THE RISE AND DECLINE OF THE COAL AND RAILWAY INDUSTRIES OF CLACKMANNANSHIRE

B. J. Elliott

In 1990 no passenger trains moved within the county of Clackmannan and only one daily freight train uses its remaining few kilometres of single track between Stirling, Cambus and Menstrie. The railway age in Scotland's smallest county lasted, for all practical purposes, a little over a century. The coal industry, still in operation today, has lasted much longer - at least 400 years. Both coal and rail reached their zenith just before the First World War.

The first stretch of railway line, between Alloa and Dunfermline, was opened in August 1850. This was relatively late in the railway era, a quarter of a century after the first and famous Stockton-Darlington line. The explanation for this delay can be found most probably in the county's proximity to the Forth. For centuries sailing ships constantly plied the river as far as Stirling trading with Germany, France and the Low Countries. Steamboats arrived in 1813 and by 1840 70-ton vessels made regular journeys between Stirling and Newhaven (Leith) carrying passengers at 'exceedingly low fares'.

Once the civil engineers and the navvies of the railway companies entered the county they remained busy on-and-off for the next 45 years. The first line in 1850 belonged to the Stirling and Dunfermline Railway Company but it was two years later before the former town was reached. By this time the Company had also opened (3 June 1851) its branch line from Alloa to Tillicoultry for the transportation of coal. This short stretch of line soon became part of a more grandiose plan to provide an alternative route between Stirling and North-east Scotland to the Scottish Central Railway Company's Stirling-Perth line through Dunblane which opened in 1848. Ten years later the Devon Valley Railway Company had secured powers to link Tillicoultry to what later became Kinross Junction on the Edinburgh to Perth line (following the opening of the Forth Bridge in 1890). Building began in 1860 and on 1 August 1863 the eastern end as far as Rumbling Bridge was opened. Almost six years later (3 May 1869) the Tillicoultry-Dollar section was opened. But the final stretch Dollar to Rumbling Bridge was beset with civil engineering problems which included the construction of 17 bridges and viaducts before it was opened on 1 May 1871.

Meanwhile on 3 June 1863 the Alva Railway Company had opened a single track line just west of Cambus station on the line from Alloa to Stirling. It was hoped to link Alva and Tillicoultry providing a more direct route to Stirling than through Alloa but it proved impossible to get rights of way on this stretch. All these small companies and indeed all trains, the whole rail system within the county closed down for nearly nine hours out of every. 24 (and much longer on Sundays), effecting the maximum savings on wages.

By 1923 and the creation of Britain's 'Big Four' companies, railways had already passed their peak. The first closure, the passenger station at Clackmannan Road had already taken place in 1921, a victim of the rapidly expanding motorbus services. The coal industry was in even deeper crisis. Like the railway system it had been taken over by the government in 1914 but as prices tumbled it was handed back to its private owners in 1921. Wage cuts precipitated a major strike, a forerunner to the disastrous confrontation of 1926. The long depression of the coal industry reduced the level of economic activity and income in Clackmannanshire. By the late 1930s there was some revival in the demand for coal and the seven collieries in the county were producing approximately 500,000 tons annually with total reserves estimated at 62 million tons.

However the combined effects of the economic depression and the growing competition from road transport had begun to eat into the profits of the railways. One result had been the withdrawal of the passenger service between Alloa, Kincardine and Dunfermline on 1 July 1930 followed a month later by the closure of the passenger stations at Sauchie and Forest Mill. These closures were but a small fraction of a much larger series at this time, mainly in the old industrial areas and coalfields of Britain.

After another even more remorseless wartime battering the British Rail system was nationalised (1 January 1948) one year after the nationalisation of the coal industry.

At the time of nationalisation nine National Coal Board collieries were in operation in the county and one, Devon Mine, privately owned. The NCB operations were Brucefield (opened 1905), Craigrie (reopened 1942), Devon (1850), Dollar (1943 - partly in Perthshire), King O'Muirs No. 1 (1938), Melloch (1850), Meta Pit (1923), Meta Mine (1946) and Tillicoultry (1876). Employment in coalmining in Clackmannanshire had actually increased 30 per cent between 1911 and 1951. The Census of the latter year indicated that 1724 men and women resident in the county earned their living from the coal industry. It is possible of course that some worked outwith the county. However the high economic level of activity in post-war Britain, the then absence of rival indigeneous fuels and the expansion of the mining operations in the county (there were seven openings between 1942-52 against three closures of collieries) would all have indicated an optimistic future for the industry.

Employment by British Railways in Clackmannanshire as shown by the 1951 Census of Scotland returns had declined by 38 per cent since 1911 to a figure of 173 men and four women. There were 12 officials, 28 locomotive drivers, 21 firemen, four locomotive shedmen, 14 guards, 33 signalmen, 16 shunters, pointsmen and crossing keepers, two ticket collectors, 41 porters and three others.

By contrast employment in the road haulage and road passenger transport industry amongst residents of the county numbered 526 men and 56 women or more than **three** times the number of railway employees.

Despite the evergrowing competition of road transport British Railways remained profitable for a few years after nationalisation. But burdened by debt, attacked by road competition and faced with the need for massive capital investment, the whole rail network, like that in virtually every other country, came quickly to rely on government subsidies.

Inevitably the price of government support was closure of uneconomic lines although within the county only one service was withdrawn in the 1950s. This was the Cambus-Alva branch line on 30 October 1954. A glance at the map shows the unviability of this line which was twice the distance by rail from Alva to Alloa than it was by road and two miles further to Stirling by rail involving also a change of trains at Cambus. The line between Alva and Menstrie was lifted.

The three remaining passenger closures in the county followed the 1963 report on the reshaping of British Railways by Lord Beeching who had been commissioned to staunch the rising losses of British Rail. The Devon Valley line from Alloa to Dollar was closed to passengers on 15 June 1964 and from Dollar to Kinross to all services. The track between Alloa and Dollar was finally closed and dismantled after the closure of Dollar mine in 1973. The Alloa bridge route to Larbert was closed on 29 January 1968 and the Stirling-Alloa-Dunfermline service eight months later on 7 October.

The optimism about the Clackmannanshire coal industry was also misplaced. Between 1948 and 198714 collieries belonging to the NCB (now British Coal) were closed. These were variously the result of exhaustion, unprofitability and geological and other technical problems. The Scottish coal industry generally was damaged by competition from nuclear, hydro-electric and oil-fired generation of electricity, in addition to North Sea gas.

The colliery closures in Clackmannanshire were Brucefield (1962), Craigrie (1952), Devon (1960), Dollar (1973), Forthbank (1958), Glenochil (1962), Harviestoun (1961), King O'Muirs No. 1 (1954) and No. 2 (1957), Melloch (1948), Meta Pit (1948), Meta Mine (1959), Tillicoultry No. 1 (1948) and No. 2 (1959). Additionally four privately owned mines have closed. Gartmorn (opened 1962, closed 1986), Gartenkeir (1967-1968), Grasmainstoun (1971-1982) and Devon Mine (1933-1987). By the end of 1987 deep mining operations were in the railways in the county with one exception were eventually incorporated into the North British Railway. The NBR gained an unenviable reputation for high costs, low dividends and inefficiency, never more so than when its ill-fated Tay Bridge collapsed in 1879. The exception to the NBR's dominance in the county was the Alloa Railway Company. This consisted of a single line leaving the South Alloa branch of the Caledonian Railway at Dunmore Moss. It crossed the Forth by a swing bridge, opened in 1885, by which time it had been taken over by the Caledonian. The line entered Alloa through a goods station in Glasshouse Loan in the industrial part of the town. The NBR then put in a connecting line just west of Grange signal box to this new line giving it entry into Alloa station. This allowed both companies to run passenger trains between Alloa and Larbert with connections to Edinburgh and Glasgow. The NBR, however, resisted all attempts by the Caledonian to use this line to gain access to the lucrative coal trade of Clackmannan and Fife. Neither did anything emerge from various attempts to merge the two companies. When large scale mergers came, in 1923, the NBR became part of the LNER and the Caledonian joined the LMSR.

Meanwhile the last line in the county between Alloa and Kincardine, another NBR venture, was initially for freight only in 1893, but in 1906 was opened for passengers, simultaneously with its extension to Dunfermline along the north bank of the Forth.

By 1910 Clackmannanshire's railways were a tiny fraction of the 23,387 route miles (37,400 kms) of the OK network into which £1.3 billion of capital had been poured since 1825. This sum included over £70 million each for the NBR and Caledonian. By 1910 the NBR owned 1352 route miles (2180 kms) and the Caledonian 1074 miles (1718 kms).

Railways completely dominated British inland transport by this time. 23,000 steam locomotives hauled 52,000 passenger carriages and 750,000 freight waggons over a total distance exceeding 400 million miles annually. A workforce of 609,000 men and women, almost 50,000 in Scotland, and paid an average of £1.15p per week for up to 72 hours work, earned for the Railway Companies a gross income of £114 million in 1910. Of this total £47 million (equal to at least £1.5 billion in 1990) was gross profit, of which the share of the NBR and Caledonian was around £2 million each. Railways, therefore, by reason of their dominant position in inland transport were immensely profitable but, through overcapitalisation were an unexciting, although for the time being, safe investment.

The Census of Population in 1911 showed that in Clackmannanshire there lived 285 men and one woman employed by the railway industry. These were 57 officials and clerks, 45 ticket collectors and porters, 34 engine drivers, stokers and cleaners, 18 guards, 36 signalmen, 66 platelayers and gangers, 26 labourers and three pointsmen and crossing keepers, the solitary woman employee being one of the latter. This total was dwarfed by the 1322 men and two women living in the country who earned a living in the coalmining industry. This statistic indicates clearly that it was the coal wealth of Clackmannanshire, well known as early as 1600 which had been the major motivation for the construction of railways in the county. By 1790 production had exceeded 100,000 tons per annum. Two mines in Alloa employing over 500 persons, of whom a majority were women, produced almost half this total. There were another three in the parish of Clackmannan producing a further third and the remaining 25,000 tons came from Dollar and Tillicoultry. A primitive tramway had been constructed through Sauchie to the waterfront at Alloa about 1766 to move these minerals.

The demands of an industrialising and urbanising society in the 19th century brought about an enormous expansion of Scottish coal production. From around two million tons in 1800 it rose to six million in 1850 then soared to its highest ever production of 42 million tons in 1913. This was part of a total UK production of 287 million, dug by more than one million miners in 3300 collieries. A third of this UK production was exported so that Alloa was a modestly expanding port during the 19th century entering and clearing a total of 170,000 tons of cargo by 1913. Not surprisingly freight traffic and especially coal on the OK rail network was of immense importance. In 1910 rail freight totalled over 500 million tons earning £61 million or almost 50 per cent of the railways gross revenue.

Passenger traffic on the OK network had become extremely important also with 1910 receipts from 1.3 billion passengers totalling £53 million equal to 43 per cent of gross revenue. The remaining 7 per cent came from hotels and shipping. As there were no longer any 2nd class seats on Scottish trains by 1910 it was the humble 3rd class passenger paying 0.89d (1f2p) per mile, and spending seven times as much in total on rail tickets as 1st class passengers (2.35d per mile), who filled the coffers of the railway companies. Undoubtedly it was largely 3rd class passengers who filled the seats on the 57 trains leaving Alloa station each week day between 7.05 am and 10.21 pm in April 1910. A study of the departure timetable (Appendix) shows that Alloa also had its own mini rush-hours with ten of these trains leaving between 7.58 am and 9.00 am and a further 11 in the evening between 5.21 and 6.19 pm. Clearly the passenger train in the small industrial or commercial towns of this period filled exactly the same role as the motorbus today although without the competition of the private car. Neither were the trains of this era much faster than buses today. The 9.00 am Alloa to Ladybank stopping at 12 stations en route took 90 minutes to cover 32 miles. In fact only one mainline train in the OK at this time exceeded an average speed of 60 mph over a significant stretch. The majority of passenger trains leaving Alloa covered short, and no doubt uneconomic journeys. Assuming quite reasonably that all the freight trains moved within the same hours as the passenger

progress within the boundaries of Clackmannanshire only at Castle bridge and Solsgirth and at a private drift mine, under licence at Harviestoun. In addition a small number of open cast operations, again under licence from British Coal were in operation.

None of this coal was being moved out of the county by rail by the end of 1987. Within the county freight traffic has been reduced to one solitary trainload of molasses, originating from East Anglia or imported through Greenock, which is delivered each morning to Glenochil distillery and leaves empty in the afternoon. Additionally sporadic deliveries of grain are made to Cambus distillery and carbon dioxide in tanker waggons is hauled out. In 1987 Scotrail considered building a turntable at Cambus and dismantling the track to Alloa. However, local pressures, including the District Council, to reinstate passenger services from Alloa have been supported by a consultant's report and subsequently by the Regional Council. In early 1990 the track is still there but no final decision about the future has yet been made.

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Acknowledgement

I am indebted for personal communications to David Clayton, Freightrail, Scotrail Glasgow; and John T. Mackie, Head of Technical Services, British Coal, Scottish Area, Edinburgh. The Departures

Appendix

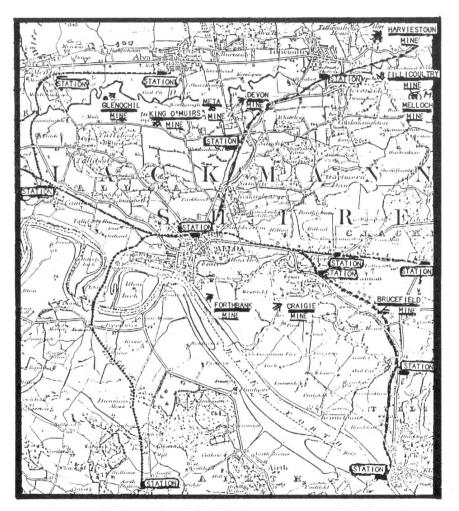
The Departures Timetable at Alloa Station, April 1910 (All NBR except (Cal.)=Caledonian. S=Saturdays only)

AM

7.05 (Cal.) 58	Throsk Platform (7.09), Airth (7.18), Larbert (7.25). Tillicoultry (8.06), Dollar (8.13), Rumbling Bridge (8.23), Kinross
8.00	Junction (8.41), Perth (9.20). Cambus (8.05), Menstrie and Glenochil (8.09), Alva (8.13).
10 15	Clackmannan and Kennet (8.16), Kilbagie (8.21), Kincardine (8.25). Cambus (8.20), Causewayhead (8.28), Stirling (8.31), Larbert (8.38), Castle Cary (8.49), Dullatur (8.55), Croy (8.59), Cowlairs (9.18),
	Glasgow (9.24).
18	Clackmannan Road (8.23), Forest Mill (8.27), Bogside (8.35), East Grange (8.39), Oakley (8.44), Dunfermline (8.56).
20	Larbert (8.38). Throsk Platform (8.39), Airth (8.48), Larbert (8.55).
35 (Cal.)	Dunfermline (Upper) (9.07), (Lower) (9.24), Edinburgh (9.49)
47 51	Cambus (8.56), Causewayhead (9.04), Stirling (9.07).
9.00	Sauchie (9.05), Tillicoultry (9.10), Dollar (9.16), Rumbling Bridge
9.00	 (9.32), Crook of Devon (9.36), Balado (9.43), Kinross Jct (9.51), Milnathort (9.55), Mawcarse Jct (10.00), Gateside (10.05),
	Strathmiglo (10.10), Auchtermuchty (10.19), Ladybank (10.30).
21	Larbert (9.37).
25	Cambus (9.30), Causewayhead (9.38), Stirling (9.42), Larbert (9.39), Cowlairs (10.14), Glasgow (10.20).
26	Last Grange (9.38), Oakley (9.43), Dunfermline (Upper) (9.54), (Lower) (10.00), Inverkeithing (10.07), North Queensferry (10.14), Dalmeny (10.20), Turnhouse (10.27), Haymarket (10.39), Lijchergh (10.42)
20	Edinburgh (10.43). Cambus (9.35), Menstrie and Glenochil (9.42), Alva (9.48).
30 10.05	Cambus (9.55), Mensule and Chenochi (9.16), Cambus (10.11), Causewayhead (10.19), Stirling (10.23), Larbert (10.46), Castlecary (10.58), Dullatur (11.04), Croy (11.10), Lenzie
	(11.10), Bishopbriggs (11.26), Cowlairs (11.34), Glasgow (11.40).
18	Causewayhead (10.28), Stirling (10.32) Sauchie (10.28), Tillicoultry (10.33), Dollar (10.40), Rumbling Bridge
23	(10.50), Kinross Ict (11.01).
25	Clackmannan and Kennet (10.31), Kilbagie (10.37), Kincardine (10.41).
30	Cambus (10.35), Menstrie and Glenochil (10.39), Alva (10.44).
40	Clackmannan Road (10.45), Forest Mill (10.49), Bogside (10.56), East
	Grange (11.01), Oakley (11.06), Dunfermline (Upper) (11.25), Halbeath (11.30), Crossgates (11.35), Cowdenbeath (11.41), Kelty (11.46).
РМ	
	Throsk Platform (12.37), Airth (12.46), Larbert (12.53).
12.33 (Cal.) 42	Larbert (1.00), Lenzie (1.25), Bishopbriggs (1.32), Cowlairs (1.41), Glasgow (1.49).
47	Bogside (12.57 Tues. only), East Grange (1.00 Thurs. only), Oakley (1.02 Mon., Wed. and Fri. only), Dunfermline (Upper) (1.11), (Lower) (1.24), Haymarket (1.50), Edinburgh (1.54).

12.50		Cambus (12.56), Causewayhead (1.05), Stirling (1.08).
55		Cambus (1.00), Menstrie and Glenochil (1.07), Alva (1.13).
1.43	(S)	East Grange (1.55), Oakley (2.00), Dunfermline (Upper) (2.11), Cowdenbeath (2.21), Thornton (2.36).
2.19		Causewayhead (2.31), Stirling (2.34).
32		Sauchie (2.37), Tillicoultry (2.42), Dollar (2.48).
40		Larbert (2.59), Castlecary (3.10), Cowlairs (3.33), Glasgow (3.41).
47		Cambus (2.54), Causewayhead (3.04), Stirling (3.12).
50		Tillicoultry (2.58), Dollar (3.05), Rumbling Bridge (3.15), Kinross Jct
		(3.28), Bridge of Earn (3.49), Perth (3.58).
55		Clackmannan Road (3.00), Forest Mill (3.04), Bogside (3.11), East
		Grange (3.16), Oakley (3.21), Dunfermline (3.52), Halbeath (3.57),
		Crossgates (4.02), Cowdenbeath (4.08), Lochgelly (4.15),
		Cardenden (4.25), Thornton Jct (4.37).
57		Cambus (3.03), Menstrie and Glenochil (3.07), Alva (3.13).
3:00		Clackmannan and Kennet (3.06), Kilbagie (3.12), Kincardine (3.16).
4.05	(Cal.)	Throsk Platform (4.05), Airth (4.18), Larbert (4.25).
18		Oakley (4.34, Sats. only), Dunfermline (Upper) (4.46), (Lower) (5.01),
		Inverkeithing (5.08), Haymarket (5.34), Edinburgh (5.38).
20		Cambus (4.26), Causewayhead (4.34), Stirling (4.38).
30		Cambus (4.36), Menstrie and Glenochil (4.40), Alva (4.45).
5.21		Causewayhead (5.31), Stirling (5.34).
22		Clackmannan and Kennet (5.28), Kilbagie (5.34), Kincardine (5.38).
22		Sauchie (5.26), Tillicoultry (5.31), Dollar (5.39), Rumbling Bridge
27		(5.49), Crook of Devon (5.53), Balado (5.57), Kinross Jct (6.03).
27		Cambus (5.33), Menstrie and Glenochil (5.37), Alva (5.42).
34		Stirling (5.49), Larbert (6.04), Castlecary (6.18), Dullatur (6.25), Lenzie
38		(6.37), Cowlairs (6.52), Glasgow (7.00).
30		Clackmannan Road (5.43), Forest Mill (5.47), Bogside (5.54), East
45		Grange (5.59), Oakley (6.04), Dunfermline (Upper) (6.15).
45		Tillicoultry (5.53), Dollar (6.00), Rumbling Bridge (6.10), Crook of Devon (6.14), Kinross Jct (6.23), Mawcarse Jct (6.30), Glenfarg
		(6.38), Bridge of Earn (6.48), Perth (6.55).
6.08		Clackmannan and Kennet (6.14), Kilbagie (6.20), Kincardine (6.24).
	(Cal.)	Throsk Platform (6.17), Airth (6.25), Larbert (6.32).
18		Cambus (6.23), Causewayhead (6.31), Stirling (6.34).
19		Dunfermline (Upper) (6.45), (Lower) (6.58), Inverkeithing (7.05), N.
		Queensferry (7.12), Dalmeny (7.18), Turnhouse (7.25), Haymarket
		(7.35), Edinburgh (7.49).
7.43		Cambus (7.49), Causewayhead (7.58), Stirling (8.01).
8.23		Clackmannan Road (8.28), Forest Mill (8.32), Bogside (8.39), East
		Grange (8.44), Oakley (8.49), Dunfermline (Upper) (9.03), Halbeath
		(9.08), Crossgates (9.13), Cowdenbeath (9.19), Lochgelly (9.26),
12.0		Cardenden (9.35), Thornton (9.47).
26		Tillicoultry (8.34), Dollar (8.41), Rumbling Bridge (8.51), Crook of
		Devon (8.55), Balado (sets down), Kinross Jct (9.15), Milnathort
		(9.19), Mawcarse Jct (9.24), Glenfarg (9.33), Bridge of Earn (9.45),
10 /	C)	Perth (9.52).
40 (Sauchie (8.44), Tillicoultry (8.50).
42 (42	3)	Clackmannan and Kennet (8.48), Kilbagie (8.54), Kincardine (8.58)
44		Stirling (8.59), Larbert (9.15), Castlecary (9.35), Dullatur (9.42), Croy
45		(9.47), Lenzie (9.56), Cowlairs (10.08), Glasgow (10.14).

45 Cambus (8.51), Causewayhead (8.59), Stirling (9.03).
 53 Cambus (9.01), Menstrie and Glenochil (9.08), Alva (9.14).



Clackmannanshire – 18th and 19th centuries rail and coal developments – Rail lines, stations and mines

BOOK REVIEW

AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT IN STRATHKELVIN 1700-1850. Dorothy E. McGuire. Strathkelvin, Auld Kirk Museum Publications No. 15. 128pp. 1988. ISBN 0 904966 20 8. £4.50.

Strathkelvin District Libraries and Museums have established an excellent record in publishing, a reputation to which Dorothy McGuire's volume makes a further contribution

Improvement, the process by which changes in agricultural practice transformed Scotland's rural landscape, is a path well-trodden by historians. It had its own contemporary literature, in Wight's Surveys, in the General Views of Agriculture and in the Statistical Accounts; the availability of these contemporary accounts has led historians rather too often, to swallow whole their opinions and prejudices as if their's was the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Worse still, the now standard works by Haldane and Symon can become quarries from which material is extracted directly, without any awareness of inherent bias. To her credit, Dorothy McGuire has avoided this pitfall. While making exhaustive use of published material she has supplemented this with unpublished primary sources, notably the Stirling of Keir and Cadder Papers and the Lennox of Woodhead Papers. Furthermore, she makes good use of work by second genera~ion writers such as Whyte and Dodgshon, who have helped to refine our perceptions of pre-Improvement conditions. A short in troduction sets the scene, followed by a systematic series of thematic chapters. Chapter one, on environment, notes the interest of Improvement writers in climate, relief and soil conditions but, rather than regurgitating their writings, uses the work of modern soil scientists to describe conditions. Chapter two introduces the human- dimension in the form of tenure. Inevitably the complexities of landholding have been simplified, so that attention focusses on tenants of estates, whose affairs are, in any case better documented than those of feuars or 'bonnet' lairds. I was left wondering whether either of these latter groups were to be found at all in Strathkelvin,

The next three chapters, on enclosure; drainage and wasteland demonstrate how the Improvers' ideas were put into effect to modify the agricultural landscape. McGuire recognises the key importance of tile drainage and the drainage Acts of the 1840s, points which are sometimes overlooked, but makes no reference to mechanisation in drain tile and drain pipe manufacture, from the late 1830s, without which the 'drainage revolution' could not have been carried through so rapidly. The chapters on enclosure and the improvement of wasteland might have been an opportunity to illustrate inter-relations within both pre- and post-Improvement farming: not until the advent of enclosed *parks* for sown grasses could wasteland be dispensed with. Land producing only

cereals- and pulses could have remained open indefinitely, but only by sowing grass crops, within enclosures, could a break be made in the preimprovement cycle of interdependence under which wasteland had to stay out of cultivation in order to feed livestock.

Chapters seven, eight and nine investigate the annual cycle of cultivation, the crops grown and the livestock kept. A chapter on rural life concentrates on the agricultural labour force, but also describes the diet and fuel supply of the whole farming community. Day labourers, an often neglected group, are given their rightful prominence, as is their decline as new technologies and specialised trades developed. The interdependence between agriculture and its increasingly urbanised and industrialised markets provides the subject matter for the book's last three chapters. This is an essential part of the story, as McGuire recognises, for the existene of alternative employment opportunities, off the land, were an important force in pushing Improvement through.

Appendices, a glossary, bibliography and index round off a very thorough, scholarly work, well annotated with notes and references and illustrated within the text and in separate plates. The preface notes that its original purpose was to have been a reference book for secondary pupils but seems to concede it is perhaps too advanced to serve this need. However, the author has succeeded in producing a work which is essential reading for anyone with a local or specialist interest.

John Shaw, 1989

Editorial Note - Beetles

A year or two ago the Secretary of the AEC (Asociacion europea coleopteralogia) at Barcelona University asked to exchange publications with us, and we have their bulletin volumes 1 and 2 - *Elytrol1*, 1987 and 1988, of some 120 and 160 pages respectively. I believe it is available elsewhere including Glasgow and Edinburgh universities, and the Glasgow Natural History Society, but I will happily copy the contents or lend to anyone interested.