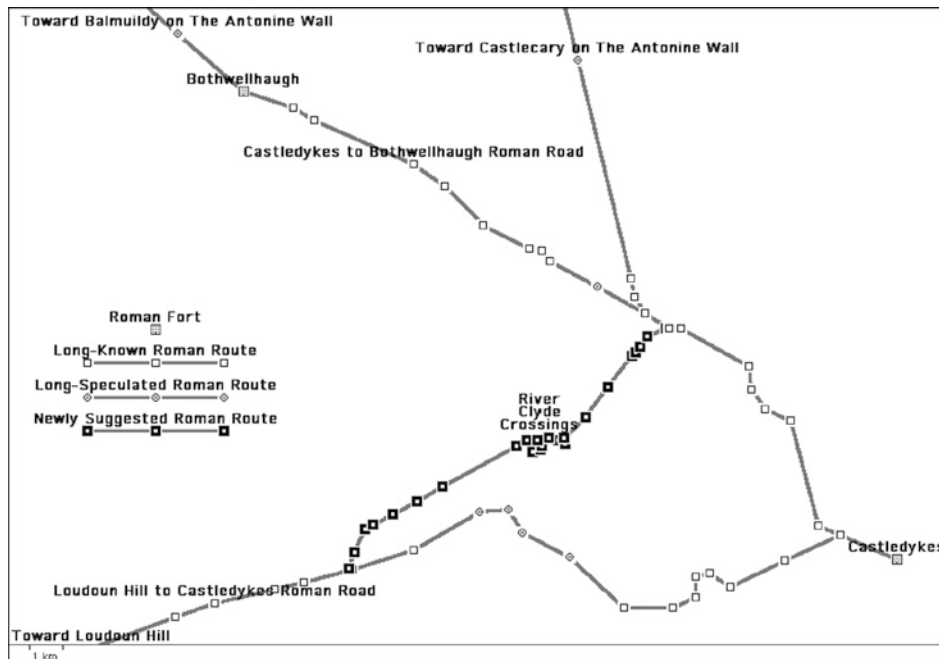


## A Second Roman Road South of Stonehouse

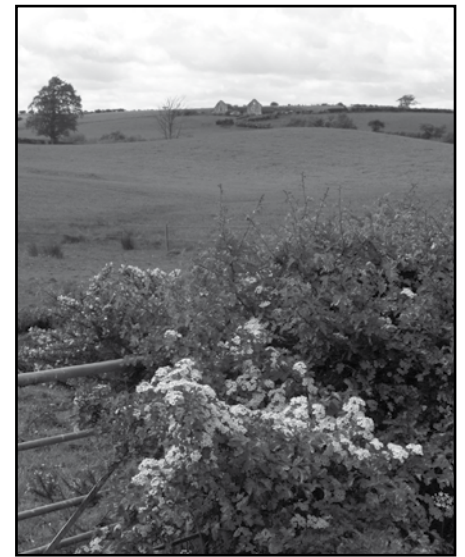
The Romans came and went from Scotland. A durable result of the first invasion (around AD 80) was a chain of forts (on the Irvine near the Lanarkshire border, on the Clyde east of Lanark, on the Tweed west of Peebles and on the Tweed east of Melrose), plus the road that connected them. Portions of that road are still in use today, but the Roman road south of Stonehouse fell out of use a couple of centuries ago.

When the Roman army returned to Scotland (in AD 142), they established their frontier across the Clyde to Forth isthmus -- the Antonine Wall. When they recommissioned their old Scottish forts and the supporting road network, they probably repaired the road interconnecting the 60-year old forts. It also appears that their changed traffic needs motivated them to build new roads to support building and garrisoning the Antonine Wall.



Recent searching suggests that the returning Romans built a new 13km road from south of Stonehouse to a Roman road junction beyond Carluke. The new Roman road junction south of Stonehouse was apparently between Dykehead Road the Cander Water, perhaps because floods destroyed the previous Cander crossing during their 50-year absence.

Several types of evidence have been found during the recent research. There are apparent hillside cuts to allow a constant-gradient descent to a stream. These suggest that the road was designed for heavily laden carts and wagons. Also there are straight field boundary hedges for a substantial distance. In addition, two burns have sharp flow changes that could result from a culvert beneath a road.



Castlehill, near route of roman road discovery

When stone quarrying was possible locally, the Romans built important roads with a layer of heavy stones covered with a layer of gravel cambered so that rainwater would flow away. So the recent searching used a thin steel rod to probe the soil for such bottoming stones. The probing was extended beyond the sides of the route to confirm that there were far fewer subsoil stones occurring naturally.

The recently discovered route seems to begin 1.2km east-northeast of Dykehead Road. There is a cluster of evidence near the small burn southeast of Castlehill. There is another cluster of evidence on the slope down to the Cander north of Spittal. Evidence was also found at the top of the next hill, beside the M74. One wonders whether the ancient ditch and mound earthwork only 45m to the north was a defended Roman watchtower. Continuing straight along the east-northeast line, more evidence was found near Dalsarf Burn south of Burnhead.

On the hillside above the Clyde, it appears that the initial route was down to a ford east of Threepwood. But fording the Clyde would only have been safe in dry weather, so it seems that a bridge may have been built about 300m up the river. *cont.. back page*

# Extracts from Townhead School Diary 1903 to 1947

## compiled by John Rogers

### 1903 April 10th

We closed this afternoon to meet again on the 20th, after the Easter holidays. Another farmer - Hamilton of Kitymuirhill wishes his youngest child to be admitted to this school, on account of the hours for opening and closing being different from those in his school, we admitted the boy although he does not know the letters.

### 1903 April 24th

The large room was divided by a partition, during the holidays, we find it is a great boon. The junior division has attained a record attendance (for it) this week 91.2 percent.

### 1904 April 18th

Mr John Anderson on Wednesday met with an accident whereby his ankle was dislocated, and he will be off duty for some time.

### 1905 April 31st

Good progress is being shown in the lowest class and indeed in all the junior division in respect to reading, spelling and intelligence (*note the date; obviously intelligence doesn't apply to teacher!*)

### 1906 April 2nd

Euphemia Leishman P7 1st year transferred to Greenside. The school was closed on the 7th of March by order of the school board on account of the measles having become epidemic, and was not opened again till last Monday the 9th of April. When the inspector visited the school on the 19th February he took the qualifying exam, and granted permission to those who passed to be enrolled in the supplementary class from 1st April.

### 1906 April 13th

The members absent duty for the week vary from 43 to 53, a good few of these are kept away by the sanitary authorities who are fumigating.

### 1907 April 5th

A woman came to the door one day this week demanding free books for one of her children because she has four at

school, two in this school, and two in the Camnethan Street School, she was informed that free books were not given here for such a reason.

### 1907 April 12th

The children who have just come from the infant school are quite a bright lot, and a great improvement on last years lot.

### 1908 April 10th

We closed this afternoon for the Easter holidays, and re-open on the 28th. In spite of the vigilance of the attendance officer. There are eleven scholars fewer today than Tuesday, although Thursday is usually the best day for the attendance of the week, which we attribute to the pleasure the scholars take in their drill. But when a holiday approaches we have always a number who cannot wait.

### 1908 April 16th

Staff: Alexander McIntosh CM, head master; Robert Leggate MA CA, class teacher; Margaret Thomson CM, class teacher; Mary Miles CM, “ Elizabeth Shearer, Assistant Art, 79 (c); Alexander Anderson, clerk.

### 1909 April 23rd

It is turning increasingly difficult for boys under 14 years of age to get regular employment unless they are big strong, and the school board exempt them from school only on condition of regular employment being obtained.

### 1910 April 25th

The school board are finding a difficulty in keeping children between their 14th birthday and the day fixed by the board for leaving school. Two neighbouring boards have no fixed dates for leaving.

### 1910 April 8th

Measles have broken out in the village and one family in connection with this school is affected.

### 1911 April 21st

R. J. Naismith Esq. Chairman of the school board called this afternoon and announced his desire of offering prizes

for the best attendances boy, and girl, at each of the schools. He will make his proposals on the subject to the board at their first monthly meeting on Tuesday next.

### 1912 April 4th

School doctor Mckinnon and nurse visited the school this forenoon and examined scholars to the number of 38. On Wednesday about mid day there was an eclipse of the sun. It was a clear sunny day and a clear view of the eclipse was obtained, the opportunity was taken to instruct the scholars as to the cause of the eclipse.

### 1915 April 1st

On Tuesday nurse Mitchell visited the school, and inspected children between 11 and 12, and over 13 and any special cases, she found some boys who were smokers.

### 1917 April 30th

On Tuesday there was a heavy fall of snow, the heaviest this winter, and only about 50% were present, we dismissed the school at dinner time. The school was closed today at the dinner hour and opens on the 17th.

### 1937 April 23rd

On Tuesday Dr Mackenzie, school medical officer and a nurse visited the school and examined pupils notified at the recent medical inspections. Dental forms have been sent to the office. Yesterday forenoon the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester passed through the village on their way from Edinburgh to Ayr, the classes were drawn up on the pavement outside the school and cheered as the royal cars passed. Preparations are being made for the coronation celebrations. The weather has been warm this week. Attendance for week 91.6%.

### 1938 April 1st

A new infant class was formed on Monday. Tests are being given in the adv. div. classes and in the senior class. A beginning was made on Monday morning, on the property adjoining

Townhead building in connection with the new school that is to be erected. Exclusions for measles still reduce the attendance. Mr Crow visited the senior adv. classes during the religious instruction period on Tuesday and Wednesday, the Rev. Mr Munro visited the classes on Thursday and Friday in Camnethan Street School, and the Rev Mr McArthur visited the infant classes on Friday morning. Attendance for week 81.4%.

### **1939 April 21st**

Owing to the reconstruction of the school building, it has been found necessary to change the forenoon interval of the infant classes. Instead of having the same interval as the senior classes, the infant interval has been changed to 11 o'clock, and the 10-30 interval for the infants has been stopped. Money collected for sewing material, handiwork material etc, sold to pupils, has been sent to the office this week. A circular letter re the promotion of pupils ( from senior to post primary ) has been received. Attendance for week 90.1%.

### **1941 April 4th**

We close today for Easter holidays, reopening on Tuesday 22nd April. This forenoon, the second dose was administered to those who were immunised three weeks ago. 25 evacuees enrolled this week. Attendance for week 82.7%.

### **1947 April 2nd**

The school re-opened today. Owing to a court duty, Mr Brodie was unable to introduce the new headmaster , John Mclachlan MA, who did so for himself quite satisfactorily. The staff consists of Mr J. George, Misses K. Small, M. Russell, J. Harvie, M. Allan, M. Mcluckie, A. Mcintosh, M. Smith, R. Dingwall, C. Donaldson. On Mondays and Wednesdays Miss Lindsay takes domestic science and Mr Lynas takes woodwork, Mr J. Humphries the physical training instructor comes on Thursdays. Mr Lynas absent from duty today. Councilor Brodie visited the school and signed the registers. A second medical certificate for the janitor. On sick list since 11/4/47, was sent to the director today.

## **Memories of Childhood by John H. Thomson (aged 94) as told to Robert Campbell**

In Stonehouse about the year 1895, five year old children were educated at Greenside School which consisted of two rooms, and since both teachers were ladies became known as the Ladies school. The children were taught reading, writing and arithmetic, but when they were older they were transferred to Cambusnethan Street School of Townhead School, where additional subjects, like History and Geography were also taught.

In those days Stonehouse children were much poorer than those of today. Often families were large, and the boys seldom had more than one suit, and this was worn until it was really tattered. The girls wore long dresses, usually made of cotton, woollen stockings and, like the boys, they wore boots.



*Greenside School wood work class*

Today in schools great care is taken of children's health, and they are examined regularly by dentists and doctors. Long ago there were no health visits and diseases like scarlet fever and measles, which are easily treated today, were very serious diseases indeed.

There was of course no cinemas, transistor radios, T.V., tennis courts or any of the other things we take for granted today, but those children were usually quite happy. They played football, rounders, and hide and seek. But the main game for boys was marbles, and some of the boys were expert. The girls, as might be expected, played at peevers and with skipping ropes.

Many of the games were played on the roadway, but it must not be thought that the roads were as smooth as they are today. They were made with a mixture of earth and stones, and everywhere there were large potholes. In wet weather, these filled up with rain and became sheets of water, which made walking very difficult. Some



*Townhead School Teachers 1914*

effort was made to remedy this and cart loads of stones, covered with earth and a steam roller used to flatten this mixture. This was successful for only a short time, and soon the rain made the surface as bad as ever again.

It might be thought that the children in those far off days had very little entertainment, and this is quite correct. They were however, generally very happy and they looked forward to many weeks of Sunday School soirees and the Cattle Show. In addition, they spent many happy days playing around the countryside and on the banks of the river. In spite of the poverty in the village, and the fact that there was usually only a half penny pocket money per week (1/5th of a new penny!), They were probably every bit as happy as children of the present day.

## Roman road cont.

There is an aerial photo of the flat 80 acre field on the other side of the Clyde that shows evidence of a defensive enclosure situated between the two possible crossing sites, that could have been a Roman fortlet or camp. There is also evidence of bottoming stones beneath that field. A plausible constant-gradient route was found leading from the large flat field up the steep hillside east of the Clyde.

Evidence of the route was found to the northeast heading toward Carluke. A plausible route was found crossing Jock's Burn and then ascending to the Castledykes-to-Bothwellhaugh Roman road, which lies along the ridge east of Carluke.

The apparent design of the road and the route taken allows speculation on the motive for building it. Could it have been for heavy supply carts and wagons from the Ayrshire coast to the central portion of the Antonine Wall?

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**Contact:** *bill@oakchip.com*

**Additional information:** *www.oakchip.com/bill/RomanRoads/RomanRoads.html*

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## Heritage Group seeks photographs or biographies

### Can you help?

We are seeking to build our collection of photographs and information about past and present residents of Stonehouse, particularly events such as day trips and Sunday school trips etc. Do you have pictures, a story to tell or can you provide a short biography of a member of your family? Do you want to write an article for the newsletter? Contact Robert Freel c/o 4-5 The Cross or [robfreel@btinternet.com](mailto:robfreel@btinternet.com)

### Photographs on website

Are you interested in purchasing photographs from our website, copies of photographs on the site can be provided in A4 size at a cost of five pounds per sheet. Up to four photographs can be provided on one sheet. Contact Heritage Group at 4-5 The Cross with details of the photograph that you are interested in.

## Members Seeking Information

### Michell di Vito

Sourcing photographs of my Grandmother Forbes Whitelaw (Kelly through marriage). I am looking to contact anyone who grew up with my Gran and may have any other pictures of her growing up. In particular I am looking for photographs from Stonehouse Gala Day in June 1949, when she was the Gala Queen. My Gran sadly passed away on 2nd February this year.

### Warren Russell

Seeking information on Grandmother Martha Russell nee Templeton who stayed in Stonehouse around 1901-1905.

### James Trotter

James was born Stonehouse about 1853. In 1861 when he was eight and living Cam'nethan Street. He married widow Annie Graham (Stewart) in 1872, having three daughters Anne, Isabella, Jane (or Jean) between 1871-1878. They lived at 17 Lockhart Street in 1881. In 1891 they were living at number 12 Lockhart Street. He came to Tasmania without his family, and died in Tasmania in 1940 aged 87. Would love to find family links, other known names are Lockhart, Grant, Frame, Burns.

If you have any information that would assist any of these members please contact Robert Freel [robfreel@btinternet.com](mailto:robfreel@btinternet.com)

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## Memories of the Stonehouse Coalmen by Harry McFarlane

Daniel Fleming lived at New Street, Stonehouse. Entry to his coal yard was from Kirk Street. His sons-in-law were named Hawthorne who married two of the Fleming girls. Thomas Hutchison in later years ran it as a one-man coal business at the foot of Kirk Street at the entry to Loch Park. Neil Collison then carried on as a one-man coal business. He also had a glasshouse where he grew tomatoes.

The Murdoch brothers had their coal depot at the foot of Union Street on the site of the Old Gasworks. They later bought the United Free Church in Millar Street with the intention of converting it into a coal yard. George Wilson (the joiner) made a deal with them to purchase the church himself because he didn't fancy having a coal yard opposite his house. He then built them premises at the foot of Kirk Street. Later he (George Wilson) demolished the church and built a bungalow, which still stands on the site today. The Murdoch brothers were names Jim, Tom, Willie, Johnstone and John. They delivered mainly in Ayrshire. David Aitken was one of their workers.

W & J Summer's first depot was situated in Green Street at the back of the house part of Loch Park. Most of the bagging was carried out at the railway station goods yard. John Summers was the senior partner assisted by his brother Bertie. Their offices were in New Street and their depot was across the road. Their fleet of lorries consisted of ten trucks – five tippers and five delivery trucks. Their coal customers were mainly in the Strathaven area.

John Summers, of Boghall Street, was the son of Thomas Summers, Kirk Street, who was also in the coal business in a small way. The main business was in Stonehouse. Tom Millar was his main man at first. Harry McFarlane and Archie Millar took over the business as partners when John died. Two of the senior workers were Pat McCluskey and Thomas McFarlane, brother of Harry. When Archie married, he immigrated to Australia, and Harry became the sole owner. Harry still traded under the name of John Summers of Boghall Street.

A Pug (small railway engine) brought down the coal supply from Broomfield Colliery to the sidings at Canderside Toll. At that time there was a choice of coal suppliers – Swinhill Colliery, Woodside and other pits in the area.

Across the road from Townhead Public School, where Alex Dick had built a house, John Fleming carried on a coal business but he moved away to farm in the Drumclog area and his brother-in-law Bob Percy took over. His wife Jessie took over the coal bagging. Jessie was better known for her work with the Salvation Army.