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## THE EDINBURGH SKATING CLUB

1778-1966

by MARGARET ELLIOT

"The metropolis of Scotland has produced more instances of elegant skaters than perhaps any other country whatever; and the institution of a skating club . . . has contributed not a little to the improvement of this elegant amusement." So wrote a member of the Edinburgh Skating Club in the article on Skating in the third edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.<sup>1</sup> And in 1865 the Club's own History fills out the picture: "Their favourite place of rendezvous has always been the picturesque Loch at Duddingston. There can be few more animating sights than a meeting of the Skating-club there on a clear bright winter's day during a season of hard frost—enhanced as it is by the singular beauty of the locality, with the overhanging hill, the ancient church on the margin, and the fringing woods of the Marquis of Abercorn and Sir William Dick Cunyngham. The variety of occupation, too, adds to the excitement; the curlers, the shinty players, boys of all ages and in all states of delight—ladies walking or sliding or skating, admiring and being admired—and the occasional military band of music; while in some snug corner, with clear, black, smooth ice, away from the hurry of more violent performers, the members of the Skating-club enjoy their intricate evolutions, sometimes continuing far on in the short day, till the red glow of the frosty sunset is succeeded by the light of the rising moon."<sup>2</sup> Then there was the annual dinner, an occasion of "great glee and harmony," with the toasts traditionally including one to "John Frost" as patron saint of the Club. This pattern lasted for about a hundred and fifty years, until the outbreak of the Second World War finally brought the Club's activities to an end; it was formally wound up in 1966, and its minute books and other records and property were deposited in the National Library of Scotland and the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland (see Appendix V).

The Edinburgh Skating Club belonged to that proliferation of societies whose records make the social and intellectual life of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Edinburgh so vivid for a later generation. Some of its early members also belonged to the Poker Club, the Society of Antiquaries, the Musical Society, the Speculative Society and the New Club;<sup>3</sup> like these, it ensured congenial society for gentlemen pursuing a common interest. The exact date of the foundation of the Skating Club is obscure, and is made more so by the claims of its nineteenth century members for a distinguished antiquity. When its records start, with the minutes of a meeting held on 30 January, 1784, it is clear that the Club had been in existence for some years. It already had a motto, a badge, some funds, and a list of members drawn up in 1778 (see Appendix I). In 1797 the writer of the article in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* dated the institution of the Club "some forty years ago"; he was likely to be right, as there were still several members alive in 1797 who had been old enough to join the Club in the seventeen fifties. By 1846, however, the Club was claiming to have been founded in 1744; this date is given in a little book on skating by James Whitelaw to which the Club's Secretary contributed information and for which he subscribed.<sup>4</sup> And in the minutes of the Club for 11 January, 1841 the genesis of a yet

more ambitious tradition is revealed. "The Secretary stated for the information of the new members present that he had heard the late Mr Gilbert Innes, a distinguished member of the Club, say that he had seen a Minute Book of the Club in his early life which bore dates of the meetings of the Club early in the century previous to the last one, thereby establishing that the Club has had an existence for at least two hundred years. Mr Innes mentioned the names of various individuals in the hands of one or other of whom he thought it probable the lost Minute Book in question might be found, but on enquiry . . . no trace of it could be made out." Nevertheless in applying for Prince Albert's patronage in 1841 the Council claimed that the Club had "been in existence, as there is every reason to believe, for upwards of two hundred years." And the tradition had increased its momentum by 1865, when the history already quoted claimed "It is known, for example, that a minute of the Club in 1642, bore it was determined [sic] that it was unsuitable to meet on the ice that year, on account of the melancholy and disturbed state of the country." Finally 1642 was hallowed as the foundation date and emblazoned on the Club badge.

But so early a date is highly improbable, both because the age of Clubs in Edinburgh had not then dawned, and because skating as a recreation was apparently not known in Britain until 1662, when the 'Great Frost' brought out on the frozen Thames the first skaters seen in London, as recorded by Pepys and Evelyn.<sup>5</sup> Possibly they were the returned exiles of the Restoration, showing their Dutch-acquired skill. Even in 1711 Swift wrote to Stella of "skates, if you know what those are?"<sup>6</sup> There is no reason why the Scots should not have learned to skate before the English, having trade and academic connections with the Dutch, but there is no evidence that any returned medical or law student actually brought skates home with him. Possibly they saw no scope in Scotland for the fast, long-distance sport they had known in Holland. Alexander Carlyle recorded that in the hard frost of December, 1739 to March, 1740 "as there were no canals or rivers of extent enough in this part of the country [near Wallyford, East Lothian] to encourage the fine exercise of skating, we contented ourselves with the winter diversion of curling."<sup>7</sup> He implies that skating was in fact practised in Scotland at this time; and such a long frost must have brought young men from Edinburgh out to skate on Duddingston Loch. There would follow naturally the formation of a club for mutual improvement in the art. We must conclude, however, that the exact date of the Club's foundation remains as uncertain as it was in 1831, when although oral tradition was still supported by living links with the mid-eighteenth century, no more precise formula could be found in urging the members to continue their support than that the Club "has now been in existence for so many generations."

The motto the Club had chosen was "Ociore Euro," translated as "Swifter than the East Wind."<sup>8</sup> That it was Care whose speed and keenness Horace was characterising probably gave the members of the Club additional relish as they left their normal duties behind and struck attitudes on Duddingston Loch. There may be evidence for its having been chosen before 1774 in the publication in that year of "Scating: A Poetical Essay" on whose title page there appears the motto and "Inscribed to the Club."<sup>9</sup> This is taken to refer to the Edinburgh Club, since there was no other skating club in Britain until one was founded in London in 1830, followed by others in Glasgow and Liverpool. There is no doubt that the Edinburgh Skating Club could maintain its claim to be the oldest in Britain.

The surviving records of the Club start in a manuscript book of unlined foolscap paper, bound in shabby, marbled paper-covered boards with a leather back. Four shillings were spent on repairing the book in 1855; the last entry in it was for 1 December, 1888. The first meeting recorded was on 30 January, 1784, when "It was unanimously resolved to appoint Mr John Rae Assistant Secretary to Mr Will. Anderson on account of Mr Anderson's bad state of health." John Rae, the surgeon-dentist described by Kay<sup>10</sup> as possessing a "spirit of joviality and good-humour," had been admitted to the Club, of which his father James, the surgeon, was already a member, in 1780. On taking over the duties of Secretary he procured the new Minute Book and copied in at the back a "List of part of the Members of the Skating Society made up from memory by a quorum of the Society in January 1778 when Mr Wm. Anderson was at Bath." (see Appendix I). He followed this with the names of new members and the dates of their admission, and the list was kept regularly by his successors in office. Many of the thirty-nine members on the 1778 list were no longer active either as skaters or as diners, but the hard winters of the period brought in fifty new members by 1784, and another seventy had joined by 1816. Between then and 1850 the new members numbered thirty-four. The sixties and seventies of the nineteenth century brought new recruits in fair numbers, making the total two hundred by 1873; after that the admissions fluctuate, and with the last member to be admitted, in 1939, the full score is two hundred and ninety-nine. Over the years the number of members active at any one time, except in the very early days, was probably never more than twenty and often nearer ten.

The list of names supports the claim of the Secretary when he told Prince Albert that it "had enrolled among its members the names of many of the first Noblemen, Judges and Gentlemen of the land." But it is clear that the Club was not socially exclusive; its members belonged to the 'local aristocracy,' it is true, but in the small community of Edinburgh the real criterion was personal acceptability. The 1778 members comprised eight landed gentlemen, three army officers, nine Writers to the Signet and other 'Writers' or lawyers, and nine advocates, with four merchants or bankers, two civil servants, one surgeon, one bookseller, one architect, and one slater. Nearly all the members of the professions and trades were sons or relations of landed families, and many of the members were related to each other. Among the next fifty new members were thirteen landed gentlemen, twelve army officers, five advocates, ten lawyers (W.S. or writers), two merchants, two civil servants, three members of the medical profession, one minister of religion and two Members of Parliament, with in addition five young peers or sons of peers. The seventy new members who joined between 1784 and 1816 showed an even greater preponderance of lawyers, with fifteen advocates and fourteen Writers to the Signet to fifteen landed gentlemen, one naval and three army officers, seven merchants, three civil servants, two doctors, two ministers and three sons of peers (with four unscrubbed). From 1818 to the end of the nineteenth century it became a club mainly of Writers to the Signet: thirty of them joined in those years, with thirteen advocates and seven doctors. Only five members belonged to the landed gentry or peerage, and there were three army officers; but with thirteen merchants, three civil engineers, two chartered accountants, one printer and two artists, one professor and one schoolmaster, we have a very fair sample of Edinburgh social life. The twentieth century recruits with their wives and sisters, now admitted, were similarly representative of the law-dominated society of the city.

The 1778 list contains several well-known names. Among the senior members, though apparently no longer active, were three Clerk brothers: Sir James, the third baronet; George, then known as Commissioner Clerk-Maxwell, later the fourth baronet; and John Clerk of Eldin, the naval tactician. The ponds at Penicuik House must have provided convenient skating practice, and the next two generations of Clerks were also represented in the Club. The other family which inevitably played a leading part in Skating Club affairs, since their estate bordered on Duddingston Loch, was the Dicks of Prestonfield; Sir Alexander, though omitted from the 1778 list, was elected "Praeses" at the dinner in 1784 at the age of 81 and may be assumed to have been a member previously. His three sons were all admitted to the Club at early ages; Sir William was remembered as a fine skater by Lord Cockburn,<sup>11</sup> and in 1820 Sir Robert was thanked for his "polite attention in taking charge of the various articles belonging to the Club at Duddingston and accommodating them on all occasions when necessary with his carts." His son William, later Sir William Dick Cunyngham, kept on the tradition of the family's connection with the Club until near the end of his life. Another well-known Edinburgh family represented in the first list were the Balfours of Pilrig; John, the bookseller and publisher, was probably not skating by the 1770's, but four generations of Balfours followed him in the Club. The Tytlers of Woodhouselee, the Wauchopes of Niddry, and the Pringles of Torwoodlee all supported the Club for two generations. Skating and dining with this landed and legal society was "Mr Broughton of the Excise," one of the government officials who congregated near Fountainbridge,<sup>12</sup> followed by his two sons. James Brown, the builder of George Square and Buccleuch Street, is on the list, as well as "Mr Ramsay, Slater." Perhaps this was the man who was concerned in the building of the new Assembly Hall in Bell's Wynd in 1765;<sup>13</sup> in any case he had a sufficiently solid reputation to be entrusted with the Club's funds as Treasurer in the 1770's. Another representative of Edinburgh's commercial life was John Forrest, son of the Lord Provost of that name. The most distinguished business men were Patrick Miller, later of Dalswinton, and Gilbert Innes of Stow, both bankers.

Between 1778 and 1790 numbers of young men with distinguished names or distinguished futures joined the Club, including William Adam, already a Member of Parliament, later the Lord Chief Commissioner of Jury Court for Scotland; Sir James Hall of Dunglass, scientist and historian and President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh; and some young noblemen including Lord Daer, son of the Earl of Selkirk. Well known to posterity as a skater because of his portrait by Raeburn is the Rev. Robert Walker, minister first of Cramond and then of the Canongate. Another famous skating picture, by Gilbert Stuart, now in the American National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., represents William Grant of Congalton skating in St. James's Park, London in 1782;<sup>14</sup> he also was a member of the Club.

It was in December 1784, a month of prolonged frost, that the Skating Club had its greatest influx of new members; in the following five years only one dinner was held and it was feared that the organisation might again lapse. But one of the keen young members was Henry Jardine, already showing the character given him by Kay<sup>15</sup> of a "public-spirited citizen, there being few institutions for the promotion of any useful or national object of which he was not a member." He was one of a group of members who in 1786 and again in 1789 "were of opinion that new laws and regulations were absolutely necessary for the future prosperity of the Club." The following Rules and Regulations were accordingly

adopted in February 1789 as "in all time coming the Standing Rules and Regulations of the Skating Club subject always to any addition or alteration they may afterwards judge proper:"

1. That a Council shall be elected from the Members for managing the affairs of the Club with full power of increasing or diminishing their own number as they may see proper.
2. That there shall be a General Meeting of the Club upon the second Monday of January annually.
3. That a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer shall be annually elected at the said General Meeting and who shall ex officio be Members of the Council.
4. That two Cadies shall also be appointed to be changed however at any time by the Council if they shall see fit.
5. That at the said General Meeting, the Treasurer shall always present his Accounts to be inspected and settled by the whole Club.
6. That every Gentleman desirous of becoming a Member shall give in to the Secretary a Petition or letter signed by himself and by two Members of the Club recommending him.
7. That the Petitioner shall be regularly balloted for and one Black Ball shall reject.
8. That none but the Council shall be entitled to ballot of whom five shall be a quorum.
9. That the ballot shall on no pretence whatever be upon the ice, if so it shall be void.
10. That every Gentleman upon his admission shall pay to the Treasurer £2. 2/- and shall receive his medal gratis from the Society."

These regulations, which were little changed over the years, formed a constitution which had the desired effect of keeping the Club in existence despite periods of inactivity due to lack of ice. Henry Jardine was appointed Secretary, and the Club left their affairs in his hands for the next twenty years, during which time the momentum imparted by the reorganisation gradually slackened as some of the Councillors appointed in 1789 died and were not replaced. Several winters went by without a dinner meeting and presumably without ice. But by 1809 a younger generation of skaters was coming to the fore, among whom were Henry Cockburn and Walter Scott's brother, Thomas. Henry Jardine resigned; another of the new members, Charles Robison, took over as Secretary under a new Council; and he in his turn set about reform. The Club was in financial difficulties, since their only source of income was the entrance fee charged to new members, and in years when the ice needed frequent sweeping their expenditure might be high. Their first step was to agree that new members should be charged extra for their badges, and next they resolved that "in future every member should pay ten shillings and sixpence annually, and that every member who should be in Edinburgh upon the day of the Annual Meeting and did not attend should pay half a guinea in addition to his annual contribution." This last provision seems never to have been enforced, and even the annual "quota" as it was called was not

always paid, perhaps because Charles Robison's health was not good. He was assisted in the office of Treasurer from 1814 by James Simpson, who became the Club's moving spirit and who was made, on Robison's departure for India, both Secretary and Treasurer, although the Club had on record a motion of his own "separating the offices of Secretary and Treasurer, the respective office bearers to act in either capacity for each other when either of them may be prevented from giving that prompt attention to the concerns of the Club, which the precarious nature of their amusement renders absolutely necessary."

A letter circulated by the Treasurer in February 1814 made a moving appeal to members: "the annual quotas of half a guinea have been very irregularly paid; the funds have, in consequence, again become exhausted; and some further debt has been contracted; which has been considerably added to this winter in order to put the affairs of the Club on a more regular and vigorous footing. Some money has been advanced by Mr Charles Robison the Secretary. If the quotas were steadily paid, there can be no doubt that all inconvenience for the future would be removed. The late long frost having been of little avail from want of funds to clear the ice, a meeting of the Council was held on the 26th ulto. to enquire into the state of the Club." The plans made at that meeting bore fruit; by December 1814 the Treasurer was congratulated for "realising a considerable sum and clearing all the long-standing debts of the Club."

One of the arguments for establishing an annual subscription had been that reliance on an entry fee "would necessarily oblige them to admit persons as members who were not so perfectly qualified as could be wished." This probably referred to applicants' skating ability, as tested by "the usual trials" from 1795 onwards, and not to their social acceptability which the ballot box was designed to sift. In 1846 James Whitelaw wrote that all the candidates, "without distinction of rank, were required to go through regular trials of their qualifications on the ice before they could be admitted as members; no one being allowed to enter who is not a good skater, and able to take a part in all the movements and evolutions of the Club." By 1865 the tradition had been established of requiring the candidate, after he had skated a complete circle on each foot, to jump over "first one hat, then two, and then three, each on the top of the other." This last condition, however, may have been not so much a real test of skating prowess as a politer method of discouraging the unwanted applicant than recourse to the black ball. Certainly this was the view taken of the test at the end of the century, when three top hats were laid out in line for the candidate to jump over after he had performed a satisfactory set of figures. The provision that the ballot should never be on the ice was also a useful delaying tactic in case the exhilaration of the sport should cloud the Council's judgment; careful selection of members was important for the Club's harmony both on their social occasions and in their skating.

There is no record of what form the Club's skating took in the early years apart from the portraits of Mr Walker and Mr Grant, who are depicted in the "travelling" position with their arms folded in front, as recommended in 1797 for performing the outside edge. It is probable that the Club was also practising the style of skating described in 1772 by Lieut. Robert Jones, who wrote the earliest known text book on the subject in English,<sup>16</sup> with the preamble "That noble exercise now reduced to an art and may be taught and learned by a regular method with both ease and safety. The whole illustrated with copper

plates representing the attitudes and graces." At that period skating was relatively undeveloped and the only figures known were the outside and inside edges and the 3-turn. The skater aimed at grace and elegance, and varied his performance by taking up a series of poses or attitudes, such as the Flying Mercury, which "is nothing more than the spiral line, except that the arms are not employed in the same manner," and which remained a classic of the skater's repertoire certainly as late as 1846. The engraving of a gentleman skating in this attitude shows (see pl. 1), if we discount the 1772 costume, that it is derived directly from the well-known Mercury of Giovanni da Bologna, which "has become an accepted symbol of victorious speed."<sup>17</sup> Another attitude is the "fencing position;" and there is also a description of "The Salutation" in which two skaters approach each other, touch hands, bow and doff their hats, and with a turn take up their original positions. Further possibilities are outlined in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article: "There are few exercises but will afford hints of elegant and graceful attitudes. For example, nothing can be more beautiful than the attitude of drawing the bow and arrow whilst the skater is making a large circle on the outside; the manual exercise and military salutes have likewise a pretty effect when used by an expert skater." Another figure early performed by the Club was the spreadeagle, which required the ability to turn one's feet out at an angle of one hundred and eighty degrees. "It was frequently done with bent knees and no variation made from the straight line . . . but even in its old dress, when done with boldness and dash, it was a very effective figure."<sup>18</sup>

The skating style of the Club was exposed to a scurrilous attack in *Blackwood's Magazine*, in the "Noctes Ambrosianae" of February, 1826:<sup>19</sup>

*Tickler.* Try the anchovies. I forget if you skate, Hogg?

*Shepherd.* Yes, like a flounder. I was at Duddingston Loch on the great day. Two bands of music kept chearing the shade of King Arthur on his seat, and gave a martial character to the festivities. . . . It was quite Polar. Then a' the ten thousand people (there couldna' be fewer) were in perpetual motion. . . .

*Tickler.* Was the skating tolerable?

*Shepherd.* No; intolerable. Puir conceited whalps! Gin you except Mr Tory o' Prince's Street, wha's a handsome fallow, and as good a skaiter as ever spread-eagled; the lave a' deserved drowning. There was Henry Cowburn, like a dominie, or a sticket minister, puttin' himself into a number o' attitudes, every ane clumsier and mair ackward than the ither, and nae doubt flatterin himself that he was the object o' universal admiration. The hail loch was laughing at him. The cretur can skate nane. Jemmy Simpson is a feckless bodie on the ice, and canna keep his knees straught. I couldna look at him without wondering what induced the cretur to write about Waterloo. The Skatin' Club is indeed on its last legs.

The shepherd then describes how he himself skated, while impersonating an officer from the Castle, and concludes:

. . . and I finished with doing the 47th Proposition of Euclid, with mathematical precision. Jemmy Simpson, half an hour before, had fallen over the *Pons assinorum*.

*Tickler.* Mr Editor, I fear that if in your articles you follow the spirit that guides your conversation, you will be as personal as Mr North himself. No intrusion on private character.

*Shepherd.* Private character! If Mr James Simpson, or Mr Henry Cockburn, or myself, exhibit our figures or attitudes before ten thousand people, and cause all the horses in the adjacent pastures to half-die of laughter, may I not mention the disaster? Were not their feats celebrated in all the newspapers? There it was said that they were the most elegant and graceful of volant men. What if I say in the next Number of the Magazine, that they had the appearance of the most pitiful prigs that ever exposed themselves as public performers? Besides they are both upwards of fifty, and seem much older. At that time of life they should give their skates to their boys.

Hogg overestimates the ages of both Cockburn and Simpson, and it is feared that the fact that both gentlemen were Whigs may have had something to do with the comments in the *Tory Maga*.

Some amends were made for this attack in August of the same year<sup>20</sup> when a review appeared in the *Magazine* of a new book on gymnastic exercises.<sup>21</sup> There is a quotation from the passage on skating: "This exercise surpasses all those of which we have hitherto spoken, as well with respect to the beauty of the movements as to the infinite variety and rapidity of graceful attitudes which the skilful skater knows how to assume and change instantaneously, without appearing to take the smallest trouble. Yes, of all pastimes skating is indeed that which makes us feel allied to the gods and believe in mythology. There goes an Edinburgh advocate in the character of Cupid—an accountant that would shame Apollo—and a W.S. more gracefully fleet than Mercury gathering the shore!" Nevertheless in the Winter Rhapsody of 1831<sup>22</sup> the attack is resumed. "The florid style of skating shews that that fine art is degenerating; and, except in a Torry, we look in vain for the grand simplicity of the masters that spreadeagled in the age of its perfection."

A new discipline, however, was at hand. In 1828, Thomas Clay's *Instructions on the Art of Skating*<sup>23</sup> gave the first description of figure skating in combination. After explaining how to cut figures of eight, he goes on, "Should there be two gentlemen that can both make it, it has a beautiful effect for both to make it in the same circles and at the same time, the one going the circle in one part, while the other is going the circle in the other, and when they meet between the two circles, to appear to touch hands. . . . When this figure is done with two, they must meet each other. But three at once in the circle is much more curious and pleasing; for this purpose, all three must follow each other the same way round. . . . When three gentlemen meet upon the ice that can make this figure easily, it will have a very good effect and add much to the beauty of it by diverting from this figure to the figure of three, and again diverting to the spreadeagle."

Thus began seventy or eighty years during which combination figure skating dominated the sport. A club was formed in London in 1830 after correspondence with the Edinburgh Skating Club, and it was there that most of the subsequent developments were made, the Edinburgh skaters losing their pre-eminent position although they retained a respectable reputation considering the few days' skating they could expect, on average, each year.

In 1831, *The Skater's Manual*<sup>24</sup> described "the sets of quadrilles as skated on the Serpentine," by which was meant figures done by four skaters together, rather than dances. These were no doubt studied and performed in Edinburgh, but it is disappointing that for the years 1826 to 1831, although the minutes include more detailed records than usual of the numbers of days when skating was possible, no further account of the skating is given than that "the Club was out" or "the Club assembled." By the 1840's, however, as is shown by a song written for one of the dinners (see Appendix III), combined figures were the Club's established practice. They used oranges at this time to mark centres on the ice, like the skaters in du Maurier's cartoons in 1875;<sup>25</sup> later they provided themselves with wooden balls of about the same size as an orange, painted in different colours, some of which are preserved (see pl. 8, and Appendix V).

A Skating Club was also formed in Glasgow, and its president, George Anderson, writing in 1852 under the pen-name "Cyclos," gave a good explanation of "Figure Skating in Concert."<sup>26</sup> "The object is to combine various movements in any arrangement agreed on, so timed that all the skaters, working from one common centre, interweave the figures and circles without collision, and when this is skilfully done the effect is beautiful. The figures most used are figure 3s, and back and forward outside circles. They require to be executed with great precision, and the skater must have such perfect control of his movements, as to be able to make any change at any instant, or on any spot required." In the years following many more figures were invented, and rockers, counters and brackets were eventually incorporated in the combined skating figures; a whole literature grew up on the subject, and the terminology became as exact as the skating. Diagrams were used to illustrate the figures, and cards of these were printed for easy reference on the ice.

The Edinburgh Skating Club seems to have stood, at first, a little apart from the main stream of development, to judge by their own account of their style in the History, which stresses forward outside edge skating. "The principal object of the Club is to enable the members to skate together in concert. This is done in figures. . . . These are numerous and varied. Some of them are very graceful. . . . The effect is produced by slow and graceful motion rather than by rapid and wonderful execution. . . . The Edinburgh Skating Club having mostly confined themselves to forward outside rather than to backward skating, have had the character of skating the circle in a style peculiar to themselves, and only to be acquired by steady perseverance and constant practice whenever they meet together on the ice. . . . One of the great advantages in acquiring this mode of skating is that it enables several to skate in concert, and it is this skating in company which the Skating Club have always in view and hold in chief estimation. . . . Each movement of the skaters opposite each other should exactly correspond, each beginning and completing his respective circle, or portion of a circle, at precisely the same moment."

The figures which the Club used to perform at this period are listed as follows:

1. The Half and Whole, or a Quarter, a Half, Threequarters, a Whole.
2. Each the Whole.
3. Each his own circle.
4. The figure 8.
5. Sixes.

6. The Worm or Screw.
7. Crossing.
8. The Wild Goose.

The illustration, pl. 2, of members in top hats doing the "Half and Whole," forms the frontispiece of the 1865 History. This figure is also illustrated in the diagram —pl. 3. The basic formula was for four skaters to start simultaneously from points A, B, C and D on a circle round a mark. Each made a half circle on the outside edge round the mark, then a whole circle round the outer mark opposite his starting point, and then a half circle back to his place, thus completing two circles. The larger circles were added for variety.

There were also five Back Skating figures listed and illustrated in the History; they incorporated 3-turns as well as the backward outside edge. Figures I and II are illustrated see pl. 4. The list is as follows:

- "Fig. I. Cross over by 'Fig. 3' on the right foot, and back again on the left.
- "Fig. II. The Single back. 'Fig. 3' right foot, outside edge back, and 'Fig. 3' to place.
- "Fig. III. The Double Back. 'Fig. 3,' outside edge back; 'Fig. 3,' outside back again to place.
- "Fig. IV. 'Fig. 3,' outside edge back, and change to outside edge forward to place.
- "Fig. V. The Back Entire. 'Fig. 3,' outside edge, back to the starting place in the '3,' then outside edge back for a complete circle on the other foot."

In these figures the skaters started from and returned to the centre in consecutive pairs; the diagrams show the track of a single skater.

These Back Skating figures formed the nucleus of the whole later development of combined figure skating, but they were disregarded in Edinburgh at first, which led to stern words from "Cyclos" in 1868<sup>27</sup>: "An old encyclopaedia, probably written in Edinburgh, gave that city the palm for skating accomplishment, and the reputation has clung to her ever since. I do not believe it ever was merited, or that at any time she could touch London. A few years ago, when I saw the performances of her club, I found them fifty years behind the day, doing nothing whatever beyond outside forward, and even that badly, and acting on the very conservative, but very mistaken, idea that nothing else was worth learning. Till they abandon that idea, there is no hope for them." These strictures may have been deserved from the skating point of view in 1868, but they ignore the fact that the Edinburgh skaters were out for company as well as good skating, and that the original article was written in 1797. The Club was small and the frost capricious, and the standard could vary greatly from generation to generation.

The type of skate used by the Edinburgh Club may have had something to do with their poor performance by George Anderson's standards. In the early days they had been somewhat in advance of their time in using a very flat blade. Lieut. Jones in 1772 recommended skates of such a small radius that no more than two inches of the blade should be in contact with the ice. This was a handicap, as the author of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article pointed out: "The English" he said, "are deficient in gracefulness; which is partly owing to the construction of the skates. They are too much curved in the surface which embraces the ice, consequently they involuntarily bring the users of them round on the

outside upon a quick and small circle; whereas the skater by using skates of a different construction, less curved, has the command of his stroke, and can enlarge or diminish the circle according to his own wish and desire." There was considerable experimentation until the ideal curvature of blade for each type of skating was discovered; even in the illustrations in his own book, Robert Jones shows quite a flat blade, though Gilbert Stuart supports him by showing Mr Grant using curved ones. Mr Walker in Raeburn's portrait is using the flat blade to which the Edinburgh Skating Club remained faithful, although a slight curve would have assisted their turns; in 1865 they were using skates "of the usual kind, fixed on wood, having the steel perfectly straight and level and flush at the toe with the wood. . . . They have the advantage of being . . . suitable for skating in figures, where the skaters are brought into very close contact"—unlike, it is implied, skates with the steel projecting at the toe. They bought their skates from the Club's official skatemaker, a title of some value to the tradesman concerned. Lord Cockburn does not record the name of the cutler from whom he bought his first pair of skates in the Parliament Close in 1792 or 1793<sup>28</sup>; members of the Skating Club may have been among the "figures with black gowns and white wigs" he remembered "walking about among the cutlery." In 1811 James Bell, "Cutler in the Canongate," was appointed Skatemaker to the Club, and was succeeded in the post in 1814 by John McLeod, Cutler, whose shop was in College Street. In 1826, "it having been stated by several gentlemen that Mr McLeod the Skatemaker to the Club had not shewn in many instances proper attention to the members the Meeting were unanimously of opinion that another Skatemaker ought to be appointed in the place of Mr McLeod." He managed to hold on to the appointment, however, for at least the next three years and was eventually succeeded at some unknown date by Mr Simpson of South Bridge. In October 1846 "Mr Goldie read a letter from Mr Archd. Young, Cutler, 79 Princes Street, making application for the office of Skatemaker to the Club. . . . The Meeting upon the understanding that Mr Simpson was no longer to carry on business in Edinburgh authorised the appointment of Mr Young." An advertisement to this effect is in Whitelaw's booklet of 1846—see note 4. He was still holding the position in 1865, according to the Club's History, but there is no mention after that year of an official appointment.

In the following years the Club members applied themselves to combined figures, both forward and back, with enthusiasm, and kept up with the English lead. One of them, C. A. Stevenson, produced a booklet in 1881 in which he drew diagrams of a range of the current figures, and this immediately led to an improvement in skating standards. It was even made available to the Glasgow Skating Club on their request. In 1887 Robert Scott-Moncrieff introduced them to the "new style" of combined figures, and in 1889 the Club printed its own "Progressive Sets of Combined Figures," based on the standard text-book by the Monier-Williamses of the London club<sup>29</sup>; in this the figures are no longer illustrated but described in a standardised terminology. C. A. Stevenson, who made his own contributions on the scientific side to the literature of skating,<sup>30</sup> served with Monier-Williams as British judge of international competitions on occasion. He and Robert Scott-Moncrieff are shown together on the ice in the silhouette reproduced on pl. 5.

In 1893 the London club recognised at least six hundred "Skating Club Figures"; many of them were so complicated that a caller was required, and in 1900, when the National Skating Association (founded 1879) was revising and standardising the system of calls, the Edinburgh Skating Club was invited to send suggestions; by this time, however,

combination skating was already in decline. By making severe demands on accuracy and timing the system had produced very accomplished skaters and had encouraged the technical development of skating, at the cost of losing the sense of freedom and easy grace which had characterised the pioneers of figure skating. A reaction against what was now called "the English style" set in, and the revival of a more natural and artistic style of individual skating was championed on the Continent. In 1882 the first international individual championship was held in Vienna, and after the World Championship in London in 1898, solo or pair skating became the style of the future for the young of this country. Combination skating rapidly died out; in 1927 a set of "Easy Combination Figures" was circulated to the Edinburgh Skating Club in the hope of reawakening enthusiasm, but in spite of one or two successful meets after that date the interest in combined figure skating tended to be antiquarian rather than practical. It had been an eminently sociable style, well adapted for groups of friends who skated together often and who knew each other's form intimately, but it had reached the limits of its development and attracted no new adherents.

It was early established that the members of the Skating Club, like the Duddingston Curling Club and other eighteenth century clubs, should wear a distinguishing badge when assembled either to dine or to skate. This was originally a thin oval silver medal, worn round the neck on a red ribbon; it was engraved on one side with the Club's name and that of the owner, sometimes with the date of his admission also, and on the other with a pair of crossed skates and the Club motto, "Ociore Euro." The form of the medal varied over the years, and the different tastes of succeeding generations are well illustrated in the successive designs—see pls. 7 and 8 and Appendix IV.

In 1815 the oval shape was abandoned for a round medal, with a design by William Thomson (1771-1845), a miniature painter. It consisted of "an infant Mercury with winged cap and feet, in the same attitude in his flight as that of the outedge skating, displaying a scroll over his head with the old motto of the Club. . . . The figure does not represent actual skating but only allegorises its qualities of swift easy and graceful movements. The natural unconstrained grace of infancy was considered as a more appropriate emblem of these qualities than the common figure of Mercury." This infant figure, and still more obviously the adult figure which was substituted for it in 1841 on a medal re-designed by John Ballantyne (1815-1897), a portrait painter, both refer to the same statue which gave the "attitude" of the Flying Mercury its name, although the image is much debased.

A new medal was required in 1841 because the Prince Consort had agreed to become the Club's Patron, and a presentation medal for him was struck in gold. This strained the Club's finances, but the members submitted to an extra levy of two guineas each with a good grace when they considered the "great additional distinction" the Club had acquired. The new medals were die-stamped and even the silver one worn by the ordinary member was much heavier than the old engraved disc; they were in use for thirty years, a slightly altered version being introduced on the death of Prince Albert, when the Prince and Princess of Wales agreed to become the Club's Patron and Patroness.

In 1871 it was admitted that the medals were "much too large to wear upon the ice," and a small blue enamelled badge was substituted, retaining the old motto and the name of the Club and reverting to the emblem of crossed skates while dropping the figure of Mercury. Prince of Wales feathers were also incorporated in the design. A further break with tradition, resisted by some of the older members, was the specification of a blue instead

of red ribbon to hang the badge on, as it was considered more appropriate to the colour of the enamel. The Secretary, Charles Cook, made a collection of such old medals as he could discover and it was displayed together with copies of the Club's traditional songs at the National Skating Association's anniversary exhibition in London in 1902. It now forms part of the collection of Edinburgh Skating Club medals in the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland, a collection which contains an example of every metamorphosis the silver medal underwent, as recorded in the Minutes of the Club. The 1871 enamelled badge is not represented, nor is the button form which was used from 1910 to 1928, but there is an example of the last form of the badge, which was a replica of the 1871 enamelled one with the addition of a miniature crown.

Although the Club was devoted to skating it must be admitted that for some members and in some periods the skating was merely a prelude to their dining together; while conversely in mild winters the dinners, even when as few as three members attended, served to keep the Club in existence. In its early years the annual general meeting was automatically a dinner, announced as in the following notice, which appeared both in the *Edinburgh Advertiser* and the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*: "SKATING CLUB. The Members of the Skating Club, Dine at Fortune's Tavern on Monday the 9th of January next. Dinner on the table at five o'clock. Edinburgh, 26th December 1808." Fortune's, both before and after its removal from the Old Town to Princes Street, was their regular dining place for many years, after their first two recorded dinners, in 1784 and 1785, which were at Walker's Tavern in the Old Town. They also dined once at Archers' Hall; and the Council met once at the Royal Exchange Coffee House in what is now the City Chambers. On 22 December 1814 "The Council agreed in consequence of the wish of many members of the Club that the wine at their future dinner meetings shall be port and sherry only, and that a bill shall be called and paid at eight o'clock when those who sit longer will pay extra." To such a pass had the war with France brought the claret-drinking Scots. The last dinner at Fortune's was in 1818, after which Oman's in the New Town was patronised for a few years. Two of their most successful dinners were at Mrs Frazer's Hotel, Duddingston, after good skating days in 1826 and 1828, when "the meeting were highly gratified by the appearance of eight sheep heads and trotters, the favourite food of skaters and the standing dish of the Club from time immemorial," and Mr Torry, the Club's best skater, proved himself also to be their best punch-maker. In 1831 another dinner was planned there but had to be cancelled because of a sudden heavy fall of snow, they went instead to Cook's Tavern in North College Street. In the next few years the Douglas Hotel in St. Andrew Square, Cooper's Tavern in Fleshmarket Close, and Rampling's Rainbow Tavern in Waterloo Place provided their infrequent dinners; in 1842 and 1843 they returned to Archers' Hall. They went to Greliche's Hotel, Princes Street, in 1854; in 1857 to Paterson's Tavern in Fleshmarket Close; and in 1860 to the Ship Tavern, Register Street. During the sixties they often dined at the Prince of Wales Tavern or Hotel in Register Street. In the seventies they seem to have met for Club business without dining, but in the eighties and nineties their dinners, of numerous courses, were grand social occasions at the Windsor Hotel or the Central Hotel, both in Princes Street, and the decorated menu cards which survive preserve some blurred photographs of the Club on the ice.

There was a tradition of music at Club dinners as well as while they were skating. On 15 December 1821 "the Treasurer was authorised to order the music and words of the

Skater's Song to be engraved and copies thrown off at the expense and for the sole use of Members of the Club." It is not clear whether Mr Simpson attended to this matter, or whether it was a different song that they spoke of on 14 January, 1826, when "a strong wish having been expressed that the Skater's March and Glee should be published for the use of all the members, directions were given to a Committee to procure a lithographed impression of the music and words, after having undergone a proper revision by Mr Innes and other musical members of the Club, the expense to be paid out of the funds of the Club; and Mr Thomas Thomson was requested to be prepared to sing a part in the Glee" at the next dinner meeting. Nothing of this date survives in the Club's archive, but there are two copies of the music and words of the 1841 revision, which effectually superseded the original version. On 12 March, 1841, "Mr Simpson produced to the meeting a copy of the original song of the Club with an altered version of the words by himself and the music also newly arranged and set as a German Glee by Professor John Thomson<sup>21</sup> which had been very handsomely bound at the expense of the Club with the view of being presented to Prince Albert along with the Club medal." On 28 December they wrote to the Prince sending the medal and the music, and asked him "to honour, with a place in your music room, the accompanying copy of the unpublished new arrangement of the old air of the Club, which, as intended for your Royal Highness, derives a melancholy interest from having been the last work of the lamented Professor John Thomson, recently lost to the Music Chair of our University and to the Musical World. The air, performed by a Band, has often animated the cadenced movements of the Club upon the ice, and, sung, enlivened its convivial meetings." The words of two other songs sung in the 1840's survive (see Appendix III), written by Charles Kerr and full of Club references; and another musical phase in the '80's produced three more: "John Frost," by David Scott-Moncrieff, "A-Skating We Will Go," by John Kirkpatrick, after Fielding; and "The Lay of the Lost Minute Book," by W. Cleghorn Murray. At their dinner in 1885 seven members sang songs old and new, and resolved to have part-songs at the next one.

As well as organising the annual dinner it was the duty of the Club's Secretary and Treasurer to make all arrangements for the Club to skate on every possible opportunity. It was necessary to watch the ice at Duddingston and Lochend when a likely frost set in; to keep boys and other potentially damaging substances off it, and to sweep it if snow fell; to send word to members when all was ready; and to provide some facilities for them at the ice. The Club regularly employed an Officer (the term 'Cady' was dropped in 1810) and took on watchmen, and labourers to sweep the ice, as they were required. When James Simpson was Secretary he prepared directions for the Officer and watchmen, drew up a plan of the method for sweeping the lochs, and made an inventory of the Club's property—see Appendix II. His instructions remained the basis of the Club's method for many years. The Officer was to report every evening on the state of the ice to the Secretary or Treasurer, and if so instructed would inform the members that the Club was to meet, either by posting placards early in the morning at a number of stated places, or, at some periods, by taking notes round to members' houses. On skating days he would repair to the selected loch to organise the sweeping of snow if necessary and to take charge of the Club tent, which at Duddingston was pitched on the north-east shore of the loch, on the flat ground looking over the small bay to the church. He had further to be responsible for a box for the contributions which were expected from other skaters who used the ice the Club's men had swept.



He was provided with "a blue livery coat with red edging, a badge sewed on the breast" to keep him warm and denote his official position; it was suspected in later years that this garment, or its successor, had the "fatal effect on the man inside of making him take to the bottle," a risk to which the watchmen also were not surprisingly subject.

The cost of employing the Officer and hiring watchmen or sweepers by the day remained remarkably stable during the whole of the nineteenth century; and indeed until the outbreak of the First World War it was still possible to have a day's work done for five shillings. There is no record of how much the Club's first two Cadies, McDiarmid and Fisher, were paid, nor John Macpherson who was appointed when Charles Robison became Secretary in 1809. Macpherson was succeeded in 1812 by William Melville, who was issued with James Simpson's detailed Directions and Inventory; and at the meeting of 26 January, 1814 "The Officer of the Club having no stated allowance, the Council resolved that he shall in future be allowed five shillings each day he attends at the ice by order of the Secretary or Treasurer. Any extra allowance for service of an extraordinary kind to be in the discretion of these office bearers. He is to provide his own Assistants at the ice, any allowance to which last to be in the discretion of the Secretary and Treasurer, when they shall employ them. The Officer shall be at liberty to sell refreshments at the ice, but must be at the command of the office bearers." On 16 February, 1814 "the meeting agreed that whenever the Officer of the Club attends at the ice, every member shall not only produce to him his medal on putting on his skates, but shall wear the same when on the ice whatever may be the number of the Club present, under a forfeit of two shillings and sixpence to be levied by the Officer as a perquisite to himself." This provision must have been of considerable value to the Officer after the introduction of the heavy medal in 1841. At the beginning of the next season "the Treasurer reported that the Officer, William Melville, had merited his approbation for his zeal and activity." As for his payment, "the Treasurer was empowered to offer to the Officer an option of a fixed salary to cover all his demands not exceeding £5 or still to continue to receive 5/- every time the Club skates. The Treasurer was also empowered to employ an assistant to the Officer and to pay him not exceeding 2/6 or 3/- per day when employed." A year later, "Mr Simpson having notified that William Melville the late Officer had resigned his situation, recommended Thomas Wilson, Mason, to succeed him. Certificates of good character were read for Wilson and he was appointed. Mr Simpson further stated that Wilson had made choice of the stated salary of five pounds instead of a daily allowance, and undertook to find and pay an assistant from the profits of the refreshments which he has liberty to sell in the tent. The meeting approved of this arrangement and were of opinion that no allowance should in future be given the Officer for an assistant." These refreshments, however, gave trouble later on. On 2 February, 1831, Wilson still being Officer, "It was stated by several members that they had experienced much inconvenience this season in consequence of the Club's Officer having admitted too many persons not belonging to the Club into the Tent, whereby Members were frequently prevented from having advantage from such a privilege. And it was the opinion of the meeting that the practice of so admitting strangers ought to be discontinued, and that the Officer should be remunerated by the Club for any loss which he might sustain by being deprived of the power hitherto enjoyed by him of selling spirits etc. to the public. The Officer being called in was informed of their resolution to which he readily assented on the understanding that an additional allowance should be made to him from the Club the amount of which should be

determined at a future meeting of the Club." The amount, if any, is not recorded, and activities appear in any case to have lapsed with a series of mild winters. On 11 January, 1841, when frost was enlivening the Club again, "Frequent complaints having been made that Thomas Wilson the Officer of the Club is not now so efficient nor so attentive to his duties as is requisite, it was moved and carried that his services should be dispensed with at the end of the present season, but in consideration of his having been in the employment of the Club for the long period of twenty-five years, it was the unanimous opinion of the members of the Club present that he should enjoy a pension of one guinea a year during his life or good behaviour. Until a new Officer qualified for the duties of the situation could be found it was also moved and carried that John Reynolds who has for some years acted as assistant to Wilson should be employed but not at the same high salary which Wilson had hitherto received."

Reynolds and his successors continued to receive five shillings a day for their services to the Club throughout the century. The problem of the Officer's admitting strangers to the Tent for refreshments was perennial, and was no doubt touched on when, at the annual dinner, he was called in and, "in accordance with the ancient custom of the Club, was charged with his duties," the charge being "delivered with humorous gravity and received by the Officer with becoming seriousness. The ceremony was ended by the Officer drinking to the health of the Club in a bumper of Port."

The arrangements James Simpson made in 1814 included a system for safe-guarding life; the Club in general, and Simpson in particular, always took seriously the risks of skating on deep water, and they accepted a responsibility at this time for providing both men and equipment for lifesaving. On 20 February, 1813 the Club was visited by Captain Manby, R.N., a well-known lifesaving expert,<sup>32</sup> who "submitted to the consideration of the Club various ingenious sets of apparatus for preserving the lives of persons who accidentally got under the ice. The Treasurer suggested the propriety of the Club giving a sum annually not exceeding 50/- along with the Duddingston Curling Club for procuring apparatus and keeping a person to watch the Loch and save the lives of boys and others who may accidentally fall through the ice. This was approved of." It is not recorded whether the Curling Club agreed to the plan but the indications are that the Skating Club were the sole owners of the equipment that was procured. "The ladder, with the noose ropes and grappling rod of Capt. Manby was agreed upon, the saver being further secured by a rope round his own waist held far behind him, and by one of the most approved patent life preservers such as the copper one made fast round him. It was likewise remarked that a buoyancy might be given to the traineau by some such means and even that air might be confined in so small a volume in membrane or prepared leather as to be worn round the waist; a complete life preserver, by every skater like a sash." Nothing, not surprisingly, came of this last suggestion.

The plan adopted by the Club for ensuring the safety of skaters at Duddingston and Lochend was ingeniously simple. It was publicised in the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* in December, 1815, in an article explaining "the means provided by the skaters of Edinburgh to render their elegant amusement perfectly safe" and appealing for some financial support from members of the public, especially parents of boys. "When the ice bears, a rope is laid loose round the lake, fixed to a post on the opposite bank from where the watchman stands, the two ends coming round to his hands. By drawing either end he can pass the rope over the whole ice. On trial it was found to move very rapidly, warning being given by a

rattle to the skaters to run before it." The theory was that the moving rope "must be caught by a person in danger, if above the ice." Meanwhile the watchman would produce the ladder and the other equipment for retrieving and resuscitating any one who fell through or was caught under the ice.

It was distressing that in spite of the precautions taken a boy and a young naval officer who tried to save him were drowned at Lochend on 18 December, 1815. The columns of the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* contain various accounts of the accident, views thereon, and recriminations against the Skating Club for being either neglectful or incompetent; but the Secretary was given space for a spirited and sarcastic defence.

"Once for all it may be stated that the means for saving can only act, and therefore are only present, when the ice at least partially bears, and may by a person of common sense be ventured upon (even after which there is risk enough); and that all that can and ought to be done, when it is freezing, is to hang up a board, and station a man, to prevent, if he can, persons from going on at all. It is therefore trusted, that in future, persons will not make their own experiments, but first go to the watchman, whom they will always find on his post, and implicitly follow his directions, if they mean to expect his aid. One thing is certain, viz. that no prudent person will dream of going to either lake, till after three days and nights of hard frost. . . . The Skating Club, while they deeply lament the melancholy accident, owe it to themselves as superintending the establishment for preventing accidents, to say, that every reasonable, nay every possible application of the new apparatus has been made on every occasion since it was first adopted; and that the attendance and activity of their watchman at both lochs has been unceasing. They have never pretended, however, that their arrangements are to supersede all care of their own persons in those gifted with reason who resort to the ice; or that the person they station at the latter, when it is weak, shall positively rescue every one who, at any point of a circumference of two miles chooses to destroy himself. They shall continue their plan in spite of illiberal and ignorant reflections, which it seems they have merited, *because* they have voluntarily come forward, as a permanent body, and taken a very great deal of thankless trouble, and incurred a great deal of yet unreturned expense, to prevent, to the utmost limits of *possibility*, such accidents as the public now deplore."

There is a note in the Minute Book following the newspaper cuttings which deal with this incident: "In the course of the winter there were two instances of the ice giving way with skaters; and it is most satisfactory to state, that the arrangements proved quite effectual; the one person being rescued in one minute, and the other in something less. One of them addressed a grateful letter to the Club."

James Simpson's life-saving system continued to be serviceable for many years. On 26 December, 1829 the minutes record that "Duddingston bore, but the ice was weak and bad. Numbers fell into holes in the ice but were saved by the apparatus belonging to the Club." The following winter, however, "a boy was drowned though every means were resorted to for his recovery." Perhaps as a result of this the minutes for 2 February, 1831 record "the meeting was of opinion that a cork dress as invented by a person in Liverpool should be procured for the use of the watchman of the ice, the present brass tube or circle worn by him having been found on more than one occasion during the present season unsuited for the purpose intended, and the Secretary was desired to procure one accordingly. It was also the opinion of the meeting that one or perhaps two of the safety life preservers as now in general



The Flying Mercury



Plate II

The "Half and Whole"

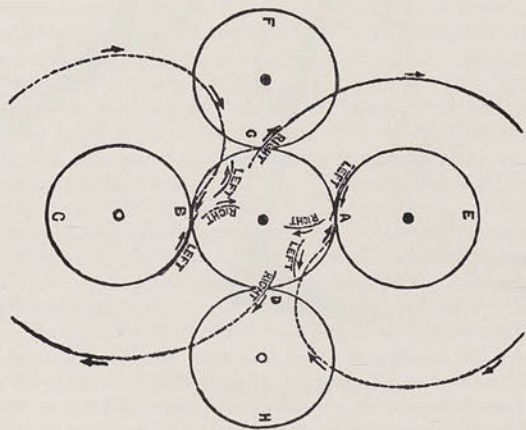
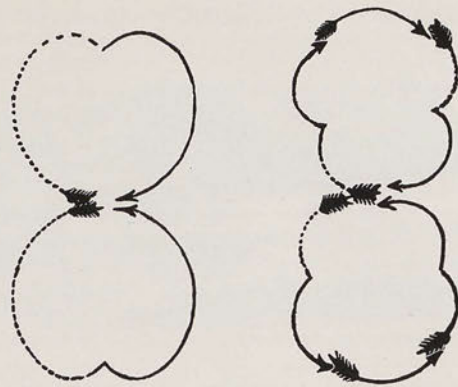


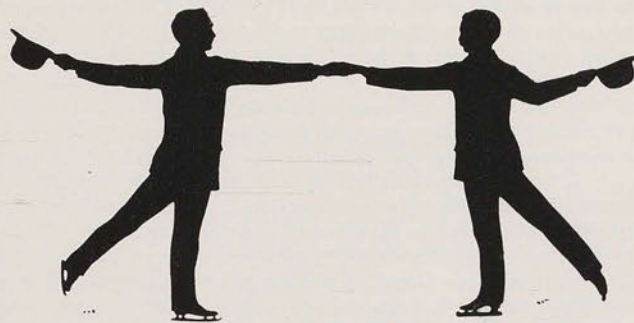
Plate III

The "Half and Whole" in diagram



Two "Back Skating" figures

Plate IV



C. A. Stevenson and Robert Scott-Moncrieff

Plate V



*Edinburgh Skating Club.*

*7th December 1889.*

*Menu.*

*Whitstable Oysters.*

*Clear Turtle.*

*Fillets of Grimsby Soles au gratin.*

*Bouchés of Chicken.*

*Canapes of Sweetbreads with Truffles.*

*Roast Turkey.*

*Cumberland Ham.*

*Fillet of Beef aux tomates forcées.*

*Devils on Horseback.*

*Mushrooms Grilled.*

*Baba au Rhum.*

*Ice. Dessert. Coffee.*

use on board the Leith Smacks ought to be procured as in certain cases they might be found very useful in preserving the lives of individuals who may fall through the ice, and the President of the Club undertook to learn the expense of one of them and report the same to the next meeting of the Club."

Nothing more is heard of the cork dress or the safety life preservers, and as the minutes are scanty for the next few years the subject probably lapsed with lack of ice. The next mention of safety precautions in the minutes shows that the whole question had become too big for a small amateur society to handle. On 11 January, 1841 "The Club having now transferred all their saving apparatus to the Royal Humane Society and thereby relieved the members from much trouble and expense, it was moved and carried that an annual donation of £5.5/- should be paid to that Society out of the funds of the Club, on the distinct understanding however that the Society should assist the Officer and members of the Club in all their endeavours to protect the lives of persons while in danger on the ice and also that the Club should have the use of the Society's houses at Duddingston and Lochend for placing the tent and other furniture of the Club in a place of security during the nights that frost may continue."<sup>33</sup>

The next year James Simpson, still as devoted to safety precautions as in his youth, "produced to the meeting patterns of the safety cape, cap etc. for preserving the lives of individuals in the event of the ice giving way which he had ordered at his own expense from London, and he expressed an anxious wish that the Club would patronise the invention. After a trial of the articles by Mr More, however, it appeared to the members present that some other improvements were requisite before the Club could give the sanction of its name to the measure." After an accident a fortnight later they accepted the urgency of the question, and a special meeting was called on 8 January, 1842 "for the purpose of considering whether some means can be devised to prevent the frequent loss of life occasioned by the breaking of the ice in skating—the attention of the Club having been drawn to the subject by the numerous fatal accidents which have recently occurred in England and more particularly at Lochend on the 29th of last month." There was nothing the special meeting could do but deplore the Humane Society's negligence in employing no one but an old and infirm watchman at Lochend, and urge them to be more vigilant in future; they also earnestly recommended the Society to investigate "what is the best safeguard against loss of life which skaters can wear on the ice, and to lose no time in recommending what is approved of to the public at large." James Simpson was no doubt still pressing his life-jacket's claims, to judge by a song written for the 1843 dinner—see Appendix III. Whether the invention was as well received by the public as was the song by the Club is not recorded.

By 1856 the Police were the responsible authority for life-saving, and though the Club was prepared to give moral support and leadership the members no longer felt their position required them to take a financial lead, as they had done in 1814. Then they had much less money as a Club, but the individual members felt more social obligations. On 1 February, 1856 "Communications from the Police Commissioners to the Secretary were read requesting the co-operation of the Club in measures for the prevention of loss of life at Duddingston Loch. The meeting having considered these communications agreed that these measures being for the public benefit and not for that of the Skating Club the latter could not as a Club by joining with the Police in any pecuniary co-operation, sanction the principle that these Commissioners are entitled to look to private bodies to assist them in discharging their

duties. The meeting however approved of the movement and requested their Secretary, Mr Scott Elliot and Mr MacKnight to have a conference with the Police Commissioners on the subject, and offer them their assistance on the ice in carrying out such proper methods as might be adopted."

The Police Commissioners seem to have had no further communication on life-saving with the Club, and it is not recorded what precautions if any were taken by individual members as long as they skated on natural ice. "Two immersions" are briefly noticed at Linlithgow when the Club persisted in skating on bad ice during a thaw, but the members were presumably soon reanimated with the liquid contents of the luncheon basket.

After carrying through his reorganisation of the Club's affairs James Simpson retired from the duties of Secretary and Treasurer in 1816. Adam Wylie was appointed to succeed him, but he was often "necessarily" out of town and sometimes ill, which meant that "some inconvenience had been experienced by the Club." The law separating the two offices was invoked and Simpson agreed to serve as Treasurer to Wylie's Secretary, "in order that one office bearer should be always on the spot to give directions with the promptness necessary to the institution." In 1820 Wylie resigned, and a new member, A. W. Goldie, offered to do the job *pro tempore*. He was duly confirmed in the appointment, which as usual involved him eventually in the duties of both Secretary and Treasurer, and he held office for thirty-seven years.

The changes in the composition of the Club during the years of his incumbency epitomise the changes in the composition of Edinburgh society which began at the end of the Napoleonic Wars. The aristocrats had begun dropping out of the Club by 1820; by 1857 hardly a country gentleman was left, and the Club was almost entirely recruited from the professions. The invitation to Prince Albert to become their patron in 1841 was significant. He was known to be a keen skater, and the motion was carried with acclamation at a Club dinner; motives of loyalty must be supposed to have outweighed any of snobbery, sentimentality or interest, but the Club will have remembered that the only peer they had left was the Earl of Mar, and even his support for the project came by post. In former times they had demonstrated their respect for the framework of society by including all the titled members on their Council, whether they were active skaters or not; now, although they had such local names as Lord Cockburn and Admiral Sir David Milne, they wanted recognition by England as well.

On Prince Albert's death they successfully petitioned the Prince and Princess of Wales to become Patron and Patroness, and soon afterwards, when the nineteen-year-old Prince Alfred was sighted skating on Duddingston Loch, a deputation approached the Palace of Holyroodhouse and he became an honorary member and accepted a Club medal. In 1911 King George V agreed to continue his father's patronage, but firm official discouragement met the idea of applying to add the word "Royal" to the Club's title. The entry in the minutes of the dinner meeting in December, 1887 perhaps better illustrates the Club's sense of proportion in these matters. "After an excellent dinner the President proposed the usual loyal toasts, but was called to order by Sheriff Crichton, who stated that loyal as undoubtedly were all members of the Club, there was one toast which took precedence at their table even before the toast of Her Most Gracious Majesty, namely 'Jack Frost;' accordingly 'Jack Frost' was toasted with becoming solemnity, as Patron Saint of the Club."

Archibald Goldie's resignation from the active duties of the secretaryship was reluctantly

accepted by the Club in 1856, and William Scott Elliot was appointed Joint Secretary. Like all new Secretaries he refurbished the Club's rules and equipment, and also set in train the publication of the Club *History* in 1865, a lilac paper bound booklet, six by four and three quarter inches, with decorated margins, of which four hundred and fifty copies were printed at a cost of £15. 5s. to Mr Grant for printing and £5. 1s. to Messrs W. & R. Chambers for drawing and engraving diagrams. The title page bears a dedication to the Prince and Princess of Wales, and depicts both sides of the Club's medal. The contents include, as well as an outline of the Club's activities and history and the complete list of the members from 1778 to date, a sketch of the members in action in their top hats and an account, with diagrams, of their method of skating and their favourite figures.

There were twenty-seven active members of the Club in 1865, an increase of about ten since the mid-fifties; the interest the Club was showing in its past went with present prosperity. They had their marking balls repainted and bought a new coat for the Officer and a table with shelves for use in the tent at the ice. In 1869 Scott Elliot resigned from the position of Joint Secretary (Mr Goldie was still alive) and was thanked for "the kind gentlemanly and cheerful manner in which he has uniformly exerted himself to provide for the interest and comfort of the Club." He was succeeded by Thomas Paterson, whose eighteen years of "great services" were recognised on his resignation in 1887 by the presentation of a handsome silver cigar box; he remained an active skater, his style being specially mentioned in 1896 when he was sixty-two. His successor as Secretary, Charles Cook, whose interest in the Club's history had caused him to form the collection of medals, found after three years that he had to resign, since "owing to his other engagements he felt himself unable to overtake his duties when there was ice." He seems to have been justified in his plea of lack of time when we read the "charge" which the senior member present delivered to his successor, Charles Stewart. He said "Mr Stewart, in undertaking the important office of Secretary to this Club you have, I am sure, done so with some knowledge of the duties devolving on you and with an earnest and honest determination to fulfil these. It is however incumbent on me to say a few words to you that hereafter if you should be found wanting in attention to the affairs of the Club you may not plead ignorance. With your life in the summer season we have nothing to do, but as a friend I would recommend you to study for a few hours daily such standard works as Monier Williams on the Skate etc, etc. . . . The summer season will however at best be a season to you of dulness and depression. But at the fall of the leaf . . . when our Patron Saint Jack Frost—all honour to his name—appears and binds the earth with iron hand, then you will shake off dull sloth and swift as Mercury hurry hither and thither in quest of suitable ice for the members of this Club to skate on. To do this effectively you will make it a rule to rise during the winter months at say 5 a.m. You will throw open your casement and consult the thermometer placed there. If it indicates a keen frost you will at once dress and proceed to visit Duddingston, Lochend, Royal Gymnasium, Craiglockhart and other lochs and ponds in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh and test the ice. You will be back to your house by 8 a.m. to receive telegrams from Bathgate, Linlithgow, Cobbinshaw, Penicuik etc. at which several places you will have ice correspondents. At 9 a.m. you will send the Club's Officer to members resident in Edinburgh with notice of the place of meeting for the day, so that all may have the information by 10 a.m. at latest. These are the more active duties of the day. The evening you will devote to writing out postcards to members, keeping the Club accounts, arranging for the luncheon for members next day,

interviewing the Officer and such light duties. I may add that during the intervals of thaw you will be at liberty to attend to your professional business, if you so wish it, but this is not compulsory on you in any way."

Charles Stewart carried out these duties for four years, and handed them on in 1895 to David Sang, who was the last of the line of W.S. secretaries unbroken since Henry Jardine (if we except Adam Wylie, whose profession is not known). It was in Sang's period of office that the committee appointed "to investigate the Minutes to make up a history of the Club" reported that "there was nothing of such general interest in the old minutes as would justify the expense of putting them in print."

By the end of the nineteenth century the Club was devoting considerable thought to the question of where to skate. Duddingston they regarded as their true home, although Lochend was always an acceptable alternative; the smaller lochs, Dunsapie and "St. Anthony's" (the loch by St. Anthony's chapel now called St. Margaret's) sometimes provided ice when the larger lochs were unsafe, and in February, 1830 they were reduced to skating on "the ponds." By this time they were already considering improving on nature. At the meeting of 20 January, 1828 "it was suggested that it would be desirable to concert measures with the Curling Club for obtaining a piece of ground in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh which could be overflowed with such a quantity of water as would freeze in the course of one or two nights sufficiently strongly to admit of skating upon it." It was thought it might be possible to find such ground "in the vicinity of the Union Canal," but nothing more was heard of this idea. Again, on 11 January, 1841 "Mr Richardson and the Secretary were requested to enquire whether the field below Fettes Row belonging to Mrs Little Gilmour could be obtained on reasonable terms for the use of the Club as it was considered that the ground could be easily flooded with water of two or three inches depth from the mill lead leading to Canon Mills." No action was taken on this by the Club, and we find them again in 1867 "of opinion . . . that it would be desirable if the Club could procure some place proximate to the new town where a piece of water would readily freeze and be easily flooded." What they wanted was a "practising pond," since skating was becoming very popular and they felt they should keep up a standard appropriate to their name when they did have a chance to appear on Duddingston Loch.

The ground below Fettes Row was eventually developed by Mr Cox, who included in the lay-out of his Royal Patent Gymnasium a curling rink and a skating pond ninety feet long and seventy-five feet broad. In 1871 the Club arranged to rent this pond for their exclusive use at £15 a year, adding £5 to this in 1873 to include season tickets for their members at "Cox's new ponds at Craiglockhart." But the latter arrangement was not repeated the following year, and the lease of the Gymnasium pond was discontinued in 1876, "in consequence of the Club having had so little use of it last season." Cox's ponds, however, remained in operation and the Club continued to use them from time to time. They sometimes used a pond at Mount Vesuvius Grounds, Bonnington Road, for which one of their printed notices survives. In 1881 plans were drawn up for a limited company to construct and manage a skating pond at Roseburn, but nothing came of it.

By 1878 the Club had started making expeditions by train when there was ice on Linlithgow Loch or on flooded ground at Bathgate; telegrams were sent to enquire about the state of the ice from the local station porter or policeman, and a festive party would set out, attended or preceded by the Club Officer with a well-stocked luncheon-basket. Occasional

expeditions were also made to Penicuik, Larbert, Cobbinshaw and Loch Leven. By leaving their home ground the Club met the skating public in greater numbers than before, and their devotion to tradition gave rise to some embarrassment. In December, 1884 "It was stated by some of the older members present that it had been the invariable custom of the Club to appear in tall hats at such meetings [on the ice], and on the other hand it was represented by some of the younger members that tall hats were inconvenient and out of fashion for such exercise as skating, and subjected them to the jeering smiles of their friends and onlookers. After considerable discussion it was resolved that the present practice of wearing tall hats should be continued when the Club meets at Duddingston, but that at meetings elsewhere the members may wear any covering they choose." The illustration on the menu card for their dinner the next year shows that they took advantage of this concession to turn to that relatively informal headgear, the bowler.

The Club continued to skate at Duddingston whenever there was good ice, the last recorded occasion being in 1903; it became too difficult and expensive, especially after the outbreak of the First World War, to hire labour to sweep the ice if snow fell, as it so often does in Edinburgh after a few days of frost have raised the hopes of outdoor skaters. The records of Edinburgh weather in the nineteenth century show it to have been as variable as in this; many winters passed with no chance of skating, or during which the ice was watched without success. There was a period in the eighteen thirties and forties when skating was very infrequent, but in the second half of the century there was ice, even if only for a few days, nearly every winter, and from 1879 to 1881 there was skating for several weeks each season. It has been possible to skate out of doors near Edinburgh about as often in recent years as in the Skating Club's time, but not on Duddingston Loch since the bird sanctuary was instituted in 1923. In any case very few skaters go out to look for natural ice now that a perfect surface is available indoors, with the added advantage of perfect safety, though without the exhilaration of a fine frosty winter's day.

Artificially frozen ice in indoor rinks had begun to be a practical possibility in the 1880's when a 'Glaciarium' was opened at Southport. Members of the Club visited this, and also the one which was formed in Glasgow in 1896. But the opening of the Haymarket ice rink in Edinburgh in 1911 was not of much avail to the Club; it was impossible to reserve an area big enough to do the combined figures without interruption, since they required the whole breadth of the rink. The Club still pinned their faith on Jack Frost, and embarked on what turned out to be a financially disastrous undertaking at Craiglockhart. In order to have exclusive use of some ice they took over from the Curling Club the lease of the two upper ponds (which they threw into one) and thus became liable not only for the rent and such maintenance costs as cutting weeds and repairing the clubhouse, but also for rates, parish assessment and income tax. There was an unfortunate series of winters with no frost to speak of; new members were not attracted and the reserves of the Club became exhausted; finally in 1921 the members who had guaranteed the lease, and who had already made considerable contributions, were able to terminate it at a cost of about £10 each.

In spite of the decision to admit women to membership, taken in 1910, the Club began to decline even before 1914, and by 1924 when G. Buckland Green, a master at the Edinburgh Academy who had succeeded David Sang as Secretary in 1907, resigned, the Club was practically moribund. The cost and difficulty of finding a large enough area for the combined figures were partly the reason, but the real trouble was that the Club had identified itself so

closely for so many years with combined figure skating that it was doomed to extinction when that form of skating died. The Club's last Secretary, D. Alan Stevenson, worked hard to revive it, and in the 1920's and 1930's competitions for young skaters were sponsored; the fostering of talent up to modern competition standards, however, was beyond the scope of a Club whose charm lay in its small size, intimate atmosphere, and truly amateur approach. The Club was active to some extent when Mr Stevenson found a way to arrange meets of the Club to perform the figures on Sunday mornings at the Haymarket Rink before the Winter Club met, from 1927 until the war put a stop to it in 1939. In 1927 the decision had been taken that "in future in admitting new members . . . special consideration should be given to those who already had a tie or link with the Club. It was agreed that this would assist greatly in continuing such an historic Club." But such a measure contains in itself the seeds of decay. After the war the Club did not meet again.

## APPENDIX I

## Membership

This list of members of the Club has been compiled from the "List of part of the Members of the Skating Society made up from memory by a quorum of the Society in January 1778, when Mr Wm. Anderson was at Bath" (numbers one to thirty-nine), and from the admissions noted by successive secretaries from 1784 onwards. Names and designations are as given in the Minute Books; additional information, from various sources including the Minute Books, is in *italic*, and dates of admission are in square brackets.

- 1 Commissioner Clerk Maxwell. 1715-84; *Commissioner of Customs; see Dictionary of National Biography; brother of 33 and 36.*
- 2 Captain John Clerk. *d. 1798; son of 1.*
- 3 Mr fraser Scott of Beechwood. *Altered in pencil to 'Francis'; b. 1732; merchant in India.*
- 4 Mr William Waite of Castlelaw.
- 5 Mr John McKenzie of Dolphinstone. 1748-88; *advocate.*
- 6 Mr Gilbert Innes of Stow. 1751-1832; *Deputy Governor of the Royal Bank.*
- 7 Mr francis Anderson W. Signet. 1747-1823; *see John Kay, "Original Portraits" (1877) vol. II, pp. 241-2.*
- 8 Mr Willm. Grant Advocate. *Of Congalton; advocate, 1773; d. 1821.*
- 9 Mr Matthew Sandilands W.S. W.S. 1779; *d. 1821.*
- 10 Mr Adam Ogilvie Advocate. 1746-1809.
- 11 Mr Alexr. Anderson Merchant. *Burgess and Gild Brother, 1772; ? brother of 44.*
- 12 Mr John Pringle Advocate. 1741-1811; *see Kay, op. cit., vol. II, pp. 289-90.*
- 13 Mr Hugh Warrander Writer. W.S. 1798; *d. 1820.*
- 14 Mr Robt. Sinclair Advocate. *Advocate, 1762; d. 1802.*
- 15 Mr James Brown Architect. 1729-1807; *see Book of the Old Edinburgh Club, vols. XIX, p. 79 and XXVI, passim.*
- 16 Mr John fforest Merchant. *Son of John Forest, Master of the Merchant Company; B. & G. B., 1767.*
- 17 Mr Joseph Baird Writer. *Not in W.S. list; James B., Writer, Nicolson's Square, appears in the 1777-8 Edinburgh Directory.*

- 18 Capt. Andw. Wauchop of Niddry. *b. after 1735; served at battle of Minden, 1759; father of 132.*
- 19 Mr Patrick Miller Banker. 1731-1815; *of Dalswinton after 1785; see D.N.B.*
- 20 Mr Alexr. McLeod of Moravonside. *Muiravonside; advocate, 1743; engaged in rising of 1745, pardoned, 1778; d. 1784.*
- 21 Mr James Rae Surgeon. 1716-91; *Kay, op. cit., vol I, p. 424.*
- 22 Mr John McGowan Writer. *Not in W.S. list; Kay, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 416.*
- 23 Mr Willm. Tytler W. Signet. *Of Woodhouselee; 1711-92; historian, see D.N.B.*
- 24 Mr Nisbet of Dirlton. *William N., 1728-83; engaged in Rising of 1745.*
- 25 Mr John Balfour Bookseller. 1715-95; *son of James B. of Pilrig; see B.O.E.C., vol. XIX, p. 47.*
- 26 Mr John Loch. *Of Rachan in Peebleshire; 1734-1822.*
- 27 Mr David Stewart of Dargenie. 1744-1823; *W.S.*
- 28 Mr Wm. Riddell W. Signet. 1746-1829.
- 29 Mr Ramsay Slater. *Either Alexander, who d. 1787, or his son James, who d. 1797; Treasurer, 1784-6; see B.O.E.C., vol. XIX, p. 57.*
- 30 Mr Willm. Anderson W. Signet. W.S. 1774; *Secretary till 1784; d. 1785.*
- 31 Mr Broughton of the Excise. *Edward, Accountant of Excise, Fountainbridge; father of 123 and 124.*
- 32 Mr Copland of Collieston. 1736-1808; *advocate; married sister of 69.*
- 33 Mr John Clerk of Elden. 1728-1812; *see D.N.B.; brother of 1 and 36.*
- 34 Mr Willm. Dick of Prestonfield. 1762-96; *from 1785, 4th baronet; son of 64.*
- 35 Major White. *Later in Minutes, 'Colonel.'*
- 36 Sir James Clerk of Pennyquick. 1710-82; *3rd baronet; brother of 1 and 33.*
- 37 Mr George Clerk Advocate. *? son of 1 but d. 1776.*
- 38 Mr James Clerk. *Son of 1; Honourable East India Company Service; d. 1793.*
- 39 Mr John Anstruther Advocate. 1751-1818.
- 40 Sir Andw. Lauder Dick Bart. *6th of Fountainhall and Grange; d. 1820. [19th January, 1778].*
- 41 Mr Wm. Adam M.P. 1751-1839; *later Rt. Hon. Chief Commissioner of Jury Court; nephew of 33; see D.N.B. [as 40].*
- 42 Mr John Anstruther M.P. 1753-1811; *from 1799 4th baronet; not M.P. till 1783. [as 40].*
- 43 Mr Ed. Bruce W.S. W.S. 1780; *d. 1804. [as 40].*
- 44 Mr Pat Anderson W.S. 1755-1809. *[as 40].*
- 45 Rev. Mr Walker of Crammond. *Robert, 1755-1808; minister of Canongate Church from 1783. [January, 1780].*
- 46 Mr John Rae Surgeon. *Son of 21; see Kay, op. cit., Vols. I, p. 237 and II, p. 283; Secretary, 1784-8; d. 1808. [as 45].*
- 47 Mr Jas. Pringle Torwoodlee. *9th of Torwoodlee; d. 1840. [as 45].*
- 48 Mr Jos. Williamson. *? Joseph W., junior, son of Joseph W., advocate, of Leven Lodge. [as 45].*
- 49 Mr John Dundas W.S. W.S. 1769; *Conjunct Town Clerk, 1771; d. 1816. [as 45].*
- 50 Capt. Wm. Cullen — Regt. *[as 45].*
- 51 Sir Jas. Hall Baronet. *Of Dinglass; 1754-1832; see D.N.B. [5th December, 1782].*
- 52 Mr Robt. Hope Writer. *Not a W.S. and not in the Directory. [as 51].*
- 53 Capt. Wm. Balfour 57th Regt. 1756-1811; *son of 25. [as 51].*
- 54 Capt. Hen. Stewart of Allinton. *[as 51].*
- 55 Mr Archd. Tod W. Signet. 1756-1816. *[as 51].*
- 56 Doctor James Hamilton. 1749-1836; *see Kay, op. cit., vol. II, p. 79. [as 51].*
- 57 Capt. P. Tytler Ed. Regt. *? son of 23. [7th December, 1782].*
- 58 Dr. B. Kissam from America. *Graduated M.D., Edinburgh, 1783. [30th January, 1784].*
- 59 Mr Ben. Mudie Writer. *Not a W.S. [as 58].*
- 60 Mr Thos. White of Manchr. *[as 58].*
- 61 Capt. Alexr. Arbutnot Edr. Regt. *[as 58].*
- 62 Mr John Bell of Todrig. *[as 58].*
- 63 Mr David Williamson. 1761-1837; *advocate; later Lord Balgray. [as 58].*
- 64 Sir Alexr. Dick. 1703-85; *3rd bart.; see D.N.B.; elected 'Praeses,' 30th January, 1784.*

- 65 Mr John Dick. 1767-1812; 6th bart.; made honorary member, along with 66, 30th January, 1784.
- 66 Mr Robt. Dick. 1773-1849; 7th bart.; see 65; formally admitted, 22nd December, 1814.
- 67 Mr Matthew Henderson. 1737-88; Burns wrote an elegy on his death (1790). [December, 1784].
- 68 His Grace J. Duke of Athol. 1755-1830; 4th Duke. [11th December, 1784].
- 69 Sir Geo. Dunbar of Mochrum Bart. b. after 1760, d. 1799; brother-in-law of 32. [as 68].
- 70 Coll. Alexr. Campbell Monzie. 1751-1832; Of Monzie and Finnab. [13th December, 1784].
- 71 Mr Henry Jardine. 1766-1851; W.S.; King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer, 1820-31; knighted, 1825; Secretary, 1789-1809. [as 70].
- 72 Lieut. Hay of the Engineers. [as 70].
- 73 Mr Willm. Anderson Junr. W.S., 1791; d. 1796; [as 70].
- 74 Mr Walter Riddell of the Carss. ? younger brother of Robert Riddell of Friars Carse, b. 1764. [as 70].
- 75 Mr Wm. Montgomery. Younger of Stanhope; d. 1800; elder brother of 76. [14th December 1784].
- 76 Mr Jas. Montgomery. 1766-1839; advocate; 2nd. bart. of Stanhope. [as 75].
- 77 Captain Kerr 43rd Regt. Charles K. [as 75].
- 78 Capt. Farquharson. [as 75].
- 79 Earl of Morton. 1761-1827; 15th Earl. [22nd December, 1784].
- 80 Coll. Pringle Edgefield. [as 79].
- 81 Major Erskine. [as 79].
- 82 Mr Thomas Trotter. W.S., 1789; d. 1837; Secretary, 1789-91. [as 79].
- 83 Earl of Breadalbane. 1762-1834; 4th Earl; see Kay, op. cit., vol. II, p. 232. [24th December, 1784].
- 84 Lord Haddow. 1764-91; eldest son of the Earl of Aberdeen. [as 83].
- 85 Lord Daer. 1763-94; eldest son of Lord Selkirk. [as 83].
- 86 Sir John Scott Ancrum. 5th bart.; d. 1814. [as 83].
- 87 Mr John Leslie Leven. Later, 'Honble. Mr Leslie.' [as 83].
- 88 Mr Geo. Gordon Hawhead. 1761-1823; advocate. [as 83].
- 89 Mr Anderson Leith. [as 83].
- 90 Mr James White. Of Leith. [as 83].
- 91 Capt. Adam Hay. [as 83].
- 92 Mr Campbell Auchalader. 25th December, 1784.
- 93 Mr Archd. Douglass. Not a W.S., but a 'Writer' in Directory. [2nd January, 1786].
- 94 Revd. Mr fienwick. '2, Hill Street', Directory, 1786.
- 95 Mr Andw. Bonnar. Partner in Ramsay Bonar and Co. and director of Bank of Scotland. [admitted in 1784, but displaced in list].
- 96 David Anderson Esqr. St. Germain's. [January, 1789].
- 97 James Anderson Esqr. of Clerkinton. [as 96].
- 98 James Dewar of Vogrie Esqr. [as 96].
- 99 Mr James Gibson W. Signet. 1765-1850; from 1831, Sir James Gibson-Craig. [as 96].
- 100 Hon. Andrew Forbes. ? 3rd son of 16th Lord Forbes; d. 1808. [December, 1791].
- 101 Mr John Thomson of Charlestown. ? John Anstruther T., son-in-law of 41. [as 100].
- 102 Mr James Clerk Advocate. 1763-1831; later Clerk-Rattray. [as 100].
- 103 Lieut. Francis Lascelles 3rd Dragoons. [January, 1792].
- 104 Mr William Millar of ye Oxford Blues. Major in 1808. [as 103].
- 105 Mr Willm. Haggart Wine Merchant. With 106, he was joint secretary of the Royal Caledonian Hunt Club. [as 103].
- 106 Mr Henry Hagart. See 105. [as 103].
- 107 Dr. James Home. 1760-1844; Professor of the Practice of Physic, Edinburgh University. [as 103].
- 108 Mr Monro Binning. ? David Monro B. of Softlaw. [as 103].
- 109 Mr Jas. Bruce Wine Merchant. [4th January, 1795].
- 110 Mr Gilbert Laing Mercht. Later, Laing Meason. [as 109].

- 111 A. M. Guthrie W.S. Not a W.S., but so listed in Directory of 1796. [13th December, 1796].
- 112 David Smith Younger of Methven. 1775-98; officer in Guards. [as 111].
- 113 William Murray Esq. Yr. of Polmaise. 1773-1847; advocate. [as 111].
- 114 John Hamilton of the Customs. [as 111].
- 115 Thomas Johnstone Advocate. 1773-1841; [as 111].
- 116 Robt. Hunter Younr. of Thurston. 1774-1808; advocate. [as 111].
- 117 Chas. T. Stewart Esq. [as 111].
- 118 John Campbell Tertius W.S. W.S., 1792; d. 1855. [as 111].
- 119 Sir George Mackenzie Bart. of Coull. 1780-1848; later, Stewart Mackenzie. [12th February, 1799].
- 120 Captain — Bruce of Kennet. ? Ralph, a son of Lord Kennet, d. 1854, as Lt.-Colonel. [as 119].
- 121 John Reed Esq. Advocate. 1775-1811. [28th December, 1801].
- 122 Thomas Scott Esq. W.S. 1774-1823; brother of Sir Walter S. [as 121].
- 123 Charles Broughton Esq. W.S. W.S., 1799; d. 1823; son of 31. [as 121].
- 124 Hugh Broughton Esq. of the Excise. d. c. 1816; brother of 123. [as 121].
- 125 Henry Cockburn Esq. Advocate. 1779-1854; Lord Cockburn. [as 121].
- 126 Kenneth Mackenzie of Dolphinton Esq. Advocate. Advocate, 1797; d. 1805; son of 5. [as 121].
- 127 John Meek Esq. W.S. Of Fortissat, Lanarkshire; W.S., 1791; d. 1845. [as 121].
- 128 Peter Stewart Esq. Of Auchlunkart; also called Patrick, and Steuart and Capt. P. Stuart (1809); b. 1780. [as 121].
- 129 Rev. Mr Bennet Minister of Duddingstone. 1763-1805; father-in-law of 140. [as 121].
- 130 William Ballentine Esq. W.S. W.S., 1801; d. 1827. [as 121].
- 131 James Balfour Esq. jun. Of Pilrig; 1774-1860; W.S. [as 121].
- 132 William Wauchope Esq. Younger of Niddry. Son of 18. [as 121].
- 133 Charles Knowles Robison Esq. W.S. 1781-1846; Secretary, 1809-14. [1804].
- 134 George Burnet Esq. [as 133].
- 135 Captain Milne Royal Navy. 1763-1845; later Admiral Sir David Milne. [as 133].
- 136 Mr A. Torry Merchant. Alexander T., tailor and furnisher, 13, Rose Street—Directory, 1826. [February, 1808]. 'Alexander' is his Christian name in the Minutes; Hogg, in the 'Noctes' (above p. 102) seems to confuse him with Archibald Torry, cloth merchant, of 32 Princes Street.
- 137 Mr James Simpson Advocate. 1780-1853; Secretary and Treasurer, 1813-19; author of "A visit to the Field of Waterloo." [as 136].
- 138 William Douglas Esq. Advocate. Advocate, 1806; M.P. for Plympton, d. 1821. [28th December 1808].
- 139 Hugh Robison Esq. Merchant. "From St. Petersburg" in Minutes. [as 138].
- 140 Wm. Clark Esq. W.S. 1777-1863; m. daughter of 129. [as 136].
- 141 Wm. Johnstone Esq. W.S. 1780-1828. [as 136].
- 142 Thos. Megget Esq. W.S. W.S., 1804; d. 1864. [as 136].
- 143 Geo. Wauchope Esq. Mercht. Wine merchant in Leith; a son of 18. [as 136].
- 144 Andw. Murray Esq. Advocate. 1782-1847. [as 136].
- 145 Gilbert Young Esq. Commissary General in Scotland. Commissioned, 1805; half-pay, 1821. [24th January, 1809].
- 146 Robt. Jamieson Esq. Mercht. Leith. [as 145].
- 147 Wm. Rose Robinson Esq. Advocate. 1781-1834; [as 145].
- 148 James Lamy, Esq. Advocate. Or L' Amy; 1772-1854. [as 145].
- 149 A. Hepburn Mitchelson Esq. Of Middleton; b. c. 1765; d. by 1814. [25th February, 1809].
- 150 William Fettes Esq. Advocate. 1787-1813. [20th January, 1812].
- 151 John Kennedy Esq. W.S. 1785-1862. [as 150].
- 152 Adam Wylie. Secretary, 1816-20. [1st December, 1813].
- 153 Patrick Small Keir Esq. Advocate. 1782-1860. [26th January, 1814].
- 154 John Colquhoun Esq. Advocate. Advocate, 1806; d. 1854. [as 153].
- 155 Wm. Wood Esq. Surgeon. 1783-1858; President, Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, 1820 and 1830. [as 153].



- 156 Sir George Clerk Bart. M.P. 1787-1867; 6th bart.; nephew of 2 and son of 38. [22nd December, 1814].  
 [No number] Sir Robert Dick Bart.—see 66. [as 156].  
 157 Sir Patrick Walker. *Advocate*, 1798; knighted, 1814; d. 1837. [as 156].  
 158 Gabriel Hamilton Dundas of Duddingston Esq. d. 1854. [as 156].  
 159 Lt.-Col. Dugald Little Gilmour 95th. Regt. *Major General Sir Dugald, K.C.B.* [as 156].  
 160 George Cleghorn of Weens Esq. W.S., 1804; d. 1855. [10th February, 1815].  
 161 Patrick Fraser Tytler Esq. Adv.[ocate]. 1791-1849; grandson of 23. [14th February, 1816].  
 162 J. F. M. Erskine Esq. 1st Foot Guards. 1795-1866; later 15th Earl of Mar; his mother was a daughter of 19. [14th December, 1816].  
 163 Elias Cathcart Esq. *Advocate*. d. 1877; brother of 170; see B.O.E.C., vol. XXXI. [4th February, 1818].  
 164 Chas. Murdoch Adair Esqr. W.S., 1819; d. 1823. [18th December, 1818].  
 165 Archd. W. Goldie Esq. W.S., 1818; *Secretary*, 1820-57; *Joint Secretary*, 1857-69. [28th November, 1820].  
 166 Francis Grant Esquire. 1803-78; *President of the Royal Scottish Academy*. [14th December, 1822].  
 167 Charles Shaw Esq. Leith. [18th January, 1823].  
 168 William Wood Esq. Leith. [as 167].  
 169 Wm. C. Dick Esq. Prestonfield. Later "Sir W. C. Dick Cunnyngame Bart"; 1808-71. [14th February, 1826].  
 170 David Cathcart Esq. W.S. W.S., 1822; d. 1867; brother of 163. [as 169].  
 171 Jas. Gibson Thomson Esq. *Mercht*. Edinr. [as 169].  
 172 Thos. Thomson Esqr. Duddingston. ? son of Rev. John T. of D., 1802-73; graduated M.D., Edinburgh, 1827. [as 169].  
 173 James Stein Esqr. *Mercht*. Edinburgh. [4th February, 1826].  
 174 John Richardson Esq. W.S. 1799-1876. [22nd January, 1829].  
 175 George Glover Esqr. *Surgeon*. [as 174].  
 176 Harry Inglis Esq. W.S. *Later Maxwell Inglis*; 1800-83. [as 174].  
 177 David Cannan Esq. *Surgeon*. [as 174].  
 178 Wm. Down Gillon Esq. of Wallhouse. 1801-46; M.P. [29th December, 1830].  
 179 John Jopp Esq. W.S. 1805-57. [30th December, 1830].  
 180 Peter Anderson Esq. 1803-55; W.S. [29th January, 1831].  
 181 Henry Hagart Esq. [18th January, 1833].  
 182 Lewis Hay Thatcher Esq. *Edinburgh medical graduate*, 1843. [16 January, 1838].  
 183 James L. Woodman Esq. W.S. 1811-56. [9th January, 1841].  
 184 William Scott Elliott Esq. W.S. 1811-1901; *Secretary*, 1856-69. [11th January, 1841].  
 185 George More Esq. W.S. 1816-99; from 1863, *More Gordon*. [as 184].  
 186 James Macknight Esq. W.S. 1810-78. [as 184].  
 187 Charles M. Kerr Esq. *Mercht*. Leith. [as 184].  
 188 Thomas Cowan Esq. M.D. Leith. *Edinburgh Medical graduate*, 1839. [as 184].  
 189 George Forman Esq. 1817-46. [14th January, 1841].  
 190 James Alison Esq. *Merchant*. Leith. [as 189].  
 191 James Balfour Junior Esq. 1815-98; W.S.; *Balfour-Melville* from 1893. [25th December, 1841].  
 192 George A. Haig Esq. Bonington. 1805-98; *distiller*. [8th February, 1842].  
 193 John Kennedy Junior Esq. 1816-1902; son of 151. [17th February, 1843].  
 194 John Gibson Esq. *Of Stobwood*; d. 1849. [10th February, 1847].  
 195 Thomas Allen Esq. *Printer and publisher in Edinburgh*. [31st January, 1848].  
 196 Andrew Gillon Esq. of Wallhouse. 1823-88; son of 178. [9th January, 1850].  
 197 John Anthony Macrae Esq. W.S. 1812-68. [21st February, 1853].  
 198 Capt. A. C. Robertson 8th. Regt. b. 1816; *General*, 1870. [as 197].  
 199 Wm. Skinner Esq. W.S. 1823-1901. [5th January, 1854].  
 200 Wm. C. Miller Esq. *Royal Institution*. Also "Fishery Board" (Minutes). [as 199].

- 201 Peter Waddell Esq. Leith. [14th January, 1854].  
 202 Dr Myrtle. *John Young M.*; medical graduate, Edinburgh, 1833. [28th February, 1855].  
 203 Aw. Jameson. 1811-70; *advocate*. [as 202].  
 204 Adam Gifford. 1820-87; *advocate*; Lord Gifford, 1870. [28th February, 1856].  
 205 A. Beatson Bell. 1831-1913; *advocate*. [as 204].  
 206 Dr. Easton. [3rd December, 18--].  
 207 Henry G. Gibson. 1827-69; W.S. [9th January, 1860].  
 208 David Scott Moncrieff. 1829-1918; W.S. [13th February, 1860].  
 209 W. A. Goldie. [10th January, 1861].  
 210 C. T. Cooper. 1831-1910; *advocate*. [9th January, 1864].  
 211 David S. Macfie. *Of Kilmux, Kennoway*. [as 210].  
 212 John Nisbet. "Photographer" (Minutes). [as 210].  
 213 A. Borthwick. b. 1839; 60th. *Rifles*; Col. by 1884. [as 210].  
 214 T. H. Orphoot. 1835-1917; *advocate*. [as 210].  
 215 John M. Crabbie. *merchant*, Leith. [13th January, 1864].  
 216 James A. Crichton. 1825-91; *advocate*. [20th February, 1866].  
 217 Frans. Deas. 1839-74; *advocate*. [as 216].  
 218 M. Mongomerie Bell. 1840-1917; W.S. [as 216].  
 219 Thos. Paterson. 1834-1911; W.S.; *Secretary*, 1869-87. [as 216].  
 220 R. D. Balfour. 'J, Rutland St.' (Minutes). [as 216].  
 221 W. C. Murray. b. 1837; W.S. [as 216].  
 222 David Sang. 1838-83; W.S. [as 216].  
 223 Capt. Graham. '10, Moray Place' (Minutes). [as 216].  
 224 John Maitland. *Either John M.* ? 1841-1922, *advocate*, or John Gordon M. 1848-84. [6th February, 1871].  
 225 Sir Walter Simpson Bart. 1843-98; *advocate*. [as 224].  
 226 John Kirkpatrick. 1836-1926; *advocate*. [as 224].  
 227 Joseph Gillon Fergusson. 1848-1908; W.S. [as 224].  
 228 J. B. Harvey. 'Schaw Park Alloa' (Minutes). [as 224].  
 229 John Moxon. '93a George St.' (Minutes). [as 224].  
 230 Lord Rosehill. 1843-91; 9th Earl of Northesk, from 1878. [as 224].  
 231 James Tod. [23rd December, 1870].  
 232 A. R. Duncan. 1844-1927; *advocate*. [6th December, 1873].  
 233 Fleeming Jenkin. 1833-85; *first Professor of Engineering*, Edinburgh University. [8th February, 1873].  
 234 Charles E. Stewart. "Accountant" (Minutes). [as 233].  
 235 Robert L. Murray. "C.A., Gt. King St." (Minutes). [7th January, 1879].  
 236 Charles A. Stevenson. 1856-1950; *civil engineer*. [as 235].  
 237 J. Y. Myrtle. "Merchant, Rutland St." (Minutes); ? son of 202. [as 235].  
 238 Alex. Blair Stewart. '23, Maitland St.' (Minutes). [1st February, 1879].  
 239 Charles Cook. 1850-1922; *Secretary*, 1887-91 [as 238].  
 240 David A. Stevenson. d. 1938; *civil engineer*; brother of 236. [as 238].  
 241 Findlay B. Anderson. *Chartered Accountant*. [7th December, 1880].  
 242 Andrew Williamson. "killed by stag" (pencil note in list). [22nd January, 1881].  
 243 George Kerr. d. 1924; M.D. [as 242].  
 244 Austin F. Jenkin. *Son of 233*. [as 242].  
 245 Charles Stewart. 1852-1927; W.S.; g.-grandson of 117; *Secretary*, 1891-5. [9th January, 1886].  
 246 Robert Scott-Moncrieff. 1862-1923; W.S.; son of 208. [18th December, 1886].  
 247 James Rankine. [4th January, 1888].  
 248 Harry J. Stevenson. *Corrected to 'Harvey' in pencil*; b. 1867; W.S. [7th December, 1889].  
 249 John H. Sang W.S. 1861-1936; *Secretary*, 1895-1907. [14th January, 1892].  
 250 Andrew Pearson W.S. 1866-1921. [as 249].  
 251 J. M. Dickson W.S. 1852-1920. [6th January, 1893].

- 252 G. B. Green. *d.* 1927; *master at E. Academy; Secretary, 1907-24.* [31st January, 1895].  
 253 J. Condie S. Sandeman Advocate. 1866-1933. [18th December, 1901].  
 254 J. H. Raeburn. *d.* 1922; 'mountaineer' (Minutes). [as 253].  
 255 J. J. Waugh W.S. *b.* 1864. [as 253].  
 256 J. B. Stevenson. [13th December, 1906].  
 257 Prof. F. G. Baily. 1868-1945. [10th December, 1908].  
 258 A. W. Hudson. *Master at Fettes College.* [6th December, 1910].  
 259 R. F. Cumberlege. *Master at Fettes College.* [as 258].  
 260 C. F. Tremlett. *Master at Fettes College.* [as 258].  
 261 H. H. Cooke. [as 258].  
 262 T. B. Franklin. [as 258].  
 263 J. Harper Orr. *b.* 1878; *advocate.* [as 258].  
 264 W. F. Finlay. *b.* 1868; *W.S.* [as 258].  
 265 Mrs R. F. Cumberlege. [as 258].  
 266 Mrs C. F. Tremlett. [as 258].  
 267 John Cook W.S. *b.* 1880; *nephew of 240.* [21st December, 1910].  
 268 Mrs W. H. Coats. 'Of Paisley' (Minutes). [27th February, 1911].  
 269 P. M. Campbell. [3rd April, 1912].  
 270 Miss E. M. Stevenson. *Mrs Yeoman; daughter of 236.* [31st March, 1921].  
 271 D. Alan Stevenson. *Civil engineer; son of 236; Secretary, 1924-66.* [as 270].  
 272 Miss M. Scott-Moncrieff. *Lady Sorn.* [as 270].  
 273 Mrs Deas. *Later Mrs Smith.* [as 270].  
 274 Mrs Ingram. *Daughter of 250.* [20th December, 1922].  
 275 Archibald Blair W.S. [17th December, 1924].  
 276 C. W. Ingram. [as 275].  
 277 Lt. Com. T. Yeoman R.N. [21st December, 1927].  
 278 I. H. Bowhill. *British skating champion.* [as 277].  
 279 Mrs J. Crabbie. [October, 1928].  
 280 William Blair W.S. *Brother of 275.* [as 279].  
 281 G. L. Auldjo Jamieson. [as 279].  
 282 Patrick Keith Murray W.S. *b.* 1878. [as 279].  
 283 Miss Fairlie Cadell. *Mrs Chitty; niece of 243.* [as 279].  
 284 Mrs Edwin R. Moncrieff. [as 279].  
 285 W. Gray Muir W.S. [as 279].  
 286 Mrs J. S. Richardson. *Daughter of 236.* [as 279].  
 287 Iver Salvesen. [as 279].  
 288 Mrs James Rankine. [November, 1928].  
 289 Sir Francis Tudsbery. [December, 1928].  
 290 Mrs A. M. Thomas. [December, 1931].  
 291 Stewart Rankine. [February, 1933].  
 292 David A. G. Pearson. [March, 1933].  
 293 Miss Bethia Keith Murray. *Mrs Harding Edgar.* [January, 1934].  
 294 Norman Pearson. [as 293].  
 295 Paul Harding Edgar. [November, 1935].  
 296 John R. Ingram. [as 295].  
 297 Miss Honor Rankine. [December, 1935].  
 298 Mrs Harper Orr. [January, 1939].

299 Thomas Hogg. c. 1720-84; a merchant and an Edinburgh baillie, his son-in-law was William Scott-Moncrieff, in whose family his medal has descended; his membership is known only from the medal (see pl. 7), possibly he was no longer a skater when the 1778 list was compiled.

## APPENDIX II

Directions for the Officer and for the watchers; an inventory of Club property (1815), and of the saving apparatus.

*Notes have been added in square brackets.*

## Directions for the Officer

(A copy of which he always keeps in his small Book)

I He must always know the state of the ice at both Lochs, both during the frost and succeeding thaw, till quite melted. And he must call on the Secretary and Treasurer every evening during that time.

II Placards to be posted up, by ten in the morning, on days when the Club are to be out, at the places following, and in the following order,

1. Manners & Millers' booksellers. [208, High St.]
2. Thomson's Gunsmiths. [9, Parliament Sq.]
3. Parliament House.
4. End of Dyke North end Mound.
5. Royal Hotel. [53, Princes St.]
6. Dyke down to W. Church. [St. Cuthbert's.]
7. Tontine George Street.
8. Assembly Rooms Ditto.
9. Wall from Fredr. Str. to H. Row. [Heriot Row]
10. Ditto from Hanr. St. to Ditto. [Hanover St.]
11. Dyke opposite head Duke St.
12. China shop opposite Corri's rooms. [Leith Walk]
13. New Club St. Andw. Sq.
14. Fortune's Coffee room. [15, Princes St.]
15. Morton's Jewellers. [10, Princes St.]
16. Post Office. [Waterloo Place]
17. Marshall's Jewellers S. Bridge.
18. McKay Ditto.
19. College.
20. McLeod Skate Makers. [College St.]
21. Bristo Str. at Lothian Str.

[many of these were subsequently scored out in pencil, leaving only 3, 4, 9, 10, 13, 18, 19, 20.]

III When Snow is to be swept, by order of the Secretary or Treasurer, he must start by eight in the morning with the number of hands ordered (about 30) and superintend the sweeping. The Sweepers to be hired in Edinr.; and each to carry out his own Shovel or Broom.

IV To place, on sweeping days, a trusty person with the Subscription Box; and to bring it to the Treasurer the same night; being answerable for it's safety. To be sure to send it from the ice before dark.

V To pitch the Tent regularly when the Club is out; and lodge it safely, for the night, at Duddingston or Lochend.

VI When given out to him he is to be answerable for every article of the Club's property, till it is returned to the Secretary or Treasurer at the end of the Season. To replace it when lost or destroyed thro' his neglect, and to give notice when it is out of repair. He will have an inventory which will always be forthcoming to the office bearers of the Club. In the end of the season he will compare the Articles with the Inventory.

VII He may sell refreshments on his own account, both inside and outside the tent; but must always be ready in case called away on Club duty, which he is to consider his principal duty when at the ice. He will attend to the Band of Music, when out, and will be paid for their Refreshment; and for anything taken either by Members of the Club or others.

VIII He is to be at the command of the office bearers for all Club duty. But he is to levy the quota money only when required by the Treasurer, who may employ and pay another person for that duty when he sees fit.

IX He will receive from the club funds Five pounds annually in full of all demands, or Five shillings every day he attends the Club at the ice. He will be allowed a consideration for an assistant, not exceeding 2/6 a day when out, and that in the discretion of the Treasurer. The latter will likewise judge what is extra labour which he may order, such as cart hire etc. (N.B. £5 as Salary taken. No allowance for Assistant) [see p. 110.]

X He shall keep a separate book, in which he will enter all outlay by himself on account of the Club; distinguishing each day; which he will bring for settlement with the treasurer at least once a week.

XI By resolution of the Club, he may claim, as a perquisite to himself, two shillings and sixpence from every member of the Club, who either comes to the ice without his medal, or does not put it on there, at the time he puts on his skates, or does not wear it all the time he skates.

XII When at the Ice with the Club, he will be ready to assist any person whatever who may fall into the water.

He will learn the use of the Saving apparatus. To look for no gratuity from the Club for this duty.

He will immediately on arriving at the ice, lay down the saving rope round the loch, hang up the warning boards, and place the saving apparatus. For the safety of all these articles, (of which he likewise has an Inventory,) he will be answerable; so that he may always see them in safe hands, and safely lodged each night at Duddingston or Lochend. N.B. The officer's small book contains directions for pitching the tent; to prevent confusion and delay.

The Street placards are so framed, that new ones are only necessary when the Club go to the other Loch; when the placards are covered with the new ones. Of course they are changed at any rate every new frost.

XIII If the Officer takes the option of a salary—No allowance is made to his assistant. The Profits of the tent have been found more than compensating the officer.

It has been found necessary to have the watchman attending the saving apparatus altho' the officer is out, as he cannot attend to his other duties and the watching besides.

After the ice is strong, the watchman is not needed.

A man is also stationed with the subscription box.

Directions for the persons who watch the Ice  
at both Lochs

1. To watch the ice at Duddingston (or Lochend) from daylight till dark, for the two or three first days of every hard frost; and the second day of the succeeding thaw; provided the ice has born, and the Club been out.

2. To call at the house of the Treasurer or Secretary, by  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 7 in the morning of the first day; and every evening during the watching.—When he will be paid (as may be agreed— $\frac{3}{4}$ - a day was allowed,—but 2/- enough).

3. On arriving at the Loch, he will first hang up the warning boards, and then put the tarred saving rope round the ice, or such part as is frozen. He will watch the whole day, and prevent boys from going on; or in any way injuring the ice with stones or rubbish. If he is off his post for a moment, or any stones are thrown on, he will neither be paid nor again employed,—or if he does not keep sober.

4. He will be ready to give immediate assistance to any one who falls into the ice, with the tarred Saving rope and other apparatus. The latter renders himself perfectly safe, so that he may go at once up to the spot of the accident. For this however he is to have no additional allowance from the Club.

5. He will safely lodge the tarred rope and apparatus (at the Farmer's at Lochend or in Sir R. Dick's aisle at Duddingston) each night; and be answerable for it's safety when in his hands.

6. When he calls on the Secretary or Treasurer, he will be ready to report the precise state of the ice, and have measured it's thickness. He will also try when the ice is bearing by going cautiously on it with his copper jacket etc., on, and a long pole.

7. He will, at Duddingston, watch the reeds when cutting the first frost; and prevent boys taking any of them up to carry about the ice; and see that the persons cutting the reeds, carry clear off all that they cut. For this he has full authority from Sir Robert Dick.

8. He will give timeous notice, when he gives up the employment and recommend some other person.

N.B. Added to the above written directions given to the Watchman will be the Inventory of the saving apparatus for which he is to be answerable.

Inventory of the Property of the Club for which the Officer is responsible. 1815

1. The Traineau with a cover of ticking lined with brown cotton.
2. Fifteen hardwood, and three iron shovels; and fifteen hair brooms with iron shads.
3. A patent locked box for subscriptions, with a brass plate—a placard board on a pole for ditto.
4. A Tent with its furniture; consisting of the following articles.
  1. Canvas top painted with red ornaments,—vase and flagstaff.
  2. Canvas sides in one piece.
  3. Inner top of brown cotton with ticking lining.
  4. Sides of the same in one piece.
  5. A Canvas bag to pack the tent in.
  6. Two tent poles and stretcher for the top.

7. A hinged skreen or frame for stretching the tent upon, of four pieces, two of them with three folds, and two with two. [For use when the ground was "too hard for the usual mode of stretching."]
8. Six stretching ropes.
9. Ten iron pins, two with iron hoops for the poles, and four with cords made fast to them to tie fast to rails.
10. A measuring rope to place the table in the middle etc.
11. A Table for the tent.
12. Five forms three large and two short; and four foot boards, two long and two short, with clasps.
5. A blue livery coat with red edging,—a badge sewed on the breast.
6. A small fire engine lent the Club by Mr Young of the Phoenix fire office—to water the ice. [Scored out].

Articles of the Saving Apparatus  
One of each sort, at both Duddingston and Lochend.

1. A ladder 18 feet long 17 inches broad, spars six inches asunder, with iron spindle and handle for the saving rope; and a small pickaxe fixed on.
2. A rod in two pieces with a spring joint, and with dragging irons at the end invented by Capt. Manby.
3. A saving rope to roll round the spindle on the ladder, with whalebone noose and wooden running-ring,—also invented by Capt. Manby.
4. A Copper patent life preserver.
5. A long rope to go round the waist of the person saving anyone in danger, held 50 yards behind if necessary.—
6. A tarred rope with iron ring to fix it to a post. The rope goes completely round the Loch and consists of five pieces or coils, each 120 yards long at Lochend, and of six coils of the same length at Duddingston.  
(N.B. the fixed post being driven on the side of the Loch opposite to where the tent is pitched, and the two loose ends coming round to the Tent, either half of the rope may be pulled over the half of the Loch, and must be caught by a person in danger, if above the ice.)
7. A painted ticket board (Two at Lochend) warning the skaters, not to throw stones on the ice, or meddle with the saving rope lying round the margin of the ice. A slipboard is attached to it, on one side with the words "The Loch is unsafe", and on the other "keep within the ropes".
8. One long and two short posts at each Loch fixed and left.
9. An additional board, (moveable) for each of the three warning boards; painted on one side, "No watchman present" and on the other "No aid yet from the ropes or ladder". These are used either when the ice is not worth watching; or is too weak to allow the saving things to be used.
10. A set of the apparatus of the Humane Society in a wooden case; consisting of
  1. A pair of bellows;
  2. An injecting syringe;

3. A small tin case, containing an Ivory nostril piece, a scalpel, and silver tube for the windpipe.
  4. Six pieces of Flannel for rubbing.
- N.B. The Humane Society apparatus is lodged, at Duddingston in the Minister's House; and at Lochend in the Farmer's House (Mr Oliver's) to be of use all the year round. Along with them is also kept the Life Preserver.—The Minister at Duddingston and Mr Oliver Farmer at Lochend are both instructed in the use of the Articles; and have humanely consented to be sent for to superintend in case of an accident occurring.
- N.B. The Club's property is lodged as follows. At Duddingston, at Sir Robert Dick's at Prestonfield, all the year except during the Skating Season when it is brought in one of his carts to Duddingston and lodged in his aisle.—The ladder is lodged during that season in the church. The Humane Society apparatus is all the year round in the Minister's.
- At Lochend, every thing is at Mr Oliver's.

APPENDIX III

Club Songs

For 1842

1. A note to each member from Goldie sent round,  
That at Duddingstone Loch the Club meets today,  
Our business engagements in haste we confound  
And with spirits elate to the Ice hie away.  
All eager our powers and our nerves to unfold,  
In worming and screwing, feats strange to behold;  
Now glancing athwart, to meet counterpart,  
Circling here, curving there and figuring bold.
2. Straight on reaching the Ice, we make for the tent,  
Where our skates we put on in tremulous haste;  
To astonish the crowd sure Woodman is bent,  
See his medal affixed with exquisite taste.  
More's is forgotten, there's no use debating,  
Reasons, excuses, in vain 'tis creating;  
You'll please half a crown to Reynolds pay down,  
Oh, quick let us cross to where they are skating.
3. A figure's declared, let each one take his place,  
A quarter, a half, three quarters, a whole,  
Then Jim-along-Josey with suitable grace  
And around and around beseemingly bowl.  
One two three and a change, with sweep large and long,  
Cries Thatcher, "My eye, ain't we coming it strong?  
"Macknight, pray keep time, and with others chime—  
"But halt! We're all thrown out, there's somebody wrong."

4. While Gillon and Glover neat sixes design,  
See Kerr flying backwards, one foot borne aloft;  
But woe to Tom Allan, he's right in his line,  
And downward he comes neither silent nor soft.  
But what means that crowd? What can be transacting?  
Ah, 'tis the Manx arms the ladies attracting.  
Who's that lying there with his heels in the air?  
Elliot the Eagle has been overacting.
5. A Wild Goose is declared, and all rally near,  
Some range on the left hand and some on the right;  
In two mighty lines they quickly appear,  
To every beholder a singular sight.  
In two graceful bends these lines interlace,  
Like two Railway Trains at the top of their pace,  
Those in now are out, now in wheeling about,  
Together commingle, and finish the race.
6. The Club for her patron has now got the Prince;  
Bright be her prospects, her interests flourish.  
May she good fellow-feeling and spirit evince  
And concord and peace within her breast nourish.  
All join in my toast ere my song I conclude,  
To the trumps of the Club, in skating so good,  
Tho' with us they're not, they can't be forgot—  
Here's long life to Tom Cowan and Haggart and Wood!

For 1843

1. The papers lately mention  
A patent new invention  
Was worn by all the Members of this Club one day;  
'Tis a bag blown up with air,  
Fastened round the neck with care,  
Which floats you in the water when the Ice gives way.
2. So without it no one here  
Must e'er venture to appear  
At any time or place on skates upon the Ice O,  
Unless he have a mind  
His Corpse to leave behind  
From failing to adopt this excellent device O.

3. 'Tis a fact well known I ween  
That our gracious Royal Queen,  
Whene'er our Patron Prince goes a-skating O,  
Round his shoulders throws the cape,  
With her fingers ties each tape,  
And helps with Royal puffs the inflating O.
4. Our subscription to maintain  
The Society Humane  
Will be saved, our other joys thereby crowning O,  
As in place of their two men  
We'll be sure to muster ten,  
All ready for the rescue of the drowning O.
5. That our friends of bulky weight  
May have confidence to skate  
An air pillow round their middle doth extend O;  
Which, now be it understood,  
Must be worn by William Wood,  
On his next appearance skating on Lochend O.
6. Since to all it must be clear  
That this patent floating gear  
Will add lustre to the name of its inventor O,  
I'm sure you'll think it right  
On each cape in letters bright  
The name "Simpson" be imprinted on the centre O.

#### APPENDIX IV

Medals of the Edinburgh Skating Club in the National Museum of Antiquities  
Nos. 3, 5 and 7 to 11 were presented by the Club.

1. A thin oval, engraved silver medal, with a suspension loop and free ring; 3.7 × 3.0 cm. excluding loop.  
Obv. [script] "Edinburgh/Skateing/Society/M<sup>r</sup>. Matt<sup>r</sup>. /Sandilands."  
Rev. Within border lines, a pair of crossed skates with decorative straps, under a scroll "OCIOR EURO."  
Cochran Patrick, *Scottish Medals*, p. 143, no. 32.  
National Museum, 1958-1947.  
Date: Sandilands is no. 5 in the 1778 list.

2. As 1.  
 Obv. " - - M<sup>r</sup>/Tho<sup>s</sup> Hogg"; all within border lines.  
 Rev. No border lines; the skates etc. slightly different from 1.  
 On loan in the National Museum from Mrs Nicoll, who has kindly supplied the information about Thomas Hogg, *see* p. 124.  
 Hogg died in 1784.
3. As 1 but larger, 4.3×3.3 cm.; the suspension loop has shoulders.  
 Obv. Within a border of rudimentary leaf sprays tied at the foot: [script] "Edinburgh/  
 Skating/[Gothic] Society/[script] Rob<sup>t</sup> Hope/1782."  
 Rev. Within a border as Obv., scroll, motto and crossed skates as 1.
4. As 3.  
 Obv. Inscription as 3., with "James Dewar/Esqr." in place of the name and date, all under the Dewar crest and motto—a mailed arm with a sword, and QUID NON PRO PATRIA."  
 Rev. Border as 3.; scroll, motto and crossed skates as 1.  
 National Museum, 1925-23.  
 Date: Dewar was admitted in 1789; *see* also no. 6.
5. As 3 but larger, 4.8×3.7 cm., with a suspension loop diam. 0.8 cm.  
 Obv. Within a narrow ropework and 'rocking' border, [script] "Edinburgh/  
 Skating/[Gothic] Society/[script] Ja<sup>s</sup>. Home/1792."  
 Rev. Border as Obv.; scroll with motto and crossed skates as 1.
6. As 5 but slightly larger, 5.0×3.8 cm.  
 Obv. Within a single line border, inscription as 5, with [script] "James Dewar/  
 1801" in place of the name and date.  
 Rev. Within a 'rocked' border, a scroll with the motto over crossed skates as 1; silversmith's marks; ID (probably James Dempster), a castle (Edinburgh), a thistle, and the King's head to r. in a trefoil punch.  
 National Museum, 1925-24. Dewar's silver pass for the Edinburgh Amphitheatre is also in the Museum.  
 Date: Mr Dewar must have preferred the new size—*see* no. 4.
7. Round silver medal diam. 4.3 cm. with a raised, moulded border and an ornamental suspension loop for the lower bar of the ribbon clasp (both silver). The ribbon is of faded red pink grosgrain silk, 4.3 cm. wide. The upper part of the clasp is a plain buckle with four prongs, 4.1×1.1 cm.  
 Obv. "EDINBURGH/[Gothic] Skating/CLUB, [on a hatched background]/JAMES GIBSON THOMSON/Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> January 1826."  
 Rev. Infant Mercury with winged cap and heels, skates suggested under feet, bearing a twisted scroll, "OCIOR EURO;" all against a background hatched above the horizon. Silversmith's marks: Thistle; JM<sup>c</sup> (J. McKay, Edinburgh); King's head to r., in a two-lobed punch.



Plate VII

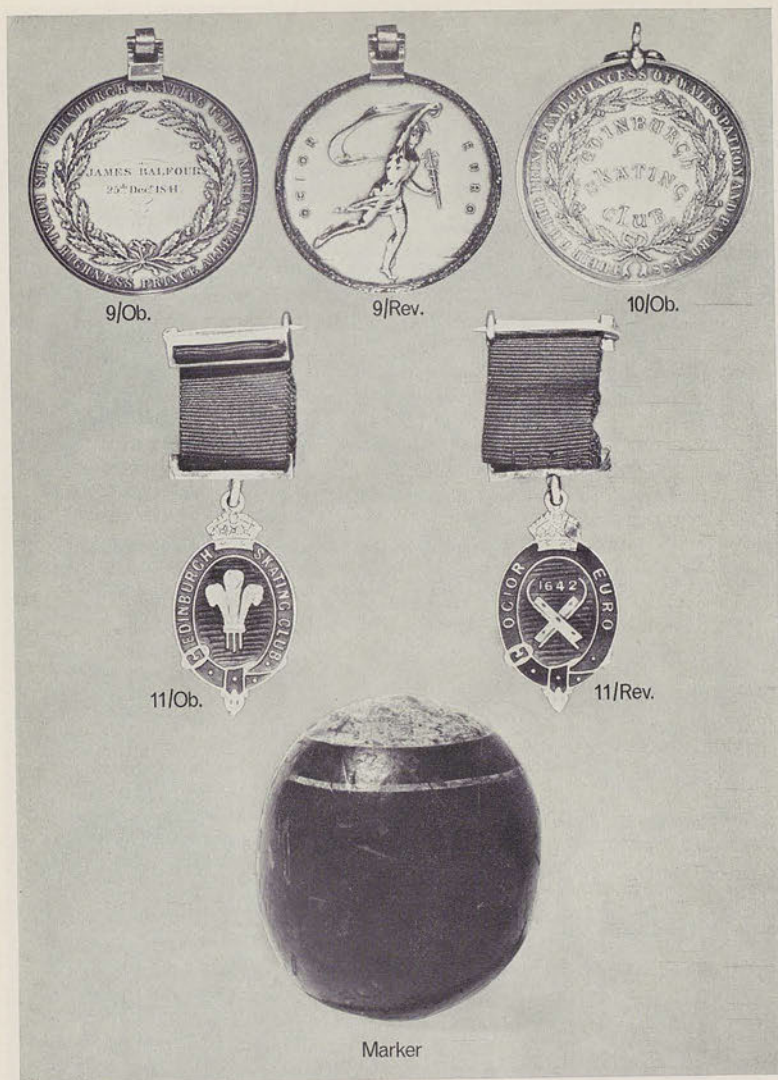


Plate VIII

Extracts from Minutes.

22nd December, 1814.

"The Council agreed that the medal in future should be of a round form as exhibited at the last meeting of the Club, that form being the only form in which what is properly called the medal is made. The new members to be directed to provide themselves according to that pattern and any old members who chuse, but this to be optional to the latter, who may adhere to the old oval form. The Treasurer to consider of an appropriate emblem and report to the Council."

15th February, 1815.

"... Mr Simpson reported that having consulted with several artists and persons of taste relating to a proper emblem for the new form of medal adopted in that minute, he had at last fixed upon one designed with much elegance by Mr William Thomson, Miniature Painter, after the manner of the very popular vignettes composed of infant figures, designed by Stoddart for the late edition of Rogers's poems.

The emblem is an Infant Mercury with winged cap and feet, in the same attitude in his flight as that of the outedge skating, displaying a scroll over his head with the old motto of the Club "Ociur Euro" from Horace. The figure does not represent actual skating but only allegorises its qualities of swift easy and graceful movements. The natural unconstrained grace of infancy was considered as a more appropriate emblem of these qualities than the common figure of Mercury. Mr Simpson shewed one of the Medals engraved as above. The Council approved of the said device to be the future emblem of the Club, reserving always to Members previous to 1813 the old medal both in form and device if they prefer it.

The Council unanimously voted their thanks to Mr Thomson for the design with which he had so handsomely presented the Club."

8. As 7 with slightly different moulding; the rich pink ribbon is faded and torn.  
Obv. "EDINBURGH [Gothic] Skating/CLUB/[Gothic] James Macknight/9<sup>th</sup> January 1841."  
Rev. As 7 but the figure more crude; Silversmith's marks: King's head (William IV) to r., in an oval; JM<sup>c</sup> (J. M<sup>c</sup>Kay—a smaller punch than 7); and a thistle.
9. Round silver medal, diam. 4.4 cm.; with an ornamental suspension loop and clasps as 7 and 8, but the ribbon maroon, 4.0 cm. wide and the upper clasp having one prong.  
Obv. In relief round the medal within a raised rim "EDINBURGH SKATING CLUB/HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE ALBERT PATRON.;" in the centre, engraved "JAMES BALFOUR/25<sup>th</sup> Decr 1841," surrounded by thistle sprays, in relief, crossed and tied at the foot.  
Rev. Within a narrow border of thistles in relief, the figure of the adult Mercury carrying a caduceus and beckoning; drapery floats from his raised right arm, and his cap and feet are winged; to l. "OCIOR" and to r. "EURO"—figure and letters in relief; at one side in small relief caps, "LIZARS INV" and at the other "INGRAM SC."

Extracts from Minutes.

12th March, 1841.

"Mr Goldie laid before the Meeting the Designs which had been drawn by Mr Ballantyne Portrait Painter for the New Medal for the Club. These designs had been submitted to Mr. Ingram a celebrated Medallist in Birmingham who stated that a die could be struck for £9.9.—

to be well done however £12.12. would be required, and if a very superior work was wished for, a still higher price would be necessary. Mr Goldie also stated that he had consulted with Mr. Lizars and others on the subject all of whom recommended that a Die should be struck in preference to Engraving the Figure as had hitherto been done. The Meeting highly approved of the Design as being in all respects very beautiful and instructed Mr. Goldie to give the necessary directions to Messrs. MacKay and Cunningham to get the work executed in the best manner of the Art with all convenient speed. A vote of thanks to Mr. Ballantyne for his able and spirited sketches of it was . . . unanimously adopted."

21st January, 1842.

"... a considerable expense had been incurred in obtaining a die for the Gold Medal recently presented to His Royal Highness Prince Albert. The Account rendered by Messrs. MacKay and Cunningham amounts to £38.6/6d. . . ."

10. As 9 but with a suspension loop and ring to which a maroon taffeta ribbon, 3.4 cm. wide, is attached from a smaller silver clasp with a long pin at right angles to it.

Obv. Within a raised, finely milled rim, round the medal in relief is "THEIR R. H. THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES PATRON AND PATRONESS"; in the centre, all in relief, is "Edinburgh/Skating/Club" within thistle sprays crossed and tied at the foot.

Rev. As 9.

The edge is inscribed "JOHN NESBITT."

Date: 1864 was Nesbitt's date of admission.

Extract from Minutes.

18th January, 1864.

"In consequence of the death of the late R.H. Prince Albert it has become necessary to change one side of the Die for the Medal. The Secretary laid the dies before the Meeting with Messrs MacKay and Cunningham's letter stating the cost of a plain reserve die would be 24/- and that with the wreath and name of Patron and Patroness would be 75/-. The Meeting resolved upon the latter and instruct the Secretary to direct Messrs M. and C. to have the change in the die immediately proceeded with."

11. Blue enamelled silver badge, pendant from a blue silk ribbon 1.4 cm. wide; it is oval in shape, with a crown at the top and a 'strap end' at the foot, 2.6×1.5 cm. the inscription, etc. are reserved in silver on the blue enamel.

Obv. Round a belt is "EDINBURGH SKATING CLUB"; within the belt, Prince of Wales' feathers.

Rev. Round the belt, "OCIOR EURO," and within, crossed skates under "1642."

Extract from Minutes.

15th February, 1872.

"Report of the Committee of the Edinburgh Skating Club appointed to consider as to a new Badge.

Since the Committee was appointed they have had several Meetings, and numerous designs more or less successful have been under their consideration. The feeling of the Members of the Committee was that the old motto of the Club 'Ociore Euro,' and if practicable the figure of Mercury should be retained in the design and that the name of the Club with the date of its institution should also appear. It was found most difficult to embody all these details appropriately in a small badge, and besides it was ascertained that the expense of introducing the figure of Mercury, which could not be properly rendered without a die being struck, would be

so considerable that the Committee resolved to abandon the idea of their forming part of the designs. The Committee came to the conclusion that the best design was the following 'Oval Badge with Garter the obverse being the Garter with "Edinburgh Skating Club" and the centre bearing Prince of Wales Feathers; the reverse being the Garter with the date "1642" and the motto "Ociore Euro" and the centre bearing cross skates both sides of the Badge being on blue enamel ground. The cost of each Badge of this description will be from about 15s. to 20s.

The Committee therefore unanimously recommend this Badge as the one which shall be adopted by the Club.

Mr Crichton moved the approval of the Report and this motion which was seconded by Mr Skinner was unanimously carried, on the understanding that Members who are at present in possession of old medals of the Club may wear them if they choose and it shall not be requisite for them to get the new Badge.

The Chairman [Mr Balfour] moved that the new Badge should be worn with a red ribbon which he stated had always been the ribbon of the Club. The motion was seconded by Mr Skinner.

Mr Crichton moved that it be worn with a blue ribbon as more appropriate to the colour of the Badge; on this motion which was seconded by Mr Tod being put to the Meeting it was carried as against the motion of the Chairman."

#### APPENDIX V

The entire written and printed records of the Club have been given to the National Library, and seven medals and five wooden markers to the National Museum; their records are listed below.

1. Minutes, 1784 to 1888, with later additions.
2. A copy of 1., made in 1895.
3. Minutes, 1889 to 1966.
4. Quota Book, 1814-47.
5. Cash Book, 1856-1919.
6. Papers (17)—miscellaneous, including the Secretary's Reports, 1888-97.
7. Rules, 1871; printed booklet, 7 pp.
8. Five printed cards and books on skating.
9. Two songs—Professor John Thomson, *The Skaters' March*, (1841, 2 copies); and 'Boreas,' *John Frost*, (1888, 2 copies, both with amendments in ms.)
10. Three photographs, one of a medal and two of skating scenes at Duddingston.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 3rd edition. Edinburgh, 1797; article on skating.
- <sup>2</sup> *Edinburgh Skating Club, with diagrams of figures and a list of the members*. Printed by William Grant, 52 West Register Street, 1865.
- <sup>3</sup> *Poker Club—Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, vol. III, pp. 151-4. Society of Antiquaries of Scotland—*Archaeologia Scotica*, 1792. Musical Society—*Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, vol. XIX. Speculative Society—*History*, 1905. New Club—*History*, 1938.



<sup>4</sup> "Walter Dove" (James Whitelaw), *The Skater's Monitor, Instructor, and Evening Companion*. John Menzies, Edinburgh, 1846.

<sup>5</sup> "1 Dec. 1662 . . . first did see people sliding with their skatees. . .", Samuel Pepys, *Diary*. London, 1825.

"1 Dec. 1662 . . . sliders on the canal with scheets after the manner of Hollanders . . .", John Evelyn, *Diary*, vol. I, p. 342. London, 1818.

<sup>6</sup> John Foster, *Life of Swift*, vol. I, letter 14, 31 January, 1711. London, 1875.

<sup>7</sup> Rev. Alexander Carlyle, *Autobiography*, ed. J. H. Burton, p. 62. 1910.

<sup>8</sup> Horace, *Odes*, II, xvi, 23, ". . . cura

Ocior cervis, et agente nimbos  
Ocior euro."

<sup>9</sup> *Cursus Glacialis; or, Scating, a Poetical Essay*; 1774. Noticed in F. W. Foster, *The Bibliography of Skating*; London, 1898.

<sup>10</sup> John Kay, *Original Portraits*, vol. II, p. 283; Edinburgh, 1877.

<sup>11</sup> Henry Cockburn, *Memorials of his Time*, p. 17; 1856.

<sup>12</sup> *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, vol. XX, p. 50.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. XIX, p. 57.

<sup>14</sup> Lawrence Park, *Gilbert Stuart*, vol. I, p. 358 and vol. II, plate 343; New York, 1926.

<sup>15</sup> Kay, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 237.

<sup>16</sup> Robert Jones, Lieutenant of Artillery, *Treatise on Skating*; London, 1772.

<sup>17</sup> Kenneth Clark, *The Nude*, p. 203 and plate 161; London, 1956.

<sup>18</sup> T. Maxwell Witham, *System of Figure Skating*, p. 287; London, 1893.

<sup>19</sup> *Blackwood's Magazine*, vol. XIX, p. 221 ff; 1826.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, vol. XX, pp. 144-6; 1826.

<sup>21</sup> P. H. Clias, *An Elementary Course of Gymnastic Exercises*; London, 1823.

<sup>22</sup> *Blackwood's Magazine*, vol. XXIX, p. 303; 1831.

<sup>23</sup> Thomas Clay, *Instructions on the Art of Skating*; Leeds, 1828.

<sup>24</sup> "A Member of the Skating Club," *The Skater's Manual*; London, 1831.

<sup>25</sup> George Du Maurier, *Punch*; London, 9th and 16th January 1875.

<sup>26</sup> "Cyclos" (George Anderson), *The Art of Skating*; Glasgow, 1852.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*, 2nd edition; London, 1868.

<sup>28</sup> Henry Cockburn, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

<sup>29</sup> M. S. F. and S. F. Monier Williams, *Combined Figure Skating*; London, 1883.

<sup>30</sup> C. A. Stevenson, in *Nature: Statics and Dynamics of Skating*, vol. XXIII, p. 268; London, 1881.

<sup>31</sup> John Thomson, 1805-41; Professor of Music at Edinburgh University.

<sup>32</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography*.

<sup>33</sup> The boathouse at Duddingston was referred to as the "Police Boathouse" in 1888, when Club property was reported kept there. The stone house at Lochend is now used by the park keepers.

## THE BALM-WELL OF SAINT CATHERINE, LIBERTON

by W. N. BOOG WATSON

*In the preparation of this paper considerable use has been made of the notes on the Well in Dr G. A. Fothergill's "Stones and Curiosities of Edinburgh", now a rare work.*

In past centuries, when many of the Scottish people lived in conditions of dirt, overcrowding and malnutrition, lacking all but the most primitive medical and nursing care, diseases of the skin were common and often severe. Of these scabies, or the itch as it was called, was the most prevalent. Indeed, in the minds of their neighbours south of the Tweed the national disease of Scotland was the itch, which afflicted men and women of all social classes in all parts of the country; and reference to it, with derogatory comment, is to be found in the records of many of the early visitors from across the Border.

Treatment of the itch, also known as the scab, the scaw or the yeuk, and of other skin diseases was usually by means of ointments of mercury, of sulphur or of tar, but the waters of certain springs were also held to be effective remedies. One of those springs, and that the most famous, is the subject of this paper.

The Balm-Well of St. Catherine is situated in the parish of Liberton, within the grounds of St. Katherine's, a residential children's home, formerly a private mansion, which stands on the east side of Howden Hall Road, the main road between Liberton and Burdiehouse, and north of Balmwell Terrace. The well is now inside the boundary of Edinburgh, for the city in its extension southwards into Midlothian has swallowed up what was once a prosperous countryside. On the surface of the water floats a black, tarry substance because of which the well was famous for hundreds of years as a place of cure. The well owes this reputation to its geographical position for it is situated in that part of Scotland where there are bituminous shale beds, and the tarry substance in the water is derived from a minute spring exuding from the oil shales below.<sup>1</sup>

The well takes its name from St. Catherine of Alexandria.<sup>2</sup> According to medieval tradition St. Catherine was a royal maiden of great beauty and learning who, after her conversion to Christianity, held a public disputation with certain pagan philosophers so that they too became Christians. For this she was condemned to death by the Emperor Maxentius and was beheaded in the year 307 A.D. The body was carried to Mount Sinai for burial. There, in the sixth century, a monastery was established by the Emperor Justinian. This acquired sanctity from the presence of St. Catherine's shrine, whence healing oil was said to flow, and it became a favourite place of pilgrimage.<sup>3</sup> At least three medieval churches in England claimed to have oil from the tomb of the saint—Durham and Salisbury cathedrals and the church of Somerby.<sup>4</sup> A phial of this precious oil was brought from Sinai to Scotland, by angels according to one account,<sup>5</sup> by St. Catherine herself according to another,<sup>6</sup> and some of it reached the site of the well at Liberton. Here is Boece's account of what took place: "This fontaine rais throw ane drop of Sanct Katrine's oulie quhilk was brought out of Mount Sinai fra her sepulture to Sanct Margaret, the blissed quene of Scotland. Als sone as Sanct Margaret saw the oulie spring ithandle [unceasingly] be divine miracle in the said place sche gart big ane chapell thair in the honour of Sanct Katrine. This oulie has ane singular vertew aganis all maner of cankir