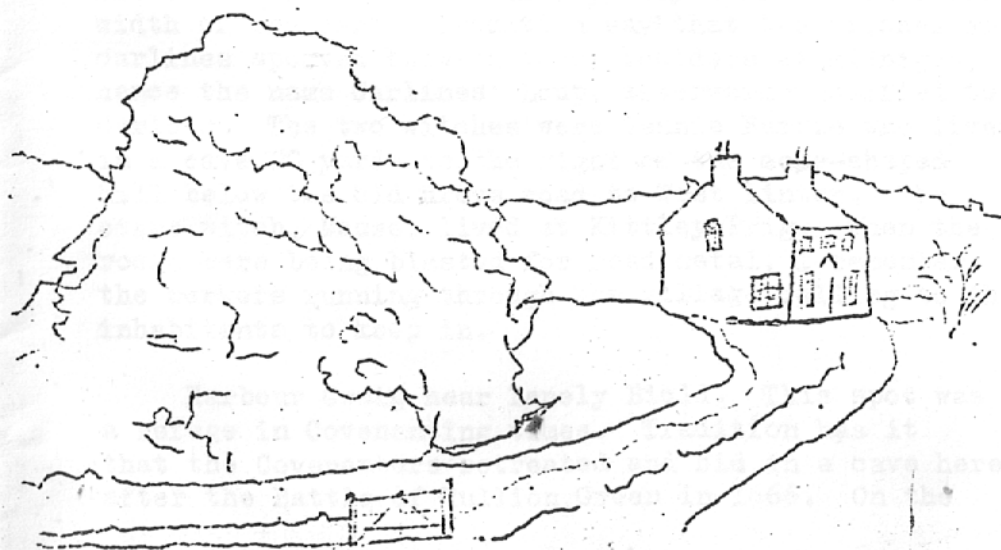


CARLOPS MEMORIES

Given to the Women's Guild
at their Meeting
on 9th January, 1975



Carlin's Lough and Carlin's Head lough

Carlops Village was founded in 1784 to work the stone and other minerals of the district which brought a large influx of weavers who engaged in the cotton weaving industry until 1860 when the power of steam proved disastrous to hand-weaving. The last Carlops weaver was working until 1894. In the days of its prosperity two Fairs were held annually in the village street and stage coaches passed through Carlops daily.

In the 18th and 19th century coal was worked very extensively and sent to all the towns and villages, including Peebles, as well as across the Pentland Hills to Currie, the transit being made by donkeys. At Carlops the coal was sold at 3½d. per cwt. in 1791 and 5d. in 1834.

I expect you all know that the name by which the village is known is said to have taken its origin from the two overhanging boulders or rocks which stood at the south entrance to the glen wherein Carlops lies. The road underneath was very narrow - only the width of one cart. Tradition says that two witches or carlines sported between these boulders at midnight, hence the name Carlines' Loup, afterwards modified to Carlops. The two witches were Jennie Barrie who lived in a cave 20 yards to the right of the cone-shaped hill below the old drove road to West Linton. The other witch, Mause, lived at Kittley Brig. When the rocks were being blasted for road metal, I remember the workers running through the village calling to the inhabitants to keep in.

Harbour Craig near Lanely Bield. This spot was a refuge in Covenanting times. Tradition has it that the Covenanters retreated and hid in a cave here after the Battle of Rullion Green in 1666. On the

rock a number of names and dates - 1612, 1640, 1662, 1666 - can still be seen. A religious Service, very well attended, used to be held annually at Harbour Craig in the month of August by the Minister of Carlops Parish Church. If wet, the Service was held in the Church. The last Service was held by Mr. Alexander Caseby on 13th August, 1961, and, as it was a wet Sunday, it was held in the Church.

Mr. Adam Kirkhope used to tell me little bits about Carlops in the olden days. One of the things he told me was that a burn used to run along in front of the row of cottages my house is in; that the ducks swam up and down and that each cottage had just a plank of wood from the front door to the road to walk on. I know for a fact that there is a very old drainage pipe running along my front garden.

My grandmother used to speak about Hansel Monday (the first Monday in January). That was the greatest day of the year in Carlops a century or so ago. On the evening of that day the annual performance of Allan Ramsay's "Gentle Shepherd" was given in the Mill by the 14 local players who were mostly apprentice weavers. Performances were also given at Penicuik and Peebles, the company travelling by horse and cart, the horse decorated with ribbons, and the Carlops folk at their doors seeing them off.

In Carlops at that time there were 40 weavers (2 brothers of the name of Hodge in my cottage), 3 grocers, 3 carriers, 1 tailor, 2 schoolmasters, 2 shoemakers and 4 Inns. Carlops also had two constables - Simon Cook and Randie Ross. A Mr. George Hunter, who was the schoolmaster at Nine-Mile Burn, travelled daily from Carlops for nearly 40 years. The

one I remember was Mr. Smith and he was followed by his daughter, Miss Jeanie Smith, both members of Carlops Parish Church.

Carlops used to be called "Little Leith" as so many Leith people came to stay in it. Nextdoor to us were the Sowersbys, bakers in Leith, who only occupied their cottage (Kintyre Cottage) in the Summer months. There were two daughters, Isabella and Sarah, and two sons, George and Harry, publicans, and it was Harry who started collecting for a Village Hall. He used to stop motorists with his collecting box.

Coaches used to run daily to Carlops from Edinburgh also motor char-a-bancs twice daily during the Summer months (2/6d. return). If one wanted back to town on the Sunday night, you sometimes got the chance of a seat, otherwise you had to walk to Pomathorn Station and get a train, which I have often done along with others from Carlops. Up till the last war, the buses were run by a private Company - the Caledonian Bus Company - which later was taken over by the Eastern Scottish and the terminus was for a long time in Castle Terrace at the Lothian Road end. They had an Office there just past Lawsons.

My mother used to speak about Willie o' the Valley - his real name was Willie Anderson - a Carlops' character and entertaining resident, and I believe Mrs. Veitch had taken a great interest in him. At one time he had stayed in the cottage now occupied by Dr. Lamont but, before coming to Carlops, Willie acquired a cottage at Fairsacks for £28. Ultimately, when the time came for him to pay taxes, he got rid of it as he wasn't going to give money away for nothing. This is when Mrs. Veitch befriended him. His phrases were

always rounded off with the curious expression "I tow" pronounced "I toe". He was a veritable Jack of all Trades and numbered among his acquirements the art of clock cleaning, either by dissection or by boiling the works in soda. He did odd jobs, his favourite being sweeping chimneys. He paid regular visits to St. Mary's Loch and every time he returned he brought back a stone in his plaid. Willie was of a deep religious cast and was an exemplary attender at West Linton Parish Church. When he died, he was buried in West Linton Churchyard.

I dimly remember Mrs. Veitch or Mother Veitch with her lace cap as she was so often affectionately called who owned the Allan Ramsay Hotel, built in 1792 by her grandfather, Mr. Alexander. She had four daughters - 2 married and 2 unmarried. The latter lived in Elphinstone till they died. Mrs. Veitch's son Davie drove a wagonette and went down to meet the train at Penicuik bringing the business men coming to Carllops for the weekend, including my grandfather and Georgie Wright, a Leith publican who built Linton Muir. I think in these days it was known as Waterloo - then Davie took them all down again to Penicuik on the Sunday evening.

Besides the Allan Ramsay Hotel, there used to be a Temperance Hotel run by Mr. and Mrs. McGill. Mrs. McGill, assisted by her daughters Martha (Mrs. Bowie) and Isa, gave teas and four-in-hand coach parties were a regular sight in the Summer; the trippers went down to the Village Green behind Eskside and played games. Mr. McGill had a horse and wagonette and we regularly employed him to bring us up to Carllops from Broomlee Station. It was a slow trot and his charge was only 2/6d. for the journey. When we travelled to

Broomlee Station we changed trains at Leadburn.

For a short time a Mrs. Holmes gave teas along at "The Cottage" now occupied by the Wilsons which she called "Rosedene Tea Rooms". When the weather was nice, she had the teas outside in the garden. Formerly a Captain Tweedie owned this house and it was he who built the house opposite (Eskside) for his housekeeper, a Miss Anderson. Captain Tweedie was followed by Professor Lawrie who asked us children for frogs. I gave him one and got 3d. for it but never again when I heard he dissected them for his experiment. I remember a Mrs. Pickard too who occupied this house and bred King Charles spaniels.

Habbies Howe in the older days was open on Wednesdays and Saturdays and a very delightful walk it was wandering through the Howe. When we had visitors it was a favourite walk. Emerging from Habbies Howe you came to a cottage called Lonely or Lanely Bield, a very happy house where everyone who called was made most welcome. It was occupied by a Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Farquharson, a daughter - Maggie Farquharson and a son - Andrew Farquharson. We regularly visited this house and one Summer, as my grandmother had let our cottage, I stayed my school holidays here. Mr. Farquharson played the fiddle and Andrew was a mole catcher and looked after the paths in Habbies Howe. They had a cow, sheep and hens and churned their own butter. The daughter married a Mr. Tudhope and went to Canada but later returned to run a Dairy in Edinburgh. When Mrs. Farquharson became a widow and her son Andrew died, she left the cottage and went to live with another daughter (Bella) in Dundee. Before she left Lanely Bield she arrived at our cottage with a chair for my grandmother which she

called her "nursing chair" and this she had carried all the way up from Lanely Bield. I still have it.

I must mention that in 1824 the Highland Society of Scotland gave their first medal to the best and cleanest kept cottage in Scotland to Charles Wilson, Plasterer, Carlops, who lived in Linnburn. A Mr. James Maclean of Nine-Mile-Burn presented the medal to Mr. Wilson. Mr. Wilson erected a stone temple of Gothic architecture in his garden with his own hands to house the many pieces of sculpture he made although unskilled in the trade. This temple or grotto can still be seen at Linnburn. I remember as a child seeing stone figures he had made erected in his garden.

The three cottages called "Ashley Cottages" surrounded by a very attractive white painted fence belonged to a Mr. Gear, a retired plumber from London. He was a very useful handyman and was employed by my grandmother, Mrs. Sutherland, to build our scullery but he was a terrible swearer and was always asking for "sub" so that he could go along to Veitch's Hotel for a dram. He had a striped cat called "Peter" and Peter used to chum him along to the hotel and wait for him coming out. Mr. Gear had a lamp above his porch in the middle house and this is how he was nick-named "the Provost". He also had a nice seat outside his fence. When both Mr. and Mrs. Gear died, their nephew in London, who wasn't interested in the three cottages, put them up for Sale and all he wanted for them was £150 - £50 each. A Mr. Walter Thom, a master painter in Leith, bought the three cottages and when the last war broke out he sold the middle cottage to the present Mr. Tom Jeffryes' father, gave his sister, Miss Thom, who was a Sister Tutor, the one Miss Pope occupies and the third he let to Mr. Adam Kirkhope.

Miss Garnock, a retired school teacher from Nine-Mile-Burn School, first of all came to live in the cottage now owned by Miss Pope and had a most interesting shop, selling everything you could possibly think of - paraffin, wool, tea, crockery, postcards &c. &c. It was she who sold the crest china depicting the Gentle Shepherd and I have a butter plate. Later she took her shop along to Carberry Cottage, where Dr. Jack stays, and there she died.

Lady Salvesen had Maryvale Cottage for a little while and it was she who had the back garden terraced.

In the early days Adam Ramsay, Joiner in Carlops, was the Precentor in Carlops Church and I can picture him standing in the front of the Church on the left-hand side with his tuning fork and leading the praise. On special occasions Mr. Bruce, the minister, asked for our organ which went along to the Church. Mrs. Ramsay had the Post Office and ran a shop where Miss Pyper stays. A Mrs. Robertson was the previous Postmistress. A Mrs. Somerville had a sweetie shop at the same time where Dr. Murray Campbell lives and both shops sold policeman's gundy - plain and treacle - which was very popular with us children and we invariably took a supply back to town with us.

There used to be two small houses at the top of the outside stair of the Allan Ramsay Hotel and when Mrs. Ramsay died and his daughter Georgie married Mr. Ramsay went to live in one of these houses. The shop and Post Office were transferred to Mrs. Bowie, Mr. McGill's married daughter, who had the shop and Post Office where Frank and his wife live until they got married and took over, then she and her husband went back to the Temperance Hotel as her father and mother had both died.

The postman cycled in these days up from Penicuik and was delivering letters round about 9 a.m. daily. Eventually Mrs. Fulton, who was then Nettie Small, delivered some of the mail to the outlying farms - at least I remember she went up as far as the Reservoir.

Mrs. Brown of Newhall erected the Village Well in 1860. Though we had rain water led into our cottage by Mr. Gear from a large 120 gallon brandy cask, which was mounted on a brick foundation, we always had to go along to the village well daily for drinking water. This we rather enjoyed as usually someone else was there getting water too. Occasionally I was sent along to the Minister's well as the spring water there was specially good.

Maggie Small - Mrs. Fulton's mother - for some time rented the middle house of Ashley Cottages from Mr. Thom before going over to Pyet Hall. She, carrying her ladder, used to light the two lamps in the village - the one outside the Hall presented by Mrs. Sowersby and the other along at the Well. Mrs. Sowersby's lamp was put up after she died outside the railings of the Church but, when the hall was erected, it was moved along. Maggie was also the Church caretaker and lit the fire on the Saturday to heat the Church on the Sunday.

Another character was Mr. Mossman - we called him "Mossie". He farmed Carlop Hill but, when his sister died, he bought the cottage now occupied by the Wintons (Ferndale Cottage). He had a parrot who tormented the villagers by calling "coal" when there was no coalman in sight.

Another worthy was Miss Mary Barr, an ex-teacher who lived at "Hartside", which picturesque cottage was

demolished by Mr. Noble who built the present house owned by Mr. Hood. She kept hens and had a host of friends, including myself, who called on her. I was fascinated with the box beds in her kitchen and parlour and, though living alone, she never locked her door at night. The ruin of the old school where she taught the young children of the village was nextdoor and the foundations of Mr. Noble's house consisted of the stones from both the school and the cottage. Miss Barr's father, Alick Barr, was said to have been the last weaver in Carlops.

A Mr. Webster from Kittley Brig used to come round the doors with his cart on a Friday selling rolls of fresh butter and buttermilk.

Ebby Stoddart from Kittley Brig came round with milk. After he died, we had to go to the "Carpot" for our milk where a Mr. and Mrs. Baptie lived and I remember a calf being named after me. Later we got our milk from Mrs. Tom Small at the Rock.

Electricity didn't come into the village until 1938 and water some time later. Before that we had oil lamps which had to be filled up daily and the wicks kept trimmed. In our cottage we had moveable brackets on our walls for the lamps so that the lamps were out of the way.

In these days there were plenty of vans - two bakers from West Linton - Jackson in Deanfoot Road who was famed for his lovely rhubarb tarts but whose bread went quickly sour, and Drysdale in the Main Street - now the Bakehouse -, "Geordie" with Paterson's van who, along with Mr. Simon Low, the Butcher, came up to Carlops twice weekly. A Mr.

Davidson came up once weekly from Loanhead selling vegetables.

A Mrs. Renwick and her daughter Barbara, who came from Leith, lived in Jess Cottage where Dr. Lamont resides. Barbara played the organ in the Church. When she died, Miss Barbara Todd from the North Esk Reservoir - Miss Garnock's niece - took over and she was followed by Miss Christine Stewart, whose mother farmed Spital, then she in turn was followed by a Mr. Sutherland from Edinburgh. An elderly housekeeper to Mr. Bruce, the Minister, gifted the organ to the Church.

When Mr. Bruce married, Mrs. Bruce held a Work Party in the Manse in preparation for the Church Bring and Buy Sale. In these days I helped at the teas. Twice I was at the Guild's Annual Outing, the first one a Coach Tour to Helensburgh and the second outing a Coach Tour to Dumfries with tea at Durisdeer.

Many picnics from town were held on the green at the entrance to Habbies Howe.

Mearn Stoddart and her son John lived at Carlops Mains (the Rock) which at one time was an Inn. Mearn always wore a large tammy on her head and was a great character. John went to Canada.

The Rev. Mr. McLintock came up to Carlops from West Linton once a month on the Sunday evening and held a Service in the Established Church. Later the little Church, which had been erected by two ladies, and attached cottage occupied by Mr. Adam Kirkhope's parents who looked after the Church, were handed over to Carlops Parish Church. Eventually Mr.

Bruce sold the cottage.

Old Redmond and later Jimmy Somerville lived in the little cottage at Wanton Wa's. They did gardening in the village and we always got our garden planted with vegetables by them.

At Hampton Cottage, now "The Latch", lived Mr. Russell and his daughter Mary. Mr. Russell, with his long white beard, was always working in his garden which was a joy to see and I remember he had one or two semi-circular yew bowers, each containing a seat. In these days Carlops was always in great demand for rooms or cottages during the Summer, as was also West Linton, and Miss Russell took in paying guests.

One Summer when I was a little girl I joined Carlops Sunday School in a picnic to Walston Farm. We went in carts and it was great fun. Mr. Pate who had Walston Farm was an elder in Carlops Church. When he retired, he and his housekeeper came along to "Braeside" where he died.

I remember quoits being played on the village green beside the Allan Ramsay Hotel by the menfolk of the village and surrounding countryside.

There was also a curling pond at the top of the brae opposite Miss Barr's cottage but it has now been filled in.

Mr. Tom Small, who lived at the Rock was the Carlops carrier and collected ashes and rubbish twice weekly, on behalf of Peebles County Council, both at Carlops and at West Linton. Previously we had to have a midden in our garden and when it was full get Mr. Small to remove what was in it to the tip. I believe

from my mother that there used to be another carrier in Carlops of the name of Walkinshaw in her time. Mr. Small went every Wednesday morning into Edinburgh with his lorry to the Carriers Quarters in Grassmarket and you would hear him coming home that night round about 11 o'clock.

As children our two favourite walks were (1) to the Wishing Well which was a mineral well at Rutherford Mains and (2) to Jennie Barrie's cave situated in the Dell on Carlop Hill.

Prior to the village hall being built, Carlops Flower Show was held in the Allan Ramsay Hotel hall which was also used for any Concerts.

When the last war broke out, my mother and I were living in Carlops so we just stayed on till the war was over, shutting up our house in town like many other folk.

Mr. Adam Kirkhope and Mr. Tom Small were the two Wardens who patrolled the village, back and front, to see that no lights were showing in any of the houses. We had no difficulty as all our windows had inside shutters.

I remember the night the German planes passed over Carlops on their way to bomb Clydeside. The noise was truly frightening!

We who travelled daily into town from Carlops passed the evenings knitting socks, mufflers &c. &c. The meeting place was usually Blinkie Knowe Cottage but, when it was moonlight, we used to go up to the Ketchins at Paties Hill - the daughter, Miss Mary Ketchin, was a teacher in Tollcross School - or the Stewarts at Spital with our knitting.

Now I must stop as time is limited and allow someone else to finish the story.

Margaret S. Stone