

# Baldernock – Profile of a Parish

*Baldernock Amenity Society, May 1974*

Lying just outside the city's northern boundary, **Baldernock** parish is the first real countryside one reaches outside Glasgow.

Its proximity to urban and industrial life makes it especially vulnerable to the pressures of over-use, and this story of the parish has been compiled in order to invite inhabitants of the parish, their friends and their visitors, to pause for a moment to assess its value and to embark on a modest journey of the imagination.

## Setting

Baldernock parish measures approximately four miles by three miles and is bounded by the Kelvin river to the south, the Pow burn to the west, and by Strathblane and Campsie to the north and east. The Macfarlane M.S.S. in the Advocate's Library has this to say about the source of the Kelvin –

*"The springs of Kelvin river cum from above Colyam (Colzium) Castle in Sterlingshyr. Bardowye is a myl fra Kelvyn on the north syd besyd a prettie loch, it is a myl beneath Cader".*

The rising ground of **Craigmaddie** moor seems to hunch its shoulder to the prevailing southwest wind as if to shelter the good arable farmland spread below and this seems borne out in the meaning of Craigmaddie, which is "rock of God".

The prefix BAL in **Baldernock** may be found in many Scottish place names and means "a town", with the particular meaning here of a township on a single estate.

## Prehistory

Long before the first tribes of hunters appeared in its sheltered hollows, the shape of the Baldernock hills and rocks and burns would be much the same as now. The land would be covered with scrubby woodland and tangled damp undergrowth.

Family groups would gather in the autumn to round up their animals which would be fenced in by the digging of deep ditches round selected areas. Good breeding cattle would be kept, others slaughtered and much food would be cooked and eaten before the lean winter set in.

Men would take time to make themselves new implements and articles of domestic use. They would carve shovels from the shoulder blades of animals, they would fashion pots of clay, arrowheads from sharp flint, the district being rich in slate and ironstone. Even primitive canoes, dug out of trunks of trees, were made.

Elaborate ceremonies were enacted in connection with the burial of a member of these prehistoric families. Several *cairns*, some oblong, some round, exist at **Blochairn Farm**, one of which, near the house, contained a stone cist, believed to be a *Bronze Age burial chamber*. These cairns consist of heaps of loosely assembled stones, covering an area of about 80 yards beneath which have been found rows of flagstones on edge, divided into cells six or seven feet long containing urns with pieces of human bone. Cup and ring markings, prehistoric marks on rocks and on graves, have been found on these cairns. Although their significance is to us unknown, they were laboriously manufactured, and were likely to have been of great importance.

“At one time” writes Mr. Richard Feacham, "at least five cairns existed in the vicinity of **Blochairn Farm**, as well as an earthen barrow, but all but two of them have been so wasted that their positions can hardly be determined". The largest remaining cairn forms a mound of boulders measuring about 60 feet in diameter and rising to a height of about three feet. Another round cairn rises almost to seven feet and may mark the place of a Bronze Age burial. The name Blochairn is probably Bal-cairn or “town of cairns.”

Succeeding generations have been puzzled by these cairns, interpreting them according to their own beliefs, and it is easy to see how folklore began to grow up. “Elf-arrows” for instance, Neolithic flint arrowheads which were found in and around burial mounds, were first used as barbs for hunting arrows. These were later called “Satan's light infantry” and were reckoned by "white" witches to be good as counter charms for cures and protection and by "black" witches to implement their malevolent spells. Worn as amulets, they were supposed to ward off the evil fairies which attacked cattle. Country people called stone hammer-heads "purgatory hammers" - they were found in graves to enable the dead to use them to hammer for **admittance** at the gates of purgatory. In recent times these "elf-darts" have been found on the road between **Baldernock Glebe** and **Blairskaith**.

In 1883 Mr R. Mitchell, of **Hillend**, uncovered during farming operations, **Bronze Age urns** only 20 yards from what is known as the **Tinker's Burn** on the road between Baldernock Church and Milngavie. The largest of these urns held an incense cup containing teeth and finger bones of a child. Excavations on **Kettlehill Farm** uncovered a stone granary of great age.

A mile to the north of the church lies the phenomenon famous as "**The Auld Wives' Lifts**". In the middle of an area of ground, amphitheatre in shape, lying due north of Mr Fergus Sandeman's house, lie two massive stones alongside each other with a third, 18 feet long, lying across them. Several interpretations of this structure exist. One is that three old "carlins" engaged in a trial of strength to see which of them could carry her stone the farthest. Each took up her burden or "lift" and deposited it in its present position. In France, near Poitiers, are similar stones, called "pierres levées" and in Ireland there is a Druid stone called the "Lifted Stone".

Between the stones is a narrow passage through which those who wanted to get married were required to squeeze and scramble in an anti-clockwise direction; if one could not manage it, there was no hope!

The area is thought by some to have been a sacred grove, and certainly the situation corresponds to similar places of ancient worship. The prevailing idea last century seems to have been that standing stones and burial mounds not in accordance with the normal, must have been either Druidical or Roman.

Writing of the Auld Wives' Lifts, Mr Harrison Maxwell FMA, FSA, says "*whether they are a great altar, a folk meeting place of the ancient past, the heart of a mighty tomb, or simply a wonderful survival of the last Ice Age, will long remain a matter of speculation*". Mr Ludovic Mann thinks "*it was the culture centre for law, religious and folk assembly for the people living in Stone Age and Bronze Age times*".

In Alexander Galloway's "Archaeological and Philological Papers" is found this sentence, "*Old women once lived together in sisterhoods, in sequestered places, devoting their time to offices of Druidical worship and popularly called Auld Wives*", therefore he assumed

Baldernock to be a corruption of "Baldrinich" which in Celtic language means "town belonging to the Druids".

Two Neolithic axe-heads were found in a field of the **Balmore Haughs** by Mr James Bowie, farmer in Whitefauld in 1860. These may be seen in the archaeology gallery in the Kelvingrove Museum in Glasgow.

## **History**

### **The First Community – Roman Era**

During the Roman occupation, their motto seems to have been "divide and rule". However, the men of the Augusta legion (said to be the favourite of Octavius Caesar), the sixth or Vanquisher legion, and the twentieth (Agricola's corps) must have known uneasy duty periods as they walked the ramparts of the Antonine wall.

The German mercenary troops did the scouting and it is easy to imagine one of them hastening to the Balmuildy commander with the news that a band of Caledonians has been seen advancing down the hill to try to cross the river from the high ground of what is known as Lennox.

But the mercenaries are good mixers. Gradually they form attachments with local girls and ask permission to live out of barracks. A group of roughly made houses grows up - they acquire additional ground to graze a few animals, they make clay marbles to amuse their children and there it is, the first community in the area. But where might it have been? Was it perhaps where **Bardowie** now is? Not too far from the road bridge leading back to the fort at Balmuildy, yet not too low lying to make it liable to suffer river flooding. We do not know the answer.

The North Britons seem to have absorbed less of the sophisticated ways of the Romans than the Britons of the South. Was it because the bleak swampy land seemed to the Romans hardly worth the effort of a long drawn-out struggle or were the Northerners never inclined to accept Roman rule? At all events it is an absorbing study to imagine what the first organised community must have been like in Baldernock.

### **Origin of the name**

By the end of the 12th century, the shape of Scotland's map began to be realised. The first record of Baldernock's name appears in 1200. The name is written Bathernok or Buthernock. "Buth" or "Bath" means "a house" and "airneag" means "among the sloes". This appears in the 13th century as "the lands of Cartenbenach", meaning in ancient Celtic language "Gart-na-Beannachd" or "field of blessing".

### **Early Land Ownership**

At this time Alexander II is king, Malduin, Earl of Lennox gives Cartenbenach to Maurice Galbraith and in 1238 Arthur Galbraith is "confirmed" as having been granted the land along with the power "*to seize and condemn malefactors, on condition they were hanged on the Lennox gallows*".

The "auld howlet-haunted biggin" of **Craigmaddie** is the last vestige of the mansion house of the Galbraiths of Bathernok. It was large, it was defended by a deep surrounding ditch and as we have read, its name means "rock of God".

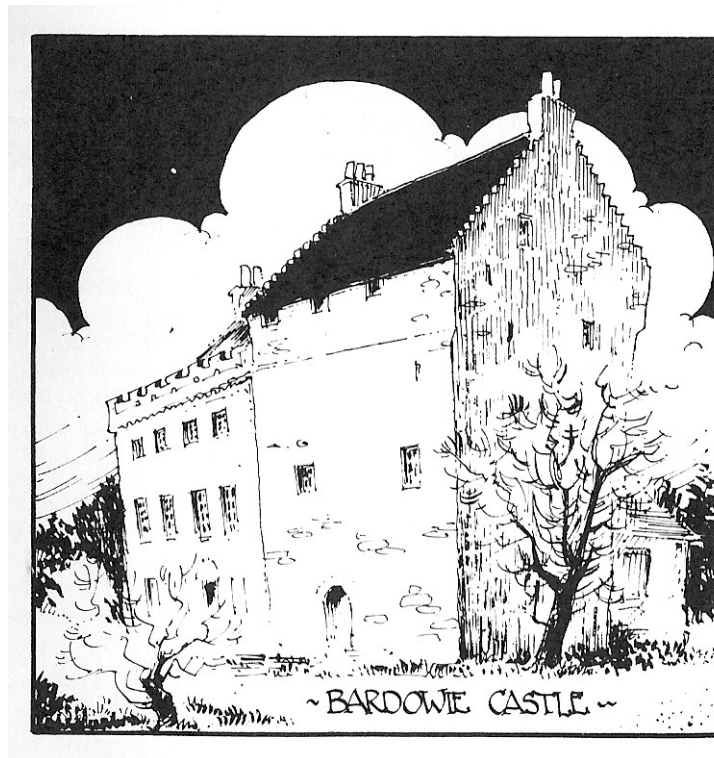
Janet, the last of the Galbraiths, was married to David Hamilton of Cadzow, who may have

been the builder of **Bardowie Castle** and moved there when Craigmaddie fell into ruin. In 1505 John Hamllton of Bathernok was "confirmed" by James IV on a charter from Matthew, Earl of Lennox, in the lands of Bathernok - a witness to this being Master Robert Hamilton, "rector of Baldernok".

In 1434 there is recorded the greatest frost ever recorded, which lasted until the following February (which was when James I returned from his captivity in England).

The keep is mentioned in a grant by James V to the family of Hamiltou de Fynert in 1526 and in 1531 James V gave to James Hamilton the lands of Pardowy along with the advocacy of the Church of Beddernocho.

These estates of Pardowy had once belonged to the family of Stirlings of Keir. In 1532 James V re-granted to the family of Stirling of Keir these lands "with fortalice, tower and lake of the same name" and all lands of Allan Hamilton de Pardowie with the mill and advocacy of the Church of Bothornok". This is the first mention of **Baldernock Mill**.



**Bardowie Castle** is a crow-stepped gable building with a square tower. It forms an oblong of 33 feet by 27½ feet "of a simplicity of design quite rare". A straight stair leads from the vaulted ground floor to the first floor, where a wheel-stair leads to the covered battlements on the north. The great hall has a rare open-timbered roof, no fireplace and is lit by end windows. The rafters are 12 inches apart and are curved, giving the impression of ribbing.

In 1526 a quarrel took place between the Logans of Balvie, near Milngavie and John Hamilton of Bardowie who was killed at **Blairskaith**. His son in turn was killed by his nearest neighbour, Colin Campbell of Auchenhov and Downan.

While all this was going on in this parish, in other parts of Scotland the great John Knox was preaching, and reporting, for instance, on the riot in Glasgow Cathedral in 1545. "... rockettis (garments) war rent, typpetis (short cloaks) war torn, crounis war knapped and syd gounis mycht haf been seen. Many of them lacked beardis, and that was the more pitie and therefore

could not bukkil other by the byrd, as bold men would haif done".

### Sixteenth Century Life

In 1522 the provisions of a Scottish family for the year might be three large vats of salt eels, 44 cattle, three hogsheds of salted salmon and 40 quarters of grain.

In 1548 in rural areas such as Baldernock, farmers were tending their land and raising their herds. The following description conjures up the scene. "Quhen thir scheiphyrdis had told al thir plays and stories, everyie ald scheipyrd led his wyf be the hand, and everyie young scheipyrd led hyr quhome he luffit best".

In the sixteenth century in the reign of James VI and I, Scottish landlords held their land from the king and were responsible for law and order and for supplying soldiers to protect the kingdom. This must have cost much money and land changed hands frequently. The eleventh laird of Bardowie was a strong Royalist and mortgaged his lands to pay the troops serving under Montrose in the Civil War and to pay the fines levied on the defeated leaders by Cromwell. Some verses tell this story.

*Twa centuries syne the Marquis o' Grahame  
Gaed oot tae the wars at the heid o' his men;  
His income was sma', tho' he'd titles enew,  
And great part o' his land he had then to feu.*

*The eleven plough lands o' Balgrochan were acquired at the time  
By eleven sturdy caries, as they ca'ed them land syne.*

*For the chiefs o' the Borders at that time did keep  
As mony blue bonnets as noo they keep sheep;  
An Marquis o' Grahame, Montrose and Dundaff  
Had naethin' before them but feu the lan' aff.*

### Agriculture

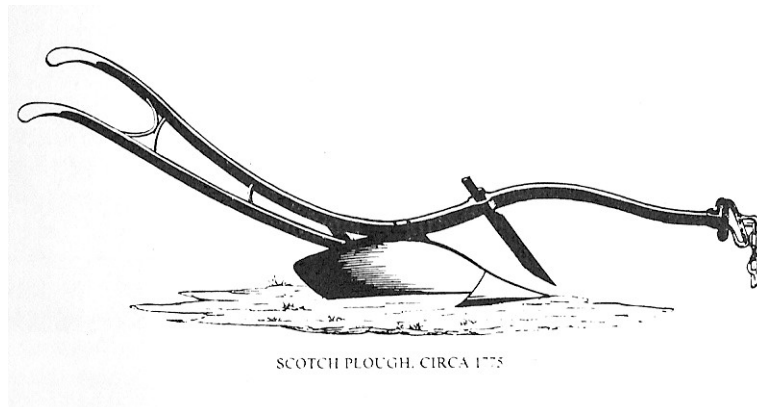
Though landlords kept some land in hand, they let the rest to tenants in "ploughgates" or areas of 40 acres, valued at 40 shillings per acre. A ploughgate was in fact an area measuring as much as a team of oxen could work in a season. An "oxgate" contained 13 acres. A "merkland" was one third of a ploughgate. Quarter of a ploughgate was a husbandland and half of that was an "oxgang". At the end of the century, the laird of Bardowie was quarrelling with yet another neighbour, Walter Graham of Dougalston and then, when the sister of Robert Hamilton, sixteenth of Bardowie, died without issue, the lands passed by marriage to Thomas Buchanan of Spital and Leny. It is interesting to find numbered among the original feuars of the Earl of Montrose, John Marshall, Allan Marshall and John Bowie.

John Buchan, in his biography of Montrose, writes "*the time was one of deep poverty for the common people. The lairds, tacksmen, labourers and petty craftsmen in the village lived very near the edge of destitution*". He mentions the rudimentary and wasteful system of agriculture, the shallow ploughing, the lack of drainage, which meant that the rich alluvial soils like the **Balmore Haughs** were uncultivable. Poor feeding and hard labour reduced the population almost to ruin.

A man named Morer, travelling through Scotland and Stirlingshire in 1689, was astonished to see oxen ploughing difficult hillsides in inaccessible places and was told that the farmer was obliged to do that as ground below was so hopelessly swampy. When, much later, people

noticed signs of furrows on the high slopes of the hills, it was thought that it meant industry rather than the truth, which was that it betokened undrained soils and real poverty, which drove the farmer to plough higher up the hillside where the crops could not adequately ripen.

Farmers kept too long to the "infield-outfield" run-rig system of farming. Main crops were grown on the in-field ground, which was divided into strips or rigs according to the amount of rent each man paid, but since the allocation of rigs was changed every year, it must have been desperately disheartening to the efficient farmer anxious to improve his land.



It was said *"If land be three years out and three years in  
T'will keep in good heart till the deil grows blin"*.

Grey oats was the common crop grown, but in other places it had long since been given up as being uneconomical and the bere, the least nutritional of the barleys, was grown in the belief that it was the only crop that would grow in the poor soil. Since there were no dykes or hedges, the cattle had to be tethered when the harvest was ripening and after harvest, the cattle wandered the hills, turning everything into barrenness. At the return of the cattle to the pastures in spring, they were so thin they had to be lifted onto the grass and all friends and neighbours would be summoned to "the lifting".

Ploughs were cumbersome, sometimes needing a whole family to work them. This was not a successful way to farm and many quarrels broke out between people forced to work their rigs side by side. A farmer had no incentive to improve land that would not be his another year. No man would wield the plough till Candlemas because traditional times for varying activities were strictly adhered to. They believed that June was not too late to sow seed, *"when the leaves of the ash cover the Pyot's nest"*, pyot being an old name for the owl.

Men were at the mercy of the seasons. The common lands could be used by every man to pasture his beasts and when the birds ate up all the newly sown seed, it was reckoned to be an *"act of God"*. When a man called Meikle had perfected his winnowing machine to help farmers to winnow and thresh their grain, peoples' reaction was to think that the practice was contravening the Scriptures, which said *"the wind bloweth as it listeth"* and that if they used *"the De'il's wind"* as it was called, no good would come of it.

A Mr Smith of Deanston instituted the system of drainage of the land - one of the great steps

forward for Scottish agriculture, and at the turn of the 18th century, arable farm land was rented for about 10 shillings to £2 per acre, but besides the rent (often paid in kind) due to the landlord, farmers were also bound to pay other taxes too. One of these burdens was that of being "thirled" to a particular mill and of having to pay the miller sometimes as much as a sixteenth part of all the grain taken to be ground. If drought dried up one mill and a farmer had to take his grain to another, he was obliged to pay twice over, once to his "regular" miller and once to the other. No wonder the millers were in those days well-to-do citizens. Another mill was the **Fluchter** mill, to which the tenants of **Bardowie** were thirled.

Certain services were due by the tenant farmer to his landlord, such as giving a stated number of days tilling, reaping, sowing, carting peats, thatching and supplying "simmons" or straw and heather ropes for tying the cut oats and barley. Produce was divided in three thus, "*Ane to saw, ane to gnaw, and ane to pay the laird witha' "*

About this time, turnip was being tried out as a crop, cabbage was grown and also a little wheat. Half an acre of trial potatoes was planted at Kilsyth in 1730. Implements were generally made by the farmer and his servants. Rough timber was bought from the Highlands and sold at the Martinmas fairs at a shilling a piece. The collars of work horses were made of wound straw ropes.

When the crops were harvested, the grain was separated from the straw by winnowing on hand-riddles taken to the tops of the hillocks where the wind blew; these were known as "the shining hills". The story goes of how the district had its harvest ruined by continuous rain and the crops being much laid, wind was needed to dry things out. The minister prayed "*O Lord, we pray thee to send us wind, no' a rantin' tantin' ravin' wind, but a hoochin' soughin' winnin' wind*".

When an animal was being killed for food, a bell was rung in the district to announce it, for there were no butcher's shops in those days. The working day was long. There would be a break for a meal at "breakfast" and then would come the "twal' hoor". A ploughman's wages were from 35-70 shillings a year, plus a few "gains" or "perks," of perhaps a pair of shoes or shirting material called "'barn" or plaiding.

All this represented tremendous effort. The year 1733 was known as "the year of the big hail" which happened when all the crops were "in ear." One farmer had "one bere-head" left out of his whole crop, and that was because it was sheltered by a certain giant mug-wort bush. The seven bad years ended in 1704; in 1789 a windy Saturday in January did much damage, a precursor of the January hurricane of 1968 when once more central Scotland was grievously damaged.

1826 saw such terribly bad weather that it became known as "*the year of the short corn*" and in the autumn of 1832, an epidemic of Asian flu' or cholera broke out. and many people died. Since there was no winter feed, cattle and sheep had to be slaughtered at the "back-end" of the year, and pickled for eating during the winter.

When the enclosures or fencing-in of land took place, it made for even greater hardship for the small farmer, who was put out, and in Cadder parish, which "marched" with Baldernock parish, it was said "*the parish is now a wilderness and decent families have been reduced to poverty*".

At one time, in Covenanting days, groups of small holding tenants would band together to win back their farms or "mailings" by demolishing the stone dykes of the enclosed fields. The



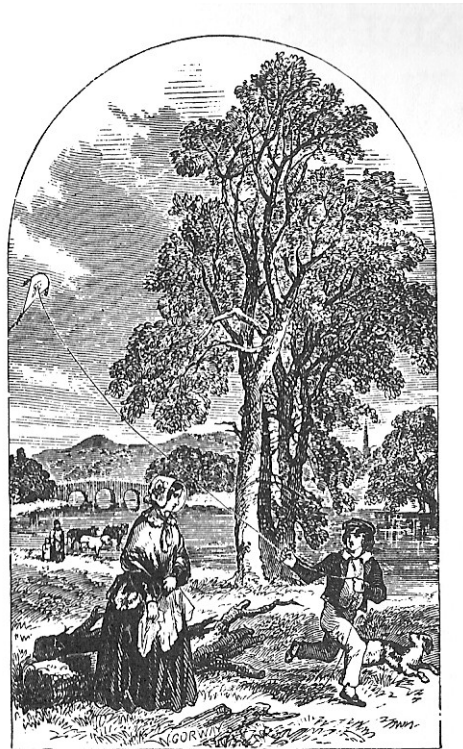
men, armed with clubs or poles, called "tents", would heave against the new-built dykes, demolishing them as fast as they were built. "These were the "levellers".

It is interesting to realise that the present citizens of Baldernock look over from their houses to what is called the "wilderness plantation" across the Kelvin river, which is said to have been laid out on the lines in which the British troops disposed at the Battle of Dettingen in 1743.

During the Napoleonic wars, wheat rose in price and farming seemed to flourish, and better houses and steadings came to be built, but this temporary prosperity came to an end with the opening up of the vast prairies in America where wheat could be grown in such vast areas that the small farmer in Scotland was near ruin. Beef was at this time much eaten, for poultry was thought "to be a delicacy which causes the judgement to be guided by the palate", and the hen was reckoned to be an unthrifty creature to keep because of the food it consumed.

### **Flooding**

Along the banks of the Kelvin lie hundreds of acres of rich flat land called the **Balmore Haughs**. The land was much subject to flooding which swept away good crops. To prevent this continuing, a group of far-sighted farmers banded together in the late eighteenth century, to raise an embankment which would contain the flood water. No land was to be cultivated nearer than three feet from the Kelvin, and sluices, ditches and bridges made. Turnings and windings of the river were to be straightened out at what must have been the vast cost then of £400.



There are familiar names in that group of men. Mr Archibald Morrison of **Kilmany** in **Balmore** has in his possession a copy, made some time later, of the document that was drawn up making provision for the erection of the embankment. The following is part of that document

At Glasgow the nineteenth day  
of March One Thousand Seven  
hundred and Seventy six years,  
in presence of Mr. John Marshall,  
Commissary Depute of Hamilton  
and Campsie compared Benjamin  
Banton Writer in Glasgow as pro-  
curator for the persons after named  
and designed and gave in the  
Original Contract and Agreement  
of which the Extract is underwritten  
desiring the same might be registered  
in the said Commissary Court Books  
to the effect mentioned in the clause  
of Registration therein contained  
which desire the said Commissary  
Depute finding to be reasonable or-  
dained the same to be done



accordingly, And of which Contract and Agreement the Tenor follows, It is agreed and finally ended between Richard Allan of Bardowie, Thomas Buchanan of Spittall, James Gibb, Walter Angus, John Penden and John and James Winning all portioners of Balmore on the other part in manner following, Whereas the parties to this Contract are proprietors of several parts of the Haugh or Low Ground of Balmore which lie upon the banks of the Waters Kelvin and Brenziet Burn that are frequently overflown with water, water which greatly damages the ground and often destroys the crops.

In times of exceptionally heavy rain, the low-lying fields are still, in 1974, prone to flooding but the triangular shaped field which lies below the **Brenziet Farm** is called "the Ark". This is due to seams from the Bishopbriggs mine penetrating under the Kelvin and into the field in question. Some subsidence took place and now when the flood water recedes, a little bumpy hillock is left like Noah's Ark on Mount Ararat.

### Minerals

In Baldemock parish, the **coal** deposits lie quite shallowly in layers of limestone along the foot of the Lennox Hills. Signs of the **lime** extraction are visible in various parts of the countryside, such as at the **Linn Cave**. Generations of small boys have taken ropes and lanterns in behind the waterfall to explore the cave and to follow the tunnel. Mr Archibald Morrison remembers how when he was at school, some wretched new boy would be taken out during the dinner break for a walk up to the Linn and left to follow the others into the darkness, little knowing that they knew to turn left at the first bend in the tunnel which brought them out at the exit of the limestone workings in the field opposite the waterfall. The new boy would find he could not get very far into the tunnel, and on finding himself alone would have to make his own way back to school, late of course and in trouble!

Another disused lime quarry is at the site locally known as the **Baker's Hole**, which lies below the road between **Baldernock House** and **North Bardowie Farm**. The material was brought out by surface excavations called "creeping heughs". A road would be put in and the coal or lime hauled on to a sledge, and carried down to the railway at Bardowie in trucks.

Lime in the ground made the **Shaw Burn** in the east of the parish carry deposits of ochre downstream, which gives rise to the name of **Redbog Farm**.

### First Statistical Account, 1796

The Reverend James Cooper, who was minister in Baldernock Church in 1783, wrote the story of Baldernock for the First Statistical Account in 1796.

At the time household provisions were regulated by Glasgow prices:

	£	s	d
Ducks per pair . . . . .	0	3	0
Hens per pair . . . . .	0	3	4
Eggs per dozen (for 4 months) . . . . .			8
Eggs per dozen for 8 months . . . . .			6
Butter per Tron Ib. . . . .			9
Buttermilk per Scots pint . . . . .			½
Potatoes per peck . . . . .			4 ½
Straw per thrave for thatching . . . . .	0	3	6
Tarry-wool per stone . . . . .	0	7	0
White wool per stone . . . . .	0	10	0
Milk new-milked per mutchkin . . . . .			½d per choppin
Wages of man servant per \is year and board	5	0	
Wages of a woman servant per \is year and board . . . . .	2	10	0
Women spinning wool per day and their 'victuals' . . . . .			4







## **Eighteenth Century Life**

In 1714 no wheaten bread was eaten, there was no wheeled traffic, the "gentry" rode to church on horseback, and houses consisted of a kitchen and at least one room, floored with deal, and having elegant glass windows. In 1784 the number of families living in the parish was 137 and the number of persons was 620.

Most were fanners, 45 worked their own ground; there were 10 weavers, one tailor, three shoemakers, three masons, three carpenters, two millers, two gardeners, two smiths, one engraver, one flax dresser, four miners and one apothecary and midwife. The parish was bare of woods - though new plantations were being established of oak and ash, sycamore and elm - mainly around the big houses, e.g. Glenorchard, where there exists still a fine avenue of lime trees. Woods were often wasted by raids or were burnt as fuel.

There reputedly grew a huge and noble ash tree in Balmore - "*The finest that grew in the West of Scotland*" but it was cut down and sold for coach building in 1855.

***What did the houses look like in which 18th century people of Baldernock lived in? What did they wear? What did they eat? What did they read?***

Well, a working man might be sewn into his shirt in the autumn, for shirts were changed perhaps only twice a year, at Martinmas and at Whitsun. Women wore coarse dresses of home-made drugget, with an apron spun in the natural state just as it came off the sheep's back. They and the children generally went barefoot, shoes being supplied only at the age of 14, "*so that a boy's feet should be hardened off for the wars*". When they went to church they wore their best, the farmer's wife wearing a head covering of coarse linen and a tartan or red cloth plaid covering her head and shoulders. Only the minister and the laird wore hats, but the farmer wore a bonnet of black to distinguish himself from his labourers' bonnets which were blue. Clothes were made at the master's expense. The man might wear stockings of flannel, shoes home-made on a winter's night, a jerkin and breeches, and of course his "sark" of coarse ham. Sometimes a man was given a "gain" which might consist of 5 ells of grey cloth, two ham shirts, two pairs of shoes and two pairs of plaiding hose".

By about 1760 plaid was still the outdoor garment or wrap of women but scarlet cloaks were coming into fashion, worn over grey dresses, with perhaps a Paisley shawl for special occasions. Coats which followed that fashion were called "jupps".

Boiled beef might be enjoyed three times a week, and herring, eggs, and blood "puden" when the pig was killed.

In 1770 the dinner hour was 2 o'clock but it grew later until, about 1830, dinner was eaten at 6 o'clock. A dish of tea was taken with one's "cummings" or friends at the "four hours". That was very special, and no wonder, with tea then costing 25 shillings per lb. Some slices of good wheaten loaf would be offered too. Ladies otherwise drank ale if guests were present, but claret was cheaper still, duty free from France. A homely supper meal might consist of mashed potatoes and milk, with oaten cake and rich sweet milk cheese. Each member of the family would have his own "bicker" (beaker) and "cutty" spoon. Forks had three prongs, and spoons had small ends made to catch up juice or gravy. Dessert spoons were unknown. Every family had a "knocking-stone" whereon to beat the bere meal for the bowl of porridge, and nearly every

family had a "guddle-yard and a "*strong tendency to avoid anything like orderly arrangement*". A steading generally had a round house adjoining the byre - where the pony walked round and round, grinding the corn. A smaller round shape on old maps signifies where the butter churn was.

"**McKinlay's guddle-yard**" is marked on an 1856 map of **Balmore**, showing it to have been below and beyond where the **Balmore Garden Centre** now is.

The mainstay of the diet of the people was bere meal. Lord Kames tried to impress the Scots with the necessity of having gardens (he was writing in 1778) "*now that meal was so advanced in price that the poorer people cannot buy it. Every tenant on the King's estates should grow vegetables, kail, cabbage and potatoes*". He thought that in every "Tack", which was a let through a tenant, there should be a clause obliging the tenant to have a kitchen garden of at least one acre. The rewards for doing that would be the giving of a good hoe, shovel and spade.

John Galt describes a tea-party in this way.

*"We had some neighbours in to their tea, and the Mistress had provided shortbread and seedcake, wi' some o' her jelly and marmolet, according to the use and wont o' such occasions. When the tea was filled out, our friend drew up his chair to the table, and wasn't a slack wi' teeth or wi' claw on the dainties. 'Ye seem to like that kind o' bread, Andra, said the Mistress'. 'Atweel, quo' he, 'it's no' ill to tak'.*

Perhaps a Miss Marshall at **Laverockhill** might have made Treacle Ale about this time, using five quarts boiling water, 21bs treacle, 2ozs yeast and sugar. The method was to melt the treacle with boiling water in a crock. Sugar was added to taste. When cold, 2ozs yeast (on toast) was added, covered closely and left for three days. Bottled and corked tightly, and tied down, this all became very potent. (It is not clear who was to be tied down - the cork or the drinker)!

Before 1745 there was probably not a tea-pot in Baldernock parish, nor a clock. Gradually, wooden "coggies" and horn spoons were replaced with pewter plates. There were comfortable brown pots, glazed inside and out, and ashets from a warehouse in Finnieston, those which Scots housewives still call "using" ones, decorated with blue designs (bits of this Delftfield pottery, thrown out in countless Baldernock "middens" can still be picked up in fields) and double egg cups cut from thorn wood. Brass and iron bedsteads were in some houses, box beds in all. The Carron Company of Falkirk opened Baldernock colliery which lasted from 1798 till 1812.

There are remains of cottages and also of holes that were pit shafts or wells. The "lumps" are colliery waste bings, now overgrown, from **Baldernock Linn** to **Lennox Forest**. It was worked by serf miners at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution.

## **Weaving**

In rural areas like Baldernock, the tailor came on his rounds with his apprentices and was paid two or three pennies per day with his food. The weavers and tailors were men of note and comparatively prosperous. Cloth was spun at home, and dyed and woven by the village "webster" who, with his mates worked all day and often into the night. There used to be a row of weavers' cottages in the field at **Balmore** cross-roads, opposite the house called **Viewfield**. The stepping-stones over the Kelvin, at the site where stood a bridge in Roman times, are sometimes written of as "the weavers' steps" - the same steps that saw illicit whisky (made in secret stills) being carried across to sell in Glasgow.

## Distilling

Licences to distil cost 50 shillings in 1786 and everybody seemed to have a finger in the smuggling pie, or the "running trade" as it was known. Stills of under 500 gallon capacity were forbidden, so all the small stills were outside the law. A white sheet hung outside was a warning to one's neighbour of the approach of the exciseman. The expensive bit of the still equipment was the "worm" or coiled copper pipe and when this wore out, the smuggler would dismantle his still and carry the "worm" to the exciseman who would reward him with £5 - just the amount needed to buy a new "worm"! If the **Torrance bridge** were being watched, news was sent to the smugglers who took the road over by **Barraston** to the stepping stones below **Balmore**.

Mr Buchanan, the miller of **Fluchter Mill**, was said to own an illicit still and when the gaugers visited him, he encouraged them to poke with their long spears into the pend beneath the mill, where he had hidden about 60 gallons of whisky, all covered over with thorns and twigs. *"Spear awa', ye're share to get something"*. One of the gaugers swore *"damn it, ye wadna say that if there was anything there"* and jumped off the pile of "throne" and left. A case there of the miller "keeping his cool".

One of the smugglers had a father who carried on a business as a grocer with a spirit license in **Torrance**. One morning a cart stopped at the door of the shop and several articles were taken out and left in the shop, amongst these a large jar containing smuggled whisky. After breakfast one of the watching gaugers called and came, as usual, into the kitchen. He was well-known to the housewife who was busily engaged in folding blankets, which she was putting into a large chest standing open behind him. He began to make enquiries about the cart and the thought of the whisky jar standing openly under his eyes made her pretend to be jocular, and set him laughing, and suddenly she threw a blanket over the gauger's head and tipped him backwards into the open blanket chest. She got the lid down and kept him there until she made her little boy take the jar of whisky away and hide it, when, of course, she released the gauger and began laughing so heartily at her own trick that he was mollified, but left the house not quite sure whether or not he had been "Had".

## Packmen

It must have been an exciting night when the packman or gaberlunzie came chapping at the door, ready to dig into his pack to offer for inspection all his whigmaleeries and bits and bobs. He always carried gingerbread men in his "pooch" for the children.

Inside the house, the farmer sat in his arm chair, limbs encased in strong gray "hoggers", head covered with a Kilmarnock cowl. A pot of potatoes hung suspended by an old-fashioned crook, from a beam that crossed the opening in the roof. One daughter would be spinning, another knitting and a son poring over a copy of Burns. The interior of the room would show a shelf-full of pewter shining like silver, brass-handled "awmrie", press-bed doors, stools, tables made of common fir and earthen floor. A knock on the door - the visitor is well-known. *"Come awa' Peter Pinglepenny, ye walking postbag you, and tell us all the outgauns, incomings, dounpoorins and affooupins in the parish, what sights ye had seen, what fairs, waddins and trysts ye hae been at, what bogles, witches, shaists and brownies ye hae banished"*. And Peter Pinglepenny brings out his *"bonniest ribbons and the cheapest in the kingdom"*. The farmer answers *"Nane o' yer whillywhallying nonsense, nae sooner hae ye gotten yersel' planted i' the inglenook than ye begin tae pawn yer trash on thae bits o' glaikit lassies wha will tug at my pouchstrings till I wair on them a' the bits o' bawbees I hae left ower after payin' the Martinmas rent"*.



*"Hoot noo, gudeman", says Peter Pinglepenny, "ye were ance young yersel', and likit brows, and mony the day ye hae gane decked in yer yellow waistkit an' yer wabs 0' ruffles tae meet yer ain bonnie lassie." I'm sure, gudewife, ye winna be against me showin' the lassies my transparent gauze napkins that are baith light and warm, they've been smuggled owerfrae France, and I got them a dead bargain"* and so the visit would go.

For a long time, indeed, almost to the present day, cadgers plied about the country, supplying salt, fish, cloth - all carried in sacks or creels. The "pigman" was not the collector of waste food for feeding to pigs, but the packman selling "pig" or crockery in exchange for rabbit skins.

Apart from visits from the packman or gaberlunzie news got around the country only with difficulty. The word "post" derives from the 16th century riders bearing news, being able to ride on horseback for only about twenty miles at a stretch. They changed horses at a staging post or inn and "posted" onwards. The word came to be applied to the innkeeper or "post-master". We are accustomed to use the phrase to do a thing "post-haste".

### **Roads**

At a meeting in Stirling in 1611 a complaint had been made of the poor quality of the houses and gear provided by *"the staiblers and sic as settis thair hors in heyr"*. A reference is made that no part of Scotland in 1655 could support the cost of a house post. A Blaeu map of 1657 shows only one road bisecting the parish from Milngavie through Baldernock to Kirkintilloch.

At the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, en had to give six days work per year on the roads - an unpopular job this - known as "parish road day", but a very necessary one because the roads were indescribably bad and carts could not be used. This of course meant that no produce could be marketed, but at last in 1751 the Turnpike Road Act was passed and it altered the whole situation. Towards the end of the 18th century Turnpike companies built surfaced roads or "causeways" and everyone who owned a horse had to provide three days labour *"man, horse and cart"*, but it was possible to dodge this duty, on paying a levy of a guinea.

Turnpikes were official roads where tolls were charged for their upkeep, and collected at barriers erected at intervals, at which a toll was paid. **Allander Toll** at the junction of three roads, kept its toll-house until 1960. More good markets were now accessible for the sale of dairy and farm produce from the farms, as a result of having better roads. Beyond, yet parallel to the disused railway embankment running from **Balmore to Bardowie**, there may easily be seen a line of hedgerow bordering Mr Andrew Gemmell's fields at **Laverockhill** and Mr James Bowie's fields at **Whitefauld**. This hedgerow is marked on a map of 1856 as the turnpike road which reached Balmore just to the south of the **Balmore Home Farm** house. The fields there are known as "Peaseland", "Blackhard" and Shots.

At this period Robert Burns was alive and composing his poems and struggling to keep a farm going, but there were others, such as Allan Cunningham (1784-1842) who wrote beautiful verse like this:

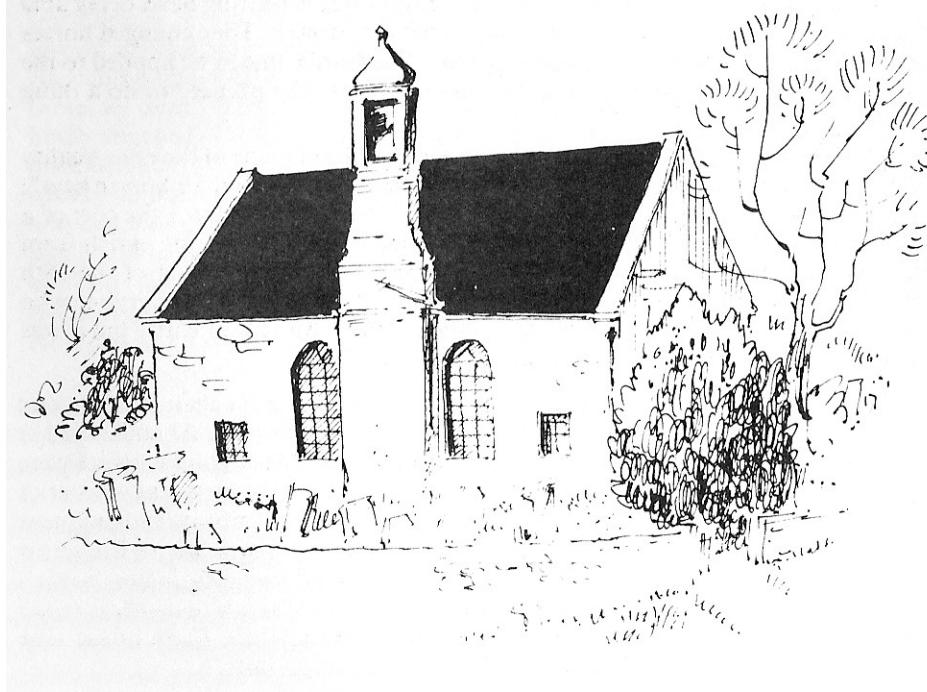
*Gone were hill the winter could,  
And gone were but the snaw,  
I could sleep in the wild woods  
Where the primroses blaw.*

## The Church

By a Scottish Law of 1579 every householder worth 300 marks had to possess *"a bible and psalm booke in vulgare language"*. In 1662, 300 Ministers left their parish *"rather than subject themselves to episcopacy"*. Walter Shirley, an Episcopalian, came next, but was put out by his parishioners in 1689.

In 1600 the Rev. James Walkinshaw was minister, but in 1663 he was ejected as minister for having remained faithful to Presbyterianism.

By 1690 Presbyterianism was established and the influence of the church became very



strong. Sabbath services were obligatory and "seizers" were appointed to interrogate anybody not going to Church. "Compurgators" had the right to enter houses after midnight on Saturday and dismiss the convivial company to their own homes.

The original building is thought to date from 1236, and the site of Baldernock Church is thought to have been a pagan shrine. Parish records have been kept, sometimes intermittently, since 1690.

In 1795, at a cost of £435. 17. 5d., the present **Baldernock Parish Church** was built. *"The greater part of the inhabitants of this parish devote their time to that most innocent and most useful of secular employments, the cultivation of the earth"*. So wrote the Reverend Mr James Cooper in the first Statistical Account.

In 1795 France and Britain were at war, money was scarce and the heritors were loth to build a new Church on the site of an old one that had become dilapidated. They engaged a Paisley man to build them a simple unadorned building which is unique in Scotland. An inscription on the belfry reads *"Deo Optimo Maxima P.F.S. - Q.S."* which means *"to the best and greatest God"*,

the stone of which is said to have come from the Antonine Wall. A stone stile still leads into the graveyard from the road, and outside stone stairs, seemingly built before 1794, lead into the little gallery. It is thought the first steps of each stair may not date from before 1795.

At one time the Minister entered by a door (now built up) behind the pulpit and hung his hat on a peg. Until 1900 a paraffin stove heated the hall and the floor was of earth. The bell was the gift of the Rev. Mr Couper who later became Professor of Astronomy at Glasgow University. The Church was very strict at that time, one might not profane the Sabbath, heavy penalties being exacted if one did. The well-to-do could perhaps get off by paying a fine, but for the ordinary people it was a case of:

*Tam maun face the Minister  
And she maun mount the pillar (pillory)  
And that's the way that they maun gae  
For poor folk hae nae siller".*

On Sundays in the Kirkhouse Inn, men conducted their business over a meal but no money passed between them on the Sabbath.

The Rev. John Anderson was the first post-Reformation Kilpatrick Minister, appointed in 1575, and he had appointed to help him a "reader" for Baldernock, and from this it seems probable that Baldernock was a pre-Reformation Church.

The names of the Ministers of Baldernock have been the Reverends Wallace, Colquhoun, Carrick, Taylor, Cooper (who wrote the Statistical Account), McEwan, Moncrieff, (Sir Henry Moncrieff), Pollock (who led out his congregation at the Disruption in 1843), Hunter, Roy, Smith, Bryce and Kidston (who wrote the third Statistical Account of the Parish in 1966). One communion cup is dated 1707, one 1774 and two lovely shallow pewter dishes are inscribed "Parish of Baldernock 1789" and "1796".

The silver collection plate in current use dates from 1888 and the christening bowl is inscribed "*To the Glory of God and in memory of Gilbert Leitch and his wife Helen Gillespie 21.10.1928*". A fine Bible in current use was presented by Mrs Lennox and her family in memory of William Lennox, elder of the Church for over forty years.

In 1649 the Lords Commissioners for the valuation of teinds caused new lines of demarcation of parish boundaries to be defined and till recently the stones marking these boundaries still existed.

In Mr Alex Brodie's account of Scottish Church tokens, there is recorded one of Baldernock Church dated 1755 with the initials M: IC - for the Rev. John Colquhoun, Minister there from 1745 to 1772.

The "living" afforded to Rev. Mr James Cooper in 1783 consisted of "*63 bolls of meal, £331 in money. a manse and a glebe of 10 acres whereof seven are arable*". **Baldernock Glebe** house, then the manse, was built in 1730.

## **Baldernock Free Church**

At the time of the celebration of the "silver-jubilee" in 1900 of Rev. Mr Young, various members of his congregation spoke of the early days, and of how the Church had a tarred roof, and how on a hot summer Sunday the tar would melt and drop down on the book boards. The services then lasted over two hours, and there was no "backsliding".

The precentor, Mr J. B. Morrison, had been appointed at the same time as the Minister, Mr Young, and in recognition of their services, he and his wife were presented with a gold albert and a pair of eyeglasses each.

Mr Young was presented by a frail 80-year-old elder, a Mr Fenwick, with a purse full of 102 gold sovereigns - and was told to *"go and spend the whole thing on a good holiday"*.

Mr Young remembered his ordination day as *"a beautiful day in April. The air was clear, the verdure and bloom of spring had begun to appear, and something of the genial warmth of summer anticipating by a little its own proper season, was felt. The old Minister to whom I had been assistant sent a peremptory yet kindly message that I was not to forget to wear my overcoat when I shook hands at the door of the Church afterwards"*. From the old precentor to the present chief elder Mr John L. Morrison, the parish has been fortunate in having the Morrison family serve it through succeeding generations.

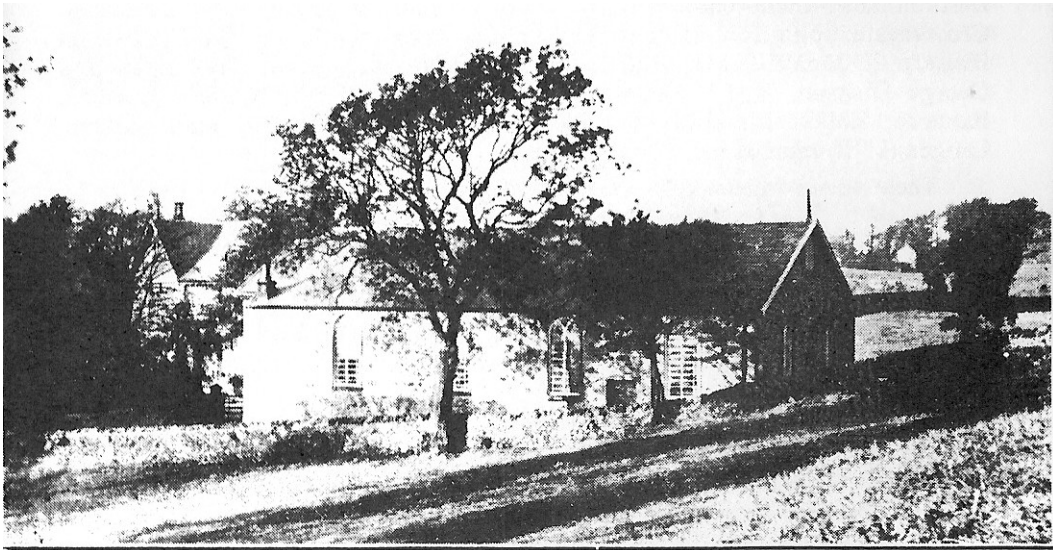
From the Union of Churches in 1929, the Baldernock and Milngavie Free Church became St Paul's Church in Milngavie.

It is impossible while reading about the period not to be made aware of the tremendous vitality that must have inspired the **Free Church** and it was fortunate in its ministers. On a delightful sampler, sewn by Mary Bowie of **Whitefauld**, the great great grandmother of the present farmer Mr James Bowie, it is interesting to find that Mary included the initials of the Rev. J. Pollock and Mrs Pollock on her sampler.

The Rev. William Young was minister from 1873 to 1920 in Baldernock Free Church.

The Free Church congregation of Baldernock originated at the time of the Disruption of 1843 when the Minister of Baldernock Church Mr John Pollock "led out" his parishioners to form a new congregation. The Manse, later extended to become **Baldernock House**, was built by local farmers in about 1848. The hall-like building behind Baldernock House was the Free Church.

The family of the late Colonel Alexander Ogilvie Robertson were members of the Church - two uncles were deacons, driving over to the services from Milngavie with their pony and trap. After the union of Churches, when St Paul's in Milngavie became the Free Church, the Robertsons bought the Church bell which is dated 1843 and it was put in a family mill where it tolled the dinner break. Mr Jackson of Barr and Stroud then acquired the Manse and extended it into **Baldernock House**. It was bought in 1956 by the Ogilvie Robertson family who brought back the bell, which still hangs at the door.



OLD CHURCH AT BALDERNOCK.

A Mrs Peareth-Lennox, of **Lennox Castle**, remembered that when she was a little girl, she was taken across the hill to join the Seceders at worship in their "tent" at the **Dowan Farm**. This probably meant that the congregation listened in the open air to the Rev. Mr Pollock who would be preaching from the "tent" or covered pulpit which was commonly used at times of Sacrament until a church and manse were built on the **Fluchter Road**.

Some local farmers were all for the new ecclesiastical regime, but one was more rigid than the rest in his views and refused to lend his house and equipment when he saw what kind of church was being built and said that he "for ane was for nae mair to dae wi' a place wi' winnocks that seemed a hantle fitter for a shop whaur claith was to be sellt than for a kirk".

Baldernock Church has been fortunate in having worthy men in its congregation, and one of these was Mr **Robert Watson** of **North Bardowie**, and of him, the Rev. Morrison Bryce said at his funeral, *"He sought to use the talents and opportunities God had given him so as to be helpful in his day and generation, and has left behind him an example of readiness to serve the Church and the parishioners which I hope will find many imitators among us"*. Mr Watson had been a JP and president of the **Baldernock Curling Club**.

Among those present at the funeral of this fine man (for this tells much) were Messrs Morrison Harrison, Fluchter; Harold Jackson, Baldernock House; James Bartholomew, Glenorchard House; W. S. Nelson, Bardowie; John Christison, Crossvegate; John Low, Baldernock; William Knox, Mealybrae; Robert Donald Blairskaith; James Bowie, Whitefauld; John Marshall, Laverockhill; James and George Dickson, Easter Fluchter; John Rennie, Kettlehill; Andrew Pickford, Balmore; Robert Morrison, Bogside; James Graham, Dowan; John Ralston, Langbank; Thomas Baird, Schoolhouse.

These verses were written at that time.

In Memoriam  
 "Robin's Awa"  
 by  
 Rabie Dow 24/3/70

*Bonnie Baldernock thy scenery rare,  
Enchantin' as ever, surpassin'ly fair,  
Thy neuk's an' thy brooks, morn, noon and nichtfa',  
Are lanesome and drear, noo Robin's awa',*

*O beauty and grandeur his loose on the hill  
Presents to the artist a prospect to thrill;  
A veil over the sum o' the nest seems to draw  
The glamour is fadin' noo Robin's awa'.*

*Glenorchard the moors, the woods o' Balmore,  
The Loch o' Bardowie, enchantments explore,  
Wi' Kelvin and 'Castle, an Bonrnie Bohall,  
They're musty and dreary, noo Robin's awa'.*

*The old 'Stablished Kirk where we worshipped an' prayed,  
Still serves as a shield where his body is laid,  
To foregather there when the "King" gives the ca',  
We'll gird up our loins, an' wi' Robin awa'.*

## **Death**

In the eighteenth century when a woman lost her husband, it was customary for the door of the house to be painted black, and decorated with pear-shaped "commas" to represent tears for the departed one.

In cases of real poverty, the Kirk Session would pay for the funeral out of Kirk funds. Ale and tobacco had to be paid for and the relatives would be given £2.

Mourners met at the house of the person who had died, and after they had been supplied with "some refreshment", would set out on the coffin road carrying the corpse on a bier. The **Coffin Road** in Baldernock parish started from the crossroads at **Balmore** past the "townend" and taking a line across the slope of the fields behind the present houses at **Acredyke** and **Whitefauld**. It then turned north at right angles along the hedge dividing **Laverockhill Farm** from **Whitefauld Farm**, crossed the **Brenziet Burn**, climbed up the next slope to the end of the wood which runs east and west on the **Brenziet Farm**, and then after half a mile turned right down the present grassy path known as the **Lang Lee** to the road which leads from **Barnellan** to the School. From there it led by the twisting road past **North Bardowie Farm** to **Baldernock Churchyard**.

In the earlier part of the 18th century, a time of continuous poverty and misery, failed crops and bad seasons, the poor were not buried in coffins, but carried to their graves in the parish coffin, whose bottom was hinged to allow the bodies to be dropped into the grave beneath. At times it became so difficult to get help to bury bodies that it became a matter for civil magistrates. Intimations came from the pulpit to all persons *"to bury the corps of the poor timeously under failzie of 20s to those persons adjacent to where they dye"*.



The oldest known gravestone in the Churchyard is that of 1644. Around the Church the gravestones record the names of its parishioners - Alexander Dunlop, advocate, who took part in passing the Reform Bill in the mid 19th century.

Archibald Bulloch lies there, grandson of the Chaplain to the second Darien expedition, and great great grandfather of Mrs Eleanor Roosevelt.

There is a gravestone near the entrance to the graveyard bearing this inscription.

Margaret McAdam  
spous to  
William Moody  
died 3rd October A.D. 1805  
who at  
Milngavie  
as man and wife  
lived 20 years a  
happy life

The other gravestone is near the vestry door and recalls the memory of a Hamilton of Bardowie who died in France with no friend or relative near him except his faithful manservant James Douglas. There was some difficulty with the burial in France, so James had the body placed in a lead coffin and he then bought a horse and cart, and brought it through France to Rotterdam, and then by ship to Scotland. At the funeral it was said that one of the pall bearers, not knowing the coffin was made of lead, was almost dragged head first into the grave.

In 1826 a small octagonal house was built at the entrance to the Churchyard. This was to shelter the men of the parish who stood guard over new graves in case they should be robbed by the "resurrectionists" who stole bodies to sell to the Anatomy School in Glasgow. Each elder was

armed with a short sturdy club; one of these is still in the possession of a present elder of the Church, Mr Robert McOuat of the Dowan Farm.

The watchers might fortify their courage with a drink of "porter" at the "change house" or Kirkhouse next to the Church, which was then an Inn.

One story tells of a man who claimed to have seen the fairies dance on the triangle of grass where the War Memorial stands, but perhaps he too had been at the change house.

### **The Church in the 1970s**

Nowadays the elders on duty each Sunday still stand in the guard house, on a pane of whose glass in the door, may be read some rules scratched long years ago,

*"Within this hous  
We elders dous  
Look through the glass  
See those that pass,  
And those that gie  
Their brown bawbee,  
Cauld charitie".*

The present church is situated rather inconveniently at the western extremity of the parish, but this is the result of the fact that formerly it was much nearer the centre of a much smaller parish.

After the war of 1914-1918 a memorial to those who had died was erected just outside the entrance to the church, and this takes the form of a Celtic cross of whinstone. The names of those who died in the Second World War have been added to the memorial. The church yard has been enlarged three times.

Graham Moffat the playwright took the Church and manse as the setting for his famous play "**Bunty Pulls the Strings**", and which has seen many productions, the latest of which has been staged as part of the celebrations during Baldernock Fair 1974.

The Church Hall in Balmore is now available for use by all sections and interests in the community though at one time the acceptance of a grant from the Baird Trust made it available only for Church purposes.

An active Woman's Guild supports the work of the Church with energy and loyalty and the Sunday School flourishes under the aegis of a succession of devoted teachers and helpers.

The number on Baldernock Church membership roll at 31st December, 1973 was 259. Over a hundred years ago, a religious leaflet circulated in the parish, called "The Baldernock Friendly Monitor". Nowadays the friendly monitor is the leaflet call the Link, circulated by the minister, the Reverend Mr Samuel Devlin.



## THE MEMBERS OF BALDERNOCK KIRK SESSION in 1974

<b>Member</b>	<b>Year Ordained</b>
John L. Morrison.	1938
W. M. Galloway	1946
James C. Robson	1957
James D. Wilson	1960
Earle W. Brazill	1963
R. C. Campbell	1963
Alexander Gold	1967
David Ralston	1967
S. C. Shaw	1967
Robert McOuat	1967
J. Macaldowie	1971
D. C. Macaldowie	1972
A. J. Struthers	1972
James C. Drummond	1972
W. A. Matthew	1972
P. B. Shakeshaft	1972

It must be recorded here that the following elders also served:

Mr. Robert P. Mair who was ordained 1967, died 1971; and Mr. William C. Lennox who died 1971 and had been an elder for over 40 years.

### **Housing at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century**

At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Baldernock houses would be simply made buildings with earth or clay floors and low roofs of heather or fern thatch. The house itself, the outhouse, byre, stable and dairy would be all in one line with the wood or peat stack behind and the pig-sty at the end of the building, and there might be a few stacks of corn or hay nearby.

Rooms would be lit rather dimly by “ruffies” which were roots of fir. Doors were low and windows no more than 18 inches high. The part where the family sat was the “in-seat” and the one and only chair was reserved for the “gudeman” of the family.

There is an inventory dated 1839 of the furnishings of a house which was to be “rouped” 15½ ells of linen, two silk gowns, one silk coat, nine coats, seven shawls, 14 napkins, two blackcloaks, three pairs cotton stockings, two pairs gloves, one silk, one dozen spoons, six pillow slips, two linen slips, one linen bolster slip, five feather pillows, two tick bolsters, five towels, two gold rings, one stone, one coat, four tyke beds, one white bed, one tick pillow, one tick bolster, eight ells tweeled sheeting, one woman’s linen shirt, one pair of Bibles, seven ells of harn, three sacks, one pair of double harn sheets, nine single sheets, four covers, ten pairs of blankets, two plaids, six stone of lint, seven women’s harn shirs, three hanks of cotton yarn, two pair cotton stockings, seven men's linen shirts, fourteen vests, one pair trousers, four apris breeches, three coats, one umbrella, two pair leather gloves, one pair gatters (gaiters), two deeks (dickies?), four short gowns, six silver teaspoons, three chrystal bottles, one half dozen china, three china bowls, two pairs brass candlesticks, ten books.

## Population

The population of the parish in 1871 was 616. Fourteen farms are listed, the principal landowners were:

Ker of Douglaston  
Hamilton of Leny  
Bartholomew of Glenorchard  
Trustees of the late Sir William Stirling Maxwell (Back-.o'-Hill and Redbog)  
R.obert Moyes (East and West Bogside)  
Kincaid - Lennox  
John Marshall (Laverockhill)  
William Johnson (Barraston)  
Robert Ronald  
Trustees of John McCulloch (East Blairskaith)  
Mrs Janet Colquhoun (Upper Blochairn)  
Robert Watson (Bardowie and West Blairskaith)  
Walter Craig  
The Old Man's Friendly Society  
James Bowie (Whitefauld)  
James Maitland (Balmore)

## Transport: Railway line, Canal and Buses

Before the age of the railways, people travelled because they had to, but on the advent of the railways, travel became also a pleasure. "Genteel Parties will find the trip an agreeable and healthful mode of spending part of the day. Fare one shilling". On the 1st June, 1879 the Kelvin Valley Railway .opened from Birdston, at Kilsyth to Maryhill for the transport of goods, mainly coking coal.

Nine hundred and two people bought shares in the railway. It was hoped that new residential communities would spring up along the route, and at one time Bardowie was to have been a model garden city, but this plan was never put into effect.

The family of Bairds of Gartsherrie were principally concerned in this railway line in order to export their coal to the docks in Glasgow, which in the nineteenth century was the world centre of locomotive trade.

The stations of Summerston, **Bardowie**, **Balmore** and **Torrance** had no fixed signals, no buildings and no cranes. In October 1879 a passenger train left Torrance in the morning, returning in the evening.

The Kelvin Valley Railway amalgamated with the North British Railway in 1885, and from then on there was consistent passenger traffic from Glasgow Queen Street to Kilsyth. Saturdays and Sundays in May and June were always extra busy with Sunday School outings and such like parties, which had replaced the old outings to **Craigmaddie**. Nowadays the Sunday School picnic takes place in the field between the site of **Glenorchard House** and the new pumping station which carries Loch Lomond water to the towns of central Scotland.

One of the great summer outings for all the family used to be a trip on one of the pleasure boats such as "The May Queen" and the "Gypsy Queen" plying on the canal between Port Dundas and Craigmarloch.

"The Swift" was a horse-drawn passenger boat with a horn that blew to warn everything and everybody to get out of its way. The bargeman, Davy Lawson, had a sharp and trusty knife that he used to reach down and cut the rope of any boat that got in his way.

The horses that drew the boats were what might be called "rejects". They had often been maltreated and become bad tempered, for which reason they were often muzzled. But they were wise beasts, knowing when to haul on the ropes near the locks, and side-stepping to release them, then "picking up" the ropes once more and going on, so that the barge lost no weigh.

After the First World War, **buses** came upon the scene, and the branch lines were the first to suffer. The Kelvin Valley Railway was withdrawn in 1951, and between that time and 1964 all the little "valley" lines lost their passenger lines.

A man called Bain ran the bus service. One inhabitant of **Balmore** in the late twenties remembers that the names for Bain's buses were Charybdis, Mercury and Arethusa, the last being the "flagship" and very modern!

### Local Characters

Who were the people known as "characters" who added colour to the scene in those days?

- "Tolan", a man based in Balfron who was the modern "packman". He went round the parish as representative for agricultural implements.
- "Creeping Jesus", who had a "soor milk cairt" and also sold eggs and butter.
- Old Hannah who scythed the parish roadsides.
- Rabbie Gibb and Effie Thompson, tinkers of the parish, who used to mend pots and pans, and were known as "Sheared-i-grind".
- "Baldy Orr" who drove his "soor milk cairt" in and out of Glasgow.
- Sally Burke, Dick Docherty.
- "The Wisp" - Gillespie with the black beard who was a tramp and a tinker and had something to do with the "smiddy" or blacksmith's shop.
- McAulay who carted hewn stones from the quarry.
- One family called Warr had six sons who all went to the 1914-1918 war and all came back.
- Bobby Gibson at **Beanscroft**, the "stickit" vet, and Joe Morrison, doctor and vet.
- Pat Killea near **Balmore Station**, who kept an unwilling donkey.
- Sam Fulton the painter of dogs who lived in **Torrance**.
- the McAulay Stevensons who owned **Robinsfield** and once, when the youngsters had built a huge kite in a field near **Bardowie Loch**, it lifted Miss Jean McAulay Stevenson right off her feet and almost into the air and away.
- Other residents were the Whites, Rodgers, Dundases, Harrisons, Galloways and Gibsons. Forrest Muirhead Moffat recalls he was one of twelve people who built the Tennis Courts at **Bardowie**, using stones and ashes from the old "coup" which burnt for years. Others who helped were the Rennies, Kirk Craig, (whose sister, Miss Irene Craig was for so long a County Councillor), Allan Smith and Tom and Willie Martin.
- Another "character" was Johnnie Ferns the roadman who kept a "'houseful of linties".
- And there once lived in Balmore a man named Thomas Dickson, a minor poet of splendid appearance when he was all "snoddit up" of a Sunday.
- In the 18th century a character called "Toss-up" was well-known at the fairs throughout

Stirlingshire - he was the gingerbread man.

- **Balmore** was the birthplace of Robert Moray whose plans of the fortification helped General Wolfe take Quebec.
- George Millar, who wrote the classic story of the French Resistance in the second World War "Maquis", lived as a boy in **Boghall**.



### Fairs & Festivals

In the country calendar in days gone by, the times of the hiring markets combined business with fun. They were called the "Fee-ing Fairs" when labourers changed jobs. There were three main fairs - the Partickmas in March, the Midsummer in June, and the Lammas Fair in August.

The **Torrance** and **Balgrochan** fair was held on November 5th when cattle were sold, and the **Bardowie** fair was held on June 6th. Country folk knew how to enjoy themselves at such times, and the highlight of a year might be a Penny Wedding to which self-invited guests went, or a Harvest Home in some farm barn.

At one time it was reckoned that if young people danced together they "risked damnation"; playing cards too were likely to corrupt, and were known as "the devil's picture books".

Hallowe'en was a splendid time for fun, with "guizards" and "galoshins" - an old rhyme sung at hallowe'en time was

*"In come I, Galoshin of renown,  
A sword and pistol by my side  
I hope to win my crown."*

Most modern Hallowe'en parties pursue a more refined way of possessing the traditional apple, but the best way is to "dook for aipples" in a big wooden tub half filled with water, with the red

apples bobbing and swirling about. A flagstone floor means that nobody minds if the floor gets wet. The "dooker" certainly will if he is doing it properly. The party giver stirs the apples and the dooker kneels beside the tub and puts his mouth (and face) in the water and tries to catch an apple as it bobs past. He is allowed three tries before someone else gets a turn.

Young people would meet on moonlight nights - perhaps in barns, when the girls would bring their "rocks and reels". Those same rocks and reels, or distaffs and spindles, to spin the wool or flax, would be worked by women by the fireside on winter evenings.

Festive times at New Year were called "the Daft Days". At a gathering of folk, the master of ceremonies might call out the dancers in these words

*"Fiddles! yer pins in temper fix,  
And rozet weel yer fiddlesticks,  
But banish vile Italian tricks  
Frae out yer quorum;  
Nor 'fortes' with 'pianos' mix  
But gie us Tullochgorum!"*

Children would go about, calling at doors, with a short rhyme -

*"My feet's cauld, my shoon's thin,  
Gie me cakes and let me in".*

For the grown-ups, there would be a kettle of warm spiced, sweetened ale, and a wee toast would be proposed

*"Weel may we a' be,  
Ill may we never see,  
Here's to the king  
And the good companie".*

One of the "spookiest" versions of Hallowe'en on-goings is the following verse written in the sixteenth century by Alexander Montgomerie.

*In the hindredend of harvest, on a/hallow evin,  
Quhen our gude nychbouris rydis, if I reid rycht,  
Sum bukkit on ane bwnwyd and sum on an bene,  
Ay trippand in troupes fra the twi/ycht;  
Sum saidlit on a scho-aip all graithit in grene,  
Sum hob/and on hempsta/kis hovand on hicht,  
The king of Phairie and his court with the e/ph-quene,  
With mony e/rich incubus was rydand that nycht.*

Present-day children dress up at Hallowe'en and Guy Fawkes and go round the neighbouring houses as guisers - from "guizard", meaning a mask which was worn by the actors in medieval morality plays to separate their human selves from the holy subjects they acted.

S. Devlin  
Mamie Magnusson  
Fawn Bain  
Sheeni Adamsen  
Fred. Jordan

Yeston  
Shirley White  
Alister Muir  
Helen Sather  
Peggy Mackenzie  
Dwaine Sather  
Joanne Dun

W. J. Cook  
C. Rachel Bakhusen  
Oleator Hanson

Laurence MacLennan  
Gordon M. Hood

Sheila Bain  
Margaret Jordan  
Danel Roberts  
Janet McQuat  
Isabel McDonald  
Kathleen Sather

E. G. S. Hood  
Sarah Nicholson  
Annie Reed  
Elyza Stirling

William Jack  
L. Bannatyne  
E Krebs  
K Bell

Anderson

John J. Stirling  
Lilya Brown  
Margaret W. Jack  
Gergetta Smith  
Matt Shearer  
Shila M. Shakeshaft

Shaw

J. Maclean  
A Maclean  
Jean R Clark

Shakeshaft  
Mildred M. Brown

W. R. White  
David N. Clark  
Kenneth Anderson  
Dunbar  
S. C. Snow

Pet. Drummond  
James C. Drummond  
Rebecca Clark  
H. L. Mackenzie

Mairiad M. Robertson  
Magnus Magnusson  
Dwaine Sather  
James O. Dun

Mr. MacLennan

## 19<sup>th</sup> Century life

By 1800, farming methods had so improved that crops were reasonably heavy; oatmeal was three shillings per peck, peasemeal two shillings per peck, potatoes 10 pence per peck and many cost 1/9d a stone. By 1815, prices had risen - oatmeal now cost 1/3d per peck, potatoes 9d per peck, cheese was 5d and beef and mutton 10/6d per stone.

During haymaking time, there would always be a big can of sour milk or "soor dook" standing in the cool shade to slake the worker's thirst. In 1826 during haytime, a boy of the Winning family went for a swim in Bardowie loch and was drowned. The Baldernock schoolmaster of that time wrote a little commemorative book about the lad who had shown such promise.

Sweet herbs were grown in gardens for medicinal use – pennyroyal, clary, rosemary, basil, fennel and no garden was likely to be without hyssop, camomile, rue and celandine.

Clothes were washed in carbonate of soda or soap bought in half firkins, blanket washings were communal affairs when neighbours met to “post” or tramp the blankets.

In 1857 the Western Bank failed, largely because of the American Civil War, when cotton was not being exported from the southern states. Bankruptcies followed, and good quality cottons and muslins could be bought cheaply, which meant that many more people could afford to dress more elegantly and prettily.

If Baldernock citizens ventured as far as Glasgow to buy or sell goods or to find entertainment, what did they sell and buy? They had butter and eggs and poultry to sell at Glasgow Cross., and vegetables in the Candleriggs. They could watch the dancing bears, the merry-go-rounds, and perhaps look into a Music Hall - "halfway houses to hell" as they were called.

"Cheeny duggs" were won as prizes at fairs; crockery came from Finnieston, stone jam jars from Calton and Garngad, white ashets decorated with blue came from Delftfield in Glasgow, and common earthenware called "pig" was universally used.

Besom brooms were used to sweep the floors, box-beds replaced those made of iron or brass (costing 12 shillings); plain wooden chairs cost four shillings each, and there would be a kist to hold the blankets.

### Balmore Golf Course

Harry Vardon designed Balmore Golf Course which was laid out in 1907, and he certified in unqualified terms *"its fine natural advantages and excellent possibilities"*. The tee for the first hole is in a sloping field called "Egypt". *"Altogether,"* it was reported, *"The prospects for the Balmore Club are very bright. Hitherto the train service has not been so good as golfers would desire, but it is expected that the facilities for reaching the course, which is situated at a distance from the station that can be covered on foot in eight minutes, will be greatly improved in the near future. Railway companies are now alive to the importance of cultivating the golfing traffic"*.

The Club at present is the only licensed premises in the parish. The course is rich in beautiful trees on what was the old **Glenorchard** estate. Giant sequoia are there, hornbeam, Corstorphine plane, the avenue of lime trees is still there to the south of where the house stood, and three chestnut trees known as "the maidens".

## Rights of Way

The parish has some old rights of way; which were roads or paths usually leading to the church, or short-cuts taken by generations of people going about their business, or used by farmers taking stock from one place to another. Names for these old paths, as for fields, have grown up gradually as they have always done, enriching the imagination and beguiling the passer-by. They recall the men and women who worked the land in a past time.

The Law of Right of Way says that rights of way can be various types. Roughly speaking, they may be categorised as vehicular routes, drove roads and footpaths, corresponding to the Roman Law servitudes of "via," "actus" and "iter". Most rights of way are very old indeed. A right of way is said to exist until forty years have passed without public use of that way being made. One of these ways in constant use at the present is the path that leads across the golf course from **Balmore to the school**. As the road crosses the **Brenziet burn**, at a point where a gate once swung, the water bubbles and froths over the stones, and has done so companionably down the years that succeeding generations of schoolchildren have called the place **The Singing Gates**. Another right of way leads from the **Balmore Garden Centre** along the edge of the fields down **to the Kelvin** where there is now a bridge, but where the walkers once crossed on huge stepping stones, and this is called **The Step Road**.

A short but interesting old right of way links **Kettlehill Farm with the Baldernock Mill**. Other old rights of way lead up the stony road east of **Miltonsay Kennels**, known as the **Mealybrae**, up along the edge of Peathill wood and the boundary stones and through **Lennox Forest to the Blane Valley**. Yet another short way joins the **Shaw cottages opposite Hillhead farm to the "back" road from Torrance to Barraston**. Another leads **from a right angled bend in the road north of the Balmore pumping station over the fields, emerging to the south of Craighead Farm and leads onto the A807**. One other way leads **from a lane north of Tower Farm over to Torrance by the Wardend Road**.

At a point on the hill on Mr Thomson's **Brenziet Farm**, where the coffin road turns west along the ridge, once stood the **Clarion Hut**. After the Great War of 1914-1918, a group of politically active people in Glasgow used to foregather at weekends in the hut they built in which to discuss their political views, which were printed in a newspaper called "The Clarion". Mr Tom Johnston, once Secretary of State for Scotland, and a native of Lenzie, was one of the number.

## Schools

The earliest school buildings at Baldemock lay to the east of their present position, and in about 1764 a new school and schoolhouse were built, and again in 1810, yet another building was erected which was big enough for the schoolmaster to board pupils from outside the parish if he wanted to increase his salary.

The Heritors of the time took their responsibilities very seriously, and resolved to advertise for a master whose principles and moral character were unblemished, and in whom *"an ability to teach French would be an advantage"*. The position must have seemed desirable for at one time, no less than 69 teachers applied for the job, in spite of the meagre salary offered. He was paid 2/6d per pupil per quarter, his salary was 350 merks, his house and land were worth £3, and the office of session clerk and precentor were worth £1 10/-.

One thinks of the dominies of rural schools like Baldemock with great admiration for the standards they set, like John Mann who *"left behind a fragrant memory"*. There was once a





At the funeral of Mr John Gibson, the schoolmaster who *"had had control of the educational interests of the parish for a quarter of a century"*, and presumably had been also session clerk, someone wrote, *"the Church itself is the very epitome of Covenanting Scotland, which with all its imperfections, has made Scotland great among nations"*. Mr Gibson had been a *"great enthusiast for the bowlin' "* and when he arrived in Milngavie to take up his appointment, he brought with him his bowls. His luggage came later!

### School games

Many people in Baldernock parish who began their schooling at the **"Fluchter"**, remember how the boys and girls played together always, *"and still do"* says Miss Annie Reid, who began teaching in Baldernock twenty five years ago. The girls played "Ring-a ring-a-roses" (relic, so it is said, of the days of the Plague), and made their "housies" in the little wooden hut in the school grounds, called Rose Cottage. *'Touch ane, touch a'* was a favourite game, so was *'Tig'*, *'Hopscotch'*, and catching marbles on the back of one's hand. Friends would "birl" each other round, with hands crossed, and when the bell went for class to begin, they would say to each other *"there's the birl"*.



**A GAME AT MARBLES.**

On the way home across the golf course, the children played *"jump-the-burn"*, or dared each other as Mr Duncan Morrison ruefully remembers, to see if they could get home walking only on the rocks in the middle of the burn, and in Autumn they would go *'pu'in gowans'*.

They guddled for trout in the **Brenziet burn** - Mr John Morrison's mother would often forgive the boys their late home-coming if they brought her a good fat trout.

Here it is interesting to know that a fresh herring cart used to pass through **Balmore** every day at one time, but recently even Gavin Russell, the fishmonger from Lennoxton, found he had to stop his van-round in the parish, because it was no longer economical.

What did the children at **Baldernock School** play at in the old days? Well, towards the end of the eighteenth century they might perhaps fly their kites in the Thummlefield or spin peeries or

tops, or play '*Hunch - cuddy - hunch*', or roll their hoops. Hoops have been favourite playthings for a long time, and on into the present, for Mr John Morrison and Mr Archibald Morrison remember with joy '*cain the gird with the cleek*'.

Children played '*Knife*', and '*Split-the-kipper*' and '*soldiers*' - all old games, soldiers being played with each child holding a stalk of ribwort plantain in his hand and trying to knock off the head of his opponent's stalk. A story is told about the boy who became Earl of Pembroke and Regent of England, who when ten years old, challenged King Stephen in whose camp the boy was prisoner, to a game of "*chevaliers*", and that was as far back as the thirteenth century.

'*Hickety bickety*' or its even older version '*Pirley Pease-weep*' might also have been played by these children of earlier days, and what were the counting rhymes they used? Counting rhymes began with shepherds counting their sheep, fishermen counting their catch, or women counting their knitting stitches, and kept up by children counting each other out or in to jumping or skipping games. An old one goes thus:

*Zeenty teenty figgety fell  
Ell dell dominell,  
Urky purky taury rope  
An tan tousy joke  
You are out.*

Present day children at Baldernock School now (of whom there are 72) sing these skipping jingles:

*Teddy bear, teddy bear  
Touch the-ground,  
Teddy bear, teddy bear  
Turn around  
Teddy bear, teddy bear  
Shine your shoes  
Teddy bear teddy bear  
That was good.  
Teddy bear, teddy bear  
Climb up stairs,  
Teddy bear teddy bear  
Say your prayers.*

and this:

*Christopher Columbus was a very brave man,  
He sailed through the ocean in an old tin can,  
The waves grew higher and higher - and over,  
5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 etc . . .*

Football, 'Kick-the-can', Coaly Bag fights' are also popular, 'Red Rover', 'Soldiers and Sailors', and many more. Another very old skipping song goes like this:

*The wind, the wind and the wind blows high,  
The rain comes scattering from the sky,  
Margaret Morrison says she'll die  
For the lad with the roving eye.*



## Books and Prize-giving

Slates in wooden frames were used to work out sums; copybooks were a chore to endure but encouraged good handwriting; and of course there was the annual prize-giving!

The books given to boys and girls as prizes at school or Sunday School were mostly very serious and gloomy. Mr James Morrison in 1883 was awarded second prize in Standard II, and what did he receive but the book 'Primrose or The Bells of Old Effingham' or first prize in 1892 when he won a book from the famous Ninepenny Series whose engravings and coloured frontispiece decorated 'Tiger Jack'.

'Stories of Self-Help' abounded. One volume by John Alexander was given to Mr Robert Morrison for 100% success in an examination in 1922, and again he got 100% in Sunday School and was given this time by Mr W. S. Pairman the Superintendent, a volume from The Red Nursery Series. All the books had tiny print and lavish and delicate engravings. The Halfpenny books, published by J. Cattnach were 'Blue Beard,' 'Puss in Boots' and 'Tom Thumb'.

Chapbooks were the paper covered books sold by pedlars and hawkers and packmen throughout the isolated communities, who also sold to women ribbons and laces and pins and needles. The Penny Histories as they were called must have brought great excitement into the lives of the country people. There was too the 'Christian's Penny Magazine' round about the middle of the 19th century, which carried such admonitions as *"The young man who will take for his guidance the star which has shone in these cheapest of cheap pages will not fail in the end to arrive at sound intelligence, right principles, Christian character, comfort, respectability and usefulness"*. Or there was Mrs Child (could that have been her real name or was she the Marjorie Proops of her day?) who wrote in 'Authority over Children' *"On no occasion whatever should a child be excused from finishing what she has begun. The custom of having half a dozen things on hand at once should not be tolerated. It should be considered a disgrace to give up anything after it is once undertaken"*.

One day Mr Baird, then the schoolmaster, sent to Mrs Duncan at the **Fluchter Mill** to borrow one of her goats to eat the grass on the school lawn, but in the middle of this, the goat kidded and one of the children had to be despatched at the double to fetch Mrs Duncan to deal with the situation. Such are the realities of life for country schoolchildren.

On a recent annual school outing to Troon, one small boy took along his pet duck to share the fun. Unfortunately the duck over-ate of Troon crablets on the beach and was ill in the bus on the homeward way!

Children still write in their exercise books deathless rhymes such as their great grandparents wrote, for example:

*Jeanie Thomson is my name  
And Scotland is my nation,  
Baldernock is my dwelling place  
Balmore it is my station,*

The cuckoo was long called the 'gowk', its call could be heard in the woods, but it could rarely be seen, and the gowk's storm might come in April when no man would be expecting it, and children took up the universal April theme of sending each other on fool's or 'gowk's errands', so when children still play April Fool's day, they are enacting a relic of ancient times.



One last glimpse of the school may be seen in the report of the Baldernock Former Pupils' Reunion in 1920. "*The dance programme*", it was reported, "*included several of the latest creations in terpsichore, such as the Fox Trot and Palace One Step. The MCs were Mr James Bowie, Whitefauld, and Mr John Morrison, Balmore*".

Long may the Baldernock children have the "*rare, incomparable gift of time, days to dream in, the dragonfly days of childhood*".

Hugh Macdonald wrote in "**Rambles Round Glasgow**" in 1854:

*"Balmore is an excellent specimen of the old-fashioned Scottish clachan. It is of no great extent, nor does it seem at all ambitious to increase its dimensions. The houses are, in the majority, plain and of one storey, with kail-yards attached to them, and lying east and west of the road, with a strong tendency to avoid anything like orderly arrangement. Most of the tenements are at the same time "theekit" in primitive fashion, while the gables are generally surmounted by "craw-steps" and dwarfish lums, which, like the human face, are indicative of advanced age. There are the usual branches of old-world trade. The souter's sign and the beild of the tailor as you are informed by an assortment of ill-formed letters; this again, by the heterogenous assemblage of scones, snaps, peeries, bobbins, red herrings and tape in the window must be the bit shoppie of Jenny a' things, an indispensable person in any community; while the cart wheel at, and the horse-shoe on, the door of his biggin' tells in unmistakable terms where the smiddy is located. The presence of the wabsters is also indicated as you pass by the jingling of the shuttle"*.

### **Tales of Baldernock**

There had to be water troughs at regular intervals along the roads to refresh the horses, and these were later used by the owners of the model T Fords which needed a 'fill-up' from time to time. At the corner of **Hillpark** and **Whitefaulds Farm** stood one such water trough of stone, projecting into the roadway. In it for many years there lived a "tame" trout, fed by the Muirhead Moffat boys who then lived in **Laverockhill**. One night, a rather dapper Bardowie man, returning home late, bumped into it in the dark, and fell head first into the water! It no longer exists, but the spring does, flooding onto the new pavement at that point.



It is a delight to imagine what the old days must have been like in **Balmore**, to think of the "**Balmore Parliament**" which was the name affectionately given to the *"gathering of cronies at The Big Stanes which lie at "the fit o' the new lawn"* i.e. in the field to the south east of **Viewfield**. Here was the meeting place where men like Joe Callaghan, Alex. Winning, Archie Morrison and Joe McLellan would stop for "a crack" and a pipe. As the villagers would lean back against the Big Stanes, their trousers would be worn to a shine, and the boys would romp about, listening with half an ear to the talk, but never, so it is remembered, never hearing a swear word; one of the men might knock the dottle from his clay pipe, practised fingers smoothing the bowl of the pipe, all embellished with carvings, and maybe a stem might break, and the smoker would prick his finger, and with the congealing drop of blood use it to stick the two ends of the pipe together again. Many interesting examples of these old pipes have been picked up during digging operations at the **Balmore Nurseries**.

And the story might be retold of how, southwest across the haugh, at a bend in the Kelvin, the water was crossed by a line of stepping stones ("the Weaver's steps" already mentioned). Here a number of learned members of the **Antiquarian Society** were looking at the stones and surmising they were probably part of a Roman road even though there were no identification marks. Two sweethearts come strolling along in the gloaming, and the lad asks what the men are looking at, to be told they believe it is nothing less than a Roman tablet, relic of the Emperor Antoninus Pius. Hearing this, the girl steps forward to have a look and bursts out laughing, saying *"Antoninus Pius! A'weel I wat ye're a set o' fules, for a' sae wise ye look. It's naethin' o' the kind - its just Redbog's auld cheese press that I've wrought many a day mysel', and which was cuist aside when they got thon new-fangled machine. Antoninus indeed quotha"*.

The **Kelvin bridge** was the scene of a curious adventure. In the white cottage on the slope of the hill at **Summerston Farm** lived a surly old man with a bonny daughter of 18. The old man was reputedly rich so there were many suitors. Father was opposed to all the youths but eventually the girl fell for a young man from Glasgow. Mary was confined to the house after being found on an evening walk with the young man, but he went on hanging about the neighbourhood till one dark November night of storm and rain, he set out for the spot as usual in a vehicle, but on the run down to **Bemullie**, the vehicle ran out of control and deposited him in the Kelvin. The driver rushed to the old man's cottage to get help. Father and servants ran to help, but after two hours search in vain, they returned to the house, to find a trail of wetness everywhere and the girl gone. *"Aye, Miss Mary's sweetheart was here, a' plashing wat, and she gaed oot wi' him a gude while since wi' her bonnet and shawl on"*. It was even so, and that very night, a "Ruglen wedding" consummated the happiness of the Rose of Kelvin and her *"droukit Glasgow chappie"*.

In the house presently occupied by Mr Duncan Morrison and his family, Joe McLellan's two aunts kept an Inn, *"the gaucy public house"*, with a circular stair at the back and stabling at the side.

There was a man named Gillespie who drove a flat cart about the parish, selling coal and briquettes during the week and vegetables at the weekend, and when required, carried Sir George Pirie's animal paintings into the city. Nan Muirhead Moffat recalls this in a verse for her little brother which goes thus:

*And do you mind Gillespie  
And the way he won your heart  
With figs and dates and oranges  
From off his old fruit-cart?*

In those days, a small child might draw in her "creepie" stool beside her grannie and be shown how to "knit" a long rat's tail of multi-coloured wool by using a hook to wind wool in and out and round four brass nails in the head of a tiny painted wooden dool. The tail emerged at the other end and could be curled up into a mat or a kettle-holder, very acceptable presents for one's nearest and dearest! On Sundays, children were encouraged to read quietly or play gentle games of a type of Scrabble with tiny cardboard letters. At Christmas, stockings might be filled with little boxes of beads to string into necklaces, or doll's house cutlery or tiny fans from Japan, or a shell which, when put into a glass of water magically opened to reveal tissue flowers, and always there would be pink sugar mice and paper hats with conundrums wrapped round "When is a door not a door? Answer, when it's a-jar"!

For many a long day, **Grannie Morrison's shop** was the hub of life in Balmore. Mr John L. Morrison remembers now how his great-grandfather farmed **Bogside Farm**, his grandfather worked in the Bishopbriggs mine, and his father, William Morrison, began the horticultural business still carried on there. It was the grapes that started Grannie Morrison's shop. Her husband grew mignonette and double daisies, and golden feather, and then began to grow tomatoes and fruit. The grapes grew abundantly and since there was then no easy means of getting the produce to market, Grannie Morrison took to hanging the choicest bunches in her window, and people from all around came to buy. She had barley sugar on a string, "readin' sweeties", sugar-ally straps and soor plooms to sell. Great hams sat on a shelf, and outside the door stood a sandstone grinder to keep the cutting knives keen-edged. A big ewer was used to get a measure of treacle from the barrel, and Mr Morrison would be sent by his mother and told *"Away down with the jam jar for a ha'penny worth of treacle and some ham, but get your Aunt Jean to cut it"* - Grannie being a bit short-sighted and careless with the knife!

Mr John Morrison remembers Grannie Morrison as a bit of a tyrant, but what colour and character she gives to the picture of **Balmore** in days gone by!

It is a picture of a small community of quiet hard-working country people. This has not radically changed in 1974. New families come and go. Many people work in Glasgow, but the incomers choose to live in Baldernock parish because they value highly the tenour of life there and appreciate that the core of the parish is the continuing care for the land given by those who have long been horticulturalists and farmers.

In a small community, every person is needed and important, and all the more so in **Baldernock**, comprising as it does, three parts, **Baldernock** itself, **Balmore** and **Bardowie**. The parish would be so much the poorer without, for example, the Lang sisters, the beadle Mr Robson, the Clarks who deliver the papers, Mr Campbell, for so long Superintendent of the Sunday School, Mrs Mould and Mr Ure, representatives on District and County Councils, the Ralstons, always welcome at Socials, Mr Shearer whose garage business is the old Torrance Smiddy, the policeman Mr Sam Muirhead and many, many others, all part of Baldernock.

### **Wildlife**

In Spring the air is loud with the call of curlew and peewit and larks quartering their territory. A hawk hovers above its prey, magpies ("one for sorrow, two for joy") fly around, and perhaps if one is still, a small neat brown head will emerge from last year's tawny bracken - a weasel, hurrying along the side of a burn with a vole in its mouth! To the north of the "top" road, sheep graze the hill ground, sharing it with a herd of black cattle. Below, Mr Imrie's tractor is ploughing, and the burn, bordered with wild watercress, runs, as it always did, past **Low**



**Blochairn** with its monkey puzzles and its geese, under the roadway and down through **North Bardowie** fields.

Oyster-catchers are early yearly arrivals; great flocks of gulls and starlings use the parish as a sort of restaurant or political hustings; moorhen and duck nest along reedy edge of the **Brenziet** Burn, and along the Auchenhowie Road weasels and hedgehogs are commonly seen. In Autumn skeins of wild geese feed in the damp fields bordering the Kelvin, and snipe are to be seen on the Haughs.

Heron may still be seen beside the Brenziet burn, hawks, sand-martins down beside the Kelvin still "*honeycomb the banks with the excavation of the little feathered miners*", as Hugh Macdonald puts it.

A deep sense of the nearness of the past is borne in upon one as one walks alone about the parish, along its less frequented lanes and hillsides. Elf-darts were found here, the Church, the mills, and the school are all just a field's length away. There is about it all rhythm and sanity. In Pamela Tennant's words:

*Full many a day have I found my way  
Where the long road winds round the hill,  
Where the wind blows free on a juniper lea  
To the tune and the clank of a mill;  
For the miller's a man who must work while he can,  
With the rye, and the barley growing,  
While the slow wheels churn and the great sails turn  
To the fresh wind blowing.*

## APPENDIX

**The Jaw** was originally known as the Mill of Auchenhowie. The House of Auchenhowie once stood where the boundary of Dougalston estate now stands. The Jaw appears on a map of 1790, the name being a corruption of the French "jet d'eau" meaning a splash. The ford across the "back" road from Baldernock to Milngavie was referred to as a "jaw".

The cottage at the Jaw is older than the barn which is dated 1803 and was probably built to contain the greater amounts of crops grown during the Napoleonic Wars. There are signs of a causeway of stones beside the loch which must have been a route taken by people going between Bardowie Castle and the Jaw. In about 1890 the barn was altered by the late Sir George Pirie for use as a studio before he built a new studio at Wardend in Torrance.

..  
**Barraston** - (Old name 1777 - Bannastown)

**Banows** - old name of the people who owned it

**Ais** – hill

"To be sold by public roup 12th November, 1862 at the upset price of £350 all and whole the lands of Gartletham, alias **Barraston**, with 24 acres of land, lying at the foot of the hill called Drumtocher hill towards the south side of the same, with the pertinents, and with the loaning and passage betwixt the principal house of Barraston, the lands called Acornfaulds and Moorhouse lands with the possession and use of peats and turf in the mosses and muirs of Balgrochan, with houses, buildings, yards, tofts, crofts and other parts, dendicles and pertinents of the same, whatsoever, lying within the Barony of Mugdock, late regality of Montrose, and Sheriffdom of Stirling; as also all and whole that piece ground called the Collier's Acre, with houses and pertinents of the same, lying as aforesaid, the property consists of about 107 acres in all".

**Barraston Farm** house has, cut in its lintel, the initials A.H. 1609 AB.

In 1508 an Englishman arrived at Mugdock to look for adventure in which to show off his prowess, and dared anybody to fight him. The Earl of Montrose said there was a hill-shepherd on his ground who would fight, and who was summoned. The Englishman asked for a week's respite to get really fit for the fight, but on the appointed day, he was killed outright by the shepherd.

The Earl was pleased his champion had won and asked what reward he desired. The shepherd answered that he would like to have the charter of the **Barraston** land, and the Earl agreed, the "reddendo" being a white rose, if it were asked for. But the rose has never been requested. Abraham Hannay was the man and Ann Blyth his wife, whose initials carved on the lintel of the door at Barraston.

Mr Charles Macintosh who was a partner in the Hurler and Campsie Alum Company, went to France to learn the art of tanning leather, and when he returned, started a tanning works at **Barraston**.

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**Bankell and Tower** - Two peel towers seem to have existed at one time. The tower was one of

the oldest in the whole district bordering on the Campsies. About 1400 a man by name Giles or Gileas, resigned his lands including the tower, to his "landholder" the lady Alicia de Falt, lady of Craighbernard (Craigbarnet?).

A family named Winning once owned **Tower Farm** but sold it and went to America in 1820. They too had acquired their land from Montrose, and their reddendo or "gift in return" was a pound of black pepper, payable only to Montrose himself, if he were to come himself to the farm, riding on a white horse. The reddendo has never been requested.

**Baldernock** may mean Bail-dain-cnoc meaning "dwellings on the hill of oaks".

**BARR-duibhe** Irish or Gaelic for a dark fountain. In a map of 1745 **Bardowie Loch** is named Bokeny.

**BANKELL** in the NW of the parish may mean 'Bun' - the end of the foot, or it might mean 'Ban' - Gaelic for white and carl or del for a cell.

**DOWAN DU** - old Celtic word for village. AN - diminutive, therefore, Little Village. AN also means a border or pleasant - therefore, a pleasant border of the burn that drives the mill.

**KETTLEHILL** - Cut - a barn, bank or sheepfold and Aill a stead.

**BARNELLAN** - Ban - tip or top, upland

AN from Ailean - a meadow or green place, thus - end or upland or meadow.  
(map 1745 - Boahill)

**BOGHALL** was built in 1706, on the bank of a burn, half a mile north of the castle. It is thought that **Bardowie Loch** must have spread over all the present low lying marshy ground to the north of the castle.

**BLOCHAIRN** - Baloch-ern - house belonging to the Lord of the manor.

**LANGBANK** - near Auchenhowie auchin - a field and nagh - a grave. An old man remembers having seen some gravestones in a field near the farm.

**ALLANDER** - the river that makes the south west boundary of the parish it means "meadow water".

**FLUCHTER** (in old days FLUCHARD) Fluich - wet and berr - land.

**BLAIRSKAITH** - (old name Blurescary) or Bal-er-skaith indicating a place where the proprietor had suffered loss, as in battle.

**Blain** - a battlefield or glade

**Sciach** - brambles or - Blur - a field or ridge

**BRANZIET** - from Bran - a Steamer

**Scoia** – boundary

**COLBEG** - Coil- nook or corner - Cuib

**Beag** – small

This may have got its name from the corner of land enclosed between the mouth of the Brenziet burn and the end of the boundary line at Cadder.

**BLAIRNILE** - Blar - a field and niall, meaning a soldier or hero.

**MEALIEBRAE** from Millie - good grass

**Mealich** – broom

**Meala** – honey

**BARGENYHILL** - Bai - meaning top

**Gaire, Glanach** - sand or gravel

**BROKENTOWER** - Bruigheantor - tower palace or mansion

During the 1930's there was a movement advocating a "back to the land" policy and the **Langbank "holdings"** were built then.

In the Maryhill district of Glasgow, dairies which got their milk supplies from local farms still bear their names, being supplied daily with milk, butter, eggs and homemade scones.



**THE HEN-ROOST.**

## 'TWEEN BALMORE AND MULGUY

I ken a bonnie countryside  
'Tween Balmore and Mulguy  
Whaur Allander and Kelvin flow  
Twa streams that ne'er rin dry.

There's hill and vale and loch and plain,  
Steep fields and guidly craps,  
There's routh o' bonnie flo'ers and shrubs,  
High trees wi' gaucy taps.

There's cottages and villas snod,  
Wi' mony a thrang farm-toon,  
Whaur eident men and women work  
Frae dawn till sun gaes doon.

Baith horse and kye are big and strong,  
The hens an' ducks lay weel,  
There's milk and butter without stint,  
Prime tatties and guid meal.

Baith Allander and Kelvin whiles,  
Ower spread the haughs sae braid,  
Till precious crap and pasture fields  
Like some wee sea are made.

Baldernock's quaint auld kirk stan's high  
Nearby the auld saw mill,  
Kirkhoose, Hillend and Dowan,  
Bankell and Kettlehill.

Gaun frae the manse, past mansion grand,  
An auld-time kirk one sees,  
Syne up the brae the hill farm-toon  
Stan's high 'mang lofty trees.

Gaun by the schule, and schulehoose near,  
Then on roond Blairskaith's twa,  
Blackhill, Hillheid and Redbog Farms  
Are yont Glenorchard wa'.

No' faur frae here are gowfin' greens  
A'maist as gude's ye'll get,  
Whaur men and maids hae'e halesome fun,  
And cease ower cares to fret.

There's twa Bog-sides, Colbeg, Whitefauld  
And Laverockhill, gaun west,  
Bardowie villas, loch and farm,  
Langbank in woodland nest.

There's a castle and twa temples  
That speak o' what has been -  
frae Balmore on to Dougalston  
There's mony a charmin' scene.

"The Steppin Stanes" "The Auld Wives' Lifts",  
The "Linn" in glen richt braw  
But gang to see the rest yersel" -  
I hinna telt it a'.

John Black  
44 Gibson Street  
Hillhead, Glasgow, July 1913

## SOME OF THE BOOKS CONSULTED

<i>The Scotland of our Fathers</i>	Elizabeth Haldane
<i>The Silver Bough</i>	F. Marian McNeill
<i>The Scots Household in the 18th Century</i>	Marion Lochhead
<i>A Century of Scottish History</i>	Sir Henry Craik
<i>The Imperial Gazeteer of Scotland</i>	
<i>History of Stirlingshire</i>	William Nimmo
<i>Prehistoric Scotland</i>	Richard Feachem
<i>The Statistical Account of Scotland (I, II, III)</i>	
<i>The Parish of Campsie</i>	John Cameron
<i>Collins Field Guide to Archeology in Britain</i>	Eric S. Wood
<i>Rambles Round Glasgow</i>	Hugh Macdonald
<i>The Antonine Wall</i>	Glasgow Archeological Society
<i>Reminiscences of Old Scots Folk</i>	T. Ratcliffe Barnett
<i>Social Life in Scotland in the 18th Century</i>	H. G. Graham
<i>Place Names of Scotland</i>	James B. Johnston

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*Compiled by Mrs Jean Stewart Illustrated by Mr Ewan Bain*

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