

THE HOUSE AT 4 THE ESPLANADE

Introduction

In the notes which follow I will try to set out something of the history of the house now known as 4 The Esplanade and its immediate environs: the ground identified on the Feuing Plan of Part of Broughty Ferry Links belonging to the Dundee and Arbroath Railway Company 1859.

The Feuing of the Ground and the Building of the House at 1 and 2 Seward Place

In 1872 the land on which 4 The Esplanade now stands was bought from the Scottish North Eastern Railway Company (SNER) by William Black and his wife Mary (nee Easton) who were then living across the water in Tayport. SNER was formed when the Aberdeen Railway Company amalgamated with the Scottish Midland Junction Railway Company on 29 July 1856. On 31 January 1862, the SNER took over the Dundee and Arbroath Railway; and the resultant company was absorbed by the Caledonian Railway on 10 August 1866.

Feudal tenure, a system of land ownership with its roots in the 12th century, was an important part of land use planning in the nineteenth century. The most common form of feudal condition was the obligation to pay a sum of money annually to the superior: the feu duty. Other conditions could place constraints on the use of the land or buildings often in order to harmonise the appearance of a street or housing development.

The land purchased by the Blacks formed part of some 12 acres of ground bought by SNER from the estate of David Hunter, 8th Laird of Burnside who had laid out the plan for the New Town. Two lots - numbers 57 and 58- had been identified on the Feuing Plan of Part of Broughty Ferry Links by then belonging to the Dundee and Arbroath Railway Company which had been prepared by J and H Maclaren Architects in 1859. James Maclaren (1829-1893) was surveyor to the Panmure Estates (owned by Fox Maule Ramsay who was eleventh Earl of Dalhousie and second Baron Panmure) and, as such, he controlled the feuing of some lands in Barnhill, Monifieth and Carnoustie as well as in Broughty Ferry. That, along with his growing reputation as an architect, brought Maclaren numerous domestic and other commissions of which 1 and 2 Seward Place was one.

The feu disposition relating to lots 57 and 58 noted that the land was "*marked off by march stones*" and amounted to: "*Eighty four poles and ten yards or thereby imperial measures.*" It was identified as being within that part of Broughty Ferry which lay within the Parish of Monifieth and the County of Forfar. Particular attention was paid to access to, and egress from, the lots to other parts of the built up area of Broughty Ferry, current and proposed. In May 1848, the short branch from Broughty Ferry Pier had been opened and carried traffic from Ferryport-on-Craig to the Dundee to Arbroath main line. The branch line was carried by a bridge over Brook Street into the area now occupied by the MacKinnon Centre. Operated by the Edinburgh and Northern Railway, the line was used mainly to transport coal mined in Fife. The branch closed when the Tay Bridge opened in 1887.

In 1872, the Links area must have looked rather as the shoreline of Tentsmuir does today characterised by sand dunes which were levelled before building could commence. In their agreement, the Blacks bound *themselves* "*...within two years from their date of entry to said subjects to erect maintain and uphold on the lands and subjects hereby disposed a stone and lime house or houses of a durable and substantial nature of the value of at least Five hundred pounds sterling*". James Maclaren, or a substitute, was to be: "*...the sole judge whether at any time a house or houses shall have been erected on said subjects hereby disposed and are sufficiently maintained*

and up held in virtue of the obligations before written....". The feu duty was to be twelve pounds thirteen shillings "for ever more for payment to us and our successors."

The Environs: 1872-1890

With Gladstone Terrace already built on the north side of Brook Street by 1871, and Castle Street developed by 1875, the building of the semi-detached houses at what was then named as 1 and 2 Seaward Place was only one of a series of developments which over the next 20 years or so transformed the surrounding area to form an extension to the built up area of the Burgh of Broughty Ferry.

The Cowan (or Cowans) family were instrumental in developing much of the area. John (1804-1881), Daniel (1813-1881), and James Cowan (1822-1893) were sons of a Perthshire farmer who came south to Dundee and established businesses. The profits from these enterprises provided the finance for the construction of a series of developments along the Links. Thus, for instance, in the 1866 a considerable acreage of land was acquired from the Panmure Estates by John Cowans noted then as a wine and spirit merchant in Dundee. The brothers and their children were politically active and, as noted later, named some of their developments in honour of royalty and leading statesmen of the day.

Amongst the first buildings constructed was a two storey and attic terrace which ran from the rail bridge at East Brook Street. Numbers 507, 509, and 511 were Cumberland Place. Intended as the first phase of a larger development, Alpha Terrace "turned the corner" eastwards into Castle Terrace (now 493 to 505 and 53 and 55 Castle Street).

In 1864 John Cowans had Castle Terrace built for rent with John Bruce as architect. The frontage of Castle Terrace extended from the site of the windmill which stood on what is now Windmill Gardens. Ornamental gardens for the use of the residents of the terrace were laid out to the south between the housing and the beach (in the manner of the Edinburgh New Town). Cowans clearly had ambitious plans for further development since, in 1869, he agreed to finance two thirds of the cost of constructing a sea wall along what was to become The Esplanade.

Beyond the junction of Brook Street with the Esplanade, and moving eastwards, were cottages followed by the semi-detached properties of 1 and 2, and of 3 and 4 Seaward Place. Beyond that again was Newington Terrace which was developed continuously in the years 1876 and 1877. Further to the east, beyond Panmure Street, were the properties known as Links Cottages which had been built in 1866. Thereafter, to the east, 14 houses were developed: four of these had frontages looking out to the Tay while a further 10 flatted properties were constructed as Rugby Terrace to face eastwards. The Dundee Directory for 1886/7 notes amongst the residents: David Croll (nursery seedsman), Thomas Armit (salvage engineer), William Ewan (mercantile clerk), and T W Grant (a teacher at the Dundee High School).

David Scott Cowans had inherited a substantial fortune from his father, John, and appears in the Dundee Directory as a wine merchant resident at 1 Newington Terrace, which is now 6 The Esplanade. He used his inheritance to build up a substantial portfolio of property. His cousins, George and Edward Cowan, were then living at 7 Castle Terrace and also held property locally. The name Rugby Terrace is something of an anomaly and it is of some interest that when the housing was under construction George was vice-captain and Edward was Secretary and Treasurer of the now defunct Invertay Rugby Club. It was planned to continue the development at right angles to back onto the railway but this phase was not completed leaving the amenity space now occupied by the former putting green and the tennis courts and extending as far as Eastcote.

Returning to the westernmost extremity of Castle Street and looking east towards the junction with Brook Street, the houses in Castle Terrace all had rear entrances on the north facing frontage. On the north side of Castle Street, and again looking as far as the junction with Brook Street, what was named Albert Place (after Queen Victoria's consort) is now 1 and 3 Castle Street (and 437 -439 King Street). Drummond Place at 9, 11, 11A and 15 Castle Street took its name from Isabella Drummond wife of the developer, Daniel Cowan. The detached house at 17 Castle Street was named Victoria Cottage after the then Queen and was home to James Scott owner of a local building firm. Albion Place was developed at what is now 19, 21, 23, 25, 27 and 29 Castle Street. The detached property formerly known as Roslyn Villa is now 35 and 37 Castle Street.

The property onto which 4 The Esplanade now looks out was named Jubilee Place and, accordingly, can be dated to 1887 being the year of Queen Victoria's Jubilee. Most of the other houses on the south side of Castle Street and east of Brook Street were built in two phases- in 1876 and in 1886—all with small garden grounds to the rear. Numbers 50-70, along with what is now 3-9 Panmure Street, were built as Derby Place; and what are now numbers now 2-10 Panmure Street were built as Panmure Place.

On the north side of Castle Street to the east of Alpha Place is Salisbury Place, attributed to the aforementioned architect, James Maclaren. The flatted properties now identified as 1-3 Churchill Place were built at right angles to that. As far as the names are concerned, Lord Salisbury's first term as Prime Minister was 1885-1892, and after the general election of 1886 Randolph Churchill (father of Winston Churchill) became Chancellor of the Exchequer and undisputed Leader of the House of Commons. These properties have adornments similar to those to be seen at East Links Place which suggests that they were constructed at much the same time and by the same builder.

Before that Links Cottages had been built in 1866, as a 2 storey terrace. Later, the flatted development on the north side now known as 83-89 Castle Street had residences below and the Mission Hall of the East Church in upper rooms above looking out to the north over the limits of the back to back housing known as "Sandy Hole" (of which more later).

The Esplanade at the Turn of the Century

The House at 4 The Esplanade

By March 1890 both William and Mary Black for whom 1 and 2 Seaward Place had been built had passed away. William's widow had spent her final years at Bridge House, St Vincent Street which was then owned by James Chapman, a Master Mariner. The houses at 1 and 2 Seaward Place were sold for £1,600 (£174,109 in 2012 prices) to Miss Dorothea Marie Ogilvy of Glen Clova. Born in 1823, she was the daughter of Donald Ogilvy MP and her uncle was the 9th Earl of Airlie, the wealthy friend of royalty. A book of Dorothea's poems was published in 1873 and their worth has recently been recognised with their reissue. Her greatest success was "Willie Webster's Wooing and Wedding on the Braes of Angus" a farcical poem written in dense Angus Scots which described the adventures of a drunken Kirriemuir cattle drover who was pursued up and down Glen Clova by an amorous witch. Miss Ogilvy lived in 1 Seaward Place and rented out 2 Seaward Place. On her death in 1895 she was buried in the cemetery at Cortachy.

The Environs

In 1896 James, George and Edward Cowan were listed as resident at 7 Castle Terrace. John Cowan was by then Town Clerk of the Burgh of Broughty Ferry and James and George were well to do salt merchants doing business from offices and the "weigh house" located east of the Caledonia Railway

Company's Dundee East Station. Conversions of the houses at Castle Terrace to flats were made at numbers 3-10 by John Bruce and Sons over the period 1906-08. By then these consisted of 15 units furnished with gas light, hot and cold water, and inside bathrooms all designed to attract the well to do. Prominent residents included Grimmond (jute), Gilray (education), Baxter (jute) and Adams (whaling).

By this time David S Cowans had confirmed his presence as a man of substance. Indeed, he may have owned as many as 200 properties in the Links area. He had also emerged as a figure of considerable local political importance. Thus for instance, he was a member of Broughty Ferry School Board 87/88/89/90; a Magistrate and Police Commissioner 1899/90; and in 1899/90 he was a Director of the Broughty Ferry and District Steam Laundry Company which was located at Claypotts. However, by 1895/6 he had decided to move to the country where he is recorded as resident at West Mains of Auchterhouse and a member of the County of Forfar County Council.

It would appear that Cowans owned, or had a controlling interest in, properties in Castle Terrace, Newington Terrace, and Panmure Terrace and Rugby Terrace. Thus, for instance, on 18th June 1891 he entered into a complex arrangement with William Oowler (1864-1892), a member of a well known Broughty family, to rent out 8 *"bathing coaches"* stored in *"the building yard at Castle Street for the summer"*. These were horse drawn down to the water's edge so that occupants could step into the water. Mr Cowans stipulated the colours in which they were to be painted and ensured their proper maintenance. The next day (19th June) Cowans was writing from his address at 1 Newington Terrace to the *"heads of families resident in Castle Terrace"* concerned about *"the great damage caused to the shrubs in front of Castle Terrace by Cricket and Ball games being played on the grass plots"*. He states that *"I would do more by garden work to keep the grounds in order, but this is useless while cricket continues being played and balls knocked all over to the distraction of shrubs, borders and grass."*

One interesting resident on The Esplanade was David Blair the officer who forgot to leave the key to the locker containing the binoculars for use by the lookouts on the ill-fated Titanic. David married Madeline Temple Mackness on 2 September 1905 in Broughty Ferry. His marriage certificate shows his address as 11 Newington Terrace, now 17 The Esplanade. Thereafter, his wife and daughter, Nancy, lived for a time at *"Finella"*, 5 Whinny Brae while Blair was based with the White Star Line in Southampton

In 1906 licences were granted by the Burgh for rowing boats and donkey rides on the beach in front of the private gardens at Castle Terrace. Entertainment was provided by, for instance, the Bachelor Boys (later joined by Girls), the Scarlett Merrions, and Gilbert Payne's White Coons. No doubt at the behest of David S Cowans in order to protect the privacy, outlook and rental value of his properties, the huts selling ice cream were restricted to the ends of Brook Street and Castle Green.

By this time the Esplanade ran east for nearly a mile along the shore from the Castle and it was *"made"* by the Burgh the Commissioners in 1894 at a cost of £2495 (approximately £275k at 2012 prices). A Swiss Chalet style tearoom, a shelter and a new bandstand were erected. A *"Ladies golf course"* was laid out according to advice from golfer Tom Morris, with four holes west of Bridge Street (now Barnhill Rock Garden). The course was completed in 1896 and cost a grand total of £80 (about £9,000 in current prices).

The Esplanade: 1908-1931

The House at 4 The Esplanade

In 1908 Ms Ogilvie had passed away and the houses at 1 and 2 Seaward Place were sold by a relative, Walter Donald Charles Ogilvy, then living in London. They were purchased by David Greig identified as a Mill Manager resident in Clepington Road who was married to Jane Farquharson Barrie. David Greig died in 1926 and his widow, then living in 1 Seaward Place, inherited both that and 2 Seaward Place (4 The Esplanade).

Parts of 1 and 2 Seaward Place are shown on an early coloured postcard of "Newington Terrace, Broughty Ferry", one of a series produced by Valentine's and posted in March in 1912. The iron railings which were removed during the World War 2 are still in place, there are trees in the front garden, and there is ivy climbing the walls. Interestingly, there appears to be no dedicated street lighting.

The Environs

A considerable storm in 1915 caused structural damage along the Esplanade. On 23 April 1915 David S Cowans entered into a fere contract with The Lord Provost, Magistrates & Councillors of the City and Royal Burgh of Dundee which effectively passed over ownership to them. It stated, *inter alia*, that they should use: *"... the subjects hereby disposed solely as a public park, or pleasure ground or a place of public resort or recreation and a ground for games and at no time nor on any pretext whatever shall spirituous or other intoxicating liquors be permitted to be sold or used or admitted within the said subjects or any building or buildings which may be erected thereon."* It went on: *"No buildings or erections shall be placed on the subjects hereby disposed except public buildings of the nature of an institute or recreation hall..."*

In July the following note appeared in the Courier and Argus: *"By laying down public tennis courts at Broughty Ferry, Dundee, Dundee Town Council has in tangible form shown its desire to develop the attractiveness of the city's delectable suburb. The new courts were formally opened yesterday afternoon by Lord Provost Don in the presence of a large attendance, which included a large representation of the Town Council. Mr Neil Macdonald, Convenor of the Parks committee, said he had no doubt that the courts would be a success."*

The groynes placed by Cowans to protect his property had been considered unsightly and inimicable to the growing visitor and tourist trade. Accordingly, the sea wall was rebuilt subject to the condition that there should be no development in front of the Cowan's properties at Castle Terrace and Newington Terrace. The latter had emerged as a desirable set of residences and the Dundee Directory of 1912 notes: John Mackay (Principal of Dundee College), George Barnes (retired banker), and Joseph Williams (surveyor with the Board of Trade). One interesting family who lived in Newington Terrace was the Piggotts.

Anne Galbraith Piggott was the youngest of the three daughters of James and Agnes Piggot (nee Anderson). Agnes was the daughter of James Anderson an evangelist (1837–1919) who was active in the Slamanan area and lived in Fauldhouse, West Lothian. Anne's early years were spent in India where her father worked in the food trade. When she was 7 years old the family returned to Scotland and settled in 6 Newington Terrace now 12 Esplanade. All three sisters—Christina (Chrissie), Agnes and Anne (Annie), trained as secretaries. James Piggot, by then a bakery manager, died aged 53 on 22 July 1917 from cardiac failure brought on by a tumour of the larynx. In 1918, aged 25, Anne returned to India under the auspices of the Churches of Christ Mission organisation. Her first job was in Latehar in Orissa State where she worked as an evangelist in a church which included an orphanage. Anne served only one term of five years in India. She recounted her experiences in "Pen Pictures from India" published in 1928. An asthmatic, Anne died at the age of 47.

The Esplanade: 1931-1945

The House at 4 The Esplanade

In 1931 Mrs Greig sold 2 Seaward Place, by then identified as 4 Esplanade, to William Dawson and, his brother, John Dawson. The former was stated to be a retired wine and spirit merchant and the latter was a retired wine and spirit merchant; both were bachelors and they had been living together at Aviemore, East King Street. In 1921 the house had been rented by David Scholfield described as a "hairdresser"; but by 1931 Robert Inglis was renting the property and running it as a boarding house. He moved out, and the brothers moved in.

This was the first time that the properties at 1 and 2 Seaward Place had been in separate ownership and that raised the question of how access to the rear garden at number 1 (3 Esplanade) was to be achieved. The solution was to afford Mrs Greig "a right of access and egress... so long as she continues personally to occupy Number One Seaward Place...." However, the proviso was that "...the said right shall not transmit to her successors ..."

William Dawson died on 13 August 1940 at the age of 87. His obituary noted that he began as a railway clerk, and had played in the band of the Broughty Ferry Artillery Volunteers. A bachelor, he had amassed a considerable fortune and was not known for unnecessary expenditure. His final employment was as a Director of George Morton Ltd then described as "*wholesale wine merchants*". Founded in 1838, George Morton Ltd was located on Dundee's Dock Street, close to Seagate, and noted for its OVD rum, brandies, and blended whiskies (including Copper Pot). The company is now a subsidiary of William Grant & Sons Ltd. (This William Dawson is not to be confused with another William Dawson: the silk mercer who built Claremont, now 61 Albany Road, in West Ferry.)

In 1939 William's brother had passed away; and a younger brother, James, had died at the age of seventeen. Accordingly, William Dawson was, by then, the sole owner of 4 The Esplanade. In his will, drawn up by J & J Scrimgeour and registered on 17 August 1940, he made provision for his sister, Mary Scott Dawson, to inherit the house at 4 The Esplanade and for 15 legacies to a variety of persons and causes. On the death of his sister, William Dawson required his Trustees "*to make over the whole free residue of my estate to the Lord Provost and Magistrates of the City of Dundee as a fund for the purpose of acquiring ground in or in close proximity to that part of the City of Dundee which is represented by Municipal Wards Ten and Eleven as the same are constituted at the date hereof (my intention being to benefit principally that part of the City of Dundee formerly included in the Burgh of Broughty Ferry) for the purpose of providing playing fields, sports grounds or other recreational facilities and the upkeep and maintenance thereof;.... And I desire that the said playing fields be called "The Dawson Park".* (Interestingly, one of the Trustees was James Gillies then identified as a cabinet maker, but later to be proprietor of Gillies the house furnishers).

On 25 August 1943, following the death of Miss Dawson, the Magistrates of Dundee accepted a bequest from the late William Dawson of £33,739 1s 4d (£1.3million in 2012) for providing playing fields. Two portions of Claypotts Farm were purchased from the Duke of Buccleuch: 31.198 acres in 1950, and 16.597 in 1957. Dawson Park is now a focus for sport in the east end of the City of Dundee with numerous pitches of both natural grass and artificial, tennis and basketball courts, a bowling club and various changing facilities. The park has feature plantings, a sunken garden, and a formal avenue of cherry trees along the north axis which is particularly attractive in spring. Duntrune Demonstration Garden, which aims to provide information and ideas for small gardens, is located within the heart of the park.

The Environs

In the interwar period the Broughty Ferry Beach emerged as a popular seaside resort for day visitors and holiday makers seeking to enjoy sun bathing, sea bathing and the associated range of entertainments of the day including trips into the estuary in rowing boats. The golf course remained an attraction; and an Art Deco beach shelter and toilets, designed by the City Architect's Office, was built in brick in 1934.

The Esplanade: 1947-74

The House at 4 The Esplanade

In 1947 the Trustees of the estate of Mary Scott Dawson sold 4 Esplanade for £850 (c. £28,000 in 2012) to Margaret Tocher Anderson then resident in a flat at 3 Churchill Place. Margaret's mother, Rhoda Peart, was born in Paddington in 1875 and in 1896 she married Andrew Tocher, a native of Broughty Ferry, who worked as a joiner. Margaret Johnston Tocher was born 26 February 1898, and she had two siblings: Robert Peart Tocher (4 January 1900) and Rhoda Peart Tocher (14 December 1902). In 1924, Margaret married Robert Ferrier Anderson whose father was a member of the fisher community.

Robert Anderson was a merchant seaman who rose to the rank of Captain. His last vessel was the M.V. 'Yewglen' which was lost on 28/29th February 1960 off Flamborough Head while under his command. The "Yewglen" had sailed from London at 2100 hours on 27th February, 1960 en route for Leith carrying about 1000 tons of cement and lime in bags. In the early hours of the next morning she ran aground. The North Sunderland life boat was called out but her crew of 11 left the vessel on foot. A Formal Investigation held in Glasgow on 10th October, 1960 under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894 found that the stranding and total loss of the vessel was due to: (1) the negligence of her master in that he failed to exercise adequate supervision over her navigation, and in that he allowed the second mate to keep watch without supervision although the latter was unfitted, through inexperience, to be left in charge of the vessel in the conditions prevailing; (2) through the negligence of the first officer in and about the navigation of the "Yewglen"; and (3) through the wrongful act and default of the second officer in failing to report serious deterioration in visibility to the master, and in failing to report to the master the apparent inshore set at Coquet Island Light. The court considered that the master had to bear by far the greatest share of the blame and, in the normal case, would have had no hesitation in suspending his certificate for a lengthy period. However, having regard to his age and his long and hitherto unblemished career as a master, and the particular circumstances of this case, they consider that justice will be done if Captain Anderson was severely censured and ordered to pay £100 (£2k in 2013) towards the costs of the Inquiry.

One remnant of the war was the Anderson shelter in the rear garden of 4 The Esplanade. (Its name had nothing to do with the Andersons resident there.) The Anderson shelter, designed in 1938, was named after Sir John Anderson, the man responsible for preparing Britain to withstand German air raids. Available for purchase for £7 (£350 at current prices) to accommodate 6 people, the shelter was formed from six corrugated steel panels bolted together to form the sides and end panels one of which contained the door. Typically, the shelters were buried and covered over with a layer of soil and turf. Like many others, the example at 4 The Esplanade was dug up and used as a garden shed into the 1970s.

The Environs

The sixties and seventies were not kind to the neighbourhood. Perhaps the most significant occurrence in the 1960s was the removal of the cottages from the area then known locally as "Sandy

Hole". The properties occupied the narrow piece of ground stretching eastwards from East Brook Street and sandwiched between Castle Street and the rail lines. There was a warren of some 67 single storied properties each housing families in 2 or 3 rooms. Constructed back to back and at high density they nevertheless had sizable gardens. Built for rent, they were factored by successive generations of the Millar family. In the immediate post war period the community supported an array of small businesses. These included: 4 grocers; a cobbler; a plumber; a sweet shop; a bakery and bakehouse; a fish and chip shop with tearoom; and an ice cream parlour. A dairy was supplied by horse and cart from Gotterstone Farm then in countryside north of the A92. However, there were no licensed premises.

The Links Mission Hall still occupied the upper storey of what is now 83-89 Castle Street. It was run by East Free Church as an outreach and organised musical evenings, hymn singing and bible classes for men, women and children.

Sandy Hole was a thriving community with strong local ties. Residents even invented their own language achieved by jumbling the syllables of each word: for example, Broughty Ferry was "Troby reffy" and Sandy Hole was "dansy lohe". A thoroughly successful street party was organized for the Queen's Coronation in 1953. However, in the 1960s, as properties became vacant they were sold on. Applying the standards of the times, the houses were considered to be unfit and families, friends and neighbours were decanted to council properties in Forthill Road, Barnhill and Douglas. A way of life came to an end. Planning permission was granted for commercial and industrial units on the cleared site. However, decaying lock up garages, an unsightly scaffolder's yard, a car repair unit, and miscellaneous commercial enterprises can never fit easily within a predominantly residential area.

In 1961 Harry Marnie and his wife Norah purchased 3 Esplanade from D M Ogilvie who listed himself as an artist. They moved from Duntrune Terrace and turned the property into a family home where they lived with daughters Sheila and Frances and their son, Ian. Their neighbour at 2 Seaward Place was Mr H L Christie who was a grocer. Harry was a graduate of Dundee High School and St Andrews University. A Head Teacher who became a Primary School Adviser, he developed a special interest in the emerging theme of environmental studies. Norah was Head Girl at Harris Academy and went on to become a teacher specialising in remedial work with pupils who found their schooling particularly challenging.

The Esplanade: 1974 -2014

The House at 4 The Esplanade

Jane and Hugh Begg purchased the house at 4 The Esplanade from Mrs Anderson in September 1974. By then the house was almost exactly 100 years old.

The feudal superior in 1974 was British Railways. The bridge which carried the branch line from Broughty Ferry Harbour to the Dundee and Arbroath main line across East Brook Street had long been removed after the line closed in 1887. On 1 February 1880 the line had passed jointly to the Caledonian Railway and North British Railway which in turn became part of the London Midland and Scottish Railway as a result of the 1923 grouping of railway companies within the national network. The company, along with all the others, with minor exception, had been taken into public ownership in 1948. The Land Tenure Reform (Scotland) Act 1974 gave vassals the opportunity to pay off the feu duty by means of a once and for all payment. The owners took advantage of that with a payment of £25 and , accordingly, the burdens set out in title deeds were now redundant and there was no feudal superior.

The Environs

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1947 and its successors made provision for the designation of conservation areas and that, together with the listing of buildings for their architectural interest by Historic Scotland has gone some way to maintaining the appearance and amenity of the surrounding area. In November 1983 the Broughty Ferry Conservation Area was extended thereby bringing the whole of the sensitive and visually important river frontage within the coverage of the Area. An explanatory pamphlet noted that: *"Beyond St Vincent Street the character is that of the seaside resort. Castle Green is an attractive area of open space, and moving eastwards attractive two storey terraces look out across the Esplanade to the beach and river. The Conservation Area extends as far eastwards as Rugby Terrace."* In 2015 the Area was further extended to take in the open space donated for leisure purposes in 1916 and also Eastcote to the east of that.

A number of buildings were given added protection by Historic Scotland on 29 October 1991. They were listed as C(S) because they were judged to be: *"buildings of local importance, lesser examples of any period, style, or building type, as originally constructed or moderately altered; and simple traditional buildings which group well with others in categories A and B."*

At Castle Terrace the violation of the roof line had continued with the insertion of velux and other lights; and many of the original 2- 4- and 8-pane sash and case wooden window frames first put in by Cowans in 1906-08 had been replaced by aluminium and uPVC. However, the characteristic cast iron guttering and small, individual, front gardens, some with their original metal railings, were largely intact. Time had been even less kind to Links Place. James MacLaren's two storey terrace was still judged to have merit despite replacement windows and the fact that some of its front and rear garden grounds were in need of care and attention. The third listed building was the Art Deco beach shelter and toilets built in 1934. By 1991 that was in poor condition. Saved from demolition, the single storey, concave building with rectangular wings incorporating decorative wrought-iron grilles has been transformed to provide a glass fronted restaurant retaining the Art Deco theme and offering patrons spectacular views over the Tay Estuary.

To the west of the Glass Pavilion is Eastcote. Formerly a single dwelling house built in Edwardian times, post World War 1 it was the home of John and Annie Stewart (he was an insurance manager). Eastcote was divided in 1953; and in 1954 Sir Francis and Lady Mudie moved in. For a period the upper flat was called Eastercote and the lower Eastcote. Sir Francis is now remembered locally for his definitive account of the history of Broughty Ferry Castle and his staunch support of the Conservative Party. Less well recollected is the fact that Robert Francis Mudie KCSI, KCIE, OBE (August 24, 1890 – September 15, 1976) was a member of the Indian Civil Service during the British Raj. He was the last British Governor of Sind and, after the partition of India and Pakistan in August 1947 when he emerged as "Mountbatten's right hand man", he continued to serve as Governor of the West Punjab.

To the east of the beach pavilion was a building which as late as 1970 was known as the "The Chalet Road House". A home of traditional jazz in the sixties it was morphed in the late 70's and early 80's into a rather down at heel night club known as "The Sands". Changing fashions and indifferent management led to changes in ownership with a cycle of renovation and renewed popularity followed by ennui, consequent physical deterioration and movement down market along with applications for extensions to licensing hours. In 2010 planning permission was granted for two blocks of 3 storey flatted housing of indifferent quality of design and construction.

What is now the Broughty Ferry Local Nature Reserve (LNR) was acquired by Dundee City Council in the mid -1980s. Before the Esplanade was “made” in 1894 the land included a pedestrian route to Barnhill which ran under the railway arch where an old gas lamp can still be seen. That path now links Shiell Street to the Esplanade. The LNR lies between the main London-Aberdeen railway line and the embankment on which ran the Broughty Ferry to Forfar Branch Line. The latter was opened on 14 November 1871 and ran the 17 miles to Forfar with stations at Kingsmuir, Gagie, Kirkbuddo, Monikie, Kingennie, Barnhill, it carried passengers and freight, notably coal from Fife and potatoes from Forfar. Broughty Junction was located to the east of Broughty Ferry station and the branch ran to the south of the Dundee and Arbroath Railway before crossing over it and entering Barnhill station. On 10 January 1955 the line was closed to passengers; and on 8 December 1958 the line was closed for freight. The old track bed within the LNR is now a retreat for wild life.

Building on the voluntary efforts local residents a Management Plan was drawn up in 1993 and steps taken to implement its proposals. However, the countryside ranger who oversaw the management of the area in co-operation with a group of local volunteers has been withdrawn.

The Barnhill Rock Garden is a public park extending to more than two hectares, owned and maintained by Dundee City Council with significant support from the volunteers who are members of the Friends of the Barnhill Rock Garden. It is situated on the western four holes part of the former nine-hole golf course opened in 1896. The course fell into disuse after the Second World War; and the last visible reminder - the former clubhouse of the Broughty Ferry Ladies Golf Club- was demolished following vandalism in 1993.

Work on what was to become the Barnhill Rock Garden was started in 1955 by clearing an area of volcanic rock which had at one time been the old shore line. Over the years the garden was extended to the east over areas which had been sand dunes; and rock from Carmylie Quarry was imported for some improvements. There were five natural springs in the vicinity; the lowest pond in the current layout is the site of one of these, the others having dried up in 1976. The lower ponds were created in 1982, and the upper ponds in 1985. They have separate water circulating systems which now provide a haven for wildlife.

When, in the mid-nineties in the face of financial stringency, the Council proposed the closure of the rock garden local protests culminated in residents forming in 1997 the Friends of Barnhill Rock Garden. That organisation now has around 300 members and is a formally constituted body with charitable status. The Pergola was “opened” in 2005 and it provides an outdoor meeting place and activities area. In 2006, Dundee Contemporary Arts donated the large Geddes glass house to the Friends. Named after Professor Patrick Geddes, it is a multi-purpose asset and environmental interpretation centre. The garden attracts at least 75,000 visitors each year.

HUGH M BEGG: 15 AUGUST 2015