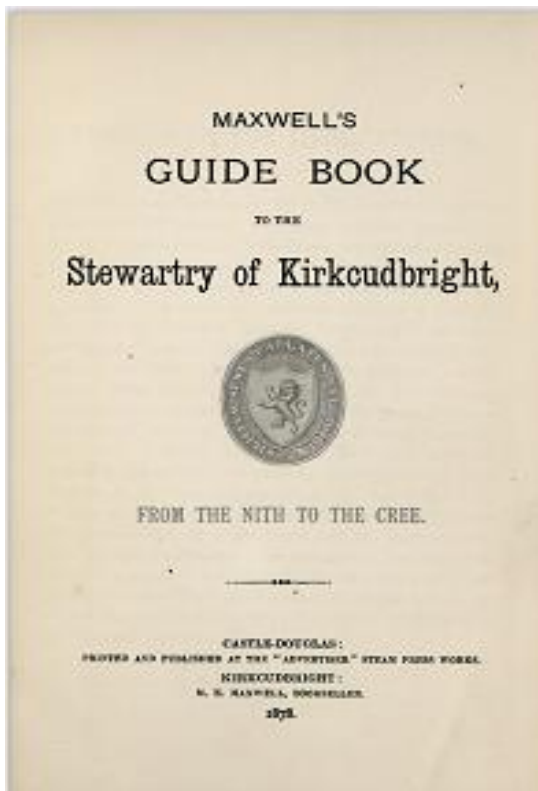


# THE BORGUE HOTEL

## a History of Hospitality



*Maxwell's Guide Book to the Stewartry of  
Kirkcudbright, from the Nith to the Cree, 1878*

*“We now return by  
Borgue House...to  
the village of  
Borgue, where  
there is “a well-  
appointed hotel  
with ample  
refreshment for  
both man and  
horse”*



# INTRODUCTION



This short booklet aims to tell the story of the building now known as the Borgue Hotel.

It looks at the history of the hotel, and how this can shed light on national and local themes, such as the history of the once powerful, now almost completely forgotten, Temperance Movement, and the development of the tourist trade in Galloway. It will also look at connections of the hotel to matters specific to Borgue, such as the Borgue Fair and Borgue Honey.

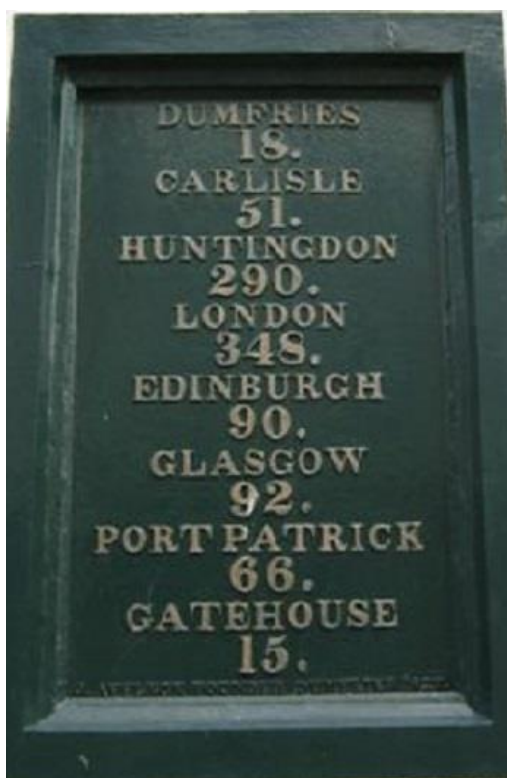
Above all, I hope to show the part the hotel has played in the life of the village, as a place where visitors to the area and local families alike can come together, to eat and drink, discuss and debate, have fun, celebrate and enjoy life.

## Contents:

1. The Early Days and the Raleigh Family
2. The Dalziel family and the Temperance Movement
3. From Coffee House to the Kerr Family
4. The Borgue Fair
5. The Raphael Family
6. The Borgue Hotel today
7. Conclusion

Appendix *(Architectural details)*

## SECTION ONE: The Early Days and the Raleigh Family



*Milestone embedded in King Street wall of the Douglas Arms Hotel, Castle Douglas*

Before looking at the origins of the hotel in Borgue, it is useful to consider what was happening in terms of hospitality in the broader locality in southwest Scotland. From the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards, hotels began to be built for the first time in the larger towns and villages of Galloway. These were used mainly as stopping places for travellers. One of the best known in Kirkcudbrightshire is the Douglas Arms in Castle Douglas. Situated at the corner of King Street and St Andrew's Street, opposite the Clock Tower, it was built around 1770 as a coaching inn, to provide accommodation for those using the busy route between Stranraer and Dumfries. On the King Street wall of the hotel is a mile-stone in tablet form which shows mileages to a few important destinations at that time, places such as Dumfries, Carlisle, London, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

In Gatehouse, smaller than Castle Douglas, but rapidly becoming an important village, there were 3 similar establishments, the Murray Arms (1760) which was actually the first house in the village to be built; the Angel Hotel (c1800); and the Masonic Arms (1812). By the early 1790's, Gatehouse had grown to a population of over 1,100 people, and was served by a mail coach twice a day. In Kirkcudbright, by far the largest and most prosperous town of the time, the Selkirk Arms Hotel, with its well-known connections to Robert Burns, dates back from 1777.

Borgue in the 18<sup>th</sup> and first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was still too small to have anything like what would be considered a hotel by today's standards. In the *New Statistical Account of Scotland*, published over a period of years between 1834-1845, the section on Borgue notes that:

*Inns.*—There are five licensed inns or ale-houses, three at least of which are uncalled for by the necessities of the place.

*Excerpt from the New Statistical Account of Scotland*

In referring to “Inns”, we need to remember this was in fact a term used at that time to describe what was simply a small cottage, offering a very limited supply of alcohol – usually beer - and often without anything other than the most basic accommodation. Hence none of these premises being referred to here were the building now known the Borgue Hotel.

A few years later, the census taken in that year describes a Peter Raleigh, then aged 37, as an *innkeeper*. (He was, in addition, occupying 11 acres of land) He had a wife, Nicholas, then aged 31 (Nicholas was widely used as a name for girls in nineteenth century Scotland). 10 years later, the 1871 census (below) shows that a Nicholas Raleigh, a widow in her 40s, is listed as an “*Innkeeper*” in Borgue.

6	Borgue Village	1	William Papple	Head	Mar	40	Widow Farmer	Married	Supervisor
			Agnes	Wife	do	33	"	"	"
			Nicholas Raleigh	Son	Mar	41	Innkeeper	"	Borgue
			Calherine	Daughter	9	15	"	"	Dorchester
			Agnes	do	do	14	Scholar	"	"
			Elizabeth	do	do	11	Scholar	"	Borgue
			Maggie Todd	Serv	Mar	29	Bakers Widow	"	"
			George Todd	Grandson	11	3 months	"	"	Burgess

### *The Census of 1871*

What has happened here is that Nicholas had married Peter Raleigh in September, 1854, before being widowed ten years later when Peter died. (His tombstone is in the burial grounds of the Borgue Parish Church). She then took on the inn as a widow. She had been born in 1829, at the Mill of Borgue, to a farmer, William Papple, and Agnes Carmichael. As was typical for the time, she was one of 10 children, born in an 18-year time span ! William Papple was clearly a man of some wealth, since as well as being a farmer, records show that he was also a hotel owner in Castle Douglas, who in 1865 is listed as the owner of the Blue Bell hotel. This was one of the better-known hotels in Castle Douglas, as well as one of the oldest, with title deeds going back to 1715.

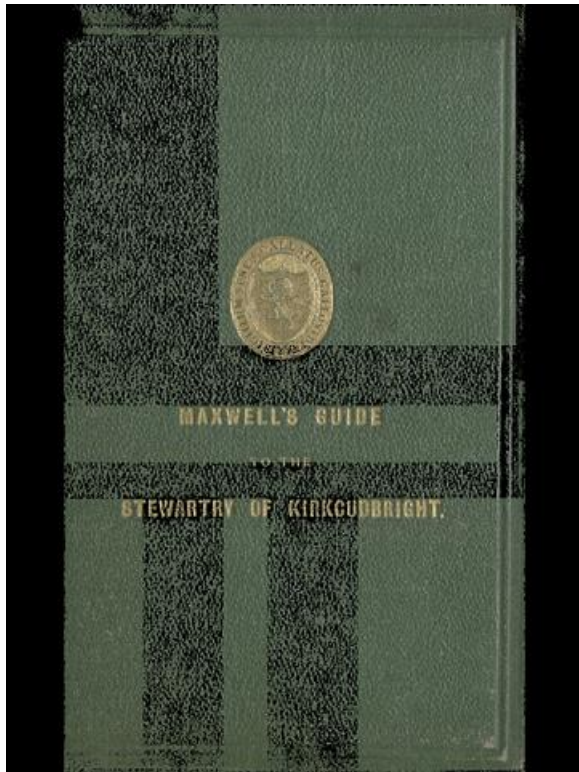
HOTELS AND POSTING HOUSES.	
(See also Taverns, &c.)	
Borgue Hotel, Mrs. Raleigh, Borgue	
Commercial Hotel (family & commercial),	
David Stewart, lessee, St. Cuthbert st—	
See advertisement	
Royal Hotel (family and commercial), M.	
McKenzie, St. Cuthbert st—See advert	
Selkirk Arms, Alexander Carter, High st	
Stewart's Commercial Hotel (family & com-	
mmercial), St. Cuthbert st—David Stewart,	
lessee—See advertisement	
Tongland Bridge Hotel, John Mitchell,	
Tongland bridge	

*Slater's Royal National Commercial Directory and Topography of Scotland, 1878*

An entry, shown left, published in 1878 in *Slater's Royal National Commercial Directory and Topography of Scotland*, describes Mrs Raleigh as running the “*Borgue Hotel*”. As we shall see below, another publication in 1878 mentions a “*well-appointed hotel in Borgue*” so it seems certain that the building being referred to here is the present hotel building.

The original purpose of these directories was to provide information about towns and localities for travellers and other visitors. A directory would include a general description of the town or area and then provide further details on local transportation, churches, schools, government offices, shops, and businesses, etc. Sometimes information on specific people, such as businessmen, traders, and shopkeepers, was included as well. As such, they are a great source of information and interest for local historians. Looking at this entry for example, locals will no doubt be familiar with the Selkirk Arms and the Royal Hotel in Kirkcudbright, but I am not so sure many will have heard of the Tongland Bridge hotel.

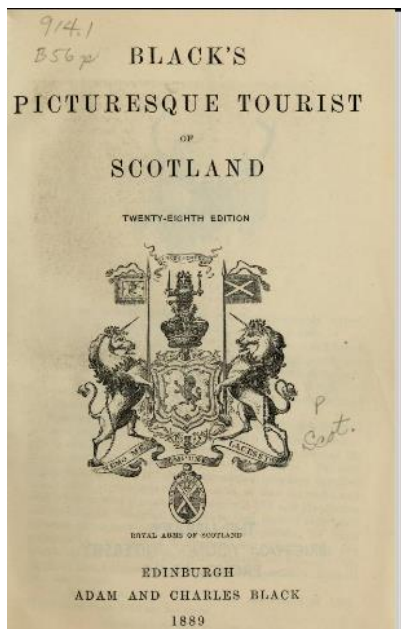




*Maxwell's Guide to the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright*

In addition to these Post Office directories, numerous, more detailed guidebooks began to appear. They were specifically intended to highlight the attractions and accommodation that were waiting for tourists coming to visit the area. One of the best such guides to cover this part of the world was *Maxwell's Guide to the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright*, which was published locally in Castle Douglas, and ran to a number of editions. It is now considered to be a standard work, and includes in the 1878 edition another of the earliest references to a hotel – as opposed to simply an inn – in Borgue:

*We now return by Borgue House...to the village of Borgue, where there is a “a well-appointed hotel with ample refreshment for both man and horse)”*



*Black's Picturesque Tourist of Scotland, 1889*

A guide book such as *Black's Picturesque Tourist of Scotland*, as the name implies, covered the whole of Scotland. The 28<sup>th</sup> edition, published in 1889, includes a section about the Stewartry which has a description of a journey between Kirkcudbright and Gatehouse in which there is a footnote mentioning an “inn” in Borgue. Given the date when this was published, we can again safely assume that this is in fact referring to the Borgue Hotel.

<sup>1</sup> A longer, but interesting route, is by Borgue (inn).

Another really useful primary source from which to get historical information is local newspapers. These frequently contained articles about all aspects of life in a village such as

Borgue, and in several cases provide us with information about the Raleigh family and the Borgue Hotel. The article shown below is from the *Galloway News and Kirkcudbrightshire Advertiser*, Friday 27<sup>th</sup> August 1880. In an article discussing the Borgue Flower Show, it was noted:

*The judges were -Mr Leslie, gardener, Munches, and Mr Thompson, gardener, Cardoness, for the bouquets, baskets, &c., Lady Gordon, Earlston, and Mr Arbuckle, Auchenhay. Mr Thompson, Mr Leslie, and a number of the committee dined together in **Miss Raleigh's Hotel** - Mr John Dunlop, president, in the chair-when an agreeable hour was spent.*

*Galloway News and Kirkcudbrightshire Advertiser, 1880*

This is an early example, one of many, of a theme which will recur throughout this booklet, ie demonstrating the link between the hotel and the significant events of the village. The Flower show was run by the Borgue Horticultural Society, and was an important date in the village calendar. It was founded as far back as 1865, and continues to this day, still awarding trophies which are much sought after.

**BORGUE HOTEL**

**THIS HOTEL** is to LET, for such a term of years from Whitsunday next as may be agreed on, and contains Sitting-Room, Public Room, 3 Bedrooms, Kitchen, Back Kitchen, Dairy, &c., a Byre for 6 Cows, 3-Stalled Stable, and Cart-Shed, together with about 14 Acres of good Pasture Land, and a Garden, all as presently occupied by Mrs RALEIGH.

The **Hotel** is in excellent repair, having been recently Papered and Painted, and is situated in the Village of **Borgue**, and within 6 Miles of the Burgh of Kirkcudbright.

For further particulars apply to D. & W. M'LELLAN, Writers, Kirkcudbright, who will receive Offers in writing till 14th March.

Kirkcudbright, 25th February, 1881.

*Galloway News and Kirkcudbrightshire Advertiser, Feb 1881*

The advert on the left, again from the *Galloway News and Kirkcudbrightshire Advertiser*, Feb 1881 is particularly interesting and informative. It gives a lot of detail about the condition, rooms and appearance of the hotel, and it notes the various outbuildings and a garden. It shows that there was a considerable amount of ground as well.

It would be impossible to say for sure why the hotel was being put for sale at this time, but it may be worth noting that in that year, Elisabeth, the youngest daughter of Nicholas and the late Peter Raleigh, had died from tuberculosis aged 21. Having been widowed at a relatively young age (35), it could be that the death of a daughter at an early age had meant that Nicholas had simply lost interest in running the hotel, particularly as Elisabeth would presumably have been helping to run the hotel.

The attempt by Nicholas Raleigh to dispose of the Borgue Hotel seems to have been successful, as the advert below, from *Slaters Royal National Commercial Directory of Scotland*, published in 1886, shows it was then being run by a Mrs Mary Crosby, or Crosbie.



*Slaters Royal National Commercial Directory, 1886, showing that Mary Crosby now running Borgue Hotel*

By 1891 Nicholas had moved to nearby Twynholm, to stay with her son-in-law, William Moffat, a teacher living in the village schoolhouse. Her occupation in the census of that year is listed as “**Former hotelkeeper, Borgue**”. She later died at Moatvale, Twynholm, 26th Dec 1897 aged 68. In all likelihood, she is the first person we can be sure of who was running the building now known as the Borgue Hotel. She was buried alongside her husband, Peter, in the grounds of Borgue Parish Church, and the wording on their tombstone is as follows:

*Sacred to the memory of Peter Raleigh, who died at Borgue Village, 4th of Nov 1864, in his 41st year. Also, William, his son, who died in infancy. Also, Elizabeth, his daughter, who died at Gatehouse of Fleet, 23rd August 1881, aged 21 years. Also Nicholas H Papple, his relict, who died at Moatvale, Twynholm, 26th Dec 1897 aged 68*

*Tombstone of Nicholas Raleigh, Borgue Parish Church*

References to the hotel under Mary Crosby at this time are scarce, but local historian Adam Gray notes that from 1880-1884, the Annual General meetings of the Quoiting Club were held in “*Crosbies Hotel*”, another example showing the use by local groups of the hotel as a suitable venue for meetings. Quoiting was an extremely popular pastime in Borgue around this time, and continued to be played up till the late nineteen twenties. In the 1950s, the game was briefly revived, thanks mainly to the efforts of Tom Clement of Borgue House.

Mary Crosby had been born Mary Logan, in 1845, a farmer’s daughter from Colvend. In 1870, she married a John Crosbie, a gamekeeper from Rerrick. He died in 1883, and was listed on his death certificate the hotel keeper in Borgue. She then married a James Dalziel - more of whom later - in Castle Douglas, 1887. She died in March, 1925 at Aldermanhill Street, Dumfries, aged 81 – her death was noted in a local newspaper as follows

*Mary Logan: at Dumfries, formerly of Borgue Hotel, in her 81<sup>st</sup> year, widow of James Dalziel*

*Death notice of Mary Crosby, nee Logan, in local newspaper*



Throughout this period in the 1880s the hotel was used by various other community groups, clubs, societies etc, as a place to hold all types of events. Often accounts of these found their way into the local newspaper. These articles detail the range of activities going on in the village around that time, and as the names of many of the families and individuals mentioned will be familiar to locals, I have included below a couple of examples.

ONE : From the *Galloway News and Kirkcudbright Advertiser*, Feb 1881

**BORGUE DINNER** : *The annual dinner of the Borgue Curling Club took place on the evening of Wednesday, the 25th ult. In the **Borgue Hotel**. Covers were laid for over 30. The chair was occupied by Sir William Gordon, Baronet, of Earlston, president of the club ; and Mr. William Sproat, Borness, vice-president, discharged the duties of croupier. Grace having been said by the Rev. Dr Cook, an excellent dinner was well served, and done ample justice to by the curlers, whose appetites had been whetted by an exciting game during the afternoon between the bachelors and married for a boll of meal and two tons of coal to the poor, in which game the bachelors gained a decisive victory. This fact was taken to augur well for the future success of the club. After the cloth was removed, the Chairman gave the usual loyal toasts, and afterwards felicitously proposed ' Success to the Borgue Curling Club '.*

Adam Gray notes that the Curling Club held its meetings in the Borgue Hotel from 1873-1893, and again from 1974, and this tradition extends to the present day. So, in this case, there is a clear link between one of the oldest, and most successful clubs in Borgue, and the Borgue Hotel which goes back 141years !

TWO : From the *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, Dec 1883

**PRESENTATION TO JOHN MAIN** : *Presentation to Mr. John Main, Jnr, merchant, Borgue, being about to leave that district to enter into a new business in Newcastle, his wide circle of friends resolved to mark the occasion by a substantial expression of their regard. On Saturday evening, accordingly, Mr. Main was entertained at a festive gathering in the **Borgue Hotel** on Saturday evening, and presented with a handsome clock) and a purse containing thirty sovereigns, the gift being accompanied with the best wishes of the subscribers. Mr. Brown, Culraven presided, and Mr. Dunlop, teacher, made*

We now move to the next stage of the history of the hotel, in which the Dalziel family were to play a hugely important role.

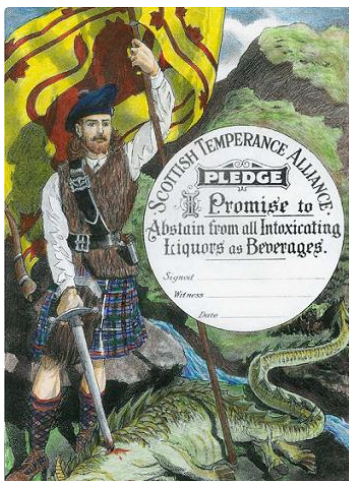
## SECTION 2: The Dalziel Family and the Temperance Movement



*Poster produced by the Free Church of Scotland to promote Temperance*

By the early 1890s the Hotel was in the hands of the Dalziels. They were to become an important family in the area, and their story is intertwined with that of the Temperance Movement, which began in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and soon had a significant number of members, both in Scotland as a whole and locally in the Stewartry and Borgue. Often referred to disparagingly as the “*Tea Drinkers*” or the “*Water Drinkers*”, the Temperance Movement advocated moderation – or in some cases, the complete abolition - of alcohol consumption. The movement was fuelled by a growing concern over social problems, including drunkenness, alcoholism poverty and even insanity which were held to be caused by alcohol. The Movement argued, for example, that contamination of drinking water had caused epidemics of cholera, and that due to the expense of tea and coffee, many poor people and their

children drank beer to quench their thirst, hence increasing their consumption of alcohol. This, according to the numerous Temperance Societies that sprang up all over the country, had created an intolerable situation that needed to be addressed. They pressurized the governments of the day to tighten laws regarding the sale of alcohol, and there were those within the movement whose ultimate intention was the complete prohibition of alcohol.



*Temperance Poster*

In Scotland, a Scottish Temperance League was formed in Glasgow in 1844, and published various educational tracts, pamphlets and other printed material in an effort to educate the electorate about the dangers of alcohol. Its committee produced guides to objecting to the awarding of licenses allowing premises to supply liquor, and even published their own newsletter named *League Journal*, established in 1857. The movement was strongly supported by churches, including the Church of Scotland, the Roman Catholic Church, and after its formation in 1843, the Free Church of Scotland. It used a number of tactics and activities to publicise its aims, including posters, marches,

demonstrations, lectures on the evils of drink, and soirees, involving tea, biscuits etc with recitations, songs, bible readings and debates. It attracted large numbers of women members, and all social classes.



*Advert for the Victoria Temperance Hotel, Creetown*

In the Stewartry, there was a considerable Temperance presence and activity. There were a significant number of Temperance establishments in the various towns and villages, for example hotels in Creetown (see the advert on the left), Parton, and Corsock. In 1900, the Gordon Temperance Hotel in Dalry even had its own Golf Course! The 1903 edition of *Slater's Commercial Directory* notes that

Kirkcudbright had 2 Temperance Hotels, one run by a Miss Lizzie Crossan, at 48 St

Cuthbert Street, and another by James Reid, at 3 Castle Street. Castle Douglas had a Miss Margaret Cochrane running a Temperance hotel in Market Street, as well as the Victoria Temperance Hotel, run by a Willie Watson, (now the Imperial Hotel). The Station Hotel in the town was once a Temperance hotel. Some places had Temperance Halls, an example being at Garlieston in Wigtownshire. Dalbeattie had an Abstinence Society, and there were Total Abstinence Societies in Kirkcudbright (founded as early as 1838, known to be still active in 1871) and also at Gatehouse, where the President was W J Stark, headmaster at the nearby Skyreburn School).

**BORGUE (Kirkcudbright).**  
Hon. President, William M'Adam.  
President, Bernard Lawson.  
Vice-Pres., Thos. Airley and John Hall.  
Treasurer, Samuel Dalziel.  
Secretary, William M'Haffie.  
Cor. Sec., Bernard Lawson, F. O. teacher.

*Office Bearers for the Total Abstinence Society in Borgue*

In Borgue itself, there is plenty of evidence to show how strong the Temperance Movement was. The image on the left shows the Office Bearers for the Total Abstinence Society in Borgue. The Bernard Lawson listed was a schoolteacher in the Borgue Free Church School (this building, just along from the hotel,

is now known as "The Soup Kitchen"), and Lawson's position as Secretary is another good example of how local clergymen were advocates of Temperance. James Bell Henderson, minister of the Parish Church from 1888 till 1899 was another prominent supporter.

**BORGUE (Kirkcudbright).**  
Lawson, Bernard, F.C. teacher.  
M'Haffie, Wm., surfaceman, Newfield.  
Stevenson, David, boot and shoe maker.

*Local members of the Scottish Temperance League*

The list on the left is of local members of the Scottish Temperance League. Lawson is again listed, and the inclusion of a surface man (William McHaffie) and a boot and shoe maker show (David Stevenson) demonstrate clearly the support of working-class people for Temperance. The

McHaffie family were particularly staunch, as William and his wife were described in an article in a Temperance journal as "*true friends of the movement, and by example as well as precept, training their children in paths of true temperance, namely total abstinence*". They had a son, James, who followed in the family footsteps as a "*life abstainer and a steady, industrious Christian and Temperance worker*"





*Cup and saucer from the Borgue Total Abstinence Society, now in Kirkcudbright Museum*

were pressurising the local Licensing authorities to revoke his license. On several occasions he was summoned appear before the magistrates sitting at Kirkcudbright Sheriff Court who were concerned about his abuses of the laws regarding the sale of alcohol, mainly to so-called “*Bona Fide*” Travellers on Sundays. (Bona fide is Latin for *In good faith*)



*Saucer from the Borgue Total Abstinence Society*

a hotel. The intention was to provide liquid refreshment for a Sunday traveller arriving at a hotel, where he was supposed to stay before continuing his journey. The fact that the law applied only on a Sunday was more about respecting and protecting the Sabbath which was a major consideration in these days.

James Dalziel, who was running the hotel by the late 1890s had been, like his father before him, a bootmaker and cobbler. As noted earlier, he married Mary Crosby in 1887. His time at the hotel was marked by a number of disputes he had with adherents of the Temperance Movement, who

This was a concept embedded in a major piece of Temperance legislation, the Forbes- Mackenzie Act of 1853 which forced pubs and hotels to close on Sundays, though *bona fide* travellers could be served with alcohol. This meant you were supposed to travel at least 3 miles from your home in order to have a drink, and as there were no pubs open on a Sunday, this had to be in



It was of course a ludicrous piece of legislation, almost impossible to enforce. The railway companies noted that the Sunday services on railway lines across urban areas of Scotland had to be doubled to cope with the demand from those who, in search of a drink, would take a short train journey to a nearby town with a hotel. In more rural areas, people simply walked from one village to the next. In the Stewartry, the Beeches Road between Twynholm and Kirkcudbright was notorious for the numerous breaches of this absurd piece of lawmaking.



*Contemporary cartoon poking fun at the concept of “bona fide” travellers*

A House of Lords Committee looking into this question was told that a number of hotels in rural Scotland would be financially unviable were it not for serving drink to the *bona fide* traveller, whether *bona fide* not. The vagueness of the law put a lot of pressure on, and temptation before, publicans, who were expected to prove that they had made sincere efforts to check the exact status of drinkers. Understandably, they were often tempted to take people at their word -presumably once they were sure the thirsty person before them was not a police officer !

It is against this backdrop that we can see the court cases involving the Borgue Hotel. On the 7<sup>th</sup> November 1891, James Dalziel, the hotel keeper, found himself in the dock at the Kirkcudbright Sherriff Court, accused of breaching the terms of his license to supply alcohol. Specifically, he was charged with supplying alcohol – a glass of whisky, and a beer each - to two men from Gatehouse, one a William Miller, and the other a William Lisle, when neither of them were *bona fide* travellers. The two men claimed that they had been in the Hotel on a number of previous occasions, and had been served drink by Dalziel, and on this particular day had finished their drinks and returned home quite sober. Other witnesses alleged that both men were in fact drunk, especially Lisle, who had to be helped home by Miller. The Justices of the Peace, who were trying the case, found that Dalziel had, in fact, breached the terms of his licences, and so was guilty. However, it was felt that since he genuinely had cause to believe the men to be *bona fide* travellers, he was allowed to keep his licence on

condition that he promised no such thing would ever occur again. In the words of Sir William Gordon, Earlston, to the accused, *"You have been very mercifully dealt with"*.

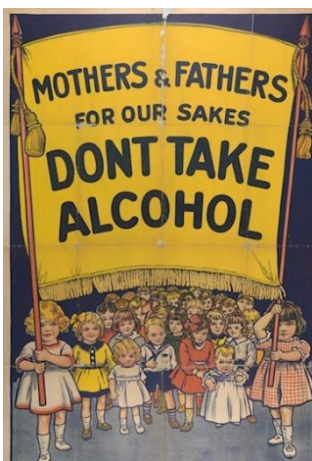


*Henry Dalziel, First Baron Dalziel of Kirkcaldy*

All the members of his family were trained to say "Thank you my lady".

However, this leniency proved to be short lived, and further court actions against Dalziel were taken over the next few months. Interestingly, his son, Henry, who was by then an MP for Kirkcaldy Burgh, and later to become Lord Dalziel of Kirkcaldy, had been making a series of speeches promoting the principles of Temperance, and the cause had very strong support locally from the powerful Gordon family. Not only was Sir William very much in favour of restricting the sale of alcohol, so too was his wife, Lady Gordon. One reason for this, according to Adam Gray's book on Borgue, was because her coachmen had got so drunk at the Borgue Hotel, he was unable to drive her back to their mansion at Earlston. She was clearly a strong-willed lady, of strong religious convictions: a local lad at the time John Palmer, recollects sitting in the church and being tapped on the shoulder by Lady Gordon who would hand him a copy of the church magazine for him to give to his mother.

There were other important locals putting pressure on the local Courts. Included in this number were clergy from the 2 churches in Borgue, with James Bell Henderson in particular a strong advocate of Temperance, He gave numerous lectures on the subject as well as ensuring that the Sunday collections his church often went to support the cause of the movement. He was instrumental in setting up a local Band of Hope. This organisation was directed towards working class children under the age of 16 who were abused and maltreated often due to the effects of alcohol use within the family. From the age of six, members were required to take a pledge of total abstinence:



*Band of Hope poster*

*"I, the undersigned, do agree that I will not use intoxicating liquors as a beverage". "I shall always be of my best behaviour, Shall give of my best service, And God helping me, I will refrain from all alcoholic drink. Amen."*

Most of the prominent local landowners and farmers, such as William Thomas Sproat, also supported the Temperance cause, taking the view that men were drinking too much on Sundays and that this meant they were often unfit for work on Monday. With members of his own family also arguing against him, things were beginning to look black for Dalziel, and, eventually the authorities lost patience with him – in May 1892 the notice below appeared in the *Dumfries and Galloway Standard and Advertiser*, asserting that, as

the hotel was being run in such a way as to be “*a nuisance to the village*”, the license to supply alcohol would be removed. This would have been a black day for drinkers in Borgue !

***The Hotel in Borgue Village was finally closed on Saturday night, an appeal against the refusal of the license not having been proceeded with.***

*Notice from the Dumfries and Galloway Standard and Advertiser, May 1892*

Being unable to supply alcohol necessitated a rapid change of tack from Dalziel if he was not to go out of business altogether. Hence the following advert which appeared just 2 month later, in the July 18<sup>th</sup>, 1892, again in the ***Dumfries and Galloway Standard and Advertiser***. It demonstrates how quickly Dalziel adapted to the new requirements, as the hotel is now *specifically* being designated a Temperance Hotel (with a piano !):

***SUMMER SEASON – apartments to let by month, or according to agreement, with attendance and use of piano if required; bathroom and conveniences. Apply Temperance Hotel, Borgue.***

*Advert in Dumfries and Galloway Standard and Advertiser, June 1892*

A few years later, by the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the hotel appears to have been functioning as a Coffee House. Unsurprisingly, one of the prime movers and backers behind it was Lady Gordon. In its early days, it was run by a Mrs Hutchinson. One piece of evidence for this is references in the accounts of the Borgue Horticultural Society, which note that dinners were provided for the Committee and the judges “*by Mrs Hutchison in the Coffee House*”.

11	Coffee House	1	5	Margaret Hutchinson	4	Head	52	Wid	8	Manageress 99/6
				Margaret do		Daughter	26	Single	9	Domestic +
				Nathaniel Harris		Boarder	34	Single	10	Boarder +
				Mary Anne Campbell		Boarder	25	Single	11	District Nurse 43/4
									12	

*Extract from the 1911 Census*

This is backed up by the 1911 Census (above) which shows a Margaret Hutchinson (widow) living in the “***Coffee House***” in Borgue, and her occupation is described as *manageress*. Also living in the building alongside her was her unmarried 26 year old daughter, (also Margaret) who was listed as a *Domestic*, so presumably helping her Mum to run the business.

It is worth noting in passing that a Mary Anne Campbell was staying at the Coffee House on the night of the Census, as a boarder, with occupation given as *District Nurse*. This is interesting as it was commonplace for the local Nurse to board at the Hotel. Some years later another District Nurse, Miss Mary E Watson, is also known to have stayed at the hotel.



(She was later to receive a Queen's Medal for Services to Nursing, presented by the Countess of Minto at a ceremony in July 1941, after 21 years of service)

It was also normal practice for the hotel to be used as lodgings by a number of single teachers, invariably women who came to teach at Borgue Academy. Initially they stayed on local farms, such as Robertson or at Chapelton Row, but latterly they were accommodated at the Hotel. This is confirmed by local man John Palmer, who grew up in nearby Kirkandrews in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Writing in his memoirs, he recollects that it was mostly boarding house for young teachers. Of course, a number of them would, as Adam Gray notes, go on to marry young farmers. One of the few people alive who can remember the Hotel being run as a Coffee House, is Mrs Cruickshanks, from nearby Rattrra Farm, who recalls from her schooldays, when it was being run by Mrs McNaught.



*WT Sproat and wife  
Jessie*

There is another piece of contemporary evidence about the hotel as a Coffee House, which concerns the well-known Sproat family. The occasion was the Golden Wedding, in 1923, of William T Sproat of Borness, to Jessie, nee Barber. Born in 1847, into a family of seven sisters and one elder brother, William Sproat spent his early working life in Liverpool as an apprentice to a shipping agent before returning to Borgue. He became a highly respected agriculturalist, breeder of Clydesdale horses, and his expertise was used to arbitrate in legal disputes concerning farming matters. An article in a local newspaper described the celebrations, at which the couple were presented with a number of gifts from their employees. (Tragically 6 months later, Sproat, then aged 77, was trampled to death by a bull whilst out walking his fields)

*Presentations from employees:*

*Last night, Mr and Mrs Sproat entertained their employees in the Coffee Rooms at Borgue, when they were the recipients of handsome gifts from them, the principal being a beautiful silver-mounted oak tray bearing the following inscription: "Presented to Mr & Mrs WT Sproat, on the occasion of their Golden Wedding, 26<sup>th</sup> February 1923, by the employees on Borgue House, Brighthouse, Rainton and Margrie." There was also presented a silver-mounted brush and comb engraved with Mrs Sproat's initials and the date of the Golden Wedding.*

*The company were received by Mr and Mrs Sproat, Mrs Biggar, Mr John and Mr Tom Sproat, and the Misses Sproat.*

*Local newspaper account of the Golden Wedding of WT Sproat and Jessie Sproat, Feb 1923*



A VALUABLE HIVE OF BEES.—Mr. James Dalziel, jun., Borgue Hotel, took forty-two 1-lb. sections on 25th June, a globe weighing 12 lbs. on 15th July, and sixty-four 1-lb. sections on 16th July—making in all 117 lbs. of honey from the same hive this year to date. There are remaining in the hive a number of unfinished sections.

Article in *The British Bee Journal*, 1899

(see opposite) appeared in the *British Bee Journal*. It notes that a Mr James Dalziel from the Borgue Hotel was successfully making honey. This, of course, directly links the Hotel with one of Borgue's most famous exports, as the area was already famous for the quality of its honey. As early as 1824, there appeared in the well-known publication *The Scottish Gallovidian Encyclopaedia*, by John McTaggart, the following comment on the honey produced in Borgue:

*This article is of such good quality, that the fame of its excellence spreads far and wide. In London there is a sign, with Borgue-hinnie for ever, wrote on*  
..

*Extract from for the Scottish Gallovidian Encyclopaedia*

By the 1840's, a local man, Samuel Houston wrote "*For many years past, Borgue has been famed for producing fine honey—perhaps the finest in Scotland. It is of a transparent sea-green hue, and possesses an exquisite richness of flavour which is keenly relished by connoisseurs. What gives it the beautiful colour has hitherto baffled the investigations of naturalists; but it is certain that it is clear until the beginning of July. Many of the pasture fields in Borgue abound with white clover, and in fine dry weather in July, thousands of the industrious insects may be heard buzzing, and, seen gathering sweets from the time that the dew rises until late in the afternoon. so ingeniously mix in their laboratory, while they are reluctantly confined in their cells.*"

In 1868, in an article in a very upmarket London publication, *Temple Bar – A London Magazine for Town and Country Readers*, a writer claimed the best Scottish breakfast was one consisting of "*kippered salmon, followed by oat-cake and Borgue Honey*" – actually, that would still be true today, 153 years later ! The tradition of honey making is carried on to this day, by a Mr McMath, whose produce is still being sold by the Borgue Hotel today.

## SECTION 3: From Coffee House to the Kerrs

In the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the issue of Temperance was still being hotly debated, with strong views on both sides. It drew comment from a well-known local writer, Malcolm McLachlan Harper, in his book *Rambles in Galloway*. This ran to several editions and ranks as a classic of Galloway guide books, well worth reading by anyone with an interest in the area. In the third edition, published in 1908, he makes some unfavourable comments about the Temperance movement, and also argues that a hotel in Borgue is essential to promote the tourist trade.

*The village has a clean appearance, and nowhere could there be a more desirable place for the tourist to stay and spend a few days exploring the district. To the artist is also inviting ; but here, as almost everywhere else in the rural districts of Galloway, there is a lack of hotel accommodation. The policy of the Licensing Courts within recent years to put their vetoes on these village and wayside inns has a tendency to drive drinking and drinking methods under the surface, and make the evil assume an uglier form. It has been proved, over and over again, that excessive restriction and sobriety do not go hand in hand. And it is very questionable, whether in Borgue or other country districts, illicit methods of procuring drink have not been increased by the acts of extreme temperance reformers. By the writings of S R Crockett and others, Galloway is now becoming famous as a holiday haunt, and it is only by providing good and well regulated hotel accommodation that visitors will be attracted to it. The rest and refreshment which these wayside inns afford to ramblers like ourselves...were much appreciated. And it is to be regretted that, through the excessive restriction of extremists, the enjoyment of "our ease at our inn" in our rambles, should be in so many places, now at an end. In Borgue, a good and comfortable hotel is now a necessity of the times, and the Parish Council, in the interests of the district, ought to see that the want is supplied*

*Excerpt from "Rambles in Galloway", 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 1908, by Malcolm Harper*



*Illustration from Highways and Byways in Galloway*

Another author similarly critical of the lack of a licensed premise in Borgue was the Rev C H Dick, in his highly regarded and extremely popular book "*Highways and Byways in Galloway*". Written from the perspective of a cyclist and walker, it first appeared in 1916. Containing charming pencil sketches by the well-known local artist Hugh Thomson (see image on left), it quickly established itself as one of the most popular guidebooks to the area, and was reprinted several times. Anyone with a love of books and a love of Galloway should have a copy.

*It may be said of Borgue that no other parish in Galloway has so quiet a village for its centre. There is no hotel, nor is there a public house in the parish. In the middle of the village—if, indeed, one may speak of the middle of a place that ends before it has really begun—there is a "Coffee House". A cheap and clean lodging may be had here.*

*Excerpt from "Highways and Byways in Galloway, 1916, note the reference to the "Coffee House"*

As well as attracting comment from writers like Harper and Dick, this lack of somewhere to get a drink in Borgue also inspired a poem. Most locals are aware of the great rivalry that used to exist - and possibly still does - between Borgue and its close neighbour, the nearby village of Twynholm. It was, for example played out in the highly competitive football matches that were once regularly played between the villages. The issue of Temperance was to give Twynholm the chance to gloat that, whereas you could get a drink in Twynholm, you could not in Borgue. In September, 1917, a poem, below, appeared in the *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, which boasted that Twynholm had not only a pub but electric lights and a village hall !

*They've nocht but a coffee-hoose noo in big Borgue*

*A michty puir place, maist as quiet the morgue;*

*They're no like wee Twynholm, wi its bricht Evening  
Star;*

*They maun fesh home bottle or ginger-ale Jar !*

*They've nae licht tae enlighten the murk whaur they  
wallow*

*But their auld oily lamps an' their caunles o' tallow*

*While oor electricitys as bricht as the moon*

*Lichting up kirk and hoose wi' a radiance like noon*

*They hae nae public-hoose, and they've nae public  
ha'\**

*In fact, the puir "buddies" hae naething awa!*

*Yet they're fu o conceit, wi their milk their honey,*

*And they still try tae brag that they've liftit maist  
money!*



*Bathers at Sandgreen beach during Edwardian times*

these activities. Places like Portpatrick in Wigtownshire, and the beaches around the Colvend area such as Sandyhills, Rockcliffe and Kippford became particularly popular, as did Borgue itself, by virtue of being so close to beaches such as those at Mossyard, Carrick, Sandgreen and Brighthouse.

Whether or not you were able to get a drink, there were other reasons for tourists to visit the area. By the early twentieth century, the mania for sea bathing, fresh air and beaches were attracting huge numbers of visitor to coastal resorts throughout Scotland. Galloway, with its numerous beaches was well placed to take advantage of this trend as its miles of coastline was ideal to cater for



*A group of women cyclists from Auchencairn, enjoying their new-found freedom to ride bikes*

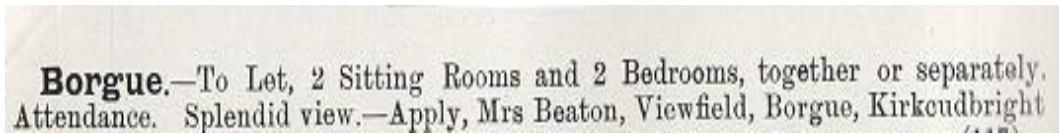
quick to join in this new pastime, although they were initially recommended to sit in the back of a tandem, as they were deemed too excitable to sit at the front ! The image above shows a group of young ladies from the Free Church at Auchencairn setting off for a spin.

Additionally other social trends were encouraging more and more visitors to the area, among them the rise of cycling holidays. Cycling had been initially a male preserve for the well to do. This quickly changed as mass-produced bikes were now being made cheaply, and so affordable by middle class and working class families. Women were

With the rise in the number of visitors, other, newer, types of accommodation began to be provided in Galloway. This included the letting out of private homes, often attached to one of the large farms or estates in the area. For example by the 1880s the Sproat family would let out their property, *Rockville*, above Brighthouse Pier, over the summer.



An advert for a similar property appeared in a publication entitled *Tours in Galloway*, 1910. The house concerned in this case was part of the estate of the Gordons of Earlston, and at that time was tenanted by a David Beaton, a labourer, and his wife, Mary.

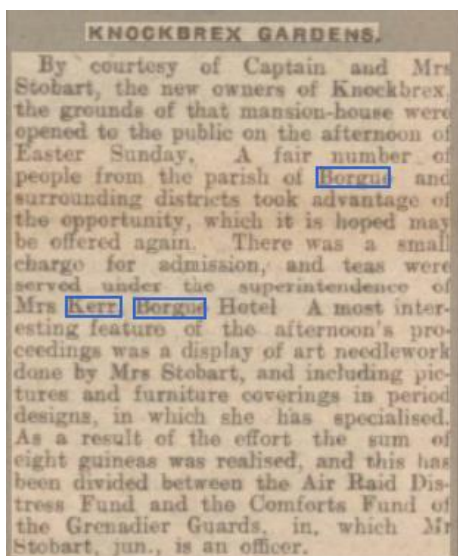


**Borgue.**—To Let, 2 Sitting Rooms and 2 Bedrooms, together or separately. Attendance. Splendid view.—Apply, Mrs Beaton, Viewfield, Borgue, Kirkcudbright

*Advert in Tours in Galloway, 1910.*

So, as we can see, the phenomenon of holiday homes in Borgue goes back for well over 100 years....!

**THE KERR FAMILY:** By the nineteen forties, the Hotel was in the hands of the Kerr family, who were builders in Kirkcudbright. The hotel was run by Mrs Kerr, and continued the practice of establishing links with the local community. Numerous newspaper articles from around this time, including those in the *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, show the Borgue Hotel hosting family events, and providing catering services for a range of local clubs, societies and organisations in and around the village. These also illustrate what everyday life was like in Borgue in the nineteen forties, so a selection is included below:



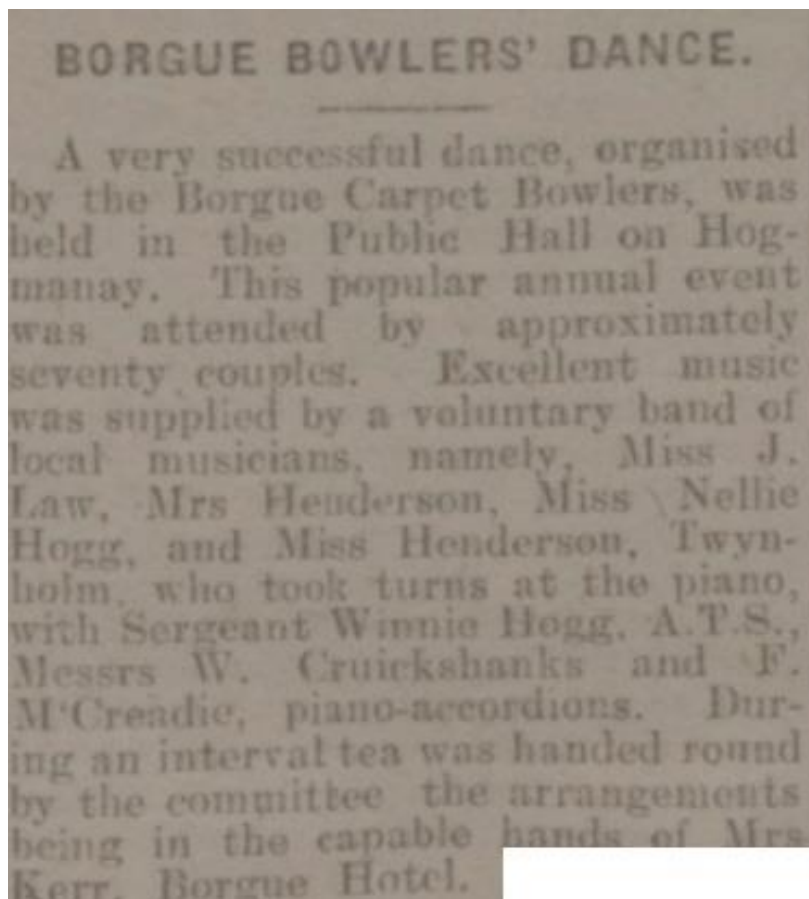
**KNOCKBREX GARDENS.**  
By courtesy of Captain and Mrs Stobart, the new owners of Knockbrex, the grounds of that mansion-house were opened to the public on the afternoon of Easter Sunday. A fair number of people from the parish of **Borgue** and surrounding districts took advantage of the opportunity, which it is hoped may be offered again. There was a small charge for admission, and teas were served under the superintendence of Mrs **Kerr**, **Borgue** Hotel. A most interesting feature of the afternoon's proceedings was a display of art needlework done by Mrs Stobart, and including pictures and furniture coverings in period designs, in which she has specialised. As a result of the effort the sum of eight guineas was realised, and this has been divided between the Air Raid Distress Fund and the Comforts Fund of the Grenadier Guards, in which Mr Stobart, jun., is an officer.

*Dumfries and Galloway  
Standard, April 1941*

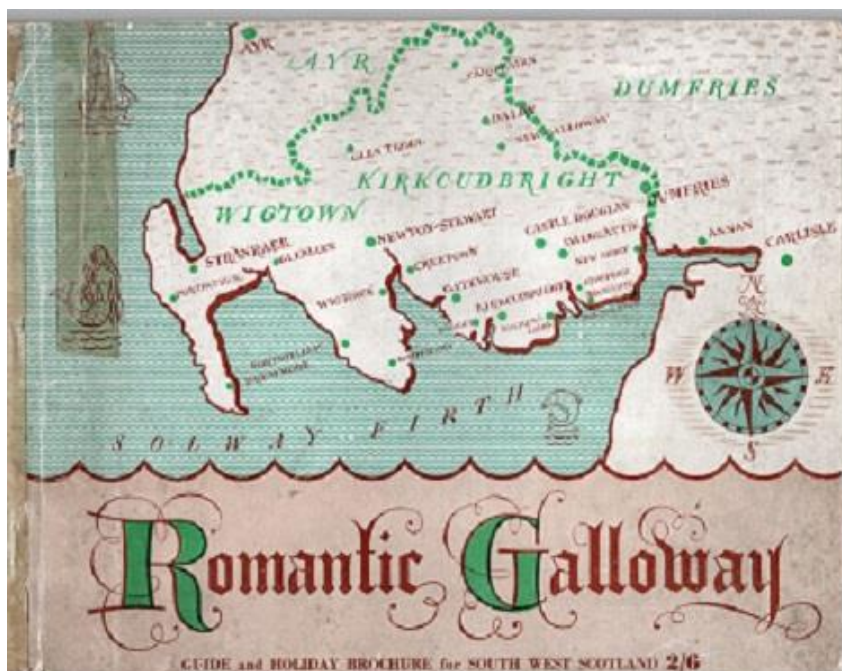


**DRAMATIC ENTERTAINMENT  
AT BORGUE.**  
In aid of the funds of Borgue Nursing Association the Castle-Douglas W.R.I. players, conducted by Mrs Martin, Lochside House, gave a dramatic entertainment in Borgue Hall on Thursday evening. There was a crowded audience, presided over by Mrs Cross, Earlston. Four one-act plays were performed with skill and success, and the players deserved the enthusiastic vote of thanks accorded at the end. The plays were: "The Shilling a Week Man," "The Price of Coal," "Colleges and Coons," and "Easy-oasy." During intervals between plays songs were rendered by Mrs Clement, Castle-Douglas, who was in excellent voice, and musical selections by Mrs Landsborough. The party and friends were afterwards hospitably entertained at the hotel by Mrs Kerr. Including donations in cash and kind the total drawings amounted to over £60.

*Dumfries and Galloway Standard, Nov 1944*



*Dumfries and Galloway Standard, Jan 1943*



*Romantic Galloway: Guide and Holiday Brochure for South West Scotland, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, 1954*

By the nineteen fifties, hotels were coming to realise the power of advertising to promote their business in local guidebooks. An interesting example of this type publication was ***Romantic Galloway: Guide and Holiday Brochure for South West Scotland***, which was produced by the Galloway Publicity Association, in Castle Douglas, running to a number of editions. The copy shown on the left is the 7<sup>th</sup> edition, written by John Herries McCulloch in 1954. It provided a well-illustrated account of the whole region. Most of the local hotels took out adverts, including the one in Borgue.



# BORGUE HOTEL

BORGUE, KIRKCUDBRIGHT

*Resident Proprietrix: Mrs J. KERR*



*Home produce and baking*

Day visitors should book in advance for  
Afternoon Teas and Dinner

Safe sandy beaches a few miles from hotel



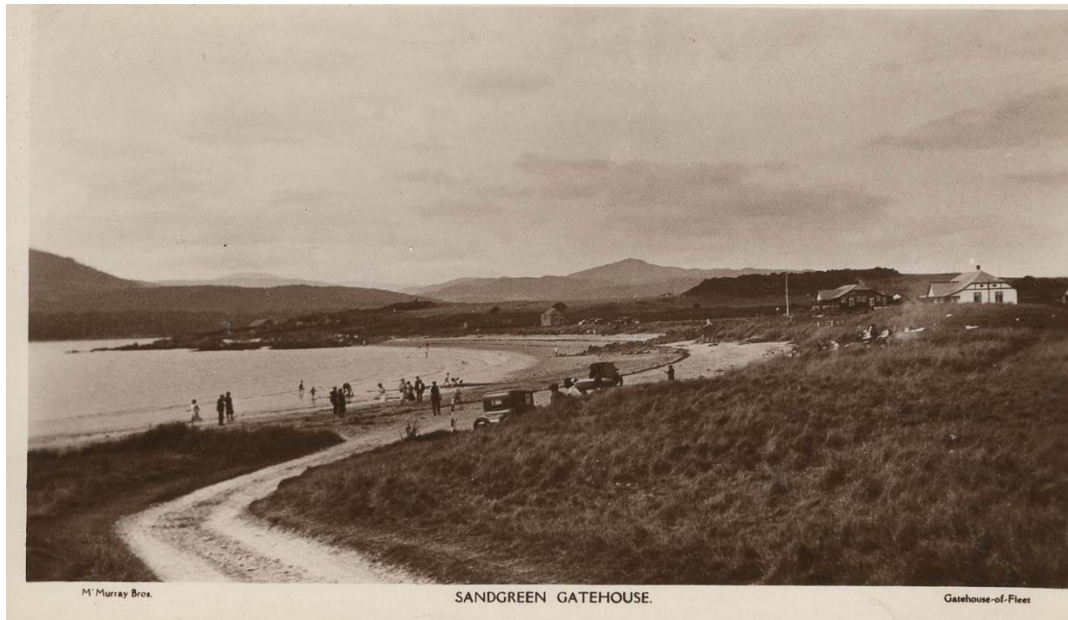
TELEPHONE: BORGUE 232

*The Kerrs advertise in "Romantic Galloway: Guide and Holiday Brochure for South West Scotland, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, 1954"*

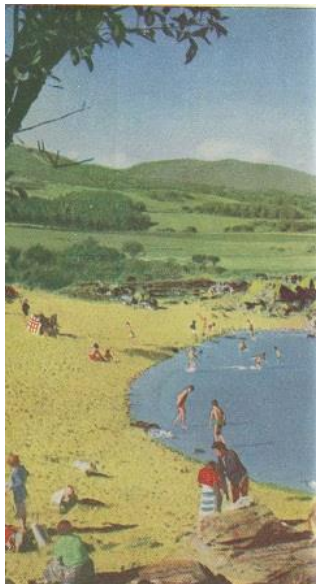
The reference to "*Safe sandy beaches*" shows, as we have already seen, how close proximity to these important local attractions were becoming as a way to attract tourists to the Borgue Hotel. So unsurprisingly, enticing pictures of beaches like Mossyard, Sandgreen etc began to appear in numerous guide books and postcards.



*Postcard of Sandgreen*



*Another postcard of Sandgreen*

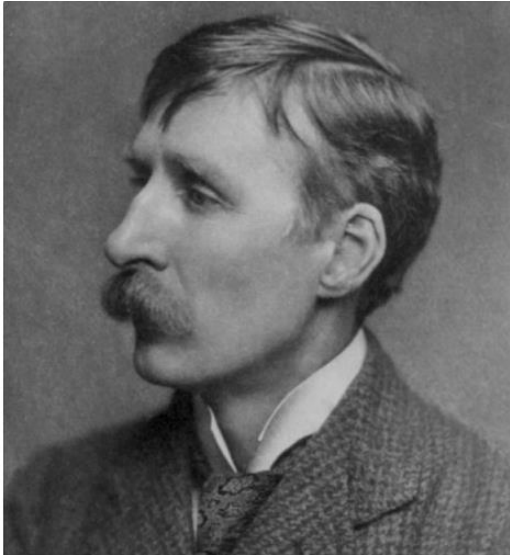


*Two views of Mossyard beach, taken in the 1960s*

Mass tourism boomed around this time as a part of Britain's recovery from the ravages of World War Two. It was given a huge boost by the rise in private car ownership. This, in conjunction with the development of the motorway network, made all parts of Galloway reachable from the large population centres of the North of England and the Midlands. In turn, this led to the development of caravan parks and also a proliferation of "bed and breakfast" accommodation, as those living near the main tourist routes saw an opportunity to earn a second income. For the hotel trade, the overall increase in the number of visitors was welcome, but there was now greater competition than ever, as we will see below.



Going off on a slight tangent perhaps, there is a link to the hotel around this time to the Glasgow Boys, the well-known group of painters often described as Scotland's answer to the French impressionists and post-impressionist. Many of them had strong connections to the area, and played a huge part in cementing Kirkcudbright's reputation as the Artists Town. Probably the best known is E A Hornel, who lived for a number of years in the High Street, in Broughton House, now a National Trust for Scotland property. Amongst the others, was Robert Macaulay Stevenson, one of the elder statesmen of the moment already in his seventies by the time he moved to Kirkcudbright in 1932. He was a colourful character, with 2 alleged weaknesses, one for alcohol the other for women.



*Robert Macaulay Stevenson*

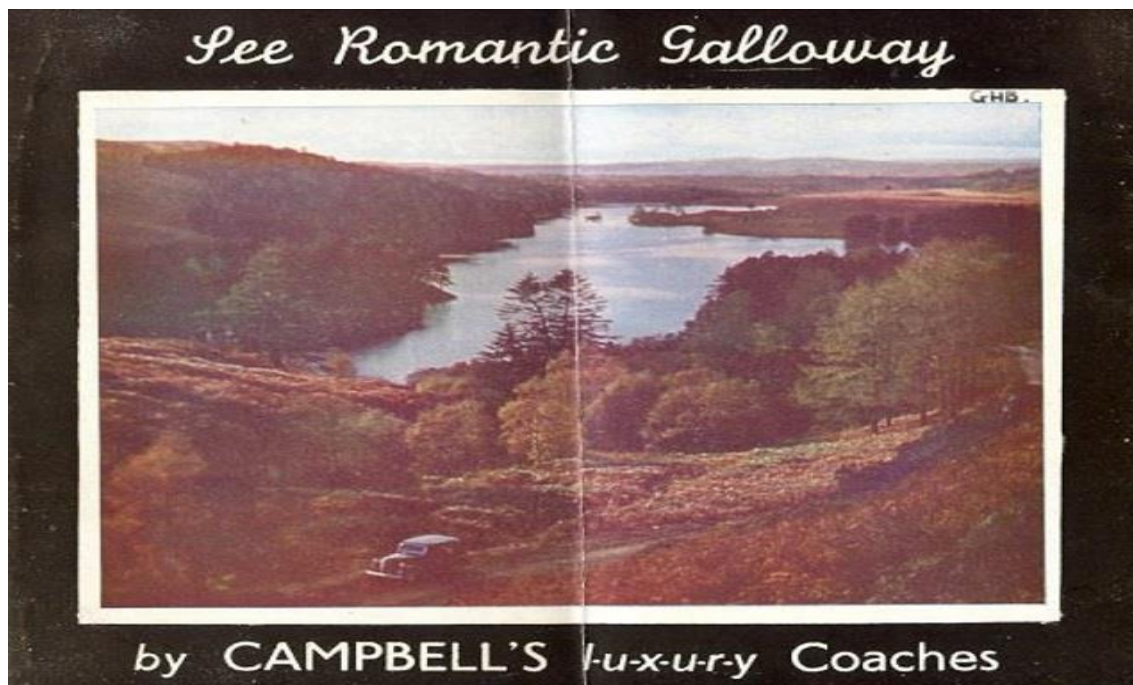
Only natural then that he would choose to stay in the Borgue Hotel and commute by bus to his studio in Kirkcudbright. According to Haig Gordons account in his excellent book *Tales of the Kirkcudbright Artists* (which I have relied on heavily for this section), the move to Borgue was to keep him away from alcohol. In Kirkcudbright he was known as a connoisseur of ladies legs. An "old ram" is how he was described by a local who claimed to have known someone who delivered a note to Stevenson's cleaning lady, but peeked at it en-route. Allegedly, it read "come around 3 o'clock – I'm desperate". Given his reputation as a womanizer, it is not surprising that a sexual interpretation was put upon the message by the deliverer, but of course, the elderly artist may

simply have been keen for someone to dust his grandfather clock

There is a further tale to be told about Stevenson which neatly combines his love of women and drink. It concerns a young lady, Joan Haslam, from Doncaster who used to come up to the area whilst visiting her future parents in law during the Second World War. (She was to become Mrs Henderson, when she married a well-known local vet, David Henderson, son of the then headmaster at Borgue Academy, John Henderson). She remembers being invited up to Stevenson's room in the hotel room to see some of his paintings, (apparently, she fell for that old line!), during which time he frequently excused himself to retire to the adjoining bathroom, claiming he needed a "*little cough syrup*", but from which he would return reeking of strong drink. According to Joan's family nothing untoward occurred, probably just as well for Stevenson, for Joan had once been banned from playing netball at school for "*employing tactics of the rugby field, unbecoming in a young lady*".



*Joan Haslam*



Front cover of "See Romantic Galloway"

CAMPBELL'S L-U-X-U-R-Y TOURS. A list of tours in operation is displayed at Beaconsfield Garage, Kirkcudbright and Fleetvale Garage, Gatehouse. An advertised list for each week appears in Saturday's "Galloway News," and in the WEEKS EVENTS issued by the Galloway Publicity Association.

From KIRKCUDBRIGHT to—	Brighouse Bay and Knock-	Dumfries.
{Dalry.	bres Shores.	
Keswick.	*Loch Trool (2).	From GATEHOUSE to—
Windermere.	{Ayr (1).	Borgue.
St Mary's Loch and Melrose.	*Portpatrick.	Twynholm.
Ballastrae.	Edinburgh.	Kirkcudbright.
New Abbey.	{Ayr (2).	Dalbeattie.
{Lochenbreck.	Thornhill.	*Creetown.
*Gatehouse of Fleet Station.	New Abbey.	Castle-Douglas.
*Port William.	*Gatehouse.	*Newton-Stewart.
{Glenlee Power Station.	Castle-Douglas.	Burnfoot.
Malloch Bay.	Twynholm.	{Murray's Monument.
Brighouse Bay.	Whinnistiggle.	*Loch Trool.
Carrick Shore.	Borgue.	{Glenlee Power Station.
{Murray's Monument.		{Ayr.
Doon Shore.	From BORGUE to—	Sandgreen Shore.
Sandgreen Shore.	*Gatehouse Portpatrick.	Knockbrix.
*Cardross Shore.	{Ayr.	Brighouse Bay.
Dalbeattie.	*Murray's Monument.	*Wigtown.
Sandyhills Bay.	*Loch Trool.	Dumfries.

A good selection of Mystery Tours from each centre.

— 16 —

List of tours provided by Campbell's Luxury Tours

Coach tours for visitors are a well-known phenomenon today, bringing business to hotels, but can be dated much further back, as in the late 1940s they started to become popular as a way for visitors to explore Galloway, including Borgue. One local firm, Campbells, were at the heart of this trade in the Stewartry. With premises both in Gatehouse and Kirkcudbright, they offered tours to a range of local attractions, including many of the places of interest and beaches in and around Borgue. They produced a range of publicity materials, such as the "See Romantic Galloway" booklet which contained both numerous illustrations and colourful descriptions of the delights that awaited the lucky passengers

WHEN people arrive home from a holiday you can usually tell what kind of a time they have had. Some look sleepy, some tired, some disgusted, and others just plain bored. But take a close look at someone who has been to Romantic Galloway. There's a person who has really HAD a holiday!

That's because Galloway is a holiday resort like you've never seen before. It's the whole of the rest of Scotland in miniature. Name practically any kind of recreation or scenery you can think of and you can have it here. Furthermore, you can have it from April till October—or all year round if you like because the mean temperature range in Galloway between summer and winter is only 17 deg. F. Same as Devon.

And under this blanket of worry-erasing climate are the many scenic wonders and romantic places that set Galloway apart from any other resort in the United Kingdom. Enough, R-E-L-A-X in the luxury of Campbell's coaches and enjoy this exquisite panorama.

Introduction to "See Romantic Galloway"



## SECTION 4: The Borgue Fair



*Poster for the 2011 Borgue Fair*

The Borgue Barbeque, or Borgue Fair as it is sometimes known, was first held in 1966, and quickly became the main social event at the heart of the village. It has remained so ever since. Originally it was set up with the intention of helping to pay for new heating in the Parish Church, and to raise fund for the Village Hall. Over the years, thousands of pounds were raised for these and other god causes such as the local pensioners. The Hotel played an integral part from the outset, as it as was used for initial planning meetings. Nan Raphael of the Hotel was, naturally, in charge of the food. The attractions over the years have included sports, dog shows, raffles, stalls etc. In addition, there were dances held at night, initially in the long-ago demolished Bowler's Hall, but whose sprung floor was considered at that time ideal for the "jigging".



*A scene from the 2009 event*



*Iain Cuthbertson as gangster Charlie Endell*

Over the years, there were appearances by various celebrity guests, for example, Iain Cuthbertson. He was a character actor and theatre director, known for his tall imposing build and also his distinctive gravelly, heavily accented voice. His most memorable television role was as Procurator Fiscal in the long running “*Sutherland’s Law*”, and as the criminal and businessman Charlie Endell in “*Budgie*” with Adam Faith (1971-1972) and its less well remembered sequel “*Charles Endell Esquire*” (1979)

Another was Eric Wallace, was a reporter and presenter for *Border Television*. He joined it in 1968 as a news reporter - he would remain there for the next 30 years, presenting *Lookaround* and many of the station's regional programmes, including his own chat show *Wallace*.



*Eric Wallace*



*Local stalwarts hard at work manning the barbeque*

Music was an important part of the day’s entertainment. Local musicians, including Zoe Bestell, Pete Kirk, the Dangleberries played. On various occasions. (Among the expenses listed in the accounts for the Fair was money paid to the hotel for supplying drinks to the bands)

During the first few years of the event, the hotel was unlicensed, but never the less kept very busy supplying food and non-alcoholic refreshment. Once the license to supply alcohol was granted, then trade, as could be expected, became even brisker....



## SECTION 5: The Raphael era

Before looking at the running of hotel by the Raphaels, it is worth looking at the state of the tourist industry in Galloway at that time, and the competition faced by small hotels in rural villages like Borgue. These were - and still are - small, often family run hotels, increasingly reliant on the tourist trade, and often operating at the margins, with very low off-peak occupancies

The overall increase in the number of visitors that was noted earlier was obviously welcome, as was the growing demand for accommodation, especially perhaps for the larger towns. In 1965, Castle Douglas, for example, could boast nine hotels, (including one Temperance Hotel), with the larger one like the Douglas Arms and Kings Arms being both large and luxurious by the standards of the time. All told, they were capable of sleeping 170 people, yet the number of tourists was so high that a report at the time complained that even this number was “*quite inadequate for meeting the demands of the summer tourist trade*”.

Th downside was that competition became fiercer, most notably from the caravan and camping sites which were springing up. Numerous sites were developed, both by private enterprise and also by local authorities, and burghs. In Castle Douglas, for example, from around 1955, the town council developed part of Lochside Park into a spacious caravan and camping site with room for 70 vehicles. Toilet accommodation was provided, including wash rooms, laundry and spray baths with hot and cold water laid on. Kirkcudbright had a municipal site. In close proximity to the Borgue Hotel were private sites at Sandgreen, Brighthouse, and Gatehouse.

There was also a proliferation of “bed and breakfast” and self-catering cottages to let, as many of those living near the main tourist routes saw an opportunity to earn a second income. A growing percentage of this accommodation was becoming farm-based.

Miss Clark, Borgue Guest House, Borgue, Kirkcudbrightshire. Tel. Borgue 248. 3 double, 1 single bedrooms. Homely, comfortable, good food, home baking, near sea. Bed & Breakfast or Full Board. 5 miles from Kirkcudbright. Terms on application.

Borgue. Farm cottage, isolated, but fully modernised, immersion heater, etc., ½-mile from shore. Sleeps 6 upstairs, 3 bedrooms. April 21st-May 21st, June 28th-July 5th, September 21st onwards.—Mrs P. Mackenzie, Seaview, Torryburn, Fife.

Mrs Sproat, Lennox Plunton, Borgue, Kirkcudbrightshire. Tel. Borgue 210. Two modern cottages. Sleep 6/8. Two bedrooms, modern kitchen and bathroom. Electric light, fire and immerser. Sandy beaches 2¼ miles. Summer lets and Winter Terms.

*A number of adverts offering tourist accommodation in or around Borgue, taken from the 1968 publication “All about Galloway and Dumfriesshire : land of Romance and Golden Sunsets”*

This page below is also from the *"All about Galloway and Dumfriesshire: land of Romance and Golden Sunsets"* booklet. It was a magazine produced over a number of years by the Galloway and Dumfriesshire Tourist Association, which was a voluntary organisation formed in 1947, to "gather information for visitors and to ensure they are made welcome". It is interesting for a number of reasons, as it offers a unique snapshot of the tourist trade in Galloway.

No. 6

WHERE TO STAY IN

1969

GALLOWAY and DUMFRIESSHIRE  
HOTELS

Number of Rooms, Bed and Breakfast and Weekly Rates are shown. These are MINIMUM terms and should be checked.

DUMFRIESSHIRE

<b>BEATOCK</b>				
Auchen Castle .....	L 37	From 52/6	From 28 gns.	
<b>CUMMERTREES</b>				
Richmond .....	CL 5	30/-	12½-14½ gns.	
<b>DUMFRIES</b>				
Cairndale .....	L 40	60/-	27 gns.	
Cargenholm .....	L 8	30/-	10% Ser. Ch.	
Eden .....	L 12	25/-	From 15 gns.	
Mayfair .....	L 15	30/-	On Application	
Moreig House .....	L 11	30/-	£11.10.0	
Nithsdale .....	L 14	45/-	14 gns.	
Waverley .....	L 21	30/-	15 gns.	
<b>ECCLIFECHAN</b>				
Cressfield .....	L 9	25/6 to 28/-	12 gns.	
<b>GLENCAPLE</b>				
Nith .....	L 8	35/- to 40/-	16 gns.	
<b>LANGHOLM</b>				
Douglas Hotel .....	L 6	27/6	—	
Eskeale .....	L 16	30/- to 32/6	16 gns.	
<b>LOCKERBIE</b>				
Blue Bell .....	L 15	32/- to 35/-	14-16 gns.	
Townhead Hotel .....	L 5	On Application	On Application	
<b>MOFFAT</b>				
Bonnington .....	L 6	From 23/-	11 gns.	
Star .....	L 10	On Application	On Application	
<b>MONIAIVE</b>				
Craigdarroch Arms ..	L 12	30/- to 32/6	13-16 gns.	
<b>SANQUHAR</b>				
Glendyne .....	L 7	25/-	12 gns.	
<b>THORNHILL</b>				
George Hotel .....	6	From 25/-	12 gns.	

KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE

<b>AUCHENCAIRN</b>				
Balcary Bay .....	L 15	32/6 to 37/6	15 to 17 gns.	
<b>BORGUE</b>				
Borgue Hotel .....	— 10	From 30/-	From 12 gns.	
<b>CASTLE-DOUGLAS</b>				
Crown Hotel .....	L 10	30/-	14 gns.	
Douglas Arms .....	L 24	On Application	27 gns.	
Ernespie .....	L 16	35/- to 45/-	16-20 gns.	
Imperial Hotel .....	L 15	32/6 to 37/6	16-17 gns.	
Kings Arms .....	L 17	35/- to 42/6	15-20 gns.	
Market Inn .....	L 9	30/-	—	
<b>CARSPHAIEN</b>				
Salutation .....	L 8	32/6	From 15 gns.	
<b>CROCKETFORD</b>				
Galloway Arms .....	L 18	37/6 to 42/6	21 gns.	
<b>DALBEATTIE</b>				
Burnside .....	L 7	32/6 to 37/6	15-18 gns.	
Galloway Arms .....	L 8	27/6	From 12 gns.	
<b>DALRY</b>				
Clachan Inn .....	L 6	32/6	15 gns.	
Lochinvar Hotel .....	L 19	From 35/-	From 16 gns.	
Milton Park .....	L 16	—	Apr-Sep 17 gns.	

GATEHOUSE

Angel .....	L 8	From 32/6	From 15 gns.
Anwoth .....	L 12	37/6 to 40/-	On Application
Cally .....	L 73	50/- to 75/-	£23-£32
Murray Arms Hotel ..	L 28	Nov-Apr 40/-	From 16 gns.
		May-Oct 45/-	From 18 gns.

KIPPFORD

Anchor Hotel .....	L 15	On Application	On Application
Hazelmout Private ..	— 12	25/- to 30/-	£15

KIRKCUDBRIGHT

Arden House .....	— 15	22/6 to 27/6	10-13 gns.
Commercial Hotel ..	L 5	25/-	12 gns.
Gordon House Pte. ..	— 15	27/6	12 gns.
Mayfield .....	— 30	S. 30/-	£15-£16
		D. 27/6	
Selkirk Arms .....	L 15	On Application	On Application

NEW ABBEY

Abbey Arms Hotel ..	L 7	32/6 to 35/-	15-16 gns.
Criffel Inn .....	L 4	From 25/-	From £13

NEW GALLOWAY

Cross Keys .....	L 9	30/- to 32/6	14½-15½ gns.
Ken Bridge .....	L 8	32/6	14 gns.
Kennure Arms .....	L —	On Application	On Application
Meadow Bank .....	— 7	From 35/-	From 17 gns.

ROCKCLIFFE

Baron's Craig .....	L 21	47/6 to 60/-	22-27 gns.
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SOUTHERNESS

Paul Jones .....	L 7	37/6	16 gns.
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SPRINGHOLM

Reoch Hotel .....	L —	23/6 to 26/6	On Application
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TWINHOLM

Burnbank Hotel .....	L 8	30/-	15-20 gns.
Star .....	L 4	On Application	On Application

WIGTOWNSHIRE

DRUMMORE

Queens .....	L 11	From 27/6	14½ gns.
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GLENLUCE

Auld King's Arms .....	— 12	From 25/-	£12.10.0
Kelvin Guest House ..	— 7	22/6	12 gns.

KIRKCUWAN

Craichlaw Arms .....	L 5	From 25/-	On Application
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NEWTON STEWART

Creebridge .....	L 19	32/6	15 gns.
Duncree House .....	— 6	On Application	On Application
Grapes Hotel .....	L 8	27/6	12 gns.
Kirroughtree .....	L 16	35/-	From 16 gns.

PORTPATRICK

Melvin Lodge Hotel ..	— 14	From 25/-	12-13 gns.
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PORT WILLIAM

Eagle Hotel .....	L 6	27/-	12-14 gns.
Monreith Arms .....	L 17	32/6	17 gns.

STRANRAER

George .....	— 30	From 55/-	From 25 gns.
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Enquirers should check terms etc. before booking, and when writing, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope

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Telephone: Castle-Douglas 2219

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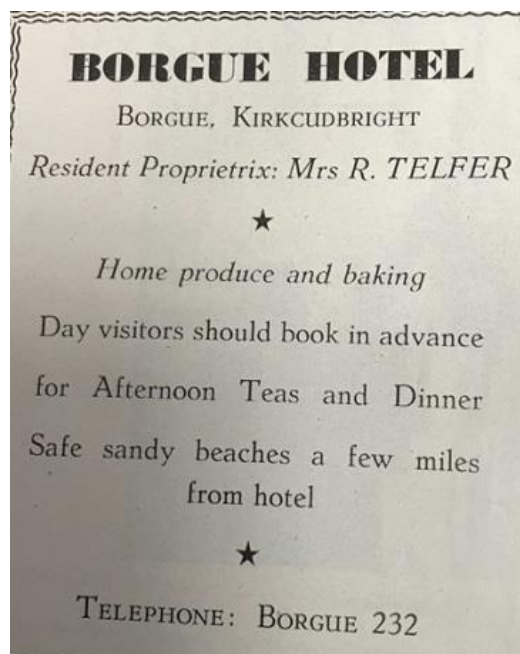
Telephone: Castle-Douglas 2219



Firstly, it shows that a large number of hotels were offering accommodation that would have provided competition for the hotel at Borgue. Secondly, it shows that in the smaller towns and villages, a number of those hotels that were in business in 1969 have now disappeared; Gatehouse has lost the Angel; Rockcliffe, the Baron's Craig; Carsphairn, the Salutation; Dalry the Milton Park. The Borgue Hotel is noted as having 10 rooms, bookable for bed and breakfast from 30/- per night, or 12 guineas for a week. (In 1970, the average weekly wage was around £32. A loaf of bread cost 9p. A property could be bought in places for £4,975). It is also, at this time unlicensed, though this was shortly to change.

**THE RAPHAEL FAMILY:** This advert, on the right, from the 1956 edition of *Romantic Galloway: Guide and Holiday Brochure for South West Scotland*, shows a Mrs Telfer was at that time running the hotel. This was only for a short spell however. She was a daughter of the Kerr family.

The Hotel was then purchased by Tommy Rogerson, who ran the well-known local Garage business, who had married Margaret Raphael. It was acquired by Robin Raphael in the late nineteen fifties, and this family were to run it for the next 20 plus years.



*The Hotel under Mrs Telfer, 1956*



*The wedding of Nan Hyslop to Jimmy Raphael*

For much of that time, it was managed by the redoubtable Nan Raphael, mother of Robin Raphael. She was a local girl, born Nan Hyslop, whose father, Sam, was a well-known farmer at nearby Cairniehill, and was a noted prizewinning cheesemaker.

In 1941, Nan married a local man, Jimmy Raphael, and the wedding was noted in the local press, with the bride and groom being described as popular members of the local Badminton Club. Jimmy Raphael worked with his brother-in-law, Tommy Rogerson, in the local garage at Borgue, and is described by Adam Gray as “one of the rarities of life about whom no one said a bad word”.





*Advert showing the Raphael family now in charge*

It is at this point that a number of a number of the traditions still associated with the hotel today were started, for example the weekly dominoes night with steak pies being awarded to the winners. Members of the Raphael family recall Borgue at that time as a thriving community with a shop, Post Office and Garage business, now all gone. The hotel always very busy with locals and visitors alike, with guests returning year after year. In spite of the competition from the other hotels in the area, and alternatives like caravans and holiday homes, it was usually fully booked over the summer. The hotel catered for numerous family functions, such as weddings, funerals, birthday celebrations etc. Often events held by local community groups and sporting clubs in the Village Hall across the road were catered for by the hotel. Burns suppers were ran, which attracted good speakers and were very well attended.

Locals and tourists alike seemed to comment very favourably on Nan's abilities in the kitchen. Judith Middleton, a regular visitor to the area, who often took meals in the hotel, describes her as a *"warm and very kind person, a splendid cook, who made delicious scones, pancakes etc, her lemon pie simply gorgeous"*. She frequently entered the competitions in the Borgue show and won numerous prizes for her prizes for baking.



*Nan Raphael*



*Jimmy Raphael*



*Nan Raphael with Jock True and trophies won by the Borgue team*

The hotel, like a number of others in the Stewartry, developed strong links to the local football team, who for played some of the time in the Stewartry Amateur League. Various pitches were used, including fields at Carlton and Borgue House. (Visitors to the Gents toilet can still see pictures of the various teams)



*Jock Wallace*

The link with football was to result in visit of a famous guest, Jock Wallace, the manager of Rangers. He had been to Kirkcudbright as a guest of the local Rangers supporters club, attended an event held in the Masonic Club in the town on the Saturday evening, and visited the Borgue Hotel with his wife on the Sunday.



*Nan Hyslop pulling the all important first pint*

A big day in the history of the hotel came in June, 1972, when a bar was opened, allowing non-residents to have a drink on the premises. Naturally the event attracted attention from the local newspaper, the *Galloway News* which published an article with a photo of Nan. In its heyday the bar would be mobbed at weekends on Fridays, Saturdays and Sunday.

Often there with music on a Saturday, supplied by local musicians Bobby Swan or George Agnew on accordion. Bar meals were very popular - again Nan's cooking attracted rave reviews - or, for a more formal occasion, you could have a meal, as you can today, in the Dining Room. Staff at this time included Betty Robinson, Netty Patterson and Winnie McKie.





*Old Folks Charities were frequent beneficiaries of functions in the hotel*



*Jean Cannon and Chris Hamerton*

As well as the tourist trade, it was functions held for locals and their families which were crucial to the finances of the hotel. It was the ideal location for holding gatherings such as birthday parties, wedding anniversary celebrations etc. A perfect example of this is the silver wedding celebrations of Jean Cannon, and Chris Hamerton, held in the hotel in 1973. Jean was a local girl who was born in Dalbeattie and, aged 2, moved to Rattrra Farm near Borgue where she grew up. She came from a family of nine, all of whom attended Borgue Academy. In World War 2, she went off to join the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF),



which had been formed in June 1939 when the country anticipated imminent war. The duties of WAAF included plotting the course of an aircraft and convoys, vital to the war effort. Jean was stationed at Northwood, in Middlesex.

Family legend is that Chris, then stationed at RAF Benson in Oxfordshire, fell for her Scottish lilt, and made an excuse to visit Northwood. He was also a D-Day veteran. They married in Borgue Church, 1948, and came back 25 years later to celebrate their anniversary in the Borgue Hotel. The party continued long into the night back at the house of the McCaig family in Roberton.



*From left: Sarah Patterson (nee Cannon) who had been a bridesmaid; Chris and Jean; Hugh Cannon (brother of Jean, who had been best man)*



The Cannon family were very much involved in another celebration held at the Hotel, this time in April 1976, when a local lad, Adam McCaig had his 21<sup>st</sup> party in the Hotel. He was a nephew of Jean Cannon, the son of her sister Barbara. She was married to Jack McCaig, who worked for over thirty years for well-known Brown family of Roberton.

*Adam McCaig, seated at front; behind, left, Barbara McCaig; next to her Kit Maxwell; next to him Jean Cannon*



*Adam McCaig and brother John*



*Kit Maxwell and Sheena Cannon, guests at the party*



*Birthday girl Eileen McCaig cuts her cake, with family members in the background, including Eric Patterson and Jack McCaig (seated at table) and two children, David McCaig and Neil Gilston)*

Another social event to take place in the hotel which featuring the McCaig family. This was the fortieth birthday part of Eileen McCaig, the wife of John McCaig. This took place in January 1991, and illustrates perfectly how the hotel was used over the decades by different generations of the same family to host and cater for important family celebrations.



*Jessie Gilston (mother of Eileen) and Jack McCaig, (father of John McCaig)*

## SECTION 6: The Hotel today

The Raphael family sold the hotel in the mid-eighties. By then, holiday habits for people in Britain has changed beyond all recognition. At the start of the sixties, it was difficult for most people to think of anyone who had been abroad for their holidays; by the end of the eighties, it was hard to find someone who hadn't. This meant that the local hotels could no longer expect the same numbers of people looking for accommodation, and so would have to find new ways of attracting custom, often featuring new technologies.

Since the Raphaels sold the hotel, it has passed through various hands. As well as seeking to explore new opportunities, all the owners continued the tried and tested practice of linking the hotel with the everyday life of the community.



*Vince and Shirley Barratt*

A retired army couple, Vince and Shirley Barratt took over from around 2007 and, true to tradition, ran dominoes nights, with steak pie prizes, Old Folks Xmas Dinners, New Year dinners etc as well as sponsoring the local darts team. They were also involved in activities such as Halloween parties and coffee mornings, which helped raise funds for various local charities, including one of Borgue's favourite charities, the RNLI.

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### Lifeboat thanks

October 21, 2010 | Galloway News, The (Scotland)  
Author: Patricia Lewis, Galloway News | Section: News  
76 Words

 Read News Document 

SIR – The **Borgue** RNLI Group would like to thank Vince and Shirley Barret, who, once again, made **Borgue Hotel** available for a very successful and happy coffee morning.

Some generous donations swelled the total to £255.25 and a further £310 was raised from the sale of the charity's Christmas cards.

We did appreciate the kindness and generous help provided by our hosts and are most grateful to all who supported this event.

**Borgue** RNLI Group

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*The hotel hosts a Coffee Morning for the Borgue RNLI*





*The RNLI and the Galloway Mountain Rescue team benefit from Halloween party in the hotel*



*The Borgue Hotel Darts Team, in their team strips*

In 2015, the couple brought publicity and entertainment to both the hotel and the village by appearing in the Channel 4 Reality TV series “*Four in a bed*” TV programme. This pitted 4 sets of hotel owners against each other, by taking turns staying in each other others properties before deciding which one was the best. The programme was broadcast in April 2015. The Borgue Hotel, described as being run “*with military precision*”, came a creditable second, and the show generated welcome publicity for the village and the hotel.



*Martin and Michelle Thomson*

In July 2016, Martin and Michelle Thomson couple from The North East of England bought over the hotel. Former school technician Michelle and teacher Martin, gave up their home and secure full-time jobs to buy the hotel without any prior experience of the trade. However, they were familiar with the area, having fallen in love with it after years of holidays at their caravan at Kippford. They

always said they'd said they'd move to Dumfries and Galloway, and after encouragement from their son, bought a cottage before going the whole hog and buying the hotel.



**Borgue Hotel - United Kingdom  
Best Rural Hotel - Dumfries &  
Galloway & LUX Hidden Gem  
Award for Weekend Getaways  
2017**

*Award for the best Rural Hotel*

The gamble paid off as just 15 months later, they managed to scoop a top industry award for their “hidden gem”: the judges from Hotel Lux Magazine awarded the Borgue Hotel the prize for the best rural hotel, out of nominated hotels and spas across the world. Michelle, 52, said: “We thought it was a joke at first. We don’t know who nominated us but it’s really lovely.” Receiving this award so soon after we arrived is just wonderful and we’re very grateful to whoever it was who nominated us.”



*Ben, a limited edition  
Steiff teddy bear,  
auctioned online for  
charity*

The couple have continued well established traditions such as weekly Dominoes, Darts, Old Folks Christmas lunches, New Year Celebrations etc, as well as promoting use by organisations like the Community Council, local clubs like the Curling Club and the Wednesday Wheelers to hold meetings and social events.

In common with every business today, they have also greatly expanded the use of Social Media platforms, in particular, Facebook, to advertise and promote events. A good example is the Quiz Nights, which have become extremely popular, as have Charity Raffles.





*Crawford Jarratt raising money for local charities*

Numerous charities have benefited from donations from the hotel. Perhaps most spectacularly, a skydive by owner Michelle and regular Crawford Jarratt raised an astonishing £3000 for Marie Curie and the Fisherman's Mission.

The Hotel has also sought to establish close links with local businesses. These have included the Sulwarth Brewery; Bladnoch Distillery; Dark Art Distillery; Cream o' Galloway at Rainton; Hills and Harbours Gin; Upper Senwick Farm; Mogerleys Butchers etc



*Poster for the Borgue Hotel Burn's Night*

On the 16<sup>th</sup> Feb 2019, the couple held their first Burns night since taking over the Hotel. The event was a huge success, ably compered by Ian Alison and featuring local talent such as speakers Ian McIntyre, Susan Muir, Susan Martin, Guy Clements, Adam Gray and Janette Watson and musicians led by Sue St Joseph, Luke Thomson and piper Euan Donald.

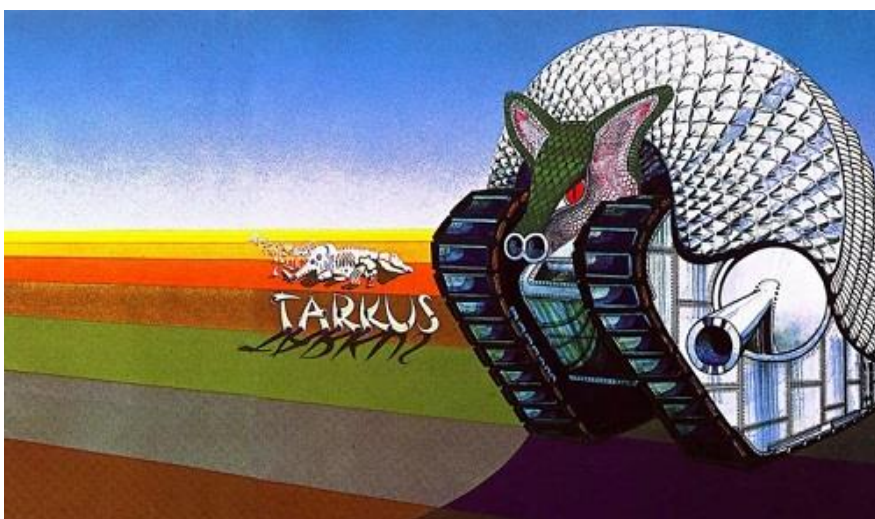




*Poster for "Under a Borgue Moon" exhibition*

The Hotel also developed links with the local artistic community in the Borgue area, particularly with the artist William Neal. He was part of the Borgue Collective, a group of artists and craftsmen located in or near the village. Born in Guildford in 1947, he went to Guildford Art School and then followed a diverse career in the graphic arts, working for the BBC, Ulster Television, Pitman Publishing and C.C.S Associates, a leading design group in London's West End. It was from C.C.S that he met Greg Lake, who was to become famous as a member of the progressive rock band of Emerson, Lake & Palmer. Neal went on to design covers for the band's million selling albums "*Tarkus*" and "*Pictures at an Exhibition*". His work was also used by other rock bands during this period such as Stone the Crows and numerous reggae bands for Trojan Records.

Over his career William has held over 100 exhibitions. Since the 1980s he has lived and worked in Dumfries and Galloway in south west Scotland. He has built a strong following for his landscape watercolours which reflect the lights and moods of the Galloway landscape. Moonlit landscapes are a defining subject and his painting Moonlit Dunes was chosen by musician Keith Emerson for his "*Three Fates*" album cover in 2012 - some forty years after first starting work with him.



*Cover of "Tarkus" by Emerson, Lake and Palmer, design by William Neal*

In 2018, the Hotel held a highly successful exhibition of his work, entitled "*Under a Borgue Moon*", during which he was present to talk about his art and music, and at which copies of his work were on display.

## CONCLUSION

In March, 2020, in a feature on Kirkcudbright, the *Herald* newspaper gave the following very upbeat review of the Borgue Hotel (probably the first time it has been mentioned in the same paragraph as Doris Day...)

*Bags of bonhomie: The Borgue Hotel in the village of Borgue, five miles west of Kirkcudbright, provides a hearty welcome and food so wholesome it could have starred in a Doris Day movie. Rooms from £75.*

*From the Herald Insider Guide: Kirkcudbright*

This should have given a welcome boost to trade, but note the date which is early March 2020 - within days of this being published, Covid had changed everything, everywhere. for everyone – although hopefully not forever. It is far too early to say what the precise effect will be on the hospitality trade, but it was clearly one of the worst affected areas. Even before Covid restrictions, trading had been difficult. New measures which were introduced at various times, including the banning all sales of alcohol, the prevention of people entering the premises to collect a food order etc meant both severe financial pressure as well as necessitating changes in the ways the Borgue Hotel had to operate. As Martin noted after the imposition of even tighter restrictions in Jan 21: “*people were coming round the back to collect their food and drinks to takeaway. Now people have to pull up and wait to collect their food at the front door when it’s ready. “We are completely closed for what we normally do and there’s no trade indoors”.*

Amongst all this gloom, one thing which helped the owners was the support of loyal locals, which kept the business afloat. This was very much reciprocated by the community, who in turn were very appreciative of how the hotel had made its mark on in the village. As one local, Jeanette Watson, put it, “*There’s a tremendous community spirit that has really shone through this year. The Borgue Hotel opened up a community shop to help keep people supplied. You couldn’t get things like flour, sugar and toilet rolls in the supermarkets but you could get them in Borgue.*

There is a well-known Chinese quote that says “*May you live in interesting times*”. I like to think that this could be amended to read “*May you live in interesting places*”. In spite of its quiet and unassuming appearance, Borgue is indeed an interesting place, and one in which the hotel has embedded itself into the heart of so much village life.

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*I would be delighted to hear from anyone with any photos, documents, anecdotes, memories etc relating to the Borgue Hotel*

[drtait@icloud.com](mailto:drtait@icloud.com)

Mobile 07838396950

Landline 01555 662443

DONALD TAIT

*February 2022*

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### **Acknowledgements**

I am very grateful to everyone who has shown an interest in, and contributed in any way to, this booklet. I would like to thank in particular the Raphael family, John McCaig, Judith Middleton, John Henderson, John Sproat, Haig Gordon, and the present hotel owners, Michelle and Martin.



# Appendix



*The Borgue Hotel in the mid nineteen fifties*

In researching the history of a building in Scotland purely from the point of view of its architecture, a good starting point is a series of books known as *The Buildings of Scotland*. However, the particular volume for Dumfries and Galloway, written by John Gifford, has very little to say, as it mentions the hotel only very briefly, as *a broad-eaved late c19th century Georgian-survival Hotel*”.

Historic Environment Scotland, the public body set up to investigate, care for and promote Scotland’s historic environment, has a more detailed description of the Borgue Hotel, (which is a Category C Listed Building) on its website:

Late 19th century. 2-storey 4-bay symmetrical fronted hotel.

Rubble walling with contrasting pale grey granite margins and rusticated quoins.

Advanced centre 2 bays with pair of doorways to ground; panelled doors, fanlight, flanking this, to ground tripartite windows. All 4 1st floor windows single light; all sash and case with 8-pane lying-pane glazing.

Piended and platform slate roofs, stepped forward over centre bays; deep timber bracketted eaves; pair of large canted flat-roofed dormers (early 20th century) with metal framed windows and lying-pane glazing flank smaller central timber dormer.

Tall end stacks with granite quoins. Rubble flanks: large rendered single storey addition to rear.