PEOPLE OF THE FORTH (4)

WHO WAS CHARLES ROGERS?

J. Malcolm Allan

University of Strathclyde

Who was Charles Roger = ROGER?He was born in 1825 and seems to exist until c.1855. That is not the only question. Who was Charles Rogers = R O G E R S_? He seems to have existed from c.1855 and he certainly died in 1890. So, who was Charles Rodger = R O D_G E R ? He seems to exist in the Stirling District Council's mind as a street name in Bridge of Allan: Charles Rodger Place. And, finally, who was Charles Rodgers = R O ELG E R S_? He appears only in a mis-spelled index entry to the *Stirling Journal.*

To unravel these four men I shall concentrate on the first two; they existed as the same man consecutively. The second two are also the same man as the first two give or take inventive spelling. So, the four men are really just one.

I acknowledge help from the following sources and people. The late Provost Steel many years ago donated his own copy of *Leaves from my autobiography* by Charles Rogers (1876) to the Dr W. H. Welsh Educational and Historical Trust. From my own shelves I have used a copy of *The serpent's track* by Charles Rogers (1880), a rare pamphlet I bought from Ginny Wills, Bridge of Allan Books about 100 years after publication. The Keeper of Muniments at St. Andrews University helpfully transcribed an obituary from one Fife newspaper and provided an execrable print from a microfilm from another. In the Manuscripts Department of the National Library of Scotland I had access to 570 sheets of letters to Rogers and with great difficulty read all the scratchy, scrawling writing. From Stirling District Libraries and other libraries, including my own at the University of Strathclyde I have used books written by Rogers or published by him.

The year 1990 is the centenary of the death of this single and singular man: Charles Rogers, D.D. (College of William & Mary, Maryland), reputed D.D. (St. Andrews in 1881 — but they know nothing of it), LL.D. (Columbia College, New York). I suggested it would make a topic for a paper expecting another to do it. That was not fruitful, and I end up doing it myself. I never learn.

He was a man of words, spoken and written, in fact of millions of words so I shall use no illustrations or slides. Such a man merits yet more words.

Charles Rogers was born, as Charles R.O.G.E.R., at Dunino in Fife in 1825. His father was 57 and his mother 21. She died in the childbirth.

They had been married just two years. Rev. James Roger, R.O.G.E.R. please note, had been minister of Dunino since 1805 and he continued there until 1849. Before that, since he was born in 1767, he had been schoolmaster, as were many proto-ministers, journalist, first editor of the *Dundee Advertiser,* private secretary to an M.P., and a writer in London. He wrote at least two books and many leader articles in papers and left a manuscript historical novel at his death. His brother, Charles also wrote at least 2 books, mainly genealogical and religious, and was Librarian of Dundee public library. This was a literary family off old farming stock. Of his father, Charles Rogers says "as a preacher he did not excel" . . . and for 44 years in Dunino kirk at that!

Charles, the motherless bairn, was brought up at Dunino Manse by his father's sister, who must have been a middle aged or elderly woman; he was educated by his father and also at the parish school. He was not allowed out of their sight unaccompanied and forbidden to stray beyond the parish boundary, just 2 square miles. He says he grew up rude in speech and rough in manners. It sounds solitary, introverted and dull.

By the age of 11 he had escaped into the realm of books, not just the boyish reading of Holinshed's *Scottish Chronicle,* the 16th century source for Shakespeare when writing Macbeth. The church officer gave him Harry the Minstrel's *Wallace* to read, early Scottish verse followed up by Barbour's *The Bruce.* That is tough and heady stuff for a confined boy. He soon set about collecting ballads from the domestics and history books even mastering the handwriting of the Dunino Kirk registers which went back to 1643. His father read Greek and Latin text daily all his life and taught him the Classics. It was his father who then determined that Charles should be a minister as there was no money to apprentice him or prepare him for a profession.

At 14, with a bursary, he went to St. Andrew's University. It was 1839 and he later confessed to being "a poor student" for 7 years. He was there to study Arts and Divinity but spent most of his time reading Scottish literature and history in the University library and he never cites a St Andrew's degree after his name.

By 1840, only 15 and one year at University, he was writing for 4 local newspapers on Scottish topics, including in the *Dundee Courier,* and he published his first pamphlet, supporting capital punishments. He wrote for the next 50 years. By 1843, at the year of the Disruption of the Church of Scotland, as an abominable brat of 18 he challenged the right of the Principal to remain in office because he was a seceding elder. He did it by pseudonymous letters to the papers, for and against, writing as if lawyer or clergyman, all by himself. The topic caused a stir that took it to the Senatus and the Presbytery before the furore died down. It is indicative of the combative and quirky nature in later life and the command of learning all his life.

The year before, in 1842 and aged 17, he had bought at auction, a 17th century manuscript which turned out to be the lost poems of a Scottish poet, Sir Robert Aytoun. By 1844, still a student and only 19, he had corresponded with literary scholars and then edited the poems to publish his first book. He presented his father with a copy without telling him about it as he knew he disapproved of all except classical and religious studies. From then on he visited local historic sites around Fife and wrote articles on them and on St. Andrews. At home, solitary and without companions, he said he studied 12 hours a day, as did his father.

On completion of his University courses he was licensed to preach in 1846. One of his first temporary posts was as assistant to Dr Hew Scott, that most learned editor of the *Fasti,* for which he was paid 9 shillings a week. Then followed a series of short-stay clergy posts in Fife, including assisting his ailing father then over 80.

The year 1849 brought certain success - he was appointed minister of the North Church, Dunfermline; his father died, in debt, aged 83; and he published a *History of St. Andrews* based on his articles and researches which was well received, reviewed and the 1,000 copies sold rapidly. Perhaps as a result, in 1850 he was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and with the profits he visited the areas of his boyhood heroes, The Bruce and Wallace, touring the sites around Stirling, Bannockburn and Falkirk.

He was 25 and was invited to write a book about Airthrey Spa. This is the Bridge of Allan connection and the book he wrote in 1851 was *A week at Bridge of Allan.* It was a promotion job commissioned by Major Henderson of Westerton. He got £20 for doing it, the equivalent of a quarter year's salary as a minister. Major Henderson, for such was the style of the man, stipulated what went in and how to write it! It is not entirely accurate as a result. Some of it is the Major's unfulfilled plans and fancies, including the map of places that were never built. The first edition, published by Lizars, was 1,000 copies as was the St. Andrew's book. In all it went to 10 editions of larger or lesser size in 13 years and some were sold direct by Rogers who signs the receipts of sale to individuals, signing as "Charles Roger". We know it was done in 1851 since there exists a letter to Rogers from Major Henderson dated 1 April 1851 (NLS 14303/72):

Mr Dear Revd. Sir,

I have your kind letter of the 27th and I am glad you propose coming to visit me at Westerton and I will tell all abt. the plans, and friendly remarks and wishes of Lord and Lady Abercromby when we meet. The principal remark being that your style is far too full of laudatory remarks which you may remember what I myself wished to impress upon you too. However you can easily draw that *milder* I daresay. Another wish was to have out all, or at all event a good bit, abt. Sir.

> Archibald Christie, burying ground at old Logic Kirk, so that is easily managed too (I'll tell you why when we meet). Mr John Fletcher will have got the 1st proof sheets by this time and will be doing your bidding.
> I return to Westerton on Saturday forenoon (I leave London on Friday 9 a.m.) will be happy to see you there at dinner and stay there till further orders so please make your arrangements accordingly, and come as soon as you can.

Henderson is calling the shots. Fletcher may be of *Fletcher's St. Andrew's Guide* and be involved with Lizars and the engraved title page of 1851 or illustrations. The letter-press title page has the date 1852 behind it in most editions.

At the time Rogers was assistant minister at Ballingry, Fife, and after another year as mission minister at Carnoustie, he came to live in Bridge of Allan in January 1853. He stayed 2 years and in the April began a monthly newspaper *The Bridge of Allan journal and Spa Directory.* It ran for only a few issues. In May 1854 he opened a preaching station in Bridge of Allan. The parish churches were a distance away at Logic and Lecropt. The only church in the village was the Free Church of 1843 and the Episcopal Church was just starting a summer mission and congregation. Rogers was always an established church man, plain Church of Scotland with protestant and Covenanter overtones. It was in 1854, in December, that he married a St. Andrews girl but there were no children to the marriage which lasted until 1880.

The preaching station, like many of his ventures, did not last long. In January 1855 he accepted the post as Chaplain to the Stirling Castle garrison. At this time, of the Crimean War, it was a busy camp and Stirling partly a military town. When he left Bridge of Allan to take up residence in the Chaplain's quarters, a wing of The Argyle Lodging, he was given a public breakfast by the inhabitants, a silver claret jug and a purse of sovereigns. He records, on taking up his new post, that in the previous 9 years he earned by preaching £266/16/6, an average of £30 per year, but his books and writings must have been a further source of income.

That is the Bridge of Allan connection . . . . or is it? In his book *A week at Bridge of Allan* he wrote in 1851 (p. 39/40):

It has been often lamented by patriotic and right-minded Scotsmen, that no monument worthy of the subject has been erected to commemmorate the gallant deeds and heroic achievements of Wallace, the most popular and meritorious of Scottish heroes. Than the highest point of Abbey Craig, certainly a more suitable site for such an erection, could not be suggested Mr Patric Park, the distinguished sculptor, has recently executed a magnificent model of a colossal statue of the

hero . . . . Such a monument, it is scarcely necessary to remark, would be peculiarly suitable for the summit of Abbey Craig; and we hope the period is not distant, when by the liberal subscriptions of patriotic Scotsmen, this or some other approved monument to the memory of Wallace, will decorate its crest . . It is proper to state, that Mr Macfarlane of Coneyhill, to whose munificent liberality at Bridge of Allan we have already had occasion to allude, has generously offered to head a subscription list with fifty pounds, for the erection of a monument to Wallace at the top of Abbey Craig . . . .

The Wallace of his boyhood still dominated his thoughts, almost becoming an obseesion. The result is there for all to see - The Wallace Monument. It is now quite different from the description of Park's statue but it is within the parish of Logie and even appears on some early postcards as 'Wallace Monument, Bridge of Allan' which is where Rogers had the idea of a site in 1851.

From 1855-1863 he was in Stirling. Although garrison chaplain the position at Stirling Castle seems to have overtaken him as a historic site and means of glory rather than just a parish. As Scottish history obsessed him he became beset by controversy and conflict of interest. It was never to leave him until his death in 1890.

By now he was Rogers, R.O.G.E.R.S., assuming the name without explanation. The *"S"* he assumed might almost stand for 'Scotland' for which he became a promoter of projects, a man of monuments and a writer. As a clergyman, like his father, he is not memorable.

By 1855 Stirling Town Council was a very corrupt body. It had effected 'economy' by not paying for a police force and reverted to a night watch where local householders each took turn, or got a drunken idler to do it for them at 2 shillings a night. The result was prostitution, gaming and general mayhem all round the Castle area, the Top of the Town and near the Church of the Holy Rude, the Valley and the Ladies Rock; in fact on Rogers' doorstep.

When Rogers was told it was his turn for the Watch he took exception and decided to clean up the area. Among the things he proposed was a Cemetery Company to extend the old Holy Rude cemetery into The Valley. He managed to do this by 1857 completing it as it is now with various monuments, all encouraged by Rogers in a 2 year campaign against objections. John Macfarlane of Coneyhill underwrote the lease on the land; others suscribed to monuments - The Pyramid, John Knox, Guthrie, the Wigton Martyrs in a glass cage. These were his Reformation and Presbyterian heroes for which he cajoled the gentry and prominent businessmen into paying by raising suscriptions, a method he used from then on. The Holy Rude area was cleared and the Bowling Green wall lowered to improve the place.

A taste for monuments set in and with it his first Wallace monument, a statue on the Atheneum building where it looks down King Street, in 1858. His next proposal was for laying out the King's Park and restoring the King's Knot Garden. By 1859 he had set up The Stirling Improvement Society, one of many societies he was to father. His 1861 proposal for a public Hall failed otherwise there might have been a Rogers or Wallace Hall instead of the present Albert Hall of later years. With this high profile of public works, in contrast to the then councillors, Rogers was himself elected to the Town Council. His proposed tree planting; baths; lavatories; libraries and dwellings for the working classes never came about until 30 years later.

By now he was Dr Rogers, using the LL.D. obtained somehow from Columbia College, New York and which was questioned many times during his lifetime. His main proposal from 1851 was for a Wallace Monument on Abbey Craig. The general idea of a monument began elsewhere, in 1818 and before Rogers was born, but the 1851 proposal of the site was his and already supported by John Macfarlane of Coneyhill. By 1856 he had set up a committee, one of his many committees, to promote the project and raise subscriptions for it. Members included some important men from far and wide, among them one, William Burns, a Glasgow writer or solicitor of some power. He was a Scottish patriot but very anti-English and, as it soon transpired, anti-Rogers. At every committee meeting, over six years, there was controversy with Burns. It started over the minutes, the accounts, the design, the competition, the method of funding and particularly over subscriptions. Rogers, as Secretary, with unbounded energy for Wallace, set up agents and committees in all parts of Scotland and beyond in Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool and London. Rogers stumped the country in his vacations, a means made easier by the network of trains now fanned out from Stirling. It is a story in itself and not a happy one.

At last in 1861 the foundation stone was laid. Such was the enthusiasm that Rogers had stirred up that 100,000 people turned up and the procession was two miles long. Another part of his energy has been recorded. Of the £13,000 needed to complete the monument by 1869 Rogers raised over £7,000 or more than half of it personally. His own salary as Chaplain was £74 per annum with a free house, raised later to £150. Also on record is the method he employed. It is stated that he personally wrote 20,000 letters in a five-year period which was computed at 3,333 hours work or SSVa days per year. In addition he composed and sent thousands of printed circulars.

I said he was a man of many words; those letters represent one part of one project begun and take no account of the committees and refutations of Burns' allegations. The Burns vendetta continued until Burns died in 1876, always casting up aspects of the Wallace Monument activity in whatever and wherever Rogers undertook.

His Stirling improvements and the Wallace campaigns stirred up another vendetta from Provost Dick and an editor of the *Stirling Observer.* In 1861 the Provost petitioned the War Office to remove Rogers from the post of Chaplain to the garrison. The Chaplain General held a Court of Inquiry at Stirling Castle which disproved all the charges. Rogers sued the Provost for libel, the first of several libel cases he brought and won, and the Provost was voted off the Town Council at the same time as Rogers was voted on.

The high drama dogged the foundation stone laying also when a Burns protege, gained access to the celebration banquet on a false ticket and caused a disturbance which ended in police intervention! Rogers had had enough of Burns' machinations and a few days later resigned as Secretary of the Committee. In an unwise move he set up a Supplementary Committee of his own since he did not give up fundraising. It led to further allegations and was repeated, lesson unlearned, with other projects.

To improve his own finances and engage his literary talents as well, Rogers set up a printing office in Stirling. It eventually employed 14 people and he began a newspaper *The Stirling Gazette* in 1862. It ran for 14 months but overextended his capacity as a businessman. When one of his employees, a boy, was bribed by a rival to say that it was bankrupt it coincided with the libel case. Although he won against Provost Dick the costs far outweighed the damages awarded. The paper folded and to prevent being made bankrupt by his 96 creditors he resigned as Chaplain in 1863 and fled to sanctuary at Holyrood Abbey until a deal was worked out. He lived in Edinburgh a while, again hounded by Burns' innuendo, and in 1864 left for a literary career in London, with debts and a persecution complex. He was aged 38.

He was already a religious writer and publisher using his own printing shop when in Stirling. While still in Bridge of Allan in 1853 he had begun *Tracts for* Sunday *Schools,* a series that evolved into his next scenario. From 1860 *Stirling Castle Tracts,* aimed specificially at the military, were produced and disseminated. By 1862/3 three journals were added: *The Workman's Friend: The Briton;and The Recorder.* Erratically produced and simultaneous with his Wallace activities, these eventually failed, some after only a few issues.

After he left Stirling for London he visited towns in Scotland, England and Ireland setting up 150 distribution points for tracts and even had 30 outlets in the colonies. By now the enterprise evolved into the *Naval and Military Tract Society,* with 1000 supporters and subscribers. Rogers, of course, was Secretary, writer and publisher at £1 per week and travelling expenses. It became the *London Book and Tract Depository* and lasted until 1874. Some records survive showing print runs. Over a short period 950,000 tracts and 89,000 journals had been published and distributed.

The Burns vendetta cropped up here, as each new publication came out. Also through Dr Baxter of the rival Religious Tract Society Rogers was anonymously denounced in 1866 and his accounts investigated. Rival tract agents pursued him and allegations were printed and repeated in national papers: that he had absconded with the Wallace Monument funds and even that he had committed suicide in remorse for absconding! None of it was true but all of it stuck and muddied the waters as his subscription seeking for one enterprise overlapped the timescale of the other and sometimes the same agents were involved.

Incredibly, he also engaged in literary and historical research, editing and publishing many works. While still in Stirling between 1855 and 1857 he had compiled *The Modern* Scottish *Minstrel* in six volumes and written 200 memoirs of the authors used. It had a moral side as well as he intended that it should be of decent verse, not questionable ballads, and be seen as continuing the strain of the 18th century poets. His profit was £50 but he got a further £20 when passing on the copyright to another publisher. After a hiatus of literary output overtaken by his Wallace and religious tract work in 1867 came out *Lyra Britannica* with 232 memoirs of hymn writers, closely followed by other hymn and poetry collections.

Again, back in Stirling in 1855 he had founded the *Scottish Literary Institute* to promote Scottish letters. It fell foul of William Burns and was refounded in 1861 as the *Caledonia Institute* which included aiming for pensions and recompense for writers. The fact that this was happening at the same time as this Stirling improvements and Wallace work is wonder enough without another enterprise for Scotland, the *Churchyard Improvement Association.* Both these folded as he left Scotland but the ideas recur.

Longest and most successful was *The Grampian Club* founded in 1868, with himself as Secretary and Editor. The purpose was to research and publish Scottish literature and history from a London base. The beginning of this is his first book in 1844 when 19 and still a student. In 1868 there was another periodical *The Oak* which ran six months as the pace and enthusiasm mounted. The Historical Society, later the Royal Historical Society, was started in 1868, some say by Rogers other with Rogers in the van. By 1870 he was the Secretary with a salary and had been acting secretary since the start. He was also the editor and 'Historiographer'. As such he edited eight volumes of the *Transactions,* a periodical not his own but which he contributed to heavily and which survived him. Still in 1868 he suggested advertising on card printed for the mail, an idea the Post Office officially adopted in 1870 and which may be said to be the forerunner of junk mail and the post card craze.

He had ideas, energy, talents and complexes; he had fixations and his own way of doing things. The result was that he had enemies, William Burns, Dr Baxter and others. Yet, he had supporters too; a group of them subscri subscribed in 1873 and bought him a house in Forrest Hill, London.

Among them were two bishops, a moderator and ex-moderator and the foundation stone was laid by George Cruickshank, illustrator of Dickens works and friend of Rogers. That year he founded two more organisations: the English Reprint Society and in 1875 the British Genealogical Society. Of course, he was Secretary and editor of both and they published some of his own Scottish works.

When he returned from a visit to the United States in 1880 he returned to controversy in the Royal Historical Society. It was over his editing, secretaryship, increased salary and accounts. Not getting his own way, and out of sympathy among more scientific historians and gentlemen academics of scholarship, he foolishly tried to found a rival society just as he had done 20 years before with the Wallace committee. In January 1881 he was forced to resign.

He was 55 and it was a predictable end to a frenetic career as writer, editor, subscription agent, etc., with a penchant for self-promotion and salaries to provide his income. His wife had died in 1880 and he retired to Edinburgh. There he continued his own Grampian Club and also wrote bitter pamphlets about his treatment.

What sort of a man was this? Was he just the motherless bairn of the strange manse of Dunino who could not get along with people? A supporter of his, in the Royal Historical Society, commented: "He is essentially a literary man; and literary men are seldom perfect accountant or good men of business". And that is a supporter letting him down gently! An opponent wrote: "He has the countenance of a bull, the voice of a lion and the hide of a rhinocerous"! That is not the conventional, douce Church of Scotland minister, is it? He was prudish, against vice but not teetotal as there is a letter where a friend regrets not being able to join him over his favourite malt. He was opinionated and stubborn and, maybe necessarily combative. Yet a poet and writer of the Wallace Monument guide in the 1930s could write "He did much to revive the soul of Scotland".

However, I have traced at least 12 libel cases he brought against detractors. There is the military Court of Inquiry by the Chaplain-General. There is the bankruptcy problem that took years to pay off. There are threatened Court of Session processes and investigations in the accounts of most of his enterprises though usually exonerated. And there are the vendettas, by others mainly, but Rogers seems to have been able to give as much as he got.

In a recent index entry to a joint Royal Historical Society and Scottish History Society publication is this: 'Rogers, Chas. Charlatan, and founder of the Royal Historical Society, d.1890'.

Is that the official line? Is that the Scottish History Society, tongue in cheek, getting back at him and the Royal Historical Society at one blow? When he

died and was buried in Edinburgh in 1890 he was 65 and one obituary says he had made his peace with his calumniators.

What had he achieved and what are we to think of him 100 years later? He was an author for 50 years, from the age of 15, and a minister for 44 years, from the age of 21. I have researched his publishing record and do not think I have a record of everything: he had written or compiled 82 books and pamphlets; he edited at least 18 more. That is a total ol 100 titles before counting revised editions or multiple volumes, lie founded and mainly wrote some 12 journals, newspapers and tract series. He founded and was Secretary of ten or more societies. There is no numbering the committes he started or was on. Often these activities ran simultaneously with overlapping interests and organisation.

If he had lived longer, and his difficult personality had allowed, then' would have been more than that even, and wider than the usual Scottish dimension. Some of his interests he recorded in 1876:

He favoured the creation of life peers; it took Harold Wilson to do that 100 years later.

He wanted compulsory life insurance; Lloyd George had to do it 50 years later.

He thought emigration should be encouraged; "Go West young man

He said colonies should be self-governing; so did Macmillan 100 years later.

He favoured a minimum clergy stipend; something he and his father never had.

He thought cultivators of learning should get state rewards and honours; maybe the Order of Lenin of the U.S.S.R. is not what he had in mind but there was scope for recognition and that beyond his own self-interest as he got a pension for the Ettrick Shepherd's widow.

What would he have done if, back in Scotland and a parish minister, he had been sent up as delegate to the General Assembly? What if his Scottish interests had turned him to politics and he had been an M.I'.?

His most obvious achievement, against all the odds and there now for all to see, is the Wallace Monument. Certainly it would not have been there without him, the raising and organising of funds and events and the writing of all those letters. Lesser in stature or grand style are the, at least, eight other monuments he instigated in Stirling, the Borders and Edinburgh.

In 1892, after his death, a bust of Rogers was put right there in the Wallace Monument hall — beside one of William Burns, dogging him to the

end.

For our purposes and interest, he was the PR man and promoter who, at only 25, made Major Henderson's ideas of Bridge of Allan an attractive proposition and a successful spa town by his book *A week at Bridge of Allan* in 1851, reprinted in 1980. And as far as I know, he never visited it for the last 25 years of his tempestuous and productive life.

Who was Charles R.O.G.E.R., or R.O.G.E.R.S., or R.O.D.G.E.R., or R.O.D.G.E.R.S.? Was he four men of activity or an incredible one?

The incredible ONE is who Charles Rogers was, that's who!

BOOK REVIEW

STIRLING THE ROYAL BURGH. Craig Mair. John Donald, Edinburgh. 255pp. ISBN 0 085976 272 6. £13.95.

This book is of particular interest to the *Forth Naturalist and Historian* whose objectives are to help further interest in the natural and social history and environment of Stirling and central Scotland. It is, as the author says in his preface, a straightforward history for general reading, and an excellent broad picture he certainly has achieved, with Stirling put into the context of Scottish history, and presented in an attractive format for reading, and for appreciating the numerous and pertinent illustrations.

"There can be few Scottish burghs with a history to rival that of Stirling" says the colourful bookjacket — featuring castle, auld brig and Darnley House in festive attire. Publisher and author are to be congratu-lated for this very readable, attractive, absorbingly interesting work which succeeds in putting this university and tourist town — set in scenic central Scotland, gateway to the Highlands — into historically significant perspective. Its key position in Scottish history and heritage, and its many associated influential and famous people — kings and queens, patriots, soldiers, scientists, politicians, merchants, churchmen, martyrs — are well featured in the fourteen chapters. These take us from Life before the Burgh of 1120; through Wallace and Bruce 1290-1370; Castle, Mediaeval town, and Mary Queen of Scots and James VI to 1603; Cromwell and the Union; through The Jacobites; and then Times of .igricultural and industrial change c!750 to 1830; Into the Victorian era; the Turn of the century; through The wars to 1950; and finally Into the future.

The latter touches on the "demolition 1950s", years when the top of the town was "a scene of gaping houses and rubble — 250 tons carried .iway every working day for over seven years"; and how the burgh .irchitect with Historic Buildings Council and others saved or restored some of the notable buildings described in Lindsay and Court's timely and influential booklet of 1948 *Old Stirling*. Stirling the author suggests was gratefully spared the worst of that 1960s period of dreadful building in Britain; its Thistle Centre could

have been **much** worse and it has preserved the unique bastion and battle dungeon, and displays some flavour of the old burgh's crafts and merchants in the concourse frieze and banners.

Briefly touching on the impact of the coming of the University the author closes the main text in thinking "the future does not look so bad. Stirling still has the feeling of a small town in a beautiful setting . . . is an enjoyable place in which to live and work . . . if the ghosts of Stirling are watching, it is we hope with a smile of approval".

Finally the book rounds off with a useful five pages of further reading notes under headings — general; castle and local battles; burgh history; buildings; neighbouring communities; for younger readers (important for education today); and for the more serious — a few notes on documentary sources. For the general reader one might suggest a start in further reading with the complementary burgh histories of Lannon and McNaughton — the *Making of Modern Stirling* and *A History of Old Stirling,* also McCutcheon's *Stirling Observer 150 years on* and McKean's *Stirling and the Trossachs* — a few of Lannon are still purchasable, the others through libraries or second hand, as would be Nimmo's *History of Stirlingshire.* Nimmo as the first and basic history of the larger area has the University's 1974 survey *The Stirling Region* nearer us in time. These all, as the author says, have greater details in some subjects e.g. the early days, the buildings, sport, transport, photos.

Our *Forth Naturalist and Historian's* 13 volumes to date have some 150 papers on many naturalist and historial subjects over the last 14 years. I might just quote a few of these — Sources of history by McKichen vol. 2 1977; Newspapers as a source of local history, vol. 3; the Labour movement by Young vol. 4; Nimmo first historian of Stirling, and the Poor Law and Stirling, vol. 5; Attitudes of Stirling clergy, and Robert Kidston, vol. 8; Fisher Row — Stirling in late 17C by John Harrison, vol. 9; and his Hearth Tax and population of Stirling in 1691 in vol. 10, which also included Jayne Stephenson's Oral history of Stirling women; David Bruce, and Stirling 1734, in vol. 11; and Early gravestones in Holy Rude in this vol. 13. Additionally these volumes have authoritative annual surveys of climate and weather, and of bird observations.

One might note that a motivating factor in our establishing the *Forth Naturalist and* Historian in the mid-1970s was to carry on the traditions of that major source of Stirling information the *Transactions of the Stirling Field and Archaeological Society* 1878-1939 which have a wealth of local studies by notable contributors. These all add to the valuable background surveys by the three *Statistical Accounts of Scotland* of the 1790s, 1830s and post World War II series.

Stirling the Royal Burgh is then an excellent introduction to its history, a broad picture, well written and produced. Perhaps Craig Mair in time might favour us with more in like manner on Stirling into the year 2000!

L. Corbett

BOOK REVIEW

PEOPLE AND SOCIETY IN SCOTLAND 1830-1914. **W. Hamish Eraser and R. J. Morris, editors.** A Social History of Modern Scotland volume 2 of three volumes. The Economic and Social History Society of Scotland and John Donald. 1990. 363pp. ppbk. ISBN 0 85976 2114. £12.50.

This is a collection of learned articles tackling a wide range of social, political, and economic issues in the Scotland of 1830 to 1914. Most of the contributors are 'heavyweight' academic historians working in Scottish universities.

In his short introductory piece called 'The Making of a Nation Within a Nation', R. J. Morris gives a punchy and promising distillation of the subject-matter and the shape of things to come. Chapter One is 'The People' by M. Anderson and D. J. Morse, a lengthy but very welcome econometric mapping-out of the wider framework for the more specific articles which follow. Thus, Chapter Two is a rigorous study of 'The Rural Experience' by R. H. Campbell and T. M. Devine, and Chapter Three finds the busy R. J. Morris turning an equally sharp spotlight on 'Urbanisation and Scotland'. The titles of the other chapters are, in order of appearance:- The Dominant Classes; The Political and Workplace Culture of the Scottish Working Class; The Occupied Male Labour Force; Women's Spheres; Developments in Leisure; Poverty, Health, and Welfare; An Exploration Into Scottish Education; Religion, Class, and Church Growth; and Community And Culture.

The articles are all rich in scholarly apparatus and flavour, with clear and precise references given after each chapter. The book has over 60 attractive photographs, and a very good general index. Despite the careful demarcation of major themes, a good deal of subject-matter overlap inevitably occurs, and some bits of some chapters do tend to read like slightly different versions of the same reality. This is often necessary and desirable, though, and for this reason some readers will be especially glad of the excellent index.

Time and again in the book, some local experiences of Stirling and the surrounding area are satisfyingly clicked into the wider world. Stirling's innovations in public health, for instance, along with the notorious reluctance to levy and to pay burgh rates, and the blatant apartheid and class-conflicts within Stirling Country Cricket Club, are all pointed-up sharply when set against similar events in other places. It's all so enjoyable melodic. I remember hearing Finlay McKichan delivering, as a guest speaker at Stirling University in 1976, what was in essence a 'Stirling stinks' hypothesis, convincingly based on evidence of slums and squalour at the old top of the town. In the opening chapter of the book under review here, the same kind of formidable spadework is employed on the same topic to reveal that Stirling, along with Montrose, had in fact the highest

death-rates in the whole of Scotland. So much for the popular myth that the big cities were the main hotbeds of early death from dirt and disease. Having long suspected that Stirling has smudged the air with a lethal pong, I'm now grateful for this extra proof.

Another Stirling feature is a reprint of an advert in a *Stirling Observer* of 1858. Pungent with original testimony, it announces the sale of property at Stirling Castle and also refers to the sale of a pew in the East Church complete with chronic dose of anxiety about the expected status of buyers ane sellers. Elsewhere in the book we are told of the strict Sunday-schools at the Cowane Church Centre and the South Church as revealed by the Stirling Women's Oral History Archive located in the Smith Museum.

Among the clamour of topics ringing loud and clear from this volume, there are a few eerie silences. The prevalence and role of freemasonry is neglected, for instance. For an issue now so high on the public agenda, some attempt to make sense of it would have been solidly relevant. Also, the Victorian period saw the grand-scale disabling and segregation of so many people with physical, sensory, and mental impairments. M. A. Crowther, in the chapter 'Poverty, Health, and Welfare' does offer some coverage of patterns of service-provision and 'care' for 'the poor', 'lunatics', 'the insane' and the likes, and this is fine as far as it goes. Perhaps future works could expand and develop the opportunities for even deeper and more sensitive understandings of this sector. In their chapter about 'The Dominant Classes', N. Morgan and R. H. Trainor come closer to a fertile concept of paupers as the oppressed playthings of the better-off. Again, this is useful, but it deserves to be developed into a full-blown exploration of the birth of so many disabling barriers, including physical structures and exploitive professionalism, which cropped up in this period and percolated into conventional wisdom. After all, Eleanor Gordon gets a whole chapter in the book to wax lyrical about the plight of women, so where are the voices of the other oppressed groups?

No-one should be alarmed or surprised if the dominant narrative style in these pages doesn't always fly like a dove from the hands. It's a Klondike of high-powered historical works, and the multiple nuggets are there for the taking. There should be no hestitation in strongly recommending this book to the serious student.

Tom Lannon