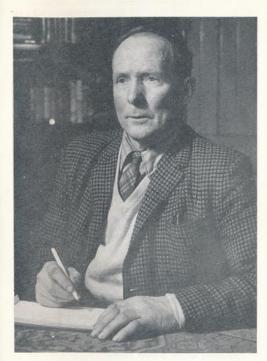
# GLEANINGS BY GLENNER'





A pleasant ploy when day's work's done Like 'Rabbie' I just rhyme for fun.

### A TOAST TO SCOTLAND

Auld Scotland, country of my birth, The finest place on a' the earth; A land that grows to me more dear Wi' ilka ither passing year.

Dear to me the heath-clad hills, Spreading moors and sparkling rills; Many a river, stream and lake Electric light and power to make.

Famous for the bagpipes sound, Grouse that on the moors abound; Salmon bright in many a river, Coal we think will last for ever.

Land of shining, sparkling streams, Land of many exiles' dreams; Land of glorious barley-bree Surrounded by an oil-rich sea.

Land of strong athletic men Reared in humble but-and-ben; Among the best they haud their ain At hammer, caber, puttin' stane.

Enthusiasts of many sorts Indulge in Scottish winter sports; They come in multitudes to ski At Aviemore, Glencoe, Glenshee.

From overseas keen bidders flock To buy our high-class pure-bred stock; To see our scenery and praise Our lovely mountains, banks and braes.

Scotch whisky's famed the world o'er Maturing in the bonded store; The richest export we can offer To help maintain the nation's coffer. It brings our country rich returns,
'Twas praised by poet Rabbie Burns;
It "oils the works" at many a parley
This potent cream o' Scotland's barley.

Abune a' drinks it bears the gree, Our rich, blood-warming barley-bree; It cheers oor herts when we grow auld And helps tae keep awa' the cauld; It beats rum, brandy, gin or beer, There's just ae thing - it's far ower dear!

The wealthy Yanks come over here To stalk and shoot our noble deer, All hoping eagerly to bag A "Royal" or "Imperial" stag. The bonus for a skilful stalker A hearty dram o' Johnny Walker!

Now please stand up with glass in hand, And toast our well-loved native land -"SCOTLAND".

### FORNETH BRAES

(One of the finest views in Scotland)

Gang up "The Gibbets" to West Mains,
Then look across towards Rochstanes,
A lovely sight will meet your een,
A picturesque and rural scene,
A view to charm the exile's gaze,
The rolling slopes o' Forneth Braes:
Nae bonnier sight could you set eyes on
Wi' "Seefar" up on the horizon.

Westward lie Arlick's grassy braes
Where black-faced sheep and cattle graze;
The "Droothie Burn" and the Fore hill,
The Croft, Burnside and Forneth Mill.
You'll see Drumhead well to the fore
Where my grandfaither farmed of yore,
A place o' first-class land, but steep,
Producing heavy crops and sheep.

Then situated lower doon
The "Whinny Drum" and the "New Toon"
Where Roy the smith was aye thrang working
And where "The Joiner" bred prize Dorkings.
Turning your eyes to eastward now,
You'll see the road they ca' "Beech Howe",
Then you behold the steep "Bank Park",
West Lodge, where once dwelt Charlie Clark.

Forneth Big Hoose wi' sturdy gables, And close behind you'll see The Stables, Then farther up "The Stars" farm steading, Famous lang syne for black bull breeding, And on the right the old "Craw Wood" Where once a lofty flag-pole stood. Continuing this list of charms
The two big Tullyneddie Farms;
Then Clunie Loch your eyes will licht on,
Birthplace of Admirable Crichton;
Where we as laddies used to like
To fish for perch and muckle pike.
The Island Castle stands aloof,
A ruin noo, without a roof.

The Loch is fed by Lunan's stream,
O' its braw troots I often dream.
Some day ere lang I might return
To fish that bonnie Lunan Burn.
You'll see a wooded ridge "The Knock"
Crowmed wi' a cairn o' hard whin rock.
Bearing the names o' Clunie's sons
Who lost their lives in World War One.
The bonnie Kirk and Castle Hill
Where feathered songsters sweetly trill.

Now looking further East you'll see The scintillating Loch Marlee; Marlee Hotel is clearly seen, And on the brae-face Thorngreen. Blairgowrie's suburbs meet the view And far away "The Sidlaws" blue. Presiding o'er this lovely valley The heath-clad mountain Benachally.

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THE HOEING MATCH (West Park - 11th June 1968)

June the 11th was the date, The hours 'tween seven and ten, To thin the neeps at "Cleikerin" Came many skilful men.

Grand equal drills, expertly done, Each one as straight as shot from gun. They fairly "haud a line" by heck! The Morrison brothers, Wull and Eck.

The signal goes to make a start, They push and draw and scrape, Swift, light, but firmly move the hoes, Nice smooth, round drills to shape.

The experts try for perfect work, They take a lot o' trouble To ensure that no a weed is left Nor any careless double.

Although in varied garments clad, "Carseckies", jerseys, blazers, One thing in common they all had, Their "clats" were sharp as razors.

Nae lad goes empty-handed hame The work was a' weel done, So from the farmer's generous hand They a' got half-a-croon.

Wi' jokes and fun the time went by, It was a grand affair, A pleasant, happy, cheery nicht, The Boein' Match at Blair. And when at last the job was done The J.A.C. were hearty, Competitors got cups o' tea, 'Twas like a Garden Party!

The judges said the work was good And competition keen. The prizes then were handed o'er By Wull's wife, Mistress Jean.

Richt gracefully she did the job, She got a hearty cheer. Then home we went our separate ways Resolved to meet next year.

### BACKWATER RESERVOIR

Inaugurated by Her Majesty the Queen 9th October 1969

On ninth October, Sixty-nine A grand experience was mine, My joy was great, my pleasure keen, I saw Her Majesty the Queen.

The sky was clear, the weather calm, All roads led to Backwater Dam, The water like a mirror lay On that benign October day.

A lot of people gathered there, A festive mood was in the air, Excitement in the crowd was keen While waiting for our gracious Queen.

To keep the folk from growing weary
The sound of music kept us cheery,
They charmed our ears, they earned "big hands"
The expert, polished Black Watch bands.

Arrangements for that day were grand, A spacious, comfortable stand. From time to time some news we got From a gentleman in red tail-coat.

Every type of person there, Provosts, Lords and Ladies fair, 'Tecs, photographers, police, Be-ribboned schoolgirls, very nice.

Reporters from the public Press, Girls in many a stylish dress, Teacher, shepherd, factor, farmer, Came to see the Royal Charmer.

8

CORTACHY GAMES 15th August 1970

Last Saturday, a showery day, To Cortachy I made my way And found enjoyment varied, rich, On that extensive cricket pitch.

A great event enjoyed by all The Games, a Flower Show and a Ball; The heavy-weights were there in force (The Big Two were at Crieff of course).

Beneath their tread the ground was quakin' Big Wallace, Maxwell, Charles and Aitken; Big Henry Gray as large as life, And young Chae Balfour up from Fife.

They gave a great display to all With hammer, caber, weight and ball, Two well-known stewards on the track Were A.B. Smart and "Stewartie Mac".

At three the rain came helter-skelter And made spectators rush for shelter, Some made a bee-line for their car, And others flocked into the bar.

The Flower Show tent bulged at the seams, The rain ran off the roof in streams; It really fell in sheets and buckets, A day for oilskin hats and jackets. The many flags were flutt'ring gay On that "Inauguration Day". The sun broke through to greet the Queen When she arrived at 3.15.

In rich, deep turquoise garments dressed, Her taste in clothes the very best, Smiling, charming, calm, serene, Elizabeth, our lovely Queen.

She thrilled us as she made her speech, Her voice concise, and clear and rich, Pronunciation never slurred, We heard distinctly every word.

The Lintrathen minister was there To consecrate "The Dam" with prayer. With regal charm that never failed, Her Majesty the Plaque unveiled.

The big drum made a mighty "bang", The echoes o'er the valley rang, In spotless uniform arrayed, The band "The National Anthem" played.

The Queen next set off on a tour Around the Dam, then back once more, And at the power-house turned a sluice To let the pent-up water loose.

Before it flows into the sea, 'Twill serve the good folk in Dundee, Wholesome water, pure and clean, This day honoured by Our Queen.

Her duties o'er, she went her way And we said, "Au Revoir" To that tremendous water store "BACKWATER RESERVOIR!"

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It cleared at last, out came the sun, Activities again begun; The judges once more took their places To supervise the many races.

A sight to cure the sairest een The handsome Cortachy Games Queen, The Earl placed sash and crown upon 'er And then she made a lap of honour.

The brawest lass in Strathmore Valley The lovely, blonde Anthea Ballie, The crowd a' cheered as she passed by Wi' her attendant Miss McKay.

The Earl of Airlie helped all round, A well-known figure on that ground, He has a sense of fun all right And took part in the pillow-fight!

The tug-o-war event was keen, A better contest ne'er was seen, The home team won the final draw, As tough a team as e'er I saw, They do know how to heave and rugg Inspired by captain Ian Ogg.

At six o'clock we left that ground, Wi' pleasant thoughts all homeward bound; Next year we'll a' come back again To those great Games in Angus Glen. GLENISLA CENTENARY GATHERING 22ND AUGUST 1969

Green Forter Haugh's a lovely spot, Encircled by the hills, The Isla runs clear sparkling by Fed by the mountain rills.

On Friday, August twenty-two A Gathering was there; Glenisla's great centenary -Polk came from far and near.

All afternoon the cars poured in, The car park overflowed; They stretched as far as eye could see Along the public road.

The Chieftain made a Welcome speech, Sincere, distinct and clearly, A pleasant, handsome, strappin' chap The braw young Earl o' Airlie.

The two great heavy-weights were there, Bill Anderson and Rowe, They are a pair o' super-men And gie a michty throw.

Bill had a record hammer-throw Beside that Isla river, Forty-eight yards, an inch forbye, I think 'twill last for ever.

J.L. McKenzie also came, A former dancing "King", He charmed the hearts o' everyone By daein' the Hielant Fling.

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TRIBUTE TO THE LATE JAMES RITCHIE WHO PASSED AWAY ON JUNE 21 1968.

I sometimes try to make up rhymes When working on the land; Today I tried a verse or twa On ane I classed as grand.

A first-class man he was indeed When fee'd at Fordie wi' Jim Reid, Fleet of foot, strong and able, He liked to see a tidy stable.

He got up early in the mornin', Nae clock required to gie him warnin', A grand hand wi' a pair o' horse, He kept his harness clean of course.

Baith guid wi' horse as well as nowt, He tamed doon many a fiery cowt, An expert hand at yokin' staigs And plaitin' manes and tails wi' saigs.

A champion hauder o' the ploo, In my mind's eye I see him noo, At plooin' matches straightly steerin' Or cuttin' oot a bonny feerin'.

Many a loon by him was trained, Much good advice from him was gained, Good natured, patient, never touchy, A grand example was Jim Ritchie.

A member of the older school, He would have shunned this "work to rule", His duties he would never shirk, He gave an honest hard day's work. The bairns had races roomd the green, A' runnin' at full tilt;
A colourful and pleasant scene,
Wi' mony a tartan Kilt.

A shooting match was also held, Of entrants there were many. A cup from Mr. Gibb was won By "Norman" o' Dalvanie.

A hearty, kind and generous lad, He promptly filled it up, And in the Secretary's hut His pals a' had a sup.

Dykehead Hotel laid on the teas, And drink in glass and beaker, Pat Lawson gave us lots o' fun Wi' jokes o'er the loud-speaker.

As usual a Hill Race was run To a shoulder o' Mount Blair, Almost as steep's a precipice, I'll bet their legs were sair!

The Yanks may fly up tae the Moon And other far-off parts; Of greater interest tae me -Glenisla's "Friendly" Sports.

I hope next year we'll meet again At Forter Haugh in Isla Glen, You soon forget your cares and woes At Forter where the Isla flows.

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He'd build a stack or draw a dreel Wi' ony ither plooman chiel; I'll aye admire a man like him, I'm proud that I knew Ritchie Jim.

A pleasant chap he was to meet In field or market, hall or street, His company was really fine When telling us o' "Auld Lang Syne".

In Kirky school in days of old He played for dances I've been told, The young folk he could fairly please When e'er his fingers touched the keys.

Last summer I was sad to learn That he'd been taen to Brig o' Earn, I hoped he'd soon be well again And come back to his bonny glen.

Alas, alack, I hoped in vain, I'll never see my friend again; To his widow and his family I write this in his memory.

# HARVEST MEMORIES

The clatt'rin' binder cut the crap Drawn by three Clydesdales fine; The sheaves were then picked up by hand And stocked in bonnie line.

We set the bosses in a raw
And stethelled them wi' broom,
A yaird or twa atween each "foond"
Tae gie ye plenty room.

Twa cairts brocht loads in time aboot Frae field tae fairm-toon; Tae see the stuff a' safely in The wish o' every loon.

The wish o' ilka honest lad That wrocht wi' horse and ploos, Tae see a weel-filled cornyaird For feedin' sheep and cocs.

When biggin' ye were on your knees Layin' sheaves doon, ring on ring; Ye packed in dry sheaves next the boss Tae gie the gangs a "hing".

An interesting job it was And fairly pleasant work, Especially if the cairter-lad Kent hoo tae yaise a fork.

But if he was a clumsy chield, His forkin' still inferior, Ye had to keep a sharp lookout Or he'd jag your posterior!

Up in these glens we've heavy rains, And lightnin', gales and thunder; The stacks maun a' be weel secured Or they'd be torn asunder.

16

FAREWELL TO THE REV. D.A. TOSH

A godly man cam' tae oor Glen, Some years ago, it's fully ten, One of Dame Nature's gentlemen, From Lauderdale; His task to ward off vice and sin From Ardlevale.

He reigned o'er us wi' gentle rule, He never clowned or played the fool. In baith the Kirks and in the schools He did his best; But noo he's layin' doon his tools For weel-earned rest.

Respected and beloved by all, A quiet man of stature tall, His ministration here was all One could desire; His prayers and sermons filled the soul With zeal and fire.

Though roads were bad and weather murky He proved to be a hardy birkie, Right faithfully he did his work aye Wi' baith his flocks; Nae time had he for gimmicks quirky, Aye orthodox. The praps in richt, the rapes tied ticht, O'er thike or slopin' sheaves; A bonnie sicht, a stack built richt And clippit roond the eaves.

The harvest hame, the "steam mull" came Tae hae a muckle thrash, The fairmers bein' a hard-up lot, Aye in the need o' cash:

Some grain weighted up tae gang awa',
The laft was then filled fu'
The new thrashed strae was bunched up ticht
An' biggit in a "soo".

When stacks wore doon, fell near the grun' We set up sma' wire nettin', It helped tae hinder rats and mice And keep them frae escapin'.

A neebor's dog was welcome then
If kent tae be a "ratter",
And if the rats lurked doon deep holes,
We drooked them oot wi' water!

### FOUR LEAVED CLOVERS - June 1970

I look my coos when morning dews Are spangling pastures over, And nearly every day I find A lucky four-leaved clover.

They just appear before my een, I never have tae look; I pick them up and tak' them hame And press them in a book.

17

He never shouted, raved or rantit, Nor in the pulpit pranced and jumpit, His fist on book-board never thumpit To raise a stoor; But hope into our hearts he pumpit That Sabbath oor.

When the wee bairnies he addressed They followed him with interest, The big folk also were impressed Wi's couthie tale; The moral always clearly traced, He explained it well.

Aye ready wi' a pleasant smile, Devoid of subterfuge or wile, Youth Club and Bible Class a while He ably ran; Name ever better earned the "style" Of God's Good Man.

A kindly counsellor to youth, Advising them to tell the truth, A wise philosopher in scoth, A guide and friend; So when he leaves us for the South Our hearts will rend. Relaxed in manner, never tense, Of moral rectitude and sense, He hated humbug or pretence And sic-like bosh; A man o' downright commonsense Ts "Big Dave" Tosh.

A comforter to old and ill, His visits beat the doctor's pill, His quiet humour could instil New hope again; His place will be gey hard to fill In Ardle Glen.

His guid wife, too, assisted weel, Her willing shoulder to the wheel, In Woman's Guild and Sunday School She played her part; A lady with a charming smile And warm heart.

Alas: they're going far from here, To Ancrum with their daughter dear, We hope for many peaceful years In health they'll dwell; We'll think o' them with joy and tears And wish them well.

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# SPRING

We've said good-bye to Winter drear, The welcome Spring at last is here, The soft, mild western breezes blaw The dull, dreich wintry fogs awa'. The waxing sun is gaining strength, The vernal days are gaining length, Bright chaffinches and speckled thrushes Salute the dawn from trees and bushes. Bold tom-cats eagerly go roamin' And blackies whistle in the gloamin'. The wild geese migrate North in skeins And lambkins gambol on the greens. Black-headed gulls attend the ploos, Wi' luscious worms they fill their mou's. Tall herons haunt the marshy bogs, Right sumptuously they feast on frogs. The river birds hold gay carousals, The mallard ducks and water-ouzels. Sand-pipers "wheep" beside the river, We've also green and golden plover. Sea-pyets too, a charming sight Immaculate in black and white. Bum-clocks are in the evening hummin' And o'er the bogs the snipe are drummin' The redshanks nest among the rushes, The linties like the thorny bushes. The pairtricks file aroon in pairs
And "joie-de-vivre" affects the hares.
An amorous lot they are I'm thinkin'
As thro' the whins I watch them jinkin'.
Grey curlews "wheeple" o'er the heather Rejoicing in the pleasant weather. The breedin' kye have dropped their burdens And folk are busy in their gardens. The daffodils are blooming fair And skylarks sing in the clear air. The Glen's alive wi' avian song, It helps to cheer our days along. Life is pleasant in the Glen Since welcome Spring is here again.

THE HAIRST

7th October 1967

The rain it raineth every day, The corn is never dry; We Glen folk cannae win oor hairst Nae matter how we try.

There's binders, combines, balers too, And plant to dry the grain, But when the stuff's aye soakin' weet Thae things are a' in vain.

The lyin' corn's sproutin' noo Or covered o'er wi' mould. Some crops I've seen have flattened been As if they had been rolled.

Oh! for a drouthy, frosty wind To make oats tinder-dry, Then we might get a winter store To feed the sheep and kye.

We'll need to stop growin' crops o' corn And concentrate on hay, And either leave the kye ootside Or buy in beddin' strae.

The birds enjoy a sumptuous feast, They're feeding without pause; Some days the fields are blue wi' doos, Some days they're black wi' craws.

Stern Ruin stares us in the face, O' troubles we've a load; Wi' poke on back, and stick in hand We'll soon be - "doon the road!"

21

# BLOSSOM TIME

It's Blossom Time now in the glen, To name them a' would beat the pen, A myriad colours paint the slopes A myrad colours paint the slopes Like magic, bright kaleidoscopes. The leafy trees, a gorgeous scene In forty varied shades o' green. In contrast keen, the copper beech In summer clothing, dark and rich. The lilac's in full bloom again, Its fragrance permeates the plain. Azalias gay, with flame alive, Embellish many a "Big Hoose" drive. Luxuriant rhododendrons too Lend their enchantment to the view. Laburnums bloom along the way With gleaming, pendant golden spray. Another pleasant sight to see The flowers on the rowan tree. A rich intoxicating breeze Wafts from the milk-white hawthorn trees. Prunus trees, a gay delight, Apple blossom, pink and bright Bird-cherry blooms along the dale Its blossom like a bridal veil. The golden broom in close-set ranks Bedizens many braes and banks. Rich Scots bluebells (wild hyacinths) Adorn the sylvan labyrinths, Beneath the oaks, an azure sheen Mingled wi' fronds o' bracken green. In sheltered nooks the primrose grows As welcome as the garden rose. Forget-me-not and speedwell too Delight the eye wi' bonnie blue. King-cups and marsh marigold Brighter far than bankers' gold. All these flowers and many more Decorate the valley floor. The bees collect nectarian treasure, This country life is full of pleasure.

1969

Some 16 years have come and gaen Since Nurse came tae oor Bonny Glen. She soon endeared herself to all, Aye glad to answer Duty's call.

Though roads were slippy, rough or muddy Our gallant Nurse was always ready. Nae matter what the pain or trouble She aye came flyin' at the double. An ankle sprained, a bealin' finger Or hand entangled in the wringer, She never failed to come in haste And kent the treatment that was best. Her healin' balm and embrocation Have earned our rich appreciation.

When skirlin' bairns first see the licht Nurse Murphy's there tae start them richt. When old folk near their journey's end She's sympathetic, very kind. In Summer's heat or Winter's cold She aye maintained a heart of gold. Her territory far and wide, She gally took it in her stride. Efficient, prudent, cheery, pally, Frae High Glenshee to Brig' o' Cally.

We wish you all the very best While you enjoy your well-earned rest. We're glad you're no' goin' far away. We hope to see you many a day. You'll aye be welcome in the Glen Whenever you look back again. CHRISTMAS EVE

It was a bright and sunny day
As to the Kirk we made our way,
A goodly congregation there
To join in carol, hymn and prayer.
The Kirk bell o'er the valley rang,
The children sweetly carols sang;
Their faces beautiful as pictures,
The older ones read from the scriptures.
Behaviour was exemplary,
So nice to see, this sacred day.

A greater number came at night
To render praise by candle-light.
The local folk and many a stranger
Sang of the Baby in the manger.
The men and women, girls and boys,
In hymns and carols did rejoice.
In soft and pleasant light of candle
Our Pastor well the praise did handle.
A powerful choir with all the parts
Prought joy and gladness to our hearts.
At midnight hour the bell was rung,
Another hymn or two were sung,
Then homeward we returned again,
Once more 'twas Christmas in the Glen.

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# ALYTH SHOW

On Saturday the 5th July
To Alyth Toon I made my wye,
A place I always like to go,
The Alyth Farmers' Annual Show.
Wi' tents and stands the Park looked gay,
It was a bright and breezy day,
A well-known fact I'll have you know,
It never rains at Alyth Show.

They had a big loudspeaker there
To send announcements o'er the air,
And whiles, to help along the fun,
A song frae Moira Anderson.
The two announcers kept us merry,
Jim frae Blair, and Pat frae Kirrie;
I think they earned three hearty cheers
(Baith happen to be auctioneers).

A quick look round the W.R.I. A wander through the sheep and kye, Grand cross-bred stock, and pedigree, The big white-faced anes filled the e'e. I saw some bonny yowes and lambs, And muckle, strong-horned blackfaced rams. A section that enthralled my heart The great display of Floral Art.

I saw some Clydesdales on the green Wi' ribbons decked, and harness clean, A spectacle o' grace and style That beats the tractors by a mile. A dizzen cuddies in a raw, Some said Hee! and some said Haw! A sicht tae charm a youngster's he'rt, I saw ane yokit tae a cairt.

25

Shetland ponies, hunters, hacks, Wi'skilful riders on their backs. Lively foalies prancin', skippin', Shepherds tryin' their hand at clippin', Lintrathen folk were fairly cheerin' When Angus Cruickshank won the shearin'. The tractor maintenance was keen, Each shinin' like a brand-new preen.

Some had mowers for cuttin' hay,
Some had ploos for plooin' ley,
Ane had a thing wi' powerful jaws
For pulverising tattie shaws.
I watched the bairns dancing reels
And T.A. sodgers changin' wheels.
The local schools ran lots o' races,
I'll swear they fairly showed their paces.

The Alyth bairns are fleet young nippers And most of them are expert skippers. The cycle racers gave us thrills And one or two had minor spills; If anyone was needing care The Red Cross tent was handy there.

A special feature of this Show Is aye the tug-o'-war, you know. Cortachy won the final "rugg", Spurred keenly on by Iain Ogg. A pleasant place tae meet a friend, A cheery place a pound tae spend. O' a' the places that I go My favourite is Alyth Show.

### THE STORM

### 15th January 1968

The thaw has come, but what a storm! The gale was fierce, yet slightly warm, Our river quickly ten feet rose, Fed by the rapid-melting snows, It's running at its fullest flood, In parts it spreads an acre broad. In summer 'twas a gentle current, It's now a seething, foaming torrent; There's little hope for sheep or cow That slips into that water now.

The roads wi' water are awash,
The cars and lorries fairly splash,
This morning roads wi' trees were blocked,
The normal flow of traffic stopped.
As if that wasnae bad enough,
The "electric" and the phones were off!
The gas is handy without doubt
Whenever there's a big black-out,
The Blair bus couldnae come our way
So scholars got a holiday.

There's slates and rubble all around And trees uprooted from the ground. There's sheds reduced to heaps o' bricks, Henhouses just like kindlin' sticks. But black ground's showing in the Glen And sheep can get a bite again. Now that fresh weather's come at last I hope the worst o' winter's past:

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THE SPONSORED WALK 1970 From Clunie Church via Lethendy and Kinloch

On Sunday, thirty-first o' May,
A lovely, sunny summer day,
A band o' happy, healthy folk
Assembled for a Sponsored Walk.
Wi' sturdy leg and soople joint,
The Clunie Kirk was meeting point.
They set off prompt at two o'clock
Upon this pleasant nine-mile walk,
Wi' happy hearts, nae thocht o' pains,
They breist the brae up to the Mains.
A left turn here, then doon the hill
Close by the stance o' the auld lime kiln.
Next, first turn right and up a brae,
This is the road to Essendy.
Up on the level, forking right,
They march along, all feeling grand,
Hillocks of Gourdie on right hand.
The sun shone bright, the going good,
They scon arrive at Gourdie Wood,
A wood that's full of wild flowers nice,
For Botanists a Paradise!
The blackbirds and their friends the thrushes
Sang merrily from trees and bushes.
On past the Kirkton, still going well,
And then the farm that's called Spoutwell,
The roadside gay with many a flower,
And presently they reach "The Tower".
With thanks for such a lovely day
They now press on to Lethendy.
The First Aid folk here check to find
If all are sound in limb and wind,
How nice when skilful nursing sisters
Pour soothing balm on cruel blisters.
A brief respite is had by all
Inside the Lethendy Church Hall.

### CONGRATULATIONS

to D.B. Sinclair, Abernyte 4th December 1968

Dear Sir, I'd like to say "Bravo!" On your great feat at Smithfield Show. You got nae mair than you deserve, The Championship and the Reserve.

I saw your steer upon TV, It fairly made my night To see that lovely well-made beast In coat o' gleaming white.

At Smithfield Show he was the chief, A half-ton o' delicious beef. You fairly showed the rest the way Wi' Shorthorn stot and Angus quey.

The finest o' his breed, I'm told, The eye o' man has seen, The first Shorthorn to win this crown Since nineteen and fifteen.

O: Happy is the stirk or calf That lands at Abernyte, They're sure to get high protein feeds, Dry beddin' day and night.

I like the Shorthorn breed mysel', They're docile, graceful movers, And when they're crossed wi' lesser breeds They act as great improvers.

An expert at this feeding game
You're now right at the top,
May you go on from strength to strength,
I hope you never stop
But keep on winning Championships
Until you're ninety-two,
Sinclair "D.B." of Abernyte,
I lift my hat to you!

29

Then off they set with song and smile, And always in strict single file. A brighter Sunday never shone, The hikers happy every one. Downhill a bit and straight ahead, Past the roadend to Aitkenhead. At Lunan Burn some stop to think And others have a hurried drink. On past Burnside and Marlee Mill, The road now slightly up the hill. Tramping along still stout and steady, They reach the famous Palace Smiddy. First left again and up a brae, They see the Garage of McBey, Beside Kinloch so full of charm, Between Woodside and Marlee Farm, A bonnie place, I know it well, A Kirk, a School and a Hotel. A welcome sight for some to see That handy place, the W.C! Soft drinks to keep the system cool Available at Marlee School. Some halt here for a cup o' "tay" And off they set doon Marlee Brae. Lighthearted still, aye forward farin' They pass Bob Grant's yaird at Balcairn; A great view here o' Marlee Loch, Up ower the hump at Quarryhill, Close by the green fields of New Mill. Then Clunic Cottage neat and trig And on to Tullyneddie Brig. Young, old and middle-aged were in it, With twelve year old the lowest limit. It was approaching five o'clock As they were skirting Clunie Loch. This lochside road is no ower wide But all walk on the right-hand side. Pleasantly tired, wi fiery feet, The three-point walk they now complete. The Treasurer's gladness knew no bounds, That Walk brought in Five Hunder Pounds.

KILRY HARVEST HOME DANCE

Last Friday on November first There was a Harvest Ball, 'Twas held across at Kilry And was much enjoyed by all.

Wi' autumn leaves and golden sheaves The hall was lookin' grand; The music also was superb, Supplied by "Fairie's" Band.

As time wore on the folk poured in, I thought they'd never stop; Even the minister was there, I saw him haein' a hop.

A couthie crowd, a cosy hall, A pleasant sight to see; Ian Bryce o' Formal helped a lot And made a grand M.C.

It was a "temperance" affair, Yet a' were bright and frisky; Which shows a dance can be enjoyed Withoot the help o' whisky.

The Kilry folk can fairly dance, They're gay and lively prancers; The programme very nicely mixed, I did enjoy "The Lancers":

I saw some strappin', well-built men, I think they might be farmers; As for the lassies that were there They were a lot o' charmers.

They'd nae extremes o' modern dress Nor fancy frills and laces, But bonnie, useful, tidy frocks And happy smiling faces.

32

STRATHARDLE PLOUGHING MATCH

Dalreoch Farm, 4th March 1972

Last Saturday ('twas March the fourth) A band o' ploomen sallied forth, Keen, hardy lads o' honest worth, Good men and true, To turn a field o' rich brown earth Near Enochdhu.

Fifteen enthusiasts were there
To draw for rigs, then start to feer,
To set their poles they werna' sweir
Wi' muckle roarin'.
Dalreoch Farm was in a steer
That busy morn.

A picturesque and pleasant scene, A level haugh o' bonnie green, A better site I've never seen On traivels wide Than that lea park wi' verdant sheen By Ardleside.

Wi' discs and mould-boards polished clean And soople furrows tweelin' fine They mostly held a steady line, A skilfu' ploy. Seams straight and reg'lar for the grain Like corduroy.

Advice was asked and freely gi'en, The rivalry was really keen, Their tractors like a brand new preen, They did maintain. The judge, Ed Sandeman, a freen' O' Stanley Prain. A' sorts of folk were gathered there, I'll bet they a' got thrills, Some from the town and farms low down, And shepherds from the hills.

Halfthrough the spree they gave us tea Wi' rolls and cakes so sweet, They'd sandwiches o' every kind -As much as we could eat.

"Nettie" proposed a vote of thanks, She thanked "The Young Men's Club" She told how they be-decked the hall And made a lovely job.

The "statue" dance was lots of fun Wi' ne'er a sign o' strife; The winning lady at the end Was Andy Younger's wife.

Jimmy Ritchie played a while Wi' fingers swift and soople, He seemed to be enjoyin' himsel' Winkin' at a' the people.

The crowd was big, the air was hot, Sweat streamed down many faces, A lot o' lads wi' jackets aff Were dancin' in their braces.

I've been alive a lang time noo And danced in many places, But never saw a cheerier crowd, Not yet saw friendlier faces.

I'll aye mind o' that happy nicht, Forget I never shall; Next year again I hope to be At Kilry Harvest Ball.

I made this up, I'll swear it's true, Next mornin' as I milked the coo.

33

A multitude assembled there To view the work, and hae a tear, Includin' many up frae Blair The time to pass, To meet old pals, enjoy Glen air And drain a glass!

Previous heavy rain was rotten luck, It made some spots as weet as muck, Some heavy tractors nearly stuck Amang the gutters, But those tough ploomen showed great pluck For name were quitters.

A welcome sight, now very scarce, We had three pair o' Clydesdale horse. Although they dinnae hae the force O' diesel tractors, Braw decorated weel groomed horse Are great attractors.

They fill the e'e and charm the heart When yoked to binder, ploo or cart, Gaily adorned with tasteful art And harness clean. For many years they played their part In the rural scene.

Then wearin' thro' the efternoon
The time the judging was goin' on,
The raffle prizes oot were drawn
Wi' many a sweetie,
Biscuits, fags, tights, cakes and rum,
And aquavitae.

There's plenty mair that I could tell Which at oor Annual Match befell, How a' the entrants plooed so well, But cuts I fear; If you want to enjoy yoursel' Come up next year!

# TO AN OLD CLASS MATE

While autumn leaves are tumblin' doon In yellow, russet, bronze and broon, I chaw my pen and claw my croon Tae write a line For an auld class mate in oor toon, A charming quine.

Her verses took me back in time To happy days o' "Auld Lang Syne" When we were baith in youthfu' prime At Blair High School. Sometimes we worked and studied fine, Whiles played the fool:

It often gies my he'rt a wrench To think o' yon old white-haired wench Who taught us how to speak in French Miss Pennycook; The least disturbance she could quench Just wi' a look.

Science teacher Jenkins, six feet four, And Dobson wi' the pleasant "burr", Auld Sergeant White wi' powerfu' roar, And "janny" Wilson. Miss Easson too, a perfect dear, And "Jockie" Nielson.

Happy the days that we spent there, The boys playin' fitba' in the square, The "pandies" that we got were sair For brakkin' windies; Oor class is noo spread everywhere, Some tae the Indies.

Your message welcome as the thrush's That sweetly sings from hazel bushes, My face is covered o'er wi' blushes O'embarrassment! But THANK YOU for regards and wishes Sae kindly meant.

36

# BONFIRE AT STRALOCH

I'll always remember the fourth of November, The fireworks display at Straloch, The Captain was there and several mair, They'd a bonfire built close to the Loch.

The fireworks were first, wi' many a burst And shower o' many-hued sparks, Some shot o'er the loch, some soared overhead, And some went back over the parks.

We saw rockets galore from our place on the shore, They exploded right up in the clouds, There was squib, there was banger, the noise and the clangour Went echoing a' through the woods.

A big crowd was there, I'd say five score and mair, They came from Pitlochry and Dundee and Blair; We saw bright lights flashing 'way up in the sky, Reflections were seen in the water forby.

Mr. Balfour was there, dressed as chef, I declare, He had mountains o' sausages hot, They charmed our een, the night air was keen, We were hungry and scoffed up the lot!

As soon as we saw the last rocket expire, They shifted along to light the bonfire, We stood in a ring, close shoother tae shoother, And watched as the spunks were applied tae the poother.

There was bustle and steer and plenty good cheer, There was lots o' soft drinks, nice and hot, Hot dogs roasted whole over barbeque coal, A tasty bite everyone got.

The bonfire burned bright, it lit up the night, Baith young and old joined in the fun, Too soon the time came for us to go hame, We were sorry when a'thing went done.

# THE LOCH O' THE LOWES

Last Sunday I took oot the car
And set aff doon the Glen,
I thocht that I wid like tae see
My 'calf country' again.
Fae Blair, we took the Dunkeld Road
Atween the fields o' barley,
And very soon there cam' in sicht The bonny Loch o' Marlee. We held straicht on, past Clunie Loch O' mony a childhood ploy, Then drove richt up the "Gibbets" brae Whaur oft I walked as boy. I looked down o'er "The Hillocks" fields Where oft I reaped the corn, And at Concraigie Farm House, The place where I was born.
The countryside wis lush and green Wi' mony a bonny bloom The hawthorn white, the lilac bright,
The golden glow o' broom.
We motored on past trees and parks, Ower mony howes and knowes Until we reached oor final goal, The lovely Loch o' Lowes. It's changed since first I mind o' it -It's noo a tourist "must" A Nature Reservation O' the Scottish Wildlife Trust. They've got a grand display there And a double-decker "hide" And a double-decker "nide" Tae view the wildfowl on the Loch While cot o' sicht inside. There's coots and moorhens, grebes and swans, And several kinds o' duck, And several kinds o' duck, But tae see the mighty osprey Wis oor greatest stroke o' luck! It's guid tae see that in this age O' chemical technology, There's still some people care about The countryside's ecology.

37

# BR-R-R-R!

We've had a fearful wintry spell,
The frost was keen and bitter,
The sort o' weather we've endured
For Eskimo was fitter.
The wind blew straight from Ben-y-Gloe,
'Twas like a hail o' knives,
We had to keep to sheltered spots
Or we had lost our lives.
The driftin' sna' was from the Pole,
'Twould mak' a body blind.
Blood in my veins was clotted up,
Mair claes I had to find.
The wind it blew, the sna' it snew,
On us it had nae mercy.
Comments aboot the weather here
Were unco gruff and terse aye.

The blood runs slow and banes turn crazy, Life in this climate's far frae aisy. The glaur is frozen hard as rock, To poultry troughs the wild birds flock, The song birds crouch wi' droogin' wing, They dinnae hae the he'rt tae sing. The hens have a' game aff the lay, The piggies shiver in their crae, The river's covered o'er wi' ice, On Christmas cairds it might look nice. Kirkmichael wells are frozen dry, "Get Willie Simpson;" is the cry. This past week many a time I've thankit The inventor o' the electric blanket. Wi' thick ile tractors winnae start, Enough to break a fermer's heart, Some tatties in the pits are frosted, A lot o' water pipes are busted, Wi' frost and rime the nichts are wicked And some oot-wintered calves were nickit. Afore we're ruined a'thegither We pray thee, Lord, send milder weather.

### KILRY CEILIDH

26th November 1969

Last Wednesday a happy crowd A pleasant evening shared; A ceilidh held in Kilry Hall By school-ma'am Mrs. Laird. The proceeds for a worthy cause, I'm sure you'll all agree; To help the bairns at Kilry School Procure a new TV.

The chairman did a first-class job And kept it going well, Wi' jovial Jack McNeil in charge Things never could get stale: We'd dances interspersed wi' songs, We'd lots o' fun and glee, Jim Fairie's Band gay music played And did it a' "for free".

Yon fiddler lad can fairly charm When he "kittles hair on thairm", Bill Cormack too can always please When tapping on the ivory keys; The drummer is the anchor man, To "keep the beat" is aye his plan.

A promising young singer came, To help he never faileth, A former Kilry pupil too, Dave Wilkie, now in Alyth. The Beatons came from Burrelton, They're never sick nor sorry, Kenny wi' his songs and tales And bright, melodious Florrie. We'd Mrs. Cameron from Glenshee, The one and only Ruth, I'd listen to her till the dawn And that's the honest truth. To cheer along that happy throng I also had a try, The story o' a tractor And a salesman ca'ed McKay.

A real star turn upon the stage, (He got a mighty clap), The boy Lascelles from Kilry Lodge, Wi's big Kilmarnock cap! Two bonnie girls in tartan kilts Performed the Highland Fling; Their teacher entertained us too When she stood up to sing.

She sang some lovely Gaelic songs, Her voice rich, clear and sweet, No nightingale in wooded vale Could give a finer treat.
The ladies served a sumptuous tea, A most delightful spread, And Geordie Hepburn sang a song While standing on his head!

After the tea there was a draw, Gifts from each Dad and Mither, The biggest draw I ever saw, I thought 'twould last for ever. Sandy Ramsay voiced our thanks To helpers one and all, And then the strains o' "Auld Lang Syne" Rang through the Kilry Hall.

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# SPRING? 1970

The cauldest April e'er I saw, And many I hae seen; Fierce blizzards blaw wi' drivin' snaw, There's nothing growin' green.

In normal times in April month Spring flowers are gaily blowing; This year it's nocht but frost and gales And nearly always snowing.

The peesies cow'r beneath the blast And shelter 'mongst the saigs, They wonder what the devil's wrang They should be layin' eggs!

The shepherds on the hilly ground Have many anxious qualms, The yowes are lean and short o' milk, There's lots o' deein' lambs;

The plans for sawin' seed this year Are a' completely wreckit, To keep frae bein' frozen stiff I've donned an extra jacket!

We grit oor teeth and try to thole, Comments are sharp and terse; Instead o' better, milder days, They steadily get worse.

We shiver gaun aboot oor work, Hands clad in glove and mitten, The dreeps I've seen at many a nose Would droon a fair-sized kitten!

Fond hopes o' warmer days to come In weary hearts we cherish, For if the weather disnae change A lot o' us will perish.

# WILLIAM G. CAMERON, MESSENGER

41

There is a chap ca'ed Cameron, A man o' great renown; He is the Laird o' Middleton, A snug wee farm-town.

He has a park for caravans Where folk have fun and capers, And to Kirkmichael takes a trip Each Sunday for the papers.

For twelve years noo he's carried through This self-appointed task; If anyone needs errands done They only have to ask.

First order was a single "Post" But very soon 'twas twa; Then grew in stature rapidly Just like a big snaw-ba'.

Right willingly he did the job Wi' pleasant ease and grace; It made a grand start to the day To see his smiling face!

Although the road was fu' o' snaw Or slippery wi' frost, "Oor Willie" overcam' it a' To fetch oor "Sunday Post".

Obligingly for many a day He carried out those labours; And now receives a fond reward From many grateful neighbours.

You've given up the job at last, Your carrying days are through; Dear Fairmer o' "The Middleton" We give our <u>Thanks</u> to You.

# ALYTH PLOUGHING MATCH

Balcairn, 23rd January 1971

Ae Saturday when southward farin' I passed the green fields o' Balcairn, And stopped an oor or twa tae watch The Annual Alyth Plooin' Match. In bonnie fields beside Loch Marlee Wi' some old pals I had a parley, A pleasant place your freends tae meet Although that day was dull and weet.

Tractors there o' every hue,
Tractors red, and tractors blue,
Some were white, and some were green,
Some cam' doon frae Aberdeen.
Some had cabs and some had nane,
A handicap in heavy rain.
Some ploced nerra, some ploced wide,
Some were plocin' aff ae side.
A lad I saw daein' extra well,
Young Ian Robbie, Blibberhill.

The tractors viewed, I searched of course Tae find the section ploced by horse, And saw them at the furthest en', A sheltered corner near "Bell's Den".

Sandy Robertson was there, A handsome plocman, tall and fair, His team a pair o' sturdy cuds That's yaised for workin' in the wuds.

Young Gordon Alexander tae, A "hauder" no that ill; He had a white horse in the furr Frae Hatton o' Cargill. Tam McKay was there as weel And made a bonnie start; He's weel-kent on Balmoral Road Drivin' his horse and cart.

The lad that plooed the ootmost rig I didnae ken ava; He had a plain, auld-fashioned pair But made a job real braw. I'll stop noo, but that's juist a swatch O' that great Alyth Plooin' Match.

### FIRST LADY NEWS READER?

Fair Angela who reads "The News" Now holds us in her thrall; Her voice so clear and tones sincere Have won the hearts of all.

A universal favourite Since on the scene she burst, But in the interest of truth Nan Winton was the FIRST!

44

# BRIDGE OF CALLY

PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Burns Supper

I'll tell ye o' a happy time, A scene most bright and gay; A right successful "Burns Nicht" With Cally P.T.A.

A pleasant evening, clear and fair, The moon was almost fu'; Burns lovers cam' frae a' the airts To this great rendezvous.

"Finlay's" pipes began the fun, A big sheep-farmer he; He has a vast expanse o' land Away up in Glenshee.

"Woodhill Rab" addressed "The Chief" Brought in by Geordie Broon, And then we a' devoured our feast Wi' fork and horn spoon.

Sandy Stuart, our local post, Right ably filled the chair, He toasted a "The Lasses" too In verses rich and rare,

Margaret Wallace in reply Gave us a merry time; She took the wind frae Sandy's sails Wi' scintillating rhyme!

The minister of Bendochy Proposed "The Immortal Toast", I never heard it better done And that's no idle boast. Stirring music charmed our ears, Heart-warming, flowing free; A group that never fail to please -The "Brig o'Cally Three."

Burns' recitations were a treat, Performed by "Rab the Ranter", He told us of "Poor Mailies" death And gave us "Tam-o-Shanter"!

Mrs. Thorburn sang for us, And her guitar did play; She sang "John Anderson My Jo" And also "Duncan Gray".

A gent was also on the bill To keep the balance fair; With resonant and vibrant voice "Cabena" came from Blair.

The scholars made a perfect job Reciting in their turns; And every verse was from the pen of Poet Robert Burns.

Harmoniously they sweetly sang, Their faces all alowe; If angels sing in Heaven like you I'm ready to go now.

Some votes o' thanks then Auld Lang Syne, Three cheers, "Hip, Hip, Hooray!" I'll mind o' that great "Burns Nicht" For ever and a day.

# STRATHARDLE GATHERING

(Preparation)

The great event will soon be here -Strathardle Games and Show, It's aye the high-light of our year And a' the Glen folk go.

The Games are held in Bannerfield Beside the Ardle River, And though you only go there once You'll mind that day for ever!

Each year before events can start There is a great procession, It always starts off from the School According to tradition.

Sir George with drawn sword leads the way, A stalwart chieftain he, The standard-bearer follows next, Pipe Band and "commy-tee".

Two nights or so, before the Show Some willing workers meet, They fix up pens, prepare the Ring, And friends each other greet.

The Captain cuts the course real bare, There's nae lang grass tae trip folk there. Goal-posts are pulled out by the root, They shift the secretary's hut.

The "guddles" plunge, the hammers swing And gates are tied to posts wi'string, They use up lots o' baler-twine, Jim Jackson says - "Ye're daein' fine". Some farmers tractor-trailers bring, The dancin'-board's set flat and square, (There's whiles a bit o' bother there!)

They work like Trojans on the Park To try and finish ere it's dark, And so, almost before they ken It's a ready for the Games again!

The Major measures out the Ring,

Just leave your troubles a' behind And come up here the morn, You'll easy find the place we meet You'll hear the cattle roarin'!

If it's a dry and sunny day You'll certainly enjoy it. (I'll maybe write some mair next week If I feel like a poet!)

(The Show)

The Gathering was first begun Near ninety years ago, And now forby the Highland Games There's Sheep and Cattle Show.

The Show has now become so big It's got another stance, A field o' green that lies between The River and the Manse.

Jock Webster brought the beasties in, The suckled calves kicked up a din, They rugg'd and tried to brak their tether Then started roarin' for their mither.

48

The bullock calves looked strong but neat Wi' clippit heads and blackened feet. The heifer calves looked sweet and lush, I thought I saw a false eyelash!

The "cattlers" hurried here and there Wi' brush and comb to sort the hair. They got their prizes very soon, The judging was all done by noon.

The cattle judge came up from Glamis, He fairly kent his work, He quickly sorted oot each class, The coo, the calf, the stirk.

The standard o' the stock was high, Spectators' eyes were starin'. The champion was a lovely calf Bred by Sir M.G. Nairn.

A red-polled coo cam' frae the "Craft", I heard them ca' her Broonie, She had a tussle for a cup Wi' a coo frae Mains o' Dounie.

An exhibition of "Luing Stock" Was there for all to see. A bull, queys, cows and heifer calves Were lent by F.K.B.

At four o'clock the lorries came And took them to their hames, That's a' I've got for you the noo, Next week 'twill be the Games. (The Games)

49

We wakened to a drizzling rain, The sky was dull and grey, At half past two the sun broke through And we'd a lovely day.

To interest equestrians A new event was made 'Twas early in the afternoon -A fancy dress parade.

The Old Manse children had a go (They scooped the pool at Alyth Show) The first prize was the oldest boy, He made a really fierce Rob Boy.

The runners sped around the ring, The dancers did the Hielan' Fling, The pipers kittled up their chanter, The Captain gave us lots o' banter.

As time wore on friends met each other And stopped to hae a richt guid blether, Some o' the folk felt "slightly faint" But soon recovered in The Tent!

The air was quiet, clear and calm, A perfect day for social dram. Many a refreshing draught was bought From Blair hotelier Arnold Scott.

The heavyweights were powerful men, The judge was Sidney Fender, The caber was a muckle tree, Twa men could scarce up-end 'er.

Our M.P.'s wife can outrun deer, She's supple as the eels, She entered for the ladies' race And showed the rest her heels. The pillow fight was lots of fun And many took a tumble. Most of the afternoon's events Were planned by Major Campbell.

The young folk a' cam' back at night To dance in Kirkie Hall. The music was by Fairie's band And they'd a lively "ball".

I don't think you'd find happier Games Although you searched afar, That's a' I've got for you the noo, Next week it's TUG-O'-WAR.

(Tug O' War)

A special feature of our Games Is aye the tug-o'-war, There's keen but friendly rivalry, They come from near and far.

The sun shone bright, the turf was right, We a' felt blithe and merry, Some o' the teams that com' tae pu' Were a' the road frae Kirrie.

The various teams stolled round the park They moved about in bands, They'd dungarees and heavy buits And rozet for their hands.

The teams line up upon the green, Their arms wi' muscles bulgin', Their tactics secretly they keep, Nae fancy tricks divulgin'.

52

Loads o' tasty things to eat, Chutney, jam and jelly sweet. I saw some grapefruit marmalade, And peppermint creams wi' chocolate made.

Thick woollen socks to keep feet warm, Carrots near as lang's your arm, Tatties, lettuce, peas and beans, Cabbages and curly greens.

Hens' eggs coloured brown and white Were a very pleasant sight. Knitted goods all full of charm, Honey from the bees that swarm.

Floral sprays in candlesticks, The ladies fairly ken the tricks, They'd flowers o' patriotic hue, Red and white and bonnie blue.

A class for children's cotton dresses And knitted hats to wear on tresses, Walking sticks and shepherds' crooks And dolls wi' almost life-like looks.

Bonnie, cuddly, hand-made dolls, And light as cobweb, Shetland shawls, Miniature gardens were on view Wi' colours pink and green and blue.

A bairns' class for Nature's flowers, I could have stayed in there for hours. We've clever ladies in the Glen, Next year I hope they'll show again. Each lad takes up his length o' rope, They're strippit tae the sark, Determined every ane tae pu' Their rivals o'er the mark.

They take the strain, their heels dig in, They churn up a' the "girse", The power wi' which they heave and pu' Like that o' Clydesdale horse.

The champs that day were Cortachy, A weel trained team indeed are they, As keen a bunch as e'er did rug, They're ably coached by Ian Ogg.

As well as open tug-o'-war There is the Robertson Cup Between the men o' Ardle Glen And Glenshee further up.

They're sixteen hefty, strappin' chaps, They tak' a powerfu' grup, Their captain's bonnet's in the air, Strathardle's won the cup!

Some say our nation's failing fast, On that account don't fret, From what we saw that Saturday There's men in Scotland yet!

(Home Industries)

I went o'er to the Industrial Tent To see if anyone I kent. The place was crammed right to the door And my way in I had to bore.

They'd many nice things there to see, Oven scones and cakes for tea, Treacle scones and pancakes too And butter from a Jersev coo.

53

# IN MEMORY OF DOUBLET

Doublet, that gay and gallant steed Has gone to his reward; The best example of his breed That ever trod on sward.

The tragic tidings caused dismay In country and in town, That Doublet had a broken leg And had to be put down.

Examined by most skilful vets But nothing could be done, It's nigh impossible to heal An equine broken bone.

Doublet has gone, still in his prime, His final race is run; But in his life, so bright but brief, The hearts of all he won.

At dressage trials he excelled On nimble hooves and joints; When reins in Royal hands were held He gained substantial points.

A bold, courageous, willing horse, No awkward moods or tenses; He ably jumped with thrust and force All obstacles and fences.

A steed of noble character, Deserving his success, He made a perfect partnership With our beloved Princess.

Doublet has gone, no more we'll se That model of horseflesh; But in our thoughts his memory Will be forever fresh. WHACKO: THIS IS YOUR LIFE!

I'll tell ye a tale o' John Lascelles, A handsome, fair-haired chap, Who recently at Fat Stock Shows Put Kilry on the map.

The heroes of my little rhyme Who feature in the plot Are John Lascelles o' Kilry Lodge And a bonnie black-polled stot.

Our John set sail for Grantown Sale In early Spring last year Hoping to spy wi's expert eye A promising young steer.

A bunch came in off Castle Grant, John promptly purchased them, For in this lot there was a stot Which looked a proper gem.

Jim Forbes it was who bred the beast, His he'rt wi' pleasure durled When it was bought by John Lascelles Best stock-man in the World!

He took it hame to his great ranch And tended it wi' care, Knowing in his heart, right from the start He had a winner there.

It throve apace on Kilry grass (Some tasty bites as well!) And by the Autumn o' the year It was a proper swell.

A bonnie heid, wi' character And outlook gay and bright, Low-set and thick, yet lengthy too Wi' coat as black as night.

56

The judge inspected thoroughly Each entry in that lot, Methought he seemed to fall in love Wi' the braw, big Kilry stot.

A level top and firm below, Bis hint-end like a hillock, A sicht tae cure the sairest een This lovely black-polled bullock.

Right gracefully he circled roond John walkin' at his head And when they dished the tickets oot The ane he got was red!

Back to his pen to rest again Until the afternoon When we would see which beast would be The National Champion.

The cream of Scotland's cattle there All vieing for top prize, Weel groomed wi' care their silky hair, A feast for fairmers' eyes.

It seemed foregone that Kilry John Wi' his painstaking work Would be placed in the final leet Wi' his attractive stirk.

Elimination ran its course Till it became a fight 'Tween John Lascelles o' Kilry Lodge And Sinclair, Abernyte.

"Whacko" was handled carefully On sirloin, flank and hip, Then wi' a thump upon the rump He won the Championship. It put on weight at a great rate, Its progress didnae falter; John quickly had it tamed and groomed And broken to the halter.

He entered it for Smithfield Show There hoping to win fame; He gave its age and parentage And "Whacko" was its name.

But first at the Scottish National That's held in Perth's Fair City He took the eye of passers-by He was so smooth and pretty.

I took a jaunt tae Perth mysel' To have a holiday, And see those well-fed cattle beasts, A wonderful array.

Every breed and cross was there, A mixter-maxter lot, But lookin' braw among them a' The big, black, bonnie stot.

The judge was Mr. Rickatson From Wintringham in York, Efficiently and earnestly He went about his work.

I'm sure he made an honest job Wi' nae suspicious tricks And soon he came to Whacko's class 'Twas number twenty-six.

The biggest class in a' the Show They thrilled me to the core; Steers of the finest quality And numbering a score.

57

Then off down south to Smithfield Show That's held in London Town To have some sport at Earl's Court And win some more renown.

The result of course is quite well known To everybody here The Champion at Smithfield Show, "Whacko" the Kilry steer.

The price John got for this great stot Made everybody wonder By equalling the record price Three thoosand and one hunder.

No need to bring exotic breeds From countries far away, When beasts like this can be produced By Shorthorn and A.A.

### "VIVA MEXICO!"

Alyth Musical Society's Silver Jubilee Performance 1973

The other night in weather bright I hied along to Alyth
To see the annual Opera,
A show that never faileth.

A great turn-out, a well-filled hall,
A pleasant time was had by all,
A garish scene was set before us,
With singers, actors, tuneful chorus,
A' the rainbow's hues were there,
Every ane and twa-three mair;
A well-presented, first-class show
This lively "Viva Mexico!"
Musicians made the rafters ring
Under the reign of Mr. King,
They played wi' skill, and zeal and ardour
Accompanied by Mrs. Barber.
A wealth of talent there amassed
And most appropriately cast.
A clever script wi' jests and quips,
One lass enjoyed some brandy sips!
"Raquelita", much loved darlin'
Was ably played by Jane McFarlane.
Kenneth Findlay, rich in tone,
Had the male lead part "Ramon".
The mad "Mendoza" was a guid yin
Portrayed by "Jimmy" the Orcadian.
Bandits, plots and handky-panky,
Bruce Turner made a handsome Yankee,
Sweet Lucille too, his lovely daughter
Raised a lot of mirth and laughter.

60

# STRATHARDLE GATHERING

24th August 1974

Our Gathering is o'er again, Our annual "Big Day" in the glen, Aye held just at the summer's en' In Kirky Toon; Glen natives a' come back again Frae miles aroon'.

The Show was held in the forencon, A brilliant day, the sun shone doon, Patullo left Linross fairm-toon To judge the nowt; While "Stewartie Mac", a sturdy loon, Best sheep picked out.

We all expected a great treat, "Red Lions" from ten thoosand feet Displaying how then can defeat The Newton law; Unfortunately they took cauld feet And flew awa!

The Sports then started on the green, A picturesque and garish scene, Wi' tartans red and blue and green, And a Pipe Band; Wi' joyful smiles freen' greeted freen' Wi' shak' o' hand.

The park was in condition rare, Ron Crichton cut the grass real bare, A bigger crowd assembled there I've never seen; The Evans popular fun-fair Charmed youthful een. A striking scene, expertly done,
The "Ritual of the Rising Sun";
The atmosphere was weird and owrie
Presided o'er by "Priestess" Powrie.
A lady prompter also came
(She micht as weel hae stayed at hame),
As through their parts the players romped
Never did they need a prompt
The dancers too ne'er disappointed,
They a' seemed to be double-jointed:
A source o' muckle fun and glee
The hunt for a gymnastic flea.

A comprehensive Thanks to all
Was voiced by genial Provost Ball,
His lady also was on view
Presenting bouquets, quite a few,
We finished off that evening fine
With hands clasped singing "Auld Lang Syne".
A memorable tip-top Show
This sparkling "Viva Mexico:"

61

Skilled dancers did "The Fling" and reels, Some folk enjoyed "al fresco" meals, And bairnies soople as the eels Ran in their races; They had great fun and happy smiles Lit up their faces.

A huge turn-out of famed athletes Competed in the "heavy" feats, From Elgin and from Glasgow streets And Kirriemuir; It gave us many thrills and treats To see their pooer.

The tug-o'-war a great contest,
The men weel-trained and fu' o' zest,
The team that proved to be the best
Were "Farfar Loons";
Although at times there were hard pressed
By "Brewers' Maroons".

The Industrial Section a success, Wi' many entries in each class, O' garden produce a great mass For tasty dinners; Iain Robertson and a Jackson lass Were the main winners.

The Games Ball was tremendous fun, A happy night for every one, Jim Fairie kept them on the run Wi' his great band; That perfect day was well begun And ended GRAND!

Long may our Games great pleasure yield In this braw Park o' Bannerfield.

### JAMES FLEMING

100 years young, 24th February 1976

James Fleming, farmer of The Lair, Has now attained his hundredth year, many sterling parts And skilled in all the hillman's arts. A quiet man, abhorring strife, leads a simple, happy life. At Glenkilry he guarded grouse
Then went to live at Dalnoid House,
In course of time he left from there
To start sheep-farming at The Lair. His grazing land was hard and steep But aye produced sound healthy sheep His lambs well-bred and nicely markit They always found a ready market. An active man, nae lazy banes, He loved a game wi' curlin' stanes, And whiles in summer left his darg To shoot a target at Broughdarg. In worship too he didnae shirk But served as elder in the Kirk, Attending well for many a day In his beloved Kirk at Cray. I met him at his birthday party In perfect health, right hale and hearty; Birthday greetings row on row, Adorned the walls, a sparkling show. A highlight of that natal day A message from Her Majesty. While school-bairns sent their kind regards With clever, home made birthday cards. The neighbours gathered round at night To celebrate with bonfire bright, And drink a toast with glasses brimming, "The Health of Centenarian Fleming" Congrats. on this his hundredth year, We hope that he'll see many mair.

64

# CROFTMUIR DISPLENISH

18th October 1975

A roup was held in Ardle Glen, We'll never see the like again; A mighty crowd assembled there To look for bargains, ha'e a tear, And maybe drink a dram or two To keep awa' the cauld and 'flu'.

It started at the barn door,
O' buyers there was many a score,
The offering was great indeed
With articles for every need,
Jim Downie occupied the pulpit,
His voice is clear and never "roupit",
He worked through that enormous stock
With quip and jest and tale and joke,
He kept it going like a fair,
Name an object, it was there!
Electric motors, jacks and winches,
Hammers, chisels, wedges, wrenches,
Pulleys, crowbars, mells and guddles,
Cleavers, tapners, tattie riddles.
Urns to make the cup that cheers,
Saws and axes, pruning shears.
Corn sacks tied up in bundles,
Wreckin' irons, cattle bindles.
Lamp shades, blow lamps and wire cutters,
Clats for scrapin' up the gutters.
Borin' braces, socket sets,
Mole traps, vices, ropes and nets.
Knife-bar sections, sharp as daggers,
Calcium for curin' staggers.
Worm poothers, markin' dye,
Tattoo sets for sheep and kye.

CRAZY FOOTBALL

Kirkmichael 29th May 1976

Last Saturday some hundreds came To watch a crazy football game, Funds for Kirkmichael Hall to yield, The muster-place was Bannerfield.

Although it was a horrid day We saw some entertaining play Wi' feint and dummy, pass and dribble And lightning dashes down the middle.

Eleven teams from near and far, The referee was Dunc. Cromar. He kept the tourney running well And Major Handley took a spell.

The wretched weather was ignored And many brilliant goals were scored. The female players all impressed And most of them were "fancy dressed".

Straloch's Sweet Strollers won this class Resplendent in their skirts of grass. The play was clean, no fouls or sinners, Glenfernate were the final winners.

Their trophy was a "jewelled chalice"
'Twould grace a stately home or palace,
With lovely scarlet ribbons on it
Turned upside down 'twould make a bonnet!

A really great day a'thegither, Next time I hope it's better weather.

65

Baler twine and wheels for barras,
Nuts and bolts and teeth for harras.
Varied widths o' drivin' belt,
Hinges, staples, nails for felt.
Many an object came to licht
Unseen for many a day and nicht,
Including some unusual "troke",
A bushel and a three-horse yoke.
An endless chain and powerful shackles,
Parts for ploos, and hooks and buckles.
Nut keys, spanners, rasps and files,
Grease gums, rivets, bricks and tiles.
Draining tools of many shapes,
Picks and shovels, spades and graips.
Cleeks and chains for heavy haulin',
Covers made o' strong tarpaulin.

The last lot sold, the venue changed To a grass park where neatly ranged Were implements, a' pentit braw, Lined up in serried rank and raw. Tractors, loaders, and dung spreaders, Ploos and harras, and hay tedders, Forage harvesters and balers, Box cairts and a' kinds o' trailers, Troughs for pigs and sheep and coos, Spring tooth harrows and horseploos.

By three o'clock that efternune
This Herculean task was dune.
A lot o' money passed that day
To help the tenant on his way;
We wish him "All the Very Best",
He's wrocht hard and deserves his rest.

STRATHARDLE PLOUGHING ASSOCIATION

PRESENTATION OF PRIZES

1st April 1977 at Log Cabin Hotel

A week ago there was a show Which ran extremely well, A Social Night of sheer delight In Log Cabin Hotel.

The function was a great success; The Annual Presentation Of trophies, cups and rosebowls won At the Ploughing Competition.

Mrs. Burgess came from Blair And kindly did the honours, Handing prizes gracefully To all the various winners.

The champions filled their cups brimfu' And then we a' had drams; And Andy Younger won the prize For best-kept "Nicky Tams"!

Our local experts played dance tunes with "box" and fiddle handy, Assisted by some friends o' mine The Kinnissons and "Andy".

Anne and Hazel Burgess danced, They fairly took a trick; Really smart performers, Supple, smart and slick. There was a pleasant interval When we were feasted well; Full marks to Host and Hostess Brian and Liz Sandell.

A few liberations were poured forth To worship the God Bacchus, And Margaret Kinnisson charmed all By playing her maracas.

"Sandy" came from Carsie Mains And did his stuff before us, He sang some Bothy Ballads And we all joined in the chorus.

The raffle gave a grand return, A fruitful money spinner, The numbers drawn at random Produced each lucky winner.

The programme ran without a hitch, Pleasant, smooth and silky, Under the able management Of Secretary Wilkie.

I hope I've given pleasure By writing this report; I'd also like to thank all those Who gave us their support.

68

A SOLILOQUY

by

The Brig o' Cally

For ten decades I've joined the sides Of Ardle's rugged river, But now I fear the end is near My life will soon be over.

Huge spates and frost, and ice floes tossed Have lately ta'en their toll; My keystone also I have lost, I fear I'm goin' to-fall.

In early days my heaviest loads Were horses pullin' carts, And flocks o' sheep and herds o' nowt Goin' Southwards to the marts.

But later on, traffic has grown Much heavier every year, The vehicles they're building noo Are mighty hard to bear.

Big loads o' frae time to time Ex Wester Bleaton quarries And loads o' cattle, sheep and pigs Contained in Webster's lorries.

The Army oft this journey make In numerous convoys; Their wagons make my structure quake And what a hideous noise. The petrol tankers make me creak As o'er my arch they thunder, And at the end of every week There's skiers by the hunder!

A vital link frae South to North Conveniently I made For all essential services Including Pire Brigade.

I hoped that something would be done When I began to fail; And now at last work has begun, I hope to some avail.

I hear they plan to truss me up Wi' straps o' steel and tethers And fill my tummy wi' cement To haud my sides thegither.

Then o'er my way they're goin' to lay A Bridge designed by Bailey, A blessing and a boon to me, Your Faithful "Brig o' Cally".

69

FIRST CONCERT

Town Hall, Blairgowrie

1st October 1976

Last Friday nicht I lowsed frae wark, I washed my face and changed my sark Then held awa' to Blair to hark To Strathmore's new-formed Orchestra.

The hall was bulgin' at the seams, Beyond the organisers' dreams, Frae a' the airts they came in streams To hear Jim Ritchie's Orchestra.

The first performance they have done, They played their hearts out every one, With perfect timing, lovely tone, A tuneful, bright new Orchestra.

The show began wi' "The Royal Four", Their music thrilled me to the core, They make a sound foundation for This new Blairgowrie Orchestra.

The Fiddling Belles played on their own, with skilful touch and dulcet tone, For many years may they keep on To grace this new-born Orchestra.

The audience clapped and cried for more, They shouted out, "Encore! Encore!" I never saw such zeal before Applauding any Orchestra.

A promising young bunch they are, With an extensive repertoire, I'm sure that they will travel far And win fame as an Orchestra.

72

HARVEST HOME CEILIDH

Blackwater Hall

22nd October 1976

Last Friday night in weather bright Blackwater Hall was filled At a pleasant Harvest Ceilidh Run by Glenshee Kirk Guild.

Those ladies had been working hard, The hall was looking braw Wi' sheaves o' bonnie golden corn And bales o' barley straw.

A glorious bill o' fiddle fare, Scots music sweet and grand Supplied by Jimmy Ritchie And his new-formed Band.

They played a multitude of tunes With lively "lift" and vigour Supported well by Hammy Scott And the Dominie McGregor.

Half-through the spree we stopped for tea, Grand value for our money Wi tattie scones, oatcakes and cheese, And pancakes spread wi' honey.

The feast consumed, fun was resumed, The floor was cleared for dancin' The bairnies did "The Duke of York" Wi' muckle mirth and prancin'. Top o' the bill was Jimmy Shand, His turn was absolutely grand, He got a most tremendous hand Supporting this new Orchestra.

A happy time was had by all In this delightful Blair Town Hall, The seats were filled from wall to wall, A big boost for this Oxchestra.

All ages represented there, I enjoyed the little Townsley pair, Although quite small they've talent rare, They'll soon play in the Orchestra.

Christine, Teresa sang with smiles, On twinkling toes danced Moira Myles, Sinclair and MacRae came many miles And helped to launch this Orchestra.

Big John McDougall well did please, A handsome chap wi' sturdy knees, His bagpipes hummed like hives o' bees When he played them for that Orchestra.

The audience came from a wide range, I didna' think it very strange To see Big Geordie Clark frae Grange Enjoying his auld freend's Orchestra.

Jim Ritchie got a book on Shand From all the members of the band To thank him for his helping hand Establishing the Orchestra.

Lang may this combination flourish, Auld Scotland's heritage to cherish, O may it never fade or perish But aye be a Great Orchestra.

73

Geordie Hepburn was compere, He really was a scream, Especially wi' his comic turn As Jean, the "kitchie deem".

Many age groups came to hear, Young, middle-aged and auld; A good few there came up frae Blair And some frae Cumbernauld.

Christine Powrie sang sweet songs Which made the heart-strings tug And an old chap from Strathardle Told us all about "His Dug".

Ian Imlay made a speech Expressing thanks to all, Then hame reluctantly we came From that Blackwater Hall. BRAEMAR GATHERING

4th September 1971

The Journey

Last week I took a holiday And travelled high and far; I made a pleasant pilgrimage To world-famed Braemar.

A brighter morning never shone As we set off together, A friend, his missus and myself, Rejoicing in that weather.

We left our cares and toil behind, And all our woe and worry; Up past Croftmuir, then through the stoor O' Wester Bleaton Quarry.

At Willie Cameron's cross-roads We turned left a wee; Climbed the steep brae at Glen Kilry, Then on through famed Glen Shee.

"The Elbow" passed, we reached at last The chair-lifts on Cairnwell; The purple heather pleased our eyes, The scenery was swell.

Our climbing done, a downhill run Through mountains wild yet bonnie, And often near the sparkling clear Bright water o' "The Clunie".

Braemar Police were very nice, They helped us on our way, And presently we reached "The Park" Where all was bright and gay.

76

# ROYAL/TY

There were some disappointed folk, Our Dear Queen couldnae come, But sent a Royal substitute, The Princes and her Mum.

Spectators there from everywhere, From every Land and Nation, And when the Royal Party came They got a great ovation.

A feature of the Braemar Games Is aye the Tug-o'-War, Confined to Armed Forces teams They come from near and far.

Prince Charles delighted every one, A real good sport is he, For at the final pulls that day He was the referee.

Two well matched teams they were indeed As sure as I'm a sinner, But after two straight, hard-fought pulls "St. Athan" was the winner.

Towards the end a tuneful Band Performed "God Save The Queen"; Bare-headed every one stood up, A most impressive scene.

When the Queen Mother left the ring With her grand-children dear, We showed our Love and Loyalty With wave and lusty cheer.

Reluctantly we left that place And home-ward made our way; I'll mind o' those great Braemar Games Until my dying day! The grass was green, a lovely scene, with heath-clad hills behind, and in the middle distance trees To shield us from the wind.

### THE GAMES

The great pipe bands stirred up the blood In tartan kilt and plaid, Dearer to me than drink or food, A splendid sight they made.

The skirl o' pipes, the beat o' drums, A rich enjoyment bringing; When I lay on my bed that night My ears still kept on ringing!

The jumpers jumped and runners ran While wechts and hammers whirled; You couldnae find a brighter spot In a' the whole wide world.

Big, muscular and mighty men, Grand athletes on the whole, At hammer, wecht and puttin' stane And vaultin' wi' the pole.

The "Braemar Caber" was produced, The award for this is nice; Ten pounds if any toss it o'er, And "Arthur" did it twice.

A Red Cross Corps attended there Comfort and succour bringing; And many did require their care For wasps were fiercely stinging.

We saw The Fling, Shean Trews and Reel On weel-sprung soople joints, And at the end o' that great day C. Mill had highest points.

77

# HARVEST HOME 1967

A cauld wind blew straight from the North, It quickly dried the grain, Hope stirred once more in weary hearts, Our spirits rose again.

The lyin' corn was never drier,
The Duncans never seemed to tire;
Their combines worked baith nicht and day,
They saved a power o' grain and strae.

A happy song the combine's hum, Wi' grain it fills the trailer; A cheery chorus follows next, The thuddin' o' the baler.

The Harvest's noo a' gathered in And safely stored awa'. There's no' a single stook ootside Nor yet a bale o' straw.

We're grateful to the Powers abune Who made the drouth to come. Let us give thanks upon our knees That we've got "Harvest Home".

### STRATHARDLE SHEEP DOG TRIALS

Upon the twenty-fifth July A pleasant holiday had I; I changed my claes and scraped my dial And went to see the Sheep Dog Trial.

The meeting-place was Tigh-na-Croft, Folk cam' frae miles aroon', bave Mitchell met us at the gate And chairged us half-a-croon.

The weather rather cold and dull, But everyone was happy, We got a dram tae warm the bluid Frae Jim MacRae, Aldclappie.

The course was very well laid oot, The first part rather steep; F.K. Balfour gave the field, Glenfernate gave the sheep.

For judge they had an able lad Who studied every turn, And when the 'herds ran oot o' time He blew his motor horn.

Bob Forsyth won The Cup, Wi' him it's quite a habit, He got an offer for his bitch And thought that he would grab it:

Jimmy Lean was there of course, He ran a dark blue bitch, She sped like an arrow from a bow And made a lovely "fetch". Right skilfully she herded them, Jimmy wi' patience wrocht, And at the end of that great day He had the finest "bucht".

Stan Thompson's luck was oot that day, An awkward bunch he got; Ane stopped and clapped doon on the grass, I could have cut her throat!

A single chap cam' frae Craig-Loisg, A real good run he made, He won first in the Novice class, And also won the "shed".

At evening when he got his cup He raised a laugh, by heck, He held his doggy in his arms, His tie was roond its neck!

Mrs. Thorburn of Straloch In stylish dress of red, Presented trophies to the 'herds, A lovely job she made.

The cups were filled and toomed again, We a' felt brisk and gay, Then Stan proposed a vote of thanks To finish off the day.

80

# MASONIC SERVICE, KIRKMICHAEL CHURCH

Wi frosty winds blawin' snell and keen And snaw on hillsides nearby seen I'll tell ye o' a stately scene In oor Auld Kirk; It fills my thoughts wi' pleasure keen While at my work.

Freemasons cam' frae a' the Earth, St. Andrews, Meigle, Stanley, Perth, Of worshippers there was nae dearth, The Kirk was fu'; Grand, honest men o' sterling worth I'm telling you!

A memorable, grand occasion, Regalia in rich profusion, Six pipers headed the procession, Braw sicht tae see; "Scotland the Brave" played wi' precision And "Rowan Tree".

The sermon pleasant to the ears, It took us back to early years, New Lodges built by sweat and tears, White men and black; 'Twas slightly marred by rally cars, A noisy pack!

This discourse gave us food for thought, Wi' history of "The Craft" 'twas fraught, It brought a lump to many a throat, A rich address;
This "Masons'" Service I would vote A great success.

81

We heard of "Architecture" fine, of "level", "square" and "plummet line", and many a secret grip and sign of "Brotherhood"; That talk delighted every ane It was so good.

The lessons read by P. MacNab, And local "Master" Wallace, Rab, They made a fluent, perfect job, That pair o' "Masters"; Nae stammer to affect their gab Or like disasters.

The Service o'er, the folk a' skailed, The path up frae the Kirk was filled Wi' raws o' "builders" a' weel drilled A double line; The hearts of everyone instilled Wi' pleasure fine. Enochdhu Social Club

MATTER OF OPINION

18th December, 1968.

Last Wednesday a happy scene
Was set at Enochdhu.
The "Clubbie" held a grand debate
To pass an hour or two.
Mr. Balfour, Dirnanean,
The meeting ably chaired,
The man supporting S.N.P.
Was Kilry's William Laird.

Wyn Colville came from Islabank (He's famous for his cattle), Sam Smith was there from Ardlebank To fight a wordy battle.
The former steered the Tory "boat" And steered it very well.
The latter spoke on marketing, His arguments were swell.

The farmer's wife from Derachie Upheld the ladies' cause, And every time she made her point Spontaneous was the applause. The only lady in the team She wasnae sweir to tackle, A lass o' sparkling, ready wit This Dorothy Arbuckle.

Our high taxation was discussed, And drifting from the Glen; Christmas space-trips round the moon And wages for stockmen. The honest truth on foot and mouth, And isolated life, The qualities a man should seek When looking for a wife! We asked their views on black-faced ewes, and future of "Luing" stock, and if the farmers of today are using too much "poke".
They talked a while on calf disease, Their knowledge knew no bounds; They told us what they'd like to do With seventy thousand pounds.

They dealt with British Standard Time With feelings strong and warm, on this the panel were agreed It could do nought but harm. The night wore on wi' jokes and fun and merry mirth and laughter, sometimes the plaudits of the crowd Were like to shake the rafter.

William Dolby of Dalreoch,
The Chairman of the Club,
Expressed our thanks to all the team
For such a first-rate job.
The battle o'er debating done,
We got a lovely tea,
A very pleasant finish-up
To this great "M. Op."

84

STRATHARDLE PLOUGHING MATCH

(Glenkilry, 5th April 1969)

Strathardle Match was held at last, Postponed six weeks because of frost, A very pleasant sight to see At Houston's Farm up near Glenshee. Right skilful men o' sterling worth From east and west, and south and north, They a' use tractors now of course Nae decorated, weel-groomed horse.

To start the Match the rigs are drawn At half-past eight that vernal dawn, They set their poles and mak' the scars, The feerin' and the "backin'" furrs. They smooth oot lurks wi' tramp and chap And tak' guid care the grass tae hap, Alang the seams they drag a chain Tae mak' a seed-bed for the grain. They get their furrows "tweelin'" fine Then concentrate upon their line. A "midzer" soon they all enjoy, The ploomen, helpers, man and boy, Their neighbours' work is then assessed Wi' banter and good-humoured jest. The plooin' judges now appear, Then roond the park they tak' a wander, The many plooin' points tae ponder. Then many plooin' points tae ponder. Then study a' the rigs o' lea. Placin' the rigs they have to do And straightest, levellest, best-gaein' ploo. And while these duties they are daein' Tractors are judged by Stanley Prain. At mid-day doon at Pryde's Hotel, The judges there are feasted well, Then back up to the Match again To see hoo a' the lads are daein'. Arrangements run right smooth and silky In the able hands o' Stewart Wilkie.

85

A' through that bonnie efternin Spectators come a-rolling in, Some come a gey lang road tae watch strathardle's Annual Plooin' Match. They've free admission through the wicket But many buy a raffle ticket; A cheery, beery, boozy draw, sherry, gin and usquebaugh, Fags and chocolates, cakes and pies, Panti-hose for female thighs; Their finest-ever raffle yet, The first prize was a half tea-set.

As to the finish they draw near
They use a tape to keep ends square,
They measure rigs frae side tae side
To ensure the last furr's no' ower wide.
The job now done, the field a' black,
Around the tent we form a pack,
Where pies and sandwiches are eaten
And whisky serves as "central heatin'",
A drammie warms us through and through
(Pryde keeps the best o' mountain-dew).
Competitors now get their prizes,
There might be one or two surprises,
Then home we go our separate way
To think back on that pleasant day.

BLAIR FIDDLE AND ACCORDION CLUB

On Wednesday night I visited The Muirton House Hotel To attend the new formed music club And did enjoy mysel'.

There was a great attendance there (I'm told a record crowd),
To hear the King of Marches
From Mull, The Great McLeod.

The compere was a chap ca'ed Blake, He kept the kettle bilin'; The audience was a happy lot, And every face was smilin'.

A record crowd it was indeed, The attendance really grand, For every chair was occupied And many had to stand.

Musicians there from everywhere, Perth, Forfar, Invergowrie; All drawn as by a magnet To this great club at Blairgowrie.

Many artists played their part, Both old and young as well, Including youthful pupils Of teacher Geordie Bell. All were experts in their line, They came from near and far; playin' fiddle, "box", drums, double-bass, piano and guitar.

Marches, waltzes, jigs and reels, A veritable feast; It warmed our arteries and veins And cockles o' oor briest.

The guest artist was in great form Ebullient, never dull, As brisk a lad as e'er I saw, This Bob McLeod from Mull.

He played his "box" and crackit jokes And also made the draw; The luck was in for many folks, A rowth o' Usquebagh!

A thrill to charm the dullest soul, The rousing grand finale. I'll swear you could have heard the sound A' through the Stormont valley.

A highlight of the social life This music club o' Blair; Next month it's Angus Cameron, And I'll try to be there.

88

JOHN CAIRNEY AT "EDELWEISS" Sunday, 31st March 1974.

Across the Glen, a mile from here There stands a grand hotel where food is good and wine is fine And everything runs well.

The staff are smart and courteous, The Manager is nice, It's put Strathardle on the map This place called Edelweiss.

It is a famous meeting place, Folk come from near and far To play at games and treat their dames And drink a social jar!

I went across on Sunday night For a great show was on, A discourse on the poet Burns By actor Cairney, John.

He traced Rob's life from birth to death His childhood grim and hard; And yet became in spite of this The World's most famous Bard.

We fairly got our money's worth He did two hour-long turns, And paid a glowing tribute To the genius Robert Burns.

He put his subject over well, Right fluently and slick, An expert at the "ad lib" too He never missed a trick!

The audience there responded well, Set in the best o' tune, He led us in some well loved songs, Like "Banks and Braes o' Doon". 8,9

There was a sumptuous buffet there, as much as we could eat; gvery kind of high class fare, pelectable and sweet.

Chicken, turkey, beef and ham, And salmon from the river, Rich confections made with jam, And jellies all a-quiver.

Various fruits of luscious taste, And trifles rich with cream; I never saw a finer feast, A perfect gourmet's dream.

The enormous helpings "swalled oor kite", Then came coffee, black and white; From time to time we'd a libation Of alcoholic distillation!

To terminate that programme fine We joined in singing Auld Lang Syne. Then homeward made our happy way The finish of a "Perfect Day".

# GLENISLA GATHERING 18/8/72

Last Friday, August's eighteenth day, I found enjoyment rare; I went to bonnie Isla Glen Which lies behind Mount Blair.

I reached the car park in good time To find a handy stance; (Dave Guthrie stopped me on the road And chairged me twenty pence!)

Then down the bank to Fortar Haugh Where old friends I met many; Chic and Eck and Andra Stewart And Norman frae Dalvanie.

The afternoon was mainly fair Wi' some bright, sunny blinks, John Duguid's tent was handy there If any felt like drinks.

The cream of Britain's athletes came And many thrills we got From Arthur Rowe the Sassenach, And Bill our handsome Scot.

Bill Anderson has everything, Strength, speed, colossal size, He conquered all opponents And collected each first prize.

His back is like a barn door, His legs like oak tree-trunks, He tosses heavy cabers o'er As if they were but spunks! George Mackie came from Laurencekirk, He's almost seven feet tall, A promising young athlete too With hammer, weight and ball.

Ed. Weighton was the next in line A weel-built lad frae Kirrie. He won the cup for local men, No wonder he felt merry.

The Earl of Airlie graced the Games, Just home from far-off lands; He mingled freely with the crowd, Chatting and shaking hands.

The secretary ran things well, A sound and able man, O'er-coming every obstacle, James Grewar o' Achavan.

The bairns had races roon the green, And some could fairly hustle, Jim Hutchison aye set them aff By blawin' on his whustle'

The sprightly dancers charmed the eye, The bagpipes thrilled the ear; We'll mind o' these Glenisla Games Till they come roond next year.

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ALYTH SHOW 2nd July, 1977

The Alyth Show has come and gone, A happy day to look back on. The atmosphere was truly grand As friend met friend wi' shak' o' hand. A really pleasant get-together In cool, but dry and bracing weather.

The best o' stock, I'm pretty certain, You'll no' find better in Great Britain. Light-legged ponies there galore, Chestnuts, greys and many more. A spectacle that quite entranced As on the sward they gaily pranced.

The pawky lad Pat Lawson made Skilled comments on the grand parade Naming the winners in each class As they were led upon the grass. One head-strong stirkie ran amok When from its boss it came unstuck.

Mrs. Brough, a sparkling beauty, Performed the presentation duty With charming dignity and grace, A pleasant smile upon her face. Her rich reward for doing this A bouquet from a sweet wee Miss.

A pair of medals too were won For service long and work well done. An honour and a mighty thrill For men from Blacklaw and Parkhill. The man who carried out this rite Was David Sinclair, Abernyte. 93

The J.A.C. had a great match when they set out hens' eggs to catch; This raised a lot of laughs indeed and gave the gulls a tasty feed. The Pageant was a great event as round the ring the entries went. And in between those varied capers Selections by the Porfar Pipers.

The Super Stars went a great length With tests of speed and skill and strength. Well-built lads wi' soople joints, Big Bill Gammel won on points. Freda's pupils too did well To music played by Geordie Bell.

A troupe of actors called Sealed Knot A mediaeval battle fought. How Claverhouse that brutal "brankie" Strove with the Clans at Killiecrankie. A violent and exciting battle Wi' claymores, pikes and cannon's rattle.

A most breathtaking thrill for all "Red Barons" parachute free fall. They tried to do a kittle thing, Land on a marker in the ring. The wind was playing hasty tricks Yet they scored five out of six!

The Tug o' War was a dour fecht,
The Farfar Loons won this cotricht.
With this event the programme ended
Then hame our happy way we wended.
Five thousand folk were gathered there
I hope we'll meet again next year.

### PETER MORRISON AT PITLOCHRY

Ae Thursday nicht ere it grew dark I dressed mysel, wi' a clean sark Then held across the hill to hark To famous Peter Morrison.

A nice run o'er the Moulin Moor Some fourteen miles, a bare half-oor, The recent rains had laid the stoor On the way to hear Pete Morrison.

This road is narrow, winding, steep, Unfenced, wi' lots o' straying sheep, But I'd made up my mind to keep A tryst wi' Peter Morrison.

Quite near at hand I parked the car, I didnae gang tae drink a "jar", But found a handy corner whaur I'd see this sincer Morrison.

The Kerron Trio sang fu' sweet, Jim Lindsay's music was a treat But I sat quiet in my seat Waiting for Peter Morrison.

Miss Caffrey danced on twinkling toes, Bedecked in tasteful tartan clothes, Her cheeks were bonnie as a rose. I admired her graceful artistry.

When Peter came on to perform
The audience shed off their decorum.
The applause was loud, prolonged and warm
For this great singer Morrison.

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A favourite with everyone, His songs were all expertly done, We had a lot of good clean fun Listening to Peter Morrison. His songs were mostly bright and gay, I dearly loved his "Rothesay Bay", I muse a hunder times a day On the Songs of Peter Morrison.

He sang sweet "Mary o' Argyll" And told us of the "Dance in Kyle" And always with a sparkling smile This cheery Peter Morrison.

A brawer chap I've never seen with charming smile and eyes o' green, He sang from Rodgers and Hammerstein In that Pitlochry Cinema.

George Duffus was a great compere A lively lad wi' golden hair. I laughed until my ribs were sair Within the Regal Cinema.

His stories thrilled me thro' and thro', Tho' some o' them were tinged wi' blue, The best compere I ever knew This school-mate o' Pete Morrison.

They both belong to Greenock Toon, The place where sugar is dumped doon. I'm mighty glad this West Coast Toon Gave birth to Peter Morrison.

I met him briefly at the end, A cheery word, a shak' o' hand, The thrill o' meeting him was grand In that nice cosy Cinema.

His singing filled my hert wi' glee, I drove hame in a merry key. I hope that soon again I'll see This charming Peter Morrison.

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# FIDDLE FINAL IN PERTH

A friend who lives down at Woodhill
The other night gave me a thrill,
Be phoned and asked if I would care
To come along wi' him and share
A night o' music and o' mirth
The Fiddle Final held in Perth.
Quick as a shot I did agree,
'Twould be a glorious thrill for me
To hear the best players in the land
And Angus Cameron's tuneful Band.
The great day came, the weather cold,
But Fortune favours aye the bold;
I took some short-cuts through my wark
And took the road soon after dark.
I left my car at Ballintuim
And then went into Perth wi' him.
The Glen road wasnae very guid
But Bob kept up a steady speed
And got to that Perth City fair
wi' almost half-an-oor to spare.
In Spey-gate car-park nearly toom
We parked the car wi' plenty room,
Then popped in to the "Ewe and Lamb"
To ha'e a wee refreshin' dram.
Thus fortified and "walking tall"
We set off for the City Hall
And went in frae the wintry weather
To that melodious get-together.
Two thousand came or maybe mair
To taste that feast o' fiddle fair.
Inside the hall, oor programmes bocht,
The site o' cor twa seats we socht
And found them in location braw
The middle o' the foremost raw!
A singer frae the North-East came,
Though elderly he's fresh and game,
Well-loved by both adults and bairns
The couthie, pawky, great John Mearns.
He ably "corn-kisters" sang
And fairly cheered the nicht alang.

A much enjoyed delightful bounty A much enjoyed delightful bounty
The Orchestra from Angus County;
They played a score o' tunes at least
The sweet Scots music soothed oor breist.
With these preliminaries done With these preliminaries done
The Fiddling Contest was begun.
Florence Burns the opening made,
The only lass to make the grade,
A stylish player, sweet and fine, Began to play when only nine; Best female violinist I've heard, The judges placed her equal third. A. Robertson was next to charm A. Robertson was next to charm
By "drawing the hairs across the thairm".
His pieces all expertly done
On instrument of lovely tone.
He won first prize, his face a' smiles He won first prize, his face a'smil-for Lerwick in the Shetland Isles. The next to play was Charles Cowie, Soople fingers, fleet-goin' bowie, Pleasant, smiling, cheery, gay, He stole the ladies' hearts away! Noo at this point there was a brak For cups o' tea and friendly crack, Then back into our seats again To hear another sweet refrain. To hear another sweet refrain. John Morrison from Midlothian came, A polished player, small but game, He made a really gallant show This first time that he had a go. MacPherson travelled many a mile, Another man wi' splendid style, Kens a' aboot the notes and scales He teaches music in the schules. He put on specs to help his eyes And finished up wi' second prize. A. Cameron the Kirrie loon Played us many a lively tune He made his fiddle sing and lilt And I admired his lovely kilt.

THE ERRANT EAR-RING

His notes as sweet as any bird
With Florence he was equal third.
Julian Dawson, young and fair
Accompanied each fiddler there;
I liked his playing very much,
His skilful, sympathetic touch,
He's talented, and full of grace
With smooth, soft, sweet angelic face.
A treat to meet when at the end
His autograph for me he penned.
I captured David Findlay's too
And of the fiddlers quite a few,
But Great Yehudi had me beat,
He made a hasty, safe retreat.
I clean forgot, in a' my hurry,
To tell ye o' the famous jury.
James Bunter came, and Watson Forbes,
Hec. McAndrew, king of chords,
And lastly to complete the tale
Yehudi Menuhin himsel'.
Up on the stage he made a speech,
Voice like his music, sweet and rich,
In words sincere, no trace of guile,
He praised the Scots folk for their "style",
And told us we should never part
From rhythm in feet and song in heart.
"It was his privilege and care
To foster music everywhere".
For Scottish folk a great occasion
The "maestro" got a huge ovation.
As long as I can see the licht
I'll ne'er forget that famous nicht.
Back to Strathardle we set sail
And that concludes my rhymin' tale.

One night while watching B.B.C. I saw a funny thing, My favourite News Reader shedding her left ear-ring; Miss Rippon was the very nice news-caster Who suffered this peculiar quaint disaster.

As down her breast the errant jewel slid She never checked nor batted an eye-lid, But kept on calmly reading her set piece In tones melodious, clear, distinct and nice, Delightful voice, with perfect modulation, She must have had a high-class education. A brightly sparkling and entrancing "cutie", No need for jewels to enhance her beauty!

A very stupid gem that truant ear-ring To spring off from so soft and sweet a mooring. The scene was changed, expectantly I waited, When she appeared again 'twas reinstated. I then conceived a most peculiar notion To see it all repeated in slow motion.

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# AULD SCOTS WORDS

Of Scots words I ken quite a few,
And if you like I'll tell them noo,
Working under stress was "trauchle",
A worn old shoe was ca'ed a "bauchle".
A "divot" was the name for clod,
A fox was often ca'ed the "tod".
The name for earth or soil was "yird",
The name for bat was 'baukie-bird".
A coo withoot a horn was "hummelled"
And if you fell, they said "ye tummelled".
The word for cattle-beasts was "nowt",
A youthful stallion was a "cowt".
The auld Scots word for cough was "hoast",
A "bogle" was a Scottish ghost!
A shirt was often called a "sark",
And "mirk" was aye the word for dark,
A blow or knock was known as "dunt",
The stalk of cabbage was a "runt".
A "quiff" was the auld word for scare.
The auld Scots word for bowls was "bools",
Instead o' graves they said "the mools".
The name they had for yawn was "gant",
A speech impediment, a "mant".
A flame was often called a "lowe",
A brush was "besom" or a "cowe".
The word they had for comb was "caim",
Your tummy was a "kite" or "wame".

A reel of thread was aye a "pirn",
To weep would be to "greet" or "girn".
They aye said "daur" instead o' dare,
A "glower" the word they had for stare.
The auld Scots word for hear was "hark!",
A "lav'rock" was the gay skylark.
When folk were tired they felt "forfochen",
The word for quenching thirst was "slochen".
A drunkard was a "drooth" or "boozer".
A travelling stallion was a "cooser".
The auld Scots word for trust was "lippen",
A baby's napkin was a "hippen".
A Scottish midwife was a "hippen".
A Scottish midwife was a "hippen".
A "ratton" was their name for rat,
And "baudrons" was a pussy-cat.
Directions were described as "airts",
And playing cards were known as "cartes".
A sheep enclosure was a "fank",
Likewise a ditch was called a "stank".
Folk feeling sad would be "gey dowie",
A little barrel was a "bowie".
"auld Nick" was how they styled The Deevil,
A porridge pot-stick was a "theevil".
To fondle tenderly was "cuddlin'",
And catchin' troots by hand was "guddlin'".
Colic in horses was a "teenge",
For scourin' pots wives used a "reenge".
For puff or pant the word was "pech",
The vulgar name for flea was "flech:"

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The shafts o' carts were aye ca'ed "trams",
Knee-belts of course were "nicky-tams".
A wee stack was a "hut" or "frandy",
Licentious conduct - "houghmagandie".
To "flype" was turn outside in,
And "widdershins" was 'gainst the sun.
Green level meadow-lands were "haughs",
The soople willow wands were "saughs".
Ben-the-hoose was named "the spence",
And "gumption" meant plain common-sense.
"Aise" was the auld Scots name for ashes,
The word for troublesome was "fashious".
A cattleman was styled "the purler",
A piece of bed-room ware "a durler".
A brisk young chap would be a "birkie",
A "bubbly-jock" was a male turkey.
The blacksmith's shop was aye "the smiddy",
Dirty, ragged bairns were "duddie".
A small amount was "tic" or "wheen",
Christina's name was cut to "Teen".
The curlews were described as "whaups",
And brose-bowls made o' wood were "caups".
"Girss" was the ancient word for grass,
A "cuddy" was the humble ass.
I've reached the end o' my lang tether,
I hope that you've enjoyed my blether!!
To Readers who have come thus far
I'll say, "TA, TA," and "AU REVOIR".