE Twenties were drawing to a close. At the midway point between a war that had ravaged Europe and another that was to span the globe, the seeds of strife were already being sown.

Hirohito was the new Emperor of Japan. Stalin had launched his first five-year economic plan to catapult the Soviet Union into the forefront of European nations. The state of Prussia had lifted the ban on Adolf Hitler speaking in public. Mussolini's Fascist regime was flexing its muscles. The airship, "Graf Zeppelin" had arrived back in Germany after a round trip across the Atlantic.

The General Strike was long over but "Black Thursday" and the "Wall Street Crash," with its world-wide reverberations, lurked just around the corner.

A Scot, Professor Alexander Fleming, was on the point of discovering penicillin, and another, author Compton Mackenzie, was being reviled in virtuous circles for his avant-garde book "Extraordinary Women."

Nearer home, the "Flying Scotsman" had ushered in a new era of rail travel with daily non-stop runs in each direction between Edinburgh and London at speeds of over 70 mph.

In York cinemas, Mickey Mouse was making his first appearance in a sound film with the release of "Steamboat Willie." In local dance halls the Charleston was still the rage and, for the musically inclined, "Ol' Man River" was competing for the top song spot of 1928 with "A Room With A View" and "I Can't Give You Anything But Love Baby."

It was at that chequered time that the St Andrew Society of York sat down to its 27th annual dinner in Terry's Cafe on Friday 30th November 1928.

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Poetic Greetings

In the flyleaf of the ornate menu was a poetic greeting from "The Scots Society of St Andrew in Norwich" -

*"Scots frae the Highlands, and Scots frae the Islands,
Scots frae the Lowlands, the cities and glens,
Where 'er ye hae wandered, in 'wet' lands or 'dry' lands,
Greetings tae ye frae the Broads and the Fens.*

*"Forgathered in Norwich, - no a' reared on porrich,
Are brithers and freens, wha are prood o' ye a',
Frae the Ha' o' St Andrew, guid luck now we send you -
Success tae a' Scots wha frae Hame are awa' "*

Alderman Inglis presided over yet another magnificent repast which began with a choice between "Cockie Leekie" or Mock Turtle soup, followed by "Filets o' Sole" in a white wine sauce, and the haggis.

The serious eating was an offering of "Roastit Heiland Stirk, Jigots o' Mutton, Bashed Neeps, Wee Kail aff the Caustic, Tawtees Biled an' Frizzled," followed by "Heathery Hens Baket in an Ashet", with salad, and topped off with a choice from "Auld Kirk Trifles" and "Pears wi' Vanilla Ice."

The cheese course was described as "A bit o' the Mitey Kebbuck, wi' Ait Cakes an' Green Stuff", followed by coffee.

Amendments to later annual dinner menus saw the emergence of other distinctly Scottish dishes like "Bubbly Jock wi' Sausage an' Greens" and "Hotch Potch wi' Whuppit Cream."

Entertainment was provided by soprano Mrs R. Ward (the former Miss Muriel Bullivant, according to the programme), baritone Leslie Wright, piper Murdoch Mackay, and accompanist Miss Gertrude Waterworth.

A verse on the menu's end cover seems to have anticipated the outcome of this gastronomic and musical treat -

*"Wi' mony a vow and lock'd embrace,
Our parting was fu' tender;
And pledging aft to meet again,
We tore oursel's asunder."*

The Society's office-bearers for that 1928-29 session included as Vice-Presidents, Councillors J.W. Dow, MBE, and T. Gray, Miss B. McKendrick, J. Hamilton, JP, Dr H. Yellowlees, OBE, and A.M. Wisely. The Chaplain was the Rev R.D. Whitehorn, the Secretary D. Beattie, 14 Grange Street, York, and the Treasurer R.J. Walker.

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Stalwart founder member J.W. Forster was Chairman of Council, with M. Murchison and Mrs T. Laurie as Vice-Chairmen. The Members were Mrs A. Beattie, Mrs S. Smith, the Misses N. Lovie, V. Murchison and A. Phillips, and Messrs D.Campbell, J. Crammond, C. Grant, D. Holmes, H. Hutchison, T. Laurie and T. Watson.

Fox Fracas

While Society members indulged themselves at that 1928 annual dinner, a less agreeable assembly was reaching boiling point at the nearby De Grey Rooms. Lt-Colonel F.C. Gurney of Hotham Hall, and hunting community friends, had sparked off a row at a meeting of the League for the Prohibition of Cruel Sports. Gurney had asked the chairman, Percy E. Hurst, what would become of foxes in England if fox hunting was to be abolished.

Hurst: *"England was once overrun by wolves, but mankind and wolves could not get on together - therefore the wolves had to go. The same applies to foxes."*

Gurney: *"By what means?"*

Hurst: *"The best possible means, but not by the development of cruelty. You and your friends derive pleasure out of the suffering of these animals."*

When Hurst recommended shooting as a means of stamping out foxes, he was told by Gurney: *"Your reply shows your dismal ignorance of the question you are discussing."*

Gurney went on to speak about the war, referring to conscientious objectors, whom he described as *"utter cowards."*

Hurst: *"You cannot bring in politics here. Are you a sportsman?"*

Gurney: *"I have done a great deal more for England than you have ever done. It will take a great deal more than you and your friends to frighten me and my friends."*

Thereupon, Gurney and his fox-hunting cronies rose from their seats and stomped from the room

Sabbath Sins

Such was the news of that evening in York. Earlier in the day the Society's President, Alderman Inglis, had defended at a meeting of the city's Health Committee a Sunday afternoon film show on health issues. Several councillors were opposed to showing films on Sundays and recommended that the matter be referred to the Watch Committee.

Alderman Inglis explained that the films dealt with works of charity or mercy and from the health viewpoint were thoroughly successful. The matter was nevertheless referred to the Watch Committee.

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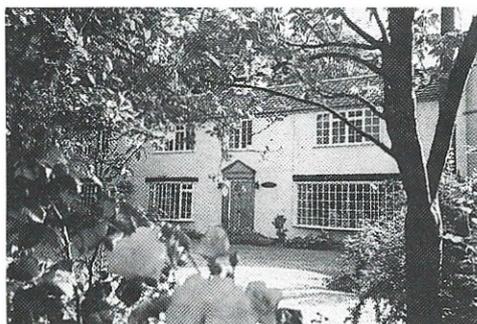
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Forty miles away, at Hull, the Chamber of Commerce deferred decision on a proposal to build a Humber Bridge. The Chairman said: "*This is such a gamble with the regime of the river that no sane man dare take it.*"

St Andrew Society activities during the 1928-29 winter included a social at Feasegate Restaurant, a Hallowe'en party for members' children at the De Grey Rooms which was followed by an adults dance until two in the morning, a special morning service at the Presbyterian Church in Priory Street, a dance at Terry's, a New Year whist drive and dance at the De Grey Rooms, a Burns Night, a lecture, and a closing whist drive and dance in March.

Four Presidents

In the 36 years between the formation of the Society and 1930 there were only four Presidents - Alderman William McKay 1894-97 and 1898-1914; General Andrew Wauchope 1897-98; Alderman J.B. Inglis 1920-24 and 1927-30; and the Archbishop of York, the Most Rev Cosmo Gordon Lang 1924-27. There then followed Dr J.G. McBride (three years), and A. Harrower (four years), with the Rev Malcolm Wilson serving a two-year term which set the norm until 1961 when the Presidency was reduced to an annual appointment.

Although the local Press carried occasional reports of the Society's activities, it was not until 1928 that the first photograph appeared, taken at a Burns Supper which cost members 5s.

From 1933 the President assumed responsibility for engaging a preacher for the Society's annual church service in December.

In 1933, too, there is the first record of how much members paid to attend the Society's annual dinner. The 10s 6d ticket included the by now legendary meal and a string quartet to play during it, as well as a dance orchestra to play into the wee sma' 'oors.

On Tuesday 2nd December 1930, the "Yorkshire Herald" carried a five-column picture of the haggis being piped in at the annual dinner in the Royal Station Hotel.

That the social life of the Society's members was extremely well catered for is obvious from its syllabus for the 1932-33 winter season, with no fewer than a dozen events to lure people away from the fireside. This was the social diary for that winter:

5 October - Social evening at Royal Station Hotel.

12 October - Whist drive at Crescent Cafe.

28 October - Dance at Terry's Cafe.

29 October - Children's party at Tudor Cafe

30 November - St Andrew's dinner at Royal Station Hotel.

14 December - Whist drive at Crescent Cafe.

2 January - Dance at Terry's Cafe.

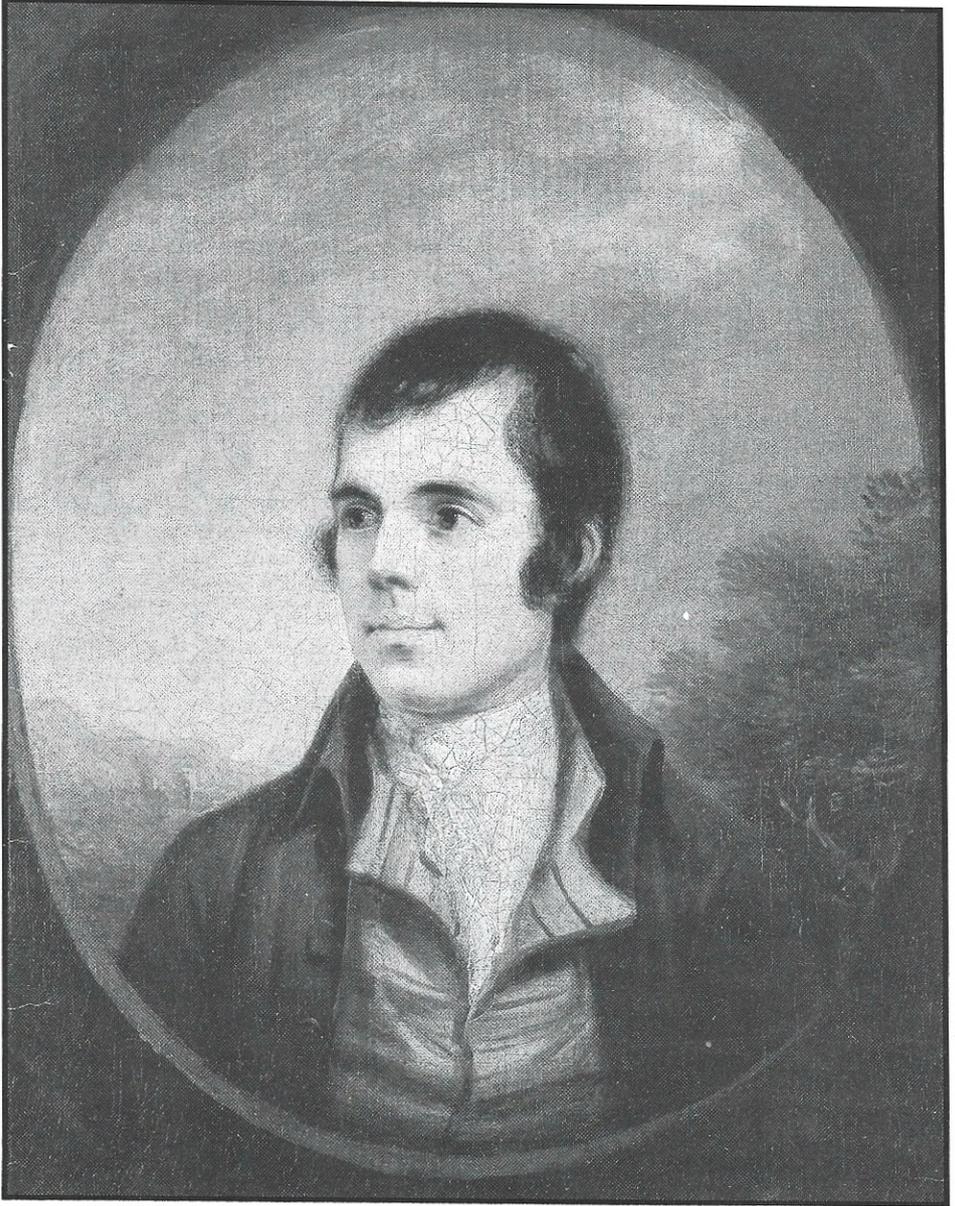
25 January - Burns Night supper at Royal Station Hotel.

17 February - Dance at Terry's Cafe.

1 March - Social evening at Royal Station Hotel.

8 March - Whist drive at Crescent Cafe.

24 March - Dance at Terry's Cafe.



Even in the best of company, there are times when it is difficult to restrain the zealot, especially in the passionate territory of the life and works of Robert Burns. One orator told the St Andrew Society: " His crown was a wreath of holly and his insignia of royalty the wooden plough which had been transformed into a harp."

Chapter 6

“Ower the Tap?”

AN abiding strength of the St Andrew Society of York has been the capacity and readiness of its members to integrate, almost seamlessly, with the city and environment in which they have chosen to live.

Fortunately, the Society has not been embarrassed by nor has it encouraged that least attractive of Scottish traits - the loud and over-long singing of the homeland's praises, the baying of the braggart which begs the stranger's query: "Why did you leave it then?"

There is little to commend the brashly over-sentimental Scot who insists on informing a largely uninterested world that his "heart's in the heather", that he craves the hills and the glens, that there's no place quite like "Grannie's Heiland hame."

That brand of dementia is totally absent from the Society's long and happy association with its city of domicile.

Indeed, at their 35th Annual Dinner in 1936, Society members were told by the city's Lord Mayor, Alderman Tom Morris: *"We welcome you as highly esteemed citizens. Your special virtues make a real and valuable contribution to our communal life."*

True Believers

There were many admirable qualities in the Scottish character, he said. Perhaps the greatest was "the Scots' power of adaptability and their marvellous capacity for making the best of the circumstances and improving the shining hour."

Even in the best of company, however, there are times when it is difficult to restrain the zealot, especially in the passionate territory of the life and works of Robert Burns. Going "ower the tap" about "Rabbie" is scarcely a heinous offence, and hyperbole recognises no boundaries when the "true believer" has the floor at a Burns Night.

Hyperbole was certainly the close friend of the Rev J. Mitchell, former President of the St Andrew Society of Harrogate, when he proposed the "Immortal Memory" at the York Society's function in January 1935.

Burns, he claimed, was *"the king of poets, who stood alone among poets for originality, energy, sparkling wit, delightful humour, exquisite tenderness and heart-melting pathos. His poems were enjoyed with a delight almost unknown in the history of literature. He was one of the greatest benefactors of the human race."*

Dinner at the Royal Station Hotel, York, 57 years ago.



The York society's annual dinner at the Royal Station Hotel on 30th November 1937 had as its principal guest Mr Neil Cameron of Sunderland, who was founder and Hon. President of the Northumberland and Durham Caledonian Society. He was also Vice-President of Clan Cameron. Among those present were the Lord Mayor of York, Councillor C.T. Hutchinson, the Sheriff, Councillor W. Thompson, and their ladies, Councillor & Mrs T. Gray, the Rev Malcolm Wilson, the Presbyterian Minister (who was President) and his lady, Mr & Mrs G. A. Potter- Kirby, the Rev & Mrs K.J. Donald, Dr & Mrs Arthur Dench, Dr Ross, Dr Sprunt, Squadron Leader and Mrs Evans-Evans, Mr & Mrs J. Syme, Mr & Mrs J.H. Rutherford, Miss Pressly, Mr & Mrs W.G. Woolley, and Mr & Mrs A.Harrower.

Not entirely content with this gushing eulogy, he went on: *"His crown was a wreath of holly and his insignia of royalty the wooden plough which had been transformed into a harp."*

World Allegiance

He added: *"Over the lonely veld and crowded cities of South Africa, the sheep walks of Australia, along the mountainsides of New Zealand, amid the floating islands of China, on the banks of the Ganges, among the spicey groves and smiling valleys of the West Indies, in the shadow of the Pyramids, on the savannahs and rolling prairies and boundless plains of the new world, thousands are gathered avowing their allegiance to the poet king."*

At the 1937 dinner, the Rev Malcolm Wilson, Presbyterian Minister and Society President, declared that the organisation had neglected the study and promotion of Scottish literature. The Society's other two objectives - social intercourse and benevolence - had been fulfilled, but they had neglected the third. However, a number of members had discussed how best to promote the interests of Scottish art and literature and it was likely that a plan would emerge soon (it seems that the project was shelved with the approach of war in Europe).

"Literature expresses the spirit of a nation and we have a literature of which we can be proud," the President said. *"It would be of great profit to us if we could meet and read Scottish literature and listen to lectures on Scottish literary men."*

Common People

Proposing "Our Native Land", was Neil Cameron of Sunderland, founder and President of the Northumberland & Durham Caledonian Society, and a Vice-President of Clan Cameron.

"We are here to worship at the shrine of a great heritage," he said. *"It is a heritage of which every Scot is proud and a heritage of which very few other nations can boast."*

They knew of the efforts of Bruce and Wallace in the fight for Scottish independence, of the writings of Scott and Burns, and of many other notable men in both war and peace, but it was not really they who made the history of Scotland. It was the common people - they were the lifeblood of the nation.

People who were driven out of their homes because of the penalty imposed on them for the rising in Scotland at the time of the war of independence had laid a foundation in New Zealand and Australia of British friendship, of which the current generation was indeed proud.

The Scots were now influential forces in these countries and they had raised "the greatest nation ever known". Furthermore, the mixture of Scottish and English blood had created *"a very good person."*

An unusual feature of the 1938 dinner was the presence of three generations of one family - Alderman J.B. Inglis with his son and grandson.

Shining Genius

At the 1939 Burns Night - the last for a long time - the "Immortal Memory" was given by W.L. Andrews (later Sir Linton) of Yorkshire Post Newspapers.

The newspaper editor said of Burns: "*His sins of passion have been more relentlessly disclosed than the crimes of Charles Peace. We know so mysteriously little about Shakespeare but about Burns we know almost everything, and with this knowledge we find the man had even nobler qualities than we may have thought.*"

"Had he survived, despite his ill health, and then enjoyed security and leisure to live a poet's life like a Tennyson or a Wordsworth, his genius might have shone even more brightly. If he had had Shelley's opportunities, could he have rivalled Prometheus Unbound?"

Mary Rose

As Hitler's Panzers rolled into Prague and Britain prepared for the inevitable war, the Society sponsored, on 12th and 13th April, 1939, a presentation at the Rowntree Theatre by the Presbyterian Amateur Dramatic Society of J.M. Barrie's "Mary Rose."

The "Yorkshire Evening Press" said of the show: "*Their presentation was well done and fittingly entertaining. Acting in strange surroundings carried its own difficulties but they were well surmounted, with due regard being paid to the unusual lighting effects.*"

"Marjorie Taylor in the title role has charm and sensitiveness and Dr Arthur Dench (father of Dame Judi Dench) opposite to her, as Simon, reacts in a pleasant and sincere way. Hamish Henderson and Eleanor Crammond are effective and the other parts, all well studied, are by David Beattie, Charles Mein, John Moffatt and Jean Moffatt who is also the producer."

Another critic wrote: "*It was a well balanced show, splendidly set, with a thorough understanding of the Barrie mind behind it. We got not only the humour and the sadness but the sweetness and the wonder of this beautiful love story based in Celtic lore.*"

Other productions by the players had included "Scott of Abbotsford", "Campbell of Kilmohr", "Hobson's Choice" and "The Woolin' o't."

The performances were in aid of York County Hospital, the Dispensary, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, the Presbyterian Church Bazaar Fund, and the St Andrew Society Benevolent Fund. Hunter & Smallpage Ltd loaned furniture and John Gray & Sons undertook the bookings. Among advertisers in the programme was the Electricity Showroom in Clifford Street, announcing a reduction in the price of electricity to three units for 1d -enough to cook a four-course dinner for six or supply hot water for a 10-gallon bath.

Forty years after first appearing in a Society publication, W. Grant & Son, the Ring Shop, Spurriergate, was offering free insurance with every ring from 35s to £ 30. Bettys Ltd in St Helen's Square was open until 11 30 pm for grills and suppers.

The officials who governed the Society's affairs until the outbreak of war in September 1939 had as their President, A. Harrower, JP, and as Vice-Presidents, founder member J.W. Forster, former President Dr J.G. McBride, President for eight years Alderman J.B. Inglis, JP, and M. Murchison. The Secretary was Harold Hutchison, "Bangholm", 28 Beech Grove, Acomb, and the Treasurer was D.C. Stewart, "Abbotsford", Lang Road, Bishopthorpe.

The Council comprised the Misses Bennett, Jack and Phillips, Mrs Mein, Mrs Russell, Dr J.I. Russell, Dr J.E. Sprunt, and Messrs H. Arnott, J.M. Melville, C.B. Mein, C. Russell and J.D. Scott.

It was scarcely surprising that the Society should go into abeyance during the war years. But would it re-emerge afterwards? What kind of afterwards would it be? Would there even be an afterwards?

Chapter 7

Society Re-Born

THE early hours of Wednesday 16th October, 1946, saw ten Nazi war criminals hanged in the prison gymnasium at Nuremberg. A few hours earlier, Hermann Goering had committed suicide by biting on a hidden cyanide pill.

That evening, at the Presbyterian Church Hall in Priory Street, York, the talk was not of Nazis but of a proposal to re-constitute the city's St Andrew Society. There was an excellent turnout in response to a letter sent out the previous week by the pre-war Secretary, Harold Hutchison.

Harold had written: *"As you are aware, the activities of this Society were suspended on the outbreak of war. At a recent meeting of the remaining members of the Council appointed in 1939 it was felt that some effort should now be made to revive activities. It was therefore decided that a general meeting of members be convened at the Presbyterian Church Hall on Wednesday 16th October, 1946, at 8 pm. I sincerely trust you will find it convenient to be present, as it depends upon the attendance at this meeting and the response of the members to this letter, as to whether the activities of the Society can be resumed. The attendance of any new members will also be welcome."*

"It will be appreciated that owing to the present difficulties of catering it may not be possible to hold the usual Annual Dinner and Burns Supper, but if it is resolved to recommence activities it is hoped to arrange an interesting programme for the coming winter, and the dinner and supper to be revived as soon as practicable. The retiring Council also recommend that the annual subscription be 5s."

Austerity Years

Despite the austerity of these years of rationing and a "black market" which flourished in nylons, chocolate, perfume and other luxuries, the Society did succeed in holding a St Andrew's Day Dinner Dance at Betty's (tickets 10s 6d, reception at 7pm, dinner at 7 30 pm, dancing until 11 30 pm) and a Hogmanay Supper Dance at the same venue (tickets 8s 6d, dancing 8 pm to 1 am, with supper at 9 30 pm).

The Society is indeed fortunate to number among its members today several who can clearly recall its re-birth. The author is indebted to George and Jean Fleming, both of them ex-Presidents, for recollections from the immediate post-war years.

George writes: *"When the Society was re-constituted in 1946, Dr J.I. Russell was President, Harold Hutchison was Secretary and I became a member of the Council.*

"Jean and I can remember vividly the Hogmanay of 1946, held in Betty's Ballroom, on the top floor of the present building, with everyone present that night sensing the atmosphere of a new beginning and the commencement of new friendships. So many of the loyal members are no longer with us, notably Professor John McGregor, Mr and Mrs Ben Mein, Mr and Mrs Harold Hutchison, Mrs Ethel Brisby and countless others from that memorable reunion."

The Fuel Minister Emmanuel Shinwell had issued a warning that there was not enough coal to get through the winter and the cotton industry had warned of imminent stoppages because of fuel shortages. Heavy snowstorms and sub-zero temperatures in the worst winter in memory were combining with the serious fuel situation to bring Britain to its economic knees.

George Fleming: *"One of the first Council meetings I attended in early 1947 was held in Dr Russell's rooms in Clifton Mental Hospital where members deliberated without any form of room heating. Dr Russell, a psychiatrist, seemed to be oblivious to mundane matters like bodily comfort, and so the rest of us just had to grin and bear the cold - and quietly freeze!"*

According to George, the backbone of the Society in the early post-war years was Harold Hutchison, whose efforts on its behalf were "prestigious." Another stalwart was the Rev William Colquhoun, Society Chaplain and Minister of York Presbyterian Church. The Minister, George says, did more than anyone to publicise the Society and recruit new members.

"In those early days," George says, *"it was the custom to have a summer afternoon outing involving members' children. I can well remember one such occasion during the presidency of John Lyall when a large company assembled at York railway station to board a specially chartered diesel train - one of the first - bound for Bolton Abbey and Grassington, with the Press*

in attendance to give the party a good send-off. A great day was enjoyed by all age groups."

The outing is also remembered by Dr Angus MacLeod, one of a select band who have served the Society twice as President - in his case, between 1959 and 1961, when it was the custom to hold office for two years, and again in 1970-71.

Dr MacLeod: *"Then, as now, the Society had connections with British Rail. For most of us, however, it was our first experience of travelling on a two-car diesel unit. I remember well that trip to Grassington, as it was the occasion I was introduced to Mary Sykes, who was soon to become the wife of my very good friend, Bob Gair, the dentist, then serving as a Council member. Over the years, before his retirement, Bob pulled out many of our aching teeth."*

The children's party of that year is also recalled: *"It was held in the YWCA, then in Cumberland House. There ensued three hours of unabated noise, laughter and tears, with the odd sandwich and glass of lemonade thrown in. Quite a few of those lads and lassies are now parents themselves."*

Over-Subscribed

George Fleming, who became President in 1962/63, reveals that the "Supper Dance" was the order of the day - *"very formal but no speeches, with the emphasis on dancing."* The Hogmanay Ball was extremely popular and on more than one occasion was held in the Assembly Rooms. It was usually well over-subscribed, leaving the Council with the unenviable task of allocating tickets and having to refuse some applications.

George adds: *"My wife Jean - who was President in 1990/91 - and I have been members now for over 45 years and it has been a great satisfaction to us over the years to see the Society flourish and prosper and build towards this, the centenary year of 1994."*

After the war, the office of Chairman disappeared and it fell to the President to head Council meetings. The first Honorary Member - founder member James W. Forster - was elected in 1947. Sadly, he was to savour the honour for only six months, succumbing to lung cancer in the same year.

The first post-war syllabus shows that Dr J.I. Russell was President, with the Rev William Colquhoun as Chaplain, D.C. Stewart as Treasurer, and Harold Hutchison as Secretary. Members of the Council were: J. Armstrong, J. Blackstock, T.S. Ewing, and J.A. Lindsay (all serving three years), Mrs Dutton, Mrs Ferguson, A. McLean and C.B. Mein (serving two years), and Mrs Russell, the Rev William Colquhoun, Professor J. McGregor and D.A. Lamb (serving one year).

Apart from the popular "Supper Dances" of that time, there were "Old Fashioned Parties" at 5s, including supper, a "Flannel Dance" at the St Andrew Hall, Bishopthorpe, a summer garden party in the grounds of Rawcliffe Holt ("by kind permission of Mrs Naish") at 2s 6d, a "Bridge Drive" at the Creamery Cafe on Pavement and a "Conversazione" at the Royal Station Hotel.

Principal guests at Annual Dinners included H. H. Herman, OBE, Chief Constable of the City of York, Alderman F. Gaines, JP, Lord Mayor of York, Dr J. Johnstone-Jervis, Dr Nicholas Gebbie, B. de Bear Nicol, H. W. Meikle, CBE, Historiographer for Scotland and, in 1951, J.W. Herries, Chief Reporter of "The Scotsman", Edinburgh, who was also a playwright and author.

Uncivil World

Proposing "The Immortal Memory," the Scottish writer declared: *"What we need today in this contentious uncivil world is more of the spirit of Burns's sense of common decency. If we could only see the world and the human race through his eyes, prospects would be opened up of achieving a better and saner world than we know today."*

The Edinburgh journalist had every reason to question the sanity of the world as it was then. The Chinese had invaded Tibet and had come into the Korean War, too, and the Viet Minh had sent the French reeling in a new offensive in Vietnam. King Farouk was demanding the immediate evacuation of British troops from the Suez Canal Zone and Puerto Ricans had attempted to assassinate US President Harry Truman.

The winter avalanche toll in the Alps had reached 108, and 80 miners had been killed in a huge underground explosion at Cresswell Colliery in Derbyshire. Fifty-six people had died in two BEA crashes - a Dakota at Mill Hill, North London, and a Viking while landing in fog at Heathrow Airport.

Attlee had announced the recall of 250,000 reservists and the Government had sliced 2d from the 1s 6d individual weekly meat ration, now down to a meagre four ounces per person.

There were many, however - and no doubt some within the Society - who still derived amusement from the theft a month before of the Stone of Destiny from Westminster Abbey where it had rested safely for 650 years. Scottish Nationalists claimed they were responsible and that they had returned the hefty sandstone slab to the country from which it had come. Historians claimed that the stone had been taken from Scone by Edward I in 1296 and England had promised to return it.

Chapter 8

A Diamond Jubilee

THE Society's diamond jubilee was not far off. Its Burns Night dinner dance at Terry's Restaurant on Friday 23rd January, 1953, had as its principal guest J. Renwick Vickers, Honorary Vice-President of the Burns Federation.

It was the nature of the haggis rather than the "Immortal Memory" which he proposed, however, that took the fancy of the *John Blunt Column* in York's evening newspaper.

"What's all this fuss about the haggis?" the columnist wrote. "Scotsmen must be a little weary by now of the same old Sassenach jokes about this celebrated dish. But having sampled it for the first time at the Burns Night supper in York, a colleague of mine has some interesting observations to make.

"Was he revolted? He was not. Nor, on the other hand, was he particularly excited by this new gastronomic adventure. The truth is - and may Burns forgive his English lack of sensibility - the haggis is an undistinguished, muddy-looking object, and it tastes just like what it is - minced mutton liberally laced with oatmeal."

The columnist went on: *" At the dinner he counted no fewer than 14 haggis. They were solemnly carried in procession, led by the piper and a solemn lassie, wearing tartan, who twirled two bottles of Highland whisky like a ceremonial drummer.*

"Twin haggis on a large platter for the President and his principal guests were carried triumphantly on high by a white-capped chef. It was a stirring moment. But when he caught the catering supervisor's eye and asked him if he could pass on the recipe, he whispered that the haggis, all 14 of them, had been specially imported for the occasion."

Denied by wars the opportunity of celebrating either its Silver or Golden Jubilees, the Society marked its Diamond one in 1954, when its Burns Night dinner at Terry's was addressed by the legendary Glasgow preacher, Dr William Barclay.

Giving the Oration, Dr Barclay declared: *"You can still hear the songs of Burns on the lips of Glasgow working men as they leave the pubs on a Saturday night."*

That, he added, was the highest compliment one could pay to Scotland's national poet. For, said Dr Barclay, Lecturer in Theology at Glasgow University and former Motherwell FC player, Burns was the poet of the common man.

"I am not going to whitewash Burns," he said. "He would not have liked it. Nor am I going to muckrake his life as so many speakers do.

"Burns had two qualities of greatness - the seeing eye and the eye that penetrated beneath the surface. He could get straight from the simple things into the very essence of eternity".

Prince of Preachers

Former President, Dr Angus MacLeod, remembers: *"He was a prince of preachers, from my Alma Mater, Glasgow University. He was an absolute master of both the written and spoken word. We were able to have him with us as he was a life-long friend of our Chaplain, the Rev William Colquhoun of blessed memory. William was the best public relations officer the Society ever had."*

The toast, "The Land We Live In and Our Guests" was given by T.S. Ewing, President-elect. Replies were given by the Lord Mayor, Alderman Charles Oliver, and the Sheriff, Councillor John Shannon.

The "Yorkshire Evening Press" reported: *"The haggis was piped in by Dr Alan MacDonald and, although kilts were noticeable by their absence, many of the Society's women members wore sashes in their clan tartan."*

Burns songs were sung by the York Old Priory Choir. Chairman for the evening was the Society President, M. Bengtsson, and W.C.M. Ferguson was toastmaster.

Jubilee Celebrated

A special dinner to mark the Diamond Jubilee was arranged at Betty's on Friday 1st October (tickets 7s 6d) and a special film show commemorating the jubilee year and featuring Scottish life and scenery was given at the Creamery Restaurant on St Andrew's Day.

Pipe Major W. Ross of Scarborough Highland Pipe Band piped members into the dinner at which the toast to the Society was proposed by J. McLusky of the Harrogate Society and Chairman of the Yorkshire District of the Burns Federation.

The Harrogate visitor claimed that he approached his address with the respect and admiration that a baby sister (the Harrogate Society was then only 33 years old) had for a sister somewhat older in years and carrying them with grace and distinction.

"I feel sure," he said, "that the Society, through the years, has won the respect and affection of the people of York. I am also sure that the Society feels a great pride in being associated with this wonderful old city and the efforts made by members to contribute to the civic and social life of it."

Members took the opportunity of the celebratory dinner to show affection for their long-serving Secretary, Harold Hutchison. He and his wife were presented with a tea service and a cigarette case by President T.S. Ewing in recognition of 34 years service "performed quietly and most efficiently." When Harold retired in 1961 after 41 years as Secretary, he was presented with a cheque and Mrs Hutchison received a marcasite necklace and brooch. On his previous

"retirement"(at the outbreak of war) Harold had been presented with a bureau.

Harold first came into contact with the Society shortly after the end of the First World War. He told the dinner guests that he came home on a Saturday and on the Monday his father, without saying where, took him to a Society meeting and had him promptly made Treasurer and "temporary" Secretary.

Among those who provided entertainment were the York Old Priory Choir - it had been one of Harold Hutchison's first duties, 34 years before, to arrange a concert by them at the Tempest Anderson Hall.

The choir recorded in "The Bulletin", their own news sheet: *"It was an honour and a compliment to be invited for the third successive year. A selected group gave a programme after dinner which consisted entirely of Scottish part songs and Psalm tunes, six of which were Burns poems. The services of the choir were well appreciated and much comment was made on the excellent choice of items, the pronunciation of the dialect songs of Burns and particularly the inclusion of Kedron and Belmont."*

Bard's Achievements

In the following January the oration was given by Alex MacMillan, Rector of the Royal Academy at Irvine, Ayrshire, and a member of the International Burns Festival Committee. He spoke of the bard's achievements and disillusionments - *"We have had greater men, more successful men in and out of Scotland before and since, but we have not made a fuss of them after they were dead. Burns was not a hero poet whose work could be likened to a great public building, but he spoke for the common man. He was one of ourselves."*

That year - 1955 - the Society ventured once more into the field of choral entertainment, staging a concert by the Musselburgh Junior Singers at the Rowntree Theatre on Tuesday 12th April (tickets 2s 6d, programme 3d). Under conductor Morton Robertson and accompanist Raymond Wadsworth, the choir's programme of solo, duet and group singing, as well as Highland dancing, was well received by a full house.

The 47th Annual Dinner in January 1956 had as its principal guest, A. Wilson Boyle, immediate past-President of the Burns Federation. He pointed out that Burns had written nearly 300 songs - 200 of them in the last five years of his life - while at the same time he was travelling 200 miles a week on horse-back and maintaining an extensive correspondence with the leading men of his day.

Lip Service

The Society President, Dr Allan MacDonald, said: *"Too often do we unfortunately see evidence of lip service being paid to those fundamental principles which make for good relations between nation and nation, employer and employed, and between man and man. How Burns would have delighted in rantin' at the bigots and hypocrites of today."*

Bridging the Years -1



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② JUNE 1957 - It was "Full House" as members headed for a day at Bolton Abbey and Ilkley.



②

① JUNE 1957 - Decorated with shields bearing the Cross of St Andrew and the Lion Rampant of Scotland, the first diesel excursion train from York carried more than 200 Society members and their children to the Yorkshire Dales. President John Lyall makes a point to Stationmaster R.W. Clappitt who waved the train away.

③ SEPT. 1958 - Attending the Burns Federation Annual Conference at Harrogate were (back row, left to right) - Dr A.I. MacLeod, Dr R.J. McIlroy, Dr K.I. Bruce, H. Hutchison, J. Sneddon, I. Walton, H.S. Walters, C. Wilkins G. Fleming and J. Lyall, President; front row Mrs MacLeod, Mrs Wilkins, Mrs Hutchison Mrs Anderson, Mrs Walton, Mrs Walters, Mrs Bruce, Dr Mrs McIlroy, Mrs Fleming and Mrs Lyall.

③



President-elect John Lyall said that Society members liked to believe they were York citizens, prepared to settle and play their part in the life of the community, and not be mere passers-by. York had so much to teach them from its wonderful past, and so many opportunities for the future - a future which Scots would be happy to share in and help.

The Lord Mayor, Alderman Fred Brown, stated: "*England is a good land. I am told there is only one better. It is a land which has been greatly enriched by a continuous transfusion of Scottish blood.*"

A noticeable expansion in the Society's activities had been going on during the 50s and the syllabus for 1957-58 included a June train outing to Ilkley and Bolton Abbey (adults 10s 6d, children 5s, tea at the Blue Bird Cafe, Ilkley), dinners, supper dances, a Hallowe'en party at the YWCA, Cumberland House, military whist drives, a special St Andrew church service, a Hogmanay Ball, Burns Night, a dinner-dance at the Milton Rooms, Malton, and a film night at the Church Hall in Priory Street.

The railway outing to Ilkley attracted 200 Society members and their children. The train was adorned with large shields emblazoned with the cross of St Andrew and the Lion Rampant of Scotland. York Stationmaster R.W. Clampitt waved off the outing.

Principal Annual Dinner guests during the late 50s included J. Milligan, President of the Huddersfield & District Scots Society, A.B. Mitchell, President of the Bridlington & District Caledonian Society, Dan Bogie, President of the Harrogate St Andrew Society, and A.J. Paterson, Chief Constable of Leeds.

The Chief Constable, an Aberdonian, expressed the view that Burns had derived his talents from his parents. Whatever education Burns received, it was largely from his father who tutored his seven children each night after work.

Libel on Burns

"What a wonderful example that would be," he said, "to some modern parents who, in this day of a so-called welfare state, want to leave everything possible to someone else rather than themselves. It is a libel to say that Burns was a rake and a profligate in his early manhood. All the available evidence points to the opposite conclusion."

By 1958, Society dinner-dances and the Hogmanay Ball were priced at £1.00 and the Burns Bi-Centenary Celebration & 50th Annual Dinner, held at Terry's on 23rd January, cost £1. 5s. A preliminary notice issued by Harold Hutchison reminded members: "*Applications for reservation of seats should be made as early as possible, and not later than Friday 9th January.*"

Harold was invited to be a member of the Executive Committee which arranged the Burns Federation's annual conference at Harrogate in September 1958. Members attending from York included Dr & Mrs A.I. MacLeod, Dr & Mrs R.J. McIlroy, Dr & Mrs K.I. Bruce, Mr & Mrs Harold Hutchison, Mr J. Sneddon, Mr & Mrs L. Walton, Mr & Mrs H.S. Walters, Mr & Mrs George Fleming, Mr & Mrs C. Wilkins, Mr & Mrs John Lyall, and Mrs Anderson.

The inclusive charge for attending functions over the three days of the conference was 40s per person, or 35s if not participating in a Sunday outing to York.

Appropriate ways of celebrating the bi-centenary of the poet's birth in the following year were uppermost as the business of the conference. York Old Priory Choir made yet another invaluable contribution to a concert at the Cairn Hydro Hotel on the Saturday evening.

York's bi-centenary celebration coincided with the Society's 50th Annual Dinner at Terry's on 23rd January, 1959, at which the principal guest was Fred J. Belford, of Edinburgh, Vice-President of the Burns Federation.

More than 3500 biographies had been written about Burns, he said, and more than 1000 editions of his works had been published. The great love Scotsmen had for Burns was not merely hero worship but a genuine desire to do honour and pay homage to a very great Scot. No country could offer a similar parallel to the enthusiasm Scotsmen had for him.

Secret of Immortality

The secret of his immortality lay in Burns' ability to get hold of people's hearts and deal with the deep fundamental emotions experienced by everyone - and he described them in words people could understand. He had also stemmed the possibility of the Scottish language sinking into oblivion, and had given beautiful songs to the world.

"What a treat it is to hear songs like this compared with the rubbish and trash turned out each night on radio and television," he declared.

(At that time, it was estimated that much of the £ 800 million which the UK's teenagers had to spend went on records and dressing up. Teddy Boys, with their familiar uniform of draped jackets with velvet collars, bootlace ties, drainpipe trousers and sideburns, were an everyday sight lounging around jukeboxes in coffee bars. The hits of the time were "Livin' Doll", "What do you want to make those eyes at me for?" and "Puttin' on the style." (Teenage adulation was centred on cult figures like Cliff Richard, Elvis Presley, Bill Haley, Lonnie Donegan, Tommy Steele, Vince Eager, Billy Fury and Marty Wilde).

Dr Angus McLeod, President-elect, proposed the toast to "The Land We Live In and Our Guests", which brought a response from the Sheriff of York, Councillor L. Daley. Songs were offered by Edith Mitchell, of Edinburgh, accompanied by Janet W. Sargent. John MacDonald was piper and Robert B. Gow served as Toastmaster.

Fiftieth Dinner

To mark the occasion of the 50th anniversary dinner, the Council decided to appoint two members to honorary status. They were Mrs A. Watson and Mrs T.S. Ewing, who were handed appropriate scrolls.

Dr MacLeod reflects on the Council meetings of that time: *"For some reason which escapes me they were usually held in the 'cutting-up room' of the Church Hall. The name would seem*

to have been more appropriate for a butcher's establishment. There we sat, sixteen of us, and one of our greatest tasks was to allocate places from a huge waiting list, especially for the St Andrew's Day, Hogmanay and Burns Night dinners. I have had much less difficulty in getting a ticket for the Scotland-England match at Hampden Park.

"Happily, most of the Council members of that era can share these memories but I recall with sadness the passing of John Lyall, my predecessor in office, who was Manager of Boots the Chemists, and Bill Davidson, who was President-elect - an outstanding Medical Consultant and a very good and loyal friend. Then there were Harold Hutchison and Jock Ferguson, who both filled the office of Secretary with distinction, and Alex Forster, who for so many years performed the task of Toastmaster with quiet authority and aplomb."

At a coffee party for women members of the Society in Cumberland House on 22nd October, 1959, it was decided to form a Women's Section, the original committee consisting of Mesdames Bruce, Hill, Lyall, Stavely and Walters.

Ahead lay the 60s, the decade of flower power, Mods and Rockers, and Beatlemania, the era which would see the assassination of President John Kennedy, the outbreak of war in Vietnam, Macmillan's "wind of change", Mao's Cultural Revolution, and England's World Cup. It was an age which would also witness the Beeching Axe, the Great Train Robbery, the horror of Aberfan, the scandal of John Profumo and Christine Keeler, the U2 spy plane, Cuban missiles and the Bay of Pigs, and the triumph of Concorde.

Chapter 9

The Swinging Sixties

THE 60s were welcomed in carnival style at a Hogmanay Ball in Terry's, attended by 180 Society members and their guests. As the last seconds of 1959 slipped away, the figure of an old man was seen coming down the stairs from an upstairs room, while a baby ascended the stairway as a symbol of 1960.

At the first Society event in 1960 - the Annual Dinner - the Lord Mayor, Alderman R. Stavers Oloman, thanked the Society for its support for the establishment of a University at York.

Dr William Davidson, President-elect, reaffirmed that support, expressing the hope that when the University was founded it would not become just a place where students gained letters, or sought jobs, but would be a place of education. And in years to come, students would say: "I was at York."

He stressed that many organisations would have a significant role to play in bringing the University to York and the St Andrew Society would in no way be found lacking.

The "Immortal Memory" was proposed for the first time by a woman - Mrs Jane Burgoyne, Honorary Vice-President of the Burns Federation.

Yorkshire Pudding

The presence of Yorkshire Pudding on the menu at the St Andrew's Day dinner - the first since 1938 - created a measure of glee in the "Yorkshire Evening Press."

Previewing the dinner, its John Blunt gossip column asked: "Could this mean the defeat, the bitter humbling of the much-vaunted haggis? Have the unique qualities of the Yorkshire Pudding won it an incredible victory over its mysterious rival? Have Scots realised their mistake at last?"

The writer went on: "*Secretary Harold Hutchison chuckled at the thought of it - then firmly assured me that such was not the case. Regrettably, I must report that the haggis will be there, too. Fifteen of them, weighing 3lbs each, are being sent down from Glasgow and will be piped in with all due ceremony.*"

Telegrams of good wishes were received at the dinner from other societies in Birkenhead, Edinburgh, Halifax, Hamilton (Ontario), Harrogate, Hull, London, Auckland (California), Mexico and Whitley Bay.

The Annual Dinner in January 1961 found Dr Ronald Mavor, Drama Critic of "The Scotsman" (and son of James Bridie) likening the proud and hypersensitive young Burns to the rebellious Jimmy Porter, most celebrated of the "Angry Young Men."

Dr Mavor, who studied medicine at Glasgow University with the Society President, Dr Angus MacLeod, was accompanied by his Danish wife attending her first Burns event.

Ladies Circle

The Ladies Circle, as it was now called, was already a flourishing venture, with no fewer than seven entries in its winter calendar for 1961-62, most of them in the Guild Room at the Creamery Restaurant.

They included a talk on "Foot Comfort" by a representative from the Scholl Foot Comfort Service, a visit to Terry's Chocolate Works, a talk by a veterinary surgeon on "Small Animals", a lecture by Dr M.E. Barnett on the "Health of the School Child", a talk on "Hats" by a member of staff from W.P. Brown Ltd., a demonstration on decorating Easter Eggs, and a whist drive. The committee comprised Mrs B.L.C. Climpson, Mrs M. Staveley, Mrs J. Lyall, and Mrs S. Hill. The Secretary was Dr Mrs E.A. McIlroy of Strensall.

A reminder of the time when Scotsmen were barred from holding any office in York was given at the Annual Dinner in 1962. The Lord Mayor, Alderman Mrs I.G. Wightman, said that Scots had not been welcome in York during the Middle Ages. In 1419 they were prevented by order of the civic authority from holding office or *"following any trade or profession in York for evermore."*

In 1501, the Corporation ordered that large knockers be made and fixed at each of the Bars and that Scots wishing to enter the city should knock first and not be admitted without the permission of the Lord Mayor, the Warden or the Constable of the Ward. Those who did not seek permission were liable to imprisonment.

The 1962-63 season began with a reception by President George Fleming and a social evening at Betty's. Many changes had been rung in the list of office-bearers. Harold Hutchison had accepted the Society's nomination as Honorary Vice-President. The President-elect was R.B. Gow. The Rev William Colquhoun remained the Society's Chaplain. The Secretary was R.R. Ferguson, 34 Ashley Park Road, Stockton Lane, with Alex Forster, 161 Hull Road, as Assistant. Alex was also Toastmaster and the unofficial Society historian, to whose researches the author of this centennial booklet owes a great debt. The Treasurer was A.F. Thomson. Members of Council were: Mrs M. Staveley, Mrs G. Robertson, J.A. Fraser, Dr R.J. McIlroy, Mrs B.M. King, Mrs S. Hill, J. McDonald, R.M. Mathieson, Mrs E. Davidson, Mrs J. Armstrong, Mrs J.P. Clark, and R.D. Gair.

Two Nations

York's Member of Parliament, Charles Longbottom, was clearly canvassing future votes when he used as his theme at the 1962 St Andrew's Day dinner the unemployment situation in Scotland and North-East England. The media, he said, were concentrating on the theme of a different standard of employment in the South. The emergence of "two nations" would be a tragedy. A massive drive to create jobs in the North and Scotland was required.

When Burns time came around again in 1963, W.H.T. Inglis, Director of Education for Ayrshire, told the York society that the poet's life had been "no success story."

"It was no Abraham Lincoln all over again, from log cabin to the White House," he said. *"Burns was born and died in humble circumstances. It is the queerest success story of all time. And yet this man became a god. His immortality is unmatched in the modern world."*

Entertainment on this occasion was provided by the White Rose Singers, a male voice choir under the direction of Sydney Skinner, and composed entirely of ex-cathedral choristers.

On Sunday 5th May, 1963, the gift of a lectern was made by the Society to the Presbyterian Church in Priory Street. It was presented by the President, R.B. Gow, and dedicated by the minister. It came into immediate use, for the Old Testament Lesson was read from it by Dr Bill Davidson, and later, the New Testament Lesson by M. Bengtsson, both of them past Presidents of the Society. The lectern was the work of the celebrated craftsmen, Thompsons Ltd of Kilburn. Their trademark - a mouse - appears on the base.

Bridging the Years - 2



OCT. 1962 - Society members were welcomed to the President's Reception at Betty's Restaurant by George and Jean Fleming (above). Pictured from the left are Dr J.I. Russell (a past President), Mrs F. Scott, and Dr R.J. McIlroy.



NOV, 1974 - The St Andrew Day dinner-dance was held at the Royal Station Hotel. Left to right are Iain Campbell, General Manager of British Rail's Eastern Region, and his wife Anne, with President Alec Layhe, his wife Margaret and John MacDonald.



JAN. 1975 - Burns Night was at Terrys. Left to right - Robert Gow, John MacDonald (Society piper), Eileen Robertson, Jim Robertson, Alec Layhe (President), Councillor Reg Pulleyn (Sheriff of York), Margaret Layhe, Beth Craig, Professor B.P. Ruthven(Orator), Douglas Craig, Mrs Ruthven, Andrew Hounam and Margaret Hounam.

First Lady President

By 1965 the Ladies Circle had instituted luncheon meetings on the first Tuesday in each month in the Guild Room at the Creamery Cafe, as well as a special Christmas luncheon. Speakers at these included Miss M.E.G. Stocker, Governor of H.M. Prison, Askham Richard, and Society member Mrs Lionel Walton - better known as the York novelist Jean S. MacLeod whose novel "The Dark Fortune" won the Cartland Award for historical novels in 1962. In 1965 she became the Society's first lady President. Also recalled as a member of the Society is another historical novelist, Vivian Stewart.

As President-elect in 1964, Mrs Walton, of Alne Cross, Alne, near York, had described to the St Andrew's Day gathering the many similarities between Scots and Yorkshire people. They were both thrifty, generous and home-loving people who were proud of their traditions and culture, she claimed. They also shared a rather pawky sense of humour.

At the Hogmanay Ball that year, presentations were made to the Society Chaplain, the Rev William Colquhoun, and Mrs Colquhoun who were leaving to minister in Guernsey. Mr Colquhoun was also made an Honorary Vice-President.

After a successful year as the first lady President in the Society's 71 years history, Mrs Walton, whose novels then numbered more than 100, went on a world tour. This included visits to Scottish societies in Australia and the United States. In Brisbane she addressed the Australian Country Women's Association and in Sydney the Highland Society. She went on to speak in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Night Out

The 1965 oration came from Major Kenneth Maxton, a Glaswegian serving with the Royal Army Education Corps at Strensall. He said he was often asked whether Burns was a great poet or just an excuse for a night out. His reply was that most Scots had enough imagination to have a night out for its own sake without going to all that trouble. He believed, however, that those who read Burns would always find something to satisfy their needs, whether it was humour, satire, patriotism or whatever.

By 1966 the St Andrew's Day dinner was priced at £ 1. 10s and by 1974 it had doubled to £ 3.00. The ever-escalating level of rents sought for venues used by the Society forced ticket prices up again and again. Betty's Ballroom did not re-open after the war, the De Grey Rooms had become unsuitable, and Terry's - a very popular venue - closed during the 70s.

The Gimcrack Rooms and the Viking and Royal York hotels became the only suitable venues with dance floors large enough to accommodate eightsome reels as well as adequate catering. The Merchant Taylors and Merchant Adventurers Halls, King's Manor, St William's and St John's colleges, the Sports Centre at Clifton, Pike Hills Golf Club, and, more recently, the Folk Hall at New Earswick, have been employed for smaller functions.

Society Piper John MacDonald was given an unusual task at the 1969 Burns Night dinner. The Lord Mayor of York, Councillor Mrs M.M. Armitage, was, in recognition of her Northumbrian

ancestry, piped into the event to the strains of the "Keel Row." Mrs Armitage went on to delight the 190 members and guests with her views : *"For a long time I thought Burns Night was the Scottish equivalent of Guy Fawkes. I know now, of course, that whereas the English have crackers for their celebration, the Scots go crackers!"*

She added that Robert Burns had long been the bard in Scotland and - amid laughter - *"for a long time, he was barred in England too!"*

At this dinner President Harvey Lorimer had Douglas Craig as his Toastmaster and dancing was to Douglas Green and his band. Janet Millar accompanied songs by soprano Margaret Hounam who was a Society favourite for many seasons.

Scottish Welcome

Tom Macfarlane (President 1981-82) remembers with pleasure the welcome he and his wife were given by the Society when they moved from Glasgow to York in 1968.

"Like many Scots before us," he told the author, *"we found our way to the Presbyterian Church in Priory Street, which was an excellent recruiting ground for the Society. The subscription was 10s and tickets for the dinner that year were £ 1. 15s. Members and guests were received by the President, Harvey Lorimer, a resplendent figure in Highland dress. One feature of the evening which I particularly recall was that the President specifically introduced any new first-time members - a nice gesture.*

"I was very impressed with the general format of the dinner and toast list, followed by dancing. All the functions I had attended in Glasgow were either male-oriented dinners or dances with buffet suppers. Here was a reception, dinner, songs, speeches and dancing - all for £1. 15s!"

Tom added: *"The function was also distinctly more Scottish than any social function I had attended in Scotland."*

Tom confessed that his knowledge of the works of Robert Burns was rudimentary, but having attended every Burns event since, his understanding is now much better than it was!

The 60s ended on several chilling notes in the world at large. In the final week of December almost 300 people died from 'flu in the UK.

Crazy Charles Manson and members of his hippie commune were facing seven charges of murder, including the brutal slaying of actress Sharon Tate. Lt William Calley was facing a court martial for his part in the massacre of 109 Vietnamese civilians at My Lai.

Thirteen people were killed and 100 injured in terrorist bombings in Milan and Rome. Ulster MP Bernadette Devlin was jailed for incitement to riot in Bogside, and 98 people were arrested at Aberdeen for pitch invasions during a Springbok match.

Chapter 10

“It’s A Woman’s World”

IN the past two decades, the Society has been the beneficiary of the increasingly positive role which women are playing in its affairs. Indeed, since Mrs Walton first ploughed the presidential furrow in 1965 there have been seven women Presidents.

Following Mrs Walton, there were Mrs M.M. Blacklee (1969-70), Dr Eileen McIlroy (1979-80), Mrs Elizabeth Craig (1983-84), the late Mrs Mary Roberts (1984-85), the late Mrs Margaret Layhe (1986-87), Mrs Jean Fleming (1990-91), and Mrs Eileen Robertson (1993-94).

Five of them shared the presidential honour with their husbands - George Fleming (1962-63), Dr R.J. McIlroy (1964-65), A.C. Layhe (1974-75), D.M. Craig (1975-76) and Jim Robertson (1978-79).

Syllabus after syllabus, the members of the Ladies Circle were engaged during the 70s in a burgeoning programme of innovative talks, demonstrations and visits. To select but a few during the early 70s, there were talks on Old Silver, Sherry, Furs, York Castle Museum, Home Wine Making, Meat, the art of Graphology, and Superstition.

Visits were made to Claypenny Hospital, Easingwold; Wedgwood at Barlaston; the Theatre Royal; York Mansion House and Guild Hall; Askham Bryan College of Agriculture; Harewood House; Castle Howard; Sion Hill Hall, Kirkby Wiske, Thirsk; Leeman Road Sorting Office; Lothersdale Mills, Keighley; and Bishopthorpe Palace by river.

Fashion parades, and demonstrations on perfume, gas, cake decoration and floral art swelled the list of events still further.

Talent Pool

Women were also pre-eminent in the pool of talent from which the Society could draw for its main functions or for the annual “let-your-hair-down” Ceilidh. Tribute is long overdue to soloists and personalities like Margaret Hounam, Eileen Robertson, Ann Murray and May Kitchman, not forgetting the effervescent Jean Moreland at the piano. Among men who were brave enough to “face the music” were Jim Robertson, John Davidson, and the sadly missed John Moreland. The Society is indebted to all of them for the pleasure they brought to countless social gatherings.

Throughout the 70s, the Society’s main calendar of social events followed a pattern similar to that established in the 60s. During the presidency of R.R. Ferguson (1971-72), for instance,

the Burns orator, Dr Donald Macmillan, Director of the Nuffield Centre's department at Leeds University, claimed that if the bard had lived at the present time he would have been "top of the pops" with his beautiful love songs.

"It is wrong to think he was just an ignorant peasant," he said. "He was well educated and could not only speak English but created his own Scots language for his poetry."

The dinner guests on that occasion were entertained to Scots songs by Roy Howell, York City Treasurer. A lamp was presented to Mr and Mrs Denis R. Bowlby, in recognition of services to the Society.

During Andrew Hounam's term (1973-74), the orator was the Rev John Weir Cook from Henderson Church, Kilmarnock. Alec C. Layhe proposed "The Toon We Bide In and Our Guests", receiving a response from the Lord Mayor, Alderman Jack Wood. "The Lasses" were toasted by Jack L. Smith, with a response from Miss Margaret R. Chalmers, SRN.

The St Andrew's Day dinner at the Royal York Hotel in 1974 had Alec Layhe as President and Iain M. Campbell, then General Manager from British Rail's Eastern Region Headquarters in York, proposing "Scotia." This was something of a BR double act, since Alec Layhe was also a senior manager at the Regional HQ.

Dining Dilemmas

The problem of identifying suitable speakers for Society events and of ensuring that they make a timely appearance has plagued the presidential role over the years.

Peter Chalmers (1985-86) describes the dilemma: *"The bard certainly got it right when he wrote of 'the best laid schemes.' I thought I had done well to get two speakers from Burns' own country....one, the then President of the Burns Federation, the other an ex-Chief Constable, both reputed to be first class orators.*

"Of course, the fact that we tend to import our speakers and that they have to travel some distance to functions that inevitably take place in winter, all combine to increase the odds of things going 'agley'..... but of course, we live in hope...."

Peter adds: *"So far as the St Andrew celebration was concerned, my suspicions were not aroused until my speaker phoned in mid-afternoon to say he would go straight to the hotel instead of to my home, and could I arrange a room for him to change on arrival? Heavy snow reported in the Borders did nothing for my nerves! A later phone call to say he had quit his car at Carlisle in favour of rail transport didn't really help either!"*

Peter Chalmers was now well beyond the nail-biting stage: *"The speaker and his lady had not arrived by the scheduled start. The only option was to ensure that at least good food and wine would help to relieve the tension - though not that of the President! But of course, as they say in the theatre world, 'it will be alright on the night'; and it was - but only just!"*

"I doubt if I would have enjoyed any sustenance had I known that as well as his road problems, the speaker had sat helplessly in his connecting train at Newcastle for almost an hour while repairs were carried out.

"In the end, he arrived about an hour late, and gave his speech, though without the benefit of his supper!"

It is said that lightning does not strike twice. Don't ever say that to Peter Chalmers!

Peter: "During my year in office I thought it was true! When my orator for Burns Night phoned to say his wife had been taken into hospital as an emergency case and that he might not be able to speak on the night, I was not really worried...at first. It could not happen twice? Surely it couldn't?"

"A phone call a couple of days beforehand destroyed any faith I had in lightning. He could not make it, and could I find another orator? It would have been easier to find a snowball in the middle of the Sahara!

"All was not lost, however, for despite his distress over his wife's illness, my speaker gallantly committed his address to paper, which he sent post-haste to York, where it was bravely delivered by the Society Secretary, Alec Layhe. So, as the other bard said, 'All's well that ends well.'"

A drama of a rather more satisfying kind had caught up with Peter during the presidency of the late Bobbie Brown (1972-73). He explains: *"I had an uncle and aunt from Australia staying with us on their first visit to this country for 50 years. Naturally, as exiled Scots, they attended both the St Andrew and Hogmanay festivities.*

"At the Hogmanay function I casually found out that the President also had an Australian lady as his guest. My aunt and uncle were, of course, keen to make the acquaintance of a fellow countrywoman. To say that my uncle was surprised was the under-statement of all time. The lady turned out to be the sister of his best friend, killed in New Guinea during the war.

"My uncle had 'dandled' his pal's baby sister on many occasions before the war but had lost touch with her for more than 30 years. To meet after all that time was something....but to do it more than 12,000 miles from home was quite remarkable. Tears and reminiscences were plentiful during the rest of the evening."

Seaside Showtime

Several times during the 70s, Society visits were arranged to the opening performances of summer shows at Scarborough's Futurist Theatre. These included "The Black and White Minstrels"(twice), "The Bachelors" and "Val Doonican". It was the practice after these shows - arranged by the then Secretary, Jim Robertson - to visit the Mount Hotel, owned by a stalwart of the Scarborough society, for coffee and sandwiches. After the owner's death, the St Nicholas Hotel became the apres-theatre venue.

Andrew Hounam (Secretary 1979-83, President 1973-74) assumed responsibility for these outings when Jim Robertson was appointed President in 1978, the initial one going to the "Mike Yarwood Show" at Bridlington.

During the 1984 St Andrew's Day dinner, the President, Mrs Mary Roberts, congratulated Alex Forster on attaining 60 years membership of the Society. Alex, then aged 81, joined the Society while he was a student at Leeds University. He was educated at Archbishop Holgate's Grammar School, to which he returned as a teacher after gaining a physics degree. He remained at the school for 41 years, retiring as Deputy Headmaster.

Alex, of Hull Road, York, was Assistant Secretary for several years before being elected President in 1967. For more than 10 years he was toastmaster at Society dinners, and he was a meticulous recorder of the Society's early history.

At the Society's Annual Meeting in St Columba's Church Hall (the Presbyterian Church), he was made an Honorary Vice-President in recognition of his services. His connections with the Society went back to his father James and uncle John who were founder members in 1894.

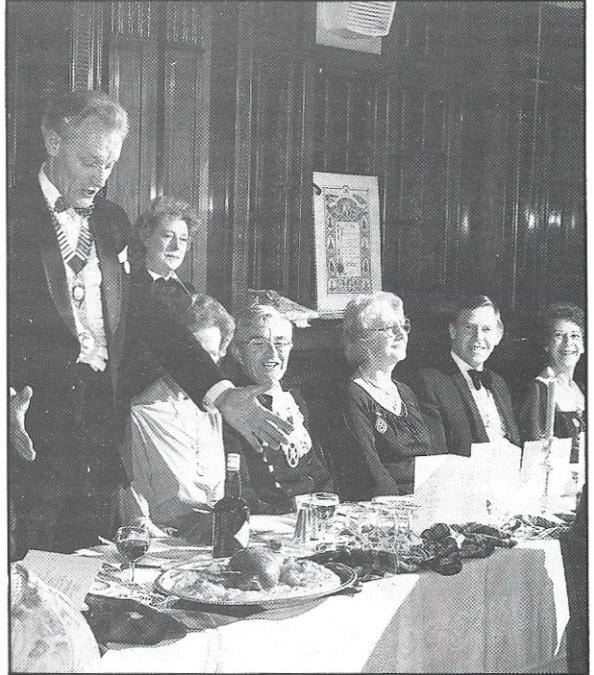
Chapter 11

Colourful Years

THE most recent of the Society's archives, covering the past decade, are reflections of the remarkable advances in camera and film technology over the past few years. Those from 1986 onwards, in particular, are splendidly colourful records, delightfully evocative reminders of the presidencies of the late Mrs Margaret Layhe, Ron Robb, Graeme Miller, Frank Paterson, Mrs Jean Fleming, John Davidson, Stewart Mains, and Mrs Eileen Robertson.

There are pleasing images of Mrs Margaret Layhe's presidential reception at the Merchant Taylors Hall and of her Burns Night dinner at the Viking Hotel where Piper Pat MacKenzie is captured at "full baw." "Guisers" are candidly snapped doing their stuff at Ron Robb's Halloween Party - Mrs Ada Robb contributing as a skeleton, John Davidson and Frank Paterson as schoolboy miscreants, Mrs Jean Moreland, presumably as a witch (or Flamenco dancer wrestling with a black cape!), Jim Robertson as a "Hooray Henrietta", and John Moreland in a quite indescribable outfit. And there must be prettier sights than Society members tackling treacle scones without the use of their hands!

Bridging the Years - 3



JAN. 1979 - President Jim Robertson (1978 - 79) addresses the haggis during the Annual Dinner at Terrys - "Weel are ye wordy o' a grace, as lang's my arm."



MAY 1984 - President Mary Roberts (1984 - 85) congratulates Alex Forster (81) on reaching 60 years membership of the Society. Alex joined the Society while a student at Leeds University. His father and uncle were founder members in 1894.

APR 1988 - Mrs Ada Robb, Ladies Circle Chairman (centre) presents a £ 500 cheque to Mr Jack Birch, Chairman of York Against Cancer. President Ron Robb (1987-88) is on the extreme left.



First Newsletter

The Society's first newsletter appeared during Ron Robb's presidential year. And what a year that was! It got under way with the Society's bowls and quiz teams reaching the final stages of the Burns Federation competition. The bowlers - Messrs John Moreland, David Crerar, John Davidson and Gordon Gomersall - were beaten by only two points (9-7) by the eventual winners, Wakefield. The quiz team - Mrs Mary Roberts, and Messrs Bob Cocker, John Buchan and Glen Nelson - brought a runners-up trophy back to York, having lost 23-19 to Sheffield in the final.

A Ladies Circle coffee morning at the President's home raised £ 160 for York Against Cancer. A mystery coach tour in the "East Riding" included supper at the Feathers Hotel in Pocklington. The tempo rose in July with a barn dance at the Folk Hall, New Earswick. Dancing was to Jim Swanney and his band, with the dancers under instruction from Jim's wife.

The President's reception at the Merchant Taylors Hall featured a 15-strong Northern Comfort Barber Shop Chorus. In October, 25 members of the Ladies Circle visited Bishopthorpe Palace, with afternoon tea at the Ashcroft Hotel. Seventy members and guests attended the Hallowe'en Party at Pike Hills Golf Club.

Thirty members - the largest-ever single grouping - attended the Burns Federation's International Conference in Edinburgh. The programme included a civic reception, two ceilidhs, an official dinner, visits to a country life exhibition and display of letters and works of Burns, as well as a service at St Giles Cathedral and a wreath-laying at the Burns Memorial Window.

At the St Andrew's Day dinner, a hand-painted plaque was presented to the Lord Mayor of York by Miss Mabel Irving, MA, on behalf of Sir Simpson Stevenson, Provost of Inverclyde, Scotland. Miss Irving was in York to propose the toast "Scotia" at the dinner in the Royal York Hotel.

Mrs Ada Robb, Chairman of the Ladies Circle, presented a £ 500 cheque to Councillor Jack Birch, JP, Chairman of York Against Cancer. And Scottish patriotism was firmly to the fore when her husband Ron handed over £ 200 in twenty crisp Royal Bank of Scotland £10 notes to the Scanner Appeal organised by York's evening newspaper.

Grand Occasion

During an equally busy and innovative presidential term, Graeme Miller presented a further £100 to the Scanner Appeal. The highlight of his year, however, was a Society reception at the York & Ainsty Suite, York Racecourse, on Friday 14th April, 1989, for the Yorkshire & Humberside Scots Societies County Ball (tickets £ 13.50). It was a grand occasion, the principal guest being Sir Ian Godfrey Bosville - MacDonald of Sleat - who claims to be descended from "Somerled", a 12th century Thane of Argyll & Lord of the Isles.

Besides the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of York, Councillor Reginald Pulleyn and Mrs Molly Pulleyn, leading guests included Mrs Anne Gaw, President of the Burns Federation, Ronald Aitken, President of the Yorkshire District of the Federation, and James G. Brown, President of the County Ball.

Entertainment was provided by contralto Mrs Eileen Robertson, accompanied by Mrs Jean Moreland, and members of the City of York Pipe Band under Pipe Major Donald Allen. Master of Ceremonies was the Society's Jim Robertson, and Society Piper Pat MacKenzie, the 1994-95 President, was also well to the fore.

The Society's reception committee comprised Mr & Mrs John Davidson, Mrs Margaret Miller and Mrs Christine Macfarlane.

The programme of dancing - the "jiggin" - was clearly designed as a counterpoint to the five-course meal. For dances included "The Dashing White Sergeant", "The Reel of the 51st Division", "Robertson's Rant", "Dalkeith's Strathspey", "The Gay Gordons", "The Duke of Perth", a Barn Dance and an Eightsome Reel. Thirsty work!

A footnote to the beautifully crafted programme read:

"We wish our best tae every giest,
The same tae every brither,
And may this be the happiest nicht,
We've ever spent taegither."

The grand event was followed on the Saturday by a dinner, dance and Ceilidh at the Abbey Park Hotel (tickets £11. 50).

Board Room

A "first" for the Society was recorded when Frank Paterson (President 1989-90) staged a reception in the magnificent surroundings of the Board Room in the original York headquarters of the North Eastern Railway. The oak-panelled room, hung with the portraits of past railway chairmen, including "Railway King" George Hudson, became the headquarters of British Rail's Eastern Region, of which Frank was General Manager from 1977 to 1984.

After a sumptuous buffet, a striking audio-visual presentation, set to music, was given by Geoff Holmes, another former railway manager. The centrepiece was a Scottish sequence specially developed for the Society. Also featured was a presentation on York Minster, and another, "Millstone Grit", a sequence on West Yorkshire and brass bands which had won several competitions and earned Geoff his Fellowship of the Royal Photographic Society.

The White Rose Conference - the Annual Meeting of the Burns Federation - was held at the University of York during Frank Paterson's presidential year. It was a truly international occasion, the 570 participants including delegates from Australia, Brazil, Canada, New Zealand and the United States.

Bridging the Years - 4



NOV 1988 - A clutch of 11 past-Presidents: back row - P. Chalmers, H. Lorimer, J. Robertson, T. Macfarlane, G. Fleming; front row- Dr Mrs E. McIlroy, Mrs M. Roberts, A. Calder, A. Hounam, A. Forster and R. Robb.



JAN 1989 - Top tablers at the Burns Dinner were: Mrs M. Layhe, left, H. Lorimer, Mrs L. Lorimer, Mrs Cooper, Councillor Ken Cooper, Lord Mayor, Councillor Reg Pulleyn, Mrs. Pulleyn, F. Paterson, Mrs G. Paterson, G. Miller and Mrs M. Miller.



1989-90 - Above, members of the Committee of the Ladies Circle and friends.



APRIL 1989 - The Society provided a reception committee for the Scots County Ball at York Racecourse. They were: Christine Macfarlane, left, John Davidson, Margaret Miller and Vera Davidson.

Many favourable comments were made about the warmth of the welcome extended by 26 Society members who spent a day at Langwith College registering delegates and directing them to the excellent University accommodation.

Society Secretary Alec Layhe was Conference Chairman. A reception and supper at the National Railway Museum also generated spontaneous plaudits. At the Annual Meeting, the Society's own Jim Campbell was elected Senior Vice-President of the Federation.

The conference dinner at York Racecourse was another sparkling occasion, with two dance floors required for the eager participants.

York was affiliated to the Burns Federation in 1950 as the 718th society to be so linked. Jim Campbell became President in 1990.

The Federation's main objectives, which have altered little over the years, are to:

- Encourage clubs and societies which honour Robert Burns.
- Strengthen the bond of fellowship among members of Burns Clubs and kindred societies all over the world.
- Keep alive the old Scottish tongue.
- Encourage and arrange schoolchildren's competitions to stimulate the teaching of Scottish history, literature, art and music.
- Mark with suitable inscriptions, repair or renew memorials to Robert Burns and his contemporaries.

The Orator at the Society's 81st Annual Burns Celebration Dinner & Dance in January 1990 was the President's brother, Ronald Paterson, a former Commander with the Metropolitan Police Force in London. The President's charity that year - York Against Cancer - was presented with a cheque for £ 775.

Cardiac Care

Almost 30 years after her husband's tenure as President, Mrs Jean Fleming donned the chain of office for 1990-91. As a result of Society activities during her presidency, she was able to present a cheque for £1000 to Dr Roger Boyle in aid of his Cardiac Care Unit at York District Hospital. The Society's charitable efforts were clearly keeping abreast of inflation!

Mrs Fleming's reception was held at York's Mansion House, and attended by the Lord Mayor, Councillor Keith Wood, and other civic representatives.

That year also saw the launch of an annual bowls competition in memory of Society member John Moreland. A shield for the competition, carved by Graeme Miller during his year of office

Bridging the Years - 5



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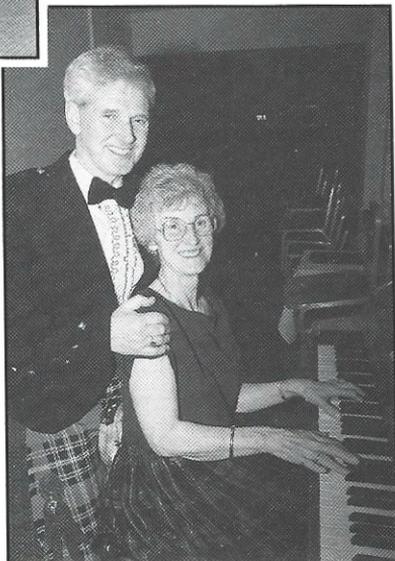
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① **JAN 1989** - Society members welcome the haggis at the Tesco store at Clifton Moor, York. In this group are Jim Campbell, left, Frank Paterson, President-elect, and Pat MacKenzie, this centenary year's President.

② **JAN.1993** - Burns Night at the Gimcrack Rooms, York Racecourse. Back row - Pat MacKenzie, left, Ron Robb, Margaret & Alan Highet, Bob & Anne Collins, John & Vera Davidson, James Sharpe. Front row - Jim & Eileen Robertson, Lady Mayoress, Lord Mayor, President Stewart A. Mains & Mrs Aline Mains, the Sheriff & his Lady, Alec Layhe.

③ A sparkling accompanist at many a Society entertainment over the years - Mrs Jean Moreland, seen here at the piano with visiting tenor Alastair Macfarlane of Carnoustie.



③

and originally named the Thistle Bowls Championship Shield, was re-named after John, a former Secretary of the Society who had devoted much time and enthusiasm to organising both indoor and outdoor bowling.

The winners of the inaugural contest were Agnes Branscombe and Jim Duncan, followed in second place by Jan Wright and Stewart Mains. The trophy was handed over by Mrs Jean Moreland.

Bowls and Brains

Soon afterwards, the Society came up trumps in the Yorkshire District Burns Federation Bowls and Quiz Competition. The bowls team, led by David Crerar, and comprising Jim Duncan, Jim Robertson and Frank Adamson, won the cup, having beaten Otley, Harrogate and Bradford. The Quiz team of Stewart Mains (captain), May Townsend and Eileen and Jim Robertson, were very narrowly beaten by Barnsley in the grand final.

The year 1990-91 was saddened by the sudden loss of Mrs Margaret Layhe, President 1986-87, Mrs Mary Roberts, President 1894-85, and Dr William Fraser, President 1950-52, who was 90. Dr Fraser had been responsible, with a handful of others, for re-vitalising the Society after World War II.

In the following year, the Society also lost its long-serving Toastmaster, Historian, and Honorary Vice-President, retired schoolmaster Alex Forster. He was 88. He had been President in 1967-68 and acted as Assistant Secretary for many years. He was highly respected in York, serving as an official city guide and historian, a Freemason and life-long member of St Columba's United Reformed Church.

Faults and Shortcomings

John Davidson's presidency (1991-92) produced a magnificent Society donation of £1250 to the Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund (the "Macmillan Nurses"). That sum was then the largest amount the Society had ever raised for an individual charity in one year.

John told the author: *"I decided to have the Macmillan Nurses as my charity after being witness to the loving care bestowed on my very dear friend John Moreland. The sum raised was a proud achievement for the Society and the generous giving and hard work of many people, not least among them the £ 170 raised by the sale of Scottish dolls expertly knitted by Betty Chalmers."*

During John's year, Council members were provided with identifying name tags made by Mrs Margaret Hounam, to be worn at all functions. At main events, Council members were allocated to tables, enabling any faults or shortcomings to be spotted and corrected and providing the Council with valuable feedback.

Stewart Mains' presidency (1992-93) underlined a growth in Society membership which had begun in the mid-80s. Stewart commented: *"Not only has the number of members continued to rise - now over 200 for the first time in many years - but more and more are joining in*

the varied activities. The increase in younger members is particularly welcome."

A device which proved particularly effective in swelling attendances at social functions was that of allocating the entire membership to individual Council members. This ensured that Council members were less remote and that they could serve as "monitors" or even "gentle persuaders" should activities show signs of flagging patronage.

The President's charity - the Goodricke Appeal for Deaf Children in North Yorkshire - hit a new high with £ 1300 donated.

Gaelic Speakers

A proposal to run evening classes in Gaelic was floated at the Annual Meeting in 1992. These are now flourishing, organised by Ishbel Willey from Lewis, a former teacher at York's Mount School. Over 20 people meet each Sunday evening and under Ishbel's tuition are learning to speak social Gaelic, sing Gaelic songs and learn about Highland heritage.

Says the centennial year's President, Pat MacKenzie : " We have ten evenings before Christmas and ten afterwards, with the tenth meeting taking the form of a Ceilidh to round off the season.

"The language of Eden is not dying out - and we are glad to see that it is making a revival throughout the world."

Pat, formerly Train Planning Manager with British Rail in York, had written to the "Yorkshire Evening Press" seeking responses from people in the York area who would be interested in learning Gaelic. Little did he know that a colleague in a neighbouring office - Safety Manager Chris Willey - had a wife Ishbel, the native Gaelic speaker who now conducts the weekly classes!

According to the 13th issue of the Society's newsletter, "The Saltire", Stewart Mains shoulders some of the "blame" for the introduction of Scottish country dance classes at Askham Bryan.

Mrs Grace Paterson wrote in the newsletter: *"Every Tuesday at 8pm the decent folk of Askham Bryan pull up the drawbridge, man the barricades and fit their earplugs. The hoochers have arrived and for the next two hours the village hall is filled with the music of Jimmy Shand and Jim McLeod, the hoochs and laughter of the dancers and the shouted entreaties of Frank P., MC and caller extraordinaire."*

Grace added: *"It's all the President's fault. It was his idea to have a display at the St Andrew's Dinner Dance and we must have made it look enjoyable because several people said they would like to learn or improve their Scottish dancing. So that started it! The main theme of the evening is enjoyment. We are not up to RSCDA standard by any means but we now have a small repertoire of reels and Strathspeys."*

Ensuring that the record is set absolutely straight, Stewart Mainds says: "*I wanted to vary the formal entertainment at dinners in the Gimcrack Suite and asked Frank and Grace Paterson if they would organise a demonstration dance. They gladly did so, rehearsals causing a fair amount of wear and tear to their lounge carpet, not to mention the effect of the 'pipes' on their neighbours.*

"The dance selected was 'The Reel o' the 51st Highland Division' with 'The Duke o' Perth' as an encore. As a result of the overall reaction, Frank and Grace then set up the regular Tuesday evening class in the local hall at Askham Bryan. This has been very successful and has led to an increase in the Society's membership."

In April 1993, a party of 21 Society members attended the 13th Scots Societies County Ball at the Civic Centre, Castleford. Chieftain for the evening was Dame Flora du Bois Hay from Edinburgh. Representatives of 15 Scottish societies in Yorkshire and Humberside were there to welcome Dame Flora, Charles Kennedy, International President of the Burns Federation, and the York Society's own Alec Layhe, President of the Federation's Yorkshire District. Wakefield Caledonian Society were hosts.

The summer outing in June 1993 was a departure from the norm. By arrangement with the Society, Mr & Mrs Robinson - Ron and Nancy - opened their Escrick home and garden to members. After a succulent barbecue, the Society arranged a treasure hunt, putting competition, Scottish country dancing and other diversions to round off a splendid trip.

Society Quaichs

President Mrs Eileen Robertson (1993-94) and her husband Jim represented the Society at the Burns Federation Annual Conference in Calgary, Canada. There they had the company of Mr & Mrs Frank Paterson and Mr & Mrs John Buchan.

As 1994 - the centennial year - opened, the Society's Council agreed to purchase three polished pewter quaichs on a suitably engraved tray to be used on special occasions but especially for the toast to "The Haggis" after it has been addressed by the Society President on Burns Night. A quaich was also presented to the Lord Mayor of York, Councillor Mrs Ann Reid, to mark the Society's 100 years link with the city. The ladies of the Society each received a miniature porcelain flower basket and the men were given whisky miniatures.

The quaich was for centuries a common domestic utensil which originated in the West Highlands. It was the dish from which the Scot supped his porridge and drank his ale. These drinking cups were very widely used in Covenanted times and are mentioned in an old Jacobite song. The quaich became the traditional toasting cup of welcome in Scotland or even of good wishes upon farewell or parting.

The recession in Britain was showing only faint signs of lightening as Mrs Eileen Robertson prepared to hand the chain of office on to Pat MacKenzie to wear during the centennial year. Yet, the Society's contribution to charity scaled new heights when Eileen presented Mike

Bridging the Years - 6

APR. 1991 - Mrs Jean Fleming, President (1990-91) hands a £ 1000 cheque to Dr Roger Boyle (right) at York District Hospital to assist with his Cardiac Care Unit. Also taking part in the ceremony were Society Secretary Alec Layhe, Coronary Rehabilitation Nurse Jayne Peace, and Society Treasurer Tom Macfarlane.



MAY 1994 - Retiring President Mrs Eileen Robertson (1993-94) presents a cheque for £ 2200 to Mr M. Golding, York Chairman for Multiple Sclerosis, towards the purchase of a new ambulance. The Society's logo was enlarged and fixed to the side of the ambulance.

JAN. 1994 - President Eileen Robertson accepts an engraved pewter tray and Quaichs to mark the start of the centenary year.



Golding, Chairman of the York branch of her chosen charity - multiple sclerosis - with a cheque for £2200, a magnificent tribute to the open-handedness of members.

A concert in York by the three Aberdeen comedians who have found fame under the stage name of "Scotland, The What?" raised almost £ 600 on its own.

Stylish Centenary

As this booklet, "100 Years in York", went to Press, preparations were being made to celebrate the Society's centenary in some style.

Former President and long-serving Treasurer, Tom Macfarlane, was made an Honorary Vice-President in recognition of his outstanding contribution to Society affairs. A Scottish "Open Day" featuring music, dance and display, was held in the streets of York on Saturday 2nd July, 1994, to help raise public awareness of the Society's links with the city.

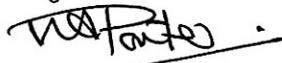
Former President Graeme Miller was putting the finishing touches to a magnificent tapestry incorporating the badges of Society presidents over the past 100 years, to be displayed at Society events in the future. Graeme's tapestry forms the basis of the front cover of this booklet.

The tapestry was due to be unveiled at the St Andrew Society dinner in November. At the same event, this booklet is to be launched and Dr John Shannon, Chairman of York Civic Trust, will "reveal" a metal plaque commemorating that very first meeting of "resident Scotchmen" at 19 High Ousegate, York, one hundred years ago. The plaque has been jointly sponsored by the Trust and the Society.

It will be officially unveiled by Dr Shannon on the external wall of the shop now occupied by K Shoes - the former Coffee Rooms - at precisely 8pm on the night of Wednesday 7th December. At that time - exactly a century on from the start of that first exploratory meeting - President Pat MacKenzie, with York's Lord Mayor and former Society presidents and guests, will use the Society's quaichs to drink a toast to the memory of the pioneers. This is to be followed by a reception at the Mansion House.

It is perhaps fitting in the centennial year, presided over by Pat MacKenzie, to recall that one of the founding fathers who assembled in the Coffee Rooms that storm-tossed night so long ago was also a MacKenzie - the Black Watch Sergeant Major who proposed the motion to set up a Scottish society in the city.

What a very long way the Society has come from that first tentative meeting! The crippling poverty and the stinking slums which scarred the city then are long gone. Few now live on the breadline. Most, though we all have our gripes, are largely content with their lot. The resident Scots are blessed with the opportunity of sharing in the prosperity of the city today. But they should be proud, too. For they have played a significant role in creating it.



W.A. PORTER,
York,
Autumn 1994

PRESIDENTS OF THE SOCIETY 1894 - 1994

1894-97 Alderman W. McKay, JP, Lord Mayor	1968-69 D.H. Lorimer
1897-98 Colonel (soon to be General) A.S. Wauchope CB,CMG	1969-70 Mrs E.T. Blacklee
1898 -1914 Alderman W. McKay	1970-71 Dr A.I. MacLeod
1914-20 Society in abeyance	1971-72 R.R. Ferguson
1920-24 Alderman J.B. Inglis	1972-73 R.C. Brown, CA
1924-27 Most Rev Cosmo Gordon Lang , DD, Archbishop of York	1973-74 A.C. Hounam, C Eng, MI Mech E
1927-30 Alderman J.B. Inglis	1974-75 A.C. Layhe, MCIT, FI Plant E
1930-33 Dr J.G. McBride, MB, Ch B, FRCS	1975-76 D.M. Craig, B Sc, FICE, FI Mun. E., M Cons E
1933-36 A. Harrower, FFA	1976-77 J.L. Smith, B Sc, C. Eng, FI Mech E
1936-38 Rev Malcolm Wilson, MA	1977-78 R.I. Cocker, C Eng, MI Mech E
1939-45 In abeyance	1978-79 J. Robertson, MOMS
1938-46 A. Harrower	1979-80 Dr Eileen McIlroy, MB, Ch B
1946-48 Dr J.I. Russell, MB. Ch B, FRFPS	1980-81 A. Calder
1948-50 C.B. Mein, BA, FFA	1981-82 Tom Macfarlane, CA
1950-52 Dr W. Fraser, B Sc, MB, DPH, DPN	1982-83 Gregor Grant, MRCVS
1952-54 M. Bengtsson, CA	1983-84 Mrs Beth Craig, B Sc
1954-55 T.S. Ewing	1984-85 Mrs Mary Roberts
1955-57 Dr A. MacDonald, MA, B Sc, Ph D, DipEd	1985-86 P. Chalmers, C Eng, MICE
1957-59 J. Lyall, MPS	1986-87 Mrs Margaret Layhe
1959-61 Dr A.I. MacLeod, MB, Ch B	1987-88 R.M. Robb, MCIT, MBIM
1961-62 Dr W. Davidson, MBE, MB,Ch B, DPH	1988-89 G.R.M. Miller, C Eng, MI Mech E
1962-63 G. Fleming, LDS, RFPS	1989-90 F. Paterson, O St J, FCIT
1963-64 R.B. Gow	1990-91 Mrs Jean Fleming
1964-65 Dr R.J. McIlroy, MB, Ch B	1991-92 J.A. Davidson
1965-66 Mrs J. Walton (Jean MacLeod)	1992-93 S.A. Mains, CA
1966-67 A.F. Thomson, B Sc, FRIC	1993-94 Mrs Eileen Robertson
1967-68 A. Forster, M.Sc., Dip. Ed.	1994-95 Pat G. MacKenzie

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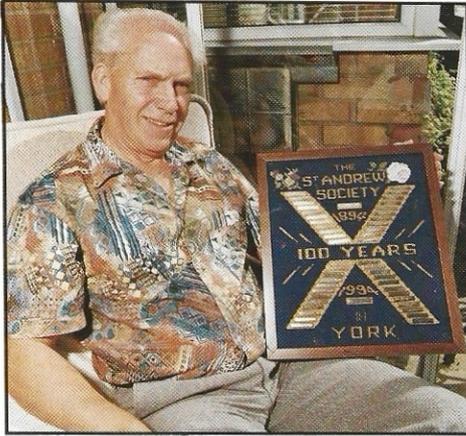
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Former President Graeme Miller with the tapestry he made to celebrate the Society's centenary.

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