

TODAY'S NEWS

Have I got old news for you?

BRIDGEND

1834

Honesty. A Lochwinnoch gentleman dropped a parcel of bank notes, which was immediately picked up by a boy and handed to him. Encouraged by his honesty he presented the boy with twopence halfpenny saying "it's a' the sma' change I have"

1836

A massive **silver basin** brought home by Captain Hunter, Lochwinnoch, on his last voyage from Lima, was presented to the Parish Church of Lochwinnoch.

1897

Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. Arrangements are well underway. Brass Band, Pipe Band. Athletics. Refreshments and buns will be served.

1898

Continued ...Shares in the **Lochwinnoch Angling Association** have been taken up. Capital is £1,500. Divided into 1500 ordinary shares of £1

To be continued @ pbthecairn



BRIDGEND BRIG. This is one over the Calder Water, a little distance northwest of the Town of Lochwinnoch. It is unquestionably of very considerable age, and much the oldest in the district. The lands which lie at the west end of it are called Bridgend, while those at the east end were at one time named Bridge-lands. The prior existence of a bridge here, whether the present structure or not, must have originated the name Bridgend; and we know that this name occurs in a Rental of the Abbey of Paisley as early as 1525. It is built of freestone, and consists of one arch. The masonry is excellent, and rather ornate. It is very narrow, not being more than 8 feet in breadth originally, and until widened several feet by the Road Trustees in 1814. Owing to the form of the arch, old people often call it the Bow Brig, and ascribe its erection to the Pechs

1886

Continued ...What has become of the **Lochwinnoch Water Supply Scheme?** I hear of Primrose Leaguers in the Parochial Board still acting as obstructionists - high price of land - land offered gratis and refused. What is kept back the introduction of good gravitational water to Lochwinnoch for so many years.

To be continued @pbthecairn

1836

A **highland servant** on a farm near Lochwinnoch was sent to cut some fern for bedding for the cattle. Unfortunately a bull in the field was a bit displeased. Using his scythe to defend himself when the bull came thundering toward him. The scythe went in one direction, he in another. The bull have split his enemies decided to attack the scythe. Sadly for the bull, the blade cut the sinews of his own leg and brought it to his knees. The servant seized the opportunity and made off.

"He who fights and runs away,
may live to fight another day"

1886**Early Hatching, Lochwinnoch**

Mr James Porteous, blacksmith has a hen of last year's hatching which had a brood of chickens, six in number, on 30th Jan. and notwithstanding the cold weather, all are doing well.

or Picts. Others say that it was erected by the Romans, or Romanised Britons of Strathclyde, within which kingdom, at one time, district it lies, because they think it is much the same with the bridge, said to be of Roman construction, over the Duntocher Burn at Kilpatrick, which is of two arches, each having a span of 12 feet, and being 8 feet in width. This bridge is said to have been on the line of road leading from the Roman Camp at Paisley, called Vanduara (Wen-dur), and also on that from Kilpatrick ford on the Clyde into Ayrshire.

Montgomerie, of Weitlands, Kilbarchan, and Schaw, of Greenock, writing in 1650, mentions this bridge. In Blaeu's Atlas, published in 1654,



it is delineated; and in a Charter by James VI of the Lordship of Paisley, in 1621, it is also referred to. It was the conjecture of old James Brodie that it was erected by order of the Regent Murray, when the lands and whole Barony of Bridgend were, from 1558 to 1573, in the hands of the Crown, by forfeiture of the owner, James Glen of Barr, who appeared at the Battle of Langside, in 1568, on the side of his lawful Sovereign, Queen Mary. But this conjecture must be dismissed as not well founded, from the name Bridgend having been given to the lands long before that period.

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LEAF OF LOCAL HISTORY

1870

Aid for the Wounded. Miss Graham and the ladies have been contributing linen and making bandages etc. for the Relief Fund for French and German wounded. The schools are working gratis for the same purpose

1879

4 Trowels Thief. Mr A Steel a bricklayer, residing in Lochwinnoch was found guilty of stealing 4 trowels. Having previous convictions he was sentenced to 12 months in prison

1821

Sale or Let. Boghead Mill

At present a cotton mill with dwelling houses and buildings. Good supply of water.

1898

Continued ... The formation of **Castle Semple Loch** into a trout-fishing area has been increased by the arrival of a couple of boats, but, so far, the erection of a boat-house and hatchery in a field at the side of the loch has not been begun. The cleaning out of the pike may prove a more formidable undertaking than the enterprising directors of the Angling Association think.

To be continued @ pbthecairn



The village of Lochwinnoch originally was nothing more than a few low thatched cottages clustered round the old church.

Its streets, or rather lanes, were narrow and confined, and, altogether, it had, according to the account given of it by the Rev. Jones Steven, who was settled as minister of the parish in 1773, "a very poor appearance." The aborigines were confined to a few families of very ancient origin, many of whose descendants still maintain "a local habitation" and a name in the parish even at the present day. These were the Orrs, Ewings, Glens, Barbour, Barclays, Brodies or Brydens, Fultons, Crawford, Aitkens, etc. among whom the Orrs and the Glens appear to be the most ancient. The name of Orr has long been



1886

Continued ...From time to time the question of supplying Lochwinnoch with **gravitation water** has bulked largely with a number of people in the village and surrounding districts, and now the Board of Supervision have brought the matter to a crisis. The ground of the proposed water tank has been surveyed, and on Tuesday Messrs. Haddock & Niven, engineers, showed a large number of the intending offerers for the contract over the proposed route. The principal reservoir is to be constructed on Gillsyard Farm. The proposed water scheme is said to be under £3000,

To be continued @pbthecairn

1876

In these days **feuds** between parishes, families and individuals were common. Even to this day the Kilbarchan people think that the inhabitants of Lochwinnoch either from jealousy or other cause, dislike Kilbarchan folk and this sometimes led to brawling at Kilbarchan Fairs and Markets.

1849**Cholera Lochwinnoch**

The disease has appeared here in a virulent form, chiefly amongst the operatives at the cloth mills. An elevated part of the town, known as Kildale, is the quarter most affected. This the first visitation cholera ever experienced in the village Lochwinnoch.

common to Renfrewshire, and particularly in the parish of Lochwinnoch.

The old "Kirktoon" of the parish is fast disappearing from the local site on which it stood for centuries. The recent extension of the "Auld Kirkyard" has almost entirely swept away the whole east side of the former clachan, only one solitary cottage being left on the way upwards to Johnshill. It is understood that this humble little dwelling is also doomed to destruction as soon as the intended arrangements can be made. But this "wee auld house" has a history still cherished as very dear to many not only at home, but also to others far away from the scene of early youth and pleasure.

Robert Orr, younger son of John Orr, who was laird of Midhouse in 1701, married "Elena," daughter of Robert Barclay, in Kirktoon. They were proclaimed for marriage in 1719. They had issue, sons and daughters. The youngest of the family was Janet Orr, baptised at Lochwinnoch Kirk in 1733. At this time, it appears, there were three families of Orrs in the Kirktoon, namely—Robert Orr, merchant; Robert Orr, tailor; and James Orr, smith, usually known as "Smithie Orr." They were all well-to-do in business, and had property in the "toon"

Part of Lochwinnoch, still called "The Factory Close," owed its origin to a weaving factory, small at first, but the present large building was erected in 1752, and was filled with looms and weavers for the manufacture of linen and cambric. Several skilled and experienced weavers were brought from Paisley to Lochwinnoch to carry out this new trade in the place. One of these was Matthew Burns, long and well-known afterwards both in Lochwinnoch and surrounding parishes as a dornick and damask weaver of first-rate abilities.

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Lochwinnoch early 1800's



1886

Through kindness, **Lady Elizabeth Lee Harvey** and the Rev. R Z Gilfillan was able to arrange for a dinner to the deserving poor on Christmas Day. The entertainment was given in the Court Hall where 100 adults and children were regaled with a substantial repast of roast beef, steak pie, mince and potatoes and plum pudding.

1877

Two eggs of unusually large dimensions were laid by two ducks belonging to Mr Thomas Orr of Belltrees, Lochwinnoch. They weighed 5 ounces each and 7 inches in length

1903

Continued ...The **Angling Club** have taken a 15 year lease on Castle Semple Loch and for a few years have been rooting out the pike and stocking the loch with Loch Leven trout.

To be continued @ pbthecairn

There is a post office in Lochwinnoch and there are carriers both to Glasgow and Paisley more than once a-week, besides carriers passing through the parish weekly to Greenock, Port-Glasgow, etc. For facilitating this intercourse, there are excellent turnpike roads and bridges in all directions. Fences are raised everywhere, and there are private roads, generally good, to every part of the parish that is inhabited. A stage coach passes twice a-day along the road between Beith and Paisley, about a mile south from the village of Lochwinnoch.

The course of a canal between Glasgow and Ardrossan, passing along the side of Castle Semple Loch, was marked off about thirty years ago, and the canal was actually made as far as Johnstone. But an Act of Parliament has been obtained to form a railroad throughout the same line of country, and it has been executed from the harbour of Ardrossan as far as the coal-works in the neighbourhood of Eglinton, but, I suspect it will not soon be



1891

The appointment of an assistant **Sanitary Inspector** is proposed by Rev. James Murray. The salary to be fixed at 35s a week.

1900

Escaped Lunatics. The Inspector reported that two female lunatics had escaped from their guardian at Lochwinnoch on the 24th March. One had since been found at Irvine, and that enquiry was still being made for the other.

1874

On the evening of Friday the 25th, this village was occasioned by the fact that an **amateur concert** was being given in the Town Hall for the benefit of the poor of the district.

The **entertainment** was a varied description, comprising a selection of vocal and instrumental pieces and readings.

carried through to Glasgow.

Education 1800s

There are altogether ten schools in this parish, two or three of which are very small, and others are not



large; but there are about 400 children attending all these schools. The parochial schoolmaster has the legal accommodations of a house and garden, and the maximum salary of £34 4s 5d; but hitherto the teacher has paid £3 of this sum to a teacher at Glenhead, a village on the south side of the loch, who has, besides this, a school-house, a dwelling-house, and a small garden. The teacher at Hollowood, the other village on that side of the loch, has the same accommodations, and sometimes a sum raised by voluntary subscription; but there is no regular salary attached to this school. There is in the village of Lochwinnoch, a school supported by the proprietors of the New Mill. They have, very much to their honour, provided an excellent school-room, giving the teacher a salary of £36 a year, and requiring him to teach 60 scholars through the day, 30 under twelve years of age, who leave the mill before the others, and meet in school at six o'clock, and 60 who meet at eight o'clock in the evening. These children pay only 9d. a quarter to defray the expense of paper, slates, etc., which are provided for them. But the teacher is permitted to take in more than 60 scholars if they apply, exacting of these additional scholars the ordinary rate of wages. All the other schools are wholly unendowed. In about one-half of the schools there is nothing taught but reading, and perhaps a little English grammar, writing, and arithmetic.

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Lochwinnoch early 1800's

1856

The **Annual Bonspiel** of the 12th Province of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club took place on Lochwinnoch Loch.

There was a large attendance of curlers and a great crowd of onlookers.

The top prize, the Royal Medal, was won by Garnock of Kilbirnie Club

1824

The **Pastures** around Lochwinnoch have a fine appearance. The farmers state that "every field is like a meadow, and the grass is as good as ever grew out of the earth"

1889

The **third class** rail ticket to Lochwinnoch from Glasgow for the month is £1 7s whereas an annual ticket costs £10 5s [the monthly tickets are too expensive]



There are three fairs held in this Parish in the course of the year. The oldest called the Fair of Hill, from the place where it originally met, viz., on the Market Hill. It has been held from time immemorial, on the first Tuesday of November, old style but has met for a long time past in the village of Lochwinnoch. Originally, a great variety of clothes, shoes, etc., were sold at this fair, at present it is only a market for cattle, and a time for meeting and settling Martinmas and other accounts. The May Fair or Trades' race is held on the second Tuesday of May, old style. It was begun about the year 1743 or 1750. The Trades had originally a parade, which has long been discontinued but there is still sometimes a race of one kind or another. There are some cattle in the market in the course of the day, and many meet in the afternoon to settle their Whitsunday accounts. The Farmers' Parade is held on the first Tuesday of July. At one time the farmers from all parts of the Parish mustered for this parade but for some time those on the south side have withdrawn.



1861

Calderpark Cotton Works for Sale. Presently occupied by Messers Ewing, Neilson & Coy.

Water Wheels, Steam Engine and whole Machinery and Utensils within the Mill. Also the Manager's House and Picking House.

1844

At **Johnshill, Lochwinnoch**, there was presented to the view of the passerby, a beech hedge, which surrounds a garden, with newly formed and healthy looking leaves of considerable size.

In another garden was to be seen on different bushes, a number of small but fresh green gooseberries, about the size of common peas,

1903

Continued The **trout hatchery** has proved successful and last week-end instalment of 2,000 beautiful trout, many of them two pounders were put into the stream, and a mount hence upwards of 100,000 fry will be put into tributaries of the loch. To be continued @pbthecairn

INNS 1800s

There are 24 inns in this Parish, which are too many, and do an incalculable amount of mischief without being balanced by almost any good. The institution of Temperance societies led to an inquiry into the quantity of ardent spirits and other liquors used here, and the melancholy and astounding fact was forced upon us, that in this, as in the neighbouring Parishes, three or four times more money is expended in this manner than is required to support both our churches and schools, and all our charitable and religious institutions.



FUEL 1800s

There are two coal pits in the Parish - one in its eastern, and the other in its western extremity. There was one lately in its centre, near the village of Lochwinnoch, and there are beds of coal in various other places. Quarrelton is only a mile or two beyond our eastern boundary, where there is one of the most remarkable beds of coal in Great Britain, if not in Europe; and there are coal pits equally numerous and valuable in the opposite direction, beyond our western boundary. A load of coals is sold at 7d., eight of which make an ordinary cart.