

**WILLIS'S CURRENT NOTES: A SERIES
OF ARTICLES SELECTED FROM
ORIGINAL LETTERS AND DOCUMENTS
NOS. 73-84, ADDRESSED DURING THE
YEAR 1857**

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Willis's Current Notes: A Series of Articles Selected from Original Letters and Documents Nos. 73-84, Addressed During the Year 1857 by Various

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VARIOUS

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WILLIS'S
CURRENT NOTES:

A SERIES OF ARTICLES

ON



Antiquities, Biography, Heraldry, History, Languages,
Literature, Natural History, Curious Customs, &c.

SELECTED FROM

ORIGINAL LETTERS AND DOCUMENTS

ADDRESSED DURING THE YEAR

1857,

TO THE PUBLISHERS,

WILLIS AND SOTHERAN,

No. 136, STRAND, LONDON.

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WILLIS'S CURRENT NOTES.

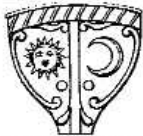
No. LXXIII.]

"Takes note of what is done—
By note, to give and to receive."—SHAKESPEARE.

[JANUARY, 1857.

NAVAL TROPHY AT DEAL.

On the esplanade at Deal, at the southern extremity, stands a now much dilapidated old house, built apparently some two or three hundred years since, and in the front, abutting on the end of the promenade, is seen imbedded in the wall, what appears to be an early heraldic shield of arms, impaled, with its bearings right and left; but on closer inspection it is evidently the stern of some old decorated boat, of which a lady having made a correct sketch, I send you a fac-simile,



The field or ground is painted red, embossed with black mouldings, and bearing on the dexter side a gilded sun enrayed, and rather below it, what may be supposed to be the planet Mars. On the sinister side, is the Crescent, or half moon accompanied by the planet which one may infer to be Venus. These ornaments stand boldly forth in burnished gold. In the centre, in pale, is evidently the raised part to which the rudder was formerly attached. None of the old pilots or boatmen appear to know anything respecting this relic, beyond what has been traditionally handed down to them, namely that the original proprietor of the premises was a seafaring man, who had been much in foreign parts, and having made capture of a Dutch ship, built the house on this spot, close to high water mark of the sea, and placed the decoration in the wall, as a record of the event, and as an heir-loom to his family.

Hasted mentions the unsuccessful attempt in 1648, of Prince Charles subsequently Charles the Second, to land here from a fleet, and it is not impossible, this might be the stern of one of the boats belonging to one of the ships.

Harbledown, Jan. 1.

M. D.

Qu. More probably the stern of some French war ship's boat, captured on some memorable occasion in conflict with the English and Dutch? possibly La Hogue, in May, 1692?
Ed.

COSTUME OF THE CLANS OF SCOTLAND.

Mr. R. R. Mc Ian, A.R.A. Ediub., after a long and severe illness, died Dec. 13th last. His interesting national work, the *Costume of the Clans*, the whole being admirably delineated in the colours peculiar to each, with historical descriptions, having become the property of Messrs. Willis and Sothran, they have commenced a re-issue of the work, in parts, as conducted by Mr. Mc Ian, but have reduced the price to one-third of the original publication price.

VOL. VII.

ORIGIN OF ORATORIOS.

Oratorios divided into scenes, and usually in three acts or parts, in imitation of theatrical representations, but always on sacred subjects derived from scripture or church history, and set to grave and solemn music in order to be vocally and instrumentally performed in a church or elsewhere, during Lent, seem never before the seventeenth century to have been entirely sung, but chiefly declaimed with incidental airs and chorusses. They are not to be confounded with the early Miracle-plays, the Mysteries, or similar Interludes which even in England may possibly date from before the Norman Conquest. None of the Mysteries are totally without music, as there are chorusses and laudi, or hymns, which in all of them were sung, and in others accompanied by performances on instruments between the acts. Crescimbeni states that in a representatione sacra teatrale written by Damiani, and printed at Siena, 1519, there was at the beginning of every act an octave stanza, which was to be sung to the sound of the lyra viol, by a personage called Orpheus, who was solely retained for that purpose; at other times a madrigal was sung between the acts, after the manner of a chorus.

All Italian writers on the subject agree that these sacred musical dramas had their beginning in the time of San Filippo Neri, who is numbered by Quadrio among Italian improvisatori; and with whom, about 1558, originated the congregation of the Priests of the Oratory at Rome. Oratorii, Ital., Oratoires, Fr., Anglice Chapels, imply the spaces between the arches of Romish churches, where there is an altar, and are so designated. By degrees this order spread itself all over Italy, and it appears these fathers in whatever city of Italy, they had an establishment, entertained their congregations with good music. During the service and after the sermon, it was usual for them, among other pious exercises, in order to allure youth to church, and keep them from secular amusements, to have hymns, psalms and other spiritual laudi or songs, sung either in chorus, or by a single favourite voice, divided into two parts, the one performed before the sermon, and the other after it.

The first collection of the words of Hymns and Psalms sung in the chapel of San Filippo Neri was published in Rome in 1585, entitled *Laudi Spirituali*, stampate ad istanza de R. R. P. P. della Congregazione dell' Oratorio. The second in 1603, *Laudi Spirituali diverse solite cantarsi dopo Sermoni da' P. P. della Congreg. dell' Oratorio*. Among these were dialogues in a dramatic form.

Simple as the manner would seem, in which this practice of devotion was begun with only spiritual can-

B

tatos, or songs, on moral subjects, they in order to render the service still more attractive, instituted Oratorios on some sacred story or event from the scripture, written in verse, and set by the best poets or musicians of the time. These being composed in dialogue, and rendered imposing to the congregations, such interest was excited by the performance of the first part, there was no fear that any of the hearers would retire during the sermon, or till they had heard the second. Among the subjects selected for the purposes of representation were the Good Samaritan, Job and his friends, the Prodigal Son, Tobit with the Angel, his father and his wife; these with others, by the excellence of the composition, the band of instrumental performers and the general superiority of the performance brought the Oratory into such repute that the congregations greatly increased in numbers, and hence this species of sacred musical drama wherever performed became known by the generally accepted appellation of Oratorio.* Venuti, Roma Moderna, 1766, p. 207, intimates—in the church of San Girolamo della Carita, in that city, Oratorios were still constantly performed on Sundays and Festivals from All Saints' Day till Palm Sunday; and also in the church of La Vallicella, or the Chiesa Nuova, where there were similar performances from November the first till Easter.

These spiritual spectacles had their beginning in these two churches, but the practice has been extended to so many of the other churches in Rome, that there is not a day in the year, during which some one or more of these representations may not be heard; and as lists of Oratorios and other Funzioni to be performed in the course of the year, in the several churches are published, similarly to our lists of Lent preachers, considerable emulation arises among the directors and performers, and a concurrent solicitude of gratification on the part of the persons constituting the several congregations.

PRUSSIA AND NEUCHÂTEL.

The father of the present King of Prussia having obtained from Napoleon permission to deprive the King of England of the Electorate of Hanover, concluded at Vienna, on Dec. 15, 1806, a provisional Convention, whereby Prussia surrendered to France the territories of Anspach, Bareuth, Cleves, and Neuchâtel.

* Doni in his Trattato della Musica Scenica, speaking of Oratorios, observes that by a spiritual representation, he did not mean the gross, vulgar and legendary kind of drama used by the nuns and monks in convents, which were unworthy of the name of poetry, but such elegant and well constructed poetical fables as that of S. Alexis, by the ingenious Giulio Rospigliosi, many times represented, and always with applause. The Oratorio of S. Alexis, which is omitted in the Drammaturgia, though printed in score, in folio, 1634; was set to music by Stefano Landi of the Papal chapel, and represented in the Barberini Palace, at Rome, on a stage and in action, with dances, machinery and every kind of splendid dramatic decoration, of which a glowing description is given in the preface and a letter prefixed to the volume.

WALLINGTON'S JOURNAL.

In answer to the enquiry made in Notes and Queries, Vol. V. p. 483, I replied, stating that the Manuscript was in my possession; it was purchased by me of Mr. Andrews of Bristol, who obtained it on the dispersion of the library of the late Mr. Walter Wilson of Bath, in whose sale Catalogue it appears as 'A Bundel of Mercys, etc.' Whilst in Mr. Wilson's possession, he had it handsomely bound by Riviere, but from whom or whence he obtained the manuscript I am unable to state; if my copy is not the original, it is of contemporary date, and bears evident marks of having been written at different times, although the same hand may be traced throughout.

The manuscript embraces a later period than that stated in the last number of Current Notes, and contains curious and interesting matter relative to the Civil Wars with Wallington's reflections on the same; it is a small quarto, and arranged under various headings, of which 'a Bundel of Mercys' is one.

4, St. John's Terrace, Oxford. JOHN GODWIN.

The enquiry in Notes and Queries refers to the Manuscript purchased at the Gulston sale in 1781, by George Baker, of St. Paul's Churchyard, for 3*l.* 11*s.* The volume, with the Gulston crest on the binding, is now as stated in Current Notes, in the Corporation Library, Guildhall. Upcott became its possessor in 1822, and in the Gentleman's Magazine, Nov. 1824, pp. 387-388, he printed a long extract from it, in reference to the destructive fire on London Bridge, that began in the night of Feb. 18th, 1632-3, but scantily described by Stow's continuators.

Nehemiah Wallington, the tenth child of John and Elizabeth Wallington, was born on Saturday, May 12, 1598, at 5 a.m. Was by trade a turner, and sold bedsteads, chairs, etc., in Little Eastcheap, and by the autobiographically recorded particulars of himself and his family, appears to have been a great fool. The Gulston volume though entitled—A Record of the Mercies of God; or a Thankfull Remembrance, is dated December xxv, 1630, but contains transcripts of other memoranda and papers from 1619. Subsequently he writes—

The beginning of November, 1647, my some, John Horthon and I did begin to reade in this Booke every morning by our selves alone, and by God's mercy we have read over this Booke, January y^e xxxi, 1647[8.]

Another memorandum states—

March the third, 1633, I thought with Solomon to looke over all my works or bookees that my hands did write, and I first begin with this Booke this morning, the Lord sanctify it to me that I may see what Mercys he hath done for me of old, and give him all the praise and glory of it.

Later still, when it would seem he had completed his 60th year, at p. 815 is the following note.—

May xxi, 1658, I have by God's mercy read over this my writing booke, which I have read over many times, but now I obsearue more then in former time I did which I have hande'd, and here followsome of that which I obsearue for my Soules good.

An Index to certain religious aspirations follows. Wallington was very illiterate, and sad blunders in orthography are found throughout; even the John Horthon, who it would seem was his son-in-law, appears, September ix, 1658, to be really Jonathan Houghton.

EARLY SCOTISH MERCHANTS' MARKS.

Many years have passed since I collected Merchants' Marks from tomb-stones, and Masons' marks from old ecclesiastical and baronial buildings, and must confess I then attached very little value to either, except as mere curiosities. Many of these which I had collected, through the little regard paid to them, have in consequence been lost, and this I the more regret, since the frequent notices in Current Notes of Early Merchants' Marks in England have appeared, I am led to believe there may be more in them than I at first imagined. Should these Merchants' Marks now selected from the remains of my gatherings in Scotland, with the accompanying memoranda, be worthy a place in Current Notes, you are most welcome to them.

These marks are evidently of the same class as those which have hitherto appeared in Current Notes; not any one of them being in themselves quite the same in design. They are all from Free stone monuments, brasses being extremely rare in Scotland. The earliest here described is from Stirling, and with the exception of two others from the old Grey Friars' burial ground at Perth, all the rest are from the old burying ground at Dundee. The delineation of the whole is not only broad and vigorous, containing certain traces of individual character and a degree of mathematical exactness in their various parts, but also present an ingenuity in design, and delicacy in execution, which cannot be too much admired.

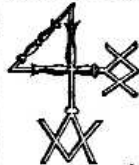
Waving the old idea that the common sign 4 was symbolical of mercantile trading to the four quarters of the globe, in which after all there may be some truth? I may observe that the remark of your Correspondent, C. N. p. 48, of Merchants not being permitted to assume Heraldic insignia is not borne out by those in Scotland, at least so far as I have yet seen, there being scarcely a tomb-stone from which the marks in this communication have been taken, but had also the family arms of the persons thereon commemorated. I deduce an instance in that of Thomas Simson, 1579. These family arms have constantly precedence of the marks, being either at the top, in the centre, or on the left side of the stone.*

It is almost superfluous to observe that those curious marks are either monogrammatic, or display some vagary in their designs, and I cannot help thinking that they originated from those of the more ancient disciples

* The instances, kindly communicated by our correspondent, refer to the sixteenth century, at which time wealth and the position of gentility doubtless obtained for many persons grants of arms from the Herald, to which their families had not the slightest claim. In the earlier ages merchants had their marks, and no arms, an instance presents itself, in a seal now before the writer, the legend being SIGILLY ROBERTI DE GLEN; he was burges of the city of St. Andrews, 1337, and his mark with the R and G entwined, is within an architecturally devised compartment, the design probably derived from the shrines of that day. ED.

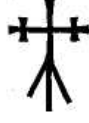
of Hiram—an idea which is supported by the great similarity of the Marks of Merchants, to those of Masons, the latter having from remote antiquity retained certain devised private marks upon their tools, which they also cut and left upon the blocks of stone which they respectively dressed or finished, and in various official capacities attached to their signatures.

The *Archæologia*, vol. xxiv. contains an excellent paper on the Use of Mason-Marks in Scotland, by the late eminent Scottish antiquary, Patrick Chalmers, Esq. of Aldbar. Two plates of Mason-Marks accompany his observations—one of these shows the marks upon some old ecclesiastical and baronial buildings in Angusshire; and the other, is a selection of private marks from the cash-book of the St. Ninian's Lodge of Freemasons in Brechin, extending from 1714 to 1847. These were mostly taken from my collection of Mason-Marks, since greatly increased; and a glance at these plates will at once evince the close resemblance of some of the marks of the early Scottish Merchants here engraved, to those of the practical Freemasons which are in the *Archæologia* but partially represented.



these lines:—

Man tak hed to me, hov thov sal be,
Qvhan thov art dead;
Drye as a tris, vermes sal eat ye,
Thy great hovri sal be lik lend.
Ye time hath bene, in my sovt grens,
That I ves clene of bodie as ye ar;
Bvt for my eyen, nov tvo holes bene,
Of me is aene, bvt bunnes bara.



The first of these, is on a stone to John Garden, a burges, 1581; the second from a stone bearing the

This pleasingly designed monogram is from a stone in the old burial ground of Stirling, and in which there are others very similar. The date 1523, is all that remains, the inscription has been effaced.

On a stone in the old burial ground or Houff of Dundee, to

the memory of a burges, named Thomas Simson, 1579, is the family coat, and his mark, in which quaint design his initials may be traced.

Upon the same stone are



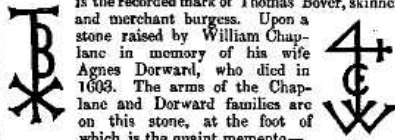
name of Robert Pehlis, 1592; and the third, the name illegible, but bearing the initials, P. A. E. S. 1598.

Built into the west wall of the burial ground, and occupying the space of three recesses, is a stone having both these monograms;



referring to James Mudie, a baillie of Dundee. Here also as a decoration were formerly the old family arms. The inscription is given in Menteth's Theater of Mortality, but all that now remains are the words—In Monumentum Sepulchrum Familia Mvdeorum erexit Jacobvs Mvdevs, Anno 1602.

is the recorded mark of Thomas Bover, skinner and merchant burghess. Upon a stone raised by William Chaplanc in memory of his wife Agnes Dorward, who died in 1603. The arms of the Chaplanc and Dorward families are on this stone, at the foot of which is the quaint memento—

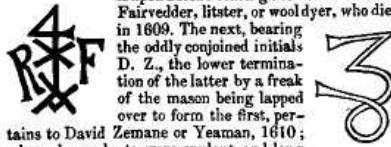


VILLIAME CHEPLANE VOS YE DORIR OF YIS.



The first of these is the monogram of Robert Kandor, also a burghess of Dundee. The two next, belong to two persons surnamed Goldman; the father 1607, and the son, 1632. The Goldman family were in their day the 'Merchant Princess' of Dundee, and owners of large possessions in landed property, but their race and name have been long since extinct. These marks have a peculiar interest, as shewing that different members of one family adopted different devices.

is upon a stone bearing the name of Robert Fairredder, litster, or wooldyer, who died in 1609. The next, bearing the oddly conjoined initials D. Z., the lower termination of the latter by a freak of the mason being lapped over to form the first, pertains to David Zeman or Yeaman, 1610; whose descendants were opulent and long



after exercised much influence in the affairs of Dundee. Upon Zeaman's stone is the following couplet, not uncommon in Dundee.

TO HONOR YE SEPVLTOR YE MAY BE BALD:
YE LERNE OF ABRAHAM OVR FATHER AVLD.

on a stone dated 1617, but all else is effaced. The R. M. on the following is the monogram of Robert Mureson, 1637. The stone was placed there by his widow Helen Collie, and a slab built into a wall at the head of the stone bears an inscription—

TO YE FAMILIE OF YE MURESONS.

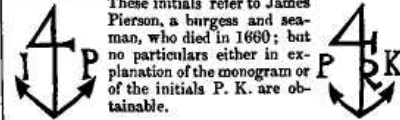


The dates of these three are doubtful, but appear to be of the early part of the seventeenth century. The first is on a stone to the memory of a David Blair, all else is effaced. The second is from a monument to one John Zoung now Young, who possibly was related to Sir Peter Young, co-tutor with Buchanan, to King James the Sixth; Sir Peter's father having been a burghess of Dundee, where he died in 1583. The name and date on the stone bearing the third mark are wholly illegible.

The monogram of Alexander Copping; when placed here is not very clear, the date being effaced and wholly illegible. The initial letter C. is not as might be inferred cut to the same breadth and upon the same level as the shaft upon which it is placed, but is proportionately narrow and inserted into the centre of the shaft by means of a slit in the centre, the upper bend of the circle of the C being slipped under the left half of the shaft, and the under circle below the right half. The undulations of that part of the shaft, consequent upon this arrangement are beautifully developed on the stone, a mural tablet, in the vicinity of Nos. 7 and 8. With the name Alexander Copping, are also the initials I. P. Copping in his day was a merchant and burghess of some note.



These initials refer to James Pierson, a burghess and seaman, who died in 1660; but no particulars either in explanation of the monogram or of the initials P. K. are obtainable.





The stone upon which this device is found is in the old Grey Friars' burial ground at Perth, bearing this inscription—Heir lysis ane Honorabil Woman Helena Colt spouse to, M Andersone quha dyit 8 Iunii, 1618.



In conclusion I may observe that the merchants in large manufacturing towns were not the only parties in Scotland who used these marks. I have seen them in many country churchyards and villages, mostly similar in design to this, which is quite a common device, and is from a stone in memory of Alexander Buchan, a Burgess of Perth, who died in 1758. In the village of Dunblane, in Perthshire, many of the old houses have these marks over the door, with the initials of the owner of the house and those of his wife, with sometimes the words:

WE LOVE EQUITY.

Painted over the door of an old shop at Brechin, the common kind of mark $\frac{4}{M}$ is seen issuing from the monogram VA, between the Christian and surname of the merchant.

Possibly the device as shown from the stone dated 1617, had its origin in the use of the weigh-beam.

Brechin, Jan. 2.

A. J.

GREAT FIRE IN LOWER THAMES STREET.

Early in the last century there were but few newspapers printed, and their place was frequently supplied by what were then designated 'News Letters,' of one sheet folio; hence also much of the correspondence between private individuals, contained more generally particulars of passing events than are now detailed in letters of our time. In one from a William Pearce in the metropolis, to his sister Mrs. Elizabeth Pearce at Ashburton, in Devonshire, are the following particulars of a disastrous fire in Lower Thames Street, of which a contemporary printed account may almost be looked for in vain.

London, Jan. 20, 1714-15.

This day sennight att evening, broke out a dreadfull Fire near the Custome house, by the accidental blowing up of a house where was great quantity of gun-powder, and the fire burned exceeding fierce till near noon next day, notwithstanding all methods used to extinguish it both by engines and blowing up of houses to prevent its spreading. About one hundred stately brick houses are now only heapes of rubbish, and multitudes of Warehouses and others of merchants goods are consumed to the value of many hundred thousand pounds, and which is worse many scores of men, women, and children, have lost their lives. Abundance that I know, their houses are in ashes; the Custom House escaped, notwithstanding the fire reached to the very walls of it, and did some damage although it was a very dark night, yet the air seemed on fire, so that a pin might have been taken up many miles from hence.

ARMOURERS' ARMORIAL INSIGNIA.

The original seal of the Company of Armourers, is of the time of King Henry the Sixth. The matrix of silver is still in the possession of the Company, but has long since ceased to be used. In the field, St. George the Patron Saint of the Armourers, is represented piercing the Dragon with his spear. Two helmets respecting each other are placed, one on either side of the saint, and beneath each helmet, is a shield, the dexter charged with two swords in saltire; the sinister with a plain cross. The legend—SIGILLY' COMYNE ARTIS ARMVRARIO' CIVITATIS LONDONEA'.

In the Court Minute Book of the Company of Armourers, dated October 7, 1556, is an entry entitled—for the renewing of a letter patent of the Armes of our Company, which notices the fact that the Master and one of the Wardens had been with the Chief King of Arms, and appointed him to make new Armes and Crest 'according unto our Arte and Mysterie,' for the sum of five pounds.

The grant has never been printed, and is here submitted, from the original record.

To all Nobles and Gentills these presents Letters reding, hering, orseyng, THOMAS HAWLEY alias Clarencieux, principall herald and kyng of Armes of the Sowthe, Easte and Weste partes of this realme of Englande, from the Ryver of Trente southwards, sendeth dew and humble commendacion and gretynge.

Equite willett and Reason ordeyneth that men vertuous and of Noble course be by their Marytes and good Reuerence had in perpetuall memoryn, And forasmuch as I the said Clarencieux, am surely informed and understande for certeyne, that eury craft of corporacion within this moste noble Citye of London doo compasse studye and deuyce with all their diligence, and namely such persons as haue in them a gentle and noble harte as are compelled therunto by very course of nature to seke the moste conuenient and laudable wayes to them possible to exalte and preferre their saide Crafts, Mystereys, and Occupacion to thentent that eurye person entryng or comyng into their saide Mysterie and Occupacion through their vertuous and commendable disposition shuide effectually enforse and geue themselves towarde the maintenance, supportacion and long cōtynuance of the same to the laude and prayse of Allmightie God, and to the honor of the Kynge and Queens Majesties, ouer Soueraynes, and of this moste noble Citye of London.

Therefore in following the saide laudable wayes there hath ben with me the forsaide Clarencieux, certeyne of the worshipfull compayny the Maister and Wardeyns of the Fraternite or Gylde of St. George, of the men of the Mysterie of Armerors, of the Citye of London, that is to wete, WILLIAM GONN, at this present tyme beyng Maister; and ROGER TYNDALL and THOMAS BRUCE, Wardeyns of the same, instantly Requyrng me for that there hath ben of long tyme belonging to their saide Fraternite and Mysterie the token of honor, that is to saye Armes.

Neuertheles, they being unsorteine under what sorte and maner their predecessors bare the same, with the dew difference, haue deuyred me the saide Clarencieux to ordeyn, assign and set furth their Armes and Crests with a dew difference lawfully to be borne.

I therefore consideryng their Request to be bothe just