

THREE

DUNDONIANS

JAMES CARMICHAEL

By S.G.E. LYTHE

CHARLES W. BOASE

By J. T. WARD

EDWIN SCRYMGEOUR

By D. G. SOUTHGATE



DUNDEE
ABERTAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PUBLICATION No 13
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Details of the Society's publications will be found on page 24.

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JAMES CARMICHAEL

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JAMES CARMICHAEL

Millwright

(1776-1853)

by S. G. E. LYTHER, M.A., D.P.A.
Professor of Economic History in the
University of Strathclyde

CHARLES WILLIAM BOASE

Banker and Bishop

(1804-1872)

by J. T. WARD, M.A., PH.D.
Senior Lecturer in Economic History in the
University of Strathclyde

EDWIN SCRYMGEOUR

Prohibitionist and Politician

(1866-1947)

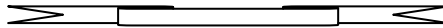
by D. G. SOUTHGATE, B.A., D. PHIL.

Senior Lecturer in Modern Economic and Constitutional
History in the University of Dundee

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The portrait of James Carmichael and the photograph of the Carmichael Statue, reproduced from the *History of the House of Carmichael*, and the drawing of the statue used as our cover illustration, were obtained through the courtesy of Dundee Public Libraries. The kind assistance of the City Librarian, Mr D. M. Torbet, F.L.A., and the Depute Librarian, Mr D. Crichton, is gratefully acknowledged.

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Preface

It cannot be often that anyone has such a congenial task as that of writing a brief Preface to three essays, each a study of a Dundonian, and each written by a writer who has been connected with Queen's College, Dundee (now the University of Dundee) and with the Abertay Historical Society. Professor S. G. E. Lythe, formerly of Dundee, writes a monograph on James Carmichael, whose ingenuity provided some of the inventions which both gained inspiration from the Industrial Revolution and also provided impetus to it, and whose firm, still in the family, survived till 1929. The second study, by Dr. J. T. Ward, is an account of Charles William Boase, Banker and Bishop, surely an unusual combination. In 1821 he was sent "to learn Scotch banking" under Roberts, previously clerk to Henry Boase, father of Charles William. Roberts was by this time manager of Dundee New Bank. Young Boase took an interest in local affairs, and was involved in the successful agitation to secure a Saturday half-holiday for bank clerks. It would be unfair to reveal the rest of the "plot" by disclosing how Boase reached the episcopate. Edwin Scrymgeour is the subject of the third essay, which is by Dr. Donald Southgate, at present on the staff of Dundee University. Scrymgeour was a crusader in favour of Prohibition, deriving his inspiration from his early upbringing and connection with Methodism in Dundee. He was a Christian Socialist whose religion was very much a religion of good works.

The three studies are a delight to read; they present their subjects with such clarity that the reader might be excused if he thought they were portraits of uncles who died ten years ago. The already high standard of the Abertay publications is amply maintained in this latest production.

W. Christie

President, Abertay Historical Society,
1965-67

JAMES CARMICHAEL (1776-1853)

Millwright

IN the first half of the nineteenth century Dundee housed a wealth of mechanical engineering talent which deserves fuller attention from historians of British technology. It was the era of James Stirling of the Dundee Foundry, nationally known for his pioneering work on the "air engine"; Kinmond, Hutton and Steele whose punching machine warranted a plate to itself in Rennie's 1841 edition of the *Practical Essays on Millwork*, James and Charles Carmichael, renowned equally for their reversing gear for steamships, their machine tools and their fan blowing machine. It is true that, twenty years after his death, James Carmichael was commemorated by a statue at the north-east corner of the Albert Institute, and, influenced perhaps by the attendant publicity, Norrie gave him four pages in *Dundee Celebrities of the Nineteenth Century* which he was currently writing. But by and large a town which became increasingly obsessed by jute paid decreasing respect to its earlier industrial achievements, especially those in the field of engineering, which, in the popular mind, came to be more and more associated with Glasgow and the West. Hence apart from Nome's article, nothing of consequence has been written on the Carmichaels except their own half-history, half-catalogue – *History of the House of Carmichael* – published shortly before the First World War.¹

James Carmichael was born in Glasgow where his father and uncle conducted a business in the Trongate, then physically the heart of Glasgow and a street of considerable architectural quality. They appear in John Tait's *Directory of 1783-4* as "Carmichael, James and George, grocers and spirit dealers, head of Salt Market". On his father's early death in 1786 James was taken by his mother to her native Pentland (in Lasswade parish, just south of Edinburgh), there to be apprenticed in due course to his uncle Umpherston in a country millwright business in nearby Loanhead.

In these closing years of the eighteenth century the millwright held the key to technical change. He was a man who understood pulleys and cogs and bearings, a man as much at home with wood as with brass or iron, a man with a developed sense of exact measurement and accurate fit. These men who, in Trevelyan's language, "made and mended machines were the elite of the Industrial Revolution and its true body-guard. They were respected by their employers . . . they were on the forefront of progress and invention".²

According to family tradition, Uncle Umpherston was an enlightened mechanic and a good teacher, and, according to the same source, James availed himself of a mutually beneficent arrangement with a neighbouring housewife, whereby, in return for baby-sitting, he was allowed to read her encyclopaedia. The environment at Loanhead was conducive to effort and initiative. Besides cottage textile making (James is reputed to have devised an improved spinning wheel), the parish had a briskly-growing paper-making industry which, when James was an apprentice, employed some 250-260 operatives and made heavy demands on the skills of the local millwrights.³

But in industrial training, as in other branches of schooling, there are limits to the capacity of the village dominie. Glasgow was the lodestone for the young Scots engineer. Famous as the scene of Watt's early improvements to the steam engine, Glasgow was laying the material and intellectual foundations of its nineteenth century pre-eminence in mechanical engineering. In the new Anderson's Institution and in the Philosophical Society men were exploring the borderland between theory and practical mechanics, whilst writers such as Robertson Buchanan and Robert Brunton were systematising the new knowledge in textbooks on millwork and engineering. This was the environment to which James Carmichael returned on the expiry of his apprenticeship when he joined Thomson and Buchanan, cotton spinners in Hutchestown.

While James thus widened his experience, his brother Charles— eight years his junior—completed his apprenticeship with Uncle Umpherston at Loanhead and moved thence to Dundee, where, with a partner, he established the millwright business of Taylor and Company. The original deed of co-partnery was for five years, and on its expiry in 1810 Taylor withdrew, and Charles persuaded James to leave Glasgow and join him in Dundee. Thus the firm of J. and C. Carmichael was born, which, with minor variations in title, survived down to the slump in 1929. It was converted to limited liability in the early 1890's but George Carmichael (James's grandson) remained Chairman of the board of directors and his sons Mr E. N. B. Carmichael and Major G. B. Carmichael have kindly provided some reminiscences of the firm as they knew it from their boyhood home in Broughty Ferry.

The brothers established themselves at what was originally called West Ward Foundry, later Ward Foundry, in Guthrie Street, somewhere within the complex of buildings occupied in modern times by Messrs Arnot's Auto Spares Ltd. In addition, they had a forge and, for a short time, a shipyard at Seabraes which was then immediately alongside the Tay, and, somewhat later, they set up an enormous hammer at the Dundee Steam Forge at a point far enough from the

main foundry to avoid the damage of sand moulds by vibration. One can but speculate on the damage to the nervous systems of nearby tenement dwellers in Lochee Road.

James Carmichael's life was closely bound up with the rise of the firm of J. and C. Carmichael. But his title to personal fame rests on a number of achievements in both the practice and science of mechanical engineering which lift him above the level of the small town operator. Thus in the later editions of R. Buchanan's *Practical Essays on Millwork* there is reprinted a letter from "James Carmichael, millwright (of Dundee)" in which James commented on the tables for the specifications of cog-wheels then in use and proceeded to enunciate what became known to engineers as "Carmichael's Rule"—

“Multiply the breadth of the teeth by the square of the thickness, and divide the product by the length. The quotient will be the proportionate strength in horses' power, with a velocity of 2-27 feet per second.”

On this formula he compiled a ready reckoner for the specification of cog wheels which, in turn, became known as "Carmichael's Table" and which, according to Brunton's *Compendium of Mechanics* (1825) was "of much use to the practical mechanic". In view of the verbal paralysis which afflicts writers on engineering we can take this to imply considerable commendation. This was Carmichael the backroom boy, and though in later life he became increasingly immersed in the running of a business, his curiosity never waned. Thus, to quote the writer of his obituary notice, "he carried on an extensive course of experiments on the flexure of timber under different loads, as in the case of joisting, etc. We often suggested to him the propriety of publishing the results of these experiments but could never overcome his modesty so far as to get him to consent. It is to be hoped they are not lost".⁴

To the wider public, however, he was known primarily for his practical contributions to the engineer's working equipment, contributions which he made no attempt to patent, holding that the fruits of human ingenuity should be freely shared. The brothers set up business at Dundee at a time when steam power was advancing on several fronts and though technically millwrights they turned their attentions to the design and building of engines both for textile mills and for transport. In 1814, only four years after James's arrival in Dundee, the first steamboat was built on the Tay.⁵ Her hull was by James Smart, her 10 h.p. engine, installed by John Robertson, was built by Carmichaels. It was a modest start, indeed her engine was "augmented by a square sail", but as a pioneering effort it ranks highly, and Carmichaels learned from the experience. The

provision of engines for the first steam-driven Tay ferries, *Union* and *George IV*, prompted James to his first major mechanical invention.⁶ “Man”, Charles is reported to have said to him, “could we not make the ship go backwards as well as forwards?”

By the beginning of the 1820's, when *Union* and *George IV* were built for the Trustees of the Tay Ferries, James had provided an answer. These were remarkable boats of a catamaran design with an engine in each hull and one huge paddle wheel in the middle. Browns of Perth built the hulls, but the engines were by Carmichaels with castings from the Dundee Foundry. Apart from the general design, the great novelty lay in the reversing gear whereby, by the movement of a lever, the boat passed “in less than a minute from motion in one direction to motion in that directly opposite”. The caption “Go Astern” above the appropriate lever on *George IV* gave rise to one of the anecdotes which enliven the Carmichael story. “George Astern”, a local rustic is reported to have exclaimed, “Fa's he? I aye thocht thir engines wis made by Carmichael”. More knowledgeably the gear was inspected by Captain Basil Hall on behalf of the Lords of the Admiralty, written up by him in the *Edinburgh Philosophical Journal*, and, like all James Carmichael's inventions, became public property. How many engineers immediately availed themselves of the idea is impossible to estimate. Certainly on the *Hibernia*, a locomotive engine built in the early 1830's by one of the forerunners of the North British Locomotive Company for the Dublin and Kingstown Railway, the valve gear was “Carmichaels”,⁷ but alternatives were soon devised and the general impression is that the Carmichael gear is important for its pioneering role rather than for its continued application.

In the field of land transport the brothers made their most lasting mark as builders of engines for the Dundee and Newtyle Railway. This remarkable enterprise began operations with horses on the level stretches and fixed engines and cables on each incline. Scotland in 1830 had little experience of steam locomotion and none of locomotive building, but after a trip to Darlington to inspect George Stephenson's engine, James Carmichael undertook to build for the Dundee and Newtyle. The outcome is summarised in the Company's Journal and Cash Book for 31st October, 1833:

“To James and Charles Carmichael for 2 Locomotive Engines and other machinery supplied from 1 May to this date £1402 17 3.”

and thereafter the two engines, known as “Lord Wharncliffe” and “The Earl of Airlie”, acquired increasing fame in Scottish railway annals.⁸ But after this pioneering effort Carmichaels seem to have abandoned steam locomotive building: the next two for the Dundee and Newtyle came respectively from the

Dundee Foundry and from Robert Stephensons, and when the Arbroath and Forfar Railway entered the market in 1837 Carmichaels did not even tender.

Their excursion into shipbuilding was equally short-lived. Iron steamboat construction in eastern Scotland almost certainly began at Perth in 1836 when Macfarlane and Company launched their *Eagle*. Carmichaels had kept up their marine engine building: in 1832, for example, they joined with D. and A. Brown in tendering (unsuccessfully as it turned out) for two steamers for the Dundee, Perth and London Shipping Company,⁹ and in 1837 they laid the keel of the first iron steamboat to be built at Dundee. Launched on the last day of February, 1838, from the yard on the river-front at Seabraes, *Caledonia* was fitted with two 35 h.p. engines and intended for Dundee-Perth river traffic. Her trial trip, only two months after the launch, was cut prematurely short at the mouth of the river when, owing to the number of gate-crashers—the food, and what was worse, the whisky, ran out, and when the swell produced disturbing symptoms among the well-fed lady guests.

Two more small iron steamers were built at Seabraes, *Tinker* and *Queen*, but according to tradition in the firm there was still too much prejudice against iron ships to make regular building worthwhile. It is perhaps significant that, apart from a similarly short-lived venture by Peter Borrie in the early 1840's, no more iron ships were built on the Tay until 1854.

While the firm was trying its hand at land and sea transport, James Carmichael's second major contribution to engineering was passing into widespread use. His fan blast (or blowing) machine was perfected in 1829. A relatively simple and cheap device, it provided a stronger and more consistent blast of air for foundry work and welding. By its use iron could be brought up to welding heat in half the time taken by the old-fashioned bellows. Again James made no attempt to capitalise his device, saying "with characteristic modesty and honesty" that it was based on an idea suggested by a Mr Clark. Nevertheless Carmichaels demonstrated the applicability of the idea, and in recognition of this James received a rare measure of recognition from his fellow engineers at a banquet at the Argyle Hotel in Glasgow on 28th April 1841.¹⁰ According to the account in the *Glasgow Herald* the "evening was spent with the utmost hilarity". During its course Robert Napier of the Vulcan Foundry (who was Chairman for the evening) delivered a eulogistic account of the fan blower, and Smith of Deanston said he had recently installed one in his forge with great success. The highlight of the evening was the presentation of a service of plate, inscribed thus:

“Presented to James Carmichael, Esq., Engineer, Dundee, by a Few Friends in the Iron Trade, as testimony of their deep sense of the liberal manner in which he and his brother have permitted the unrestricted use of their valuable Fan Blowing Machine. Glasgow, April, 1841.”

During the evening there was exhibited a specimen of engine gearing in malleable iron finished on "a newly invented planing [*sic*] machine ... by the Messrs Carmichael". It "excited the admiration of Mr Smith of Deanston and other scientific gentlemen present", some of whom found it hard to believe that the specimen was not hand finished. This can be taken as a symbol of yet another side of Carmichael's activities—machine tool making, a branch of engineering which was growing rapidly in the country generally in the second quarter of the century. By its output of machine tools for planing, shaping and boring metal, some supplied to Government establishments in England, the firm kept abreast of modern trends, whilst by using similar equipment in Dundee it raised its own technical efficiency. "In the course of my inspection of the engines made by different makers", wrote James Nasmyth, "I was impressed with the superiority of those made by the Carmichaels of Dundee ... I was told that the cause of the excellence of the Carmichaels' work was not only in the ability of the heads of the firm, but in their employment of the best engineers' tools. Some of their leading men had worked at Maudslay's machine shop in London, the fame of which had already reached Dundee; and Maudslay's system of employing machine tools had been imported into the northern steam factory".¹¹

Nasmyth's phrase, "the northern steam factory", seems to have been a lair description of Carmichaels in their early decades. The bread and butter came from engines and boilers for which, as the Dundee-based textile industry increased in both scale and mechanisation, there was a brisk regional demand. Their first engines for spinning mills were of the order of only 2 h.p.; within a few years that had risen to 4 to 6 h.p., and by the early 1860's, when Warden was writing his *Linen Trade*, he could talk of Carmichael engines of "100 h.p. or more". According to tradition in the firm the early Factory Acts, with their restrictions on the hours of child and female labour, played into their hands. Within months of the 1833 Act James was producing boilers capable of double the pressure of the older models so that the whole tempo of production in spinning could be accelerated.

Though they imported skill from the South, they also turned out a succession of able young engineers, indeed Dundee in the time of the Carmichael brothers and James Stirling was almost as prolific of engineers as, in a later age, it was to be of journalists. One of the key men at Anderson's foundry at Leith, Robert

Maclaughlan, served his time with Carmichaels.¹² John Keir was with them until 1826 when he set up as a specialist in millwork, retiring forty years later with wealth enough to buy the estate of Duncarn in Fife.¹³ William Kirkland left them three years after Keir to join his father in the manufacture of wood-cutting machines.¹⁴ But the Carmichael sons, George, son of James, and David, son of Charles, left Ward Foundry only for wider experience. Before 1850, after training with English firms, they were back in Dundee and were, in effect, running the family business. The womenfolk of the family tended to marry into local textile circles, indeed James's daughter, without having to change the initials on her travel-bag, became the wife of Peter Carmichael, the mainstay of Baxters for much of the nineteenth century.

Of the original founders, Charles – in his later years a heavily-built ‘Regency’ sort of man – died in 1843. James, thin-faced, almost saturnine, outlived him by a decade to die at Fleuchar Craig on 14th August, 1853. Both were known to contemporaries as “quiet, unostentatious, honourable men”, who “are rare blessings, appearing only at long intervals”. Of the two James was regarded as the more sagacious, and it seems probable that his “blunt diffidence and extreme modesty” alone prevented him from fully exploiting his remarkable ingenuity and the prestige which it brought him.

S. G. E. Lythe
University of Strathclyde

NOTES

- 1 Copies of this survive in the Dundee Public Library and in the National Library of Scotland.
- 2 G. M. Trevelyan: *English Social History* (1944 impr.), 479.
- 3 *The Statistical Account of Scotland*, Vol. X (1795), 279.
- 4 *Dundee, Perth & Cupar Advertiser*, 19 August 1853.
- 5 Lamb Collection (Dundee Public Library) 245(1), and *Dundee Year Book* (1893) 120.
- 6 Described at length by W. S. Thompson in *Handbook and Guide to Dundee* (British Association Handbook, 1912) 288-290.
- 7 I am grateful to my colleague, Mr J. Hume, for this information.
- 8 More fully described in my article on this railway in *The Railway Magazine* (1951), Vol. 97, No. 604.
- 9 D. P. and L. Directors' Minute Book, 20 September 1832.
- 10 *Glasgow Herald*, 30 April 1841; and *Dundee, Perth and Cupar Advertiser*, 19 August 1853.
- 11 James Nasmyth: *An Autobiography* (Ed. S. Smiles, 1885), 119-120.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 118.
- 13 W. Norrie: *Dundee Celebrities of the Nineteenth Century* (1873), 316.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 324.

CHARLES WILLIAM BOASE (1804-1872)

Banker and Bishop

SCOTLAND'S early establishment of branch banks has attracted the attention of several historians, but published accounts have generally concentrated on Edinburgh and Glasgow pioneers and on the great chartered banks.¹ One of the most remarkable nineteenth-century Scottish bankers, Charles William Boase, has been virtually ignored—probably because he spent his working life outside the metropolitan cities, in Dundee, the first other burgh to establish full banking services. The "Dundee Banking Company" had been founded by the celebrated Whig landowner George Dempster of Dunnichen (1732-1818) and 35 others in August 1763, with a nominal capital of £12,600 and issued capital of £1,260.² As a result of its careful policies, the company survived for a century.

C. W. Boase was born in Knightsbridge on 8th June 1804, the sixth child (and third son) of Henry Boase (1763-1827). A member of an old Cornish family, the largely self-educated Henry Boase became a clerk with the Pall Mall banking house of Ransom, Morland and Hammersley in 1787, chief clerk in 1792 and a partner in 1799. He published seven pamphlets on financial and agricultural affairs, three articles, two odes and two papers for the Royal Geological Society of Cornwall, of which he was a founder. As an earnest Evangelical he helped to establish the Bible Society in 1804 and supported the London Missionary Society and the Lancasterian schools. After initially favouring the French Revolution, he was later horrified by its excesses, supported Pitt's Ministry and joined the Volunteers. In 1809 he retired to Penzance, where he was a partner in the banking concern of Batten, Oxnam and Carne from 1810, chief partner in the Union Bank from 1823 and mayor in 1816; and in 1821 he became a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. By his marriage to Anne Craige, he had several remarkable sons. Henry Samuel (1799-1883) M.D., F.R.S., was a chemist, physician, banker and industrialist, John Josias Arthur (1801-1873) a banker and antiquarian, and George Clement (1810-1880), a banker and evangelist. Charles inherited most of his father's interests, in banking, religion, pamphleteering, philanthropy, geology and Whiggish politics. He was taken to Penzance in 1810 and after attending Helston Grammar School lived in France at S. Pol de Leon for a year from 1817 before starting engineering training at Portsmouth.³ He was soon to enter his father's profession.

Two of Henry Boase's London partners, William Morland and the 7th Lord Kinnaid (d. 1805), the son-in-law and heir of Griffin Ransom, were involved in Dundee affairs. In January 1802 they had joined John Baxter of Idvies (b. 1765)

and four others in re-founding the Dundee Commercial Bank of 1792 as the Dundee New Bank, with a nominal capital of £58,000. The bank's books were soon in chaos, and by October 1803 there was a deficiency of £11,787. 5s. 3d. (which had fallen by some £360 a year later, primarily because of further omissions in the records). The laird of Rossie Priory then called in Boase to attempt to solve the mystery unearthed by the accountant; but the money was never recovered.

Boase advised Kinnaird that the co-partnery should be dissolved and a new partnership formed. To his horror, Kinnaird insisted on his joining the venture, along with Morland; Boase "had already as much to do as he wished and no desire to embark in any other business, especially in one so distant." But despite Scotland's lack of attraction Boase eventually agreed, on condition that his equally reluctant clerk, William Roberts, should be appointed cashier; the latter accepted only on his salary being raised from under £200 to £500, with a promised reversion to his London post. The unwilling travellers to Dundee were amply rewarded; by about 1825 Boase estimated that he and Morland had made over £20,000 from the venture, while Roberts had "established" himself by marrying Baxter's elder daughter and had "saved [Boase] supposed, forty thousand pounds".

Some local interests, led by James and William Bell (two of the original partners) opposed the reorganisation in the courts, and Kinnaird's death in October 1805 further postponed the new agreement. The 8th Lord Kinnaird (1780-1826) eventually returned from abroad and in December 1806 joined Baxter, Morland, Roberts and Boase in re-establishing the New Bank, with a capital of £52,000. Kinnaird provided the reputation of a Whiggish noble family, considerable business acumen and 10 of the 26 £2,000 shares; Baxter represented the burgh's greater merchants; and the other partners gave the strength of professional banking knowledge. By 1821 Boase had so far rid himself of what Charles later called "rather a horror of being connected with Scotch commercial affairs" as to send his son to Dundee "to learn Scotch banking" under the now-wealthy manager, Roberts.⁴

C. W. Boase arrived in Dundee when the ancient burgh was rapidly expanding, already reaching a population of well over 30,000. The New Bank had made considerable progress, establishing branches at Arbroath, Brechin and Forfar in its first year and thereafter gradually increasing its business, despite competition and war-time fluctuations. In 1809, when a second local rival, the Union Bank, was formed with a nominal capital of £100,000, the 'New' partners joined 12 others in providing similar backing for the Glasgow Bank, under James

Dennistoun of Golfhill (1758-1835), with Henry Boase's clerk, W. B. Cabbell, as manager. By 1821 the 'New' retained only its Forfar branch, while the 'Union' had five establishments; the respective gross profits were £5,789 and £4,447. But in 1825 some loss was occasioned by the accountant and teller joining the new Dundee Commercial Bank and the effect was multiplied by commercial crises. Profits fell from £5,759 in 1824-1825 to £3,001 in 1827-1828; both the 'Union' and the 'Commercial' fared better.

As the Bank's teller, Boase took part in the first local agitation by bank employees against their long hours. In 1826 he supported the clerks' successful appeal for a Saturday half-holiday, and later helped to secure public support against a director's complaints.⁵ On the retirement of Dennistoun in February 1829 Roberts succeeded him as the Glasgow managing director, and in April Boase inherited Roberts' Dundee post, during a year of rising profits. Henry Boase had died in 1827, leaving over £65,000, and Charles now helped to support his brothers and sisters; his youngest brother, George Clement, became an unpaid clerk at the New Bank in 1830 and confidential clerk and partner in 1833.

Boase took a prominent part in local affairs. Like his eldest brother, Henry (M.D. of Edinburgh, partner in the Penzance Union Bank in 1823-1838 and in the Claverhouse bleachfield at Dundee in 1838-1871, a Fellow of the Royal Society and author of several works on medicine, geology and chemistry) he was interested in scientific subjects. From its foundation in 1824 he was for 12 years secretary and treasurer of the pioneer Watt Institution, where he delivered lectures, founded the museum and encouraged potential scientists and engineers. He also energetically supported the Political Union in support of the Reform Bill, and on 1st September 1831 received the freedom of the burgh for "his zealous exertions in aiding to procure a liberal constitution for the burgh of Dundee". His most prominent political activity was in proposing the candidature of Sir Henry Parnell.

As a good liberal, Boase critically noted local trade unionists' "domineering spirit" in 1834, and he always maintained a close watch on all public affairs. Despite such interests, as managing partner Boase devoted most of his energy to bank affairs. "In the autumn of 1837", he later recorded—

various circumstances tended to make the Directors [of the Dundee Banking Company] weary of bearing the burden of personally managing the business of the Bank and to suggest the propriety of obtaining the services of a professional banker, as Manager, who might be competent to undertake the responsibility of

superintending all the affairs of the Company, consulting the Directors as to such matters only as were of unusual importance or difficulty.

The result was that the original bank invited Boase to manage its much larger business—"and this proposal led to the purchase ... of the business of the [New Bank], that Mr Boase might be free to do so". Although the merger took effect on 31 January 1838, it was only after the partners' meeting on 12th March that Boase assumed complete management. The Banking Company's assets then totalled some £473,000 and the New Bank's almost £175,000. Boase recalled that it was the defalcations of 1803 which had ultimately led to his appointment; and an examination of the Company's accounts led him to think of recording local banking history.

On assuming office, Boase found the assets "deficient by more than the amount of [the] capital"; "dependancies" amounted to £81,873. 19s. 2d. of which he ultimately obtained about £55,000. He faced a difficult situation, and his local biographer not unreasonably noticed that—

As a banker, Mr Boase was distinguished for caution and prudence; ever ready to assist those who were steady and industrious and who confided their affairs to him; but stern and uncompromising to any who attempted to deceive him.

He persuaded the Company to raise its nominal capital from £42,000 to £100,000 and paid-up capital from £25,000 to £60,000, after the "Commercial" (having reached "an evil condition") had sold out to the new Eastern Bank of Scotland, "to avert a public calamity". To show their confidence, the directors promoted him from cashier to manager, in 1840, when George became the cashier.⁶

Boase carefully managed the concern during the following years. The number of directors was reduced in 1840 and only "moderate dividends" were paid. The bank brought off some astute deals. In 1842 Boase was involved in a celebrated bankruptcy case and by applying immediately on learning of one William Boyack's composition secured payment *primo venienti* from the sequestration, to the horror of other creditors. In 1843 he ended an old but unremunerative account with the harbour trustees. And in September 1845, with considerable difficulty, he bought the Tay ferries from the Public Works Loan Commissioners, to prevent the loss of a claim, and then sold them to the Scottish Central Railway. "Thus, by a hair's-breadth", he later claimed, "the Bank escaped the loss of money advanced to a Board of Trustees to enable them to complete

the Public Work committed to their management". The Bank aided the burgh in difficult years with little reward.

The Company's rivals were now withdrawing: the Royal Bank closed its unsuccessful six-year-old branch in 1842 and the last local competitor, the Union Bank, sold out to the 'Western' in 1844, having reached a serious position. By the Scottish Bank Act of 1845 (8 and 9 Vic., c. 38) the Dundee Bank was limited to the average of its circulating notes in 1844—£33,451. It worked with constant caution. Only in 1846 did the partners allow £150 for directors' remuneration. Five years later Boase received 200 guineas as a "substantial mark of approbation" for "his valuable and efficient services". Certainly the Bank prospered under his rule; by 1856 its assets had grown to almost £838,000. And Boase's acumen was widely recognised. In 1852 he was invited, as "one of the oldest Bank Managers in Scotland", to manage the 'Western'. He wisely refused; the 'Western' was soon in trouble and closed during a commercial crisis on 9th November 1857, the 'Royal' taking over its Murraygate branch. The Dundee Bank was then the smallest of the 17 Scottish banks in paid-up capital (£60,000), number of partners (79), branches (2) and actual circulation (£35,834). But it had about £750,000 in deposits, was one of the three banks to pay a 10% dividend and soon established two new branches.⁷

In December 1856 "one of the larger Joint Stock Banks" proposed an amalgamation. Its offer of £160 per share attracted 70 partners, but six held out and "the project had to be abandoned". In March 1857 the directors presented Boase and his brother with £300 and £200 respectively, "in token of their satisfaction". The Bank maintained its growth and in 1863 received and paid over £5,000,000. In June the co-partnery contract was revised, the nominal capital raised to £200,000 and provision made for incorporation and amalgamation. The Bank achieved incorporation in August, under the Companies Act of 1862, and in the following year the amount paid and received was almost £7,000,000.⁸

After a century and six months, the independent history of Dundee Banking Company came to an end in 1864. In January, following an earlier suggestion by Boase's friend John Stirling of Kippendavie (1811-1882), an ordinary director of the 'Royal' from 1857, the Royal Bank proposed amalgamation. The partners accepted in February, with effect from the 20th, Boase joining in the negotiations. The flourishing company then had a note circulation of £53,943, deposits of £722,219 and branches at Alyth, Broughty Ferry,

Forfar and Lochee. It was a sound purchase for the 'Royal'⁵, and the 74

partners were bought out "at 60% premium with a dividend of 10 %".⁹

Proud of their Bank's healthy position, Charles and George Boase agreed to manage the 'Royal' branch in the old Castle Street premises, retiring on 21st December 1867, when Charles received a pension of £1,000 a year. Charles's last great service was the publication of his celebrated volume on *A Century of Banking in Dundee: Being the Annual Balance Sheets of the Dundee Banking Company, from 1764 to 1864*, issued at Dundee in 1864 and Edinburgh in 1867. This work of love has often been praised and more often used.¹⁰

The Dundee Bank served the burgh well in the years when the jute industry was establishing itself. And Boase's family served the Bank well. George served 37 years before retiring as the 'Royal' sub-manager, and a nephew, H. J. Pearce, was employed from 1850 to 1862. The family also had connections with local industry. W. A. Pearce was a partner in a foundry from 1857 and played an important role in the manufacture of jute machinery. Dr. Boase was a partner in the Turnbulls' Claverhouse bleachfield from 1838, becoming managing partner in 1846 and later styling the enterprise 'Boase & Co'. His sons included two jute manufacturers and a yarn miller.¹¹ C. W. Boase himself played another important role in the burgh's affairs. In May 1842 the Corporation became bankrupt, having "for some years past" overspent its income and being unwilling to sell its considerable property at the low prices likely during the depression. Boase was appointed, with five others, as a trustee for the town's creditors, controlling property and rights valued at £125,347 "in security of the payment of the debts due to the Town amounting to £87,852, which included £27,500 due by and ultimately payable by the Harbour Trustees. . . ." The creditors were eventually paid off, the capital of four mortifications which the Council had lent to itself was restored with interest and at Martinmas 1864 the trustees returned "a small reversion of the town's property" to the Council.¹²

On 9th December 1832 Charles married Helen, fifth daughter of William Lindsay, W.S., corn merchant and provost of Dundee, and on 22nd December 1834 George married the fourth daughter, Jane Smyth. Both had several children, and the brothers (and many relations) shared another interest, by becoming leaders of a new religious sect.

During the 1830s the followers of the Rev. Edward Irving (1792-1834), an expelled Church of Scotland minister, and the politician Henry Drummond (1786-1860), expecting an early Second Coming, formed an organisation of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, later adding deacons and episcopal 'angels'. From this emerged the 'Catholic Apostolic Church', which in

1842 adopted a rite mingling Anglican, Roman Catholic and Orthodox practices. The hard-headed Boase was "a believer in the restoration of the Apostles to the Church" from 1835 and became the benefactor of the little Dundee community in Whitehall Close. Boase built a chapel in Bell Street (replaced in November 1867 by a church in Constitution Road) and in October 1836 was ordained to the priesthood. Religious duties never interfered with business, but Boase devoted much effort and expense to Catholic Apostolicism and in August 1851 was elevated to the episcopate. His conversion had considerable effects on his family. His nephew Alfred, his sisters Anne, Jane, Rosanna and Laura, his brothers-in-law, Dr. W. M. Boase and John Symes (a famous chess player) and his third son, Clement (once his bank clerk) all became prominent Catholic Apostolic evangelists. And George, who had thought of entering the Anglican priesthood in his days at Queens' College, Cambridge (but who had received no degree), became a priest in 1836, bishop for Dundee in 1859 and minister at Brighton in 1868. One of his sons, George, became the 'Royal' cashier, while another, William, founded a famous Dundee spinning company and was Conservative candidate for East Perthshire in 1889 and 1892.¹³

C. W. Boase worked hard for his church. When A. P. Forbes (1817-1875), the celebrated Bishop of Brechin, issued his controversial charge in 1857, Boase produced a seventeen-page "Irvingite" reply. In 1864 Boase published a paper on *Tithes and Offerings*, which was reprinted at Edinburgh in 1865. He started his work on *Baptism* in 1866 and issued *The Elijah Ministry* at Dundee in 1867 and Edinburgh in 1868. In November 1870 he moved to Edinburgh, to organise the sect's Scottish work. Literary productions, varying from pamphlets to large volumes, followed in quick succession: *Notes on Doctrines and Ecclesiastical Facts* appeared in 1868, *Physical, a Part of Theological Science* in 1870 and 1874 and *Cogitations of a Bible Reader on the Scripture History of the Earth* in 1871 and 1874. Boase also arranged a large collection of copies of religious paintings; and his popular sermons attracted large congregations.

The strange career of Charles William Boase ended on Friday, 7th June 1872, during a council of Catholic Apostolic elders at Albury in Surrey, where he was buried five days later. He left £24,000 to his widow and four children, who erected monuments at Albury and Dundee and published some of his uncompleted writings. His episcopal dignities in an eccentric communion now primarily based in America and Germany were briefly remembered; his publications were carefully recorded by family hagiographers later renowned for biographical and bibliographical "short notices"; but his wise, cautious but vital contribution to Dundee's development has rarely been noticed. During important years in its growth, Dundee was fortunate in being served by the Boases; and its

Bank was doubtless unique in being managed by bishops.

J.T. Ward

University of Strathclyde

NOTES

1. For recent general accounts, see Henry Hamilton, *An Economic History of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century* (1963), ch.11-12, and R. H. Campbell, *Scotland since 1707* (Oxford, 1965), 68-75, 133-151.
2. See W. Norrie, *Dundee Celebrities of the Nineteenth Century* . . . (Dundee, 1873), 26-30; C. W. Boase, *A Century of Banking in Dundee* ... (Edinburgh, 2nd. edn., 1867), xvii, *seq.*, 1, *seq.*; [Anon.], "Early Banking in Dundee" (*The Three Banks Review*, 60: Dec., 1963, 34-43).
3. C. W., G. C. and F. Boase, *An Account of the Families of Boase or Bowes, originally residing at Paul and Madron in Cornwall* .. (Truro, 2nd. edn., 1893), 12-20, *seq.*; G. C. Boase and W. P. Courtney, *Bibliotheca Cornubiensis* (3 vols., 1874-1882), I, 28-30, III, 1076-1079.
4. C. W. Boase, *op. cit.*, 222-226. On the Lords Kinnaird, see *Burke's Peerage* (1846 edn.), 575 (1963 edn.), 1375-1376. The 7th Lord's 5th (2nd. surviving) son, Douglas (1788-1830) was a Westminster banker. See also Neil Munro, *The History of the Royal Bank of Scotland, 1727-1927* (Edinburgh, 1928), 252-255.
5. C. W. Boase, *op. cit.*, 226, 262, 318-319, 334-335, 350-352, 356-357. In recent times, the Royal Bank of Scotland was the first Scottish bank to recognise the National Union of Bank Employees, which has a large and active branch in Dundee.
6. C. W. Boase, *op. cit.*, 360, 382, 394-395, 401, 403-404, 405, 407; Norrie, *op. cit.*, 397-399; Frederic Boase, *Modern English Biography* (1965 impr.), 1,321.
7. C. W. Boase, *op. cit.*, 411, 418-419, 422-423, 430-431, 429, 434, 451, 471, 493-501, 503; Munro, *op. cit.*, 243-246; Charles A. Malcolm, *The History of the British Linen Bank* (Edinburgh, 1955), 128-129; "Early Banking", *loc. cit.*, 38.
8. C. W. Boase, *op. cit.*, 471, 475, 524, 525, 528.
9. *Ibid.*, 529, 532, 528; Munro, *op. cit.*, 255-260; "Early Banking", *loc. cit.*, 34, 38-39, 42. On Stirling see *Burke's Landed Gentry* (1898 edn.), II, 1411, and Munro, *op. cit.*, 404. His son Patrick was an ordinary director of the Royal Bank in 1890-1896.
10. Munro, *op. cit.*, 254-255, refers to it as "a work unique of its kind, ranging far beyond the implication of its title, and the quarry from which much of the material of all subsequent Scots bank histories has been taken" (*cf.* the almost exact similar comment in "Early Banking", *loc. cit.*). William Graham (*The One Pound Note* (Edinburgh, 2nd. edn., 1911), 131) referred to it as "an invaluable repertoire for banking study".
11. Boase and Courtney, *op. cit.*, III, 1077-1078; C. W., G. C. and F. Boase, *op. cit.*, 34-38, 20-26.
12. Dundee Town Council minutes, May 1842, and note in the Lamb Collection, Dundee Public Library. I am indebted to the late Town Clerk, Mr Robert Lyle, for this information.
13. See F. L. Cross (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (1958 edn.), 251, 702, 423; Norrie, *op. cit.*, 398; Boase and Courtney, *op. cit.*, I, 26, III, 1076, *seq.*; C. W., G. C. and F. Boase, *op. cit.*, *passim*; F. Boase, *fin rit* 1. 321.

EDWIN SCRYMGEOUR (1866-1947)

Prohibitionist and Politician

ON 16th November 1922 the many enemies of Winston Churchill chuckled and others not lacking in good will towards him (though these were temporarily in short supply) smiled at the news that he had been defeated at Dundee in the general election by the founder of the Prohibition Party of Great Britain. Five months later Edwin Scrymgeour, M.P., as a peroration to his speech moving the second reading of his Liquor Traffic Bill (to impose penalties of up to five years' imprisonment for the sale of alcohol other than for medical, scientific or industrial purposes), avowed: "He who said 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee' has brought me here to this House of Commons in the most marvellous fashion that anyone could have contemplated, notwithstanding all the forces arrayed against me, including all the official forces of party organisation. I am here at the clear, expressed call of Him who has called me and Who calls you today to serve the masses . . . and to help in sustaining not merely the prestige of the country and to advance its interests but, better still, to advance the Kingdom of Christ. ..."

Here are summarized the abiding features of "Neddy" Scrymgeour's public life—an undeviating conviction that it was possible to convert Britain to Prohibition; a strong sense that he was doing, and was called to do, God's work; a loving care for and championship of the welfare of the "masses". Nothing could be truer than the assertion of Mr Leif Jones, a leading critic of the Liquor Traffic Prohibition Bill introduced by Scrymgeour on 13th February 1931, that it was something other than "actual sympathy by his constituents with the views which he put forward this morning" which had made him member for Dundee, which had never exercised its statutory right to "go dry". Scrymgeour's assertions that this was because the people disapproved of the local option system (to him a fiendish trick to check the course of Prohibition) were hardly convincing. The Commons, in rejecting his bills by 236: 14 in 1923 and 137: 18 in 1931 probably represented opinion in Dundee as well as in Britain as a whole. It is said that "The Trade" welcomed Scrymgeour's fundamentalist crusade for Total Abstinence (as contrasted with temperance, restriction of licences and local option) and that many publicans voted for him. His supporters included steady drinkers, and unsteady ones could be found at election times in his campaign rooms at Lochee.¹ To Scrymgeour this was all part of "God working in a mysterious way". Better a vote for God's servant than for a Unionist wedded to 'The Trade', a Liberal whose licensing legislation would be part of a 'deal' between 'The Trade' and the temperance forces, or the Labour Party whose shelving device of a Royal Commission in 1929 showed, he said, that "the

Labour movement is still loyal to a glass of beer . . . (and) a dram of whisky". Of his personal sincerity there was never doubt; he had given up his beloved pipe in a bargain with some men to give up drink.

"Votes! What matter votes? Seats! What matter seats?", cried Scrymgeour in the Commons as a reproach to Labour. "Character, courage, devotion to principles. These are the things that our great Leader... Christ Himself asks us to observe when we pray that God's will may be done upon earth as it is done in Heaven". The language of Evangelical Christianity came naturally to his lips, for his father James (1821-87) and his mother had been stalwarts of the Wesleyan chapel in Tally Street. Theirs was not a religion of mere piety or bible-punching, but one of good works, and from them Edwin inherited both his zeal for total abstinence and a loving care for the unfortunate, whether or not the misfortune was caused or aggravated by drink. His father was the local pillar of the Prisoners' Aid Society. It was perhaps while serving out supplies to shivering queues of destitute people that the son concluded that it was not enough to relieve individual hardships. He must campaign for the transformation of the social order, to obtain for all as a right of citizenship what voluntary aid could provide for only some of the victims of Capitalism. Parents, he said, in his first parliamentary election campaign in 1908, should not demand school meals for their children; they should demand the means of feeding them themselves. Society must minister to the individual's self-respect. Of those who spoke grudgingly of 'the dole' as a financial burden to the nation and a symptom of fecklessness in the recipients, he said, movingly: "It is so petty, and so hard a thing to say of bodies of people, while the great body of men and women who are receiving that allowance at the Employment Exchange are feeling saddened beyond measure that they have to go and accept such a provision".

Thus the son of a Tory philanthropist became a Christian Socialist* with the emphasis on the Christianity. The son of the charitable worker became a believer in political agitation, splitting the Good Templars because they tried to remain non-political and the Scottish Prohibition Party (founded in 1901) because its chairman spoke for a Liberal leader not committed to Prohibition. Scrymgeour entered the fray in 1908, at the by-election caused by the vacating of a safe seat for Churchill on his defeat in Manchester, because no other candidate would support abolition of the liquor traffic. His vote was a derisory 655 out of 16,118. Yet already he was more than a mere faddist with a one-plank platform. VOTE FOR SCRYMGEOUR AND DEATH TO THE DRINK—HAVE DONE WITH BOGUS LABOUR REPRESENTATION AND GO IN FOR SOCIALISM read his bills. He continued to campaign as a Prohibitionist, a Socialist, and a local man devoted to the interests of the local people. In the two general elections of 1910

his vote rose to 1,512 and 1,825, representing 9.08 and 11.35% of the voters. Liberals not willing to vote for Churchill's Labour colleague and Labour men unwilling to vote for Churchill threw what they thought of as "their second vote" to the local man. In December 1910 some hundreds shared their two votes between the local men Scrymgeour and Sir George Baxter, the Unionist. Scrymgeour had been prominent locally since his election to the City Council in 1905 (he sat till 1919) as a 'muck-raking' candidate. Mocked by the Corporation establishment as 'the white star of purity' he was indefatigable in uncovering instances, real or supposed, of the inertia and low standards of public spirit, imagination and humanity which then, as so often, characterised the municipality.

While Leif Jones had ground for saying that Scrymgeour had 'been elected . . . for his own personal independent qualifications, and he has fully earned in this House the reputation which his constituents gave him of being an independent man of strong individual views, who does not shrink from putting them forward in their strongest form", no independent can get into Parliament for a populous constituency without organization. Within a month of his election in 1922 a committee of church people asked him to put his 'splendid organization' at the disposal of the local anti-license movement (and received in reply a characteristically stinging rebuke for neglecting the poor and street-corner preaching). But this organization had no backing from vested interests, capitalist or labour, and was enlisted in aid of a man who was never well-off and not, one suspects, very good at managing his own private affairs. He had been a clerk in a manufacturer's office at fifteen, then briefly in London, then in the offices of the Caledonian Railway at the West Station and then with an iron merchant. He gave up regular employment after election to the parish council in 1898 and from 1904 was organizing secretary of the new National Prohibition Party and editor of *The Prohibitionist*. He could not have afforded to be an M.P. but for the payment of members, for which he campaigned as the key to a Socialist breakthrough, and was much relieved that by the time that the candidates were freed from the obligation to pay the returning officer's expenses in 1918 (subject to forfeiting £150 if polling less than one-eighth of the voters) he had cleared the one-eighths hurdle. In this he was helped by the fact that he had been the only candidate to oppose Churchill when, after a period out of office after the Dardanelles Affair, he became Minister of Munitions in 1917 and, according to law as it then stood, had to submit himself for re-election. Though Scrymgeour was anti-war, he got 21.8% of the votes. In 1918, opposing the two sitting members who supported the Lloyd George coalition and had the 'coupon', Scrymgeour, with 26.71 % of the voters supporting him, did markedly better than the I.L.P. candidate, though he, too, was local. He was thus well poised to

come up from behind and head the poll in 1922, in a very bitter campaign in which Churchill and another National Liberal were opposed by a Labour, a Communist and an Independent Liberal candidate as well as Scrymgeour, and Churchill was smeared by the Tory Courier and damned with faint praise by the Liberal Advertiser.

In 1922 Scrymgeour escaped the big guns but had many a passage at arms with Willie Gallacher. For, as a Christian Socialist born out of Methodism Scrymgeour abominated Marxism, and the Communists regarded him as a muddle-headed bourgeois sentimentalist.² He rose to make his maiden speech on the Address in 1922 just after Newbold, the member for Motherwell, boasted that he was the first representative of the International elected to Westminster. Scrymgeour agreed with him that "that tomfool show of theirs" (the State Opening of Parliament) was like the challenge presented to the French people by Marie Antoinette, and that Downing Street was subservient to Wall Street, and on his first visit back to Dundee complained that the speeches lacked sincerity because of the convention and the courtesy. But he denounced both atheism and talk of unconstitutional action, while annually warning the parties that it was their fault if, because of their shadow-boxing, the conviction spread among the poor and the unemployed that the House of Commons was a futile institution. He spoke for 'The Old Book' against both Das Kapital and the "gamesters . . . playing ducks and drakes with the interests of millions of our people".

In 1923 Gallacher condemned Scrymgeour as neither ornamental nor useful and said that if people voted for him, God knew what they were voting for, though, according to Scrymgeour, God really did know. The Courier and the Advertiser, however, weightily instructing the electors to reject him because he favoured a Labour government and a capital levy and all the other wild devices of Socialism, admitted that as a member he was earnest, diligent and a useful advocate of local interests. The electors gave him his reward. Again he headed the poll. He had 40 % of his votes in common with the Labour member, E. D. Morel, and hardly any with Gallacher (634 to Morel's 9,239). He had 5,130 plumpers (to Morel's 1,762) and no less than 9,509 (compared with Morel's 1,864) in common with a candidate of the Right.

But the 1923 election was the only one in which Scrymgeour received really dramatic support right across the political spectrum. He never joined the Parliamentary Labour Party, though invited to do so after his election in 1922, and none of the Labour candidates elected with him ever stood in alliance with him. But Scrymgeour was elected, and thrice re-elected, largely because he belonged to the Labour movement, if not to the Labour Party. He was an

independent, but he was very much aligned. He unfurled his banner in 1922 as 'a pledged opponent and deliberate challenger of all the forces adverse to the interests of the working class'. In 1929 he called himself 'Prohibition and Labour' and crossed the floor of the House when the Labour government took office. In 1922 two-thirds of his votes, and in 1924 nearly two-thirds, were obtained in common with Morel, in 1929 and 1931 85% and 80% respectively with Marcus. Scrymgeour was an unofficial Labour candidate who had pre-empted one of the Dundee seats and against whom, with the Communist polling quite strongly, Labour dare not put up two candidates lest they won neither seat. But in 1923 Scrymgeour would have been defeated by a Liberal if 5,935 people had not voted Liberal-and-Scrymgeour (and 3,574 Unionist-and-Scrymgeour), many of them, no doubt, people who did not understand that for a Liberal to give a vote to Scrymgeour as well as the Liberal was equivalent to not voting at all. Evidently the Liberal organizers grasped the point, for in 1924 the Liberal-and-Scrymgeour voting fell to hardly more than a thousand. Scrymgeour, losing his place at the head of the poll, scraped in by 1,075 against a Unionist, perhaps saved by the fact that there were still 3,243 Unionist-and-Scrymgeour voters, by holding whom Scrymgeour was again in 1929 at the head of the poll.

But there was a gradual waning of Scrymgeour's distinctive hold on the electors, as his share of the plumpers reveals—1918, 3,884 of 9,248; 1922, 5,015 of 7,381; 1923, 5,130 of 11,512; 1924, 3,431 of 7,123; 1929, 1,588 of 8,431; 1931, 1,722 of 9,598. In 1929 both the Unionist and the Communist obtained more plumpers than he, a sign of political stratification which more and more reduced him to the ranks of a Labour candidate with, however, enough votes from people who also voted Unionist or Liberal to give him an edge over a Unionist or Liberal challenger in a marginal contest. But in 1929 his victory by more than 16,000 was not marginal and in 1931 his defeat by more than 16,000 was not marginal. In the former year he still obtained 5,000 votes in common with the Unionist or the Liberal (semi-allied as anti-Socialists) and in 1931, when Dundee was won by Dingle Foot (L) and Florence Horsbrugh (U), allied as candidates supporting Ramsay MacDonald's National Government, Scrymgeour was still the beneficiary of 3,593 of the 4,850 votes 'mixed' between Right and Left, although no more violent critic of the National Government existed and he had lately been cooperating closely with Maxton's I.L.P.

Scrymgeour's relationship to the Labour Party was that of 'candid friend'. He could, he said, best help the Labour movement by telling the Labour Party when it was wrong. "As an independent representative of the Labour movement", he said in the House in October 1930, "I can see what I prophesied years ago would happen, that is, the Labour Party developing into a Liberal and radicalized

party". To stay in office it was playing the shameful, irrelevant game of party politics, courting the Liberals, telling Parliament through the King's Speech that its business would be 'unreal business', unrelated to the cure of poverty and unemployment, instead of presenting a Socialist programme and falling on it. To him Mac-Donald's treachery in allying with Tories and Liberals in the 'national' government was only an accentuation of his refusal to take any radical measures to deal with the economic depression. To Scrymgeour it was all so simple—"Men and women are unable to find an honest means of earning a living, and what is this wealthy country going to do for them? . . . We are sent here to defend those who are defenceless, and to let this Government [the Labour government] or any other government know that, by whatever means they have to find the money, the business of defending these people must be done". He did not shrink from advocating the entire abolition of the army and air force, both to get the money and to give a lead in world disarmament. MacDonald agreed – Scrymgeour was always quoting him—that it was "a question of masses of toiling people being played with as mere pawns in a game, a question of powerful financial forces manipulating the interests of the nations of the world for their own particular gratification and satisfaction". But, not seeing how to beat them, he joined them. To Scrymgeour the 'national government' was "a national disgrace", and when extra police were drafted to deal with unemployment riots in Dundee, and the House was discussing how to prevent dishonest receipt of the dole, Scrymgeour burst out in the House (28th September 1931)—"You dare to say that about men? . . . You stand at that Box and insult them! ... It is downright blackguardism". There were the inevitable cries of 'Name'.

Two days later Scrymgeour made what he did not suspect was his last speech in the House of Commons. It was against an increase in the duty on beer unaccompanied by one on the drink of the rich. "If", he said, "beer is a legitimate commodity it ought to be relieved of all taxation. . . . But why pursue this wretched plan of taking revenue out of what is perfectly well known to be a prolific source of infamy and a business into which no man with self-respect and with the highest ideals of Empire and people would enter?"

For the last time in October 1931 the strains of Farewell my Bluebell echoed from election halls in Dundee. To it had been set in 1908 the words:

"Vote, Vote for Scrymgeour,
He is your friend,
He'll not deceive you, but be faithful to the end!
He is straightforward, honest, brave and true—
Vote now for Scrymgeour and he'll work for you."

To it in 1922 a crowd of 30,000 with a pipe band had seen him off to Parliament. His vote now was almost identical with that of the year of his first triumph, but it was not enough, for the electorate had been swelled by the women of 21-30 and older unmarried women (as from 1929).³ Dundee elected its first (and so far its only) Unionist M.P. and, in the person of a 26-year-old English barrister (more than thirty years' hence a Labour minister), its last Liberal member. Scrymgeour's defeat in 1931 was part of that remarkable swing against Labour the dimensions of which no one had foreseen. But it was peculiarly poignant, and when, after the declaration of the poll, the good and faithful servant, bewildered by the result, said "My heart is with the people. I have never deserted them, although they have deserted me", he made for himself a fitting epitaph.

Donald Southgate
University of Dundee

NOTES

1. The *Courier* alleged in 1918 that Scrymgeour's vote represented the Irish vote. Scrymgeour believed in Home Rule for Ireland and, by the mid-twenties, for Scotland. He admired the Irish party, as contrasted with the Labour party, because of its consistency of purpose.
2. The proportion of voters supporting both Scrymgeour and a Communist was notably small—never more than 1-18%.
3. Scrymgeour's popularity with the mill girls is shown by the fact that in 1929, after this enfranchisement, his share of the voters' support rose by more than 16%, compared with a rise of less than 3% for the Labour candidate.

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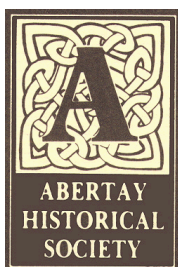
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