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Introduction

Kinnettles features in all three Statistical Accounts since 1793. These accounts were written by the ministers of the time and, together with snippets from other books such as Alex Warden’s “Angus or Forfarshire – The Land and People”, form the core of our knowledge of the Parish’s past.

In the last 50 years the Parish and its people have undergone many rapid and significant changes. These have come about through local government reorganisations, easier forms of personal transport and the advent of electricity, but above all, by the massive changes in farming. Dwellings, which were once farmhouses or cottages for farm-workers, have been sold and extensively altered. New houses have been built and manses, and even mansion houses, have been converted to new uses. What used to be a predominantly agricultural community has now changed forever.

The last full Statistical Account was published in 1951, with revisions in 1967. Some of us felt that this was an appropriate time to contemplate something new and the coming of the millennium a good excuse to do it. Accordingly Kinnettles Heritage Group was initiated early in 1999, with the stated aims of:

- promoting the study and conservation of the life, heritage and history of the parish of Kinnettles.
- promoting an interest in the above and educating the wider public in an appreciation of this, by way of publications and exhibitions.

The first phase of our endeavours has resulted in the publication of this book and a number of exhibitions of the material gathered. Much of the information will be lodged, for safekeeping and future reference, with the County Archivist, the local library and local schools. It is also hoped that the project will be supported by all who live in, or who have an interest in, Kinnettles, and will result in future activities which will help our community to develop and evolve in the future.

One person must be singled out as the catalyst to it all. Norman Knight started it, interested others in it and played a major role in its development, despite simultaneously fighting a terminal illness. This publication is, and always will be, Norman’s book.

Kinnettles Heritage Group

Norman Knight – Researcher and author
Ron Leslie – Secretary and Treasurer
David Mackland – Survey and database manager
Elma Reid – Editor, researcher and author
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Chapter 1 - A Brief Geography Lesson

In attempting to define the boundaries of the Parish of Kinnettles we were frustrated by the spate of local government changes in recent decades. Clearly, to planners and mapmakers, the concept of a civic parish boundary is old fashioned and Kinnettles has, like many other such communities, been subsumed into a larger administrative unit. As a consequence we have, for the purposes of this publication, adopted the parish boundaries shown on 1926/27 O.S. maps, when such boundaries were still recorded.

The sketch map on page three shows the Parish to be bounded on the north and east by Forfar, on the southeast and south by Inverarity and the southwest and northwest by Glamis. It is a small area (3,153.5 acres) compared to many rural parishes and is roughly rectangular in shape, but with many indentations. The boundary coincides, in many places, with burns (or old drainage ditches) and is approximately 13 km in length. In 1773 the parish of Foffarty, which had until then been a detached segment of Caputh in Perthshire, was annexed to Kinnettles and this explains the tongue of land which crosses the Kerbet Water and extends up the northern slopes of Kincaldrum hill.

The centre of the Parish is dominated by the oblong Brigton Hill (164m) whose steepest slopes descend to the Kerbet waters. The Kerbet valley is well wooded and contains two small hamlets, Kirkton and Douglastown. The only other sizeable group of dwellings is at Ingliston on the flatter area to the northwest of the A94 Forfar to Glamis road. Our northern boundary is the “Great Drain”, now known as the Dean Water. Strathmore Estates constructed this, from Forfar Loch to the Kerbet, in the 18th century and thus helped to drain this previously boggy area. In addition it provided a transportation route for marl from the Loch to the Estate.

The remainder of the dwellings are scattered throughout the Parish and many are associated with farmland or estates.
Sketch map of the Civil Parish of Kinnettles as indicated on OS maps of 1926. The boundary is shown as a broken black line on a grey background. North is at the top.
Chapter 2 - The Kerbet and its Valley

The Kerbet rises in Dilty Moss, Kirkbuddo and flows southeast to northwest through the Parish. It eventually reaches the River Tay via the Dean and the Isla. This rather round about route is the result of changes in drainage basins induced during the glacial period. The point at which the Kerbet enters the Dean was altered during the construction of the Great Drain or “Canall” by Strathmore Estates between 1766 and 1767. A terminal meander of the Kerbet, which is still discernable on the ground, was replaced by a straight section, which enters the Dean further to the east than the original river. The Parish boundary follows the original unstraightened course and encloses a considerable area of reclaimed land on the west bank of the present course.

There appears to have been a significant change in the flow of the river in the past five to ten years. The level has dropped from an average of 18” to 6” and parts of the river bed have dried up. Whether this is due to climatic change, obstruction for irrigation or the drilling of bore wells, is not known. The water is also noticeably less clear than in the past and the formation of algae on the stones has considerably increased. This may be due to the run off of artificial fertilizers from the fields.

The river has always had spates of flooding but this has probably been worsened by the removal of hedges in order to enlarge fields. With the dualling of the A90 Forfar to Dundee road, the level of the river in spate has increased by over two feet. At one time it used to rise to the level of the bridge at the Kirkton, but it is now two feet above this and the floodwater reaches a point which is within eight feet of the houses. The speed at which it rises in flood is about a foot every fifteen to twenty minutes. During one particularly bad storm, farm workers considered it safer to remove the bulls from the mill field. The water level on the road bridge was six inches when they set off and by the time they’d walked the short distance along the road to the mill bridge, the water level was over two feet. The force of the water and debris made it too dangerous to venture any further. This flooding was the result of the first heavy rainstorm which followed the opening of the new road!
Some speak o' Scotland's bonny braes
Their mountains and their glens.
But aye gi' me Kinnettles
Wi' a' its buts n' bens.
Its Duncan Hall and bonny kirk
Wi' a burn running by
Where a' the lads and lasses
Gang, courting on the sly.

Mrs W Smith

Bridges

It is claimed that there was a bridge or causeway over the Kerbet at Douglastown, in Roman times, though we have not seen any documents to support this. Certainly it has been a crossing point for many centuries. The present stone bridge in Douglastown was built, at least partially, by public subscription in 1770 and once carried all the traffic on the Strathmore turnpike (Perth to Forfar road) and the adjacent Bridge house was once a roadside hostelry. Apart from extended wings to the bridge walls and a now raised road level, it appears very similar to a picture taken in the 1930's.

The Douglastown by-pass required the construction of a new bridge which unfortunately can act as a choke point in exceptional spates and there have been some severe floods in Douglastown and Kirkton since its construction.

There was a small foot bridge within the Brigton policies which was destroyed by a spate a number of years ago but whose footings are still visible. Some of the old bridge structure lies abandoned in the woods nearby.
The vehicle bridge, in Kirkton, was replaced in 1999 with a slightly narrower, modern, modular structure.

The bridge at Carterhaugh is of stone construction though nothing is recorded of its age.

*The Kerbet bridge at Douglastown*
Mills

We know of three mills within the Parish boundary. These were meal-mills at Kinnettles and Brigton and possibly a retting mill at the Mill of Invereighty.

The ruin at Kinnettles is still recognisable as a mill, though the structure was badly damaged by a fire in the 1980s. Before that it was possible to climb the outside stone steps and examine the derelict machinery which was still in place. Some of the older people remember the mill working up to about the time of the last war. The Mill cottage (now demolished) was situated in the mill field and Barbara Brown says it was the best house on the estate. She should know, because she lived in most of them with her husband, Arthur, during his working life. The lade, like those for the other mills, is now collapsed and partially filled in, but the line is still recognisable.

The Brigton mill is of unknown age, but was considered “old” in 1789, when it was altered to accommodate experimental flax spinning machinery, more of which later. It is not clear whether, following the above trial, it was ever restored to its original purpose, but certainly it was used only for storage in the 1940s. In 1946 it was badly damaged by a fire and persons unknown removed the mill wheel about 1960. It seems to be older in style than the mill at Kinnettles. Although partially rebuilt as an outhouse, the structure is still recognisable as a mill and can be glimpsed from the bridge at Douglastown.

The mill at Invereighty may also have been a meal mill once, but we are conscious that Don Smith believed it had been a retting mill in his grandfather’s time. It was here that locally grown flax was steeped in gently flowing lade water in order to rot and carry away all but the tough fibres which would later be spun into yarn. The smell of such a process was reputed to be unbearable during a hot summer. An old painting of this mill shows it as being below the level of the present farmhouse but, apart from the dam and lade, there is no obvious sign of the structure.
nowadays. Its position at this lower level would have allowed a wheel to be driven by the fall of water from the higher retting level. This is consistent with the machinery perhaps being used to break up the rotted flax stems to produce tow for spinning, though it may also have been used as a conventional meal mill.

![Invereighty Mill](image)

**The Douglastown Spinning Mill - A Scottish First?**

Around 1787 there was great interest in spinning flax by machinery. The method had been patented by John Kendrew (an optician who probably invented, but never patented, spectacles) and Thomas Porthouse, a clockmaker. The patent was owned by John Kendrew and Co. who ran the small water powered Low mill in Darlington.

A small group of flax merchants from Dundee visited Darlington and were granted a lease of the patent privilege. An old water-driven corn mill, owned by William Douglas of Brigton, was offered for a trial and at the end of 1788, or early 1789, all was ready for the first experiment. It obviously met their expectations, because it was decided to lease land from Mr. Douglas for a purpose-built mill and a row of cottages for the workers. The lease was for 45 years.
The mill, functional by 1790, was built of stone and was four or five storeys high (historical sources differ on this). James Ivory, a celebrated mathematician who had earlier taught algebra at the High School of Dundee, managed it. The village of Douglastown was completed in 1792 and, although called Milltown on some old maps, was later named Douglastown to commemorate the aid given to the enterprise by William Douglas. He had been made a partner in the new business around this time.

This is an engraving of the mill which Thomas Porthouse built at Coatham Mundeville near Darlington. It is interesting to compare the shape of this apparently 4 storey mill and to compare it with the plan shown on the map on the next pages. Perhaps the Douglastown mill was similar.

In November 1790, Ivory and Co. made a petition to the Board of Trustees for Manufactures to patronise their efforts and to encourage them in their undertaking. The Board, who were established after the Act of Union to encourage invention and industry throughout Scotland, visited in January 1791 and were impressed by the quality of the yarn spun. They later resolved that,

“...as it would appear that this is the first undertaking of the kind that has been set on foot in Scotland, and that the undertakers have incurred a large expense with it, that they shall be allowed a premium of £300, payable in three moieties of £100 annually, provided it shall appear that the patent of the Darlington company, by whom the machinery was invented, does not extend to Scotland...”.
Great interest was shown in the new mill and, in time, similar mills, such as that of the Baxter family at Glamis, sprang up beside burns throughout Forfarshire.

The flax for the industry was initially locally grown, but was later supplemented by Russian flax imported in increasing amounts through the port of Dundee. However this was a period of unrest in Europe as Napoleon was on the march. The price of the raw material was subject to major variations over the first 30 years of the 19th century and the original company broke up in 1803 as a result of losses attributed to price fluctuations, following the sudden death, in 1801, of Paul, Emperor of Russia.

William Douglas personally met the company’s debts and in 1804 bought the mill at public auction, running it himself until 1808, when he took on several partners who each paid £800 for the privilege. Under the new arrangements the mill survived for a further 7 years. Mr. Douglas again paid the debts in full, and struggled on until 1817 when he sold the mill, village, machinery and lease to James Watt of Dundee.

The mill continued to function for another 17 years and in 1830 had the erratic power from the Kerbet supplemented by a small seven horsepower steam engine. This gave a potential of twelve horsepower in all. However, even this was not enough to compete with the more modern mills being set up in neighbouring towns and the enterprise finally came to an end in 1834, this being about the time the lease was due to expire. The engine and machinery were removed shortly afterward.

At that time the mill contained 14 frames of 30 spindles each - 420 spindles in all. These threw off 234 spindles of yarn per day, or 1404 per 6 day week. It gave employment to 49 people: 10 flax dressers, 12 preparers, 16 spinners, 7 reelers, 2 turners, 1 engine man and a clerk/overseer who supervised the whole workforce. The latter, Alexander Yeaman, lived in a detached overseer’s house situated at the northern end of the Row in Douglastown, which seems to be close to where Scroggerfield farm house, now known as Deanbank, stands. The redundant workers seem to have been absorbed by local agriculture or the weaving enterprises in Forfar.
This is the only old map of the area which shows the exact location and shape of the spinning mill. It was published in 1865. Note that the only lade shown is that for the meal mill at Brigton.
What became of the building? Strathmore Estates have records showing an insurance payment for £200 for the “Old mill at Douglastown”, which burnt down on June 28th. The year is not clear but the entry is before the sale of land for the new school in 1865. It is often said that when the Parish school was built in Douglastown, much of the building stone came from the old mill site and this seems the more likely explanation if one considers the effect of a fire on the structure. From old maps it would seem that the site of the mill was to the east of Scroggerfield farmhouse, on the north side of the A94 and Mrs Anne Merry remembers there being a pile of stone at this site in the 30’s. The Douglastown by-pass bisects the old workers’ ‘Row’ and several sections have been demolished over the years. Of the lade there is no trace and it is not shown on any of the maps we have seen. Bob Butchart recalls, however, that when ploughing the field behind the school it was not uncommon to catch flat slabs with the plough. If you caught one, you usually then lifted a whole row and there was some sort of space beneath. This seems a long way from the original Brigton meal mill lade and the river, but would have been in the line of the old spinning mill site. However, in 1952, a Bronze-age cist was discovered in the area where these slabs were found and this is an alternative explanation of such slabs.

According to an article on the mill in the Scots magazine, there was a mill wheel in Douglastown until sometime during World War II and it was said to have been a favourite hiding place of village children. Then during the last war a zealous scrap metal collector removed it without asking. However those who might be expected to remember this, do not, and we believe the article is referring to the wheel at Brigton meal mill. It seems likely that the wheel of the spinning mill was removed with the machinery in 1834.

It is of interest that neither Porthouse nor Kendrew made a great fortune out of their invention. Although the machinery could do the work of 10 hand spinners, female spinners were paid such low wages that they were still cheaper than the machinery.

Warden, in his 1864 book on the Linen Trade, comments that “water spinning mills were thought a wonderful invention in 1792, were thick as blackberries in 1822 and were set aside as old fashioned in 1852. A few decades nowadays bring about greater changes than centuries did before”.

Was the Douglastown mill the first powered flax-spinning mill in Scotland? According to Warden, Sim and Thom erected a building in 1787, on the Haughs of Bervie, for spinning flax
thread. This was later substantiated by a date written inside a driving drum. The firm also obtained the machinery from Kendrew and Porthouse, the only difference being that Ivory and Co. spun a heavy yarn specifically for Osnaburg weaving. Their petition to the Board of Trustees was quite specific about this, so strictly speaking, they made no false claims about what they were doing. However it seems that Douglastown may have been beaten to first place by a thread!

**Reservoirs**

There is a large stone-built covered water tank high up in the woods in Kinnettles House grounds, with a smaller one a little further to the west and lower down. These supplied the big house, the farms and Kirkton village. To augment the supply, the Kinnettles Estate built a small reservoir at the base of Hayston hill. The water was piped downhill to nearby Kirkton where there was a small pumphouse (still intact). The pump was driven by waterpower supplied by a pipe from the Kinnettles Mill dam upstream. There was also a small wind-driven pump on Brigton Hill. The water supply has now been disconnected and the water-driven pump has, unfortunately, been stolen, however, there is still flowing water entering the lower tank from somewhere. There used to be a small building on the side of the hill above Brigton House, which was an enclosed well, and this was in a line with the pump house mentioned above. It is tempting to speculate that it may also have been supplied from the Hayston hill reservoir, but no-one seems to know.

**The Wildlife of the Kerbet valley**

The arrival of the mink (Mustela vison) over the past decade has caused devastation to the indigenous wildlife. There are now no water voles or moorhens and the duck population has fallen from forty to fifteen. Of the ten breeding pairs of dippers, which nested under the Kirkton and Mill Bridges and which were being monitored by the British Trust for Ornithology, none remain. Residents of Kirkton have observed mink at their bird tables attempting to kill the various species feeding there. One duck actually survived an attack during which the back of her neck was torn. She was known locally as “Tufty”.

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This is an artist’s impression of the duck thought to have been savaged by a mink and thereafter known as Tufty. She was a great favourite in Kirkton.

Flocks of domestic fowl have been totally wiped out in some parts of the local area. Salmon were in abundance thirty years ago but the stock has dwindled in the past few years. The few which do appear, spawn further upstream and the chances of the fry surviving are very slim because two heron also work the river. Even the heron population is threatened, a young one being found last year, dead from malnutrition.

Buzzards have reappeared in most woodland in the parish, as a result of less human persecution. There is an abundant rabbit population to sustain these birds, though some young have been seen suffering from starvation. The kestrel and sparrowhawk are seen hunting occasionally. The wood pigeons (cushie doos) are pests, which cause damage to crops but again the buzzards benefit from their presence.

Due to changed farming methods, the teuchats (peesies or lapwings) have diminished in number along with the laverock (lark). There are however still larks in most fields on Brigton Hill. The goldcrest and mavis (thrush) are rarely seen nowadays.

In the last few years the partridges have been more plentiful and free ranging pheasants are common.

Swallows, swifts and house martins, once seen in their thousands, are now less evident. It has been reported that hunters in the Mediterranean regions shoot them in their hundreds as they migrate to Africa.
Greylag and Pinkfoot geese do not often land in fields in this Parish but are occasionally seen on the top of Brigton Hill, where they are less susceptible to disturbance while feeding.

Rabbits are rife and crop damage is considerable. They provide food for foxes, weasels, stoats and buzzards. Norman Knight recalled seeing a squealing rabbit in a field near the Kerbet; a stoat had it mesmerised. The sound of the squealing alerted a buzzard which then attempted to take the rabbit, but the stoat was having none of that and pulled the dead rabbit, four times its size, into the nearby scrubby trees, where the buzzard found it impossible to land.

Brown hares have diminished rapidly in the last decade. Only occasional pairs are seen nowadays, where it used to be common to have to slow down as one raced in front of the car for a hundred yards or so, before darting through a field gate.

Badgers were plentiful in Kinnettles woods and there are several old setts to be found. They are thought to have been destroyed at the time when there was a widespread, though still unproven, association between the badger and bovine tuberculosis.

There are about fourteen roe deer which migrate, in small groups, between parish woodlands and fields of crops, which they eat. They occasionally cause alarm to motorists as they leap across the road in the early morning and at dusk. These secretive creatures are best seen crossing snowy fields, but are often smelt in woodland clearings where they have gathered overnight.

Since Dutch Elm disease killed the Elm trees, the Great Spotted Woodpeckers, which lived near Kirkton, have moved to other woods.
The Smiddy

There was still a smiddy in Douglastown within the living memory of some older residents. The picture above shows Douglastown in about 1920 and those with good eyes might be able to make out the pile of metal outside the smiddy on the left hand side of the road.

The last owner was James Shiells and there is a gird and cleek, made by him, exhibited in the Kirkwynd museum in Glamis. The smith at Cuttyhaugh, which is strictly outside the boundary, but only just into Inverarity, was called Ernest Strachan and he was trained by Mr Shiells, as were many other local smiths.

The OS map of 1926 shows a smiddy at Leckaway, but no one seems to recall this being there in their lifetime.
Chapter 3 - The Kirk and its Ministers

Kinnettles Kirk

The original Parish church or ecclesiastical settlement is believed to have been established early in the 13th century and may have originally stood on a small knoll, known as Kirkhill, which is on the south bank of the present course of the Kerbet, a little upstream from the present kirk. There is also an area on the south bank opposite the present Kirkton called Bishopmoor. At that time the surrounding area was swampy and the church must have appeared to arise from the marshland. As a result, it is often said that the name Kinnettles is derived from a Gaelic word meaning “the head of the bog”, however we have not been able to reconcile this with words for bog or swamp in the Gaelic dictionaries we have consulted. Old maps show the parish variously as Kynetles, Kynathes, Kynetys, Kinettils and Kynneclys. A more plausible explanation of the name is that Kinn or Cinn is a variant spelling of the Gaelic Ceann, meaning headland or promontory (jutting out into water) and the word for ecclesiastic would have been “eaglais” which, when pronounced, might have sounded like eclys. Thus Ceanneglais (Kinnecklys) may well have been the original Gaelic name for church headland, thus Kirkhill may be relevant. The rest of the names may be merely phonetic derivations of this original.

The church was given to the Archbishop of St Andrews, in lieu of others in Fife which King James VI took from the primate. Very little can be gathered about the kirk for the first two centuries but in 1597 there is a record by the then minister, the Reverend James Fothringham, who was minister of Inverarity and of Meathie, as well as Kinnettles, where he records his stipend as being £8 6s 8d. (Recorded in 1250 the Church of Kynetlys was rated at eighteen merks).

A map published in 1640 clearly shows the kirk sited at about its present position and it is highly likely that this church had a separate round, or pencil tower, such as that at Brechin. The Church was rebuilt in 1812, solely at the expense of the heritors; the parishioners were not required to pay anything towards its erection. It was designed by Samuel Bell, who also designed the Steeple church and St. Andrews church in Dundee. Kinnettles Kirk’s galleried building could seat 420 worshippers comfortably and the front seats of all the galleries (thirty six) were reserved.
by the heritors for themselves and their families whilst the Minister’s family sat on six seats set aside on the ground floor. One seat on the ground floor was reserved for six Elders. All other seats had to be paid for, at an annual rate of two shillings (10p), per sitter. The Communion Table, at that time extending the whole length of the Church, seated fifty communicants at each service. The vestry was added in the late 19th century.

The old Manse had been rebuilt in 1801 and repaired six years later and again in 1811. The Glebe ground, at that time, extended to some eight and a half imperial acres (approx. three and a half hectares). Let at approximately £1 10 shillings per acre, this brought in some £12 15 shillings per year, not enough to cover the minister’s stipend, falling short by some £30 1 shilling, which was then made up by the Government. At that time the average amount of church collections yearly was £22 7s 3d. Following the rebuilding of the church the manse was also re-built and had a wide variety of associated outbuildings, including a manservant’s dwelling shown on this old photograph.

There is a collection of old gravestones by the east wall of the kirkyard, which must have stood in the old burial ground. Some are written in the old Scots language and there is a reference on one of the stones to a now lost cottar hamlet within the old parish. It is said that a Kinnettles schoolmaster once stole a stone and was taken to court by the family concerned. The stone was returned and has remained there to this day. There are quite a few unmarked graves but there is a detailed record available in the County Archives at Montrose. As was the custom long ago, some of the stones have the occupations of the deceased carved upon them. These include gardeners, weavers, stone masons, and smiths.
In the dyke facing the west door of the church is a small wooden box which held the bell ringer’s watch. There it would be protected from falling rain and yet easily visible to him, as he huddled in the protection of the porch, in those days before wristwatches were invented.

The present kirk is unusual in having a precentor’s box and high pulpit.

Three rows of pews were removed during refurbishment in 1983 in order to extend the chancel. This reduced the seating capacity to 300. The paraffin lamps were installed in 1983 and are lit during the Christmas services. Patrick Meffan, a prominent citizen of Forfar, who was born in the parish, gifted the font in January 1863. It has a silver bowl which fits into the stone font.

There are two stained glass windows facing south; memorials for the men killed in the First World War, from the women of the parish. Fund raising for these windows included a fete in the manse gardens which was opened by Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon (the Queen Mother), this being one of her first public engagements.

The communion plate of the kirk is silver plated and the two wine goblets are engraved “Kinettles 1809”, (note this spelling). The wine jug is dated 1929. The plate from the Women’s Guild is dated 1927. The other plate has no date. The two brass offering plates were a gift from the Sunday School and are dated 1909.
A **United Free Kirk** and manse was built, as a gift of Mrs John Inglis Harvey of Kinnettles House, immediately after the disruption in 1843. It closed in 1919 and was purchased and gifted to the community, as the Duncan Hall, by Sir James Duncan of Kinnettles. The communion plate of the Free Kirk, consisted of four goblets, two plates and two wine jugs, all dated 1846, which are made of pewter and bear no other adornments or markings. These were left in the trust of the parish kirk with the stipulation that, in the event of its closing, they are to go to the Meffan Institute in Forfar.

![Image](image-url)

**UF Kirk (now Duncan Hall) and adjoining manse.**

A **Roman Catholic chapel** was built about 1659, by the Bower family of Kincaldrum, at the margin of a small den on Kincaldrum Hill. This was within the detached parish of Foffarty (alternatively spelt Fofarty or Faferdie) which had been transferred to the tenant, Alexander Pyott, by the Bishop of Dunkeld, “for his zeal in resisting the Reformation”. This chapel was burnt down by a party of Royal Dragoons in 1745 and stood roofless for many years. After the fire, the stone which held the holy water was moved to Kincaldrum where a chapel was set up in the mansion house. The Roman Catholics in the area, including some from Kinnettles, worshipped there for a number of years. The owners, the Bowers, were eventually forced by poverty, probably induced by the widespread persecution of ‘Papists’, to sell the land to the Earl of Strathmore in 1758. The remaining walls and foundations were removed about 1815 and are believed to have been used in land drains.
Kinnettles Parish Ministers

- The church was dedicated by Bishop de Bernham 11th November 1241.
- John (James) Scott, parson, 1563 (died before 22nd May 1566).
- Andrew Davidson, preacher, 1566 (died before 4th December 1587).
- Alexander Lindsay, M.A., regent, St. Andrews.
- James Davidson, M.A., minister, 1587 (died before 10th September 1588).
- James Raitt, minister, 1588 - 1608 (minister of Forfar in 1576).
- David Lindsay, M.A., (minister Carmyllie 1609) 1610 (transferred before 8th August 1617).
- James Lamont, M.A., 1620 died Kinnettles 1651.
- Alexander Pigott, M.A., 1662, transferred to Airth 8th May 1866.
- Silvester Lyon, M.A., 1667, transferred to Kirriemuir 6th January 1669.
- Alexander Tyler (Taylor), M.A., 1670 - 1689.
- James Taylor (probably related to Alexander) 1689. Died 1694.
- William Wingate 1716. Died 8th May 1735.
- Thomas Brown 1736 - 1743.
- George Nicol 1744. Died 25th November 1773.
- David Ferney 1774. Died 26th April 1807.
- Robert Lunan 1807. Died 9th April 1850.
- Maunsell Grant Mackintosh Donald, B.D. 1899. Died 7th May 1941.
The Road of Life

The road may be hard and thin may be yer shoon;
The keen frost may nip through yer auld worn goun;
Ye may be near drappin’ an’ at yer wits end
Tae mak’ a’ ends meet wi’ sae little tae spend.
But dinna gi’e up though moist be yer broo;
There’s mony a’ ane mair forfoughten than you.

Keep yer een aff the brae, there’s nae muckle there
Tae comfort a body o’erburdened wi’ care.
The sun and the rain dinna come frae the grou’;
Let yer een an’ yer he’rt tak’ a flicht up abune.
Then ye winna gi’e up, for yer strength He’ll renew,
Like mony a ane mair forfoughten than you.

Kirkton of Kinnettles and a snow covered Kirk, with Kinnettles House beyond.
Chapter 4 - Mansion Houses and Estates

There are three estates within the parish boundary, each with a mansion house. Throughout their history they have, at various times, changed hands and the Earl of Strathmore has frequently acquired land within the parish, though never resided here. In addition, Foffarty was, at one time, part of the lands of Kincaldrum.

Invereighty: The estate seems to have been originally part of the extensive holdings of the Earl of Angus. The lands were frequently seen to be in the gift of the monarch and on occasion, to change hands after a very short period. Later it became an asset which passed from family to family as a business transaction. Thus the estate has been owned, or occupied, by Lindsays, Balbirnys, Youngs, Grays, Bowers, Simpsons, Laurensons, Glamis Trustees, Baxters and Patersons. The latter two families acquired their parts of the estate simultaneously in 1872, when the Glamis Trustees sold one parcel of land, south of the Kerbet, to the Baxters of Kincaldrum and the northern section, with the mansion house, to James Paterson of Kinnettles. Mr Paterson made many alterations and improvements to the house and grounds in the ten years before his death. Thereafter, it was occupied by the Dons of Forfar and later, the Baxters of Kincaldrum. George Baxter was married to Grisel, a gifted painter. Following her husband's death Mrs Baxter moved to St Andrews and the old mansion house fell into such poor repair that the current owners had it demolished about 1967. They replaced it with a tasteful modern dwelling but retained the walled garden, lawned slopes to the wooded banks of the Kerbet and the north drive, lined by a colonnade of magnificent lime trees. Construction of the new dual carriageway from Dundee required the east lodge and entrance to be demolished in 1993.
Brigton: The lands of Brigton (or Brigtoune) were originally in the gift of the monarch and included Scroggerfield and Ingliston (or Inglishtoune as it was sometimes known). The Strachans, who acquired the lands from King Robert III toward the end of the 14th century, sold them to Lord Glamis, who in turn, passed them on to his relatives, the Lyons, in 1622. In 1743 the estate was acquired by the Douglas family and remained with them until financial losses related to the spinning mill in Douglastown (see earlier), caused much of it to be sold to the Earl of Strathmore. The family retained the house and grounds together with the home farm, and their descendants still live there. Most of the extensive farming land, however, was subsequently acquired by surrounding estates and farmers. Brigton House, policies and associated buildings such as the stables and servants quarters, icehouse, doocot, walled garden and home farmhouse, are fascinating insights into estate life in the parish and several long-standing members of the present community have happy personal memories of life at Brigton.
**Kinnettles:** King Robert III granted a pension out of the lands of Brigtoun, Inglestoun and Kinnettles to Alexander Strachan (Strathaquhine of Carmyllie) at the turn of the 14th century and later they acquired a proprietary interest. From them Kinnettles passed to the Lindsays in about 1511, who held the lands until the middle of the 17th century, when it went to a Provost of Dundee, Sir Thomas Moodie. The estate then passed to Patrick Bower, who had relatives at Kincaldrum. The house he occupied was in the area to the northeast of the present road more or less opposite to Kinnettles doocot. There is a dated stone (1678) in the wall of that field which is reputed to have come from the plain, two storey house, which lay adjacent to the kirk and village of Kirkton, or the ‘Bogg’ as it is still occasionally called.

In 1802 John Aberdein Harvey, a schoolmaster’s son who had become rich from his work in the plantations of the West Indies, purchased Kinnettles from the Trustees of Alexander Bower. He built a new mansion, in the area of the present policy park. This was surrounded by fine parkland and plantations up the hill to the north.
He also built the main row of the village of Kirkton in 1813.

It is uncertain when the old school, which is now numbers 1 to 3, was built, but it is likely to have been during the time of the Harvey family.

Their son John Inglis Harvey went to India, in the service of the East India Company, after studying law in England. He became a civil judge there, finally returning home to Kinnettles. It was he who built the mausoleum to the south of the walled garden.

James Paterson bought the estate in 1864, removed both the first and second house and built the present castellated mansion “a little to the west and rather higher up the hill from its predecessor”. He also removed the old farm buildings, which were close to his new house and rebuilt the Mains in its present situation. The public road between the Dundee to Forfar turnpike and the Strathmore turnpike was straightened, as part of many improvements he made to the estate.
The next owner was Joseph Grimond, a merchant from Dundee, who purchased the estate about 1880. Then in 1914, Sir James Duncan, who had been born in a small cottage at West Ingliston and attended the Parish school, bought the property. He had entered a bank in Dundee after leaving school and soon went to Rangoon where his business skills and resourcefulness gave him great success. On his return he bought the estates of Kinnettles and Coupar Grange. In 1922 he purchased Douglastown, North and South Leckaway, Muiryknowes and Little Mill, Mains of Brigton, the three farms at Ingliston, the Mains of Foffarty and two smaller farms at Wester Foffarty. His many gifts to the community included new houses at Leckaway, Mains of Brigton, and Ingliston, plus a nurses’ home for Forfar Infirmary. In addition, he bought the United Free Kirk when it closed, which he then refurbished and presented, as the Duncan Hall, to the “heritors” of the Parish of Kinnettles, for use as a hall and library.
He was succeeded, in 1927, by the MP Sir Harry Hope, who was also convener of Angus County Council and deputy Lord Lieutenant of Angus. His purchase did not include Douglastown or the Leckaways and Inglistons. In 1939, his daughter Peggy married Squadron leader Dudley Lloyd-Evans and continued to live at the big house. Mr Hugh Walker-Munro purchased the Estate in the 1960s.

There are many interesting features in the Kinnettles House grounds, not least of which is the adornment of stonework with beautifully carved ropes and knots.

There is still an ice-house, but the gasometer (presumably for lighting), is no longer where it was shown on old maps.

The woods around the house are a tree lover’s delight. Apart from the beauty of mature open woodland there are many rare and exceptional specimens and the Tree Register of the British Isles has been carrying out surveys of some of the trees since 1891. To the northwest of the house was a maze, which was said to have been based on that of Hampton Court. Several elderly people have recalled sneaking into the maze to play as youngsters. In the springtime the rhododendrons, close to the house and stables, glow with bright colours.
Doocots

There are two of these structures still standing in the parish. Both are listed buildings.

One, the Kinnettles doocot (known locally as the Doos’ doocot) is in the corner of a field by the track which leads to Kinnettles mill. It is in poor repair, the roof having collapsed sometime during the last ten years. It is unusual in that it does not have the more common corbie-stepped gables.

The now collapsed slate roof and dormer pigeon entrance were later additions to the original structure. Anyone wishing to find out the origin of the term ‘pigeon-holes’, now has a perfect opportunity to observe the exposed rows and columns of the nesting shelves.

The other ‘dowcatte’ is in the grounds of Brigton. It was designed as the upper storeys to a functional outhouse. There were two entrances for use by the pigeons and the ‘doos’ probably became accustomed to the comings and goings of humans; this would have aided their capture when it was time to harvest this ready source of fresh meat for winter consumption.

There were few doocots built in Scotland after the middle of the 18th century and so the Kinnettles example may have been contemporary with the first Kinnettles house. The one at Brigton is of uncertain age, but it is likely to be at least as old.

Maps from early this century show one other doocot in the Parish, close to South Leckaway farmhouse, but there are no obvious remains of this now.
Chapter 5 - Interesting characters in Kinnettles History

‘Bird’ Balfour

There is an oft’ repeated tale in the district about a William Balfour, who lived at Foffarty and was once a military prisoner in Edinburgh Castle. He escaped by scaling down the Castle rock. His fellow escaper was killed as a result of falling from the rock. When asked how he managed to avoid a similar fate, he replied “I flew” - hence the nickname “Bird”.

There is a stone in the kirkyard with his name on it and some relatives who were visiting confirmed this story to Norman Knight. Furthermore, a local man, whose father-in-law knew “Bird”, said that the tale which “Bird” spun was that he had been wearing a greatcoat from which the buttons had been removed; this had opened up during his own fall and so had reduced his landing speed. He said, however, that he nevertheless hit the ground at a “fair rate”, which winded him a bit! Was ‘Bird’ the first of the hang-gliders?

Reverend Thomas Brown

Mr Brown was a minister in Kinnettles from 1736 to 1743, but was deposed for deserting his charge for seven months. He seems to have later assumed the name of William Jamieson. According to an account of the trial in 1751, he was accused, with others, of “accomplishing, by force and violence, a marriage between Thomas Gray and Jacobina Moir, only child and heir of the deceased James Moir of Earnslaw”. It transpired that Thomas Brown “celebrated” the marriage in a hackney carriage on Musselburgh lands! Afterwards the lady in question was forced to sign the certificate of this irregular marriage in a public house at Jock’s Lodge, then was thrown onto a bed in order for Mr Gray to consummate the marriage. Fortunately, it is recorded, no violence of her person followed. For his part in the matter, Thomas Brown was sentenced to transportation to the British plantations in America for 14 years.
The Rev. Maunsell Donald

“That frae the pulpit up abune
Glower doon on them an’ a’ their sin;
But a’ hae comfort in the thocht
That man’s a poke o’ sweeties brocht;
An’ gin asleep they divna fa’,
A peppermint or stripped ba’
Will mak’ things even for their waes
Baith o’ the sermon and their claes.”

By all accounts, Maunsell Donald was a fire and brimstone preacher. When one of the local lairds was having an affair with a married lady, it is said that Maunsell, during his sermon, looked up at the gallery and declared, “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife!” Downstairs, the congregation would be straining to see the object of the declamation though, as most pews were paid for, each knew who sat where, and whose pew Maunsell was looking at.

When Sir James Duncan died in 1926 Maunsell would not allow the funeral service to be held in Kinnettles Kirk. Instead, it was held in the old Free Kirk (now the Duncan Hall), which had by then been stripped of its pews and altar, so, while everyone who wished to attend could do so, all had to stand during the service.

He also wrote a brief account of the Parish in 1904, which was published in the Forfar Presbytery book.
Robert Douglas

A description of a race in Lord Willoughby de Broke’s book on Steeplechasing indicates Robert Douglas of Brigton to have been a fine and resourceful horseman. In October 1824 he took part in a race from the top of Dundee Law to the summit of Kinpurney hill (the article actually says Kilpurnie hill, but the description matches that of Kinpurney). This was a distance of 7 miles as the crow flies, but was estimated to be about 9 or 10 miles by the shortest practical route. Three horses started; one owned by the Hon. W Maule of Panmure, one was Col. Fothringham’s of Powrie and Robert Douglas rode his own. At a signal, the horses dashed down the Law “to the terror of the spectators”. “Two of the horsemen took a bird’s flight course”, but Mr. Douglas made a more circuitous one. He availed himself of the turnpike road for some miles and came in first. Having completed the ride in 35 minutes, he outdistanced the others by a mile.

Sir William Douglas

William was the son of William Douglas, the owner of the spinning mill at Douglastown. Our picture shows him as a boy. Later in life, during the Battle of Waterloo, Sir Dennis Pack, who commanded the Highland Brigade, was wounded and had to leave the field. Sir William assumed command. After the battle Lord Wellington came up and asked who commanded the Brigade. Sir William replied that “he had the honour to do so just then”. Wellington exclaimed “No man could do it better” and added, “Take the command and keep it”. Sir William did so until the Brigade was disbanded on leaving France.
James Ivory

James Ivory was a celebrated mathematician, who had earlier taught algebra at the High School of Dundee. He was one of the group who established the Douglastown flax spinning mill and it was he who managed the company, known as Ivory and Co., until he left in 1803. Following this, he took up a teaching post at the Royal Military Academy in Taplow (then to Sandhurst). He was later knighted for his mathematical work and held membership of the Royal Academy of Sciences in France, the Royal Academy of Berlin and the Royal Society of Gottingen.

Patrick Meffan

Patrick Meffan was born in Kinnettles. His father, William Meffan, was a notary and had business premises in West High Street in Forfar. He was Provost of Forfar between 1817 and 1819 and again between 1823 and 1825. Patrick’s mother was Jane Low. He had a brother and four sisters. The family home was on New Road in Forfar, possibly Bellfield House (or Ravenswood as it is now known).

Patrick also became a legal document writer and was Provost of Forfar for the periods 1833-1835, 1842-44 and 1848-1850.

He gifted to Kinnettles Parish church the baptismal font, which is inscribed “The gift of Patrick Meffan to his native Parish Kinnettles 1st January 1863.” He died on 11th August of that same year. He was outlived only by his sister Jane, who bequeathed a trust of about £6000 to build a museum and library, “to promote the moral and intellectual improvement” of the community of Forfar.
Colonel William Paterson

William Paterson (sometimes recorded as Patterson) was the son of a gardener to Mr Douglas of Brigton. He was honoured with the patronage of Lady Mary Lyons of ‘Glammis’ and was thus able to pursue his overriding interest in botany. In 1781, in order to enlarge his botanical vista, or so it was rumoured, he enlisted in a regiment bound for India. During this period he frequently sent crates of specimens to Sir Joseph Banks, the eminent botanist whom he admired. However his military career also prospered and by 1789 he had risen to the rank of major when his regiment returned to Britain for disbandment. Banks suggested that he join the New South Wales (NSW) Corps, which was being formed to garrison the new penal settlement in Sydney, Australia and this he did as a Captain in 1791. This gave him ample opportunity to maintain his botanical collection for Banks, which he never stinted.

The NSW Corps, or “Rum” Corps as it was known, was notorious for its illicit rackets, but Paterson does not seem to have been involved because he was frequently on exploratory expeditions. One of his projects entailed converting his 3 hectare allocation of land in Petersham, to establish Australia’s first botanical garden.

He returned, on leave, to England in 1796 as a Major and second in command of the Corps. Rather than Whitehall commending him on his scientific work, he was called to book about the Corps’ commercial activity and was returned to New South Wales as the Commanding Officer. He was charged with the task of giving all aid to the Government in abolishing the rum traffic and to bring his undisciplined fellow officers to heel. His inept attempts to do so ended in a duel with Captain John Macarthur, the ringleader of the Corps’ rum trade. Paterson was shot in the shoulder and Governor King had Macarthur arrested and sent back to England for court martial. A little later that year Paterson, who was by now a Lieutenant Governor, was ordered to establish a settlement on Tasmania’s north coast. This turned into a very difficult task and, although eventually successful, little was due to Paterson who was by this time “drawn into a void of lethargy by alcohol excess and ill health”.
Soon after this he was recalled to Sydney to try and sort out the near anarchy created by the Corps’ deposing of the Governor. This, he was manifestly not up to, and the chaos worsened under his command. He granted large tracts of subsequently very valuable land to try and appease warring individuals, but in 1809 Governor Lachlan MacQuarrie arrived and soon returned Paterson and others of the Corps to England. Paterson died aged 55 years as his ship, the Dromedary, rounded Cape Horn on June 21st, 1810. There is a plaque in the Parish kirk of Kinnettles detailing the more glorious episodes in his life.

A few years ago a visiting beekeeper from NSW observed how, during a particularly long drought, the bees had managed to survive because of the continued growth of a plant known in the state as “Paterson’s curse”. This plant, better known here as viper’s bugloss, was an invasive weed and was reputedly introduced by William Paterson!

Alexander Yeaman

Mr. Yeaman was the day-to-day manager, or overseer, of the Douglastown Spinning mill. He bought the flax, superintended the spinning and sold the yarn. He promoted the purchase of the yarn in Forfar (where there was initially some prejudice against machine spinning) by setting up a loom to make osnaburg, for which the yarn was specially produced. He transferred to James Watt’s employ when the mill was sold by William Douglas, largely supervising the production of yarn for export, until it finally closed in 1834. He was reported as being a cheery, pleasant man. He married twice and produced three sons, two of whom became bankers and one a laird.
Chapter 6 - Rural Reminiscences

Lizzie Milne (now McFarlane) well remembers the Tattie Howkin days, with Dan Kennedy as ‘tattie gaffer’, at West Ingliston, during the mid nineteen thirties. She is the little girl on the left in plaits. She recalls that day when the photo was taken in the field, which was behind the school, now the road to Glamis. There was her mother and brother along with Dolly Steel (now McDonald) from the Plans of Thornton, Mrs. Balfour, Amy Milne, Mrs Leiper, Alec McLaren and Johnnie Robertson.

Lizzie went on to become kitchen maid at Brigton House for Mrs Thorne Roberts, mother of Mrs Macmillan Douglas. At that time Brigton House was an emergency maternity hospital for mothers-to-be from Dundee and as such employed a staff of nine workers. After the war ended the staff was reduced. Lizzie started as a kitchen maid then moved up to housemaid then to table maid and finally to cook.

She also has memories of Sir Harry and Lady Hope arriving every Sunday at the kirk in their chauffeur driven limousine. Sir Harry always wore a tile hat and tail coat.
Elizabeth Sturrock recalls the days her father, David Reith spent as roadman in the Kinnettles area. It was his job to keep the roads clear in winter and the ditches free and well running in summer. Mrs. Sturrock also remembers the opening of the Duncan Hall gifted by Sir James Duncan, as all the school children were invited to attend the opening ceremony. There was a small library in the hall, open one evening per week, when books could be changed. Elizabeth’s mother and father, Mr and Mrs Reith, were hall caretakers after her aunt and uncle gave it up. She also remembers the story of how the row of cottages (Kirkton) was given to Angus County Council by Sir Harry Hope.

Willie Davidson, gardener to the Hopes at Kinnettles House, lived at what is now known as the Mill of Kincaldrum and kept an immaculate garden in his retirement. His twin brother Robert, Elizabeth Sturrock’s brother-in-law, was tractorman at Leckaway.
Barbara Brown remembers the days when she and Arthur, her husband, worked and moved around the Kinnettles area. She and Arthur lived at Burnside, then at the Mill, then Foffarty. Next came the Mains of Kinnettles, then Foffarty again followed by Mains of Brigton. Finally they spent six months in Kinnettles House itself, before going into the Lodge and finally to Kirkton. A well travelled pair!

Isabel Cargill holds fond memories of the times when she and her sister Margaret played in and around the Smiddy at Douglastown. They were allowed to puff the fire using the huge bellows and watch eggs being fried on a shovel. These had been dropped from the nearby rookery by young lads who’d climbed the trees in order to raid the nests. Isabel recalls these eggs being dropped into the aprons of the lassies waiting below. No doubt a smashing time was had by all!

Anne Shiells (now Merry), daughter of James Shiells, the blacksmith, late of Douglastown, remembers the busy days in the smiddy. Horses were brought from farms such as Hayston, Mains of Glamis, Glen Ogilvy, North Leckaway and Spittalburn, to name but a few, and her father and his journeymen shod them every six months or so. Wagonloads of coal kept the three smiddy furnaces alight and hand bellows were used by the leather aproned journeymen and apprentice. Their hours were arranged to suit the farmers and their workers. There are railings at Leckaway made by James Shiells which still show his name stamped on them. James also had his name stamped on something else! One day, whilst rushing to Dundee to fetch a spare part for a farm implement, he was stopped by police for speeding near Tealing and was fined £28 for doing 20 m.p.h.! A costly replacement part!

Mr Shiells, later in life, bought many of the houses in Douglastown from the Trustees of Sir James Duncan and rented them out to local residents.
It was common to see smiddies sited in farming areas during the days of the Horse as these were the working beasts of the land and their wellbeing was of paramount importance. The farm workers would also take the opportunity of washing their carts at the ford at Douglastown whilst their horses were being shod at the smiddy. Anne also remembers the bleaching green (for the villagers’ washing) by the ford at the Douglastown Bridge. Other interesting snippets include the fact that there was once an alehouse in Douglastown (today’s Bridge house). There was also a sweetie shop run by an old, old lady and much frequented by the school bairns.

The Kerbet provided fun and games when in flood. Apparently almost everyone had a pig in those days and after heavy rain the pigsty would flood. It was not unusual on a dark stormy night, to hear indignant squeals as first one, then another, would be hauled to safety by a leg and an ear. Making a silk purse out of a sow’s ear took on a whole new meaning in Kinnettles!

School stories include the day when they put a hedgehog on the chair of Dominie Thom. When he pulled it out in order to sit down, he was not amused, nor, five minutes later, were some of the pupils!
Anne also remembers two spinster sisters, the Miss Kiddies, living in a house by Scroggerfield farmhouse. Helen was a schoolteacher and a writer of poetry. She had a book of poems published in 1904, by James Matthew & Co., 17 Cowgate, Dundee. The biographical introduction, by John Paul, records Miss Kiddie’s father and mother as coming from Fifeshire, where she was born “more than thirty years previously”. They had then moved to the Mill of Kinnettles, and for eighteen years continued to reside there. After the death of her father and mother, she moved with her sister to Douglastown. Helen was a member of the Dundee Prayer Union and set up their Gospel Trust at Kinnettles.

In her book of Poetical Meditations entitled “All for Jesus”, she recalls “The Dear Old Home”, which was presumably Kinnettles mill.

"In tender thought I try to cast
Me backward to the days gone past;
I little thought a time would come,
When I would leave the dear old home.

My deepest sorrows then were light,
For parents dear made home so bright;
Where’er my wandering footsteps roam,
My heart warms to the dear old home.

Other pieces include the locally relevant narrative “A Reverie”, which again records her love of Kinnettles.
With happy thoughts of old lang syne,
The dear old village may I say
With slates of blue and walls of gray
With flowers galore in every plot
So simply sweet a lovely spot.

The Manse, the Church, the old graveyard
These we hold sacred and regard
With War Memorials for they
Speak to the passers-by each day
Of the great War they stand to tell
Where these brave heroes fought and fell
Obeyed the call their lives they gave
Their King and country to save.

Now for Kinnettles I was bent
The afternoon was well nigh spent
But all around to me is dear
I've walked the road for many a year....

Round by the Lodge my way I took
A lovely spot a cosey nook.
The avenue took all my time
Ah me had I been in my prime
Now and again I had to rest
It fairly brought me to the test

But age you know comes in between
So many summers I have seen
On neither side did I encroach
And when I reached the grand approach
What beauty met my wondering eyes
It almost did me mesmerize
'Twas like a Panoramic view

It held me fast it thrilled me through.
The lawn so beautiful and green
Soft as a carpet and so clean.
Near by a most romantic Bower
A shade from sunshine or from shower
Fine sheltered with huge trees so high
Methought they almost touched the sky
The spacious grounds with lovely trees
Of various sorts and size are these
With some so fanciful and rare
While every kind of bush is there..............

And near the summit of the hill
The Mansion House majestic stands
With tower and turrets O how grand
With terraced walls and garden neat
So beautiful a quiet retreat
Within these walls are many a plot
Of flowers earth holds no lovelier spot
And all are of the brightest hue
With red and yellow pink and blue
With white and purple rose and green
And colours I had never seen
Still in my thoughts they hold a part
It seemed to me a work of Art
Outside these walls so bright and gay
With brilliant flowers a grand display
Of rhododendrons rich and rare
Magnificence I say is there
With blossoms of the deepest dye
That does attract the passer by.......................

I knew twas time for me to go
The evening sun was setting low
So I my homeward way did take
And wished and wished for any sake
The Motors would be in their beds
In Garage or in old Cart sheds.
My only hindrance that day
Was passing Motors on the way
Enveloped in a cloud of dust
A perfect shame a real disgust
With blinded eyes and muddled brains
Wished motors had been aeroplanes
Especially on a summer day
When all is pure and bright and gay.

That night the roads were clear and clean
And not a Motor to be seen.
So when I reached my home that night
I felt so happy and so bright
I’ll call this outing I did say
I’ve styled it a real Red Letter day.
Not all of Helen’s poems were as mystical as the aforementioned but most held a touch of nostalgia - even for a long lost pet.

A Pet Cat

I have no doubt but you’ll miss her sair
When at your meals she aye was there
She nae’r was pleased but on your knee
It was truly there she liked to be.

How vexed you’ll be when you do mind
She was so gentle and so kind
With velvet paws and glossy fur
How pleased she was how she did purr.

We will not mourn tho’ Maddy’s dead,
No milk she needs nor bits of bread
Nor play nor scamper o’er the green
Such fun I’m sure was never seen.

The rattans now can sport and play
All their dread was Maddy many a day
In hen house and on midden head
But her work is done poor Maddy’s dead.

Captain Kiddie, a nephew of Helen, is buried in Kinnettles kirkyard near the vestry.
Geordie’s Gems

Geordie Sievwright, who worked at Ingliston for nearly forty years, recalls the days of the horsemen.

He recalls the patience needed to persuade those great beasts, at the Mains of Invereighty, to stand still long enough for a photo to be taken.

His wage at 14 was £1 per week plus meal and milk. Like all horsemen, Geordie had to be up at five in the morning to ‘sort the horse’ then back home for breakfast in order to be ready to ‘yoke’ at 7.00am. He and Dan and Ben (his pair) would work until 11.30am then home for lunch and a rest for the horses until 1.00pm. The afternoon work would then start and go on until ‘lousin time’ which was 5.30pm. Often the horsemen would return to the stable in the evening just to check that their beasts were all right. They worked a nine hour day, ten at harvest time and the men would be fee’d to work a half day on a Saturday morning, plus four Saturdays with no pay during the ‘Hairst’.

The worst job, according to Geordie, was filling out dung then spreading it. This job was even worse than the heavy lifting associated with the threshing mill, when men had to lift, and carry bags of grain weighing two and a half hundredweight up the loft stairs and into the loft itself. This job sorted out the men from the boys! Could be the reason for so many retired farm servants having dodgy knees in their old age!

Another sore job was pu’in neeps. Even if they were first slackened using an Angel plough, “it was still a sair job”, according to Geordie. The main crops were tatties and grain (mostly corn and wheat) and of course there were no combines in those days. The sheaves were loose and had to be stooked then forked on to the cart to be lead home.
Obviously the horse was the greatest resource that man had in those days, so if they took ill it was a major worry not only to the horseman, but also the farmer. The greatest killer of those magnificent beasts in those days was ‘Grass’ disease. Many a handsome beast was felled or had to be put down because of the appalling suffering caused by the disease and few ever recovered from this scourge. Vets could do little to save them and it was a sad day when a favourite friend died. There was always the one that meant something special and Geordie recalls a grey horse, called Dan, which always took itself off on a Monday morning, down to his house for its ‘peece’ before commencing the week’s work.

During a slack period, and there were not many of these, you cut down thistles and kept field ditches clear, according to Geordie.

Other memories include the visit each week of the baker’s van. There was Jock Birnie, George Robertson and the Co-op butcher. This kept the ‘wolf from the door’, and these provisions were often supplemented by a free bag of meal and flour, plus a flagon of milk per day, if the farm had milk kye.
A day off was a much-welcomed event and many men looked forward to the annual Highland show or Angus show. A bus often took the spruced up workers to the show. The yearly holiday, for the women and bairns, was often spent in the berryfields around Forfar.

She’s across the wee briggie an’ doon past the mill,
She wheechs roon’ the bend, an’ she pechs up the hill;
There’s laughin’ an’ crackin’, a lang drawn-oot sigh,
   An’ Jock on the baker’s van hails us gaun by.
Geordie finished his life on the land as gaffer at West Ingliston and was justly rewarded with a long service medal.
Douglastown in 1999
The Mains of Brigton in 1973 (above) and 1999
The Inglistons

David and Maureen Pattullo
North Leckaway and Cottages
Turwhappie with Loanhead beyond and to the left. The Robb family at play.

Hillhead as it was in 1973. Eddie and Ellie in their garden in 1999.
Spittalburn and the dual carriageway (above)

Invereighty House with the Mains beyond (left)

The Aiton family (right)

The Mill of Invereighty and the Smith family
The Mains of Kinnettles with the Whirlies and Forfar beyond

Carterhaugh with Bill and Ruth Findlay
The Mains of Kinnettles and some modern farming activities
Another view of Kirkton and two of Foffarty.

The Communion plate (left)
Brigton, seen from Hayston (above)

From the South bank of Kerbet (left)

The Macmillan Douglas family (right)
Chapter 7 - Kinnettles Schools

During the mid 19th century there were two schools in the parish: a parochial school where English reading and writing, Arithmetic, Algebra, Mathematics, Latin, French, Geography, English grammar and Bookkeeping were taught and a “sewing” school in which the school pupils (girls) were taught English reading, and several types of needlework.

The parochial schoolmaster’s salary at that time was £34 4s 4d per year and, since this school was always well attended, he could realise some £50 per year from fees, making a total income of £84 4s 4d annually. He also had statutory accommodations, a well-finished two-storey dwelling house, an excellent schoolroom and two bolls of oatmeal in lieu of a garden. On the other hand the income of the schoolmistress of the sewing school was very poor. She had a free house and garden, but no salary as such, having to depend upon “precarious” school fees.

There were four distinct quarterly rates of fees at the parochial school; two shillings and sixpence (12.5p) for beginners; three shillings for reading and writing; four shillings for arithmetic; five shillings for learned languages. Due to the practice of multiplying schoolbooks in the hands of the scholars, the fees seldom amounted to much more than one half of the total expense of education per quarter, affording a pretty fair remuneration for the schoolmaster of a parochial school.

It is on record that, at the Kinnettles parochial school during the mid 19th century, all young persons between the ages of six and fifteen could read, and nearly all could write, only one person over the age of fifteen having been recorded as being unable to read or write. The total number of scholars in Kinnettles parish at this time was recorded as 112.

There were only four head teachers at the Douglastown school over the 103 years of its life. Mr Martin was the longest serving from his appointment on April 25th 1866 to July 1918 when he retired, 52 years in all. John West succeeded him, but stayed only 2 years. Mr Thom, “Dominie Tam” as he was affectionately known by several older people around the Parish, came in 1920, and James Falconer Edward took over from him in 1947. In 1969, the unsavoury task of presiding over the school’s closure fell to him.
The following extracts were taken from the schoolmaster’s records, which started in 1866. They yield insights into the school, its pupils, teachers and visitors, as well as mentioning the illnesses and issues of the day.

1876

January 3\textsuperscript{rd} to 7\textsuperscript{th}. School closed on Monday for the New Year’s Holiday. Attendance very unsatisfactory partly owing to the season and partly to sickness. Whooping cough prevails to some extent in the Parish. Bronchitis also prevalent.

1878

December 30\textsuperscript{th} to January 3\textsuperscript{rd}. Opened and closed at the usual hours. Gave pupils a holiday on New Year’s day.

1879

January 6\textsuperscript{th} to 10\textsuperscript{th}. Visited by the Rev. Th. J. Pattison, Clerk to the School Board.

January 20\textsuperscript{th} to 24\textsuperscript{th}. Three new pupils from Inverarity Public School entered on the roll. Half holiday on Monday for the funeral of our Clergyman’s daughter. Average attendance: Boys 57. Girls 35. Total 92.

1896

Report.

Kinnettles Public School 23\textsuperscript{rd} July 1896 (Forfar).

“The School is conducted in a bright and efficient manner and makes on the whole a decidedly good appearance. A good deal of care is bestowed on the general neatness and Writing of Exercises of the four Upper Standards. Their Arithmetic is also exceedingly well done and Composition and Spelling are generally of good quality.
Three or four pupils in the higher class are backward at Reading but as a whole the Reading is satisfactory and intelligence and Grammar rank as good. The lines of poetry are read or repeated and, as a rule, well explained. The third and fourth Standards know their Geography very well and the two Upper Standards have a very fair knowledge of theirs. History also has been studied with very fair results. The children in the lower division are frankly and sympathetically treated and have made good progress. Singing, Needlework and Physical Drill have been taught very satisfactorily. A good pass is made by those in Agriculture and Domestic Economy.”


1896 August 3rd to 7th. School opened and closed at the usual hours. Attendance most satisfactory. Scholars had their annual picnic at Fothringleham on Friday.

1900 December 3rd to 7th. One boy and two girls left, the girls having been convicted of theft and sent to Glamis.

1914 November 16th to 29th. Another suspected case of Scarlet Fever among the pupils. Sent family home.

November 30th to December 4th. Case of Scarlet Fever not proved and family are allowed to return.

December 7th to 11th. One girl left school by Doctor’s orders suffering from St. Vitus-Dance, not allowed to return until Spring.
1916 January 3rd to 7th. Gave a holiday on Friday to enable Lady Baxter to prepare the school for the entertainment given by Sir George and herself in the evening.

January 17th to 21st. Two new pupils entered on the roll, one from the Isle of Skye.

September 11th to 15th. Holiday on Friday as Lady Baxter sent the older children to Dundee to see the “Battle of the Somme” films.

1918 Report

Kinnettles Public School. C. Forfar.

“The class of the present session sees the retirement of Mr. Martin, the respected Headmaster of Kinnettles School. Mr. Martin possessed the distinction of being the only old parochial teacher in this district and one of the few survivors of that body in Scotland. For over fifty years he has been actively engaged in the work of public instruction; to the end he has proved himself a competent and vigorous teacher who had always at heart the best interest of his pupils.....................”

Sadly George Martin saw little of his retirement, since he died in November of that same year.

John West took over in August 1918 and introduced a number of changes to the school organisation and curriculum. There is evidence, however, that this did not meet with full co-operation from the other teacher.

1919 April 11th. The attendance this week has been excellent. Registers marked and closed at the normal times. Last night the children of Kinnettles School gave a performance of the School Operetta entitled, “Prince Lu of Kyle”, in the Kirkton Hall. There was a crowded house of parents and friends and the drawings, which go to the Soup Kitchen Fund, amounted to over £20. The school was closed this afternoon for the Easter holidays.
The Supplementary class did very good work. The Arithmetic of the Qualifying class was weak and will receive more attention. The other subjects were good. Composition in Seniors II is weak.

On the whole, work is progressing satisfactorily. The attendance in the Junior Department has been excellent this week. In the Senior Department there are 12 absentees today, and of these 9 are employed planting potatoes. I have discovered that the reading of the highest class in the Junior room is inclined to be parrot work. There is this danger when the same short lesson is gone over too often and I have recommended that Miss S. cover more ground - make her lessons longer.

23rd May. Empire Day was celebrated today. Lady Baxter of Invereighty was present while the children sang their patriotic songs and saluted the flag which was unfurled by one of the boys in the Supplementary class. Colonel Fothringham of Fothringham and Professor Stegall, University College, Dundee. addressed the children.

30th May. 4 children in the supplementary class have left, having been granted exemption certificates. Another two families have left the district. On the roll this week: 69.

6th June. The weather has been ideal this week and the attendance excellent. I have again found it necessary to call Miss S.’s attention to the spitting on slates. Every child should have a sponge and water for the purpose of cleaning slates.
1920

19th March. Mr. M. Donald of His Majesty’s Inspectors Service visited the school on Monday and remained the whole day.

26th March. A Concert (school) was held in the Parish Hall on Thursday night of this week. A double attendance was marked that day and the children dismissed at 2.00pm. The concert was in aid of the school piano fund and was most successful, over £17 being realised.

23rd April. The attendance this week in the Senior Department has been very poor, many of the older children being kept at home to assist in potato planting.

30th April. The school children were medically examined today. Only one pupil was absent. One family has been excluded as they were suffering from an infectious skin disease.

28th May. Empire Day was celebrated on Monday. Lady Baxter of Invereighty and Colonel Baxter of Kincaldrum were amongst those present while Rev. M. Donald, The Manse, Kinnettles, addressed the children. The children sang their patriotic songs and saluted the flag.

Of course, some children ‘skipped’ school for reasons other than illness and farmwork. Especially on a beautiful day in June!

There’s no a clood in the sky,
The hill’s clear as can be,
An the broon road’s windin ower it.
   But – no’ for me!
It’s June , wi a splairge o’ colour
In glen and on hill,
An it’s me wad be lyin up yonner,
   But then – there’s the schule.

Ay! - the schule is a winnerfu’ place,
   Gin ye tak it a’ roon,
An I’ve nae objection to lessons,
   Whiles - but in June?
16th November. Today Mr. J. S. Sutherland of the Scottish Band of Hope Union visited the school and delivered to the pupils a lecture entitled, “Barley, Bread and Beer.”

19th November. This afternoon the Inspectress of Sewing and Cookery visited the school. On investigation she discovered that no work in sewing or knitting had been given out to any girl in the Senior room or supervised by Miss S, from the time the school was re opened after the Summer holidays until the day she left to take up duties in Careston, except in the case of one pupil.

Thus ended an unhappy period for Miss S., who was recorded at one time to be absent with “nervous debility”. Soon afterwards Mr West’s characteristic hand was replaced by that of James Thom.

17th December. On Wednesday Miss Carswell, Physical Instructress under the Authority, visited the school and gave a demonstration lesson of indoor exercises and games.

1921 27th June. On Friday I was absent again from 2.00pm attending the Rural Science Course. The Senior Division was engaged in Silent Reading.

1935. 3rd May. The school was re opened after the Spring Holiday on Monday. On Tuesday Nurse Smart visited the school and inspected for cleanliness. On Friday morning the Rev. A Munro and the Rev. L. Beedie visited the school in connection with Religious Instruction.
10th May. The school was closed on Monday on the occasion of the King’s Jubilee Day. The children assembled at the school at 9.30am and were presented with a Jubilee tin of sweets from the Education Committee of the County Council as well as gifts presented by the Earl and Countess of Strathmore to scholars within the Glamis Estate and by Mrs. Harley to those resident in the parish of Kinnettles. Games and Sports were engaged in on the Brigton Estate for the rest of the morning, the prizes for the latter being gifted by Mr. Henry Harley. Miss Saffley, with the help of Nurse Graham, visited the school on Friday. Extractions were done in the morning and stopplings in the afternoon.

15th November. The school was closed on Thursday because it was required for a Polling Station. The attendance has been good although the weather has been either wet or frosty.

On such a day village children might visit an elderly neighbour

When she sat by the fire wi’ the cat on her knee
Her heart was as young and as blithe as could be;
She aye read the papers, and was up in the news,
Tho’ she differed at times wi’ some o’ their views.

The weans would ca’ in on their way frae the schule
To speir for her health if they thought she was ill;
“Tho’ I’m stiff, I’m gey stuffy,” was what she would say,
“I used to be soople, but I’ve had my day.”
She liked the bairns and would get them to sing;  
"Their voices," she said, "were like larks in the spring."

A haun’fu’ o’ sweets frae the press she wad tak’,
Bid a cheery guid-day, "don’t be lang till ye’re back.”

29th November. Mr. Andrew L. Barr of the Scottish Band of Hope Union delivered an address on Temperance to the Senior classes on Wednesday afternoon. As the result of flittings at the Martinmas term, nine scholars were removed from the roll leaving 52 in the school.

1936

20th November. Nurse Gordon spent Monday afternoon in school examining the scholars. A few pupils have been absent during the week suffering from impetigo and broken-out faces. A few are in attendance at school with scabby faces.

1938.

18th February. This week the Summer timetable was resumed. Now the closing time is 3.45pm instead of 3.30pm. The Junior Division recorded 100% in attendance and the Seniors were also all present with the exception of one boy who has been off for three weeks with threatened meningitis.

25th February. A boy in Senior III, Joseph Ross broke his leg on Tuesday on his way home from school. He had been sliding down the telegraph pole at the Kerbet Bridge and on landing, his foot had doubled under him.

6th May. Dr. Sinclair looked into the school on Thursday morning for a few minutes to enquire if school was free of infectious diseases. Nurse Young also visited the school on the same morning and examined the girls under observation. The scholars have been unfortunate in the matter of accidents this Spring, one having been absent for two weeks with a broken leg, another for two weeks with a burnt shoulder and a third for one week with a staved wrist. The result of a fall off a stack. One boy returned this week after being absent for five weeks having an operation for appendicitis. For the first time I suppose in the history of the school, the roll is under the fifty mark, being now a modest 49.

2nd June. Dr. Laidlaw visited the school on Tuesday morning. On Thursday at 4.00pm a boy, Alexander Allan, leading a bicycle, was knocked down by a motor.
1940.  
8th March.  On Monday morning, Mr. Ross, the newly appointed dentist called and examined the scholars’ teeth. Miss Kirk returned to duty on Wednesday morning. The dyke which was knocked down on the night of the 14th to 15th February by a passing motor vehicle was rebuilt on Wednesday and Thursday. Two pupils having removed to Perthshire were marked off, leaving a roll of 43.

29th March.  Six of the senior boys were again engaged digging the garden when weather was suitable for about two hours each day. I could only supervise the work by brief visits, but from what I saw they worked consistently and thoroughly.

1947.  14th February.  The school has been closed all week owing to a severe snowstorm. The roads were blocked with drifts and a level overall depth was about fifteen inches. Two pupils turned up on Monday and two on Wednesday.

28th February.  The school has been closed for the last three days of the week. Continuous snow fell on Wednesday for eighteen hours. A strong wind was blowing and every road filled with drifts. No motor traffic was to be seen on the roads until Saturday.

7th March.  On Monday eight pupils were present at the opening hour but they were sent home. I let it be known that the school would reopen on the Tuesday and over a score turned up. The attendance for the week was 69.7%, which in the prevailing conditions of the roads may be deemed satisfactory.

28th March.  Two of the Junior pupils have been absent from school for six weeks. The
road to their home about two miles from school situated near Kincaldrum Hill has been blocked with deep drifts of snow during all that time. The thaw has set in and some good regular attenders could not reach school owing to flooded paths and roads. The attendance for this week was 81%.

31st October. Roll: 39. Average 96.7%.

20th November. The wedding of H.R.H. Princess Elizabeth took place today. Children granted one day’s holiday.

24th December. School closed today for the Christmas holidays. The children were given a Christmas Party by members of the W.R.I. As this was held in the Duncan Hall, Kinnettles, permission to mark a double attendance in the registers was granted by Mr. Eadie. Roll 40. Average 95.1%.


1965.  16th August. The school reopened today after the summer vacation. Roll now down to 18.


1967.  8th November. Roll 16.

Mr James Edward giving a Nature lesson, apparently on the subject of Red Squirrels.
LETTER RECEIVED FROM DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

10th January, 1969

At a recent meeting of the Education Committee, it was decided that Homlettes School should be closed at the earliest practicable date. While it had been intended that the closure would take place at Easter or Summer, 1969, the parents, on consultation that have taken place subsequent to the Education Committee meeting, have clearly indicated that they wish the necessary changes to be introduced immediately.

Accordingly arrangements have been made to transfer the pupils concerned either to Flassan or Forfar West Schools with effect from Monday, 3rd February, 1969.

Signed

A. McLeod
Deputy Director of Education
Chapter 8 - Kinnettles Crack

There is a story told of a stranger who visited the church of Kinnettles one day and caused a stir amongst the people of the parish, none more so than one Lucy Johnstone. The stranger was a Mr. Walter Ogilvy, the only man ever to have set her heart alight. He, in turn, felt his very soul move towards her when he first beheld her in church that first day. The stranger became a regular visitor at church and sat in a pew at the front of the gallery where he could see Lucy Johnstone sit with her father in a humble seat in the lower part of the church.

Eventually it became clear that a marriage was in the offing and Walter and Lucy were to leave the country to seek their fortunes in foreign lands. The following Sunday, attendance at church was an unusual one. Walter Ogilvy sat in his accustomed place but he did not even glance towards Adam Johnstone’s pew in search of Lucy. It was as though he knew she was not there. This was highly unusual as Lucy had never been known to miss church and when old Adam was asked the reason for her non-attendance, he referred to her having a slight headache. During the following week it was known throughout the parish that Walter was to leave Hayston, on the Saturday, but not a whisper was there of any wedding or of Lucy becoming his wife in Australia. It soon became evident that Adam knew nothing of any engagement and when Saturday arrived Walter bade an affectionate farewell to old Adam but there was never a mention of Lucy.

The following day, Sunday, all were at church as usual, including Lucy, but how she had changed. She had a distinct air of sadness about her and her cheeks were very pale. As the months wore on, Lucy shrank from meeting friends and became even paler as though consumed by a huge and secret grief, known only to her. Eventually she took to staying in the house, not even venturing out to attend church on a Sunday. That winter, as snow lay upon the ground, old Adam was told by his wife that shame was about to fall upon their household – Lucy was about to give birth to a baby. The old man was furious and cursed his daughter and strode off to the kitchen to throw her out of his house for ever, but Lucy was not there. She was nowhere to be seen!
That night snow fell thickly as the villagers searched in vain for Lucy. It ceased to fall towards daybreak but a severe, sharp frost set in. Still the search went on and at last old Adam found his daughter and her baby, but it was too late, they were both dead.

Adam Johnstone, it was said, was never himself again and within the year, both he and his wife were dead.
Three years passed and one Sunday, a stranger appeared in the parish of Kinnettles. He took the name of Captain Vernon. He became great friends with the then Minister of Kinnettles church who offered him a place to stay in the Manse. The stranger declined the kind offer and chose to stay in the little hamlet of Thornton. One day whilst out walking together the Captain confessed to the Minister that he was not a well man and, in fact, stumbled whilst crossing the rickety old planks of the Kerbet bridge. He soon regained his strength however, as they approached the churchyard and the Captain enquired of an unmarked grave. The Minister told him that it belonged to one Lucy Johnstone and her baby. There followed an oppressive silence then the Captain bade adieu at the gate and proceeded on his way to Thornton.

Several days later, the Minister received an urgent message to go to Thornton to visit someone who was gravely ill. On arriving at the cottage in Thornton, the Minister could see that it was the Captain who lay so very, very ill. A doctor was suggested but the stranger declined, saying that he had already seen a doctor and nothing more could be done for him. He had called the Minister along to offer him a confession. He asked for forgiveness then said that his real name was Walter Ogilvy. He had used an assumed name because of the disgrace that he felt he had brought upon the Johnstone family. He then proceeded to tell the sorry tale to the Minister – of how things had not gone well in Australia and that all he could think about was Lucy and Scotland. “Every field and hedgerow and meadow, reminded me of Lucy Johnstone. The winds, the birds, the streams ever whispered her endearing name. Her once happy home of innocence and love, the humble cottage on the hillside, my imagination supplied the picture.” Walter Ogilvy’s last request was to be buried near Lucy. Three days later, the mortal remains of Walter Ogilvy were consigned to the tomb. His dying request was not forgotten, and he sleeps in the quiet churchyard of Kinnettles, side by side with Lucy Johnstone.

\begin{quote}
And now at ev’ning’s twilight hour,
When solemn silence reigns,
To heaven above we joyful raise
Our heart’s adoring strains.
\end{quote}
Another story of Kinnettles spins the tale of

The Lily of the Vale.

Arthur and Mary Cargill were the proud parents of seven lovely boys but both yearned for a girl and as the eighth child was born, the joyful news that it was a girl soon spread around the valley of Strathmore. Jeanie Cargill was described as “a halo of goodness and beauty encompassing her wherever she went, she was indeed the charm and delight of her rural home, the sunshine and joy of the lovely strath in which she dwelt”. Admirers of every station basked in her smiles, but to one only had she given any encouragement. His name was Percy Guthrie, son and heir to the rich and wealthy farmer of Scroggerfield.

Percy and Jeanie attended Kinnettles parish school together and had become warmly attached to each other. Many a happy ramble they had in the sylvan woods of Brigton, and along the rich haughs and meadows that fringed with emerald beauty the banks of the swift running Kerbet.

They were often on the receiving end of much teasing about their relationship from the other boys in the wee school of Kinnettles. One day the teasing got out of hand and Percy felt he had to take some action. The biggest boy in the group was the one selected by the others to stand up to Percy. Much encouragement was needed to persuade Davie Gray to take up the challenge.

“Tak’ aff yer coat, Davie – tak’ aff yer coat,” cried the excited bairns; “ye canna feicht wi’ yer coat on, man,” as they formed a wide living ring around the combatants, in front of the gateway leading to the home farm of Brigton.

Percy was first to throw his jacket off, but Davie’s seemed reluctant to come off. “Tak’ yer time, my lad,” Davie growled as he struggled to rid himself of the homespun coat. “I’ll be at ye in a jiffy.”

The other boys could wait no longer. “Davie’s feart. Davie’s feart, and winna feight.”
“Fa says I’m feart?” yelled Davie sounding as though he’d take on anything but actually showing no signs of immediate action.

“Come awa’ hame,” said a little fellow, “lat him pech, and pech awa’; he’s feart I tell ye, and winna feight.”

“Fa says I’m feart and winna feight?” roared Davie for the third time and he launched himself in the general direction of Percy who deftly stepped aside to avoid the intended blow. Davie, meanwhile, propelled onward by the sheer force of his intention, shot across the road, tripped on a boulder and landed headfirst in a miry ditch!

In the meantime one little spy had gone back to school and told the schoolmaster of the goings-on at the end of Brigton farm road. Rushing up the road, the master was just in time to see poor Davie being dragged out of the ditch covered in filthy, evil smelling red clay.

“My laddies! Oh! What’s this you’ve dune? Killed poor Davie Gray? Wha’s brain planned the plot? Wha’s hand did the deed? Wae’s me! That I should hae lived tae see this day!” But to the delight of the grey-haired, weeping headmaster, Davie slowly rose to his feet and explained the situation in a few words, right generously exonerating Percy Guthrie from all blame.

The practical result of that evening’s encounter was that no one ever taunted or jeered at Percy and Jeanie again as they continued with their relationship.

Their close friendship lasted throughout the years of schooling at Kinnettles until the day arrived when they had to go their separate ways; he to Montrose Academy and she to be educated at home by a private governess. It was towards the end of October when the last day of their “skailing” arrived and they walked home together, but instead of going the usual route by the hedgerows of Brigton, they walked in the direction of the bridge which spanned the Kerbet at Douglastown. Eventually they reached the far side of the wood where they knew they had to part company. Jeanie turned to say goodbye but Percy took her hand and said. “Not yet, Jeanie. This is our very last night of school together and I feel so very, very sad.” Jeanie confessed to not knowing how she felt, but Percy vowed that they would meet again one day. They parted with a kiss – the first kiss of love.
Meanwhile things had not been going well for Jeanie’s father, despite his prudent and far-seeing ways. Eventually he was declared bankrupt but he managed to keep the shame of it all from his family. The ruin was so complete that it almost broke Arthur Cargill, however he was a determined man and he heroically decided to try to retrieve his fortunes by seeking a new home in the far West. When he told his daughter of their misfortunes and his plan to recover his wealth and position, she was horrified and declared that wherever he went she would go also. Arthur’s plan had been to have her marry Percy Guthrie but Jeanie was having none of it, if it meant being parted from her beloved father.

Then came the night when the Lily of the Vale and Percy Guthrie met and parted for the last time. The harvest moon shone brightly over the woods of Brigton as Jeanie Cargill and Percy Guthrie wandered arm in arm along the banks of the Kerbet. Percy declared that this would be their last meeting for some time. He still had plans to marry Jeanie one year hence when he would follow the Cargill family out West. Jeanie herself, despite telling him otherwise, had a strong feeling that they would never meet again. She was right.

True to plan, the Cargill family set off on their long voyage west. One night a storm blew up and Jeanie Cargill was swept away as huge waves broke over the deck of the ship and took her out through the fragile poop-cabin into the dark and troubled sea. When the news of Jeanie’s death reached Percy Guthrie he was devastated but did not show his grief openly. He never married but carried on working quietly and industriously and in the course of time did succeed to the lease of Scroggerfield. He lived in comparative affluence and peace until he died and was laid to rest in the quiet churchyard of Kinnetles around which flowed the waters of the Kerbet which he and Jeanie had loved so well.
The Lily’s Farewell

Farewell, my own sweet Highland glen,
Away from thee I roam;
Afar from scenes and haunts of men
I seek a distant home.

No more I’ll see thy bonnie broom,
Thy daisies on the lea,
Nor yet the waving bluebells bloom,
Beneath the greenwood tree.

No more I’ll hear the lav’rock’s strains,
Breathed sweet at early morn,
Nor, ringing glad the happy plains,
The linnet on the thorn.

No more I’ll hear the blackbird’s song
At evening’s silent hour;
Nor yet the thrush the notes prolong,
In woodland leafy bower.

But though afar from thee I roam,
No more my glens to see,
My heart will bless my Highland hame,
My thoughts shall be of thee.

And though the billows swift may bear
The ship across the sea,
And balmy gales may waft despair,
My heart shall beat for thee.

And when afar from haunts of men,
My future home I see,
Oh! then, my own sweet Highland glen,
My heart shall turn to thee!
Will-o’-the-Wisp

Will-o-the-Wisp is a “strolling demon who once entered a monastery in order to play pranks upon the monks.” He is sometimes called Jack-o’-Lanthern but in the Howe of Strathmore he was called “Spunkie.”

The tale is told of one weary night towards the end of December 1822, when the occupants of the farmhouse of Foffarty were gathered in the warm kitchen around a blazing wood fire. The lasses were spinning busily and the young men were seated by the ingle with the Dominie of Kinnettles in their midst. While the guidwife was busily engaged in preparing the evening meal, the old armchair of the guidman stood empty. The man himself had gone to the Kirriemuir market but was expected home at any minute. The table was spread and all awaited his coming. The clock struck nine. It was now long after his expected return and everyone became concerned for his safety.

Suddenly the door flew open and the farmer himself staggered through the door and sank into his own chair by the fire. He was covered in miry mud from head to foot. “Fat’s come owre ye, guidman?” asked his concerned wife.

“Am I in my ain hoose at last?” gasped the half demented man.

“Deed are ye, Robert,” said his wife “and there’s a’ your ain’ laddies and lassies around you; and here’s the dominie frae Kinnettles, come tae welcome ye hame, and yer supper’s waitin you on the table.”

The dominie asked the guidwife to give her man a dram out of the bottle which she duly did and the colour gradually returned to the guidman’s cheeks. He then proceeded to tell the assembled
company of his adventures on the way home from Kirrie market. He recounted tales of “warslin’ and fechtin’ the spunkies and fairlies and witches and waterkelpies.

“Spunkies and fiddlesticks,” interrupted the Dominie. “It’s all imagination – a mere chimera.”

“Fat dis the body say!” shouted the farmer. “Wi’ a’ your buke learnin’ – ye ken naething about it ata. I wish ye had only been wi’ me this winter nicht, an’ ye wad hae seen wi’ yer ain een if it was a mere keemera or no.”

The tales were again recounted over a plate of bacon and eggs followed by a dram or two. It appeared that after finishing his business at Kirrie market, including a few drams of Glenlivet, he and the farmers of Benshie, Glassell, Redford and Dragonha’, together took the road home. They eventually parted company and took their own ways. Benshie shouted to the guidman of Foffarty, “Tak care Faffarty; mind the warlocks and the spunkies!”

The words of Burns’ “Tam o’ Shanter” came to mind as the guidman threaded his way through the peat mosses and swampy marshes, “that lay atween me an’ Faffarty.” Then he recounted coming across “an awfu’ sicht!” He told of seeing the Devil himself. However, being a man of some courage, he took up his stout stick and began swiping the warlocks to the right of him then to the left of him, until the hedges of Brigton hid them from his sight.

“A mere phenomenon of nature,” scoffed the Dominie.

“Phenominum o’natur’ or no Dominie, tak’ care as ye gae hame to Kinnettles the nicht.”

At last the hour arrived for the Dominie to depart and the guidman offered to escort him along the road. One of the sons, Jamie, was ordered to carry the lantern and the group set off. It was a beautiful night, the ground was crisp and hard with frost and the air clear and sharp. Sure enough, the guidman suddenly shouted out, “Yonder’s the spunkies i’ the moss. Did you no hear yon lauch?”
The dominie remained quite unperturbed saying that these were natural exhalations of a marsh. Jamie and his father remained unconvinced but, by this time, they had reached the margin of the Kerbet which was very much swollen by the recent rains and had overflowed its banks, though the rickety bridge was still intact. The Dominie declared that the bridge would not take the weight of all three travellers and so he alone would cross it.

*Brave Daniel reached, without a word,*  
*The middle of the trembling ford,*  
*When guffaw from the bank,*  
*A laugh arose – his fate deplore –*  
*A cry of terror reached the shore –*  
*“I’ll never see my laddies more”*  
*And ‘tween the planks he sank!*

*“Whaur are ye?” cried mine host behind,*  
*“For I the bodie canna find,*  
*I’ll tell’t to a’ the clachan;*  
*Ou there ye are, wat, drucket hen,*  
*Half-drooned; I wot ye’ll no again*  
*Mak’ sport wi’ ony in the glen,*  
*O’ waterkelpy’s lauchin!*

The shamefaced Dominie was duly escorted to the door of his house in Kinnettles where his companions bade him a kind goodnight and hoped there would be no ill effects to follow his sudden and mysterious immersion in the haunted waters of the Kerbet!
The Mausoleum Mystery?

John Aberdeen Harvey, of the West Indies plantations and later of Kinnettles House, married Angelica Dingwall Fordyce of Bruelley, Mintlaw, Aberdeenshire. They had seventeen or eighteen offspring of which John Inglis Harvey was one.

He married his first wife Elizabeth Eleanor Wiggens, then went to India where he became accountant general of the Bengal East India Company. Elizabeth died in India. Her body was interred in India and her husband promised he would bring her body back home to be buried beside him when he died, which he did.

Whilst still in India he married his second wife Rajam Manjo, but despite a widely held belief that she was an Indian princess, the name, when translated, simply means daughter of an Indian prince. His second wife also died in India, but because she was a Muslim could not be buried so she was preserved in a barrel of arrack and placed in a tomb in India. Unfortunately the tomb was flooded during the monsoon and the barrel floated around a bit before being shipped home to Britain. The tale took an even more gruesome turn during the voyage home, when the sailors broke into the barrel and drank the spirits contained therein! The mausoleum was built to house the body, as it had to be above ground.

The mystery lies in the fact that the tomb is empty. So where did the body go? Was it secretly buried along with the husband and first wife? Or was it taken by the body snatchers of the day - perhaps in the hope that it would have been interred with all the jewellery and finery of the daughter of a prince?

According to the Harvey ancestor who related this story (which is still being researched), more information may come to hand and will be made public one day. It still does not, however, explain which one might be the ghost of Kinnettles house!
The Ghost of Kinnettles House

The story goes that the lady of the house, accompanied by her dog “Buzz”, was walking along the drive from the house toward the walled garden when she met an old lady with long white hair, dressed in white. When asked what she was doing, the old lady replied that she was looking for a place to rest and that she spent all her time searching for her resting-place. Meanwhile, “Buzz”, usually rather boisterous, was sitting cowering next to his mistress, trembling. She walked on to the garden and the old lady suddenly disappeared.

These events were related to Arthur Brown, an employee of the estate for forty years, who was working in the grounds but he was rather sceptical of the story. However, later on, Arthur began to experience strange phenomena himself. He described these manifestations as a sudden rush of air on the pathways, where no wind or traffic could have caused it. When this occurred, his dog “Dinkie” huddled at his side, shaking with fear.

Could this have been the ghost of Mrs. Inglis Harvey who was interred in the mausoleum and perhaps later removed to be buried alongside her husband in Kinnettles Kirkyard?
Chapter 9 - Farming, Frolics and Fun

The farming year

There were two distinct breaks in the farming year. Whitsun term 28th May and Martinmas term 28th November.

The year started with sowing the neeps, then huowin the neeps; cutting the hay, coling the hay, the corn hairst, lifting the tatties, carting out the dung, feeding cattle, taking in neeps, threshing, ploughing, sowing grain seed, sowing grass seed, planting tatties then back to sowing neeps.

It was usual to have a seven-year rotation. After the corn and tattie hairsts much time was spent ploughing and harrowing. The ground was double tined and then sown with winter wheat. In the springtime it was straiked and then grass seed sown and rolled the same day so that the drought could not get in. Because the grass would not be high enough to be cut with the grain it was left to the following year, but the ‘aftermath’ would be grazed that Autumn. The following year the field would be used as pasture and so dunged naturally by the sheep or cattle. Finally at the end of this second year it would be ploughed and corn sown in the April.

Neeps would be put in after corn before the Whitsun term. They ‘briered’ about a fortnight afterwards and then it was up to all the workers to go out together to the clatt to single the neeps. There would be the foreman, second, third and so on, orraman and loon followed by the gaffer and sometimes the cattler and his dog, but the order could vary. The pace was set and everyone had to keep up, ‘push and pull’. The neeps would be singled out again about a month later and that’s when recriminations would start, as a bad ‘dreel’ was discovered!
Sheep were put out to eat the neeps off the drill but neeps to be used for cattle fodder had to be ‘pu’ed’ and ‘cairted’ hame to the farm where the cattle were housed in the court for winter. Yellow neeps were pulled mid October and topped and tailed with a ‘tapner’; this was a sore, back breaking job, especially on cold frosty mornings. Swede neeps were best left to be ‘frostit’ before being pu’ed and stored in sheds and pits. About a tenth of the acreage of neeps would be ‘sheughed’ by putting two drills of the swedes into a row and ploughing earth over them. They were then ploughed up in May month and cleaned; that is ‘topped and tailed’, before being fed to the cattle. Davie Ramsay recalls how “They stayed wonderfully fresh, a lot better than stored swedees.”

Immediately all the neeps were lifted the ground would be ploughed and harrowed then sown in barley just before the May term. Tatties too needed to be planted in the springtime.

The hay was left until the end of June, when the pollen level was lower, so that it did not bother the horses. The cut hay was turned two or three times, in ten to twelve working days, then it was made into coles where it was left until the corn hairst. Then it was taken in to fill the hayloft or built into stacks. On rainy days the implements would be taken to the smiddy for sharpening and often the horses taken along for shoeing.

The corn hairst lasted about six or seven weeks from mid-September onwards. The corn was cut first, then the barley and lastly, the wheat. One pair and a half (three horses) had to be used to give extra pull on sloping ground and everyone worked long hours, including four Saturday afternoons without pay, to get in the hairst. The horses pulled the binder, which cut the crop and bound it into sheaves. These sheaves were then built up into stooks, to allow a passage of air to sweep through them and the sun to dry them out. Corn and barley held ten sheaves to a stook whereas wheat could hold twelve sheaves, being more stable. Leading
(lading) then took place when the stooks were forked on to a cart with flakes or big sides and lead in to the cornyard to be built into stacks. These stacks were built off the ground on ‘stathles’ with a wooden boss in the middle. The horseman then forked the sheaves from the cart to the stack builder. He crawled round and round the base of the stack, building the sheaves higher and higher, heads of grain to the middle of the stack and the sheaf sloping down to the outside of the stack so that the rain would run off. The stacks were then ‘theekit’ with wheat straw again to help run off the rainwater and finally finished off at the peak with a corn dolly, made by the horsemen. Some areas had their own particular shape for corn dollies of their parish. The stacks were then tied down with ‘sparty’ rope, criss-crossed, and left until being threshed out the following year.

The thresh was a big event in the farming year and when the travelling threshing mill arrived, it took 14 to 16 men to work it so men were borrowed from neighbouring farms at threshing time. Often two wives from the cottar houses would ‘louse’ on top of the mill.
A ‘stoorie’ backbreaking job! The grain was allowed to pour into big grain bags (one and a half hundredweight for corn; two hundredweight for barley and two and a quarter hundredweight for wheat). These bags were lifted onto a barrel then on the back of each man, upstairs into the corn loft. The straw (corn) from the thresh was used for c’aff mattresses or built into a straw ‘soo’ to be used for bedding down the animals. Wheat straw was also used in bunches to ‘straw’ the tattie pits.

The horsemen worked the tattie hairst pulling the digger and the carts. Women and school bairns gathered a ‘bit’ or ‘half a bit’, until each field was lifted.

The tatties were carted away and built into a tattie pit, covered with layers of earth and wheat straw to keep out the frost. Tattie dressing took place later on and the tatties were graded by means of a riddle and bagged, to be sold in town. Broken tatties were dressed out and used for cattle fodder. Big tatties went for ware and little ones ‘chats’ would go for pig feed, while medium sized ones would be kept for seed. Dung had to be carted out and spread on ground that was to be used for neeps or tatties. The cattle were fed inside cattle courts during the winter months and so provided the dung for the fields.

Other jobs, which had nothing to do with farming, were carried out by the farm workers, included tree felling. One man with an axe, cut chips from the front and another cut some chips from the rear until the tree looked like two huge pencils standing point to point. An iron wedge was then driven into the cut with a sledgehammer. This wedge reinforced the tree so that it couldn’t fall back in the wrong direction. One then took up the two handled cross saw. Another man took the opposite end of the cross saw and they began to saw backwards and forwards across the axe cut. Everyone was told to get back out of the way and eventually the tree shivered and fell with a tremendous thud. The branches were lopped off first of all and the bigger ones were loaded on to a cart, whilst the smaller twigs (hag) were left by hedges to fill in the gaps. Chains were fixed on to the horses’ harness and they were yoked to pull the tree back to the farm where it was sawn up for firewood. Farms which had no trees to fell had to arrange to have a load of slabs picked up from the sawmill and brought back to be used as firewood to supplement the supply of coal in the bothy and cottar house fires, as well as the farmhouse fire.
Another yearly event was the killing of the pig. The pig killer was booked to come and do the job, usually at the weekend. The carcass was split in half and left to hang all night. The next day the carcass was taken to the kitchen table where it was divided into four hams and two ribs and the trotters. The four hams and one of the ribs were put into a tub of brine and the other rib was cut up and used right away. A rare treat shared around all the farm folk. The offal was cleaned and one of the cottar wives made ‘potted heid’, with the head and the trotters boiled together with two freshly killed rabbits. The next night the puddings were filled to make mealy puddings, the stuffing being made using oatmeal and onions, salt and spice. The filled puddings were tied with string about every four or five inches and boiled in hot water. Once cooled they were stored in the meal bunker. When the hams were cured all the farm workers who had contributed to the feeding of the pig got a slice or two of salty bacon. Another rare treat!

In Kinnettles some of the farms were quite small two hundred year ago and, according to the Statistical accounts, it seemed that labour, although hired in some cases, was largely supplied by the farmer’s own family. Only one or two farmers had cottar houses in which they could house hired help (fee’d married men). Many appeared to prefer to hire single men but there would seem to be no verified record of bothy life in Kinnettles. The bothies would probably, in the early days, have been something like a shed with an earth floor, a single door and window, wooden frame beds with a c’aff mattress on each. The mattress stood about two feet high when first filled but gradually worked its way into the shape of the sleeper. The men slept two to a bed in order of seniority and a big coal and/or stick fire burned almost continuously. Furniture would have, later on, consisted of Kists; a Claes kist and a Meal kist per man. A bothy form would have stood in front of the bothy fire and a press, or larder, by the side of the fire or in a corner. Other furniture might have included a wash stand and basin, together with a slop pail.
This whole building was often looked after by the farm maid or the wife of one of the married men living in a nearby cottar house. She would be paid to fill the paraffin lamp, light the bothy fire (for the men coming in from work) and ‘redd up’ (keep the place clean and tidy).

The bothy men would have a rota of duties and be expected to take their turn faithfully ‘hackin’ sticks for ‘pannie’, ‘biggin the fire’, fetching the water in the bucket, cooking the porridge in the morning or a fry-up in the evening. Someone would have been responsible for fetching the sausages for the meal. Then each of the lads would have a turn ‘bidin ahent’ one weekend in three or four, to ‘see to the horse’.

These lads would often walk or bike home with their washing at the weekends and the mother would have it all washed and ironed ready for the following weekend. Bothy life could be lonely and wearisome so the lads had to make their own entertainment and many played a musical instrument - often by ear. A great number of fine melodian players or accordionists, fiddlers, ‘moothie’ and Jews harp players as well as spoon drummers came out of the bothy, as did many beautiful songs and singers of Ballads of the Bothy.

For the cauld winds they bla in aneth
   My timmer bothy door,
An’ the moosies they djeuk in an’ oot
   The knotholes in the fluir
But that’s no the warst o’ bein here
   Discomforts I can thole,
For it’s lonely at nicht in the bothy.
Other pursuits to while away the long winter nights included dominoes, cards and sometimes darts or draughts, not to mention arm wrestling! Many young lads took no part in this form of entertainment however, preferring to spend hours in the stable grooming their horses or shining and making decorations for the harness, to enhance their appearance at a forthcoming agricultural show or a ploughing match. There was often great companionship between a man and his pair. Many ex-horsemen today say they never ceased to be amazed at the reasoning power of the horse.

In his reminiscences William J. Milne talks of being given his first fee to drive a pair of horses at the age of 16, then he graduated to a three-pair farm in Kinnettles parish in 1845. There he records being part of a set of five men who lived in a bothy quite far away from the actual farmhouse. They were however, often invited into the farmhouse kitchen to eat and were frequently joined by the family in a song or dance. These men only ever entered the parlour, if and when, the Minister came to test their knowledge of Scripture.

A fourteen-year-old schoolboy might go to live in a bothy, miles from his own home. He would start off doing orra jobs with one of the men or even with the gaffer. He had to pu’ neeps, feed cattle, feed hens and collect the eggs or perhaps he’d be sent to spread dung or ro’ up sparty. A little older and this loon might get to work the orrabaist on the bagwallopers or the harra’s. A sixteen or seventeen year old might, if strong and competent enough, get his own pair. A proud day for a young lad!

The bothy lads always held in with the ‘fairm maidie’ so that they could get an odd egg or two or perhaps a little ‘dod o’ butter’ with their milk can. A married man was given, on average, four pints of milk per day and a single man two.
For work the men wore a grey flannel shirt, breeks and ‘nicky tams’ (to stop the bottom of the ‘breeks’ becoming messed up).

A loose dungaree jacket was worn called a ‘greaser’ and on their heads they wore checked cloth bonnets. On the feet were worn woollen home knitted socks and ‘tackity buits’, with heel and toe pieces as reinforcement. Their ‘guid’ clothes consisted of a white shirt (often worn over the flannel one), a serge suit, a ‘guid’ bonnet, polished dress ‘buits’ and a gold pocket watch and chain.

A horseman spent most of his working day seeing to his pair. In the morning he would muck them out and lay down clean straw bedding, then he would groom them morning (and evening), using a Dandy brush, then he would feed them corn and hay before giving them water. After this they would go out to the fields to do a mornings work. At dinnertime they would first be given water as soon as they stopped working, then they’d be fed more corn and sometimes a neep before going out to work all afternoon. At night they were again watered, fed and groomed before settling down for the night. The horseman often checked them again after eight o’clock, before returning to the bothy or cottar house for supper, finally going early to bed himself, so as to be up in the morning at 5.00am to feed and muck them out again. The working day in summer started with ‘yoking’ time at 6.30am, then stopping at 11.00am for two hours, to give the horses a rest. ‘Lousing’ time was 6.00pm each day. Winter working hours were slightly shorter.
Bothy life, though still spartan, improved in the mid 20th century, the buildings themselves having a stone floor and a ceiling and the men being given an allowance of coals, oatmeal, potatoes and milk. Bakers’ vans travelled the countryside selling bread, sugar, tea and other groceries.

Sometimes a system of bartering took place and goods were exchanged for other goods. For example meal may have been offered to the baker in exchange for bread, or a cottar wife might sell eggs to the baker for sugar or tea. Sometimes the odd rabbit, which was surplus to requirements, would also be sold to the baker.

Mighty arguments often arose as buyer and seller tried to strike the best deal! The story goes that one Mistress found that the baker had got the better of her, telling her, that after a conference, all the bakers had decided on a lower price for eggs. She decided to get her own back. Eggs were really a shilling a dozen, but her baker had only offered her tenpence a dozen. The following week she handed over twelve dozen eggs in a covered basket saying she was in a hurry and he could just pay her the ten shillings and count them after she’d gone. He duly handed over the money and she went on her way. Imagine the consternation and fury of the baker when he lifted the cover on the basket only to see twelve dozen bantams’ eggs. When he accosted the little woman about these tiny eggs she replied. “Weel, ye see Maister, the fact is, that oor hens had their conference in the back yaird and they jist made up their minds that it wisna worth their while tae rax themsel’s for eggs at tenpence a dizzen!”
Long ago it was necessary to make their own entertainment and the bothy lads often formed a ‘band’. The musical instruments were often ‘primitive’ but they could produce wonderful sound and many a Broun’s Reel was danced to the music of the Bothy band.

Other forms of entertainment included; diddling competitions, pontoon (played for matches), draughts, cards, darts and dominoes. The bothy lads often held other competitions involving feats of strength; arm wrestling, boxing and lifting the huge “fifty-sixers”, using only the pinkie finger. Davie Ramsay recalls biking along to Kinnettles policy parks to play football with the bothy lads every Tuesday and Thursday evening in the summer time.

Entertainment in the farmhouse could have taken a different turn depending on how much money was available. Some could afford a gramophone upon which they would play the old “78s”, singing or dancing to the sound of Jimmy Shand’s Band. In the centre of these records would be a picture of a dog watching the sound horn of a wind-up gramophone and the writing declared ‘His Master’s Voice’.

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The wireless was a popular form of entertainment in the old days; the football results, the McFlannels (to the theme tune of the Glasgow Highlanders) and Scottish Country-dance music being the order of the day on a Saturday afternoon and evening. It was worth all the bother of having to scrape the verdigris off the terminals of the ‘kjumy’ (accumulator) in order to get it to work properly and produce a good clear sound. After tea the table would be pushed back and the bairns would be dragged up to learn how to dance. All this in preparation for the day when they would grow up and want to be away out dancing all the hours; Broun’s Reel or Strip the Willow, The Lancers and Quadrilles, The Dashing White Sergeant, Eightsome Reel, Circassian Circle, Petronella along with Pride of Erin, Waltz Country, St. Bernard’s Waltz and the Flo’ers o’ Edinburgh (Chase the moosie!). At the Duncan Hall live bands, such as that of Neil Robertson (from Leckaway) played; Neil on the fiddle, Scott Cameron (from Charleston) on the accordion, accompanied by drummer McIntosh. There was also the Kellas Band, the bands of Jim and Will Cameron from Kirriemuir and even the immortal Jimmy Shand played in the Duncan Hall.

Lizzie Milne remembers how ‘Dancie’ Kiddie used to bike out to the Duncan Hall, fiddle o’er his back, in order to play and teach Scottish Country Dancing. The young lads had some difficulty with their footwork and in desperation, ‘Dancie’ used to shout “Hey fut, strae fut”, (hay foot, straw foot). A wonderful character was ‘Dancie’ Kiddie.
Many a ‘never-to-be-forgotten’, night’s dancing (until the wee sma’ hours) was held in the Kinnettles Duncan Hall, long ago. After a long bike or walk home, it was up in the morning early, as usual, to proceed with the work of the farm day - tired or not! Nothing daunted, on would go the clean ‘sark’ and away the boys would go to the Saturday dance on little more than two hours sleep after the Friday dance! The horses would still need to be ‘seen to’ on a Sunday morning at their usual time.

At other times throughout the year, great nights of entertainment would be enjoyed. Cutting out the turnip (neep) lantern for the bairns at Hallowe’en, ‘dookin’ fur aipples’, or ‘likkin traicle scones aff a string’, not to mention the unforgettable Harvest Home dances held in the loft, with all members of the family present, even the bairn!

Mention of ‘the bairn’ brings to mind the ‘ither bairn’. The Sunday morning entertainment provided by Oor Wullie and The Broons of Sunday Post fame.
Chapter 10 - The 1999 survey

In July 1999 Kinnettles Heritage Group distributed a six page confidential questionnaire to each of the 87 dwellings within the old civil Parish boundary. In addition we added 3 properties which are very close to our boundary, where the residents are known to participate actively in the life of the Parish (Loanhead, Broadlands and Mill of Kincaldrum). Of the dwellings visited at least 2 were believed to be unoccupied at that time. Since the survey one further dwelling has been added to the number within the boundary. Of those households which were served a questionnaire, 54 (60%) responded by September, when the survey period closed. The following information is thus not totally representative of all living in Kinnettles, and some caution must be observed when interpreting the findings. However, having now read most of the Kinnettles Kist you may wish to make your own comparisons with the past we have described.

The People

The number of individuals, of all ages, in the responding dwellings was 121, ranging from 1 to 5 per house (average 2.2).

The ages of the inhabitants varied from less than 1 to 85 years, with 2 octogenarians – both women.

Their places of birth were Scotland (70), of which 45 are from Angus; England (17); Kenya (2); and Australia, Burma, Ireland, Singapore, Sweden and New Zealand (1 each). Not everyone responded to this question.

The number of years the families have been associated with Kinnettles varies between 1 and 292.

The number of years at the survey address varies from 1 month to 65 years.
Of the 95 adults who answered, this was their marital status.

![Marital Status Pie Chart]

**Occupation:**

The occupations of the adult residents were very varied, but some broad groupings are indicative of the range of skills revealed:

Agriculture and Horticulture (11), Commerce (8), Cultural (4), Education (4), Engineering and Building (11), Healthcare (10), Housewives (18), Other Professional (6), Retired (18).

There is overlap between some of these groups and thus some respondents fall into 2 categories. There are also quite a few who are not easily classified into any of the above. The gender breakdown of respondents was 42 male and 52 female, indicating the number of women working at this time.
The submitted information on farming is summarised in the next table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of workers employed from within Kinnettles parish</th>
<th>What is the main crop?</th>
<th>Number of acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cereals</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Spring barley, oil seed rape, potatoes</td>
<td>533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Carrots</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Malting barley</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Winter barley</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Cereals</td>
<td>1182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracted out</td>
<td></td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>3612</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are a significant number of the sampled residents (54) who have higher educational or vocational qualifications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of people with degrees in household</th>
<th>Number of households</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Property:

The following chart shows a breakdown of home ownership in the sampled households.
Below is information on the council tax banding of the dwellings of respondents, showing the majority (61.1%) to be in bands B, C and D.

![Council Tax Band Chart](image)

![Central Heating Chart](image)

All have a bath or shower and an inside toilet. Below is a breakdown of the central heating facilities.
Consumer goods:

Respondents had the following items:

Cars:

![Numbers of cars in Household](image)

Televisions:

![Number of Televisions in Household](image)
Satellite Dishes:

Video Recorders:
Computers:

Internet Access:
Refrigerators:

Deep Freezes:
Domestic Animals:

The following data summarise the animals kept in responding households:

Oh Rover, Rover, waes my heart
The morn my doggie we maun pairt
An I may never see you mair
Nor hug you thus and daut your hair.

Or scamper wi’ ye doon the shaws
An lauch tae see ye chase the craws
Your lichtsome bark nae mair may hear
Or share your love my doggie dear

For tho’ you’re but a dog they say
You’ve mair sense than some menfowk hae
You hae at least I’ll ay assert
Than mony men, a truer heart.
In addition there were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of domestic animal</th>
<th>Numbers of animals and households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rabbits</td>
<td>5 in 2 households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamsters</td>
<td>1 in 1 household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea pigs</td>
<td>2 in 1 household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pony or horse</td>
<td>2 in 2 households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pigeons</td>
<td>1 in 1 household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bees</td>
<td>3 hives in 1 household</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Commercial Animals:

The following were reported but are certainly not a complete inventory for the Parish.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commercial animals</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>460 in 4 establishments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>473 in 2 establishments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swine</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chickens</td>
<td>16 in 2 establishments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ducks</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geese</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Conclusions:

- It was interesting to contrast these findings with similar information in the Statistical Accounts, written by the ministers in 1793, 1843 and 1967.

- The size of the population is smaller and much more diversely occupied.

- Although we have inadequate information about the number of children the impression is of far fewer young children than in the past.

- The standard and value of housing is far higher and home ownership is greater.

- Material possessions are certainly more valuable.

- Occupation is no longer dominated by farming and indeed the number employed on farms has fallen since this survey.

- Of the adults, few actually work in the Parish, though there is some evidence of ‘cottaging’, where some of their work is performed at home by employing fast electronic transfer of information to and from base offices.

- Commuting to local towns or further afield is predominantly by car.
Acknowledgements

Kinnettles Heritage Group wishes to thank the following, who gave much of their invaluable time and experience to the authors. Without them we would have been unable to produce this book or to exhibit the material we have collected together.

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J.C. Jessop, Education in Angus (1931).


Alex. J. Warden, The Linen Trade, Ancient and Modern (1864).

Alex. J. Warden, Angus or Forfarshire, The Land and People (1884).


Forfarshire Illustrated. Dundee (1848).
Further copies of this book are available from:
   Elma Reid
   "Cuttyhaugh"
   Inverarity
   Angus. DD8 1XL   Tel: 01307 820260

We hope you will be encouraged to join Kinnettles & District Heritage Group, which costs only £5 per annum and gives entry to all their organised activities. For full details, contact:
   Ron Leslie
   Mains of Brigton,
   Forfar.
   Angus. DD8 1TH   Tel: 01307 463931

An exhibition associated with this book may be made available to appropriate organisations, on application to:
   Dave Walsh
   The Whirlies,
   Kinnettles, Forfar.
   Angus. DD8 1XF   Tel: 01307 820367