



A Sink of Atrocity: Crime in 19th-Century Dundee

Malcolm Archibald

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Nineteenth-century Dundee was a tough, unforgiving place. For many of its citizens, it was the survival of the fittest, and to survive they turned to crime. But what was it really like both for the criminals and the lawabiding citizens to live in the streets and closes of Dundee at that time? A Sink of Atrocity reveals the real Dundee of the nineteenth century and the ordinary and extraordinary crimes of the times. As well as the usual domestic violence, fights and petty thefts, the Peter Wallace gang plagued the city while Resurrectionists caused panic and alarm. There were also infamous murders and an astonishing variety of crimes by women, as well as highly unusual crimes such as the theft of a whale at sea. Against this tidal wave of crime stood men like Patrick Mackay and the city's other Messengers-at-Arms, responsible for apprehending criminals before the advent of the police. It was a tough job in a tough city, but the punishments were severe as the authorities fought hard to bring law and order to nineteenth-century Dundee.



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