

the coast shows on either side a battlement of stark red cliffs through which a burn or two makes a pass to the water's edge. The bay itself is ringed with fine clean sands, where we lads of the burgh school loved to bathe in the warm weather. But on long holidays the sport was to go farther afield among the cliffs; for there there were many deep caves and pools, where podleys might be caught with the line, and hid treasures sought for at the expense of the skin of the knees and the buttons of the trousers. Many a long Saturday I have passed in a crinkle of the cliffs, having lit a fire of driftwood, and made believe that I was a smuggler or a Jacobite new landed from France. There was a band of us in Kirkcaldy, lads of my own age, including Archie Leslie, the son of my father's session-clerk, and Tam Dyke, the provost's nephew. We were sealed to silence by the blood oath, and we bore each the name of some historic pirate or sailorman. I was Paul Jones, Tam was Captain Kidd, and Archie, need I say it, was Morgan himself. Our tryst was a cave where a little water called the Dyve Burn had cut its way through the cliffs to the sea. There we forgathered in the summer evenings