

**RAMBLING
RECOLLECTIONS
OF OLD GLASGOW**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649089628

Rambling recollections of old Glasgow by Various

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VARIOUS

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OF OLD GLASGOW**

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RECOLLECTIONS
OF
OLD GLASGOW.

By "NESTOR."



JOHN TWEED, PUBLISHER, GLASGOW
MDCCLXXX.

“ We might have sat, as we have often done, by our fireside, and talk'd whole nights away—old times, old friends, and old events recalling, with many a circumstance of trivial note to memory dear, and of importance grown,

CHARLES LAMB.”

1299869

P R E F A C E.

“FORSAN ET HAEC OLIM MEMINISE JUVARE.”

THESE notices of Glasgow in the beginning of the nineteenth century were written for amusement at spare moments of a somewhat busy life. They were suggested by the late John Buchanan, Esquire, Banker, who lived to revise some of the earlier sheets. They appeared from time to time in the *Glasgow Herald* under the appropriate designation of “RAMBLING RECOLLECTIONS.” Being written at intervals, they may occasionally repeat incidents. A desire has been expressed to collect and re-publish the notes in a separate form, with which the writer has reluctantly complied.

1st January, 1880.

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RAMBLING RECOLLECTIONS OF GLASGOW.

No. I.

THE writer of these notes was born in Dunlop Street (or Dunlop Street as it was called) in the last century. Soon afterwards his residence was removed to Glassford Street, in a large tenement on the east side near the bottom.

The changes he has witnessed on his native city during his life-time are scarcely credible. These have been chronicled by others to some extent already, but in reflecting on the past, many minor points spring up in his memory which are probably worth preserving. Under this impression the writer (under the signature of "Nestor") ventures to jot down a few things which may interest citizens, especially those of olden time.

The tenement in Glassford Street in which "Nestor" resided, and several other "lands" or tenements, were erected by Mr. Horn, an eminent builder, who opened the street in 1792. He purchased Shawfield House and grounds from Mr. Glassford, known as the great Tobacco Lord. Mr. Horn also built Horn's Court, between St. Enoch Square

and Jamaica Street, and had a country residence at Horn Bank, a little to the east of Govan, on the river side. Mr. David Crawford married a daughter of Mr. Horn, and resided in the first floor of the tenement in which "Nestor" resided. Mr. Crawford was long chairman of the Poor Assessment Board. As such, he was Preceptor, and had the management of the hospital or poor's-house, then in Clyde Street. This was a very comfortable mansion, with shrubbery in front. Mr. Crawford daily visited this establishment, which had about one hundred very aged and infirm male and female inmates. The poor children—generally orphans—numbered about a score of girls and boys. On Sabbaths they walked in procession in plain and very neat garbs to attend divine service in the College Church, the minister of which at that time being Dr. Lockhart, the father of John Lockhart, son-in-law and biographer of Sir Walter Scott. When inmates died in the hospital their interment was in the High Church ground, north side, called "the poor's ground," and all the inmates, dressed in black cloaks, followed a very plain hearse. The only lunatic asylum at that time was a house behind the hospital, where some half-dozen were in confinement. There were a few slits with iron coverings on the wall fronting the Ropework Lane. It was melancholy, in passing the neighbourhood, to hear the cries and shrieks of the poor lunatics. For this reason, few people cared to pass that way, and young folk ran with accelerated speed lest a madman might escape and rend them. Popularly, this asylum was known as "The Shells" (cells). It may be here noticed that Mr. Oswald, the proprietor of the adjacent rope-work, had his town residence there, embellished with the figure of a rope cut out on a stone frieze, still to be seen. Mr. Oswald was subsequently well

known in the political world, and became a member of Parliament for Glasgow. Mr. Horn, afore-mentioned, had no family, and his large estate passed to a brother, a farmer in Perthshire, and who died at his residence, at the Bridge-of-Allan. A younger son was Mr. Robert Horn, advocate, distinguished for his great taste for and encouragement of the Fine Arts, and who became Dean of the Faculty of Advocates. In the early period of the century Spreull's Land was one of the sights of Glasgow. Strangers were taken to see its spiral staircase, which even yet is an object worthy of notice. Messrs. Spreull, father and son, the proprietors, were long Chamberlains of the city, and had their public offices in a small building behind the front land. Afterwards the office was removed to, and for a time kept in, an upper flat of a tenement on the south of the Trongate between the Old and New Wynds.

At the foot of the west side of Glassford Street was an ancient mansion in which was the Ship Bank (now merged in the Union Bank). It was also the town-house of Robert Carrick, the cashier and chief proprietor of the Bank. A considerable distance beyond to the north was a brick wall enclosing a green. Within this wall were some remains of the ruins of Shawfield or Glassford House, with some aged trees, also the modern coach-house and stables of Mr. Carrick, and his hay stack. Outside the wall the side path was in causeway, and not yet paved. On the east side of the street were shops up to Wilson Street, but few beyond, and on the west side Galloway's Court, in which there were the offices of some legal firms. The great manufacturing house of John M'Ilwham had their establishment in a tenement on the east side of the street, which afterwards for a time was used as the Post Office. The Trades' Hall, then the only public