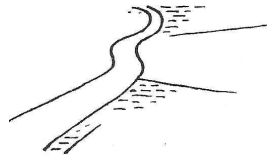


scaLan



news

No. 10, June 1995

'I never was happier since I came to the Mission than I am at Scalan, and were it not for the other duties of my Charge, I would be content to be never without the limits of its enclosures ... I have got an excellent set of Servants, who go hand in hand for the good of the place and live in the most perfect harmony ... My boys are every day more tractable: content and happy.' (Bishop George Hay, Rector of Scalan 1788-93)



The AGM of the Scalan Association took place on Tuesday 6 June, and once again the race is on to tell people a little about it and get the newsletter out in time to prepare them for the Annual Mass on Sunday 2 July. More than thirty crammed into the former Schoolroom for a mass which was concelebrated by Mgr Copland, Canon Symon, Canon McDonald (both down from the north) and Fr Halloran. The weather stayed fine, and lunch in the Braes Hall was fine too - as ever.

At the business meeting afterwards items discussed included the proposed toilet behind the seminary. Plans were on display, drawn up by the local builder Terry McIntosh. The estimated cost is £10-12,000, but if it were also behind the rowan trees land would need to be acquired from Crown Estates. Jane McEwan's report as Treasurer showed the Association in credit to the sum of £12,593. The Calumba Trust has already given £3,000 towards the latest building proposal, and the possibility was discussed of seeking additional support from Moray District Council, the Moray Tourist Board and the Millennium Fund.

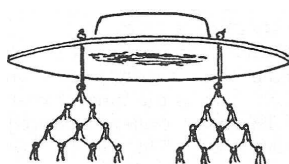
A work-sharing plan was explained by Bill Grant which will have the worst of the pot-holes filled in before cars use the road next month. There was discussion about alternative storage for chairs piled up in the Schoolroom, and it was agreed have the interior walls white-washed as a step towards a cleaner, tidier and simpler appearance for the growing number of visitors. Visits from schools, in particular, are on the increase. In the course of his President's report Mgr Copland made the very welcome announcement that Cardinal Winning intends to be at Scalan on Sunday 2 July at 4 p.m.

Membership continues to rise, and income from subscriptions came to £1,149. This is the time of year when our Treasurer prefers to receive the 'Scalan fiver'. The cost of producing two newsletters, including package and posting, was £519, and members will no doubt wish their appreciation to be expressed for the efforts of pupils in Aberdeen schools. This summer issue comes to you courtesy of Mrs L yden's primary seven class at St Peter's who visited the Old College in May.

Once again the newsletter is bigger and the editor is becoming concerned not that there will be insufficient material to keep this up in future issues, for there seems to be no limit, as that people will start to leave it unread. That's up to them of course, and so long as there's something for everyone ... A main reason why the issue became so long was that the editor himself got hooked on an article which reached 3,480 words (according to the computer) before he could stop. It is intended as 'light scholarship without footnotes'. Already an approach has been made to a light scholar for the next issue.

The picture opposite is relevant to that article which links Scalan and Tombae (see also the back cover). It shows the chapel which has served Lower Glenlivet since Catholic Emancipation as Peter Anson saw it in 1936. He left his caravan and weary horse there and walked to Scalan, and from that walk came the idea of restoration.

Cardinal Winning at Scalan!



In December the newsletter revealed that Thomas Joseph Winning had visited Scalan as a young man: The editor expressed the hope (without real hope) that he might be persuaded to come and con celebrate at the Annual Mass. As soon as inquiries began to be made it became apparent that the new Cardinal remembered Scalan very well indeed. In conversation after a meeting of the Catholic Education Commission, he spoke to a group which included Jim Conroy (an incomer from London as head of the Religious Education Department in St Andrew's College Bearsden) about the remoteness of the site and the fact that Scalan was successor college to the one at Loch Morar. Later, on a visit to Aberdeen in connection with the University's Quincentennial celebrations, the Cardinal Archbishop was heard to say that the Glasgow Archdiocese began with Scalan.

So various people have been following up the suggestion made in the last issue, and none more than TJ's old friend 'Johnny Cope'. The pair have been in touch over the operation of the one and the 70th birthday of the other. Mgr Copland was able to add some detail about the Winning family's Tomintoul holiday of 1945, when Mr Winning, a miner not a hillwalker, got his 'Scalan knee'. From phone conversations with his secretary Sister Veronica in the Clyde Street offices beside St Andrew's Cathedral (built by Bishop Andrew Scott, who was at Scalan) it became apparent that the Cardinal really wanted to come. However he is to be in Kent on Saturday 1 July (talking to the Archbishop of Canterbury?) which made it seem unlikely that he would be with us at the Scalan Mass.

Now he *is* coming, and 'making his own travel arrangements'. Memories returned of Archbishop O'Brien touching down at Pluscarden in a friend's helicopter. Nothing so dramatic need be expected on 2 July: as John Gallacher's story on p. 10 shows, an airborne landing by the Archbishop of Glasgow would probably need help from Sandy Matheson's tractor. When Pope John Paul arrives in new country he is known for the symbolic act of kissing the ground. Since one of Cardinal Winning's strongest Scalan memories from fifty years ago is 'the wonderful taste of the Crombie Burn', a more suitable act of homage would be to take a drink from the

Bishop's Well.

Rob Roy

Bill Sharkey of Aberdeen has drawn attention to the fact that Rob Roy was assisted on his death bed by the rites of the Roman Catholic Church. He takes mild exception to the fact that this did not come through in the film, although the director may have felt that Liam Neeson and Jessica Lange running towards each other in slow motion, Hollywood-style, made for a happier ending. Bill is right though, and not just about this particular member of the outlawed clan. Closer to Scaln than the Braes of Balquhider, Calum McGregor of Dalfad and Ballater was complained of by the Presbytery of Kincardine O' Neil to the Kirk's General Assembly:

'Calam Griersone, alias M'Grigor, of Baladar, papist, frequently resetts popish priests ... The said Calam was leatly building a chapel for them, erected a very high crucifix on a little hill near to his house, to be adored by all the neighbourhood. He keeps always pub lick mass and popish conventickles in his house; and is such trafector that few or no protestants that become his tenants, or servants, escape being perverted by him. " The said Calam Griersone is a common mocker of God and religion ... In September 1701, at Alanchoich [Braemar] at a publick marriage feast before a great many people, after he had first ridiculed the protestant religion he next went to his knees' and with a loud voice uttered a deal of horrid blasphemie, pretending to personate protestant ministers in their prayers, and then fell a preaching, to the great astonishment of beholders.'

The crucifix was probably at Ardoch, high above the Gairnside road and across the river. There a ruined farmhouse marks the place where the Rev. Lachlan McIntosh died after 64 years in charge of the Glengairn mission. His Latin-inscribed gravestone, recently restored by the Aberdeen diocese, is in an old churchyard (reached through a farm) at Foot of Gairn. Along with its associated chapel at Corgarff, this combined mission lay immediately to the south of Glenlivet. The Rev. Charles McGregor of Banchory, Ballater and Braemar gets on very well with the Protestant ministers of Deeside, but he is proud to claim Calum McGregor as an ancestor. As a man of the theatre he will surely have seen 'Rob Roy'.

Wartime in the Braes

Isobel Grant

Granny Bochel had gone to Portsoy for a holiday to relatives and my mother had plenty work to do on the farm. Granny was away a fortnight, so a few days before her return, mother rushed a letter away to her in case she thought she was being neglected. My mother used to write when my sister Evelyn was already in bed between 11 p.m. and midnight, so (being tired) on the address she wrote 'Mrs Grant, Rosehall, Port Said' - but no Banffshire. And the boy that posted it on the way to school never looked at the mistake.

Granny was quite upset no letter or PC came, but my mother said 'I did write.' Three months later the letter arrived at Portsoy back from Port Said in Egypt - went all the way there and back for a penny-halfpenny stamp. I suppose when they realised the postmark was in Scotland they tried perhaps Port Gordon then Portsoy. Granny had to laugh that her letter had gone around the world.

My mother had a letter returned from the censor when she wrote to John Emmett in Changi Prison Camp because she said she hoped they were being as well treated as Italian prisoners in the Braes. The Italians were so delighted when Italy came over to our side in the war. They went around all the scoops at the back of the farms, got a piece of bicycle at one place, then another, and got a bicycle going around the road. I remember how proud they were when they could even walk down the road.

The camp was in Banff, and they came up on a lorry every weekday to cut down trees for mining props in Tomvoan Wood. When it rained they downed tools and went in the hut to make coffee. Father Murdoch thought they would be hungry (though they had sandwiches) and of course he could speak Italian and used to talk to them. He went to Easterton Farm opposite the chapel and offered to pay for a bag of potatoes so that they could boil them in the hut. Mr Matheson gladly gave him them, but of course refused any pay.

If the boys were well behaved some were allowed to live out round the farms, and we had one at the Bochel. My sister was at home in wartime and she cooked him plenty macaroni. He used to help us in the harvest field on the way from work. The prisoners always made us taste their tea before they drank it. I think they must have been told that we might try to poison them when they were the enemy. We had to laugh. Of course they were all Catholics and came to Mass on Sunday.



Scalan: the Next Stage

Ann Dean

When one crosses the bridge over the Crombie Water and gets close to Scalan how handsome the building now looks sturdy and simple in its hidden setting. The sense of dereliction which surrounded the building, felt particularly when the rain lashed down and a gale was blowing - that has gone, to be replaced by one of indomitable strength, a settling down for at least another two hundred interesting years.

But Scalan restored is still the old Scalan that drew people like a magnet. It is still wrapped around' with silence, simplicity and holiness, with an almost tangible sense of its extraordinary history during the eighteenth century.

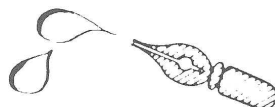
Now the restoration of the interior of the building is being considered, and the problem is how to carry this out and still retain Scalan's special aura or mystique. It has been suggested that, using archive material as a guide, Scalan could be furnished and decorated as a faithful reproduction of the seminary. There could be life-size figures of the boys and their masters, perhaps even Bishop Hay and Bishop Geddes, for this can be done so skilfully now.

Following this idea, Scalan would become a museum, with a curator or guide permanently there at opening times. At the other extreme it has been proposed that, after the restoration of all the plaster and woodwork, Scalan should be left absolutely empty, just as people have been used to viewing it for fifty years at least.

The first suggestion would turn Scalan into yet another attraction on the tourist trail and seriously run the risk of destroying its unique historical and religious significance. The second proposal - to maintain the status quo does seem rather defeatist and unimaginative after all the work and effort that has already been expended on the building. Why not a carefully thought out compromise - one which will not endanger Scalan's treasured qualities (nor require the presence of a curator) but which will nevertheless inform visitors, in an unobtrusive way, of the history of the college?

How could this be done? The purpose and history of rooms, during the seminary period and after, could be written up and framed in each room. A simple bench might be a comfort for those who like to sit and ponder, or just rest. A black and white sketch, done professionally and placed in each room, might also be helpful: informative, visual, but not distracting. The interesting samples of original paintwork and wallpaper which have been discovered could also be discreetly protected and maintained.

In this way Scalan could share its history without losing its special character. But perhaps members of the Association have their own ideas and



Readers Write

In describing last year's Scalan Mass readers were asked to identify the unknown Ethiopian priest who

concelebrated with ten others. Part of the answer came in the form of a bulletin from Fr Jock Dalrymple's parish of Leslie in Fife. There it was explained that Fr Haddish was studying for a degree in pastoral theology at the Ethiopian College in Rome (did you think there was only a Scots College?) and was over here last summer because of a contact, made during the famine, with a German nurse called Marianne Arndt. She is now at St Andrews University and was at Scalan in July, as the following letter from Mrs Biddy Gray of Glenrothes makes clear:

I was present at the 1994 Annual Mass and realised that Fr Haddish was the priest coming to look after St Mary's (Leslie) for Fr Jock during his summer holiday, so after the Mass I went and spoke to him. The incredible thing was that the German nurse Marianne Arndt (whom I had never met) approached me before Mass to ask if she could sit in the space beside me, and to look after her coat while she went to look for friends. Fr Haddish was with us for six or seven weeks and was delightful. We all grew to love him very much.

My connection with Scalan began in the early seventies when I stayed in a cottage in the village at the foot of Glenlivet with Valentine and Cecilia Kilbride, who had lived there before the War, once when they were up for a holiday. I also visited Tomintoul with Victor Gaffney and family in subsequent years, and have been drawn back to Scalan time and again.

As the following letter shows, a knock on the door of the chapel house at Braes of Glenlivet may find the editor at home. It has become a wonderful place to retreat to - much could be said.

I met you last September when I was visiting Chapeltown with my cousin Ian and his wife Phyllis. You kindly let us through the chapel house to visit the inside of the church. Ian paid my subscription, and I really enjoyed *Scalan News*. I first visited the Scalan in 1946 with my father, who would be delighted to know that there was such interest in its history and restoration.

I'm enclosing a couple of photos.

You may well have the one of the Scalan, which is in a booklet I have on the Abbe Paul Macpherson written by Rev. D. McRoberts. The other photo is of a candlestick which was supposed to have belonged to Abbe Paul and has been handed down through my family as such.

I visited Lena Stuart in September.

She went to college at Craiglockhart in Edinburgh which was a sister institution to Queen's Cross in Aberdeen. She taught me there, and she and her father were also friends of my family. I would really like to meet up with Fr Copland. He sent me a lovely letter when I wrote to him a couple of years ago. I did call at the house but he was out.

Maggie Ridout (Macpherson), London

Mgr Copland, who is of course President of the Scalan Association, had an operation earlier this year. He convalesced with his sister in Devon and was back at the chapel house in Keith by Easter.

The next letter is from a member of the Dominican community of Blackfriars in the Chaplaincy Centre which serves Edinburgh University.

Could it be drawn to the attention of pilgrims (in a car, who come from the right direction and have time to make a detour) that the pre-Reformation kirkyard of St Peter beside the Deveron - a few miles west of Huntly - is the burial place of Father Patrick Primrose OP, whose remains were interred there early in 1672? Of course there is no way of identifying the grave, since the 'superstitious monument' was demolished by an order of the Privy Council dated 4 March 1672, but the site certainly deserves a visit (on a fine day) ..

On a visit to Banff some years ago, I left a note at their request with the then proprietors of what was Rose's Temperance Hotel in my youth, but had been renamed the Dunvegan Hotel (by Macleods presumably) about its being the site of the tolbooth where Fr Primrose was incarcerated. They thought it would interest visitors from Glasgow but I don't know if it did.

The story of Fr Primrose is in Anthony Ross's article in volume xxiii of the *Innes Review*.

Fergus Kerr OP, Edinburgh

The article was also published separately in 1962 as 'The Dominicans in Scotland in the Seventeenth Century'. Fr 'Primarosa' (as inscribed on the base of his chalice) appears to be linked through the rose symbol with two Catholic sites: Beldorney Castle, quite close to his burial place, and the recently demolished Putachie House in Turriff. This belonged to the Conn family from which came a papal ambassador to the London court of Charles I. Fr Patrick must surely have taken the name Primrose 'in religion', since the Dominican Order of Preachers is

closely identified with the Rosary.

'Peterkirk' was one of the places to which the priest Gilbert Blackhall travelled on circuit from his base at Aboyne Castle in the 1640s. Presumably it was in this period of Bosnian-style civil war that the building was destroyed by fire:

Blackhall's mass was said at 'the brunt kirk of Strathboggie' as well as in 'the Rawes', i.e. the rows of houses which made up Huntly town. Blackhall's services were not needed for the Marquis of Huntly's family and retainers in the castle because they had a Jesuit (whom he seems to accuse of neglecting the poorer people outside the walls) but he did attend the mansion of Cairnborrow, a mile or two from the riverside ruin of Peterkirk.

Here follows a contribution from a particular friend of the newsletter, who also sent a much-appreciated contribution towards its production costs.

My daughter Alison, the 12th and last of the brood, prepared the enclosed map of the Tomintoul area for her wedding. As the Church of St Michael was then out of use (rot!) she asked to be married in the church once ministered to by her G. G. G. Grandfather Alex Tulloch before the Disruption. *[This is the Disruption of 1843, when many Presbyterians left the Established Church of Scotland to set up the Free Kirk.]* In these cecumenical days, with the (Icelandic!) C. of S. minister in cahoots with the P. P. (Fr Stewart) no problem! So a wedding Mass was said in old Tulloch's original kirk. He lay some twenty yards from his descendant's Papist Mass. I have little doubt he now approves, and could well have done so in the 1800s. T. has always practised cecumenism, partly out of distaste for 'English' behaviour!!

Ecclefergan - Canon Smyth's suggestion - is the old kirk's name now. *[This is the original C. of S. building, now 'a prayer room where mass has been celebrated on occasion' - ScN6.]* I have made it over to a Trust of which my son Neil and daughter Nadine are chairman and secretary / treasurer for some ten other trustees - family and friends. They look after it well.

A. T. MacQueen, Pitkerro

Thank you for sending me back numbers of the Scalan newsletter. As a history teacher (now retired) I have found the *Innes Review* very helpful in the past, but had the strange notion that it was no longer in existence till I saw your advertisement of it in *Scalan News* No. 1, so it is interesting to find you are the editor of both periodicals. I have been doing a little research on the link between the West Highlands and the North of Ireland (Gaelic-speaking) and found them very helpful.

Elizabeth Howat RCSJ, Dalkeith

In later correspondence Sister Howat has helped the editor to make a start with research into the achievement of her own history lecturer, the deviser of the Scottish Room (now at Kilgraston) Mother Forbes of Craiglockhart. Sister is wheelchair-bound but managing to make herself useful. She has also enabled information to be forwarded to Dr Mark Goldie, who wrote in Scalan News about his forebear George Goldie, the church architect. It concerns the Lady Altar in St David's Dalkeith and some noble ladies who became sponsors to Mr Goldie.

The May issue of the Innes Review is particularly helpful for links between Ireland and Scotland. The first two articles concern Adomnan, the biographer of St Columba, and Irish priests in the Highlands in the early eighteenth century. The other two major articles are 'Scalan Reconstructed: Architectural and Documentary Evidence' by Ann Dean and Michael Taitt (18 pages, including drawings and plans, as advertised on the back page of our last issue); and also an article of considerable human and historical interest by Ian Stewart, who is a member of the Scalan Association, entitled 'Teacher Careers and the Early Catholic Schools of Edinburgh'.

Some members took advantage of the offer to purchase that single issue for £7 (including postage) and it may still prove possible to do so - as stocks last - by sending a cheque to SCRA to the Treasurer: Dr Laura Cochran, 9 Armadale Crescent, Balbeggie, PERTH PR2 6EP. Consideration is being given to the creation of an illustrated booklet out of the 'Scalan Reconstructed' paper. This would be available in years to come to the growing number of people with an interest in the restored seminary, and could be a joint publication of the Scottish Catholic Historical Association and the Scalan Association.

The two bodies came into being soon after the War (ours first, by a short head) with Mgr David McRoberts, editor of the Innes Review for seventeen years, involved in the setting up of both. It has been a privilege for this editor to be involved in two very different kinds of desk-top publishing since 1991, but his term of office at the scholarly end of things has now come to an end. This should mean a more single-minded focus on Scalan News

and 'all that pertains thereto' ..

The Scalan Walk

Priscilla Gordon-Duff

I thought that readers might be interested to know about the work I have been doing for the Crown Estate in the Braes of Glenlivet and, specifically, around Scalan. About three years ago I was asked by the Glenlivet Development Committee to conduct a study in the Braes, talking to those who live there about farming life in the 1930s. I did this, and presented a report on my findings, suggesting that the material might be used in articles, talks and possibly information leaflets.

As a result some of the work appears in the Cultural Tourism book produced by the Robert Gordon University's Heritage Unit. I have given talks to the Moray Centre of the National Trust and to other groups, and very soon a leaflet is to be produced. This leaflet will be on sale at tourist information offices, and at the Glenlivet Estate Office and Information Centre in Tomintoul.

The aim of the leaflet is to enable those visiting the area to have a greater understanding of the landscape. It centres on Scalan, describing a route from Eskmulloch car park past the Seminary, through Clash of Scalan and past Larrievary to return to the car park. There are excellent illustrations by Alan Paterson of Duff town.

The text is based on the memories of those I interviewed, most of whom still live in the Braes. It is hoped this will increase the enjoyment of visitors, as they learn how the land was farmed when nearly every house in the area had a reeking lum. As the leaflet points out, the land continues to be managed; while scenically beautiful, this is still very much a place where people live and work.

I hope some readers will buy the leaflet so as to add another dimension to their visits to the Braes. Of course I am very new to Scalan, and am always pleased to hear of the work of others in the area and to learn more myself.

Scalan, August 1965

John S. Gallacher

A mild and overcast early August afternoon. Wending down from Scalan to Eskmulloch with a message for Annie I became vaguely aware of black Angus calves congregated about the gate on Starry Hillock - or was it crows?

Nearer approach revealed a priestly posse, some fifteen strong, guessing the spring on Sandy's wee humans' gate. [*The spring-loaded green gate for humans is to the left, approaching Scalan, of the larger gate for vehicles and animals.*]

You could not but note the person of Archbishop James Donald Scanlan of Glasgow, formerly Bishop of Motherwell, of which Cathedral I was a parishioner.

Further down came a tragi-comic sight. In the glaur of a wet summer a black Mercedes was immovably bogged down. Despite the efforts of sundry clerics, including the Rector of Blairs shoes and socks discarded and trousers

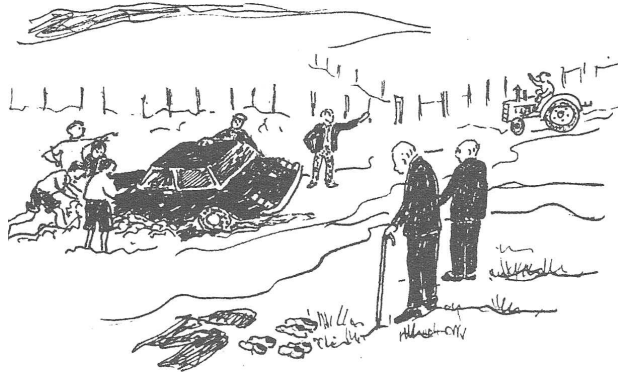
knee-high - the vehicle remained steadfast in the slough of despond. I walked back to Scalan and returned with Sandy and his trusty tractor. This retrieved the situation and vehicle.

Back at Scalan, the walking party included Cardinal Theodore Heard, Scots-born but Rome-based, making a farewell visit to his native land. From their respectable 'cairry-oot' Sandy and I were each proffered, in gratitude, a bottle of beer by the neck - spirits being the preserve of prelates.

The entries of the Cardinal and the Archbishop were circled in the visitors' book by myself - the former's in a thin and frail script (he was an old man, soon to die) the latter's in bold black lettering.

After due homage and further convivial confabulation the party departed in high good spirits, two to their rescued limousine and the rest, presumably, to more mundane machines.

The whereabouts of the old visitors' books (along with who took them away and why) remains a mystery. They were better where they were.



Inquiry of a member of the Scalan Association who has Blairs connections reveals that the Rector in question was Fr Daniel Boyle, Cambridge-educated and regarded by students and staff alike as 'a very intellectual person'. Before Blairs he had been in charge of the Royal Scots College at Valladolid and after it he became Rector of the Scots College Rome.

Out of the same inquiry emerged the answer, at least in part, to John Gallacher's closing appeal. The Reverend gentleman (whose anonymity is meantime guaranteed for fear of JG's wrath) took two completed visitors' books of the 1970s to Blairs for safe keeping, and thinks he will be able to lay hands on them in the presbytery he now occupies.

There used to be a joke about the Celtic footballer Charlie Tully, who kept turning up and being recognised in unlikely places - so famous that when he appeared on the balcony of St Peter's in the Vatican people said 'Who's that with Charlie Tully? In much the same way Isobel Grant has a habit of being where the action is (she got close to the balcony of Buckingham Palace during the recent VE Day celebrations) and, as it turns out, she was 'there', in John Gallacher's story - although not fully aware of the scale of the clergy invasion or the plight of the archiepiscopal limousine:

I was at the Scalan with Christopher my nephew, sitting in Sandy's house the day Cardinal Heard and two other priests visited the College. They had the car away in a field. Did it rain! We waited a while, and when the rain didn't stop away we went. I have never got home so quickly - we rushed along! Christopher wanted us to go into Eskmulloch but I was so wet I didn't want to stop. As soon as we got in the house the rain stopped. I remember Cardinal Heard died in Rome soon after. He was very tall and old.

'This Monkish Hovel'

The Rev. Alexander Geddes, author of 'The Book of Zaknim' and much else, built Tynet for his mission of Auchenhallrig while earning a reputation (later international) as a biblical scholar which caused the University of Aberdeen to honour him with a doctorate. Dr Mark Goldie, who gave a lecture on Alexander Geddes to a conference of the Scottish Catholic Historical Association on 3 June, supplied the following dismissive account of Geddes's education at Scalan. It was written in 1804 by an anonymous reviewer, in 'The Edinburgh Review', of Mason Good's biography.

From the care of this village matron he passed into that of a private tutor retained in the family of the gentleman on whose estate his father resided: and afterwards he was removed from home to Scalan, a free Roman-Catholic seminary established in a remote and dismal valley of the Highlands of Scotland ... Few of our readers, we presume, have ever heard of this humble cradle of the sciences; and it probably derives its strongest claim to fame from having detained young Geddes till his twentyfirst year, when he was transferred to the Scottish College at Paris. If his biographer be correct in supposing that the course of classical study pursued at Scalan did not extend beyond the vulgar Latin version of the Scriptures [*he was far from correct, as Dr Goldie has shown*] it may be regarded as a striking indication of the native and irrepressible vigour of his own mind that he should have emerged from this monkish hovel with so decided a bent towards the pursuit of liberal knowledge as he now discovered. In the most celebrated schools of Paris ... he attracted the applause and the friendship of his masters and literary superiors.

Book Review

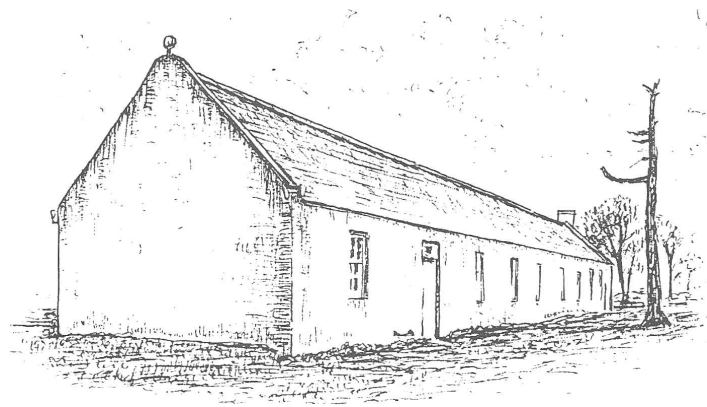
Donald Findlay, *Banffshire Churches*, published in 1994 by the Banffshire Field Club at £2.50. ISBN 0 9524239 0 1.

Donald Findlay, a member of the Scalan Association who comes from Craigellachie, is a church historian working in England. But he is knowledgeable, too, about his roots, and his publication on Banffshire churches is both timely and welcome. Though Banffshire may not boast great medieval monuments such as Pluscarden Abbey or Elgin Cathedral, 'nobody who visits the churches [of Banffshire] ... could fail to be impressed by their glorious settings, by their witness, however humble, to centuries of living faith and by their vital place as markers in stone and mortar of the history of this fascinating area.'

Donald Findlay takes the subject through from the Middle Ages to the end of the 19th century, setting the buildings against their historical background and covering the various denominations. It can easily be read from beginning to end or dipped into as a guide to a specific building. *Banffshire Churches* is pleasantly and accurately illustrated by various local artists: author, illustrators and the Banffshire Field Club are to be congratulated on its production.

Elizabeth Beaton

", .



The book is extremely good value at £3.50 including packaging and posting, and can be obtained either from J. D.

~. Yeadon's Bookshop, 86 South Street,

| Elgin IV 30 1BF, or by writing to Monica Anton, Shieldaig, Sandyhill Road, Banff AB45 1BE. She is Secretary of the Banffshire Field Club, and has recently been supplied with a set of our back numbers when taking out a subscription to the Scalan Association.

Members may not know about this learned local history society with an outgoing approach. Its Transactions, bound on the shelves of several libraries, go back to 1885 and are similar to those of the Buchan Field Club and the Deeside Field Club - does anyone know if 'field clubs', so called, are a phenomenon limited to North-east Scotland? At any rate there would seem to be possibilities of co-operation

between the two societies in what used to be known as Upper and Lower Banffshire. Perhaps we will reach the stage of having Scalan field trips other than walking over from the Well of the Lecht, that is. Incidentally, Scalan News is also available in Aberdeen's Central Public Library, but back numbers have not been bound as yet.

The two drawings reproduced from Donald Findlay's book are the work of Douglas Summers of Cullen who provided most of the illustrations. They have been chosen to make the contrast, always evocative, between the humble 'Banffshire Bethlehem' (as Peter Anson called it) of St Ninian's Tynet (1757) and St Gregory's Preshome (1788) which was for a while the largest Catholic church in Britain outside the foreign embassies of London.



Mill of Smithston

More information has emerged about the mass-centre which featured in Mary Harding's account of Andrew Oliver, the mature student at Scalan who found his true vocation with the Augustinian nuns at Douai (*ScN* 9). Readers will recall that the convert clergyman was moved from Aberdeen because of friction with local Presbyterians and left Mill of Smithston in poor health, frustrated that he had only been able to make five or six converts. In Christine Johnston's 'Secular clergy of the Lowland District, 1732-1829' (*IR*, May 1983), where mission stations are listed, we read MILL OF SMITHSTON: See Strathbogie, then STRATHBOGIE:

Glenrinnnes, Mortlach, Huntly, Mill of Smithston. This suggests that a priest in full health could live in Huntly and serve other stations - as Canon Lewis McWilliam does today. It also puts Mill of Smithston alongside the neighbouring missions of Glenlivet 'and the Cabrach,

As you descend the Cabrach road towards Rhynie the farm sign Mains of Lesmoir marks the spot, across the road from the former castle of the Gordons of Lesmoir. There is hardly a trace of it now. It featured at the end of the Montrose campaigns when a garrison of the Irish troops who did so much to create a Scottish hero were shot outside the walls in 1645. The same happened at Huntly. The Gordons of Lesmoir became the Gordons of Mill of Smithston, a mile or two to the east - a process of humbling papist gentry which can be seen all over North-east Scotland. A Jesuit of the post-Reformation period went from there to become a considerable scholar in Toulouse, Bordeaux \ and Paris. A secular priest was responsible for the Huntly mission (including his family home) between 1741 and 1761, when he died. Both were called John Gordon.

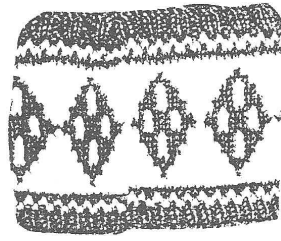
That period covers the Jacobite Rising of 1745 and the hard times of repression after Culloden. In a letter from Captain Robert Stewart to the Episcopalian Bishop Forbes, who collected evidence for posterity, we read: 'The following is a summary of certain desolations made betwixt the rivers of Spey and Dee in the year 1746 ... *[A selection follows. The whole list may seem worth reproducing on another occasion.]* In Glenlivet, Bowchell Halt and Scallan, the whole houses; John Gordons in Clashnoir his dwelling house, the house and Chapple at Tombae ... In Kineathmont, the miller's house of Miln a Smiston all burnt.'

A brief visit failed to uncover any information on previous burnt buildings and the only person to speak to, a boy from the farm, knew nothing of the place's change of use. But (as the Auchindoun's Cairn episode demonstrated) brief visits are never enough. As at Scalan, we know that physical destruction failed to stop the saying of mass. Long before Andrew Oliver's time there in the 1770s, a priest called Alexander Forrester was 'in hiding' at Mill of Smithston in 1748 and the following year. A convert from Cromarty, Forrester spent most of his priesthood in Uist. He was imprisoned after the defeat of the Rising but released and allowed to go to France by way of Holland. He seems to have been on his way back to the Outer Hebrides, defying his exile, because in 1749 he was back in Uist. Despite his Lowland-sounding name Forrester must have had Gaelic. It would be interesting to know how well the language survived at this time in the high lands from Glenrinnnes to Mill of Smithston.

By their Jerseys ...

Colette McCafferty came forward with some interesting information at a meeting in Huntly this year. She has Barra connections, and was able to add a Catholic dimension to the well-known fact that fishermen can be identified, even when drowned, by their jerseys. An article published nearly twenty years ago in the magazine of what was then Aberdeen College of Education explains that each jersey had its own distinctive yolk representing the home. Although the knitting patterns were not written down they passed from mother to daughter. Parallel rows of plain stitches on purl form steps to the home, leading up to the middle of the lower part jersey.

Parallel zig-zags represent the waves. Other patterns represent ropes: anchor, cable and herring bone.



What Colette was able to add, from stories heard and the investigations of her late husband, was that the house where mass would be celebrated was passed on, from the priest to all who were in on the secret, by the householder *wearing his jersey inside out*. The MacNeillaids of Barra renounced their Catholicism late in the 18th century, so the people had to be careful even there. This was before the period of chapels and chapel-houses, and priests lived with families in turn.

It is reminiscent of an incident which took place in Lewis in the late 17th century. The Mackenzies under the Earl of Seaforth brought an Irish priest to the island, Cornelius Coan from the Sorbonne, and among the converts he made were fisherman. Local ministers were pleased to record the failure of his attempt to produce a miraculous catch by blessing their nets and sprinkling them with 'holy water'.

Then William of Orange landed at the other end of the kingdom, the Catholic James II and VII fled to France, and Coan found himself marooned on a desert island in the North Atlantic. As a result of this major political event down south the Isle of Lewis rejected Rome later, under its enthusiastic Free Church (admired by Cardinal John Henry Newman), in a very fundamental way. The relevant point, however, is that these fishermen were described as turning their coats inside out as a sign of conversion. This generates interesting thoughts about the origin of 'turncoat', inside-outness, and Catholicism in the Outer Hebrides.

The following song was written down by Bill Grant, now of Nether Clashnoir, in 1934. As a very young man not long out of Chapeltown school Bill was a regular and appreciative listener. It shows how songs were 'made' for local people before television took over, when men gathered in the back of the Shop because there was no licensed public house in the Braes. Here 'local people', as in few other areas where songs were in Scots, knew all about confession to a priest.



Oh good Reverend Father, forgive me my past.

I'm again gettin' menit, this time it's the last.

They say I'm gey auld, but then sir Oh Hell!

In matters like that, I'm the best judge masel'.

A lassie is only the age she reveals.'

A man is just as young as he feels. Besides, I've a motive that's worth

recognising,

And when I explain there'll be no criticising.

There's a surplus a' bachelors in oor little glen,
 A' specimens grand 0' eligible men, But it just taks a widower tae mak' them courageous,
 For marriage, they say, is aften contagious.
 Noo aff 0' me they micht tak their cue. There'll be some excitement - and a jobbie for you.
 The death rate is rising, the birth rate decreasing.
 Tae alter the fact we must get in position.
 So fix me secure and let me aff cheap. The money's hard to get and it's harder to keep.
 Young lads may lauch at me takin' the sample,
 Bit then sir (oh Hell!) they'll tak my example.
 Noo since to you I've my conscience laid bare,
 You'll just say a mass, and breathe a short prayer.
 Think it's good spunk 0' us twa gaun thegither.
 I'll wager there's lots wad like tae be taidier.

Chambers's Scots Dialect Dictionary: 'taider' (or tether) means married.

Folklore from the Archive

Rhona Talbot

What follows is taken from two letters written by an archive assistant in the School of Scottish Studies at 27 George Square in Edinburgh. The School, now part of the University, was largely the creation of Hamish Henderson shortly after the War, and he was one of those who went about country districts recording old songs and stories so that they would not be lost.

It took me some time to react to the request for information which came in January (the Archive has been busy) but I was eventually able to search for material on Glenlivet. Hamish Henderson's collecting in this area was mainly done in the 1950s and mostly of songs. There are however some tapes which give details of how people lived. One in particular is from 'Granny Bochel' (Mrs Annie Grant), who was 102 years old at the time of the recording in 1954. This tape has details of the old lady's life as well as information about the area. Her son George Grant is also on tape with more family history and some songs. The other informants we have on file are Sandy Irvine, Adam Lamb (who talked on a range of local subjects) and Robbie Lamb.

Anyone interested in making use of this material would need to come and listen to the tapes, only a few of which have been transcribed. It is possible to photocopy the typescripts we have at IOp a sheet. Usually we charge for copying tapes, but if some member of the Scalan Association were prepared to do some transcribing we could probably come to an arrangement. We are held by copyright, of course, both for photocopies and the tapes themselves. It can be quite a lengthy business tracing informants but I am sure Hamish Henderson would be willing to help.

Bill Grant, song-collector, remembered this project reaching the Braes. Inquiry was made first through Professor Sandy Fenton, who has just retired from the School but is still active round the corner in the European Ethnological Research Centre. Both he and Dr Margaret Mackay, who took over as Director, were interested to hear about the Scalan Association. The School is now signed up as a member, with back numbers to encourage ethnologists to become Glenlivet-minded.

On a visit in May staff showed every courtesy. Although Rhona Talbot was on holiday (and Dr Bruford the Archivist had recently died) Ian Fraser was able to show, from card indexes, that Adam Lamb in particular had recorded stories going back to the whisky smugglers and beyond that to Jacobites in Glenlivet. They are on tape,

and if any member of the Association (living in or near Edinburgh) could find time to go in and transcribe them we would probably find ourselves looking at another rich source of information.

More immediately (at the end of June) there is a conference-cum-ceilidh in Benbecula with Hamish Henderson invited to talk about Jacobite songs - a chance to speak to him about Scalán News before coming back for the Mass.

T ombae and Scalán:

Status Animarum

Alasdair Roberts

A thick leather-bound volume has been preserved at St Michael's Tomintoul, its foolscap paper of prime quality. Near the end, in explanation of some deeply serrated edges and referring to his predecessor, the Rev. Kenneth Mackenzie has written: 'Fr. Alex. Bennett told me these pages were eaten by rats in the chapelhouse!' On its spine, inscribed by the bookseller I. Forsyth of Elgin in a way which reflects the first clergyman's solemn sense of purpose, are the words *Status Animarum*, R. C. *Glenlivet*. As the penal laws against Scottish Catholics were relaxed, clergy began to keep more formal records of baptism, marriage and death. In the 19th century it also became customary to write down the names of those receiving the sacraments of communion, confession and confirmation, and the book presents this 'state of souls'.

An opening paragraph introduces the priest who built the Tombae chapel: 'The Revd. James Gordon Missionary Apostolic after serving the Roman Catholic Congregation Huntly from 1st April to 26th June 1812 and officiating for about 3 weeks occasionally in Brechin, Edinburgh, Glasgow and serving the Roman Catholic Congregation Paisley from 23rd July to October 5th succeeded the Revd. Alexander Paterson Missionary Apostolic for upwards of 18 years in Glenlivet - 11th October 1812.' A convert to Catholicism, James

John Gordon was 28 years of age and came from Forfar. A letter to his mother in Brechin, written a year before this careful listing of early duties, has him a student at Aquhorties and describing the burial of Bishop Hay.



Now ordained, he followed a man whose qualities had been recognised early when he returned to Scalán with students driven from Douai by the French Revolution. Glenlivet was Paterson's first charge, and his last was in Edinburgh as Bishop of the Eastern District.

It was obviously an occasion of great pride and significance when Alexander Paterson returned on 15th November 1818 as coadjutor Bishop of Cybistra (based at Paisley and sharing responsibility for the Lowland District of which, because of Scalán, Glenlivet was part) to confirm the area's young adults: 'High Mass (probably for the first time in this country since the era of the pretended Reformation) was celebrated by the Rt. Revd. Dr. Paterson assisted by the Revd. George Mathison, Mis. Ap. Tynet Enzie who officiated as Deacon. The Revd. George Gordon Mis. Ap. Keithock Achindoun was SubDeacon, the Rev. Donald Carmichael Mis. Ap. Cults near Tomintoul Strathavon was Thuriferarius and the Revd. James John Gordon acting Master of Ceremonies.' Those confirmed numbered 29 males and 65 females - see the latter end of this article on what sociologists would call 'gender imbalance'.

James Gordon's mission extended 14 miles from south to north, from the solidly Catholic homes around Scalán to Corriehabbie facing Ben Rinnes, half way to Duff town and 'Achindoun'. This was a mixed area. The year before his death Gordon reported to Bishop Kyle that there were about 400 Catholics and 600 Protestants in 'the Lower District of Glenlivet'. In 1814 a grand total of

1,145 of those he believed to be Catholic was recorded by the new priest in the first of three mission censuses. The word is apt, since details of age, marital status, occupation and place of residence were entered, much as was to become standard in government censuses. In addition, at the head of columns ruled in ink as if for the purpose of celestial book-keeping, are the words Communicants, Confirmed, Confessed and Converts.

The chapel of 'Kynakyle' (several spellings for this head of the narrows but see the back cover map of 1864) stood on the right bank of the Livet, a mile or so up from Gordon's house at the foot of a bum called Altnabae. This seems to have been the preferred name for what became 'the Church of the Incarnation, Altnabae Glenlivet', both before and after the natural disaster which affected much of northern Scotland in 1828. It was a flash flood out of the 'allt', or rivulet, which swept away the chapel in the 'Muckle spate o' twenty-eight'. The Benedictine Odo Blundell found traces of it in the early years of this century but there is nothing there now.

In other circumstances that might have been regarded as a discouraging act of God, particularly when linked with the washing away of Catholic graves at Nevie Christ further down the Livet. But destruction of buildings was universal, and James Gordon had in any case already decided that his chapel, after almost fifty years of service, was in need of replacement - and by something much finer. The first due to his intentions appears after recording confessions for Quadragesima: 'No Lists have been here inserted in consequence of the absence of the Revd. James Gordon the Incumbent of Glenlivet who left Tombae 16th July 1826 on a charitable Mission to Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Paisley, Greenock - & Ireland, whence he returned on the 6th April 1827.'

An Irish priest based in Dundee, Constantine Lee, was one of four clergy who supplied during Gordon's fundraising tour. Lee was the first of his nation to appear in the Catholic Directory for Scotland, although Irish priests had been in Glenlivet much earlier to serve what was then a Gaelic-speaking population. The visiting priests were careful to keep records, but it was in the familiar hand of 'the Incumbent' that an ever-rising number of Easter communicants (394) was recorded for the period of his absence. Gordon left for a second tour in June 1828, by which time there was no longer any doubt that he was collecting 'funds for the erection of the New Chapel'. This time he added Dundee, Perth and New Abbey at Dumfries to his preaching stops in Scotland, and went on to Carlisle, Liverpool and Manchester before returning to Glenlivet on 8th January 1829. The Rev. James Gibbons of Dungannon (who does not appear in Canon Canning's record of Irish-born priests in Scotland, so presumably was a contact of the previous year) took charge at Tombae for six months.

The new chapel was opened at Claggan of Tombae on Candlemas Day

(2nd February) in the year of Catholic Emancipation, having been 'founded' two years before in 1827 with a first stone, as a particularly confident neoGothic expression of future success in the 'cure of souls'. Churches had a way of growing, however, and Mr Gordon made it clear that he still regarded Tombae as unfinished in 1841. The Church of the Incarnation had been 'erected to accommodate the 700 to 800 of the Catholic Population of all Glenlivet'. There was no lack of seats for a congregation with 205 adult communicants, supporting the priest by 'voluntary offerings of Seat Rent'. Still required, however, were male and female schools under Catholic teachers for the 70 boys and 76 girls between 5 and 20, to counter the influence of two 'Proselytising schools endowed'.



Much may be learned (family history people take note) from the lists of communicants recorded by name and place after confessing

Young and even middle-aged Catholics of today, encouraged by the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, usually go to communion whenever they are at mass; the more devout among older ones, brought up in what has come to be thought of as a traditional style, aspire to receive the eucharist on a daily basis. It may come as a surprise to both liberals and traditionalists to learn how rarely regular churchgoers received the sacrament ~n Glenlivet. Only those of considerable age and piety presumed to so on a majority of the eight principal feasts, and the most frequent communicants (showing an awareness of approaching death) benefited from the priest's sick calls *via viaticum*.

Leaving these general points aside, the *Status Animarum* which was kept at Tombae yields new knowledge of the relation between Scalán in the Braes of Glenlivet and what came to be a separate mission in 1829 as 'the Lower End', north of the Bochel. The Rev. James Sharp, the last rector of Scalán, remained there until 1808, nine years after the college closed, and we may presume that mass continued to be said by him in the chapel extension on ground level which is now a roofless ruin. What happened after he left? All that has been recorded in print about where mass was said in the period prior to the opening of Abbe Macpherson's church at Chapeltown (and that in a footnote, by Dom adolf Blundell) is that the Lettoch farmhouse of the Gordons of Minmore was used. The 1995 occupants were able to confirm (from previous owners, so oral tradition) that their kitchen was once a chapel.

[illegible]

Further scrutiny of the Tombae register shows that Easter Wednesday was the usual day for most of the Scalan .. 'residents' to fulfil their duties, and on a number of occasions (one of them shortly after Christmas) it is recorded • that communion was given where they lived. Scalan seems to be the only place where something like a modern housemass occurred. As early as 1819, when the first list of Easter communicants was drawn up, a group similar to that illustrated came forward led by Miss Helen Cameron, and it seems very likely that this was at Scalan though not recorded as such. Presumably the Rev. Cordon went to them at least once a year from

early in his incumbency, and spent an hour or so hearing confessions before saying mass in what had been the downstairs chapel. It seems likely (speculation once again) that what later became a shoemaker's house was already being used for non-religious purposes. A population of 43 was noted in the priest's census of 1822, higher than in seminary times, so accommodation was scarce. Could the chapel building have been home to 'Miss' Cameron, whose title indicates higher social status? Answers to questions may yet emerge from letters in the Scottish Catholic Archive in Edinburgh or its equivalent in Rome.

There is scope for another article about the people who lived at Scalán. It would show links with Abbe Macpherson's family and trace John Cummin back to his time as Bishop Hay's servant; also forward to his meeting in 1845 with James Stothert, who began the writing of a history which is still being uncovered. We may never be clear about where everybody was at Scalán, but there is evidence enough on the householders and those who lived with them. And the records of the *Status Animarum* can be extended through the censuses published from 1841 to 1891. Here we focus, finally, on one Scalán household and one near Tombae, in order to put the clerical emphasis on Catholic duties in wider perspective.

The schoolteacher has always been seen as right hand person to the priest, but both the men whom the Rev. James Gordon brought to the Braes were from non-Catholic families. The convert John Farquharson came from Tomintoul to teach at Nether Clashnoir and then Chapeltown. James Michie kept a school at Achnascraw before moving to Scalán as a farmer. He came from Glenbucket and his father (protected from Glenlivet's Catholicism by the Ladder Hills) was a Protestant. His mother had been Catholic, but of six children living with the widower in 1814 only James is recorded in the *Status Animarum* as having confessed and communicated. James Michie was born in 1779 and may well have studied at Scalán (at his mother's wish?) with first communion there in his teens as was normal. The registers from 1785 are lost, but where else would a boy from the top end of Glenbucket, singled out from his family, have received the education to teach a school for Catholic children?

He never married, and his sister came to keep house for him. She too became a Catholic: 'At Scalán on the 9th day of February 1826 Henriette Michie senior daughter of Henry J Michie and Janet Stuart More, the former Protestant the latter Catholic, residing while living at Badenyon Glenbucket, educated Protestant; abjured, Heresy and was received into the Holy Catholic Roman Church, a Member, in the presence of her brother James Michie, her niece - Clark, Margaret Geddes wife to Sergeant Thomas McPherson, Jean McPherson wife to James Stuart Dow, all residents at Scalán.' ¹ She appears in the records to 1829 as Henriette Michie 'senr.', so perhaps this niece was discovered to be a Michie of the same name. There is a gravestone at Chapeltown commemorating Henriette Michie who died in 1844 aged 63.

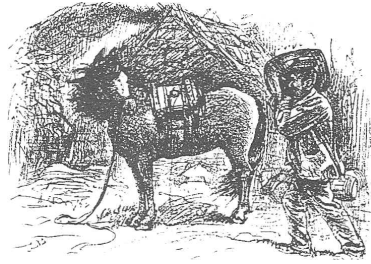
Her brother lived a further nine years as the same inscription shows. A boy who knew both of them was buried, much later, under their stone: Alexander Matheson, 1835-1897.

The reason for dwelling on the two Michies is that they cast some light on the question of men, women and Catholicism in Glenlivet. Here as elsewhere, the records indicate that women were more religiously inclined. Certainly they gave more support to the priest. In any given year the ratio of female to male communicants was about four to one, and even at Easter it approached three to one. The hand-written extract illustrates the imbalance, and even though other men and women went individually to the sacrament at Tombae the proportion is not affected.

The Michie household provides very particular evidence. Henriette became a frequent communicant along with Miss Cameron. Her brother appears to have lapsed - at least for a time - from an unusually high level of involvement. During the 1818-23 period of recorded *Communicantes et Confidentes* James Michie continued to behave like a school teacher, singing in the choir at Kynakyle (four men and eleven women in 1819) and communicating three times a year. After 1823, aged 44, he disappears from the *Status Animarum* except as one of the witnesses when his sister was received at Scalán.

1823 was the year when the Duke of Gordon signalled a new resolve to act against the many illicit whisky stills on his Glenlivet estate by steering a bill through Parliament in favour of larger, licensed distilleries. George Smith opened what became *the* Glenlivet Distillery at Upper Drummin, and slept with pistols by his bed for fear of the neighbours. The unlicensed majority of farmer-distillers, among them James Michie, were effectively criminalised by their landlord.

Now it may be that Michie was out of Glenlivet each year during the times of Easter duty until 1829 (when Braes names ceased to be entered) and at other feast days when he had come forward to the altar rail. This article is almost entirely based on the Tombae *Status Animarum*, and the Chapel town register (still to be consulted) will probably show the former schoolmaster in full communion with the Church during his latter years, for he is buried in the chapel yard. But at present it looks as if James Michie, farming at Scalán where the Whisky Road went over the hill to the Lecht (then south by Glengairn) became involved in what James Gordon was to condemn as 'that abominable traffic of driving the mountain dew'



By coincidence one destination was his mother's town of Brechin in Strathmore, where whisky was sold to supply the growing urban population of Scotland. The 'staple commodity of the country' was transported on ponies, each carrying four gallon 'ankers' and: led in a line. There is an account of the Glenlivet men riding up Brechin high street beating the empty barrels in triumphant tattoo, before heading north with consumer goods and cash from the crop. This was a period of prosperity for a poor upland area of Scotland, but legislation and policing brought it to an end by stages.

Even before the 1823 Act violent confrontations with customs officers ('gaugers') were common - both on this route and the Ladder Trail which went down Glenbucket past Badenyon. 410 gallons were seized in a clash near Inverurie in 1824, when shots were fired and horses killed. Clergy of all denominations condemned the 'wild life of the bothies' - so different from summers in the shieling pastures when people drank buttermilk. The curate who asked his priest, uncertain of the penance for a whisky smuggler, 'What will I give him?' ('Not more than a shilling a bottle') would have had a different answer from the Rev. James Gordon.

We know this because of a draft letter which has survived in the *Status Animarum* on the back of a list of first confessions. It dates from around 1820: 'Your nephew Paul Grant renewed his lease of Midtown Aghdrigny. Paul continued for the first two or three years after I came to Glenlivet to drive the staple commodity of the country to Strathmore. He met with many serious losses in that quarter: he had debts which he never received. These untoward circumstances bore hard on him after taking Midtown from John Stuart Bain, now in Linavoir. Soon after he abandoned that abominable traffic of driving the mountain dew and took his farm, he married a daughter of Marjory Thomson - an excellent, active and most virtuous young woman. The loss of several crops, the expenses of stocking his farm and the above losses exposed him to struggle with poverty ever since he became a farmer and husband. He conceives that you would, as far as your abilities admit, afford him some pecuniary aid by loan or otherwise. I can recommend him as a well behaved, sober and industrious man.'

The 1822 census shows Paul Grant married and farming at Midtown Achdrigny a mile or so to the east of Tombae. Along with his wife, he has confessed and communicated and they are the parents of a baby son. By the time of the third census in 1834 there were two more children, and the oldest son was confirmed by Bishop Kyle two years later; also another, named Paul after his father, in 1847. The Glenlivet whisky smuggler had reformed under the influence of a good woman - and a good priest. A Glengairn smuggler did the same and ended a priest himself, condemning strong drink. Priests and people, saints and sinners, men, women and children (for the teacher) - there is plenty in the leather-bound volume which calls to mind the 'state of souls'.

Had there been more space (there are already items in reserve for next issue) a full account might have appeared of Sandy Matheson's broken leg before Christmas, but Sandy shuns publicity (and none too pleased about the idea of his television coming via Rosehearty instead of Rosemarkief). He takes the view that the accident was 'nothing to do with the College', but as Grannie Bochel said to Isobel Grant, 'Scalan wouldn't be Scalan without Sandy.'

An excellent newsletter came through the door at Chapeltown in February, courtesy of Andy Wells the Glenlivet Estate Ranger based in Tomintoul. It detailed the many things which are being done to improve the area for walkers. A letter to the editor suggested direction posts for the Whisky Road, but this is not likely to happen before members meet at the Well of the Lecht at one o'clock on 2 July. *Preferred address for your letters, Chapelhouse, Chapeltown, Ballindalloch AB33 9DL.*

