LARGS OLD CHURCH (1), including CEMETERY and MONUMENTS

EG, 7710, F 11.1.1867, 41ab — Order, Privy Council, 28.12.1866. Will close to new burials w.e.f 10th January 1867. Exception: Brisbane Aisle.

BRISBANE AISLE

List 52 — Small C17 freestanding burial vault to W of Skelmorlie Aisle. Built for the Shaws of Kelsoland, becoming burial vault of Brisbanes after 1695. Rectangular plan and gabled; finely squared ashlar masonry with bolection moulding at wallhead, and cavetto moulded skewputts and apex stones. Main fabric presumably dating to 1634 as inscribed in heraldic datestone at E elevation above sealed portal. Heraldic panel also inscribed with PS and IS, for the Shaws of Kelsoland, plus armorial devices of (left) Shaw (mullets) and (right) Montgomerie of Braidstone (annulets). Carved armorial at W bears initials PS - IM - IS. Slab roof at lower pitch than steeply-pitched gable ends, the result, presumably, of repairs made possibly late C17. C19 exterior wall-mounted memorial panels with block pediments. Ref: Arch Coll of Ayr & Wigton, vi, 58 (1889). A.

SKELMORLIE AISLE, including CEMETERY WALL and GATE PIERS

For commentary on the texts on the ceiling at Crathes Castle see

Henry Hargreaves, The Crathes Ceiling Inscriptions, pp 373-386 (Ch.28) in J Derrick McClure & Michael R G Spiller, eds., Bryght Lanterns: Essays on the Language and Literature of Medieval and Renaissance Scotland, Aberdeen, AUP, 1989.

nr — 1636. Church demolished 1802. Ceiling dated 1638 **J S Stalker** Edinburgh and also Renovatum MDCCCXCIX. The tomb is 'without parallel in Scotland'.

List 51 — Built 1636. Aisle, originally N transept of Largs Old Church, demolished 1802, and originally linked by tall pointed arch, now blocked, on S wall. Coursed ashlar. Entrance on W wall: ogival headed door with roll moulding, below square plaque with crest, and flanked by single windows; 2 similar windows on W wall and windows with geometric tracery on N gable. Angle margins, with decorative quoins. Straight skews, thistle and fleur-de-lis finaisl and slate roof.

Interior: richly painted ceiling, signed J S Stalker, and dated 1638. Timber barrel-vaulted roof divided by rainted ribs imitating rib-vaulting, panels between with biblical texts and representations, zodiac signs and symbolic figures; the 4 seasons represented in the corners, 'summer' including view of Largs town and old church. Floor on two levels, upper level raised over partially sunk burial vault, and approached by steps with balustraded parapet. Elaborate Renaissance carved stone tomb, canopy raised over panelled and pilastered platform, supported on 4 pairs of double Corinthian columns; 2 elaborate outer entablatures linked centrally by raised arch with elaborate brackets; soffits coffered; entablature with pinnacles and decorative pediment. Symbolic figures over angles.

Enclosed by rubble built cemetery walls with segmental headed ashlar gateway to W dated 1636 and approached by stone steps. Refs: C&DA, v, 193-200; DoE Guide; M R Apted, Painted Ceilings of Scotland, 1966, pp 21-24 and plates. A.

Hay, 208-209 — The Skelmorlie Aisle is interesting on account of both its fine boarded ceiling, richly painted and of an impressive monument which in general conception recalls that at Westminster to Queen Elizabeth by Maximilian Colt and the 1611 one to Elizabeth Marnix in the Oude Kerk of Delft. Though a lesser work than either of these, and in freestone instead of marble, the Largs monument, which was erected by

the Montgomerie family in 1639, is nevertheless notable for the refinement of its Italianate detail. Standing over a balustrade above the burial vault entrance, it takes the form of a kind of triumphal arch surmounted by strapwork, finials and cherubs, but was almost certainly intended to have a recumbent effigy.

Hay, 226-227 — The Skelmorlie Aisle, which was added to the old kirk of Largs in 1636 and of which it is now the sole remaining fragment is notable both for the splendid Montgomerie monument and for a fine ceiling similar in type to the Pitcairn (Perths) one. It, too, is a boarded cove and its elaborate decoration simulates a ribbed vault, enriched with such symbols as the seasons, the signs of the zodiac, symbols of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, and highly stylized renderings of the Temptation of Adam and Eve, and the transcation of Jacob and Esau, all on a white ground. Of more local interest are representations of Largs kirk and the Old Castle of Skelmorlie and the monograms and armorial bearings of the Montgomery family and its allies. At the springing level a series of lunette panels bear renderings of scripture texts enclosed by cartouche work. Apart from the signature I Stalker, fecit 1638, little appears to be known of the execution of the ceiling, which evinces all the Italianate character of [Pitcairn]. The ceiling was carefully treated by the Ministry of Works but the unfortunate application of wac has produced an alien glaze on the painting and likewise falsified the colour values. These ceilings belong to an interesting group which includes examples at Pinkie House, Skene's House Aberdeen, Earlshall and the The Palace Culross.

AR, 6/35 October 1899 — The ceiling of the burial aisle of the Montgomeries, in the old churchyard at Largs, is being restored.

AA, Th 7.9.1899 — Is in course of being restored. The work is being done by an artist from Ayr, on the instructions of the Earl of Eglinton's Commissioner. [See, for ? better info, LMN 24.2. and 3.3.1900.]

SN&Q, 2s, v1, April 1900, 156 — Skelmorlie Aisle 'is being restored at the instance of the Hon Mr Vernon, the Earl of Eglinton's Commissioner'. Artists: **Bennett Brothers**, Glasgow.

SOURCES

Pevsner, London One, L&W, 3rd edition, 442

'Free-standing further w Mary Queen of Scots, c1607-12, by **Cornelius Cure**. Two groups of four columns carrying straight ceilings, and connecting the groups a big coffered arch with a superstructure bigger and heavier than that of Queen Elizabeth's tomb. White marble effigy of superb craftsmanship high up on a sarcophagus.'

LARGS OLD CHURCH (2), Gallowgate Street

nr — Site now occupied by St Columba's CoS. Built c.1802. Demolished c.1891.

AA, Th 1.6.1865 — 2 stained glass windows were pit in on Friday: gifts of Robert Kerr and Hugh Lang.

BAPTIST CHURCH

GH, 16.12.1941 — Formally opened

CHURCH, School Street/Boyd Street

ACC Planning, B248 — July 1956. Church, for Rev Joseph Kerr, Girvan. AiP. Not built?

CLARK MEMORIAL CHURCH, Bath Street. Listing includes GATEPIERS

Built as UP Church

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Martha H McINTYRE, From Generation to Generation - The Clark Memorial Church Largs 1779-1942, [np], [nd (c.1942)]

BUILDING

List 6

**William Kerr** associated with **T G Abercrombie** of Paisley, 1890-92. EE Gothic, 7-bay church with tall 3-stage tower and spire, vestry and 4-bay hall at SE, low gabled porch at SW. Snecked stugged red ashlar with polished dressings. Tower has clasping stepped angle buttresses at 1st and 2nd stage; door in S wall with pointed moulded head and hood-moulds, single lancet set high above in tall lower stage. Short 2nd stage with 5 arcaded, pointed headed openings (3 blind) with slender shafts to each face. 3rd stage has tall, open, pointed-headed paired belfry lights to each face, in moulded reveals, with slender dividing column. Tall faceted spire with lucarnes and pinnacles supported on columns. Tower linked to church by rectangular hall and semi-octagonal vestry. Projecting porch at W with door under pointed, moulded head and hood-mould, bays to body of church divided by stepped buttresses, with gablets above eaves; 5 windows with geometric tracery to N and S, 2 in former in advanced gabled aisle; door in either end of N wall. Large geometric traceried window in W gable, gableted angle buttresses, stepped, and with plinths, at eaves line, supporting figures under hoods, Moses to L, St John to R. East window has large geometric traceried window and angle buttresses; hall, lit by 4 lancets, extends to left.

Interior: Body of church with oak pews and high dado with panels cusped and corniced. Hammerbeam roof, and light fittings supported by angelic figures. Organ by **Willis** of London. E window by **Meikle & Sons**, Glasgow, and W and transept gallery windows by **Stephen Adam**, these all gifted by John Clark.

Church set back and enclosed by low red ashlar wall with battered broad gatepiers; octagonal, with decorative frieze, cornice and hemi-spherical caps. Refs: Rev Charles Scobie, Clark Memorial Church, Largs, nd; Groome, 1882, iv, 470. Endowed by and called after John Clark of Curling Hall. A.

DSA

Very Burnetian (Kerr came to Abercrombie from Burnet), and derives in part from Burnet's competitive design for the Coats memorial Church, Paisley.

AA, Th 30.1.1890

A well executed sketch of the new church which Mr John Clark, of Curling Hall, is about to present to the UP body here was on view on Saturday and judging from it, Mr Clark's gift is going to be a building at once structurally handsome and very imposing in appearance. The view is from the SW and shows spire, principal gable and one of the entrances. The main gable is to face Bath Street.

AA, Th 10.7.1890

New UP church in course of erection at corner of Bath Street. Decorated Gothic, freely treated, and depending more on its massiveness and good proportions than on elaboration of detail for effect. Porches L and R of the front gable to Bath Street, the principal one being to L and finished in polished stone with open timber roof.

AA, th 25.9.1890

Memorial stone laid last Monday.

McIntyre (above)

Opened 16th June 1892.

Letter of sarah Goldie, 16.11.2010

2003, disabled ramp added, by McMillan & Cronin.

WINDOWS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| BI 2/20 | November 1891 | Large west window to be by Stephen Adam & Co. |
| BI 3/27 | June 1892 | Chancel window, 'Master's Call', by William Meikle & Sons, Glasgow. |
| People's Palace, Glasgow, nr | | Windows executed by J & W Guthrie, to designs of Christopher Whall. |

BELLS

Clouston — 10 bells of 1891 by Gilbert & Co., Croydon, of which only 5 remain.

AA, Th 7.1.1892 — The fine set of bells in the new UP church was ready in time to welcome the New Year.

HALL

SVR 1966-1967 — 25.8.1966

Letter of Sarah Goldie, 16.11.2010 — Opened 25th August. Built by William Tyre, of Wm Tyre & Sons, joiners. His architect was Alex J Gibson. Extended in 2002 by W I Munro, Kilmarnock.

DUNN MEMORIAL HALL, Union Street

List 49 — Mid C19. Symmetricaly planned 2-storey house linked to later single storey hall to E Harled with ashlar dressings. Original house: altered door with splayed reveals and segmental headed double-fanlight in right bay of house; 2 mullioned and transomed windows to ground floor, window in slightly advanced central gabled bay is moodmoulded. String courses over ground floor. 1st floor: central hoodmoulded recessed blank panel between 2 narrow lights with stepped linking cill band; round headed opening in gable. Single windows in outer bays with gabled dormer heads. Moulded skews with flat skewputs. Hall to E has tall central panel inscribed DUNN MEMORIAL HALL with oculus and stepped gable. Flanked by hoodmoulded segmental headed tripartites with small square blank plaques above; bracketed cornice; rhone pipes and guttering decorated with simple floral design. Slate roof. Gabled hall to rear. CS.

AP, 27.3.1936 — Formally opened last Wednesday. In memory of D Guthrie Dunn, millionaire yachtsman, of Knock Castle, drowned in South Atlantic in (8th/9th March) 1933.

L&NA FHS Journal, 56, Spring 2009, 31 — Formally opened 25th March 1936.

LMWN, Sa 28.3.1936, 5ad — Formally handed over last Wednesday. Fryers & Penman, c £3000. "Front elevation has been made to synchronise with the Elizabeth type of architecture in the old hall."

RELIEF CHURCH, Waterside Street

Sasine Abridgement 50 of 1841 — Feu Disposition, 1837, to Relief Congregation, Largs. 291.20.

ST COLUMBA'S [CHURCH OF SCOTLAND], Gallowgate Street

Built as Parish Church on site of Largs Old Church [2]

List 17 — **Henry Steele and Andrew Balfour**, architects, 1891-1893. Cruciform plan 1st-pointed Gothic church with hall to east and tall 3-stage square tower with spire at NW corner. Red snecked and stugged ashlar and polished dressings. Tower with tall set-back buttresses to 1st and 2nd stage; pointed-headed hood-moulded door in N elevation. Tall 2nd stage, with set-off, lancets high on each face flanking gableted central pilaster strips. 3rd stage has engaged banded octagonal angle piers with capping pinnacles, tall pointed headed louvred belfry openings, and clock on each face at base of spire below gable. Faceted spire. Main entrance in W gable, with pinnacled angle buttresses. Central gabled doorway with nook shafts, under moulded, pointed arch and hood mould; flanking buttresses. Tall, triple, plate-traceried lights above, with shafted jambs and moulded arches. Vescica in gable head. 5-bay buttressed nave and aisles; paired lancets with shafted jambs and hoodmoulds to aisles, plate traceried clerestory windows. Squat 2-stage octagonal tower with faceted roof at E end of aisles, each with pointed headed door. Large, hoodmoulded pointed headed transept windows with geometric tracery above blind arcade, flanked by

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|---|---|---|
| | | gableted and pinnacled angle buttresses. Small central decorative fleche. 5 bay hall to east, orientated N-S, with 5 paired lancets to clerestory at E and aisle, gabled porch in N gable below triple lancets approached from W by steps with pierced balustrade and square low terminal piers. Small fleche. Slate roofs throughout.<br>Interior: Nave, clustered columned aisle arcade. W and transept galleries have panelled balcony fronts. Organ by **Willis** of London. S transept window by **Stephen Adam** (1892); N transept by **Winfields** (1891) and W window by **Cottier & Son**, London (1891). Some later aisle windows by **Gordon Webster**.<br>Refs: SRO HR 167/1 and RHP 7353-7356. Architect, 20.12.1892. Groome, 1882, iv, 470. B. |
| BI 1/8 | November 1890 | Parish church and memorial hall, cost c.£12,000. Architects: H B W Steel and Balfour, Glasgow. |
| BI 3/28 | July 1892 | Glasgow Architectural Association visited Largs 18.6.1892 - shown new Parish Church - 'Mr Balfour of Messrs Steel and Balfour, architects, went over the building with the party'. |
| BI 4/47 | February 1894 | Interior exhibited at 33rd GIFA exhibition. |
| | WINDOWS | |
| BI 2/20 | November 1891 | New 'Te Deum' window to be by Stephen Adam & Co. |
| BI 4/26 | May 1892 | Memorial window, 'Christ stilling the Tempest' in transept by Messrs Winfields Ltd. |
| AA, Th 21.7.1892 | | Dedicated last Friday. |
| Russell, DS | | 5 windows by **Douglas Strachan**: 1925, 7-light window in memory of R K Holmes-Kerr (Psalm 23); 1924, 2-light window in memory of Rev J L Pagan (Pilgrim's Progress); 1938, 2-light window in memory of G & Mrs MacGregor (Pool of Bethesda); 1919, 2-light window in memory of A H Eckford (Christ Walking on the Water); 1924, 2-light War Memorial window (King David). |
| | BELLS | |
| Clouston | | 1814 **Mears** bell and 4 bells of 1891. |

ST COLUMBA'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, Aubery Crescent

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| List 2 | | **Ross & MacBeth**, architects. Built 1876. Simple EE Gothic church with 4-bay nave, 2-bay chancel and projecting south porch at west end. Snecked stugged ashlar with polished dressings. Recessed pointed-headed door; squat nook shafts supporting moulded arch and hoodmould. 3 cusped, louvred openings above in porch gable. Paired cusped windows to nave and choir, and 3-light east window. Slate roof.<br>Interior: altar with marble reredos, raised centrally with gable above cusped niche. Octagonal pulpit, organ framing and chancel dado panelling all oak, with Gothic detailing, and fitted 1930. Oak alter rails fitted 1938. Most windows have painted and leaded glass panels; Crucifixion on E window, portraits of SS Michael and Margaret dated 1898, SS George and Andrew dated 1902, and other memorial panels.<br>Refs: Signed architects' perspective in vestry; Groome, 1882, iv, 470; D O Noble, ed, 1976 centenary brochure. B. |
| LMN 9.6.1877 | | To be consecrated today. EE. Auchencarry stone. Walls lined with red Skelmorlie stone. Stained glass in E windows (SS Mary and John/Crucifixion) and W windows (SS Ninian, Columba, Kentigern, Margaret of Scotland), by **Heaton, Butler & Bayne**, London. Font: Brora stone on Peterhead granite shaft. Architect: **Alexander Ross**, Inverness. |
| | STAINED GLASS | |

Hadley lists a number of windows as "Largs", most of which I suspect are here.

Hadley — **James Powell & Sons**. Order no 4466 of 1890. Two light window in nave, based on a picture in the National Gallery of Scotland.

Hadley — **James Powell & Sons**. Order no 5444 of 1892. 2 2-light windows in chancel, 2 lights over sedilia, and 2 lights in south wall. Cartoons: **George Wolliscroft Rhead**.

Hadley — **James Powell & Sons**. Order no 6953 of 1896. Two lights: design **J C Powell**.

Hadley — **James Powell & Sons**. Order no 7718 of 1898. Two lights in south wall. Ss Michael (+ Read) and Margaret (+ E Penwarden)

Hadley — **James Powell & Sons**. Order no 8975 of 1901. Two lights in north wall. Ss George (+ Brown) and Andrew (+ Hodges)

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, Bath Street

Built as Free Church. For hall see DUNN MEMORIAL HALL, above.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Rev John L Riach, This House of God - The Centenary Brochure of St John's Largs 1843-1943, Largs, Simpsons, 1943.

BUILDING

List 7 — 1843 church, rebuilt 1886, **A J Grahame**, architect. Minor alterations in 1950. Romanesque 4-bay rectangular church with tall tower at NW Corner, vestry at SW corner, these 2 linked by arcaded narthex. Tower has small round-headed openings to light stairway and paired round-headed openings high on each face. Octagonal belfry with roundheaded louvred openings, slender shafts at jambs and at angles. Corbelled facetted spire with weather vane. Vestry has bowed front, divided by pilaster strips into 3 panels, round headed window in each; shafted jambs and moulded arches. decorative eaves band continued to left over narthex which has 5 moulded round arches, each supported on 2 slender columns with foliated caps. Doors below outer arches; rectangular window opening. Louvred oculus in frame with mask heads in gable. Corbelled skews, slate roofs. N elevation: 3 tall windows, jambs have slender shafts supporting moulded round heads. Smaller similarly detailed window in right bay, partially blocked, with rectangular inserted window and oculus above. Apse and hall to E, gallery to S approached by round stair tower with flat conical roof.
Interior: Nave with aisles; gallery on W gable with arcaded balcony front. Some leaded glass panels. Refs: Ewing, ii, 66. B.

Ewing — Begun September 1843, rebuilt 1885-1888.

Riach, 12 — Foundation stone laid 28.9.1843. [p 17-18, said to have been built with whinstone from demolished mill on the Gogo]

Riach, 18 — 1886 plans for reconstruction by Archibald J. Grahame, ' a youth of singular promise', who died of malaria, while studying in Italy, before work begun.

Riach, p.20 — Cost, 1886, £5084 7s 8d.

STAINED GLASS

Riach, 26 — 1886 windows by Heaton, Butler & Bayne, and including a memorial to A.J. Grahame.

Russell, DS — 1911 window in memory of Rev C Watson - 3 small single light windows in vestibule, subject St John: **Douglas Strachan**.

FONT

Riach, p.28 — 1890. Design by Middleton, Cambridge; execution by Martyn, Cheltenham

ORGAN

AA, Th 2.4.1891 — Organ has now been completed. Built by Messrs **J W Walker & Sons**, Tottenham Court Road, London.

BELL

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Clouston | | 1886 **Mears** bell. |
| | MANSE | |
| Riach, p.15 | | Gifted by Miss Mure of Warriston, 1846. Enlarged in 1847. |

ST MARY, STAR OF THE SEA. 28 Greenock Road

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Shaw | | RC Church, Largs, 1870. |
| LMWN, W 12.4.2017, 28 | | Opened 24 June 1962, cost £80,000 |
| | HALL | |
| NAC, 12.00073/PP | | February 2012. Proposed. |

U.F. CHURCH, Brisbane Road

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| B 16.9.1932 | | Site in Brisbane Road chosen. |
| B 18.11.1932 | | **Stellmacs** are prepared plans. |
| KS 4.2.1933 | | Sketch. |
| BI 43/516 | March 1933 | Sketch and description. **W F Valentine**, Kilmarnock, architect. |

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