

Scotland Newspaper Articles

Newspaper Articles

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Revised January 13, 2024

Newspaper Articles for Scotland

1893, January 07 – The Motherwell Times

Announcement by Rev. John McNeill of services to be held at Motherwell Town Hall

1893, January 14 – The Motherwell Times

Report of Rev. John M'Neill week's mission in Motherwell.

Kilsyth Chronicle

1905 May 5 – Baptisms in Banton Loch

The Courier (Dundee, Scotland)

1907, February 13, p 5

With whom did the movement begin? The first person to take up the work was Mr. Irvine who was at one time mine manager for Messrs Baird & Company in Glasgow.

The Courier (Dundee Scotland)

1908 July 17, p8 – Cooneyites at Crochnacrieve (not transcribed)

The Courier (Dundee Scotland)

1908, July 23, p3 – Cooneyites (not transcribed)

Kilsyth Chronicle

1908, July 24 – A Socialist Colony About the Cooneyites – A Sect Pledged to Poverty (not transcribed)

Date unknown (publication possibly The Courier or Leven Mail)

Strange Sect Which Has No Name – Baptism at St. Monance, Scotland (now St. Monans)

Kilsyth Chronicle

1913 August 15 – Crimean Veteran Dies at Kilsyth (John Irvine, William Irvine's father)

The Courier (Dundee, Scotland)

1917 August 29 – Arthur James Baker denied conscientious objector status in military

The Courier page 5 (Dundee Scotland)

1920 December 9, page 5

How St. Monans went "Dry" – Cooneyites

The Courier (Dundee, Scotland)

1924, April 19 – Strange Preachers in Peterhead

Daily Record

circa 1930s – Ten Baptised in Duncryne Burn (Gartocharn, Scotland)

The Sunday Post, Lanarkshire, Scotland

1947, Mar 16, Pg? – William Irvine Had to Go (Announcement of William Irvine's Death)

May 5, 1905

KILSYTH CHRONICLE

9 Market Chambers

Kilsyth G65 0AZ Scotland

BAPTISMS IN BANTON LOCH

On Sabbath afternoon curiosity tempted several hundreds of people to face the cold easterly breeze and showers on a pilgrimage to Banton Loch where a number of adults, converts to Edward Cooney, who styles himself 'the tramp preacher,' were immersed. For several weeks, Cooney, a native of Enniskillen in the North of Ireland, has been conducting in Kilsyth a mission in connection with the evangelistic body occupying the Wooden Hall, in West Burnside Street. The scene of Sunday's proceedings was on the North side of the Loch where at the water side a canvas structure had been erected as disrobing room. The spot selected, whether advisedly or merely coincidentally, was at the spot from which it will be remembered a boy named Wilson, about two years ago, went in to bathe and was drowned. A goodly number sought vantage spots on the rubbish bin from the old Riskend Pit, while numerous others lined the West Bank and also the North bank, in the immediate vicinity of where the tent was erected.

Prior to the immersion proceedings, a religious service was held, and thereafter, females were the first to brave the cold water. They were conducted down the bank by one man and led out to where another (Mr. W. Abercrombie, Queenzieburn) was standing waist deep, who received them and dipped them beneath the water. The varying expressions on the faces of the immersed as each came to the surface, in some cases gasping and to all appearances chilled with the experience, gave room for much caustic comment and humorous remark from the spectators. The crowd was, however, of the most tolerant nature and beyond giving audible expression pretty freely to their opinions, in no way interfered with the ceremony. While the males were preparing for the baptism, Cooney held forth upon the rite of baptism, avowing himself a believer in adult baptism and giving an account of the rite as performed by the ancients and in the various religious bodies of the world. Afterwards, the men were dipped and interest in the proceedings, so far as the crowd was concerned, was at the end. While the ceremony was going on the Hall followers sang hymns. In all, eleven women and eight men underwent immersion.

**The Courier, p5
Dundee, Scotland
Feb 13, 1907**

A WINTRY DIP.

CORAGEOUS FORFARSHIRE BAPTISTS

IMMERSED IN GELLY BURN.

INTERVIEWS WITH PARTICIPANTS

Although the efforts of a sect of revivalists in **Downfield** to carry through a series of out-door baptisms at Falluws on Sunday afternoon were thwarted by one of the proprietors, the ardour of the enthusiastic little band was by no means quelled, and the ceremony was carried through to a successful termination yesterday afternoon.

There were six candidates for the rite, which was performed in the Gelly Burn at a point near the farm of Mr James M. Andrew, Magdalene's Kirkton, Mains, by two "tramp preachers" who are at present carrying on evangelistic work in Perth.

As the principal actors approached the scene of operations, followed by a small band of spectators, a cold drizzle of sleet was falling, accompanied by a sharp east wind. The candidates, however, seemed to heed but little the inclemency of the weather as the ceremony proceeded, and concluded with their complete immersion into the water of the burn, which had been dammed for the purpose.

A STRANGE SECT

Later in the evening a "Courier" representative called at the farmhouse of Magdalene's Kirkton with the object of obtaining from Mr Andrew, who is a prominent member of the sect, some particulars as to the views held by this people, and was cordially invited to join the company at the tea table. In the course of conversation one of the preachers informed our representative that the sect had no organisation at all.

"There are no headquarters" he said, "no recognised leaders of thought, although there are some men we recognise as men of more experience than others in helping the weaker."

"Then who carries on the work?"

"We have what are called 'tramp preachers' or 'going preachers' since some people object to the word tramp."

"And if you have no head, who appoints them, and who pays them?"

"We go forth at the call of Jesus. We believe in men who feel they are sent for the work, and while we recognise the text that the labourer is worthy of his hire, we believe that by hire was meant his food, his clothing, and his shelter; but we do not believe in a salary, and we have no salary. The paid minister is the servant of man, not the servant of God. We go forth in faith depending on God. When we enter a town we enquire if there is anyone worthy, and if we find a worthy home we stay there. If not, we take lodgings."

"And who pays the rent?"

"We take no collections, nor solicit money from anyone, but nevertheless we have been living in a hired house in Perth since the New Year – of course it is only an attic – and we have never wanted the rent."

STRENGTH OF BODY

"Are there many 'tramp preachers'?"

"There are well on to four hundred who are thus evangelising in Great Britain and in other parts of the world."

"Do the 'tramp preachers' all find they can thus exist?"

"Oh yes; of course, we suffer sometimes. The Bible says we have to go out and suffer hunger. Sometimes we do. Sometimes our clothes are not very good, but the Lord sees to these things."

"How long have you been a 'tramp preacher'?"

"Close on two years, but there are men amongst us who have been seven or eight years."

ORIGIN OF MOVEMENT

"With whom did this movement originate?"

"The first man to take up this work was Mr Irvine, who was at one time mine manager for Messrs Baird & Company at Glasgow."

"With regards to open air baptism, do you consider it a necessity to furtherance of Christian faith?"

"Jesus Christ sent forth disciples to make disciples, and to baptise in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. We do it as the command of Jesus. It looks a ridiculous thing to many, but it is the command of Jesus and that is why we do it – not for any glory of our own or for any selfish ends."

"It must require a bit of physical courage to undergo that ordeal in a running stream on such an afternoon as this," I remarked.

"We don't believe in a tank or anything else. The New Testament gives instructions for the open baptism, and all the incidents of the kind we find there were all carried out in one or other of the rivers."

"You don't believe in waiting till the weather is warmer," I suggested with a smile.

"We have come here at the request of the people who were to be baptised."

"Have you had many baptisms in Forfarshire?"

"There were two here on a previous occasion, four at Letham, and two in the Almond at Perth."

INTERVIEW WITH CANDIDATES

In the course of conversation with candidates, who were looking none the worse for their dip, our representative was told that they did not feel the water was at all cold, while another who had undergone the ordeal remarked that, while it required some courage, members who were true to their faith were so unhappy till they were baptised that season never entered their thoughts. The preachers expect to remain in Perth for some considerable time. They have a following in Forfarshire, there being a church in **Letham** and a church in **Downfield**. All churches of this sect are entirely carried on by the local members.

[Click here to view pdf image](#)

Kilsyth Chronicle

July 24, 1908

A Socialist Colony about the Cooneyites

A Sect Pledged to Poverty

(not transcribed)

STRANGE SECT WHICH HAS NO NAME

(No date given or source—possibly the Dundee Courier or Leven Mail)

By a Correspondent

Late at night and in the early hours of morning pilgrims, standing waist deep in water, have been solemnly baptised in the Firth of Forth near St Monance (Scotland).

Carried out in secret, the remarkable ceremonies have formed part of the programme of a strange religious sect which has been holding its annual convention in the Fife fishing village.

For the past few years this has been its accepted meeting place. The religious services are held in the Town Hall Building, formerly the school, which are hired to them by the Town Council.

This body of men and women pass the greater part of each day in hymn-singing and prayer. Among the 300 members are people of all classes—bakers, butchers, grocers, working people, and professional men and women..

Perhaps the most surprising fact is that it has no name. Locally the members are known as "Cooneyites," but the sect itself does not recognise this designation officially.

By Word of Mouth.

The annual convention is interesting in the extreme. The members are summoned not by letter, but by word of mouth. From widely scattered parts they come—from England, Ireland, and Wales.

There is no secretary, the sect has no fixed headquarters, it takes no collections, and has no clergy. Their faith lays down that if they organise into a "movement," they would chase out the Holy Ghost.

There are a number of unpaid preachers who travel from town to town visiting members. They carry no money with them.

Each year during the Fife conference, there are a number of converts, and following the accepted custom, they are baptised in the Firth of Forth. Several ceremonies have been carried through this week. The hours chosen are late at night and early in the morning.

"The members stay in St. Monance for several days," one local resident informed me, "and although they have been coming here for years, we know as little about them as we did when they first came. They are not secretive; they simply keep their religion to themselves. They are all very devout people. We have rather taken to them, with their somewhat strange ways, and now welcome their annual visits."

[View Article in TTT Photo Gallery](#)

TTT Editors Note: Possibly published in the paper formerly called "The Leven Mail" but now titled The East Fife Mail," or the "Dundee Courier." In earlier years, there were one or two other local newspaper covering the east coast fishing villages in Fife, but they may have ceased and been swallowed up by the Leven Mail.

St. Monance (sometimes spelled St. Monhans) is in the County of Fife located north of Edinburgh, on the north side of the Firth of Forth.

Click here to view photo of baptism titled: **"BAPTISM IN THE SEA AT ST. MONANCE."**

Pilgrims being baptized in the sea at St. Monance, Fife, during the four days religious conference which was concluded last night. Pilgrims from all parts of the country were present.

NOTES provided to TTT Editor: *St. Monance is a small fishing village. The name has now returned to its original "St. Monans." I remember my mother telling me about convention at St. Monans. It was held in the Town Hall just yards from where she grew up. Special Meetings at Christmas time are still held there. I also remember my mother telling me about the baptisms. Due to the interest they aroused from outsiders, they tried to hold the baptisms at night or early in the morning on the beach outside the western boundary of the village.*

Gartocharn, Dunbartonshire replaced St. Monans, perhaps in the early 1960's. I remember my mother saying it was there at St. Monans when she was a small girl (perhaps late 20's – early 30's at least.) At the time the convention was in St. Monans, the village for its size must have had one of the healthiest numbers of professing folks. Out of a population of 800 to 900 then, there were four or five large meetings. Probably that's why the convention was held there. Those who came from afar stayed in the homes of the friends.

August 15, 1913

Kilsyth Chronicle

CRIMEAN VETERAN DIES AT KILSYTH

KILSYTH. There passed away at Bogside House, Kilsyth (the residence of his son-in-law, ex-Bailie Freebairn), on Tuesday, in the person of **Mr. John Irvine**, a noteworthy Kilsythian and one of the now sadly, diminished army of veterans who took part in the historic war in the Crimea.

John Irvine first saw the light day in Kilsyth, and, following the footsteps of his father, became in his boyhood connected with the development the mining industry in and around Kilsyth. He was first connected with the smaller enterprises which worked the minerals, and he afterwards was a trusted colliery manager with Messrs. William Baird & Co., Ltd., when the industry extended, being manager along with his sons when the Dumbreck Pits were newly opened. He was also manager at Haugh Colliery. All his life he had been connected with the mining industry of Kilsyth, like his father before him.

In the stirring times of long ago, when the call came for men to serve their country, John Irvine volunteered and was accepted for service with the 79th Cameron Highlanders at the beginning of the Crimean war. He went right through the great campaign, being present at the Alma and Balaclava, and also taking in the siege of Sebastopol, in the Turkish campaign, holding the medals and clasps for these engagements. As a soldier he witnessed the soul-stirring charge of the Light Brigade. He came through the wars without a scratch, but could tell of many thrilling escapes.

Mr. Irvine was a real old Kilsythian—he had reached the ripe age 80 years—and no one could speak with more interest and enthusiasm of life in the olden times. The family was a much respected one in the annals of the town. His early days had been closely associated with that glorious name in Kilsyth's religious history, namely, Burns, and Mr. Irvine was often heard to declare that Mrs. Burns had been to him like mother. Little wonder then that he was a great church man all his life.

The family went over to the Free Church in the Disruption, and deceased filled the office of manager in that church. A Freemason, he was connected with Lodge Kilsyth St. John, filling the office of Worshipful Master in his earlier days. Some ten or twelve years ago, Irvine retired from active duty. He paid a visit to New Zealand, extending over a period of two years, to see his son, and his elder brother James, who is now over 86 years of age.

For about a year before his death, he had not been able to go about. Those favoured with his company found in him a most interesting personality. Rich in his reminiscences of the old life of the town, and having held the confidence and esteem the best known families in the town for generations, it was indeed a treat to hear him relate incidents connected with the days of long ago. No one could have been better versed in the history of Kilsyth. His was indeed a noted personality, and by his death an important link with the past has been severed. Three sons and four daughters of Mr. Irvine survive. Since returning from New Zealand, Mr. Irvine has resided with his son-in-law, ex-Bailie Freebairn.

1920 December 9
The Dundee Courier p5 (Scotland)
How St. Monans Went "Dry"
Village Licenses All Held by Women

Propaganda Which Won the Victory

St. Monans, the only centre in Fife to go "dry" was carried for "No License" by a remarkable wave of religious and temperance enthusiasm.

The electors are namely fisherman, and St. Monans possesses the distinction of having an unusually large number of religious sects, including such bodies as Plymouth Brethren, Salvation Army, "Cooneyites," in addition to the orthodox Churches.

These sects hold services in houses, varying the meeting place from time to time, and these occasions, it is said, produced a strong wave of "No License" sentiment. In addition to this, the U.F. and Congregational parsons were strong leaders for "No License."

(this is all of the article that pertained to Cooneyites)

Extract from the "Dundee Courier" April 19, 1924

STRANGE PREACHERS IN PETERHEAD

DENY THEY ARE COONEYITES OR MORMONS

Some perturbation has been caused in religious circles in Peterhead by the visit of two young men, **Frank Dennison**, Tipperaray, Ireland, and **James Tarvet**, Fifeshire (Scotland), who have been conducting religious services in the town. Their teachings have been considered in some quarters to be rather mysterious and there have been all sorts of rumours regarding their sect.

Feeling has been aroused in the local Salvation Army by the fact that several young women members of that body, have been attending meetings and have been influenced by the teachings of the preachers.

In an interview Mr. Dennison stated that they were undenominational and were simply following the scriptures and acting on the same principles as Christ's disciples. They did not take collections at their meetings and were supported in the same way as the New Testament preachers. They had no antipathy towards any church in particular, but did not believe in commercialising the gospel. He emphatically denied the rumour that they were Cooneyites or Mormons.

It is understood that they have several followers in Peterhead and last night addressed a meeting in Buchanhaven.

NOTE: **Peterhead** is a fishing town in Northeast Scotland. **James Tarvet**, the young worker mentioned in the Peterhead article above, came from **St. Monans**.

"Daily Record" Reporter
Undated (after 1930)
10 Baptised in Burn
[Duncryne Burn, Gartocharn, Scotland Convention]

NOTE: The Gartocharn, Scotland convention grounds are located in an old sandstone quarry now pleasantly overgrown with trees in the small village of Gartocharn on the banks of Loch Lomond, about 15 miles northwest of Glasgow. **The convention may have started in the 1930s, was suspended during WWII and resumed afterwards in the 1940s.** The village lies within the beautiful Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park. It is probably better known as being the location of Duncryne Hill, known locally as

the Dumpling, as it has a similar shape to the well-known Scottish fare, the Cloutie Dumpling. A convention was held here as late as 2022, and possibly longer.

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They were different, the 400 people at Gartocharn by Loch Lomond yesterday; different from the thousands of day-trippers that the brilliant summer day had drawn to Balloch, just three miles away. For the thousands of day-trippers, it was simply and solely a day of relaxation in the sun; for the 400 it was a day of special significance.

But the 400 had one thing in common—they were all members of a world-wide religious sect—a sect with no name, no churches and no ministers.

It was a day of special significance for them because 10 of their number went through the ritual of baptism by total immersion in a burn which runs through the grounds where they are holding a four-day convention.

They gathered in the sun to sing a hymn while the baptisms were performed. Five women, in bathing caps and waterproof trench coats, were followed by two men and three boys. Each was immersed separately.

Seventy-three-year-old Irishman from Co. Wicklow, **Joe Twamley**, who led the group in prayer before the baptisms, is the organizer of the convention. He has been a full-time preacher with the sect for 45 years—unpaid "servant is his designation. "We never think of money," Mr. Twamley told me. "Our preachers work in pairs and live with members in the districts where they are preaching. To meet the costs of conventions like this, they just give as their heart moves them."

#### **Code of Conduct**

No smoking, no films, no intoxicants are rules in the sect's code of conduct, explained Mr. Twamley. Wireless? It's all right for ships at sea but radios in the home are only a distraction.

The sect has no offices, no headquarters, no list of members, no printed material except the Bible and their own hymnbook. They keep in touch by personal correspondence.

Among those at Gartocharn are two American preachers who travelled from French Morocco and a Scottish preacher who came from India. There are also several full time \_\_\_\_\_ (ran off page.)

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The following article may be read on another page:

#### **The Sunday Post, Lanarkshire, Scotland**

**1947, Mar 16, Pg? – William Irvine Had to Go (Announcement of William Irvine's Death)**