

in the streets. There was also a 'Children's Day' commencing with a procession of gaily decorated horses and carts with the children in fancy dress, followed by games in the park." The society and the celebrations terminated before the beginning of the War in 1939, the only remaining relic being the Society Hall which is now the Assembly Hall of St John Vianney's School.

Coal mining and limestone quarrying were the main industries of Gilmerton, the carting to Edinburgh, which employed the majority of the menfolk, being a subsidiary of the former. The coal industry goes back as far as 1427, reaching an output of 24,000 tons annually by 1760. In 1830 the Gilmerton mines were the deepest that had yet been reached in Scotland and the first in which a railway was introduced. In addition however, due to the steep gradients, women, girls and boys were employed to carry the coal in creels from the faces. A standard load for a woman was an incredible 12-14 stones, or 16-18 stones on the level! The payrate was an equally incredible 10-14 pence per day, unless the bearers were wives or daughters of the hewers, in which case it was nothing! Incidentally, the coal was delivered in Edinburgh for 7/6 a ton, small coal 2/6 a ton. This heartless exploitation of women, girls and boys, peculiar to Scotland, ended by Act of Parliament in 1842.

The quarrying of limestone laid almost as severe a burden on the workers as coal mining, the women with their creels being similarly used as carriers. Up to the development of the housing estates around Gilmerton, the workings could be seen and entered—vast areas of caverns whose roofs were supported by a series of rock pillars. As at Burdiehouse, the limestone abounds in fossil remains, though at Gilmerton, the stratum being higher, these are marine in nature.

Further north towards Liberton village lies the old estate of Goodtrees, or "Gutters" as it was known locally until the name was changed to Moredun. Its most noted owners were the Stewart family, distantly connected with the royal house. The first Stewart, Sir James, banker, merchant, and twice Provost of Edinburgh, inherited the property through marriage. He was a leading covenanter, held high in esteem even by Cromwell. Later, however, his zeal in supporting the restoration of the king led to a long imprisonment from which he emerged in 1681 so impaired in health that he died shortly afterwards. His son James, Lord Advocate of Scotland from 1692-1713, succeeded to the estate and built a residence there. He also was succeeded by his son James who became an M.P. and Solicitor General for Scotland. He in turn was followed by the fourth Sir James Stewart of Goodtrees, the most remarkable of the family, an eminent writer on political economy and other money matters and a Jacobite who suffered exile for eighteen years. Goodtrees became Moredun

when it was purchased by Baron David Stewart Moncrieff who took the name from a hill on his father's estate in Perthshire, no doubt because the local pronunciation, "Gutters" lacked dignity for an advocate! It became the property of the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary and is now the Murray Homes for convalescents.

Adjoining Moredun is Stenhouse, originally Stonehouse but locally "The Stennis". It was once a Barony which included St Catherine's, Gracemount and Southfield as well as the Northfield of Stenhouse which was beyond Greenend, and was held first by the Melvilles of Carnbee in Fife and later by the Rosses of Halkhead. The little hamlet of Stenhouse remains an old world feature of the district. It is situated at the crossroads of two old roads, one of which runs from Greenend to Lasswade Road and was locally known as "The Loan" though successively named Stenhouse Road and Ellen's Glen Road. On it are cottages and houses well over 200 years old, including the original "Robin's Nest" a two-storeyed building to the north west of the crossroads which was a well-known inn in the district and was in business in the present century. The name has been adopted by the modern roadhouse in Greenend. The other road is part of the oldest highway in the district, the "Via Regis" or King's Highway, mentioned in a charter of 1253 and known to have existed as late as 1760 when in a public print advertising the sale of a property in the Stenhouse, the Via Regis was stated to be one of the boundaries. To the north it is now no more than an unremarkable hedged footpath bordering an open field and leading to the end of Yewland Gardens off Lasswade Road. To the south, it ran through Ellen's Glen, Hyvot's Bank, the west of Gilmerton village and Melville Grange farmhouse to Newbattle. It was the road along which the monks from Newbattle Abbey travelled to Edinburgh.

On this road, once known as "Ellen's Grove", near the intersection with the "Loan" are the ruins of the original Liberton Free Church with its school in the basement which served a wide area until the School Board erected Liberton School in 1889. The mill on the Burdiehouse Burn functioned up to 50 years ago but is now a fast disappearing ruin, though the millhouse is still occupied. To the left and on the far side of the bridge over the burn is a house reputed to have been rebuilt, stone by stone, from the old Toll House which once stood in Mayfield Road. This part of the hamlet has been known as Ellen's Glen, or Ellen's Grove, since 1870 at least when a local contractor, Robert Alexander, having gained the contract for the filter beds at Alnwickhill, built a row of houses at the southern extremity for his carters from Gilmerton. These houses bear his initials, those of his wife, Mary Smith, and the place-name "Ellen's Glen".

A distinguished native of Stenhouse was John Simpson, 1755-1815, the architect of the locks and basins of the Caledonian Canal and the bridges at Dünkeld and Bonar. Equally, though less happily famed were the "Stenhouse Witches"—Bessie Lecost and four other women who, after being forced to confess to the charges, were convicted of witchcraft and burned.

At the close of the eighteenth century, the adjoining grounds and mansion house of Southfield were the property of Sir William Forbes, head of the firm that founded the Union Bank of Scotland, and associate of such immortals as Edmund Burke, Joshua Reynolds, Oliver Goldsmith, Walter Scott and Samuel Johnson who, along with Boswell, spent a night in the house on their famous journey to the Highlands. Later, it was the property of the Croall family of coaching fame. It became, first a sanatorium with several annexes on the extensive grounds and is now a geriatric hospital providing both long-term and daily outpatient facilities. Within the extensive walled garden is a magnificent cedar of Lebanon, believed to be over 650 years old.

Neighbouring Southfield until recently was the house of Burnhead with its quaint window overhanging the footpath of Lasswade Road. It had passed through the ownerships of the Duncans of Duncan and Flockhart, the Edinburgh manufacturing chemists, and of Sir John McNeil, a distinguished army officer, and his wife Lady Emma sister of the Marquis of Lorne, who was married to the Princess Louise and who appear to have been frequent guests. The house was occupied as a private dwelling till 1957 and was noted for its beautiful gardens, its glass conservatory connecting the entrance on the roadway with the front door of the house, built, it is said, to enable the Princess Louise to pass from her carriage to the house under protection from the elements! A feature of the house was the suite of four handsome rooms bearing the inscription, "The Royal Suite". The house suffered from vandals while unoccupied and has now been demolished.

Part of the Burnhead ground was purchased in 1883 by the Lockerby Trust for the erection of cottages under the will of Thomas Lockerby of Derwent Villa, Surrey, who left the residue of his estate, amounting to £31,000, "for the erection and endowment of twelve or more almshouses in or near the city of Edinburgh after the style of those in London and Croydon for the reception of twelve or more persons, male or female, in reduced circumstances, who, after acquiring or being left with a competency, have been reduced through the conduct or representations of others, in the investment of their means. The recipients are to be allowed 10/- a week and a free house, and a preference is to be given to the natives of the south of Scotland, Edinburgh and Glasgow." In 1892, Miss Agnes

Macaulay of Glasgow, left the residue of her estate, about £4,000, to the trustees of the above charity. In 1894 twelve houses were erected and opened by Sir James A. Russell, L.L.D. Two houses were added in 1907 and two more in 1938. Ground is still available for further houses.

Adjoining the old United Free Church manse, now Northfield House, and separated from Southfield Hospital by Ellen's Glen Road, is the former Liberton Cottage Hospital. It was built in 1906 in terms of a bequest from Miss Martha Brown of Lanfine, Ayrshire, as an addition to Longmore Hospital, at that time, the Royal Edinburgh Hospital for Incurables. It was opened with 40 beds which were soon increased to 60, and in its day was described as giving effect to "every modern development" in hospital construction, a claim justified by its fine lightsome dayrooms, its excellent accommodation, its physiotherapy and occupational therapy equipment. The standard of "every modern development" was maintained when the new block was completed in 1968 at a cost of £850,000 and opened by the Duchess of Kent. It comprised a four storey, 184 bed ward block with a spacious entrance hall leading to administration, examination and treatment areas. Residential accommodation for 22 nursing staff is provided and changing areas for the non-resident staff. The pharmacy and stores at Liberton serve the five hospitals in the South Eastern Group. As many of the patients are long term, a branch of the Church of Scotland Woman's Guild is associated with Liberton Kirk.

Immediately to the north of the hospital, in Lasswade Road, is Mount Alvernia, for long known as the Convent of Poor Clares. It was founded in 1897 by Poor Clare Nuns who came two years earlier from the Convent at Baddesley Clinton, near Birmingham, which in turn, was a foundation from Bruges in 1850. The Order is Franciscan, having been founded in 1212 when St Clare was received by St Francis of Assisi. Though originally designated a convent, it is now officially a monastery as it houses a contemplative order, the nuns of which make solemn vows, and is one of eighteen monasteries of the Order in Britain. The life of the Order is principally one of worship of God and prayer for all people, especially the suffering and the needy. The Order also serves the community in practical ways, in egg marketing, making altar bread and providing printing, typing and duplicating services. A new wing was added to the buildings in the 1930's.

A tour of the surroundings of Liberton will no doubt be regarded as sadly incomplete without a digression to Craigmillar Castle, once within the parish, but its history and associations are so vast and have been so adequately dealt with in Good's "Liberton" and Speedy's "Craigmillar" that the temptation must be resisted. A word here, however, on the famous "Craigmillar Sycamore"—Queen Mary's Tree, as it was widely

known—is called for before its memory disappears. It stood through the centuries at Little France on the Old Dalkeith Road where some of Mary's retainers dwelt and worked. It was believed to have been planted by the queen in the presence of Rizzio. In 1881, in the course of sawing off some decaying branches, a crop of seeds fell to the ground to be gathered and sown in a neighbouring nursery. A few years later, Queen Victoria, passing it on her way to Dalkeith Palace ordered that the tree should be protected by an iron railing and requested that some of the seedlings should be sent to Windsor Great Park and Balmoral where they now flourish. There is some comfort in that knowledge for little remains of the original tree. For a time after the main tree had had to be severely reduced, the trunk with its commemorative plaque remained a landmark, but today, the iron railing protects only debris and a charred uprooted stump. Not even the plaque has survived.

To the west of Little France is Liberton Golf Course, using as its Club House the former Kingston Grange, once called Craigs and Sunnyside, which was purchased by Sir Robert Gordon Gilmour in 1889 to be used as a Dower House. On the other side of Kingston Avenue is the mansion now known as Kingston Clinic. It was built in 1869 by an Edinburgh tailor, Mr William Christie and accordingly nicknamed "Castle o' Clouts" though officially "Craigend Park". It served for a number of years as a boys' preparatory school before it became, as it is today, a Nature Cure Clinic. To the east of Craigend Park, and beyond the rows of cottages at Upper and Lower Craigend, lay a part of the glebe of Liberton Kirk, the Kirklands, purchased for housing development by the City of Edinburgh in 1946. On it stands one of the battle stones or Camus stones of the district, at the end of what is now Ravenswood Avenue.

The nearby village of Greenend was a hamlet of thatched cottages until the new road to Gilmerton and Dalkeith, which formerly passed through the grounds of Kingston Grange, brought a new shape and stature to it. For many years its principal feature was the house and finely laid out grounds of Greenpark, now offices of the Coal Board, but once a stately mansion owned by Mr Richard Whytock who carried on the weaving of tapestries on the premises. Today, all else is overshadowed by the large Liberton Secondary School which was opened by Princess Marina.

The circuit around Liberton is completed by continuing north along Gilmerton Road back to Nether Liberton, but not without a glance at the Inch Estate on the right, now a closely populated housing area, passing the old Liberton East Mains Farm House, a fine Georgian dwelling which has been converted to a roadhouse, and the site of Liberton Tennis Club, one of the most famous in Scotland, but forced out of existence by vandalism. The Inch House once known as "Inch Place" and "King's

Inch", survived the tide of city encroachment by becoming first, a primary school, and latterly, a community centre. The house, dated 1617, towers impressively to four storeys and attics. It is rough cast with a square stair-tower. There has been much alteration, but the two vaulted chambers of the ground floor survive and in the thickness of the wall is a little stair leading to the first floor level and the main hall with its magnificent stone fireplace. The name "Inch" is from the Middle English meaning a small island, and indeed it is recorded that at one time the house was permanently surrounded by water and accessible only by way of a drawbridge. As recently as 1870 the Braid Burn overflowed its banks, completely surrounding the house to a considerable height.

The earliest owners were the Winrams who played a prominent part in Scottish history. One member, John, sub-prior at St Andrew's, preached the sermon at the trial of Andrew Wishart, the Reformation martyr, but in 1559 he joined the reformers and was instrumental in producing the First Book of Discipline. His son James acquired land in Liberton and built the Inch House. His son George, a noted Covenanter, became a Lord of Session with the title Lord Liberton. He was mortally wounded fighting in the Covenanting army at Dunbar, a fact slightly incongruous with the preservation at the Inch House of a sword engraved "Belonged to Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector, Naseby, June 14th 1645. Dunbar Battle, Sept. 3rd 1650. Praise to the Lord of Hosts". The house then passed to the Gilmours of Craigmillar, a Royalist family who turned over the fortified house to Hanoverian troops during the 1745 Rising under Prince Charles Edward.

To tour around Liberton is to move from point to point at which the past centuries with their romance and rural simplicity meet the inevitable invasions of civilisation's requirements, with all the problems of transition, but that is a study requiring another chapter.