



THE INCHES OF PERTH

The Inches of Perth

A SHORT ACCOUNT
BY
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THE INCHES OF PERTH

There is a tale told that Perth is the smallest town in Scotland because it is between two inches! Our fair city today no longer lies between the North and the South Inch as once it did but has stretched its boundaries far beyond. However, the saying was true in mediaeval times when a city wall bounded the town and beyond that confining and defensive wall, lay the grassy stretches of our two Inches. It is a tribute to the town indeed that in spite of changing needs and pressures these two splendid parklands remain practically unchanged to this day for citizens and visitors alike to enjoy. Our unique Inches are held in trust for the citizens of Perth by the District Council, formerly Perth Town Council. They are part of the Common Good Property administered by the Council. The town planners speak nowadays of the highly desirable green belt for towns and industrial areas. One could suggest that Perth possessed even in earliest times the ideal green belt! By a strange reversal our green belt has become two very restful areas enclosed by the urban belt of an expanding town.

HISTORIC SCENES

Our North and South Inches have in former times been the focal point of many historic scenes of national importance and also of the pleasurable pursuits of individual citizens. In an early charter of 1377 Robert III granted the North and South Inches to the Royal Burgh of Perth. This gift is reiterated in the charter of 1600 which confirms all previous charters. In early times all land belonged to the king and was his to gift to burghs and noble families. There is a belief that the Mercers of Aldie, a prosperous land-owning family gave the North Inch of Perth to the citizens in return for the right of burial in St. John's Kirk. The lines state:

"Folk say the Mercers tried the town to cheat
When for twa Inches they did gain six feet."

It is difficult to substantiate this. In 1370 William Mercer was Provost of Perth. In 1374 Robert III granted to one John Mercer a charter of lands at the bridge of the Castle Gable to the road which goes to the Stormont, near the wall of the garden of the Blackfriars. This may well have formed the south end of the North Inch. One member of the Mercer family was a Laird of Balhousie Castle and

probably had grazing rights on the adjacent North Inch. As the writers say, "from time immemorial" the North and South Inches have been the property of the community.

Today the North and South Inches comprise about 190 acres. In 1231 Blackfriars Monastery was founded by Alexander II. The buildings of this Dominican monastery were situated at the southern end of the North Inch and their grounds stretched to the Inch and westwards to the area of Barossa Place and Murray Street. No drawings exist to record the features of these monastic buildings which probably formed a quadrangle. There was also the King's Lodging used by the monarch during his sojourns at Perth and said to have overlooked the North Inch. Adjacent to the Inch in that period was the King's Garden, sometimes called the Gilten Herbar. This was apparently a green lea between the monastery and the Inch. It may originally have been land of Perth Castle which was swept away by disastrous flood in 1210.

One of the earliest historic scenes on the North Inch was the Battle of the Clans which was rather in the nature of a tournament than a pitched battle and which was viewed by King Robert III from a stance near to Blackfriars Monastery. A feud between the Clans Chattan and Kay failed to be settled amicably and it was decided that thirty men from each clan would settle the feud in open combat on the North Inch before the King and his court. One member of the Clan Chattan, lacking in courage, swam off across the River Tay before combat began. An artisan, by name of Harry or Hal, was paid half a French crown to take the place of the ignominious deserter. The North Inch arena was staked out. Armed with bows and arrows, swords and targes, knives and battle axes the contestants began the savage battle. Victory went eventually to the Clan Chattan due in no small way to Hal the Armourer. Such needless bloodshed is not to the credit of our historical past and many feel that the King should have been strong enough to forbid such savage slaughter. For many years a borestone marked the spot where the battle took place and was near the centre of the Inch opposite the Academy building. It is interesting to note here a precedent for armed combat on the North Inch. In 1312 King Robert the Bruce presided over a duel between William de Saintlowe and Hugh Harding.

The Blackfriars guarded their property and rights jealously. There is a record in the 16th Century of their complaint that the Provost, Bailies and Community of the Burgh had entered the Gilten Herbar and knocked down a wall in order to build archery butts! At that period skill in

archery was of prime importance for the defence of the town. It would appear that these butts were for the less proficient archers, the more skilful being found at practice on the South Inch.

Witches were severely punished in mediaeval times and three unfortunate women—Janet Robertson, Marian McCash and Betty Ireland—were burnt on the South Inch as witches in 1598. Three similar burnings took place on the North Inch opposite Kincarrathie Ferry.

There was a regular ferry service at the top of the North Inch as early bridges at Perth were often damaged or partially swept away by flood. The rights of this ferry were granted to Lord Stormont and it was known as the Kincarrathie Ferry. From old records it would seem that these boats were used for bringing cattle across the River Tay to the market in Perth.

In the Jacobite rising of 1715 the Earl of Mar expected James Edward Stuart, the Old Chevalier to join the troops at Perth. In preparation officers were stationed in the inns but men and horses camped out on the North Inch. Again in 1745 Charles Edward Stuart stayed in Perth for eight days at the beginning of his campaign. While in the city the Prince made a review of the Army on the North Inch on 7th September, 1745. Prince Charles is said to have smiled occasionally at the awkwardness of the men's movements but complimented them on their appearance calling them his "staigs". By this the Prince meant that these men would make excellent soldiers when properly trained. Tradition has it that these Risings were plotted at meetings of the Perth Hunt on the Inch. After 1745 Perth was a military station, strongly garrisoned. There is record of an encampment of 5,000 German troops on the North Inch. Hollow, parallel lines on the west side of the old road across the Inch remained to mark the position long after the encampment was abandoned. An anecdote from the days just prior to the Rising of 1745 tells of a drummer-boy from the detachment of troops quartered in Perth going out to Scone with companions. Visiting a tavern there they fell in with Jacobites who persuaded them to drink the Pretender's health at the old Cross in the village. Unfortunately the ale wife felt compelled to report the incident and the drummer-boy was court martialled then led out to the White Dyke on the North Inch to be shot. He was buried where he fell. His heart-broken mother took his blood-stained shirt and nailed it to the ale wife's doorpost calling down vengeance upon her. The boy's grave was marked for many years by a headstone.

In the 16th century a water course flowed from the existing Town's Lade to the Balhousie Mill and then by the west side of the North Inch to rejoin the Town's Lade at Mill Street. This conduit, whose inlet was known as the "Boot" of Balhousie, remained uncovered until the nineteenth century and several bridges gave access to the Inch.

The earlier and smaller North Inch was bounded on the north by the White Dyke erected in 1727, the cost being paid by fines levied from the brewers and bakers for fighting the weavers in the town. The object of the Dyke was to prevent the Muirton farmers from encroaching on the common land. On Macfarlane's Plan of Perth dated 1792 the Dyke is shown as running from Balhousie Castle to the River Tay.

An interesting print by Rutherford towards the end of the eighteenth century shows the main road to the North, which came by Skinnergate and Castle Gable to the North Port, crossing the North Inch. It was about 1790 that the road northwards took its present line.

The lands of Balhousie adjoined the Inch and in 1803 as the result of excambion made with the Earl of Kinnoull of Balhousie Castle Muirton Haugh was added to the North of the Inch. The Town gave part of the farmland of the Laigh of Tullylumb and the lands of Unthank. The excambion is dated 1st January, 1803, and was finalised in the provostship of Thomas Hay Marshall. The agreement involved the flat ground of Muirton, the low corner of the Orchard of Balhousie then exceeding thirty acres and the land commonly known as the Stanners which lies on the east side of the flat grounds betwixt them and the River Tay. Apparently the Stanners was frequently overflowed but the other lands mentioned in the excambion were under the plough. One condition stated in the agreement was that the lands of the Inch should be kept "solely as a lawn". The land east of Muirton Haugh was known as Fishers' Laigh and was protected by a dyke from the waters of the Tay. A dyke marking the new boundary was erected and maintained jointly by the Town and the Earl of Kinnoull and was known as the Muirton Bulwark.

The South Inch lay some distance from the south wall of the mediaeval city. The wall ran on the line of the present Canal Street. The area between the wall and the South Inch was known as Spey Gardens and is now completely built upon. A favourite and practised pastime was archery. The bowstrings stretched and twanged as the arrows shot to the northern limit, a piece of rising ground known as the

Scholar's Knoll. The southern mark or stance was a stone but unfortunately this stone was carried off in the early 19th century when the practical need for the archers' skills lessened and other sporting pastimes had ousted archery. The distance of the bow butts on the South Inch is said to have been about 2,000 feet. The Scholar's Knoll was levelled before the beginning of the nineteenth century. William Marshall, an historian of Perth, writes of a terrible and mortal visitation of the plague in 1645-7. Huts were erected on the South Inch. Those who died were buried "in open fields or in certain places allowed for that purpose, as in the west side of the South Inch,"

In 1652 the South Inch was chosen by Oliver Cromwell as the site for his fort, known as Cromwell's Citadel or Oliver's Mount. It was one of four forts built to overawe Scotland at the time of the Protectorate. The fort was a square with a bastion at each corner. It had a high rampart and moat. The north entry had an iron gate. On the river nearby there was a pier for loading and unloading stones and timber.

A good deal of local stone, however, was used and the material was obtained by destroying a large part of our burgh! Stones from the abutments of the great arches of the bridge demolished by flood in 1621 were put to use as were stones of the sepulchres in Greyfriars Burying Ground, materials from the Spey Tower, the former Hospital and the Grammar School. Although Cromwell was a deeply religious man he clearly had no qualms about desecrating holy ground for his citadel. The surface of the two Inches, which yielded two thousand merks yearly for grass, was uplifted to build the ramparts of the Mount. After the death of Cromwell and the Restoration of Charles II Perth presented a petition to H.M. Commissioners for the Citadel. This was granted. Most of the fort was demolished in 1661 but one part remained until the 18th century being used as a cavalry barracks with stabling for 200 horses. In 1788 the Council records state that a decision was taken to level the Mount on the South Inch and to use sand to fill in the trenches and hollows adjoining the Mount. The road into Perth from the South came originally by Craigie and the priory of St. Leonard. The route was altered about 1760 and the road from Edinburgh was brought in by the present line through the South Inch. Rutherford's map of 1774 shows this road passing practically through the centre of Oliver's Mount.

During the retreat of the Jacobites from the south in 1746 a contingent under Lord George Murray came to Perth where some thought a stand would be made. Rumours

were abroad that Perth was being fortified. Oliver's Mount on the South Inch was strengthened. Trenches and palissades were made here and there in the town.

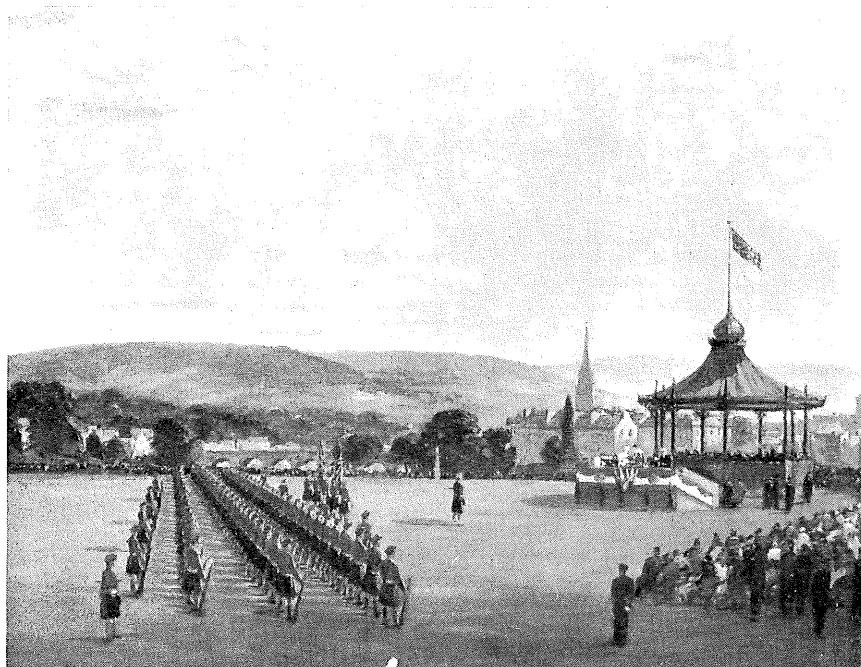
The South Inch continued to have "military" events as there were for some years in the late nineteenth century annual inspections of regiments including Battalions of the Royal Highlanders. In the 16th and 17th centuries public whippings were frequent spectacles in the streets of Perth. The route through the streets was by way of Watergate, South Street, Meal Vennel and High Street. On one occasion when three men and two women who had engaged in a meal mob were ordered to be publicly whipped the population of the town was so enraged that a company of the 3rd Dragoons was ordered under arms on the South Inch. The South Inch extended originally to the area of South William Street and west to the Inch Burn. This was a water course flowing from the Lade at the west end of Canal Street across the Inch to Craigie Burn. The area of the Inch next to the River Tay was known as the Cow Inch or Little Inch. In the early years of the 19th century the Town Council gained by excambion with the Glover Incorporation a piece of ground to the west of the Inch Burn and so the South Inch was made square. An avenue existed on the north side of the Inch and it had a circle of trees in it. Part of that avenue was cut down when the Georgian houses of Marshall Place began to be built in 1802. The word "Inch"—Gaelic Innis—means island and there are place names—Inchcoonans, Inchmichael and Inchtire—in the vicinity of the River Tay. Our Inches were often islands when the flood waters poured down the River Tay and also through the branches of the Lade.

WEATHER REPORTS

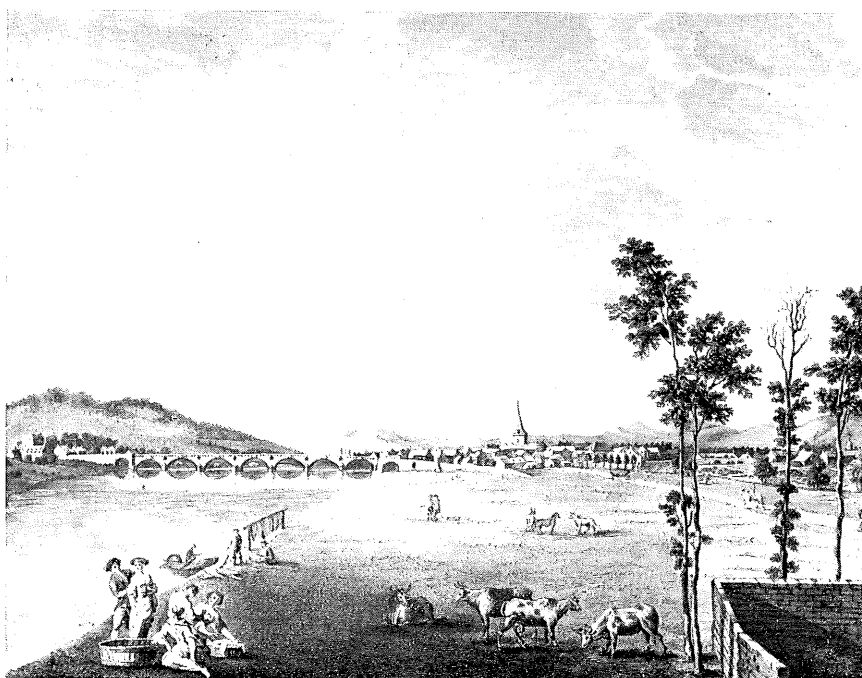
Throughout the centuries our Inches have been at the mercy of very variable weather! In 1774 a severe winter built up piles of ice against the recently constructed Perth Bridge and on February 14th the melting snows brought overwhelming flooding of the North Inch. Part of the White Dyke was broken down and a fine row of trees destroyed. The flood situation was aggravated by the River Almond pouring its waters into the Lade. In 1814 at the breaking up of the winter ice both Inches were flooded and when the water subsided the North Inch was covered with masses of ice of enormous thickness. The townsfolk feared that pasturage would be destroyed. However, a fine spring with western breezes dispersed the ice and a good crop of grass



The frozen River Tay at the North Inch.



The Black Watch parading for Freedom of City Ceremony at the Bandstand, North Inch (from an oil painting).



Perth from the North Inch.

followed. In 1838 over a thousand skaters enjoyed the ice on the Tay adjacent to the North Inch. Considerable flooding occurred in 1847 and in 1879. During the floods of 1894 the Inches began to disappear under water and Rose Terrace and Princes Street were awash. At this time photography was in its infancy and there are photographic records. The winter of 1895 was extremely severe and the Tay was frozen across. An ox was roasted at the barbecue held. A solid sheet of ice stretched from the railway bridge to the foot of the High Street. The first snow had fallen on 28th December, 1894, and nine weeks later that memorable frost had not relaxed. At the height of the severity the frost was recorded to be three feet down. Papers reported an increase in the interment of the aged.

At the north end of the North Inch the "pond", during severe spells, was used for skating and in December 1896 at such a spell the ice broke and skaters, three ladies and three gentlemen, fell into the deep water. Bystanders rushed to their assistance and rescue was made. The South Inch also afforded opportunity for this sport and when serious flooding occurred in 1846 it was suggested that the sluice at the curling pond be removed to prevent a repetition of such conditions. The Council feared being taken to law by the proprietors of adjacent private property which had been damaged! In 1842 Perth Curling Club was allowed to form a pond on the South Inch between the alley and the Penitentiary just south of the "Bog" provided the assent of the tacksman was obtained and an annual nominal rent of 1/- was paid. Bonspiels were held on both Inches but later in 1849 a new curling pond was made at Friarton.

Much has been done in centuries past to enhance the beauties and amenities of the Inches of Perth. A record of the Town Council dated 1766 minutes that the expense of planting trees in a row on each side of the Highways leading through the North and South Inches should be met by the Council. At the same time a row of trees was to be planted at the north boundary of the North Inch.

Within Perth Town Council there was an Inch Committee to administer the parklands. After inspections, felling, pruning or replanting was undertaken. Damage was frequently done to trees by cattle rubbing off the bark. In a gale of 1846 many of the fine trees on the South Inch were blown down and one of the splendid hornbeams on the west side was broken open six feet from the ground. Two years later in similar conditions a large beech tree, almost the last of the old avenue on the North Inch, was torn down.

When felling was done it appears that the timber was disposed of by public roup. This realised a sum over £10 in 1832 from trees at the South Inch. Thomas Bishop, woodforester at Methven Castle, was called in 1834 to give advice to the Town Council about the trees on the Inches. He suggested uprooting some trees on the South Inch but leaving sufficient to screen the Lime Sheds at the old Lime Shore. About nine Moss Cup Oaks were to be placed at Athole Street and limes at Rose Terrace. Four Lombardy poplars to hide the back areas of Charlotte Street was a further suggestion. Another adviser, Mr. Beattie, gardener at Scone Palace, proposed planting Scotch elms at the west side of the Shore at the South Inch. The Inches have several commemorative trees. In 1902 an oak tree was planted on the North Inch to mark the Coronation of King Edward VII. This oak was sited near the two trees planted in commemoration of the marriage of the then Prince and Princess of Wales in 1863. One line only of the north avenue of trees on the South Inch remained when Marshall Place was built and shrubberies were planted. These were often pillaged and on one occasion a barrow was used by a zealous marauder! A parallel line of younger trees stands today south of the older line. Some years ago a proposal to widen Marshall Place threatened the established trees. The newer line of trees were planted at that time.

VARIOUS USES OF THE INCHES

The pasturage of the North and South Inches was let by the Town Council usually for periods of two to three years. This gave the tacksmen the right to graze cattle on these green swards. Although cattle grazing was permitted there was a determined effort at the beginning of the seventeenth century to stop swine being allowed to roam the Inches. Often letting was done by public roup. In 1788 Daniel Cameron, a merchant, agreed to pay £81 10/- yearly for a three yearly let. Some of the land deeds of houses in Barossa Street adjacent to the North Inch included the right of pasturage for cattle.

At the beginning of the 19th century there was a Cattle Market and Show on the North Inch and proposals to remove it therefrom brought storms of protest from the inhabitants. It is of interest too that the Royal Horticultural Society of Perthshire held annual shows, lasting three days, on the North Inch.

The agricultural link with the Inches may be said to be maintained in the annual Perth Agricultural Show held on

the South Inch. Before the establishment of the permanent site at Ingliston the Royal Highland Show was held in various larger towns and cities of Scotland. It appears to have come to the South Inch about every seven years. In 1871 some exhibition cattle had contracted pleuro-pneumonia. There was a protest that the show should be held on the town's grazing ground thus aggravating the risk of infections. The Council ordered the police to make an inspection of local cattle, numbering 212. The report stated no evidence of foot and mouth disease or pleuro-pneumonia.

A nineteenth century painting of the tree-lined Edinburgh Road shows cattle grazing on the smaller part of the Inch adjacent to the River Tay where the annual show is held and which was referred to as the Cow Inch. An interesting anecdote appears in the Perthshire Courier of April 1867. An ox in charge of two butcher's boys was going quietly before them off the Inch when its horns got entangled in a sheet hanging on ropes between the line of trees in Marshall Place. The beast became enraged at its imaginary enemy and blinded by linen folds it turned and rushed madly up the Inch in the midst of clothes laid out for bleaching, upsetting tubs and barrows and making the women fly in all directions. A sudden toss relieved the animal of its head dress and it moderated its headlong charge. An old print of the South Inch shows the washer-women with their clothes laid out to bleach or hanging on lines between trees. One can well imagine that the genteel families living in Marshall Place would not be amused! In February, 1833, there is record of a complaint from these inhabitants. The town Council stepped in to prohibit such use of the trees and also interestingly enough prohibited sailors from hanging clothes and rigging on the trees adjoining the shore.

The custom of bleaching and drying clothes on the Inches depended on the use of the waters of the Lade. On the North Inch it was the habit for the women to wash and rinse their clothes in the Balhousie Lade until the course was covered over. Clothes poles were placed opposite Rose Terrace. At the turn of this century a character by the name of Bob Sidey was the Inch watcher who looked after the clothes. Remuneration was made according to the amount of washing under surveillance. In recent times most of the clothes poles have disappeared although one still remains in solitary state—a glimpse of Old Perth indeed!

The Inches are ideal for the pleasant but inexpensive pastime of walking. The strollers on the North Inch could pause to watch the fishermen at work at the Fishers' Lodges

or the boating enthusiasts hiring craft from the Boating Stations. The Town Council permitted the erection of such Lodges and Stations only for the appropriate season. Indeed such permission was sometimes refused! Not all citizens wished the gentle exercise of walking and seats were set on the Inches by the Town Council. In 1804 it is recorded that new seats were to be placed on both Inches and that a reward of ten guineas for information about "the persons who had broken and destroyed the present seats" was to be offered.

North Inch walkers often had opportunities to view friendly boat races on the River Tay. One regatta worthy of note was the Grand Aquatic Procession of May 1868 held by the boating clubs to open the season. Musical accompaniment was provided by the Volunteer band in a large boat. Another boat carried the pipers of the 42nd Highlanders. It is interesting to note that the boats included a small screw steamer from Dundee. It was witnessed with pleasure as the first steamer to be seen on the waters of the Tay above Perth Bridge. For many years a Perth Regatta was held on the river at the North Inch. In November, 1842, a crowd on the North Inch witnessed a novel spectacle when a clown of Cooke's Circus navigated the River Tay in a tub drawn by four geese! He proceeded from the Fishing Lodge to the Bridge but it is reported that the unusual barge was impelled more by the current than by the exertions of the harnessed birds!

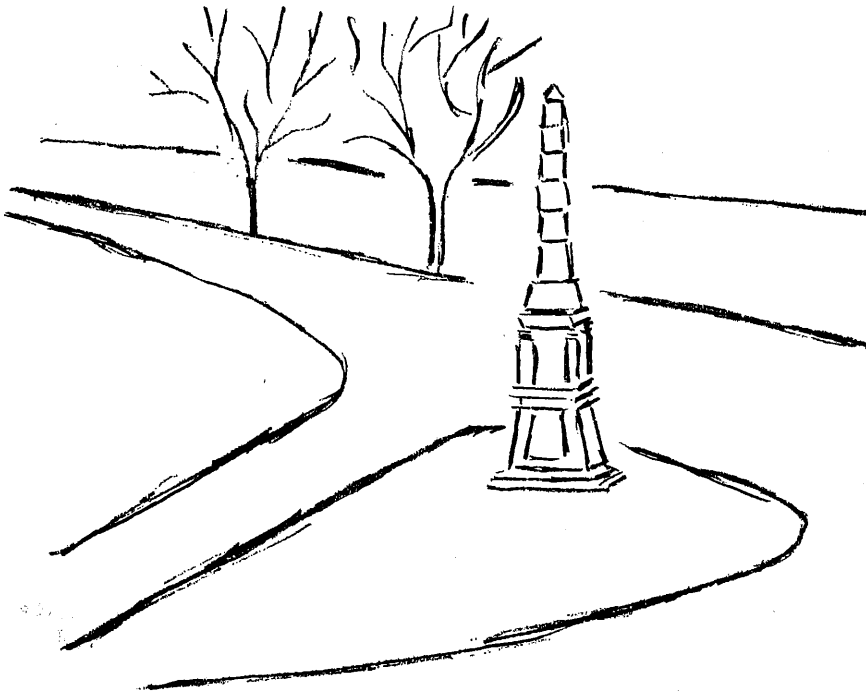
MONUMENTS OF THE INCHES

Three fine monuments adorn our Inches. At the north-west entrance to the South Inch there stands the statue of Sir Walter Scott. Originally situated at the foot of the High Street the statue was moved to its present position in 1877. The statue was the work of a local sculptor. Nearby the High Street site of Sir Walter Scott's monument stood two cannon which later were sited outside the Old Academy at the North Inch. These cannon apparently came from Sebastopol.

A fine statue of Albert, the Prince Consort, stands at the south end of the North Inch. It is nine feet high, being carved out of a single block of freestone from Redhall Quarry, near Slateford. The Royal Prince is shown wearing the robes of the Order of the Thistle and in his right hand holds a scroll with a drawing of the Great Exhibition Building. The statue was sculpted by Mr. Brodie in his Edinburgh studio and it is said that Prince Alfred took great

interest in its execution, frequently visiting the studio. The figure of Prince Albert stands on a pedestal of local stone from Huntingtower. The pedestal has a height of thirteen feet thus giving a total elevation of twenty-two feet. This "beautiful piece of statuary" was conveyed from Edinburgh to Perth on 16th August, 1864, and was unveiled by Queen Victoria on 23rd August which was declared a general holiday in Perth. Her Majesty, who had travelled from Windsor to Perth, came in royal procession by way of Marshall Place, Princes Street, St. John Street, George Street and Charlotte Street. A loyal and respectful crowd mindful of the Queen's feelings on such an occasion watched along the route. The ceremony was short and a battery of Artillery at the top of the North Inch fired a Royal salute before the Queen departed. This ceremony gave rise to an annual Perth holiday known thereafter as Inauguration Day.

Also on the North Inch stands the "Lynedoch" Memorial Fountain. In 1895 there was held a meeting of gentlemen



The Lynedoch Memorial, North Inch, Perth.

from the city and county of Perth interested in the old 90th Rifles Regiment. This regiment was raised on the North Inch, Perth, in 1794 by Thomas Graham of Balgowan, later Lord Lynedoch. Originally the Perthshire Volunteers, 90th Light Infantry, it became later the 2nd Battalion of the Cameronians. It was felt that it would be fitting to celebrate the centenary of the Regiment, which was by this time merged with the Cameronians, and it was observed that this fact would make the centenary celebration difficult to arrange. A committee, including the Duke of Atholl and Sir Robert Menzies, was formed and decided to erect a monument to the old 90th Regiment, Graham's Greybreeks, on a site on the North Inch. It was suggested that the monument might be similar to the Black Watch Memorial at Aberfeldy but the final decision was that the monument should be in the form of a drinking fountain with suitable designs to commemorate the raising and some events in the regiment's service recorded. A site for the fountain was chosen in front of the Academy in Rose Terrace. This fine Georgian building was designed by Sir Robert Reid of Edinburgh and was erected in 1805-1807. This "90th Light Regimental Memorial" proposal was opposed by the residents of Rose Terrace. Opinion was divided. One member of the Town Council suggested that the memorial on that site would look like an overgrown clothes pole! The residents of Rose Terrace would have "cannon to right of them, cannon to left of them, a battlefield in front of them and a street named after the hero of Barossa behind them."

At that period two fine cannon stood facing the Inch in front of the Academy. These cannon earlier stood at the foot of the High Street but were moved from that position when Tay Street was completed. It is believed that the cannon came from Sebastopol. No fewer than 282 persons signed a petition against this site and eventually an alternative site near the river and between the road to the Horse Water and the footpath round the Inch was agreed. During this controversy it was frequently called to mind that no permanent erection could be placed on the Inch. All problems overcome, the fine memorial was unveiled by Lord Wolseley in December, 1896. The monument, from a design by Messrs. Beveridge, sculptors, Perth brought to mind not only the exploits of the Regiment but also Sir Thomas Graham. He who raised the regiment took to the army as a career late in life after the death of his wife in 1792. His career was a successful one. He served as aide-de-camp to Sir John Moore and rose to the rank of Lieutenant-General. His was the victory at Barossa where 4,000 British defeated an army of 9,000 French. Later raised

to the peerage, Lord Lynedoch died at the age of 93 years. Mr. John Murray Graham of Murrayshall wrote the biography of his illustrious relative and erected the obelisk on Murrayshall Hill near Perth as his memorial. The 90th Perthshire Volunteers had a proud record fighting in the Peninsular War, the Indian Mutiny and the Crimean War. In 1872 the old colours had been placed in the East Parish Church (part of St. John's Kirk).

Inscriptions read:

"The regiment served with distinction at Mandora 1801: Martinique 1809: Guadeloupe 1810: In America 1814-15: South Africa 1846-47 and 1878-79: Crimea 1854-56: Indian Mutiny 1857-58 and on 1st July 1881 was formed into the 2nd Battalion of the Cameronians.

In honour of the 90th Light Infantry (Perthshire Volunteers raised May 1794 by Thomas Graham of Balgowan who was promoted for his services in Italy, Spain and Holland to the rank of General 1809; made a Knight of the Bath 1812; and created Lord Lynedoch 1814."



Thomas Graham of Balgowan, Lord Lynedoch.

The "Lynedoch" monument stands today as it was unveiled by Lord Wolseley who, before the ceremony, was made a freeman of the burgh in the City Hall. Perth was bedecked with flowers but the day was dull and cheerless. An enormous crowd gathered on the Inch to see the unveiling. The monument is of Egyptian character, standing thirty feet high and eleven feet square. The lower panels had drinking fountains fitted. Above the inscription panels there is a block in which a sphinx and other emblems of the regiment are carved.

The fine domed Marshall Monument stands today at the head of George Street. It is interesting to note that in 1816 when a memorial to Lord Provost Marshall was being considered there was a proposal to place a monument on the North Inch near the old march or White Dyke. The Council declined the suggestion but had no objection to the Monument being placed at the "earthen mound which bounds the Town's property with the property of the Earl of Kinnoull"—its present site.

SPORTING PASTIMES

Perth had and indeed still has a close link with the sport of horse racing. In present times the twice yearly race meetings at Scone are well attended. However, the first mention of this sport in Perth is in 1613 when the South Inch appears to have been used. A prize was being run for—namely a silver bell presented by Ninian Graham of Garvock in the name of John Graham of Bogside. In 1631 Perth Town Council converted three bells into a Prize Cup and in 1633 the prize was a piece of plate worth £40. The course was marked with six stakes. Transference was later made to the North Inch with the obvious advantage of a longer course of 2,220 yards which was also level. Previous to the Kinnoull excambion of 1803 part of the White Dyke was removed on the occasion of the Races and the course was continued onto the Earl of Kinnoull's land by his special permission so enabling the runners to have the longer circuit. The 8th Earl of Kinnoull was the prime mover in these improvements.

During the periods of the Jacobite risings and immediately after, the fashion of horse racing declined. About 1784 the exiled families were returning, forfeited estates were in many cases restored and a new impulse given to the county gentlemen. It was probably in the last quarter of the 18th century that the race course moved to the North Inch, having been on the South Inch for nearly 200 years.

During the Napoleonic Wars the races at Perth seemed to be in abeyance again but in 1820 the Town Council voted fifty guineas to the next Perth Races. This was to be known as the Town's Plate and it was felt it would give encouragement for racing to be held annually in Perth which would be beneficial to the trade of the town. The last mention of a direct gift from public funds was in 1833. The earliest written record of the Perth Hunt is dated 1818, an earlier minute book having been lost. Not only did Perth have its local races but the race course was visited by the Caledonian Hunt. In 1891 Perth Hunt agreed to bi-annual meetings. Meetings lapsed for a few years and in 1896, thanks to the then Earl of Mansfield, the Hunt Races began again with many local families of nobility giving their support in purse and person. The Perth Hunt uniform was a green coat with yellow buttons and a buff waistcoat. In the 19th century at the Perth Hunt races a grandstand was temporarily erected on the North Inch, and refreshment tents were allowed to local publicans—a profitable time for them quenching the thirst of spectators with whisky costing 4d. a gill! There is record of forty to fifty tents erected on the North Inch at race time. As the races were held in September, carts of apples and pears harvested from the Carse of Gowrie were brought to the Inch. Singers, pipers and fiddlers performed for a few coppers while hardware and jewellery were offered at give-away prices. These side-lines continued long after the last races. In such crowds, pickpockets were rife and extremes of debauchery were often witnessed. The Perth Hunt Races lasted from two to five days. As the course was adjacent to the River Tay, boat races were also held, the prize money for these being donated by gentlemen of the Hunt.

The magistrates, distressed at the drunken scenes on the Inch, ceased to grant licences for the refreshment tents. However, boats moored to the river bank were used to provide the spectators with something to assuage their thirst. It is said that many who drank too deeply fell into the river! Thereafter, tents were on the Balhousie area but again the drinkers had to face the hazards of crossing the open lade! It is interesting to note that in a letting of the pasturage of the Inch freedom for the golf, archery and for the running of horse races and sweating the said horses for three weeks before the races was maintained.

In the days before the railways existed, race horses were brought to Perth by road on foot. The arrival of these race horses created a stir and often youngsters would walk out the Edinburgh Road to give escort to the splendid animals. Many of the inns and hostelries could provide stabling for

these horses. The White Horse Hotel of Hanoverian connection by its name reminds us of past racing glories. Frequently there figures in Council records requests for permission to exercise race horses on the North or South Inches prior to the races. It seems that this was allowed although merely pleasurable exercising was not. In 1868 there was a request from a W. Norris of the 8th Hussars for permission to gallop his horse on the old course on the South Inch as training for the Perth races. His time of practice was to be three hours per week.

Archery and horse racing are no longer practised on our Inches, but the ancient game of golf most certainly is on the North Inch course. At what early date was golf played here in Perth? The game appears to have been well established by the early 17th century and record has it that King James VI played here. However, an earlier Stuart monarch, James II, issued from Edinburgh his first edict against golf in his kingdom. Probably, therefore, as early as the 15th century the citizens of Perth may have been drawn from the practice of archery to the pleasures of golf. In the 16th century there are records of offences of playing golf and football on the Sabbath. There was a great flood in Perth in 1621 when part of the Perth Bridge was swept away. It is said that Perth golfers accepted that flood and disaster as directed to themselves because of their evil ways! Perth certainly made both clubs and balls for the sport and it was in 1618 that James VI issued to one William Berwick the right to make golf balls. Very early golf balls were made from old kilts! Later, feather balls were fashionable. Carefully cut and stitched leather pieces were stuffed with feathers. These in turn were superseded by the guttapercha balls about 1848.

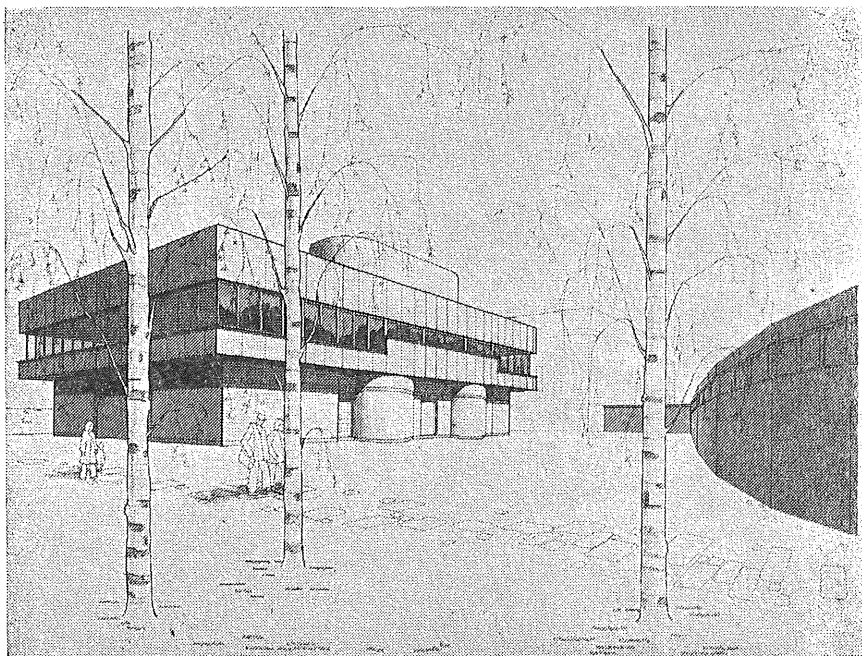
Was golf first played on the North or South Inch? In 1613 it was being played on the South Inch and continued there until about 1850. A house on the site at the north end of Watergate was known as Kilty Reid's Tavern or the House of the Green. Being close to the North Inch and a meeting place for golfers it is reasonable to suppose that the sport was in practice on the North Inch. The South Inch course had at first eight holes; later twelve and finally sixteen when four holes were added on the eastern division. The course began at the north east corner of the West division and went by the north limit of the Inch to Leonard Bank and then to Craigie Burn on the south. Perth Golfing Society was instituted in 1824, the uniform on field days being a scarlet golfing jacket. At its inception the Society was undecided whether to play on the North or South Inch. Finally deciding upon the the South Inch they played there for ten years but

in 1833, when the Society received royal patronage, play was removed to the North Inch. There the annual competition for a silver medal was held. The original course on the North Inch had only six holes but after the extension of the Inch at the beginning of the 19th century a longer course was laid out and the home hole, near to Perth Bridge, completed a thirteen hole course. The freedom for play was jealously guarded and when the Town Council proposed in 1851 planting clumps of trees on the North Inch, a petition was drawn up. Such trees interfered with the golfers' facilities and the Council decided to remove them. The North Inch golf course came into municipal care and ownership in 1921. An interesting sidelight on golf in Perth appears in an article in the Perthshire Courier of 1842. This concerned the golf caddies who daily congregated in Charlotte Street. The authorities were called upon to intervene and it was felt that the Golf Club should do something about those disorderly youths who were becoming an annoyance to the public. It was also felt that boys should not be employed who abused the money they earned as caddies.

As the North Inch course was close to the River Tay, special rules were made. If a ball was driven into the river it was merely considered out of bounds not lost, but if seen by one party only then it was lost. Also it was laid down that if a ball lay within a club length from a wash tub then the tub might be moved! Conflicting interests indeed! Also, if the ball was lying on bleaching clothes it might be lifted and dropped behind them. One can picture the irate washerwomen and their bitter complaints. The cow-feeders, too, protested about the golfers—and cricketers—cutting up the valuable pasturage. Their grazing rental was reduced after due deliberation!

There were other conflicting interests as to the types of pleasurable pursuits indulged in upon the Inches and in the Perthshire Couriers of the 19th century one reads of the plague of playing football. The city fathers were often inclined to ban this sport as it appeared to interfere with the freedom of others enjoying the amenities of the Inches. Rules were laid down by the magistrates for the playing of football. An historical reference to this sport appears as early as 1424. Football was to be suppressed and a royal edict from James I stated that football and such unprofitable sports were to be abandoned and archery was to be practised. In such times the football was of leather stuffed with rags. A later ball was made of the bladders of pig or ox. Perhaps the most famous of Perth's earlier games was played on the North Inch in 1836. It was agreed that fifty

men of Perth would meet fifty of Lord Stormont's on the North Inch. The match began at 12 noon. Dr. Anderson of Perth Academy and Mr. John Bell, Bridgend, were the adjudicators. Perth men wore red favours on their left arms and the Scone team had badges of red and blue on their left breasts. One of the kicks sent the ball into the Tay and the game was declared a draw. In 1853 another football match numbered twenty players on each side. It is recorded that the goals were one mile apart. From 1836 to 1884 football in Perth seemed to decline and then it was revived in its present form. A story of John Kippen is worth telling. He is said to have dribbled a ball from the North Inch to Methven by way of Muirton fields and Hillyland in 1812. In earlier times, as Perth was a garrison town, matches were



The Gannochy Sports Pavilion, North Inch.

arranged between Perth youths and the garrison soldiers. Another popular match was between married and single men.

The Perthshire Cricket Club play matches on the pitch on the North Inch throughout the summer. One or two occasions are of interest. In 1921 the Australian Cricket Team visited Perth and carried off a victory against the Perth

side. Motor cars were allowed on the Inch at this event. In 1932 a comic cricket match was held in aid of funds for Perth Royal Infirmary. Weird and wonderful costumes were worn by the players. The newspaper reports described it as a good example of how not to play cricket. Some of the players sported the Morris Dancers' costume of the Glover Incorporation as worn in 1633 for the visit of Charles I. The Oxford Authentics made an annual visit to Perth for a cricket match on the North Inch and the Scottish Counties Championship matches were important events in the Perth Cricketing Calendar. It is of interest to note that cricket was introduced to Perth by English soldiers stationed in Perth Barracks.

In 1979 the Gannochy Trust gifted to the Town the Gannochy Sports Pavilion for participants in outdoor sports. The fine domed sports area adjacent to the Pavilion was gifted to the Town in 1967 for participants in indoor sports and is known as Bell's Sports Centre. Lying to the north is the Douglas Memorial Garden, laid out in 1962, to commemorate the famous botanist and plant hunter, David Douglas of Scone. An avenue of Douglas firs leads to an entrance gate of Balhousie Castle which now houses the Black Watch Regimental Headquarters and Museum. The castle charters date from 1442 and the estates of Balhousie were held originally by a family named Eviot, later by the Mercers and from 1625 by the branch of the Hay family who eventually inherited the honours of Kinnoull. From the castle the Wavell Memorial Gate leads to a memorial Garden opened in 1966 in memory of the Rt. Hon. Archibald Percival Wavell, 1st Earl Wavell of Cyrenaica and Winchester, P.C., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., C.M.G., M.C., Viceroy and Governor General of India 1943-47, Colonel of the Black Watch 1946-50.

REVIEWS AND PAGEANTS

Being large expanses of open ground, the Inches were ideal for the review of troops. Such military spectacles included the review of the Eastern Regiment of Royal Perthshire Militia by Sir James Baird in 1812 on the North Inch. The Renfrew and Fife Militia and other militia regiments were reviewed particularly during the Napoleonic Wars when invasion was thought to be a decided possibility. In 1812, the depot for prisoners of war was complete. It had been designed by Sir Robert Reid, His Majesty's Architect in Scotland. With a capacity for 7,000 men, the Perth depot housed prisoners brought to Perth by river and escorted by various militia regiments.

Worthy of note is the Volunteer Review which took place on the 1st August, 1868, on the North Inch, when the Forfarshire and Fifeshire Volunteers took the field with the Perthshire Volunteers. As Perth was by that date well established as a Railway Centre the visiting Volunteers reached Perth mainly by rail. The troops mustered on the South Inch at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

After inspection they marched in two divisions to the North Inch, one proceeding by George Street to the lower gate of the Inch and the other by Methven Street and Atholl Street to enter the Inch by the upper gate at Rose Terrace. Spectators in holiday attire crowded onto Perth Bridge to witness this spectacle. The "enemy" in the sham fight were the 42nd Highlanders and the Breadalbane Volunteers, and were supposed to have crossed the river from Scone and occupied the north of the North Inch. After the "battle" all the troops taking part marched past Colonel Bulwer who took the salute and in his speech to the assembly expressed the hope that all the participants would proceed homeward in as orderly a fashion as displayed in the Review. He spoke of the high degree of discipline shown in the exercise. Many described the scene as really grand and ceremonious and said that Perth had not had such a day since Queen Victoria's first visit to the city. The weather was splendid, the varied uniforms—with scarlet predominating—were colourful and the surroundings were matchless.

At the conclusion the participants were supplied with refreshments on the North Inch. It is an interesting aside that water carts were thoughtfully placed on both the North and South Inches. These were much appreciated by the "fighters" because of the extremely hot weather. The whole affair seems to have been an unqualified success, this being due to the organisation and work done by Lord Kinnaird and the Earl of Dalhousie, Lord Lieutenants of Perthshire and Forfarshire respectively. From this excellent review it was concluded that there need be little uneasiness about the national defences. The drill sergeants were specially commended in the reports as "proficiency in drill brings efficiency in action". In the general opinion such an exercise was worth repeating. The only complaint to mar the whole occasion was that although the railways had efficiently brought about 20,000 men into Perth that day, there had been scarcely adequate provision for taking them away. There had been considerable confusion at the railway station.

Not least among the stirring scenes on the North Inch was the Centenary Celebration in 1932 to mark the 100th Anniversary of the death of Sir Walter Scott. "The Wizard of the North" was held in especial esteem on our city, as author of "The Fair Maid of Perth". A dramatised version of this novel was performed in Perth Theatre during the celebrations. Perth had already honoured Sir Walter Scott by erecting his statue, and at it on Wednesday, 21st September, a short ceremony took place on the South Inch. A Centenary dinner was held in the Station Hotel. However, the most outstanding of the celebrations was a processional pageant on Saturday, 24th September. Having assembled on the South Inch the display proceeded by South Street, St. John Street, Kinnoull Street and Atholl Street to the North Inch. School children, youth organisations and various societies displayed characters in tableaux from the writings of Sir Walter Scott. As the pageant entered the arena on the North Inch the Duke of Atholl, Lord Lieutenant of the County, took the salute. The great poet and novelist was extolled in the local press as the "Founder of the Summer Visitor Industry and the pioneer discoverer of the beauties of Perthshire". What greater claim to fame indeed!

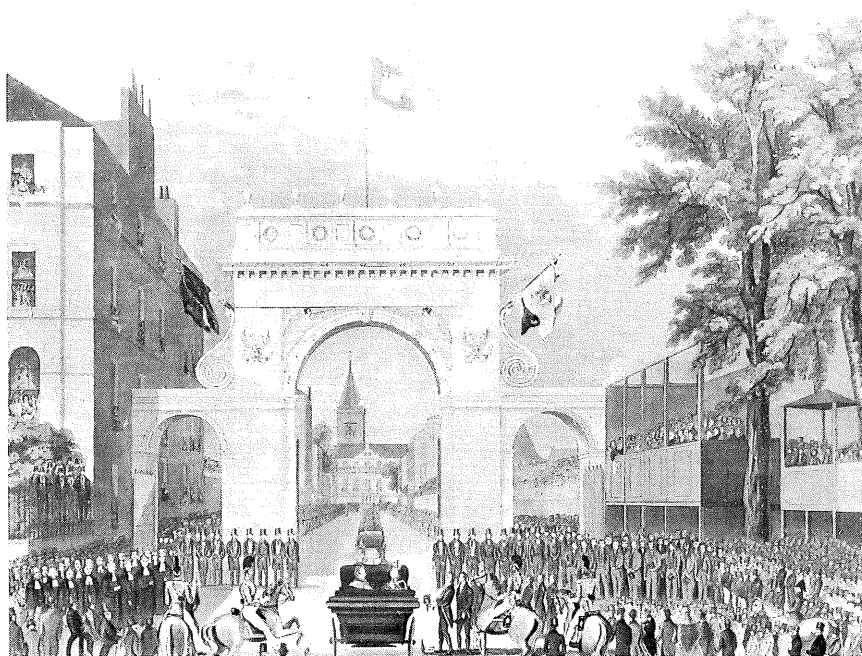
THE ROYAL VISIT

It was in the year 1842 that a magnificent archway was erected at the Edinburgh Road beside the South Inch. The reason for its erection was the visit of Queen Victoria and her husband, Prince Albert. The royal lady planned to visit the Earl of Kinnoull at Dupplin Castle, the Earl of Mansfield at Scone Palace and the Earl of Breadalbane at Taymouth Castle. Perth Town Council had received from Sir Robert Peel, the Prime Minister, a letter informing them of the Queen's intention. It was decided to erect a Triumphal Arch at the entrance to the town where the keys of the city were to be presented to Her Majesty. Mr. William Mackenzie, Superintendent of Public Works, prepared a plan for the arch at the East End of Marshall Place. "For taste, elegance and architectural beauty" it was universally approved. Messrs. Reddie were the successful contractors for the arch which was made of material and wood painted in imitation of stone. About forty feet high, the Royal Arms and the City Arms emblazoned it. A flag bearing the Royal Arms flew over the principal arch which was flanked by two smaller archways.

On Tuesday, 6th September, Her Majesty travelled from Dalkeith Palace to Dupplin Castle where she received the Lord Provost and Magistrates of Perth. A loyal address was

read to the Queen. About twenty minutes past five the Provost and dignitaries returned from Dupplin ahead of the royal party. The Provost was in black silk velvet of the costliest description. The Town Councillors wore black with white neckerchiefs. The Magistrates were attired in court dress with swords at their sides. Perth's High Constables wore round cut green coats with gilt buttons. Bearing halberds, the Town Officers were in front of the assembly. Discharges of artillery from Bellwood, just before six o'clock, notified the Queen's departure from Dupplin. From descriptions of the event, Her Majesty wore a light blue satin bonnet and a mantlet of dark blue satin. The royal carriage halted before the Triumphal Arch. Lord Provost Sidey stepped forward and presented to Queen Victoria keys of silver, richly chased—the keys of the city. Her Majesty touched the keys lying on the crimson velvet cushion and returned them to the Lord Provost. Thereafter, Prince Albert was presented with the Burgess ticket of a freeman of Perth. This was contained in a black oak casket with the Arms of the City of Perth in gold upon the lid. This impressive ceremony was watched by many people, some in the Grandstand of Perth Hunt erected at the Arch on the east side as the Queen would then have an uninterrupted view of the South Inch to the west. Front seats in that Grandstand cost one guinea and the proceeds were given to the County and City Hospital. The royal route through the city was lined by 1,000 mechanics and tradesmen with white rods hand held to form a barrier. At the east end of Perth Bridge the procession passed under another fine archway erected by Mr. Turnbull of Bellwood. This was a floral tribute with a statue of Flora scattering flowers.

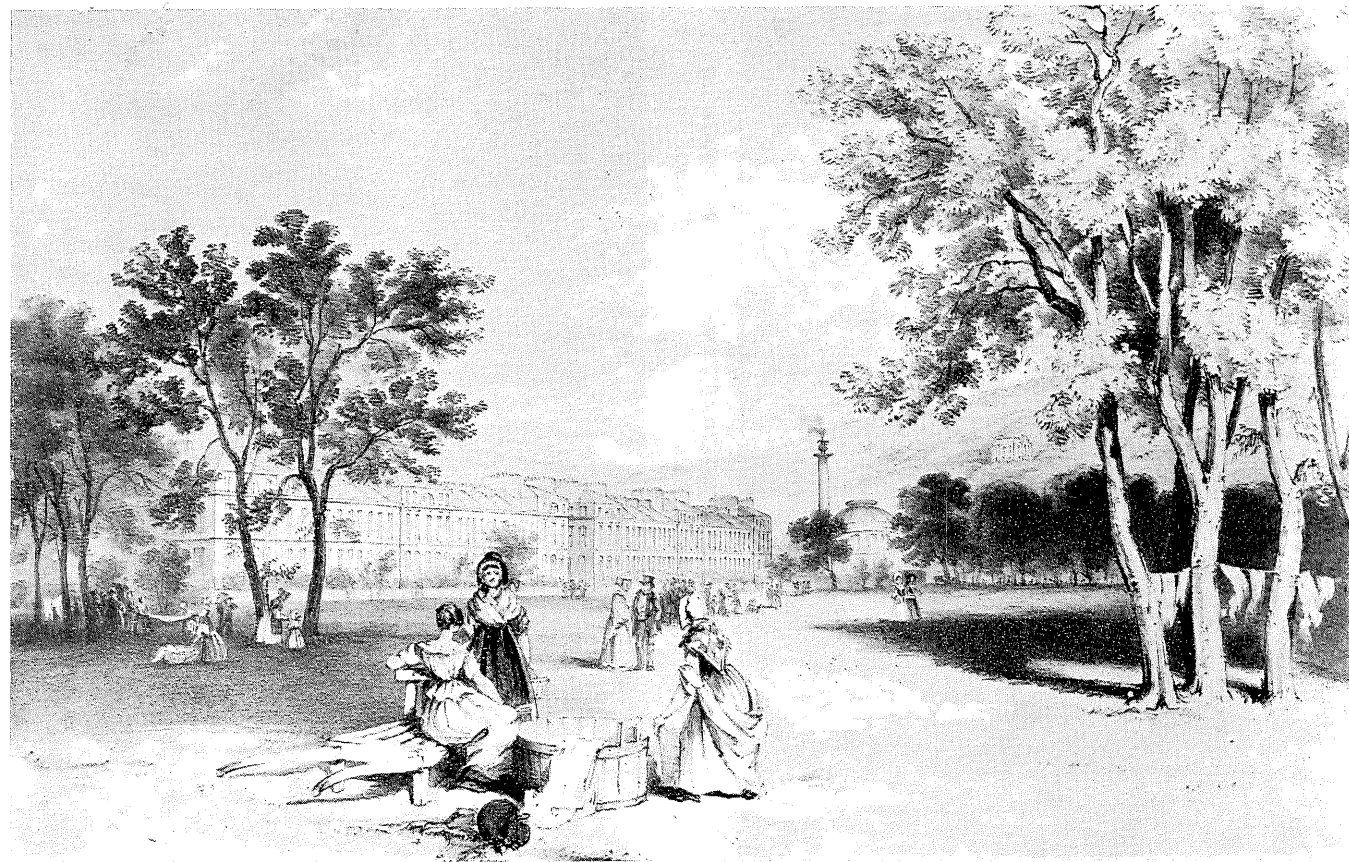
The archway erected in Atholl Street had three arches in Grecian style. The central arch had the Royal Coat of Arms, the right hand arch displayed the City Arms and "Welcome Victoria" and on the left hand arch were the Prince of Wales feathers and "Welcome Albert". Busts of Scott and Byron completed the monument. The three arches were fringed with coloured lamps lit by gas. This archway was designed by Mr. Wallace, coachbuilder to Her Majesty for Scotland. As darkness fell and the Queen proceeded to Scone Palace the archway was lit. At the moment when the royal visitor entered the Drawing Room of the Palace the pyrotechnic display of rockets, serpents and Roman candles, under the guidance of Professor Adam Anderson, began on the North Inch. To complete such a memorable day there was an evening banquet in the County Hall.



Archway erected on the occasion of the visit of Queen Victoria.



Trees lining the Edinburgh Road at the South Inch.



Marshall Place and the South Inch.

IMPROVEMENTS TO THE INCHES

Unemployment is not a modern disease. In 1826 the Council decided to lay a footpath along the east side of the North Inch and from Charlotte Street to the bridge over the Lade in front of the Academy. In the following year for "the relief of the labouring poor" a footpath was made on the west side of the South Inch. Such work eased the unemployment problem. About this period too a decision was reached to enclose the foot of the North Inch as horses and carriages were encroaching. A chain railing was erected and a rod of round iron introduced eighteen inches from the ground to prevent cows being driven through. This rod would also prevent washerwomen pushing barrows through the railing.

By 1827 the Georgian suburb of Rose Terrace was complete and the proprietors of the fine houses complained of the annoyance due to individuals driving their cows to and from the North Inch pasture. The pavement was soiled and abused and it was unpleasant for inhabitants of the Terrace and the public, who wished the cow grazers to use the Town's proper access at the foot of Charlotte Street. The Town Council maintained that Rose Terrace was a public street. Dr. Macfarlane of Rose Terrace appears to have been the spokesman in the dispute. Finally, he said that legal proceedings would be taken unless access to the Inch by Rose Terrace were limited to pedestrians only. The Town's legal assessor advised the Council not to prohibit access. Agreement was finally reached in 1830. There was to be an entrance gate and wing railing from Rose Terrace to the North Inch but a small bridge over the lade at the south end of the Terrace would be open for cows. Improvements to the south end of the North Inch are read of in 1846. A pavement was being laid betwixt the carriageway and the parapet wall. There is rather a sad footnote to this improvement. As sand was required in the work it lay in a heap and boys playing had devised the game of leaping from the parapet wall onto the heap. To add interest the boys had stuck a crow-bar into the heap to leap over. One lad came down onto the crow-bar, was impaled and suffered serious injury.

The railings which formerly enclosed the North Inch and the Albert statue were taken for the war effort in the Second World War as were the cannon in front of the Academy. Wartime affected the North Inch in yet another way. Anti-tank blocks were set at the river bank and the green stretches of both Inches were staked out to prevent enemy aircraft landing.

Musical tastes were also considered in the improvements to the Inches. It was felt desirable to have a bandstand on the North Inch. The Town Council had been asked to provide this feature but felt that it could not spend the town's funds on such a project. However, Mr. James F. Pullar of Rosebank presented a bandstand to the Town at a cost of £312. This benefactor also brought the band of the 6th Royal Dragoons from Edinburgh to perform the opening concert which included Rossini's Stabat Mater and a selection from Ruy Blas by Lutz. After much discussion the position of the stand was fixed and the opening ceremony was performed by Senior Bailie Jackson as Lord Provost Wilson was unwell. A crowd of three to four thousand looked on in splendid weather. Weekly concerts were given on Sundays and also midweek evening concerts when Perth Pipe Band and Perth Silver Band performed. The bandstand was demolished in 1958.

A most impressive ceremony took place at the bandstand on the North Inch in August 1947 when the freedom of the Burgh of Perth was conferred on the Black Watch Royal Highland Regiment and was accepted on the Regiment's behalf by Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, Colonel-in-Chief of the Regiment. At the same ceremony the freedom of the Burgh was conferred upon Field Marshall Earl Wavell, Colonel of the Black Watch from 1946-50. An oil painting of the scene on the North Inch is in the Black Watch Museum.

THE "BATTLE" OF THE SOUTH INCH

The famous Red Parliament was held in Perth in 1606 and during that time there took place the Battle of the South Inch between the adherents of the Earls of Eglinton and Glencairn.

Over two centuries after the Battle of the South Inch there was another "battle" which is perhaps more memorable and certainly well-recorded in press reports. The contestants in this affray were the people of Perth and the gentlemen of the various railway companies who wished a new railway terminus built in Perth. The choice of site was the South Inch! The railway boom developed rapidly in Scotland from 1840 onwards. By 1845 no fewer than six lines of railway communication were desirous of having a railway terminus at Perth and the city fathers were quick to realise the opportunities for Perth's future prosperity. A Railway Committee was set up and the most suitable site was declared to be the South Inch.

Thus began "The Battle of the South Inch"—a long and bitter struggle to stop the wanton destruction of one of the chief beauties of the Fair City. Perth citizens rose in support of their rights to use the South Inch as a bleaching green and clothes drying area. The ground was used for recreational purposes, golf still being played there in 1845. It was in keeping with modern thinking too that there should be parklands near the larger towns for the health and recreational benefits of the citizens. Indeed, Queen Victoria herself had admired the Inches!

Initially, the east end of the South Inch was to be used. The Dundee and Perth Railway Company was to extend their line and cross the Tay and the road on the east bank of the river by a bridge which would have to be of such height as to make a drop to the level of the east end of the South Inch quite impracticable. This latter area housed at that time the coal yards for the storage of coal off the boats. However, it became increasingly clear that there would be encroachment onto the main part of the South Inch for the terminus. Much discussion within the Town Council took place and it appears there was a fear that unless the South Inch were given as a site the terminus might be taken elsewhere and the town would not receive the advantages of railway progress.

The North Midland line now wished to share the proposed terminus and it was quite obvious that the eastern division of the Inch would be required for store yards, marshalling yards and workshops. In July 1845, a special meeting of the Town Council was called to consider how appropriate it might be to cede possession of the western portion of the South Inch for the General Terminus for the Scottish Central, Scottish Midland, Edinburgh and Northern and Dundee and Perth Railways. Although Lord Provost Sidey dissented the majority of the Council agreed that provided the buildings were suitable and compensation for the ground was right the motion should be carried. It was felt that this decision was in the best interests of the citizens. The buildings of the Terminus would be of a very ornamental character, very few trees would be interfered with and more than two-thirds of the Inch would be left for recreation. The Dundee and Perth line would have to cross the eastern portion but the western site for the Terminus might allow the height of the bridge over the Shore Road to be increased!

It was now that the battle royal began as Perth citizens felt they were being deprived of their chartered rights—possibly to satisfy the desire for financial gain! The

inhabitants had been divided about granting the use of the east part of the Inch but were practically unanimous in their desire to preserve the west part. It is true that a few thought they would rather look at a fine facade of the proposed Terminus in Marshall Place than upon "the most beautiful bleaching green in the world". It was protested that the residences of genteel families in Marshall Place would be entirely destroyed by the proximity of the Terminus. Petitions from the proprietors of Marshall Place and Leonard Bank noted the proposed defacing of the Inch and reminded the Town Council of their obligation not to allow the erection of buildings within 400 yards of those houses. "Your petitioners have learned with regret that it is the intention of one or more of the projected railway companies connected with Perth to bring their rails through the South Inch and have termini, warehouses and other buildings erected in whole or in part upon it. Your petitioners consider the North and South Inches as the pride and ornament of Perth and therefore deplore any encroachment on them which would deface their beauty." It was maintained, however, that only a section of the South Inch was to be spoilt by cutting up for lines and a section that already had an intersecting footpath—ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte!

To preserve the integrity of the Inches many alternative sites were suggested at St. Leonards, in the vicinity of the Infirmary (County Place), at the Newrow or at the land south of the South Inch belonging to the Moncreiffe family. There was an interesting fear expressed in connection with the last site. If the General Terminus were at the Friarton then trade might be drawn from Perth and indeed a rival city might appear with Perth a mere suburb!

Captains Cleather and Coddington from the Board of Trade were sent to Perth to make a report on the sites available. The decision of this report was that the western portion of the South Inch should be used as a passenger station. By this time the Railway Companies were losing interest in the South Inch site mainly because of the low situation and the declines and inclines which would be required. Also it was felt that the frequent flooding of the South Inch would be against the efficient working of the railway. When a new Town Council was elected in November 1845, the "railway battle of the South Inch" still raged. In January 1846, Mr. Stevenson of Edinburgh surveyed a line from the Waterworks to the west end of the town by which a viaduct might be carried to take the Dundee and Perth line. The necessary height of their bridge over the Tay made a South Inch terminus a difficult proposition. An earlier suggestion had

been the building of a bridge at Mugdrum to bring the Dundee line along the west bank of the Tay. Mr. Stevenson favoured the site at Leonard Causeway.

There was, too, the matter of compensation. The value of the Inch to be appropriated for a station and of the amenity to the feuars adjacent was placed at £53,000. This was independent of the claim of the inhabitants of Perth as a body. The new site appeared to be a saving therefore and the South Inch quickly became the dearest and least convenient site. The apparent tyranny of the Railway proposals were likened to the Protector Cromwell. Were they now also going to carry off the stones of the Hospital, St. John's Kirk and the seminaries for the actual building construction? Perth Town Council was constantly condemned for their precipitancy in even allowing the South Inch to be considered as a site.

Finally the Glover Incorporation, mindful of the agreed conditions in their excambion, took out an interdict against the Lord Provost and magistrates against granting the west portion of the South Inch for railway buildings. Although the Town Council had been unanimous, with the noble exception of the patriotic Provost, that the South Inch should be used it was felt that the same Town Council would feel indebted to the timely interference of the Glover Incorporation and the restrictive clause in their agreement of excambion. Hope was maintained that the rash step of the civic dignitaries might be retrieved. The local press asked if the city would still deserve the description "Fair" and encouraged all to visit Perth before "the stroke of the woodman and mallet of the labourer lay prostrate all her ancient glories in the dust". At one point people felt that the situation was so desperate that a painting of the fine avenue of trees on the South Inch was made. This was an attempt to bring forcibly to notice what was to be lost forever!

After petitions, appeals and recourse to legal measures the "battle" of the Inch was won. In August, 1846, news came to Perth from London that the Inch was saved. Such rejoicing was there in our city! The bells of St. John's Kirk and St. Paul's Church were rung and the 250-year-old banner of the Glover Incorporation was hung from the window of the Glover's Hall in George Street. In the Perthshire Courier of October, 1847, there is to be read the report of the laying of the Foundation Stone of the General Railway Terminus at St. Leonard's in Perth.

The settlement of the Railway Terminus question was achieved but a newspaper report of a later date does not lack interest. Apparently the road to the Railway Station along by the Lade at the South Inch had no proper protection and passengers coming from the Station on dark evenings had been known to plunge headlong into the water! Having saved the South Inch the citizens jealously guarded their right to enjoy the parkland. Of interest is a letter of July 1867 wherein the complaint is made that railwaymen walking to their work had cut up the grassy carpeting of the Inch and beaten it into intersecting footpaths. The writer suggests that the town should lay out one precise footpath which all could follow. In the letter the behaviour of boys who climb the fine trees and chase the cows for cruel amusement is deplored. Apparently the Council forbade horsemen to ride across the Inch yet they could be seen daily disobeying this order. What was even more deplorable, continues the letter writer, the Council had recently allowed Mr. Sanger's circus to take up the most beautiful part of the Inch and permitted the green sward to be dug up. At this event not only horses but elephants, dromedaries and caravans were to be seen marring the beauty of the South Inch. This letter gives an informative glimpse of life on the South Inch at the period.

Say not the struggle nought availeth! Today our Inches afford opportunities to all for relaxation and pleasurable pursuits. Indeed the valuable asset of those Inches is appreciated as much today as in earlier centuries. This was abundantly clear when, recently a suggestion was made to extend the Annual Agricultural Show site onto the western portion of the South Inch and storms of protest rained down on the proposed violation of the fine parkland!

May our famous Inches of Perth remain in future a unique and unspoiled feature of the Fair City.

In concluding this study of the Inches of Perth I should like to express sincere appreciation to all those who assisted in its compilation.

Acknowledgements are given to Dr. W. H. Findlay for photographic reproductions of the old prints, to Mr. E. Macmillan, Black Watch Museum, for reproduction of the oil painting, to the Director of Perth Museum for the use of photographs.
