

Per/56/26



**CITY AND
ROYAL BURGH
OF
PERTH**

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TREES of PERTH



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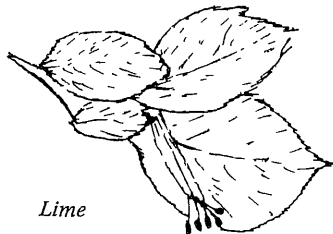
Enquiries to: Director of Parks and Recreation, Marshall Place,
Perth (Telephone 25662).

TREES of PERTH

Perth, our city is visited each year by many tourists who admire the fine buildings and monuments and who are interested in the history of our town.

We feel that the beauty of our city is enhanced in no small way by the trees which grow in our parks and line our streets. We, the pupils of Primary VII, Kinnoull School have made a study of some of the more interesting trees of Perth and invite you, the visitor, to look at them with us.

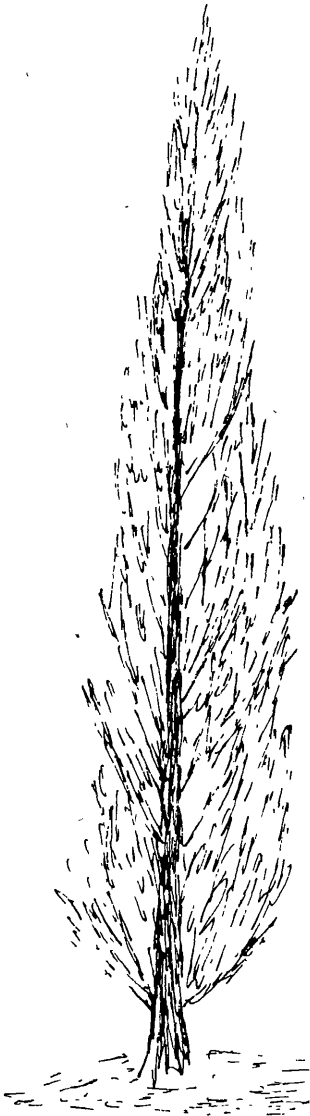
Perhaps the most notable trees of our city are the Limes which border the River Tay in Tay Street. There are 36 trees which were planted soon after 1876 when Tay Street was made. These Limes stretch from Perth Bridge built by Smeaton in 1772, to the Railway Bridge which carries the line to Dundee. The Lime trees lead the visitor to four fine Poplar trees which are situated at the city end of the Perth Bridge. The eye is immediately attracted by the distinctive shape of these Lombardy Poplars. Poplars like Willows



Lime

prefer moist habitats and often are used to enhance river banks. In spring the visitor will appreciate the beauty of the Japanese flowering Cherry trees at the museum in George Street and also in the grounds of King James VI Hospital in King Street. These are *Prunus Hisakura*, a very fine species with deep pink double flowers. When heavily laden with blossom they attract much notice. Also in this garden is a specimen of the Bird Cherry, *Prunus padus grandiflora* var *Waterii*, it is laden with racemes of white blossom in May. This is a garden variety, but the species is a native of Scotland.

The North Church situated in Mill Street has a small garden area laid out with plants of biblical interest. Here can be seen a specimen of *Cercis siliquastrum* or the Judas Tree. This tree generally grows in the Mediterranean region of Europe and Palestine. It has a handsome



Poplar

form and beautiful flowers and it is a pity that by tradition such a fine tree should have acted as gallows for Judas Iscariot. This is the belief, however, and so the tree gets its name. Also in the church garden is an *Ailanthus glandulosa* tree commonly called the Tree of Heaven. The tree originally came from China and Japan. It has gracefully curving branches and can withstand sooty atmospheres. In China this tree is the feeding ground of the silk-moth. The leaves of this tree resemble ash leaves. The leaf stalks may be as long as two feet.

If the visitor crosses the Queen's Bridge to the east part of Perth, there can be seen the attractive Norie-Miller Park. This park was gifted to the town of Perth by the General Accident Insurance Corporation and handed over to the Lord Provost of the city, on the 26th May 1972 by Sir Stanley Norie-Miller. There are some fine old willow trees bordering the river. Here too are several Japanese flowering cherry trees and Blue Cedars. There is also a specimen Tulip Tree. The Tulip tree was introduced from the Eastern States of America to this country. The tree has a grey bark but its leaf is unique in shape and when it is in flower it is covered with blossom resembling Tulips. This is how the tree gets its name. The flowers are greenish white. Beside the cherry trees there are two specimen Blue Cedars. These are very fine trees with imposing shapes and needles of a definite bluish green colour. Beside the ornamental pond there is a young weeping willow tree. Also at the edge is a fossil tree planted by pupils of Primary VII Kinnoull School in December, 1972.

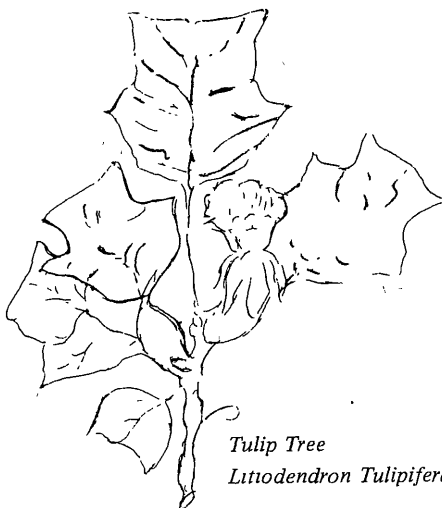
This tree is *Metasequoia Glyptostroboidea*. It dates from prehistoric times and was thought to be extinct. It was thought only to exist in fossils until a living specimen was found in China in 1941. It is now found in parks and arboretums.

Another name for the tree is the Dawn Redwood. This tree bears cones but is deciduous so in this respect it resembles the larch.

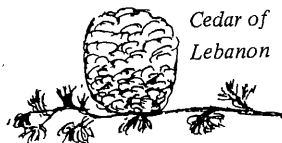
Mention has already been made of the Tulip tree in Norie-Miller Park, but in the garden of the house situated at the foot of Bowerswell Road there is a large specimen. The house called the Den and now the offices of a firm of architects was built in 1888. Also in the garden of this house is a very old pear tree.

Turning right after crossing the Queen's Bridge the visitor will walk along the Dundee Road passing the Hillside Homes Hospital. In the grounds may be seen an extremely large specimen of Cedar of Lebanon which is believed to be almost 150 years old and is about 90 feet high. With its spreading branches and rough bark it is a majestic tree. The needle leaves grow in clusters and the cones are large and rounded. This cedar grows on Mount Lebanon and is often mentioned in the scriptures. It is not surprising that it has been claimed by tradition as having supplied the timber for the Cross of Calvary.

In the garden of a private house "Elvera", Dundee Road there grows an extremely old Cherry tree. This house was built in 1904 and the road itself was laid at the turn of the century. This area was the site of a castle which presumably had an orchard to the rear. This cherry tree is believed to be in excess of 150 years old.

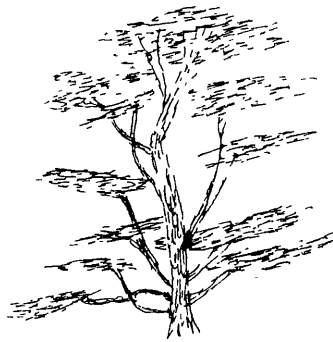


Tulip Tree
Liriodendron Tulipifera



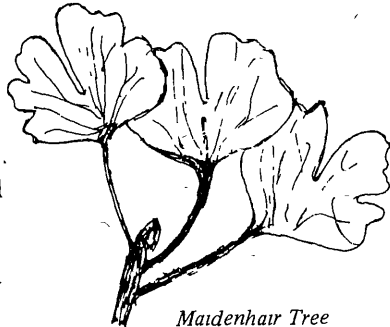
Cedar of Lebanon

Branklyn House and Garden lies at the end of Dundee Road. This is National Trust for Scotland property gifted to the Trust by the late Mr. and Mrs. Renton. The garden which is open to visitors contains many interesting specimen trees besides the outstanding collection of rhododendrons and alpinas for which the garden is renowned. A booklet gives a full account of the garden but worthy of special note are two Chilean Fire bushes, - *Embothrium coccinium*, a Golden Atlantic Cedar, an Umbrella Pine, and several beautiful Acers.



Cedar of Lebanon

In the garden there is a *Juniperis recurva coxii*, or Coffin Juniper, known by this name because of the use made of its wood in its native China. A cut-leaf Birch will attract the visitors attention as will the Chinese Birch, *Betula albosinensis septentrionalis* with its shiny orange brown bark. Mrs. Renton raised this latter tree from seed sent to her in 1926 by the American plant hunter Joseph Rock, who collected it in Central Asia. A well established hardy Eucalyptus tree appears to thrive in Branklyn and of great interest is a fossil tree, *Gingko biloba*, a relic of the coal age. These are just a few of the trees which can be seen in this unique garden.



Maidenhair Tree

The Perthshire Society of Natural Science was founded in 1867 by Dr. Buchanan White and the Society celebrated its centenary in 1967. To mark this occasion Scots Pine trees were planted at the northern tip of Moncreiffe Island on the Tay. This is opposite the building in Tay Street where the Society held its meetings and where its members collected exhibits for their natural history museum.

Bowerswell Road leads up the lower slope of Kinnoull Hill to Bowerswell House which was once the home of the Grays whose daughter Effie Gray married John Ruskin the writer. This marriage was annulled and she later became the wife of John Millais the artist. After the Second World War the stately house was bought and converted into a home for the elderly as Perth's War Memorial. In the grounds are to be seen several fine evergreens such as the Cedar of Lebanon planted by George Gray in 1848. There is near-by a group of two Hemlock Spruce, a Wellingtonia Gigantea, a Weymouth Pine and a Thuya Plicata. A Weeping Ash stands in front of the Bowerswell House next to the oldest and largest Tulip tree, which was always visited by Admiral James when in Perth. He was the grandson of Effie Gray and John Millais and was the child that modelled for Millais' famous painting "Bubbles". To commemorate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953 the Rotary Club of Perth planted a flowering Cherry tree within the grounds. Worthy of note is an Evergreen Oak (*Quercus Ilex*), its leaves are oval and pointed at the tip but the margins are usually spiny. The bark is extremely black.

Kinnoull Hill is a famed beauty spot of our city of Perth rising to the height of 729 feet.

From the top the visitor can enjoy a magnificent panorama of mountain, hill and valley. The slopes of the hill are clothed with Birch, Oak, Ash and evergreens such as Spruce, Pine and Douglas Fir. A separate booklet deals with the natural life of the Hill but two particular trees are to be mentioned. Kinnoull Hill was gifted to the citizens of Perth by Lord Dewar on 10th September 1924. At the official ceremony Lord Dewar planted an Oak tree, *Quercus Pedunculata* and the Duchess of Atholl a Larch tree, *Larix Leptolepis*. This tree grows wild on the Mountains of Japan and was introduced to Britain in 1861. This type of Larch is now considered to be better than the European Larch because it grows faster and seems better suited to our climate. At the foot of Kinnoull Hill lies the red bungalow estate built about 1930 by the Gannochy Trust. These attractive bungalows are each surrounded by Beech hedges. At many of the entrance gates there stand two Rowan trees. These trees have for centuries been associated with witches and they are supposed to counteract evil spirits.

However, when some of the Rowans had to be cut down they were replaced by Whitebeam which show their distinctive silvery green leaves in spring.

The word Inch means an island and at one time the North Inch would be a marshy area of water draining into the Tay from the fields beyond. The Mercer family are said to have given this land to the citizens of Perth in return for the right of burial in St. John's Kirk. The town's people had the right to graze cattle on the pasture and this restricted the activities of the golfers in the summer months. Some of the houses beside the North Inch still have written in their title deeds the right to grazing land on the Inch.

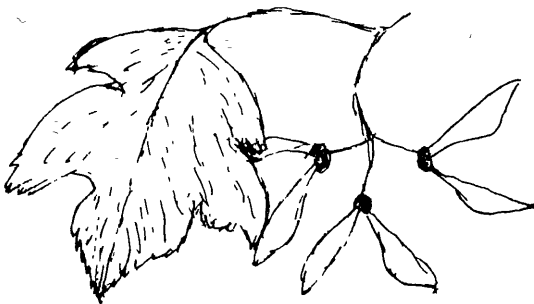
A line of Sycamore trees and later a boundary wall marked the northern limits of the Inch. One of the original trees still stands at the corner of the Douglas Memorial Garden. This tree is probably about 300 years old. The Royal Golf Club of Perth played on the course on the North Inch, but as extra land was added to the Northern end of the Inch the golf course was also extended. Caddies huts were grouped in the vicinity of Atholl Place, and it was these Caddies who fearing the loss of their livelihood, pulled down and burnt trees planted by the Town Council to enhance the North Inch. After a great row an expert was brought in to advise on the planting of trees so that they did not interfere with the golfers game. In the 19th century horse racing was held on the North Inch and two breaks in the boundary wall already mentioned allowed the runners to have a larger circuit.

The Academy building in Rose Terrace was then used as the temporary hunt headquarters. On the North Inch of Perth there stands today an extremely fine collection of Lime, Oak, Chestnut, Ash, Beech, Whitebeam and Sycamore trees. Conifers are in the minority. Some of the trees are extremely old but others are of more recent addition. Red Maple, Acer Worlei, Willows and Lime border the banks of the River Tay and the visitor should note four or five Copper Beeches in the gardens on the opposite bank which are extremely fine when in fresh leaf in May. At the far end of the Inch there stood a witch's tree where witches were reputedly hanged. This tree was destroyed in 1906.

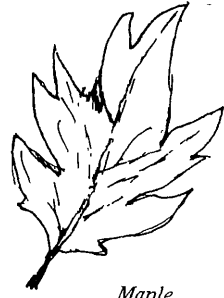
In May 1937 two Oak trees were planted by the Lord Provost of Perth, Sir Robert Nimmo and the Lord Mayor of Perth, Western Australia, who was then visiting Perth. To mark the Queen's coronation in 1953 Baillie George Fairlie planted a tree on the North Inch. 'Plant a Tree Year' was held in 1973 and in this year a selection of Maple, Gean and Ash were planted by famous sportsmen and women of Perth. Bells Sports stadium adjoining the North Inch was opened in 1968. Around the building *Prunus Pissardii* and *Laburnum Vossii* were planted. The dark red leaves of the *Prunus* and the long golden chains of the *Laburnum* flowers make a pleasant colour contrast. Of note on the pathway facing the Sports Stadium is a dead Chestnut tree. This tree has been killed by gas, a main running close to it on the Inch. North Sea gas is particularly noxious to trees and this will undoubtedly pose a problem of conservation in the future. The planting of an avenue of Douglas Fir trees marked the opening of the Douglas Memorial Garden in 1958. In this garden beside the Sports Stadium the visitor can enjoy many of the plants from North America introduced by David Douglas who was a native of Scone and was educated at Kinnoull School, Perth. A Douglas Fir grown from one of the original sent home by David Douglas in 1827 can be seen at Scone Palace.

The road from the south brings the visitor into Perth through the Friarton district with its large quarry to the left of the road. There is a fine view looking north over Perth to the Highland foothills. Poplar trees with their tapering tops may be noted growing amid the houses to the left and a line of sixteen stand near to the bridge which takes the road over the railway and into Perth. Glenearn Road has been planted with Rowan and Cherry trees alternately along one side. The Cherry blossom appears in spring and the rich red berries of the Rowan give colour in autumn. It is interesting to note how housing areas may be softened and blended into the background of hills by the planting of trees.

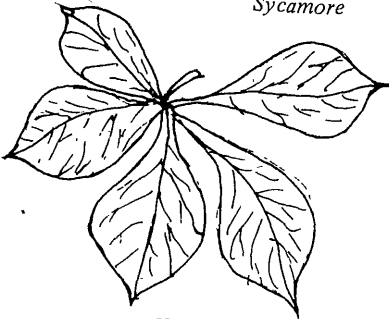
Queen Victoria visited Perth in 1842 and an avenue of trees was planted at the Shore Road side of the Lesser Inch to commemorate her visit, and named the Queen Victoria Avenue.



Sycamore



Maple



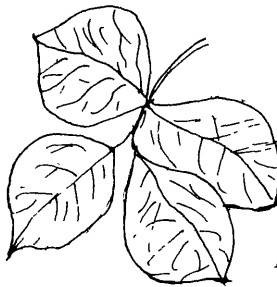
Horse-Chestnut



Ash



Douglas Fir



Beech



The road into the city runs through the South Inch and is bordered by Oak and Beech trees. Lime trees line the fine Georgian Street of Marshall Place.

On the South Inch are two trees which flower in winter time. The Chinese Witch Hazel, *Hamamelis Mollis* was introduced to this country in 1879 and flowers at Christmas time. Nearby there is the Autumn Flowering Cherry which begins to flower in October. The *Laburnum Adami* is a most interesting graft hybrid where by a freak of nature the tissues of the *Laburnum* rootstock develop up through the graft joint and intermingle with the tissues of the Broom above, so that both Broom and *Laburnum* leaves and flowers appear on the tree. This tree was first produced in Paris in 1828.

Wellshill Cemetery has been used as the town Burial Ground since 1850. In the cemetery there grows a Chilean Pine or Monkey Puzzle tree. This tree was introduced to Britain by Archibald Menzies in 1795. The story is that Menzies, born in Aberfeldy, Perthshire in 1754, travelled with Vancouver on his voyages of discovery 1790-95. Being a keen botanist he pocketed some nuts put on for dessert while he and the ship's officers were dining with the Viceroy of Chile. When he returned to the ship he planted the nuts and when the ship ultimately reached England five plants were alive. So was the *Araucaria Araucana* brought to England. To mark their centenary the Perthshire Society of Natural Science honoured the founder of the Society, Dr. Buchanan White by planting two willows, *Salix Lanata* and *Salix Wehrhahnii* at his grave in Wellshill Cemetery.

To the west of Perth city lies the Royal Infirmary which was opened in 1914 by King George V and Queen Mary. At the opening ceremony their Majesties planted two Beech trees which now stand in the centre of the new car park.

Further west still lies the district of Oakbank. Many fine Oaks flourished giving the area its name, but unfortunately some were cut down to accommodate house building plans. Some however remain sturdy giants bordering the grounds of Perth Academy and making the name of Oakbank relevant.

About ten minutes by car or by bus from the city centre are the Buckie Braes.

A ramble uphill or a picnic in the clearings may appeal to the visitor to our city. It is interesting that in this naturalised area Ash and Hawthorn are establishing themselves and becoming predominant. Standing high on the skyline beyond Buckie Braes is the largest Wellingtonia in the area, over 120 feet in height. It stands in the grounds of Cleeve House, the home of the late Sir Francis Norie-Miller now the trial grounds of the East of Scotland College of Agriculture.

In the area of Dunkeld Road and Crieff Road there are False Acacia trees, there is also one growing in the garden of a house in Atholl Place. In summer it is extremely graceful; it is called the Locust tree as missionaries believed that it must be the tree upon whose fruit with wild honey John the Baptist supported himself in the wilderness.

Within the grounds of Perth crematorium may be seen a young Tulip tree and the Maidenhair tree, *Ginkgo Biloba*, a younger specimen than the one in Branklyn Gardens. Here too there is planted a sweet gum tree which is a native of Mediterranean regions, Asia and North America. The first record of this tree is in a book written by a Spaniard and published in 1651. He wrote that the sweet perfumed resin which oozes through the bark was Liquid amber. The leaves of this tree, *Liquidamber Styraciflua* resemble the maple in shape and it is well known for its fine autumn colour. The wood is referred to as satin walnut. Within the grounds there is a plant of *Caryopteris Clandonensis*. This shrub shows its blue flowers in August. These flowers are fringed and for this reason the plant is known as the Moustache plant. A group of Silver Poplars have also been planted here.

Letham House is situated on the outskirts of Perth and may be seen standing in its grounds to the left of the road leaving Perth for Crieff. This was the home of the late Mr. Brown of Alexander and Brown, the famous Scottish seedsmen. He planted in his garden the seed of a Wellingtonia which he brought back in his pocket from a trip to America, and expressed the hope that he would live long enough to sit beneath its shade. His wish was fulfilled and the tree now fairly tall stands clearly against the skyline.

In Perth the softening effect of trees when planted in housing areas has been fully realised by the Parks Department. Glenearn Road with its Rowans and Cherries has already been mentioned. Dunkeld Road which leads the visitor northwards from Perth is lined with Maples, Silver Birch and dark-leaved *Prunus Pissardii*. In Rannoch Road an avenue of Rowans and Cherries was planted to mark the Silver Jubilee of King George V and Queen Mary in 1935. This policy of avenue planting in Perth is well worth continuing in the future.

If the visitor has enjoyed this booklet he might like to pursue his interest into the county of Perthshire. Ten minutes from Perth, on the Blairgowrie Road, is situated Scone Palace. In the Pinetum there is an outstanding collection of specimen trees planted by the Earls of Mansfield. Near Blairgowrie is the unique Beech hedge planted in 1746 growing to a height of about 90 feet. Crossing Wades Bridge at Aberfeldy the road takes the traveller through the famous avenue of Poplar trees. Passing through the village of Weem the road continues to Fortingall where the well known Fortingall Yew may be seen in the churchyard. This is claimed to be the oldest piece of vegetation in Europe. Obviously Perthshire has much to offer in interesting trees.

We hope that this booklet will encourage interest and appreciation of our trees and invite further information in anticipation of demand for a second edition.

We would like to acknowledge the help which we received from Mr. J.W. Lacey, Director of Parks, Mr. J.R. Aitken, Orchardbank Nursery, from Mrs. W.E. Reid, Mrs. E. Williams, and Mrs. F.E. Sampson of Perth and Mrs. D. Adams of Methven.

This booklet was a project of the Primary Class VII, Kinnoull School, Perth, as a contribution to the national Plant a Tree Year - 1973. It was initiated and the pupils guided by their teacher Miss Rhoda Fothergill, M.A..



VIEW OF OLD BRIDGE FROM NORRIE MILLAR PARK