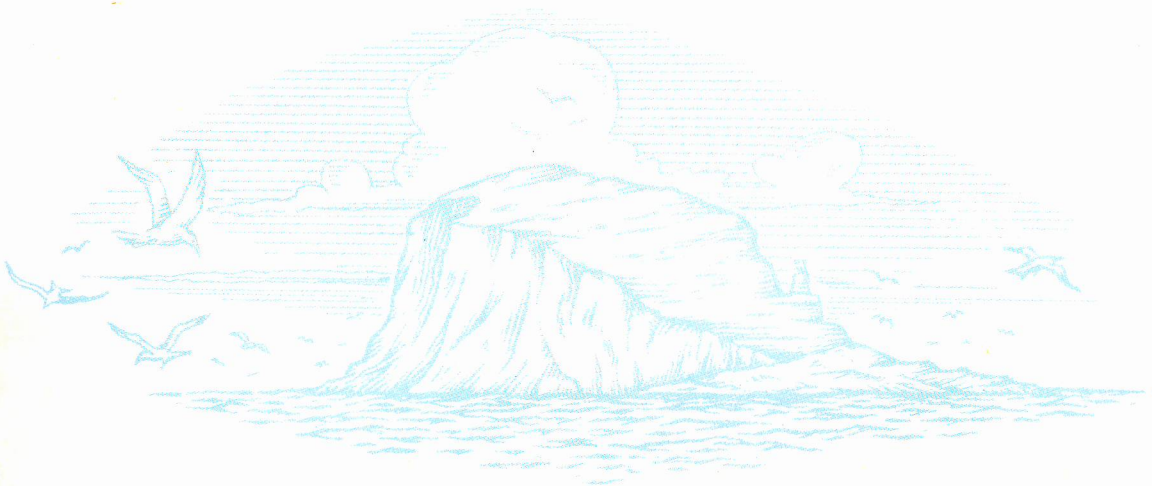


# “Gardylloo”

## Voyage of the m.v. “Gardylloo” on the Firth of Forth

On leaving her berth in the Edinburgh Dock, built in 1881, the “**Gardylloo**” proceeds through the Albert Dock, built in 1865, to the Water of Leith and seawards into the new entrance lock officially opened by H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh on 28th May 1969.



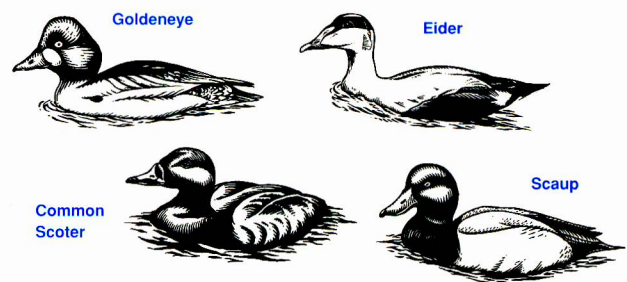
East of Scotland Water

The earliest mention of a harbour at Leith is made in a charter of the Abbey of Holyrood (who owned the lands of North Leith) of 1143, and in 1329, shortly before his death, King Robert the Bruce granted a charter of the "Harbour and Mills of Leith" to the City of Edinburgh, the harbour then consisting of quay walls lining the Water of Leith. In 1365 Trinity House of Leith, a body of Leith shipmasters was founded and still exists through shorn of its former powers and now confined to charitable work. Apart from playing a major role, as port for the capital, in much of Scotland's history Leith has much history of its own. It is perhaps best known to some as claiming to have the second oldest golf course. St. Andrews 1552, Leith 1593, Dornoch 1616, Montrose 1628, Aberdeen 1642, Musselburgh 1672. One of the sad by-notes of history was played out on the Shore in Leith in April 1779 when the Duke of Buccleuch's South Fencible Regiment was sent to put down a mutiny of the 42nd (Black Watch) and 71st (Fraser's) Highland Regiments who were being embarked for America, contrary to their engagement. In the ensuing massacre some 17 soldiers of these regiments were killed and 28 wounded. Three of the mutineers were sentenced to be shot at Edinburgh Castle and only after parading before the firing squad and standing beside the empty coffins were they given a reprieve!

Many notable historical characters have landed at Leith including James I in 1423, Mary, Queen of Scots (after an absence from Scotland of 13 years) in 1561, The Czar of Russia in 1896, King Olav of Norway in 1961 and of course the present Royal family. No visitor was more welcomed and none so happy as the 299 prisoners freed from the German prison ship "Altmark" in Josing Fjord, Norway, in February 1940 by Captain Vian in the destroyer "Cossack" and subsequently landed at Leith. This was, incidentally, the most recent occasion that a naval boarding party have been issued with cutlasses. Once lowered to the level of the sea and the outer lock gate opened the ship heads through the channel to the south of Inchkeith.

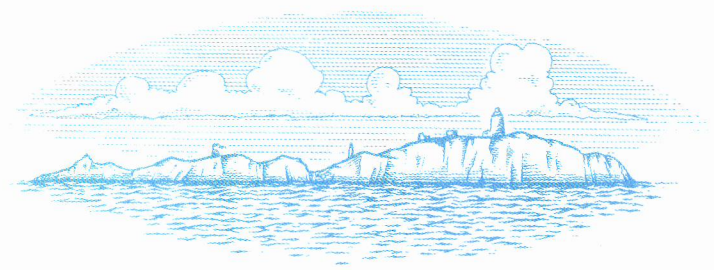
Inchkeith, has a long and turbulent history. In the 7th century a "School of the Prophets" from whence missionaries were sent to evangelise the mainland was established by St. Adamnan, biographer of Columba. During the reign of James IV in 1497 the plague "Grandgore" infected Edinburgh and to prevent its spreading the victims were banished to Inchkeith. It was also during James IV's reign that the King, of a scientific turn of mind, in an attempt to determine the original language of the human race, ordered a dumb woman and two infants to be landed on the island. On their return after some years it was claimed that the children spoke "Extremely good Hebrew". Following his overwhelming defeat of the Scots at the Battle of Pinkie in 1547, the Duke of Somerset fortified Inchkeith. This garrison was however dislodged by an invasion force of French soldiers in June 1549, some 300 - 400 English soldiers being reported killed. Until 1878 the island slipped into oblivion but then the Admiralty, recognising its strategic position, ordered fortifications to be built. On completion, to proof test the effectiveness of the defences, the battleship H.M.S. "Sultan" was sent to effect a live bombardment on the

island. This spectacle, in August 1884, brought many trippers from Edinburgh to view this live "battle" from the many pleasure steamers then plying on the Forth. The writer recalls a similar grandstand view from the deck of a trawler shortly after the 2nd World War when the obsolete battleship H.M.S. "Nelson" was moored off Inchkeith and subjected to bombing attacks to test the effectiveness of armour plating. Seafield Bay, at least prior to sewage treatment coming into operation was, the site in winter of one of the largest concentrations of sea duck to be found in the world, up to 30 - 35,000 have been counted on occasions. Mainly Scaup,



Scoters, Goldeneye, Eiders, Pochard, Tufted duck and a few Long Tailed Duck. Once clear of the buoyed channel the courses diverge whether bound for the St. Abbs or Bell Rock dumping sites. Bound on the northern most track for the Bell Rock site the ship continues in mid Firth between Fidra Islet and Elie Ness towards the May island.

The East Neuk of Fife has a number of picturesque harbours, Elie, St. Monans, Pittenweem, now the principal fishing harbour and Anstruther a focal point for visitors with the excellent Scottish Fisheries Museum. A ship of the Spanish Armada called at Anstruther in 1588 in somewhat strange circumstances and in a fit of pique John Paul Jones, during his panic evoking cruise on the "Bonhomme Richard" in 1779, loosed a bombardment on the town. Further along the coast is Crail,



most picturesque of all the harbours and much beloved by artists. Four miles off the Fife coast is the Isle of May with many claims to fame apart from its present day status as a migrating bird observatory. The origin of the name is the subject of some speculation but is thought to derive from the old Norse Ma-ey, the Gulls Isle. Legend has it that Thenaw the errant daughter of King Loth of Traprain Law (who gave Lothian its name) was cast adrift and washed up on the May where the names of some of the features, Lady's Well, Maiden's Rocks etc. perpetuate this legend. From the May, Thenaw sailed upriver to land near Culross where St. Serf cared for her and her son Kentigern, or Mungo, patron Saint of Glasgow, was

born. The Hungarian St. Adrian was killed by the Danish King Humber on the May about the year 875 and in the middle of the 12th century an abbey dedicated to Adrian was founded on the May by King David I and became a place of pilgrimage for Scottish Monarchs for centuries. The ruins now being in the care of the Historic Scotland. A little known event of the 1715 Jacobite Rising involved the May. The Earl of Mar planning to cross the Firth, assembled a fleet of small boats at the East Neuk ports and after a feint by cavalry at Burntisland the crossings were made. Most boats eluded the waiting English ships, however a detachment of 300 men under the young Earl of Strathmore was driven to take refuge on the May and there remained for 8 days before successfully retiring to the Fife coast. The very first lighthouse to be built around the Scottish coast was erected on the May in 1636 by Alexander Cunningham of Barns. This light consisted of an open fire in a grate and consumed around 400 tons of coal per year. Not until 1st February 1816 was this replaced by an oil lamp.

The degree of hazard which the Isle of May and its rocks presented and indeed still does present to shipping can be judged from the wrecks recorded there. In the period from August 1868, when the first entry was made in the shipwreck return, until 1960, no fewer than 39 ships came to grief on the May Island. On the mainland beyond Crail is Fife Ness with its new lighthouse replacing the "North Carr" lightship which, with its predecessors, guarded the treacherous North Carr Rocks for some 200 years until withdrawn in 1975. On the end of the reef of the North Carr Rocks is a beacon built by the celebrated lighthouse engineer Robert Stevenson. Eleven miles beyond Fife Ness is the Bell Rock Lighthouse, probably the best known of Robert Stevenson's many structures, this replaced the "Abbot of Aberbrothock's bell" made famous in Southey's poem "Inchcape Rock". The lighthouse was built between 1808 and 1811. Before the days of radio a signal apparatus kept the keepers in touch with the shore at Arbroath and for emergencies a pair of carrier pigeons were kept. Despite the prominence of this light the cruiser H.M.S. "Argyll" was wrecked on these rocks in a gale in October 1915.

Dumping of the sludge, much to the delight of the attendant gulls, takes place 7 miles from the Bell Rock, 44 miles from Leith in depths of 30 fathoms.

Returning to where the tracks diverge bound towards the St. Abb's dumping position the southernmost track is followed. Fidra Islet with its lighthouse, the site of an ancient? dedicated to St. Nicholas, is passed on the starboard side. Between here and the Bass Rock, the Lamb and Craigleith, rocky little islands are passed. All this coast and off lying islands are of great ornithological importance but none more so than the Bass Rock, dominating feature of the outer Forth. The Bass, a vast lava core, thrusts some 350 feet from the sea and apart from its world importance as a breeding station for Gannets who take their scientific name from the Bass - Sula Bassana - it is a place of much historical and geological interest. In the dawn of recorded history St. Baldred of the Bass had his hermitage here and died on the Bass in 756 (some authorities say 607 or 608). His body was disputed over by the three

neighbouring parishes as Bellenden the chronicler tells us:- ".....the parishioners of Auldham, Tynninghame and Preston (East Linton) contended whilk of them should have the body to decore their kirk; but on the morrow they fand be miracle of God three biers with three bodies.....and so the haly man lies be miracle in all three kirks". Between 1673 and 1684 the Bass was used as a state prison housing many prominent Covenanters and again in 1691 was used to imprison 4 young Jacobites. Whilst the captors where hauling up coal from the jetty in June that year the 4 prisoners shut the gates of the fortress against them and for nearly 3 years the Bass remained the sole bastion of the exiled King James against the remainder of Dutch William's realm. Eventually the gallant band capitulated on honourable terms. In his sequel to "Kidnapped", "Catriona", Robert Louis Stevenson, grandson of the famous lighthouse builder, devotes 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> years chapters to the Bass. Up til Victorian times a "Prefect of the Bass" was employed to catch Gannets and was required to present an annual dish of these birds to the Monarch! An estimated 50,000 Gannets live on the Bass and studies of diet indicate that such a number would require to catch around 2,800 tons of fish yearly. Facing the Bass on the mainland are the gaunt sandstone ruins of Tantallon Castle, long a stronghold of the Red Douglases. Sir Walter Scott in "Marmion" describes it.....".....vast, Broad, massive high, and stretching far, and held impregnable in war...." Diverging from the coast as the ship heads out into the North Sea for some 17 miles from the Bass in the distance beyond Dunbar and Barns Ness (noted for its limestone fossils) is Fast Castle Head. This is the original of Scotts Wolf Crag in his "Bride of Lammermuir" and aptly named. A curious tale exists of buried treasure at Fast Castle and involves a "Contract of Magic" between Logan of Restalrig (who owned the Castle and whose corpse was exhumed and tried for treason after the Gowrie conspiracy) and John Napier of Merchiston, great scientist, and inventor of Logarithms. The ingredients of this tale are many and complex and involve, inter alia, the casquet letters of Mary Queen of Scots, Spanish Armada, Inquisition, Gowrie Conspiracy.

Dumping takes place 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> miles North of St Abbs Head lighthouse, 36 miles from Leith in depths of 34 fathoms.

Many stirring events have taken place on the waters of the Firth of Forth from the days of the Romans to whom the Firth of Forth was known as Bodotia Aestuarium. Until the 17th century the Firth of Forth was known as the Scottish Sea.

Events such as the great battles and eventual capture of Sir Stephen Bull and his English fleet by the doughty Sir Andrew Wood in 1489 and 1490. The launching of the Great Michael, greatest warship of her time in 1511 at Newhaven. General at Sea Robert Blake's defeat of a Dutch fleet off Dunbar during the Cromwellian wars: the John Paul Jones scare of 1779. The five ships carrying Scotlands pride and 1200 men some women and children sailing full of hope in July 1698 bound for the Darien to establish Scotland's disastrous colony. The First World War probably saw its most active period with the "Battle of May Island" where, during fleet

manoeuvres, two flotillas' of K class submarines collided and were run down by other submarines and surface craft, several being sunk with considerable loss of life. This debacle took place in January 1918.

During the First World War for whatever reason, Official Photographers were not encouraged by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty. Some fine paintings were done by war artists however, one of which is most telling is the return of the "Wounded Lion" (Beatty's flagship) being towed up the Forth after the Battle of the Dogger Bank. The carnage involved in a fleet engagement must have been quite terrible and the sailors in the surviving ships of the Battle Cruiser fleet returning to their base in the Forth after The Dogger Bank and Battle of Jutland must have been truly thankful. 14 ships and 6,097 men never did return from Jutland. With such vast fleets involved, accidents such as the "Battle of May Island" were not uncommon and another tragedy of this period in the Forth was the sinking of H.M.S. "Campania", one of the early aircraft carriers which collided with the "Royal Oak" suffered a boiler explosion and sank to the west of Inchkeith on the 5 November 1918 only a few days before the armistice.

Undoubtedly most spectacular of all must have been the vast armada when the Grand Fleet of no fewer than 13 squadrons of major warships, Battleships, Battlecruisers, Heavy and Light Cruisers, a total of 201 allied ships carrying 20 flag officers plus many attendant destroyers and ancillary craft met the German High Seas Fleet 40 miles to the East of May Island and escorted the German Fleet of 9 new Battleships,

5 Battlecruisers, 7 Light Cruisers and 49 Destroyers (There were to have been 50 but one struck a mine on the passage across the North Sea and sank) into the Forth to anchor. There on the 21st November 1918 they surrendered to Admiral Beatty prior to being interned at Scapa Flow.

The submarine force surrendered at Harwich.

The final saga of this once proud fleet took place several years after its scuttling at Scapa Flow on the 21 June 1919 when one by one, salvage experts raised the ships and they were towed upside down many of them to drydock at Rosyth to be broken up for scrap. A few of the ships in deeper water still await salvage and ironically their value has increased out of all recognition since these few ships are one of the very few sources of pre-nuclear age armour plated steel which is necessary for some delicate scientific instruments.

The first air raid over Britain during the Second World War took place on the 16 October 1939 when a flight of 14 Heinkel bombers attacked the Forth Bridge and Rosyth Dockyard. Thus began the war in the Forth and sadly on the very eve of Germany's surrender, 7 May 1945 the last British Merchant ship to be sunk during this conflict the "Avondale Park" was torpedoed and sunk by a U-boat one mile south-east of May Island.

Although there is still considerable naval activity in the Forth it is now largely given over to peaceful pursuits with tankers, oil rig supply ships and drilling platforms nowadays dominating the scene.

**Ron Leask Master of m.v. "Gardylloo".**

# The meaning

## GARDEZ L'EAU

**By the year 1765 the population of Edinburgh had reached 30,000.** With no proper drainage, conditions in the streets became even worse. Several notable people wrote of their experiences when visiting Edinburgh during this period. A recent book on the "Life and Times of Rob Roy MacGregor" contains the following description of the Edinburgh he would here find on his first visit in 1688-89. "Like all other visitors, they would time arrival to avoid the horrors of the night drum. When Edinburgh's clocks struck ten, the people were allowed by beat of drum to throw their day's slops and excrement out of the windows on to the streets. Since there were 30,000 people living within a square mile, all on the flank of the long ridge that sloped down from the Castle to Holyrood Palace, this avalanche from 10 storeys high was too grim a penalty to be paid for late arrival, however much it might save on the morrow. Rob on his first visit may well have felt appalled by the vision summoned up. The pleasant surprise of the morning's arrival would seem all the greater, when they climbed up to the High Street Rob would find no trace of the expected sludge. Scavengers daily swept all clean when the bell of St. Giles tolled seven.

..... First they had a struggle getting up the narrow stairs, which in the mornings were always congested with male and female carriers bearing water-casks to the houses from public wells in the main street. The bedrooms and kitchen, which opened off the common room, each had a close-stool, or chamber pot set in a wooden box, and the scents from that source were augmented from windows opened to air the rooms, for the close was freely used by passers by, including the tenants, to relieve themselves at all times of day.

..... Since there was no street lighting each hired a caddie, one of the numerous lads who hung around coffee houses and all other public places to serve as guides or run errands. On the 10 o'clock drum beat the town resounded to the cries of "**Gardylloo**" (**Gardez l'eau**) as folk emptied pots and buckets. Then from the streets came the stench called the 'Flowers of Edinburgh' pouring in at the windows. Conversation stopped indoors while counter measures were taken. Men tried to fumigate the rooms by scattering bits of lit paper across the floors and tables.

..... a caddie bearing a paper lantern would go ahead to cry "**Hud yur hand**" in answer to any '**Gardylloo**' from above." Daniel Defoe in the third volume of his "Tour Thro' the whole island of Great Britain" Divided into Circuits of Journies", published in 1726, described the conditions he found in early 18th century Edinburgh. He noted the 'Stench and Nastiness' of the streets, 'as if the people were not as willing to live sweet and clean as other Nations'. People live in a 'rocky and mountainous situation, throng'd buildings, from seven to ten or twelve story high a scarcity of water, and that little they have difficult to be had, and to the uppermost lodgings, far to fetch'. He observed that I believe... **that in no city in the world so many people live in so little room as at Edinburgh.** 'How long can it be suffered wrote John Wesley in his Journal in 1762, 'that all manner of filth should be flung into the street How long shall the capital city of Scotland and the chief street of it stink worse than a common sewer.

*(Extracted from a paper written by G. P. Tetlaw, Senior Trade Effluent Officer, Dept. of Drainage and presented to the Institute of Water Pollution Control 14 December 1988)*