

1. Introduction, General Observations, and Bibliography

This is an account of journeys along the 3 main rivers in Fife and Clackmannanshire from their respective sources to their outlets into the Firth of Forth or North Sea, during which I pause to consider nearby sites of present and especially past significance. The 3 rivers are;

The River Eden

The River Leven

The River Devon

The journeys have been in an important sense virtual, in that I have not tramped for miles along the river banks. There are some walkways, and country parks, which I have utilised, but for the most part, I have followed the rivers on maps and satellite views, identified sites of interest, and then worked out ways of getting near enough to see them, and obtain photographs. Sometimes that has not been possible, usually because sites are private, which status has been respected; where access is available occasionally or conditionally, I have sometimes used photographs from the Internet, acknowledging their provenance. I have tracked the rivers downstream, and since reaching head waters and sources is now usually beyond my present physical capabilities, photographs obtained by others have been essential, and I am grateful to many hikers and hill-walkers, who have made them available. I have drawn information from many places, some listed in the bibliography, others mentioned in the relevant part of the document, but it is appropriate to highlight McWilliam's volume 'Fife' in the Buildings of Scotland series, which has been particularly useful, and can be used to fill out many of the short sketches presented here, and the maps on the National Library of Scotland website, maps.nls.uk which have allowed the sites of many watermills which operated in the past to be identified.

The descriptions refer to settlements, archaeological sites, buildings, and natural features, which are near to the rivers in question; I have only occasionally strayed to places where a river or its valley cannot be seen. Rather less attention has been given to tributaries than to the chosen rivers; they have not been tracked as systematically but sites of interest on their banks have been described. The aim has been to keep the rivers central to the narrative, rather than using them as a vehicle for a wider study of the lands around them. Readers will only find cursory geological descriptions here, and little consideration is given to botanical and zoological matters, central to some books about rivers. Other deliberate omissions are fishing, swimming, and boating of all types, but hopefully the content is still wide enough to sustain interest.

Although the accounts of individual rivers stand on their own, a few general comments are appropriate and they now follow. There are two categories of building which are regarded as special in the context of this document, as they are in a real sense 'of the rivers', rather than just near to them. I refer to watermills and bridges. Comments on the watermills appear in the main texts, but at the end of each account of a river, watermills are located, on a map of the river and its main tributaries, produced by Dr. Alastair Robertson, and those on lesser tributaries and streams are tabulated. In addition, the watermills on all the other streams in Fife and Clackmannan, however small have been identified and tabulated, at the end of the 'wash-up' document, covering lesser streams. No such exercise can be seen as complete, but the Tables at the end of the accounts of the river journeys contain our best estimates of numbers of Commercial Mills and Farm Mills in Fife and

Clackmannanshire, and the results are brought together in the overview, which is Appendix 1. Some general information on watermills, is also to be found there.

As regards bridges, there are of course many crossing the rivers of Fife and Clackmannanshire carrying roads, tracks and railway lines, but most are relatively modern, i.e. 19th century or later. On the river journeys, I have singled out mainly those which pre-date 1700, of which at my last count there are 12 in the two counties, which cross the selected streams. Most would agree that the two finest span the River Eden, and are relatively close to St. Andrews, the seat when they were built, of Primates of Scotland, who were responsible for their construction; I refer to 15th century Guardbridge, and 16th century Dairsie Bridge. They and the others are dealt with as encountered on the river journeys. However, since the document was first posted, a survey of bridges standing in 1600, in England and 1700, in Scotland, carried out using old maps has been compared with a survey of pre-1700 bridges standing now, to determine which have survived in coherent form for over 300 years. The results of this analysis as they apply to Fife and Clackmannan are presented as Appendix 2.

Of many smaller streams of interest in Fife and Clackmannan, I deal with 7 of them, termed lesser streams in a 'wash-up' section, following the pattern indicated above. Those streams are;

Pow of Lindores

Kinness Burn

Kenly Water

Keil Burn

Lyne Burn

Bluther Burn

Black Devon Water

I have appended to this introduction a short bibliography.

Each item, i.e. , the accounts of river journeys, those of the lesser streams, this introduction, and the appendices is a separate PDF, accessible from the document home page, utilising the flexibility achievable on-line.

Bibliography

Title	Author (s)	Publisher	Date
Medieval Religious Houses - Scotland	Cowan I.B. & Easson D.E.	Longman	1976
The Buildings of Scotland - Fife	Gifford J.	Penguin	1988
The Buildings of Scotland – Stirlingshire & Central	Gifford J. & Walker F. A.	Penguin	2002
Discovering the River Forth	Hendrie W.F.	John Donald	1996
The King's Scotland – The Kingdom of Fife	ed. Lang T.	Hodder & Stoughton	1951
Loch Leven & the River Leven – A Landscape Transformed	Munro D.	The River Leven Trust	1994
The Castles of the Heartland of Scotland	Salter M.	Folly	2007
Water Mills in Scotland 1550 - 1870	Shaw J.	John Donald	1984
John Erskine Earl of Mar, Architecture, Landscape & Industry	Stewart M.	Architectural Heritage, Vol XXIII	
Water and Wind Power	Watts M.	Shire	2005
Account of the Number of People in Scotland in 1755	Webster A.	Various Modern Transcriptions	

Websites

Site	Comment
britishlistedbuildings.co.uk	
rcahms.gov.uk	Scottish historic buildings
maps.nls.uk	Historic maps
gridreferencefinder.com	Convenient access to Google & OS maps
drtomsbooks.files.wordpress.com	My own gazetteer of ancient bridges
en.wikipedia.org	
ceh.ac.uk/index	Hosts the National River Flow archive
scottishgolfhistory.org	
scotlandsoldestbridges.co.uk	

I have accessed many guide books and websites dealing with specific sites and places in the search for information while preparing the document. Where I have used actual content like photographs, I state the source in the text, but to include all the sources which have given me hints or ideas would make for an overly long reference list for a document which is not a learned paper. Any reader wishing to follow these footsteps needs only to enter the relevant entity in a web search engine.