

St Andrews Day Lunch

“An invitation you can't refuse”

Can I take you back 183 years to enjoy a unique flavour of the past?

I would like to offer you the opportunity on 29th November to savour a menu based on one of the most influential Scottish books ever written. No, not Smith's 'Wealth of Nations', or even Burns 'Kilmarnock Edition'. In 1824 Europe's most popular author Sir Walter Scott wrote an unusual book called 'St Ronan's Well'. Part romantic history, it was also in part a food-based novel.

“So how can I enjoy this book's influence?” you may ask.

This year our popular St Andrews Sunday Lunch celebrates a classic book based on the 'anti-heroine' of St Ronans. She was a bossy, nosy, argumentative cook - Mistress Meg Dodds, proprietor of the Cleikum Inn. Her name was taken as a 'nom de plume' by Edinburgh housewife Isabella Johnston who two years later wrote.

'The Cook and Housewife's Manual'

In front of me as I write you lie the 1828 second edition, and a much-loved and used 1862 eleventh edition. The latter contains over 1200 recipes ('receipts') – **and we have a lunch menu taken directly from her amazing cornucopia of Scottish originals.**

You'll start with a welcome Lanark traditional 'Het Pint', before you taste receipt no. 736. It's a rich potted beef (a rare cut), served with pickled organic beetroot, and our Trustee tasters loved it. Next comes no. 750, “Pan-kail – a maigre soup” unanimously declared “excellent” by the tasters.

This will be followed by the kind of main course gourmet Sir Walter and friends would welcome. Indeed poet John Home was moved to write thus:

“Bold and erect the Caledonian stood Old was his mutton and his claret good”.

It's **“Dressed breast of Mutton with Sauce Robert”**. The Pentland Hills reared mutton comes, well-aged, from the Cowan's family farm at Carlops. Naturally it will be served with a good claret. The final course is one you are most unlikely to have tasted before. It will be **“Hartshorn Jelly with a bramble coulis”**. You'll love it... our tasting panel thought it “super”.

Whilst you enjoy good wines and real Scottish ales with the St Andrew's meal, **you will equally get great pleasure from our principal speaker**, who will celebrate the influence of Meg Dodds on the national table. There is a direct line - from Dodds through F Marion McNeill's “Scots Kitchen” - to CATHERINE BROWN. Whether through her many books like “Scottish Regional Recipes” or “Broths to Bannocks”, or her prolific journalism, **Catherine is another 'National Treasure'**.

Catherine will be followed by the much celebrated local farmer HUMPHREY ERRINGTON, **one of the most influential cheese-makers in Europe**. Humphrey will talk about his researches into Scottish cheese, 200 years ago.

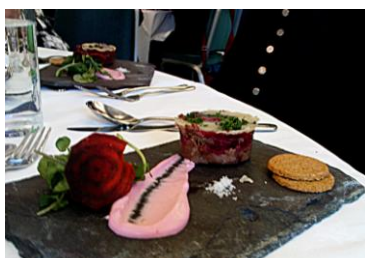
Yours truly,

Arthur J A Bell CBE FRSA
Chairman, Food Trust Scotland

A St Andrew's Day lunch, and 'St Ronan's Well'

For a superb meal at the New Lanark Hotel, Arthur Bell CBE FRSA, The Chairman of The Food Trust Scotland, "took us back 183 years to enjoy a unique flavour of the past", (to quote him) which offered us: "the opportunity to savour a menu, based on one of the most influential Scottish books ever written. No, not Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, or even Burns *Kilmarnock Edition*'. In 1824 Europe's most popular author Sir Walter Scott wrote an unusual book called *'St Ronan's Well'*. Part romantic history, it was also in part a food-based novel. How could we enjoy this book's influence? This year our popular St Andrews Sunday Lunch celebrates a classic book based on the 'anti-heroine' of St Ronans Well. She was a bossy, nosy, argumentative cook - Mistress Meg Dods, proprietor of the Cleikum Inn. Her name was taken as a '*nom de plume*' by Edinburgh housewife Isabella Johnston who two years later wrote **'The Cook and Housewife's Manual'**. In front of me as I write, lie the 1828 second edition, and a much-loved and used 1862 eleventh edition. The latter contains over 1200 recipes or 'receipts'. The lunch menu is taken directly from her amazing cornucopia of Scottish originals" (Arthur Bell).

The lunch started with a Lanark traditional welcome **'Het Pint'** (*which. To those unused to it, had a strange sort of medicinal taste – but most interesting, I liked it, CS*). Then we were served Receipt no.736, which was a rich **potted cow heel**, accompanied by **pickled organic beetroot, horseradish mousse and oatcakes**. (v. good - CS.).



Next on the menu was Receipt no. 750, **"Pan-kail – a maigre soup"**, served with a **chiffonade of Savoy cabbage**. (*a really delicious thick soup, CS*).



This was followed by the type of main course which - quoting Arthur Bell again; "gourmet Sir Walter and friends would have welcomed. Indeed poet John Home was moved to write thus: 'Bold and erect the Caledonian stood, / Old was his mutton,



and his claret good'. "The mutton for our feast was; **"Dressed breast of Mutton with Sauce Robert"**.

Reared in the Pentland Hills, on the Cowan's family farm Eastside at Carlops, this well-aged mutton was garnished with julienne of cucumber and served with carrot, turnip and fondant potato, and served with an excellent claret. (*The mutton was superb. CS*).

The final course, one we were most unlikely to have tasted before, was **"Hartshorn Jelly with a bramble coulis"**. (*the jelly was made from collagen extracted from boiled antlers from John Fletcher's deer farm at Auchtermuchty. It was excellent indeed, and, as we heard from the very articulate chef, Alan King, it required a lot of skill, time and patience in the making!*)



The first speaker, **Catherine Brown**, celebrated the influence of Meg Dods on the national table, through the publication in 1828 of the *'Cook and Housewife's Manual'* ostensibly by 'Mistress Meg Dods' (actually by Isabella Johnson – who pre-dated Mrs Beaton by decades). There is a direct literary and literal line - from 'Mistress Meg Dods' through F Marion McNeill's *'Scots Kitchen'* - to Catherine Brown herself, whether through her many books, .e.g. *'Scottish Regional Recipes'* or *'Broths to Bannock'*, or her prolific journalism.

Catherine was followed by the much celebrated local farmer **Humphrey Errington**, (of Lanark Blue fame), one of the most influential cheese-makers in Europe. Humphrey talked

about his researches into Scottish cheese, mainly from about 200 years ago, although he noted that 1147 is the oldest record of Scottish cheese-making. It used to be thought that 'Kye's milk was better for butter, and yowe's milk better for cheese'. However, cheese 'made under the wool' often contained a few extra natural ingredients (dribbles of urine, a few ovine faecal pellets, and honest sweat of milkmaid) which added to the pungent and aromatic flavour.

Walter Scott, in 'St Ronan's Well', writes of 'ewe-milkers'. For example: "This awkward Scottish laird, that has scarce tact enough to make love to a ewe-milker, or at best some daggle-tailed soubrette, has the assurance to start himself as my rival!"

And Alan Ramsay, in '*The Gentle Shepherd*', writes of ovine cheese: 'But first we'll tak a turn up to the height, / An' see gif a' our flocks be feeding right; / By that time bannocks an' a shave o' cheese, / Will mak' a breakfast that a laird might please.' (Gentle Shepherd; Act 1, sc. 1). And:- 'The thick-blawn wreaths o' snaw, or blashy thows, / May smoor your weathers, an' may rot your ewes; / A Dyvour buys your butter, woo', an' cheese, / but or the day o' payment, breaks, an' flees; (G.S. Act 1 sc II. *smoor...weathers – smother ..castrated male lambs; blashy thows – slushy thaws: dyvour – debtor or rogue*)

This superb St Andrews celebration of our nation's food, was at the UNESCO World Heritage Site, New Lanark Mill Hotel.

Craig Sharp's "Excerpts regarding Food and Drink", from 'St Ronan's Well', by Sir Walter Scott. From The Melrose Edition of the Waverley novels. London, the Caxton Publishing Co, 84 Chancery Lane, WC. (No date - ?1920's) There are more quotes before page 164 than after, because Scott then "speaks more narrative and less dialogue", as he states at the beginning of chapter XVIII., on that page.

In these references to food and drink, spelling and format have been retained pretty much as they are. Virtually all that follows below is directly quoted from the book – but only conversation is put in double quotation marks.

[Pp 2-9] The Mowbrays of St Ronan's were at one time a very powerful family, allied to the house of Douglas. Their castle was situated on a considerable eminence, and Sir Reginald Mowbray distinguished himself in the obstinate defence of the castle against Cromwell, who incensed at the unexpected opposition in so obscure a corner, caused the fortress to be blown up with gunpowder. After the revolution, Mowbray built a house in the middle of the village, but after 50 years it was damaged by fire, and the laird of the day moved further off, at the same time cutting down an ancient rookery – so folk say the decay of St Ronan's began when Laird Lawrence and the crows flew off.

The deserted mansion was converted into an inn, and marked by a huge sign, on one side St Ronan and on the other the Mowbray arms. A thousand stories were told of the revels held within its walls, but this had long since passed away when the worthy couple (servants and favourites of the Mowbray family) died. But they had accumulated some wealth, and their daughter, Meg Dods, became the new owner, and called it the Cleikum Inn. (*Cleikum* pronounced Anglice, with the open diphthong)

She ruled with the despotism of Queen Bess herself, over all her servants – and strangers within her gates; if they ventured to oppose Meg's sovereign will and pleasure. "Troop aff wi' ye to another public" she would say as she ejected them (the nearest being 16 miles away). It is but justice to Meg Dods to state that though hers was a severe and almost despotic government, it could not be termed a tyranny, since it was exercised, upon the whole, for the good of the subject.

The vaults of the old Laird's cellar had not, even in his own day, been replenished with more excellent wines; the only difficulty was prevailing on Meg to find the precise liquor you chose. Then her kitchen was her pride and glory; she looked to the dressing of every dish herself and there were some which she suffered no-one to interfere. Such were the cock-a-leeky and the savoury minced collops, which rivalled in their way even the veal cutlets of Mrs Hall at Ferrybridge. Meg's table-linen, bed-linen and so forth, were always home-made of the finest quality, and in the best order. (This circumstance shows of itself that the Meg Dods of the tale cannot be identified with Jenny Dods who kept the inn at Howgate, on the Peebles Road; for Jenny, far different from our heroine, was unmatched as a slattern.)

We have only further to commemorate the moderation of Meg's reckonings which often relieved the apprehensions, instead of saddening the heart, of the rising guest. A shilling for breakfast, three shillings for dinner including a pint of old port, and eighteen-pence for a snug supper – such were the charges of the inn at St Ronan's, under this landlady of the olden world, even after the nineteenth century had commenced. Meg's outward properties were in a concatenation: she had hair of a brindled colour, betwixt black and grey, which was apt to escape in elf-locks from under her mutch when she was thrown into violent agitation – long skinny hands terminated by stout talons – grey eyes, thin lips, a robust person, a broad, though

flat, chest, a capital wind, and a voice that could match a choir of fish-women. This was Meg Dods, or 'Meg Dorts' as she was popularly termed on account of her refractory humours. (*There is a good drawing of her, opposite to page 8*)

[P16]. Tyrrel...soon had the satisfaction to behold a capital dish of minced collops with vegetables, and a jug of excellent ale, placed on the table by the capable hand of Meg herself. He could do no less than ask Meg for a bottle of the yellow seal, "If there was any of that excellent claret still left." She returned with such a bottle of claret as no fashionable tavern could have produced, were it called for by a duke. Soon his officious landlady was saying "I was thinking to offer you a dish of tea, Maister Francie, just for the sake of auld lang syne."

[P18]. "When the cork's drawn, the bottle maun be drunk out – and what for no? – unless the bottle be corkit. I'll put it by to be sauce for the wild-duck the morn. Then the liquor's no lost – it has been seldom sic claret that has simmered in a saucepan"

[P 20] "But will ye not take another dish of tea Maister Francie? And a wee bit of the diet-loaf, raised wi' ma ain fresh butter? An' no wi' greasy kitchen-fee, like the seedcake down at the confectioner's yonder, that had as mony dead flees as carvey seeds in it. Set him up a confectioner? Wi' a pennyworth of rye-meal, and anither of trayacle, and twa or three carvey-seeds, I will make better confections than ever cam out of his oven."

[P 24] A brisk walk to the inn, and a light supper on a Welsh rabbit and the dame's home-brewed, were stimulants of livelier thoughts – and the Blue bedroom, to the honour of which he had been promoted, received him a contented tenant.

[P 26] "as ever turkey was larded wi' dabs o' bacon." Thus...honest Nelly switched her little fish-cart downwards to St Ronan's Well.

[P 30] Captain Hector McTurk preferred toddy of the strongest to wine, and in that fashion, and cold drams, finished about a bottle of whisky *per diem*.

[Pp 32 – 33] The clamour which attends the removal of dinner room, a public room, had subsided; the clatter of plates, and knives, and forks – the bustling tread of awkward boobies of country servants, kicking each others' shins, and wrangling as they endeavour to rush out of the door three abreast – the clash of glasses and tumblers, born to earth in the tumult – the shrieks of the landlady – the curses, not loud, but deep, of the landlord – had all passed away; and those of the company that had servants had been accommodated, by their respective Ganymedes, with such remnants of their respective bottles of wine, spirits, &c, as the said Ganymedes had not previously consumed, while the rest, broken in to such observance by Mr Winterblossom, waited patiently until the worthy president's own special and multifarious commissions had been executed by a tidy young woman and a lumpish lad, the regular attendants belonging to the house, but whom he permitted to wait on no-one, till, as the hymn says "All his wants were well supplied."

"And, Dinah – my bottle of pale sherry, Dinah – place it on this side – there is a good girl; and, Toby – get my jug with the hot water – and let it be boiling – and don't spill it on Lady Penelope, if you can help it Toby."

"No - for her ladyship has been in hot water today already" said the Squire; a sarcasm to which Lady Penelope only replied with a look of contempt.

"And Dinah, bring the sugar – the soft East India sugar, Dinah – and a lemon, Dinah, one of those which came fresh today – Go fetch it from the bar, Toby – and don't

tumble downstairs, if you can help it. – And Dinah – stay, Dinah – the nutmeg, Dinah, and the ginger, my good girl.”

“And, Dinah,” continued the president, “lift up my handkerchief – and – a bit of biscuit, Dinah – and – and I do not think I want anything else. – Look to the company, my good girl. – I have the honour to drink the company’s very good health – Will your ladyship honour me by accepting a glass of negus? – I learned to make negus from old Dartineuf’s son – He always used East India sugar, and added a tamarind – it improves the flavour infinitely. – Dinah, see your father sends for some tamarinds.”

[P 37] Mr Chatterly had stopped at the door of the Cleikum “in hopes to get a glass of syrup of capillaire, or a draught of something cooling.”

[P 58] It was common at the Well, for the fair guests occasionally to give tea to the company.....Lady Penelope had manoeuvred herself into the patronage of the tea-table for the evening, to the great expenditure of souchong and congo.

[P 60] “I don’t think you looked in his eyes – they are quite deep and dark, and full of glow, like what you read to us in the letter from that lady, about Robert Burns.

“My venerated instructor”, said Dr Quackleben, “took a wine-glassfull of old rum, mixed with sugar, every day after his dinner.”

[P 69] “Miss Mowbray,” said Lady Binks, “Miss Mowbray declares for ‘Champagne and a chicken at last’ “ “The chicken without the champagne, if you please” said Miss Mowbray, “I have known ladies pay dear to have champagne on the board.”

[P 90] There was likely to be all sorts of error and irregularity in dishing and in sending up; for Shaw’s Castle boasted neither an accomplished housekeeper, nor a kitchenmaid with a hundred pair of hands to execute her mandates. All the domestic arrangements were on the minutest system of economy consistent with ordinary decency, except in the stables, which were excellent and well kept. But can a groom of the stables perform the labours of a groom of the chambers? Or can the gamekeeper arrange in tempting order the carcasses of the birds he has shot, strew them with flowers, and garnish them with piquant sauces? It would be as reasonable to expect a gallant soldier to act as undertaker, and conduct the funeral of the enemy he has slain.

[P 92] Then there was the silver strainer, on which, in more economical time than ours, the lady of the house placed the tea leaves, after the very last drop had been exhausted, that they might afterwards be hospitably divided among the company, to be eaten with sugar, and with bread and butter.

[P 121] Sir Bingo readily imparted to the invalid a thimbleful of his cordial, which, we believe, had been prepared by some cunning chemist in the wilds of Glenlivet. He then filled a bumper, and extended it towards the veteran as an unequivocal symptom of reconciliation. The real turbinaceous flavour no sooner reached the nose of the Captain, than the beverage was turned down his throat with the symptoms of most unequivocal applause. “I shall have some hope of the young fellows of this day,” he said, “now that they begin to give up their Dutch and French distilled waters, and stick to genuine Highland ware. By Cot, it is the only liquor fit for a gentleman to drink in the morning, if he can have the good fortune to come by it, you see.”

“Or after dinner, either, Captain,” said the Doctor to whom the glass had passed in rotation, “the Whisky is worth all the wines in France for flavour, and more cordial to the system besides.”

[P 125] Mr Bindloose, a bluff bachelor, stimulated his housekeeper, old Hannah to get tea ready. "The japanned tea-caddie Hannah – the best bohea."

[P128] "Few of our auld friends of the Killnakellty are able to come to the sessions now, Mrs Dods." Said Mr Bindloose. "The waur for the country", replied the old lady, "they were decent considerate men that didna plague a puir herd muckle about a moorfowl or a mawkin, unless he turned common fowler – Sir Robert Ringhorse used to say the herd lads shot as mony gleds and pyots as they did game. – But new lords, new laws – naethin but fine and imprisonment, and the game no a feather the plentier. If I wad hae a brace or twa of birds in the house, as everybody looks for them after the twelfth - I ken what they are like to cost me – And what for no? – risk maun be paid for – There is John Pirner himself, that has keepit the muir-side thirty year, in spite of a' the lairds in the country, shoots, he tells me, nowadays, as if he felt a rape about his neck."

[P 135] Mrs Dods, accustomed to judge of persons by their first appearance, said, that in the three steps which he made from the door to the tea-table, she recognised, without the possibility of mistake, the gait of a person who was well to pass in the world; "and that," she added with a wink, "is what we victuallers are seldom deceived in. If a gold-laced waistcoat has an empty pouch, the plain swan's-down will be the brawer of the two."

[P135] "A drizzling morning, good madam", said Mr Touchwood. "A fine saft morning for the crap, sir" answered Mrs Dods with equal solemnity. "Right, my good madam; *soft* is the very word, though it has been some time since I heard it. I have cast a double hank around the world since I last heard of a soft morning." *(they use 'soft' a lot in Limerick – I had thought it entirely an Irish term, hence its inclusion here)*

[Pp 136 -8] "Father, madam?" said the stranger, "They think no more of their father than Regan or Goneril." "In gude troth, ye have skeel of our sect, sir," replied Dame Dods, "They are gomerils, every one of them – I tell them sae every hour of the day, but catch them profiting by the doctrine?" "And then the brutes are turned mercenary, madam", said Mr Touchwood, "I remember when a Scottishman would have scorned to touch a shilling that he had not earned, and yet was as ready to help a stranger as an Arab of the desert." "Weel, weel" said the banker; - " that may be a' as you say, sir, and nae doubt wealth makes wit waver, but the country's wealthy, that cannot be denied." "I know wealth makes itself wings", answered the cynical stranger, "but I am not quite sure we have it even now. You make a great show, indeed, with building and cultivation; but stock is not capital, any more than the fat of a corpulent man is health and strength.....I left you bothered about one Air-bank, but the whole country is an Air-bank now, I think – and who is to pay the piper? It is a perfect Babel, and would turn the head of a man who has spent his life with people who love sitting better than running, silence better than speaking, who never eat but when they are hungry, never drink but when thirsty, never laugh without a jest, and never speak but when they have something to say. But here it is all run, ride, and drive – froth, foam and flippancy – no steadiness – no character." *(I included the above part in terms of its modern relevancy to the current UK financial situation.)*

"I'll lay the burden of my life", said Dame Dods, looking towards her friend Bindloose, "that the gentleman has been at the new Spaw Waal yonder."

"Spaw, do you call it, madam? – If you mean the new establishment that has been spawned down yonder at St Ronan's, it is the very fountain-head of folly and coxcomby – a Babel for noise and a Vanity Fair for nonsense – no well in your swamps tenanted by such a conceited colony of clamorous frogs."

“Sir, sir!” Exclaimed Dame Dods, delighted with the unqualified sentence passed on her fashionable rivals, - will you let me have the pleasure of pouring you a dish of tea? I hope it is to your taste, sir”

“It is as good as we have any right to expect, ma’am” answered Mr Touchwood; “Not quite like what I have drunk at Canton with old Fong Qua; but the Celestial Empire does not send its best tea to Leadenhall St, nor does Leadenhall St send its best to Marchthorn.” “That may be very true, sir” replied the dame, “but I will venture to say that Mr Bindloose’s tea is muckle better than you had at the Spaw Waal yonder.” “Tea, madam! – I saw none – Ash leaves and black-thorn leaves were brought in painted canisters, and handed about by silver monkeys in livery, and consumed by those who liked it, amidst the chattering of parrots and the squalling of kittens. This blessed decoction was circulated under the auspices of some half-crazed blue-stocking or other, and we were saddled with all the formality of entertainment, for this miserable allowance of a cockle-shell full of cat-lap per head..”

[Pp 143-6] Mr Touchwood had his own whims about cookery.....and was ready to renew the scene of the unhappy cream-tart, which was compounded without pepper. However, if her present guest lodger could blame, he could also applaud; and no artist, conscious of such skill as Mrs Dods possessed, is indifferent to the praises of such a connoisseur as Mr Touchwood. The pride of art comforted her for the additional labour; nor was it a matter unworthy of this most honest publican’s consideration, that the guests who give most trouble are usually those who incur the largest bills, and pay them with the best grace. On this point Touchwood was a jewel of a customer. He never denied himself the gratification of the slightest whim, whatever expense he might himself incur, or whatever trouble he might give to those about him. And all was done under protestation, that the matter in question was the most indifferent thing to him in the world. “What the devil did he care for Burgess’s sauces, he that had to ate his kouscousou, spiced with nothing but the sand of the desert?”

“Pray, Mrs Dods, what sort of man is your minister?” “He’s just a man like other men, Mr Touchwood”, replied Meg Dods; “What sort of man should he be?” “But is he a sensible man?” asked Touchwood. “No muckle o’ that, sir” answered Dame Dods; “for if he was drinking this very tea that ye gat from London wi’ the mail, he wad mistake it for common bohea.” “Then he has not all his organs – wants a nose at least,” said Mr Touchwood; “the tea is right gunpowder – a perfect nosegay.” “Aweel, that may be” said the landlady. “And I have gi’en the minister a dram frae my ain best bottle of real Coniac brandy, and may I never stir frae the bit, if he didna commend my whisky when he set down the glass? There is no ane o’ them in the Presbytery but himself – ay or in the Synod either – but wad hae kend whisky frae brandy.”

“Does this minister of yours come much into company?” “Company? Gae awa,” replied Meg, “He keeps nae company at a’, neither in his ain house, or ony gate else. He comes down in the morning in a lang ragged nightgown, like a potato bogle, and down he sits amang his books; and if they dinna bring him something to eat, the puir demented body has never the heart to cry for aught, and he has been kenned to sit for ten hours, black fasting, whilk is a’ a mere papistie, though he does it just out of forget.”

“Why, landlady, your parson is anything but ordinary – Forget his dinner! The man must be mad – he shall dine with me today – he shall have such a dinner as I’ll be bound he won’t forget in a hurry.” “Ye’ll maybe find that easier said than dune” said Mrs Dods; “the honest man hasnae, in a sense, the taste of his mouth – A drink of

milk and a bit of bread serves his turn, or maybe a cauld potato. It's a heathenish fashion of him, for as good a man as he is, for surely there is nae Christian man but loves his own bowels." "Why that may be", answered Touchwood; but I have known many who took so much care of their own bowels, my good dame, as to have none for anyone else. But come, bustle to the work – get us as good a dinner for two as you can set out – get the old hock I had sent to me from Cockburn – a bottle of that particular Indian sherry – and another of your old claret – fourth binn, you know Meg. And stay, he is a priest, and must have port – have all ready, but don't bring the wine into the sun, as that silly fool Beck did the other day."

"But that's an unco order of wine for twa folk, and ane o' them a minister", said Meg, with a toss of the head. Such was the worthy divine whom our *bon vivant* at the Cleikum Inn hoped to conciliate by a good dinner and Cockburn's particular; an excellent menstruum in most cases, but not likely to be efficacious on this occasion.

[P 157] "I go seldom abroad, sir", said the minister to Mr Touchwood, with a good deal of hesitation, for his habits of solitude and seclusion could not be entirely overcome, "yet I cannot deny myself the pleasure of waiting on a gentleman possessed of so much experience." "Well then", said Mr Touchwood, "three be the hour – I never dine later, and always to the minute – and the place, the Cleikum Inn, up the way; where Mrs Dods is at this moment busy in making ready such a dinner as your learning has seldom seen, Doctor, for I brought the receipts from the four different quarter of the globe."

[Pp 159-60] In the course of the afternoon they became more familiar. But Touchstone considered Minister Cargill's utter inattention to the quality of what he ate and drank, as unworthy of a rational, that is a cooking creature, or of a being who, as defined by Johnson, holds his dinner as the most important business of the day. Cargill did not act up to this definition and was, therefore, in the eyes of his new acquaintance, so far ignorant and uncivilised. What then? He was still a sensible, intelligent man, however abstemious and bookish.

On the other hand, the divine could not help regarding his new friend as something of an epicure or belly-god, nor could he observe in him either the perfect education, or the polished bearing, which mark the gentleman of rank.... Nevertheless a friendship, companionship at least, was struck up betwixt these two originals, to the astonishment of the whole parish of St Ronan's. Sometimes, but rarely, the divine took share of Mr Touchwood's meal, though less splendidly set forth than when he was first invited; for like the unostentatious owner of the gold cup in Parnell's Hermit "Still he welcomed, but with less cost."

[Pp 161-3] It was on one of the later evenings when the learned divine had his place at Mr Touchwood's social board, or rather at Mrs Dods's – for a cup of excellent tea, the only luxury which Mr Cargill continued to partake of with some complacence..... "Mr Cargill ! – Gude guide us! – are ye weel? – will you taste a drap o' something? "A sudden qualm" said Mr Cargill, recovering himself. "Oh! Mr Cargill." Said Dame Dods, "This comes of your lang fasts." "Right, dame" subjoined Mr Touchwood; "and of breaking them with sour milk and pease bannock – the least morsel of Christian food is rejected by the stomach, just as a small gentleman refuses the visit of a creditable neighbour lest he see the nakedness of the land – ha! ha!".

[P 239] "...accosted the daughter of a hundred sires, as he would have a ewe-milker."

[P 263]. *This is simply included for its use of Scots - here Dame Dods is speaking;* "As I live by honest reckonings" said she, "I believe it *is* yourself, Maister Frank, in blood an' body after a' – and see if I dinna gie a proper sorting to you twa silly jauds

that gard me mak a bogle of you, and a fule of mysell – Ghaist! My certie, I sall ghaist them – if they had their heads as muckle on their wark as on their daffing, they wad play nae sic pliskies – it’s the wanton steed that scaurs at the windlestrae - Ghaist! wha e’er heard of ghaists in an honest house? Naebody need fear bogles that has a conscience void of offence. – But I am blithe that MacTurk hasna murdered ye, when a’ is dune, Maister Francis!

[P 264] “Mrs Dod’s will toss up something – a branded fowl will be best, Mrs Dods, with some mushrooms, and get us a jug of mulled wine – plottie, as you call it.”

[P 266] “Here comes our supper” exclaimed Mr Touchwood, “Sit ye down and let us see what Mrs Dods has done for us – I profess mistress, your plottie is excellent, ever since I taught you how to mix the spices in the right proportion”

“I am glad the plottie pleases ye, sir – but I think I kenned guy weel how to make it before I saw your honour, for mony a browst of it I hae brewed lang syne

“You are a conceited old woman” said Mr Touchwood; “how should anyone know how to mix spice so well as he who has been where they grow? - I have seen the sun ripening nutmegs and cloves. Ah, the merry nights we have had at Smyrna!-Gad, I think that gammon and the good wine taste all the better in a land where folks hold them to be sinful indulgence – Gad I believe many a good Moslem is of the same opinion – that same prohibition of their prophet’s gives a flavour to the ham, and a relish to the Cyprus.”

“And what for no? What for shouldna the honest man say a blessing after his drap punch?” demanded Mrs Dods; “it was better, I ween, than blasting and blawing, and swearing, as if folks shouldna be thankful for their creature-comfort.”

[P 284] “Don’t let me keep you from walking” answered Jekyl, “You will find breakfast far advanced at the Well, sir, and your walk has probably given you an appetite.”

“Which will serve me to luncheon-time” said Touchwood; “I always drink my coffee as soon as my feet are in my pabouches – it’s the way all over the East. Nay young gentleman, if you are keen for a good smart walk, I am for you, and the gout may be d---d. You are a lucky fellow to have youth on your side; but yet, so far as between the Aultoun and the Well, I think I could walk you for your sum, barring running – all heel and toe – equal weight, and I would match Barclay himself for a mile.”

[Pp 288-9] “Never mind Mr Jekyl – I shall make no bad use of what I have learned” said Touchwood. “Were you to eat your words with the best fish sauce (and that is Burgess’s)” “Really sir, all that you have said is an absolute riddle to me”, replied the embarrassed Jekyl. “Riddles may be read” said Touchwood, nodding; “if you have any desire to read mine, pray take notice, that this being our first interview, I have exerted myself *faire les frais de la conversation*, as Jack Frenchman says; if you want another you may come to Mrs Dods’s at the Cleikum Inn, any day before Saturday at four precisely, when you will find none of your half-starved, long-limbed bundles of bones, which you call poultry at the table-d’hote, but a right Chitty-gong fowl – I got Mrs Dods the breed from old Ben Vandewash, the Dutch broker, stewed to a minute, with rice and mushrooms. – If you can eat without a silver fork, and your appetite serves you, you shall be welcome.”

[P 303] “Besides, this brother of hers provokes me too...he stands on point of honour, this broken-down horse-jockey, who swallowed my two thousand pounds, as easily as a pointer would a pat of butter.”

[P 310] “The wine! – there was hardly half a mutchkin, and puir thin fushionless skink it was – the wine was drunk out, ye may swear- we didna fling it ower our shouther- if ever we were to get good o’t, it was by taking it naked, and no wi’ your sugar and

your slaisters - I wish for ane, I had ne'er kend the sour smack o't. If the bedral hadna gi'en me a drap o' usquebaugh, I might e'en hae died of your leddyship's liquor."

The hag crawled to her chimney corner...sat down at her wheel, and seized, while she spun, her jet-black cutty pipe, from which she soon sent such clouds of vile mundungous vapour as must have cleared the premises of Lady Penelope, had she not been so strong in purpose to hear the expected confession of the invalid. As for Miss Digges, she coughed, sneezed, retched, and finally ran out of the cottage, declaring she could not live in such a smoke, if it were to hear twenty sick women's last speeches.

[P 318] Lord Etherington reflected; "I have put a stopper into the mouth of that old vinegar-cruet of quality, but the acidity of her temper will soon dissolve the charm."

[Pp 322-3] "This awkward Scottish laird has scarce tact enough to make love to a ewe-milker, or, at best, to some daggie-tailed soubrette, has the assurance to start himself as my rival."

[Pp 326-7] There was, besides, Mr Winterblossom, who, in his usual spirit of quiet epicurism and quiet self-indulgence, was, under the fire of a volley of compliments to Lady Penelope, scheming to procure for himself an early cup of tea...MacTurk himself was present, notwithstanding that he thought it an egregious waste of hot water, to bestow it upon compounding any mixture, saving punch.

[P 330] Winterblossom noted that "I was negotiating with Mrs Jones for an additional lump of sugar to my coffee. Egad, it was so difficult a piece of diplomacy" he added, sinking his voice, "that I have an idea her ladyship calculates the West Indies produce by grains and pennyweights."

[P 331] "Jones- Jones" exclaimed Lady Penelope, in surprise and displeasure. "Only the key of the tea-caddie, your ladyship" answered Jones.

[P336] "You cannot frighten me with those flights, John", answered Clara, trembling, although she endeavoured to look unconcerned - "you have used them to me too often." "It is well for you, then; you will be ruined without the shock of surprise" answered Mowbray. "So much the better-We have been" said Clara-

"So constantly in poortith's sight,
The thoughts on't gie us little fright.'

So say I with honest Robert Burns."

"D—n Burns and his trash!", said Mowbray, with the impatience of a man determined to be angry with everything but himself, who was the real source of the evil.

"And why damn poor Burns?" said Clara composedly; "it is not his fault if you have not risen a winner, for that, I suppose, is the cause of all this uproar."

"Would it not make any one lose patience", said Mowbray, "to hear her quoting the rhapsodies of a hobnailed peasant, when a man is speaking of the downfall of an ancient house! Your ploughman, I suppose, becoming one degree poorer than he was born to be, would only go without his dinner, or without his usual potation of ale. His comrades would cry 'poor fellow!' and let him eat out of their kit, and drink out of their bicker without scruple, till his own was full again. But the poor gentleman - the downfallen man of rank - the degraded man of birth - the disabled and disarmed man of power! - it is he that is to be pitied, who loses not merely drink and dinner, but honour, situation, credit, character, and name itself!"

[P 343] Said Touchwood "On my word, I believe I must be troublesome to your butler for a draught of something - I am as thirsty as a coal-heaver. You have porter, I suppose, or good old Scotch two-penny?"

With a secret execration on his visitor's effrontery, Mr Mowbray ordered the servant to put down wine and water, of which Touchwood mixed a goblet-full, and drank it off. "I am sorry I have no malt liquor, if you prefer it" said his entertainer. "Prefer it?" said Touchwood, compounding however another glass of sherry and water, and adding a large piece of sugar, to correct the hoarseness which, he observed, the night journey might bring on,—"to be sure I prefer it, and so does everybody, except Frenchmen and dandies.-No offence, Mr Mowbray, but you should order a hogshead from Meux - the brown stout, wired down for exportation to the colonies, keeps for any length of time, and in every climate - I have drunk it where it must have cost a guinea a quart, if interest had been counted."

"When I *expect* the honour of a visit from you, Mr Touchwood, I will endeavour to be better provided" answered Mowbray.

"This is what I call coming to the point", said Mr Touchwood, thrusting out his stout legs, so as to rest his heels upon the fender. "Upon my life, the fire turns the best flower in the garden at this season of the year - I'll take the freedom to throw on a log.-Is it not a strange thing, by-the-bye, that one never sees a fagot in Scotland?

You have much small wood, Mr Mowbray, I wonder you do not get some fellow from the midland counties to teach your people how to make a fagot."

"Did you come all the way to Shaws Castle" said Mowbray," rather testily, "to instruct me in the mystery of fagot making?" "Not exactly, not exactly," answered the undaunted Touchwood, "but there is a right and a wrong way in everything."

[P 347] "Take a glass of wine, Mr Mowbray" said Touchwood complacently; "Take a glass of old sherry – nothing like it for clearing the ideas."

[P 349] "As I live by bread, I am serious" said Touchwood.

[Pp 354-5] Mowbray applied himself to the bell. Patrick answered the call, and was much surprised when the old gentleman, taking the word out of his entertainer's mouth, desired a bed, with a little fire in the grate. "For I take it friend," he went on, "you have not guests here very often. – And see that my sheets be not damp, and bid the housemaid take care not to make the bed on an exact level, but let it slope from the pillow to the footpost, at a declivity of about eighteen inches. - and hark ye - get me a jug of barley water, to place by my bedside, with a squeeze of lemon - or stay, you will make it as sour as Beelzebub-bring the lemon on a saucer, and I will mix it myself. And let the lad put up his horses, and get him a bed somewhere."

"Ye may catch us at that, if ye can." Said Patrick; "there's nae post-cattle come into our stables – What do we ken, but they may be glandered, as the groom says?"

"We must take the risk tonight, Patrick" said Mowbray, reluctantly enough.

Even Lord Etherington's horses had not been admitted into that *sanctum sanctorum* into which Mowbray now saw himself obliged to induct two wretched post-hacks. But he submitted with the best grace he could; and Patrick, when he had left their presence, lifted-up his hands and eyes.

That ends this selection of the worthwhile references to food and drink in 'St Ronan's Well'. A few four others are included, about Burns; and horses; and Captain Barclay (who famously walked 1000 miles in 1000 hours); and one illustrating Sir Walter's deep knowledge of Scots.

Glossary

bedral - sexton
bogle – apparition, scarecrow
browst - a brewing
carvey-seed - caraway seed
cot - God
crap - the crow of a fowl
diet-loaf - a type of sponge-cake
daffing – frolicking
dorts - sulks
fagot - bundle of sticks bound together
fashionless skink - tasteless stuff
glandered - suffering from the disease, glanders.
gled - kite
gomeril - a fool
jaud - disreputable woman
mawkin - hare
moorfoot - ?moorhen
mundungus - ill-smelling tobacco
pabouches - slippers
pliskie - a trick
plottie - mulled wine
porter - beer
pyot - magpie
slaisters - mess
rape - rope
receipts - recipes
skeel - skill
Scaurs - frightened
turbinaceous - peaty, turfy
usquebaugh - whisky,
what for no? - why not?
windlestrae - a stlk of withere grass

papistie – not to be found in my dictionaries, Scots or otherwise.