



Glasgow's Black Heart: A City's Life of Crime

Douglas Skelton

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Glasgow is the largest city in Scotland. It is a city of culture, of impressive architecture, enterprise and endeavour, and is one of warm-hearted, generous people. But it also has a dark side.

Beneath the busy streets, the Victorian sandstone and urban trendiness lies a black heart that beats in rhythm with the roar of the traffic and the echo of footsteps on concrete. It is a black heart pumped by greed and lust, violence and murder. And it has beaten since the city first sprang up on that dear, green place on the banks of the Molendinar Burn. This is the epic story of Glasgow crime.

Beginning in 1624 when the Tolbooth was built at Glasgow Cross to house the courts and town jail, author Douglas Skelton covers four centuries of Glasgow's hidden history, tracing the formation of the first paid police force in Britain, the Black Assizes of the circuit court and the formation of the city's own High Court of Justiciary.

Here you will find the pimps and pushers, gangsters and gangleaders, rioters and robbers who flooded the veins of the city. Famous felons rub shoulders with their less notorious, but equally vicious, counterparts. Here also are the thief-takers, cops, lawyers and judges who tried to stem the gushing flow, some with more success than others.

These stories may not be what the City Fathers would like to see on Glasgow's CV, but they are as much a part of its traditions and its legacy as the fish, the bell and the tree.



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