

### 3. Hugh Love of Lochwinnoch

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Hugh Love's story starts at the Kirk of Lochwinnoch, popularly called "Auld Simon"; not with that particular building erected in 1729, but a previous one on the same site. The Kirk had a great influence on the career of Hugh, surely the king of entrepreneurs, if I may use a current expression. Building contractor, house agent, coal merchant, tax collector, 'skule maister', kirk elder, registrar of births etc., moneylender, that was Hugh Love, general factotum of Lochenyuch in the shire of Renfrew.

If you look around the kirkyard, you will see some very old stones - 16th century and even older. Hugh's grave I have not yet located, but there is one stone we cannot overlook. That stone is the one erected to the memory of Dr. Andrew Crawford of Cairn of Lochwinnoch fame – without whose painstaking research I could not write this account.

The Kirktoon of Lochenyuch (there are at least forty different spellings of Lochwinnoch - pronounced for years as 'Lochenyuch', was one of the many ferm-touns of the parish of Lochwinnoch. From the Barr Castle you can still identify one of the ferm-touns lying between Roadhead and Beith (Barford) and Barr Castle was a building very familiar to Hugh, as we shall see.

Hugh was born in 1597 in the ferm-toun of Calderhaugh, now the centre of the village. That was almost 40 years after the Reformation, just at the start of the time when wars, rebellions, executions and other nasty things were beginning. The root of the trouble was the erosion of the Scottish way of life, starting with the departure of Jamie the Saxt to be James 1st of England. With him went the 'hingers-on' who forgot the mither tongue and worshipped all things English. Jamie saw the power he could wield with bishops and a prayer book, but he was crafty.

His son Charles, not so crafty, fell out with both parliaments, then in with the Scots, who then fell in with the English parliament. Executions everywhere, including the King and the Marquis of Montrose. What a mess! That takes us up to 1650. What had the Kirk - and Hugh - been up to all this time?

The Reformation had given freedom, but the finances of the Roman Church had disappeared in a sort of Robert Maxwell fashion into the coffers of high society and the government. Paisley Presbytery was chaotic with some not very good ministers - Alexander Hamilton of Lochwinnoch, for example 'a naughty man, ill reported of', according to Woodrow, the historian, yet he was handy for signing documents (which he did for Hugh) till he died. A good minister, Hugh Peebles, came to Lochwinnoch in 1647, the very year that King Charles I was handed over to the English Parliament. The political pot was definitely boiling over.

Now a flash back to Hugh -he seemed to have prospered. By 1630 he had acquired a wife, Isobel Downie, affectionately known as Bell, and had set up house in the Sandilands area of Calderhaugh, right next to the river Calder,



He was now in the property market in the Johnshill area right next to the Kirk - most desirable then, as it is now three and a half centuries later. For obvious reasons the Kirk property was in a ruinous state after 70 years of neglect. Robert Love, son of George Love, in-dweller at Lochwinnoch Kirk lived in such a 'houss' with a rent of 100 merks which Hugh 'lent' him. Robert was to put the place in order and keep a bedroom for himself and a room for his kist (big kist or wee room) also to 'get his meit' for any tasks he did. There was an agreement for 14 years with safeguards for both parties, signed and witnessed by Robert Law, Solicitor, and Alexander Hamiltoun, minister. A footnote said 'R. Love could not write', that was the norm.

Hugh was no fool. The Kirk was the owner, Robert was to do the repairs - no harm in calling in the surveyors - sichtars in those days. The sichtars were Robert Barbour of Risk; John Love of Scheills; William King of Plantilly and Thomas King of Hills, none of whom could write.

'Sichtars' Determination: 'They find the littel hous nerrest ye kirk zaird dyk standing sufficiently. And the mekill houss on ye northsyd yrof anf they sichtit and finds all the timber wt. in the hous wt. the hewin dor the worth thereof extending to fourteen pundis moe.'

They were farmers from farms still in existence today, and their names have been around for a when o' years. A rough translation is 'the little house nearest the kirkyard dyke is all right, but the big house on the north side has rotten timber. It has a hewn door. Cost of repairs will be £14 more.' That seems a lot for a Kirk tenant to pay, but years of neglect before and after the Reformation meant ruins everywhere. Hugh grabbed the chance.

His 'Memorandum of the maist part of the bigging of the houssis at the kirk in simmer 1636' is a mine of information of rural life at that time. (see fig.1) What you see in the Cairn are translations of Hugh's good medieval writing. Dr. Crawford salvaged a piece of it.

A map of Lochwinnoch (see fig. 2) shows that Hugh was on one side of the river Calder and his building materials on the other, with one bridge at Bridgend. Wheels were rare, often changed from one vehicle to another. Hand barrows were like ambulance stretchers, needing two to carry them. Wheeled barrows were unknown. 140 years later people came for miles to see them when Macdowall got them for his workers deepening the Cart.

So it was a route from the Kirk, up the Craw road, over the bridge, down the road we now call Burnfoot to Barrbank beside Barr Castle, for timber from the bank (or hill) and 'stains' from the quarry. Pack ponies would be used most, or slypes, something like sledges. Every item was recorded and costed. Farmers who helped were named. Timber from Barrbank and stones from the quarry cost £11:7/- and 13/4 respectively. Hugh himself 'wan' (got) 200 loads of 'stains' and carted them to Johnshill, using his own 'greath', 13/4 seems good value. Any old ploughman - and Louis Anderson - could tell you 'greath' is his equipment or harness or both. Other farmers carted stones, but Hugh wrote proudly, 'the rest I both wan and led myself'.

Next came the preliminary work with three more names, including our old friend, Robert Love, who earned 40/3d. for eight days' work. Presumably he had already earned his 'meit'. A chalder of lime at £4 carted by Hugh, and he was ready for the builders, or 'waares'. They cost £30 plus 'mair for bread and drink - fyftein days £7:10, wrights for two days £4, and drink 8/-'.

Next came crooks and bands, I presume for the old cruck construction as in the Weaver's Cottage in Kilbarchan, then spykings (nails), ridging and roof timbers to hold turf described as 'dyfets' and spelt in a glorious diversity. The divots were cut by a farmer friend, carted by Hugh, and there they were, ready for the theiking (or thatching).

Thomas Orr, farmer, put on the turf, then straw 'for six days at his awne cost £3:4/-'. Help was needed - 30/- gone, more straw needed, more turf, another theiker, then panic - a strike! The problem was solved. Hugh's comment - "the whole cost of this great building I find to be £8:10/6 sterling, including eales (ales), deners, and own work." Note the word 'sterling', English influences were creeping in - there were twelve Scots pounds to one English pound.

One of Hugh's buildings was the old manse, still standing, though a bit disreputable after a chequered career. It is highly probable that the ground floor of no. 5 Johnshill (the house with crow-stepped gables) was built at this time. The upper storey was added in 1727 and dated, but the ground floor dates from the 1630s. The next house was most likely in a ruinous state at that time, for it was built (or rebuilt) in 1665 (there is a date at the back). There were other 'houssis at the kirk' now covered up by part of Johnshill.

The kirkyaird and 'houssis' extended well over the road until widening in the 19th and 20th centuries. Old Robert's house would be one of these, but there were also kirk houses in Eastend.

Troubles multiplied. The National Covenant was signed in 1638. King James had died in 1625 and we have already noted the troubles till 1650. Hugh Peebles had begun his ministry in 1647. What was Hugh Love up to? School mastering, collecting the teinds for the Kirk and the local taxes, registering births, and carrying out the duties of kirk elder. No King - he had lost his head, literally - and Cromwell decided to punish the Scots for daring to acknowledge a new king, he invaded, and was now boss. Hugh, as tax collector now found himself answerable to one John Spreull for collection of taxes. There were severe penalties for anyone who refused to pay for the upkeep of Cromwell's army in Scotland. In 1652 "Hew Love, sub collector for the north syd of the loughe of Lochqunyechoat several tymes, twentie fye pounds one shilling five pennies half pennie Scotese money upon every hundreth pound of valued rent" (rates, in other words). That was a receipt, believe it or not. As well, the heretors had to pay two shillings to cover one Cornet Morley's losses in Cathcart parish. This covered the period between 27th December 1651 and 1st September 1652 "being eight moneths and od days... for which I discharge the said Hew Love and his proportion of the said paroch for ever. Sub Sc. with my hand at Pasley this 2nd of September 1652 yeirs, John

Spreull." As though that were not enough, Spreull's superior, John Greene, signed for the self same collection by "Hew Love of Lochquinnoch at Peasley", but, of course, he was a hated Englishman and minion of Cromwell. In 1653 Hugh had to hand over to Adam Ritchie £20:8/- Scots for upkeep of horse and foot soldiers garrisoned in Glasgow for a month. In 1657 Thomas Crawford, chief collector in Renfrewshire signed that Hugh Love and other sub collectors had cleared their accounts, had cleared him, and had cleared each other. You cannot be to careful, can you?

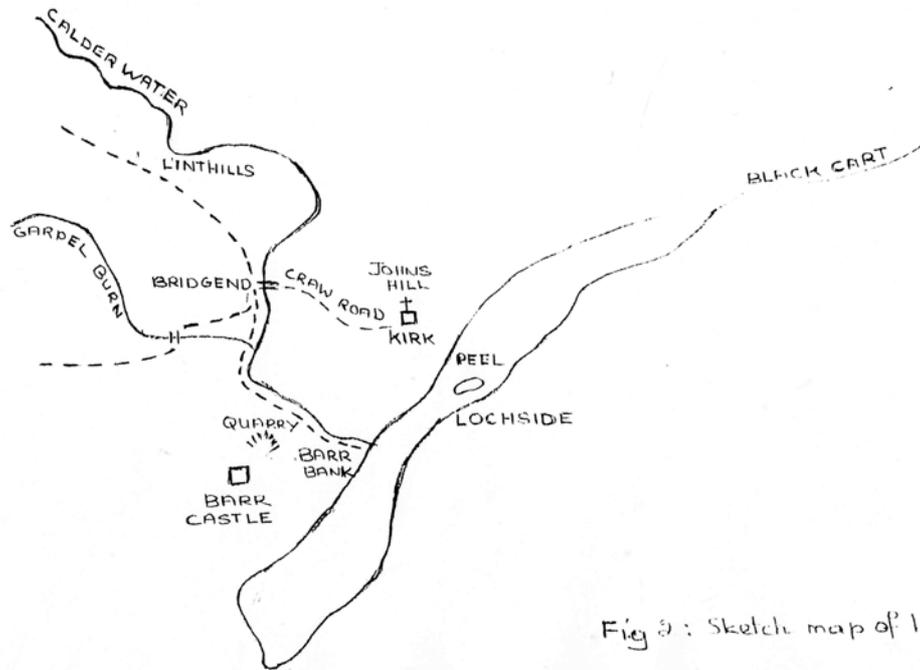


Fig 2: Sketch map of Lochwinnoch.

Hugh continued as tax collector after the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660, but his other work, including his retail business went on. His Count Book is fascinating (see fig. 3). Some of his work as elder - "Certificate by J. How, 8th July 1663. This is to testify that the beirer heir of James Widrow is without scandall. He may get baptism for his child". Another from Kilmacolm said "...free from scandall or anie impediment knowin to us yt. may hinder the baptisme of his chylde."

Hugh Peebles, minister, gave a receipt to Hugh for the rent of his house in 1663 and for his teinds made up of money and meal. Ministers could be paid with flour, meal, crops - coals even. The minister was about to be 'outed' when Episcopacy was forced on the country. How Hugh coped with the two curates is not known. Before Peebles was removed he was a very good customer to Hugh - tobacco, pipes and paper, chiefly. Lochwinnoch was known as a parish of 'smeikers'. Hugh Love supplied tobacco and pipes, also paper pens, 'stifine' (starch), tethers, lint (flax), buttons, spice, tar, whalebone, candles, etc., but chiefly tobacco and pipes. He would also arrange a day's threshing of corn, or delivery of coal. The tethers or halters were made of rushes, the plant common on moorlands. Rash, rash-bush or thrash-bush are other names, while farmers in this area (Renfrewshire) talk of

"ill grun' or laun' fu' o' threshes." There were threshes to spare in the 17th century. As well as rash tethers there were 'brechams' (horse collars) and saddles stuffed with rashes, their 'cruisie' lamps had rash wicks, their children wore caps of woven rashes - the uses were endless.

Starch was used for good clothes - finery; whalebone went into corsets or stiff bodices. A more mundane use was bristle for brushes or stiff besoms. Tar was like the stockholm variety, used as a wormer for cattle, or for dressing wounds in sheep etc.

Prices were - for tobacco 13/- to 20/- a 'pund' and 8d. to 22d. an 'unce'; pipes 2d. each - also sold by the 'disan'. (Four dozen were once sold for a burial and three dozen for a 'bredall' [wedding], it was the custom in Lochwinnoch to supply pipes and tobacco on such occasions. Can you imagine the reek?) An ounce of stifine cost 6d.; a 'quare' of paper 6d. (a 'thruh' or sheet of paper is not costed); a day's threshing 3/- (by flail), and a 'pund' of candles 4/8d.

The minister's purchases of tobacco, pipes and paper show that he must have been in a state of nervous tension before he was outed. He bought rash tethers - he would have a horse and a cow. 'Coles to Hew Peebles' would be part of his 'teind'. This came from the 'heuch' or pit worked by John Pattison of Lochside, ferried across the loch, then up the Skipper's path to the manse.

William Kirkwood at the kirk bought on tick. When he and Hugh went to Glasgow on horseback they took the route shown in the Blaeu atlas of 1654 to Paisley Abbey, over the Cart then on to Gorbals village, past the Leper Hospital and over the only bridge on the Clyde at Stockwell Street. Hugh would stock up with tobacco and pipes and Kirkwood spend all his money and borrow more.

Practically every farm in Lochwinnoch is mentioned in the Count Book and the names could have been taken from the present electoral roll. He was not embroiled in politics. He sold to followers of Cromwell and to avowed covenanters.

His private life? Bell and Hugh had three children. Hugh, the eldest, was well educated. He had "an excellent hand", became Session Clerk in the Kirk, witnessed several legal documents along with his father. William, the second son, died unmarried before 1665. Bell died in 1665. Elizabeth seems to have married. After the death of Bell, Elizabeth got "full and bairn's part of the legacy and had no further claim." After the legal niceties came the terrible admission "Elizabeth Love could not write." No women's Lib. at that time!

The Count Book seems to have ended about 1666. Some bits disappeared, but Dr. Crawford rescued what was left.

Hugh died in 1669. In 1691 a new minister, John Paisley, looked for Kirk records in vain. Somebody remembered Hugh Junior had kept a register of

Baptisms and marriages, so William Glen got a copy and started another roll from 1691. He died in 1698 and Hugh Love Junior in 1699. Would you believe that, less than a century later, most of the records were lost? Old Hugh must have been 'birling' in his grave.

In the 1695 poll tax roll, Hugh Junior is listed along with his wife, maiden surname Cochrane. His son, Robert, died without issue, so the line passed over to the Linthills Cochranes.

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