



Currie & District Local History Society

CURRIE CHRONICLE (The Journal of the Society)

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Currie Toll 1897

Hello Friends,

The Committee do hope you enjoyed the talks and presentations which were included in the 2012/2013 Winter Syllabus.

The topics were certainly wide-ranging from Edinburgh in the days of Mary Queen of Scots; a history of Edinburgh's local RAF Squadron No. 603; and a well-researched presentation on the local park in Juniper Green - Bloomiehall Park.

A stimulating talk which created a lot of comment afterwards was presented by Evelyn Whitfield (of the Dean Village Association) on the Dean Cemetery in Edinburgh. The Committee have, therefore, asked me to research the history of Dean House and Cemetery along with a pen portrait of the more famous Scots who are interred in the grounds.

Evelyn has volunteered to take Society members on a tour of the graveyard - in June 2013 - and point out the many interesting sites to be seen within the Cemetery.

Details of our 2013 Outing can be found on the draft 2013/14 Winter Syllabus enclosed with this Chronicle.

Hope you enjoy the contents and suggest you bring your copy with you if you are coming on the tour.

Kind regards,

Ronnie Dickson,

The DEAN CEMETERY

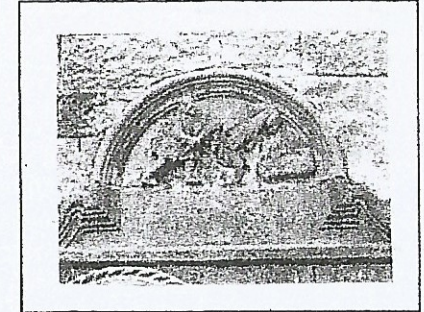
Dean Cemetery, also known as Edinburgh Western Cemetery, was laid out in an informal arrangement by David Cousin (an Edinburgh architect who also laid out Warriston Cemetery) and was opened in 1845 by the Edinburgh Western Cemetery Company. The cemetery is located to the west of Dean Village (formerly known as the Water of Leith Village), next to the Dean Gallery in Edinburgh and is a mile from the City centre.

It became a fashionable burial ground and represented one of a number of new garden cemeteries which opened in the City in the 1840s. Its monuments becoming a rich source of Edinburgh and Victorian history, for mainly the middle and upper-classes. The many monuments bear witness to Scottish achievement in peace and war, at home and abroad.

The cemetery is privately owned by the Dean Cemetery Trust Ltd., making it one of the few cemeteries still run as it was intended to be run. The layout, with its matured designed landscape, can be seen as an excellent example of a cemetery actually being visible in the form it was conceived to be seen.

It was one of the first cemeteries in Edinburgh to be laid out along formal lines, and the trees that were planted over 150 years ago have grown to maturity, giving the Dean Cemetery the atmosphere of a peaceful garden. The Dean Cemetery Trust (a charitable company limited by guarantee) who run the burial ground still have plots available. This comes as a great surprise, as the inscriptions that decorate the fine memorials and gravestones that line the pathways, read like a roll call of the great and the good of Scottish History.

DEAN HOUSE stands on the site of the original **Dean House** (built 1614), part of the **Dean Estate** which had been purchased in 1609 by Sir William Nisbet, who became, in 1616, Lord Provost of Edinburgh. The Nisbets of Dean held the office of Hereditary Poulterer to the King. The famous Herald, Alexander Nisbet of Nisbet House near Duns, Berwickshire, is said to have written his *Systems of Heraldry* in Dean House. The estate house was demolished in 1845, and sculptured stones from it are incorporated into the south terrace wall supporting the edge of the cemetery.



Stone carving from Dean House,
now part of retaining wall in
Dean Cemetery

NOTABLE INTERNMENTS at DEAN CEMETERY

(in Alphabetical Order)

SIR THOMAS BOUCH - (1822-1880)

Thomas Bouch was born in Cumbria and trained as an engineer, much of his life being spent in Edinburgh. Together with a Thomas Grainger (1794-1852) he was responsible for the World's first train ferry which ran between Granton, Edinburgh and Burntisland in Fife.

He designed the first railway bridge crossing from Edinburgh to Fife which of course was never built, and infamously, he also designed the railway bridge across the River Tay between Dundee and Newburgh, Fife. As is well known this bridge collapsed in a storm in 1879. At the Inquiry afterwards his design was blamed for this disaster and Bouch was disgraced.

He retired, a broken man, to his country home near Moffat where he died in 1880.

SAMUEL BOUGH - (1822 - 1878)

Samuel Bough was born in Carlisle and, after schooling, became a landscape painter - self-taught - who spent much of his career working in Scotland. He began working in Manchester as a theatrical scene painter where he was able to exhibit his water colours, mainly of the Lake District. He finally settled in Jordan Lane, in Edinburgh in 1855 by which time he was an established landscape artist in water colours.

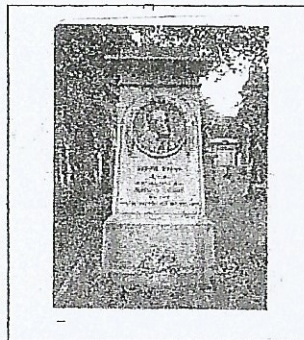
He spent much of his time in the fishing villages of Fife painting coastal scenes, and was noted for painting many of them in the open-air.

A copy of his painting 'Ship Building at Dumbarton' (with Dumbarton Castle in the background) proudly hangs in my dining room. The original can be viewed at the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich.

He was much admired by Robert Louis Stevenson, and Bough painted a view of his house at Swanston.

He was buried at the Dean Cemetery, in 1878, twenty three years after coming to Edinburgh.

Bough's gravestone



HENRY THOMAS COCKBURN
(Lord Cockburn) - (1779 - 1854)

Henry Cockburn was born on 26th October, 1779 in Edinburgh and educated at the old Royal High School and Edinburgh University. He was a member of a distinguished legal family and a nephew of Henry Dundas, Viscount Melville. In his literary career Cockburn contributed regularly to the 'Edinburgh Review'. In this the popular magazine of its day, he is described as "rather below middle height, firm, wiry and muscular, a good

swimmer and an accomplished skater, with an intense love of the fresh breezes of heaven " He was the model of a high bred Scottish gentleman.

Cockburn entered the Faculty of Advocates in 1800 at the age of 21 and attached himself to the Whig Party. He was one of the leaders of the Party in Scotland in its days of darkness prior to the Reform Act of 1832, and was a close friend of Sir Thomas Dick Lauder. He became one of the leading barristers of his time and took up the post of Solicitor General for Scotland in 1830. Four years later he was appointed a Judge in the Court of Session when he took the title of Lord Cockburn of Bonaly. He was Rector of the University of Glasgow 1831 - 1834.

He was a noted conservationist. The Cockburn Society (founded in 1875) continues to have a significant roll in the protection of the City of Edinburgh, and is named in his honour. The Society organises the very popular "Doors Open Days" generally in September each year.

Lord Cockburn died at his mansion, at Bonaly, on 26th April, 1854.

DAVID OCTAVIUS HILL (1802 - 1870)

David Octavius Hill was born in Perth on 20th May, 1802. His father was a bookseller and publisher in the 'Fair City' who helped to re-establish Perth Academy; David and his brothers were all educated at The Academy. When his older brother, Alexander, joined the publishers - Blackwoods - in Edinburgh, David joined him in the City to study at the School of Design. He learned lithography and his landscape paintings were shown in the 'Institution for the Promotion of the Fine Arts in Scotland', a forerunner to the Scottish Academy which was established in 1829 by him and his close friend Henry Cockburn.

At this time he sought commissions in book illustrations and went on to provide illustrations for editions of books published by Sir Walter Scott and Robert



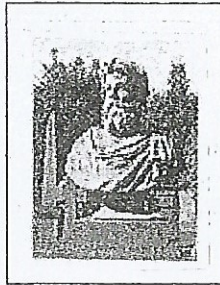
Burns. Hill became interested in photography after attending the Disruption Assembly in 1843. At this gathering over 450 ministers of the Church of Scotland walked out of the Assembly and moved to another city hall to found the Free Church of Scotland

David Hill decided to record the dramatic scene with the encouragement of his friend Lord Cockburn who suggested using the new invention of photography.

He was introduced to another enthusiast Robert Adamson.

They both took a series of photographs of those who had been at the breakaway meeting and the setting. Hill then painted the well-known huge portrait (measuring 5ft x 11ft 4ins) which was completed in 1866 and purchased by the Free Church for £1,200.

Hill and Adamson formed a photography partnership based at Rock House on Calton Hill. They produced thousands of prints of the great and the good, as well as many pictures of ordinary working folk - Newhaven fishing folk - and Fife landscapes. In 1869 illness forced him to give up his post as Secretary to the Royal Scottish Academy, and he died on 17th May, 1870 aged 68.



A bust, sculpted by his second wife, (as above) is displayed near his and her graves in the cemetery.

JAMES NASMYTH - (1808 - 1890)

James Nasmyth was born in Edinburgh on 19th August, 1808. He was the youngest son of the eminent landscape and portrait painter Alexander Nasmyth (1758 - 1840). One of Alexander's hobbies was mechanics and he used nearly all his spare time in his workshop, where, he encouraged his son James to work with him on all sorts of materials.

James attended the Royal High School which he left in 1820. He had learnt many skills during those days at school where he became very proficient at turning in wood, brass, iron and steel. He practiced these skills at school friends father's foundry and his father's workshop. He built his first steam engine at the age of 17. In 1828 he made a complete steam carriage that was

capable of running a mile and carrying eight passengers. This accomplishment at aged 20 increased his desire to become a mechanical engineer.

He then started a foundry business in England and became a pioneer in the design and construction of steam powered machine tools including the invention of the steam hammer, planing machine, pile driver and steam lathe.

He retired from business in 1856 at the early age of 48 and moved to Kent. As he said at the time: "I have now enough of this world's goods; let younger men have their chance". He renamed his retirement home 'Hammerfield' and happily pursued his various hobbies including astronomy.

In memory of his renowned contribution to the discipline of mechanical engineering the Department of Mechanical Engineering at our local Heriot-Watt University is called the James Nasmyth Building.

SOME OTHER 'DEAD FAMOUS' FOLK BURIED in the DEAN CEMETERY

JAMES CRABBIE founder of 'Crabbies Green Ginger Wine'

ELSIE INGLIS - (1864 - 1917) Leading surgeon and suffragette, founder in 1901 of the Elsie Inglis Maternity Hospital staffed only by women

Wm. HENRY PLAYFAIR, F.R.S.E. - (1790 - 1857) One of the greatest Scottish architects of the 19th century. Designer of many of Edinburgh's neo-classical landmarks in the New Town, the unfinished National Monument on Calton Hill and the City Observatory

FLORA STEVENSON - (1839 - 1905) Scottish social reformer with a special interest in education for poor and neglected children. School named after her at Comely Bank

ROBERT Wm. THOMSON - (1822 - 1873) Engineer and inventor. He invented the first vulcanised rubber pneumatic tyre (1845), the fountain pen (1849) and the spring mattress.

CURRIE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

ANNUAL SUMMER OUTING

Our Outing this year will take place on
WEDNESDAY, 12th JUNE, 2013

A TOUR ROUND the OLD CEMETERY of DEAN

led by EVELYN WHITFIELD
of the Dean Village Association

(see description in March 2013 'Currie Chronicle' No. 79)

Meet at top gates of the Old Cemetery
on Dean Path at 2pm

Metered Street Parking is available in the area although it is
served by bus services from the City Centre
Nos. 19, 37, 41, 47 (Lothian) or 43 First Bus

Alight at second stop after Dean Bridge before Baptist Church
then proceed up Dean Path

It is intended after the tour (1 ½ - 2hours) is completed
to adjourn to the Dean Gallery Restaurant
for tea/coffee