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two great blocks of storehouses that survive from the seventeenth century have altogether an appeal of their own. They are well proportioned, simply designed and eminently practical. A few smaller buildings survive, in a state of greater or less disrepair, from a rather later date, and the early nineteenth-century mill building still stands at the north end of the bridge. That is all that is left of the old village, but what remains is well worth preserving.

ALLAN RAMSAY OF KINKELL'S PROPERTY ON THE CASTLEHILL

BY HELEN ARMET

IN the Protocol Book of John Foular (1500-1503)¹ an entry dated 9th November 1501 records that Andrew Moncur, burgess, resigned in the hands of William Goldsmith, bailie, his land and tenement, fore and back, lying at the Castlehill, between the Castle-bank on the west, his own east tenement on the east, the King's street on the south, and the north loch on the north, upon which the bailie gave sasine thereof to him and his wife, Janet Cant. This fifteenth century property became the property of Allan Ramsay of Kinkell in the eighteenth century.

On 4th May 1698, an act of the Town Council by way of a Disposition was granted in favour of Samuel McClellan, merchant, then Town Treasurer, of a ruinous house, waste ground and yard demolished several years past, which belonged to the heirs of the deceased Robert Davidson, merchant in Edinburgh, bounded by the Castlehill and Castle-bank on the west, the north loch on the north, the high street leading to the Castle on the south, and the lands belonging to Bailie Fullerton's heirs on the east; also of an adjoining waste ground or yard on the east, now in grass, without any dyke, belonging to the heirs of — Hutchison, bounded by the founding-house on the south, the north loch on the north, and the common passage now leading from the Castlehill to the north loch upon the east. This passage, now Ramsay Lane, was the highway made in 1682 leading to the port at the foot of Halkerston's Wynd. The value of the first subjects was placed at £20 Scots for 18 years purchase,

¹ *Scottish Record Society*, vol. 64, p. 78.

amounting to £360 Scots, and the second at £6 Scots, or £108 Scots. The property was stated 'to be holden of the King in free burgage, for service of burgh used and wont.' By a Disposition dated 30th May 1635, by William Halliday of Tullibole, son and heir of the late John Halliday of Tullibole, Kt., advocate,¹ Robert Davidson, mentioned above, and his wife, Jean Lawrie, became proprietors of a tenement of land on the north side of the high street beside the Castlehill on the west, which formerly belonged to the late George, Earl of Dunbar,² then to Dame Anna Home, his daughter, and to Sir James Home of Cowdenknowes, Kt., her husband. Robert Davidson was elected to the Town Council in 1643/44; from an entry in the Town Council Minutes of 30th August 1661 it appears that he went bankrupt after 1646.

Ten years later, in 1708, Samuel McClellan, now Sir Samuel McClellan, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, sold his property, which was described as 'now in labour' and occupied by James Berry, gardener, and enclosed by a dyke on either side, to Sir Alexander Ogilvy of Forglen, Bart., Senator of the College of Justice.

Lord Forglen died on 30th March 1727, but on the 14th March he sold to Robert Hope, surgeon in Edinburgh, for 2000 merks, his yard, park and enclosures, with the gardener's house and other houses thereon, as presently possessed by himself and John Tennant, his gardener, all as bounded in the Disposition in favour of Samuel McClellan. Part of the property Robert Hope disposed to Allan Ramsay, bookseller, in life-rent, and his only lawful son, Allan Ramsay, in fee, for £25 sterling. The description in the Disposition, dated 18th September 1733, is as follows: 'that piece of ground adjoining to the founding-house belonging to the Town which lies mostly to the westward and partly to the northward of the founding-house and consists of about 180 feet of

¹ John Halliday of Tullibole was admitted advocate on 17th March 1584.

² The Town Council gave a banquet to him and others in June 1606.

ground or thereby from east to west, and of about 100 feet from south to north and which piece of ground was formerly for the most part garden, and is at present surrounded with stone walls, and the said founding-house on the west, south and east parts and whereof the boundary upon the north is the remains of an old faill dyke running from the southmost elm tree growing within the stone dyke upon the east to the southmost elm tree growing within the stone dyke upon the west, being the southmost part of the land bought by Robert Hope from the late Sir Alexander Ogilvie.' For ascertaining and fixing the march upon the north between this piece of ground and the remainder of Robert Hope's ground Allan Ramsay was obliged to build before Whitsunday a stone dyke or wooden paling at least six-quarters high upon the foundation of the old faill dyke. Robert Hope also disposed in favour of Archibald Hope, his eldest son, his yard or enclosure with houses and others, excepting the yard or uppermost enclosure lately disposed by him to Allan Ramsay, bookseller. This Disposition was dated 'at Hope Park,' 3rd April 1734.

On part of the ground bought from Robert Hope, Allan Ramsay, the poet and bookseller, built his house, which from its shape was given the title 'the goose-pie' by some of his contemporaries. The house is shown along with the bell-house or founding-house on Edgar's Plan of 1742. In the Disposition dated 10th December 1741, by Ramsay in favour of his son, the description continues 'and whereas I have since making the foresaid purchase inclosed the foresaid piece of ground and built a house thereupon with office houses and taken in a part thereof for a garden.'

The poet's son was then twenty-eight years of age. He had left home in the summer of 1736 to study his art abroad and it was two years before he returned on a brief visit to his home, after which he set up as a portrait painter in London. He acquired the lands of Kinkell in Fife in 1747, and thereafter, although mostly residing in London or abroad, he evidently

determined to obtain the ground adjoining his property on the Castlehill. This was a delectable site with a magnificent panoramic view over the north loch, yet undrained, and green fields stretching to the edge of the River Forth and over the firth to the hills to the north. The ground to the south of the house built by his father, still in the possession of the Hope family, was his first acquisition. On 11th August 1748, Archibald Hope, with consent of his trustees, granted a Disposition in his favour of the piece of waste ground formerly belonging to the heirs of Robert Davidson, 'bounded by the Castlehill and the Castle-bank on the west, the ground formerly disposed by Archibald Hope's father to Allan Ramsay, bookseller, on the north, the high street leading to the Castle on the south, and the land sometime belonging to Bailie Fullerton's heirs on the east.' Ramsay built a wing to the house and made other alterations. His object in obtaining the piece of ground to the south was to secure an entrance from the Castlehill. There is an act of the Dean of Guild Court dated 21st March 1750, following on a petition by him, showing that he had a piece of ground on the north side of the Castlehill upon which he had built a house, which ground was bounded on the east by the tenement belonging to Fullerton's heirs, now conveyed to Mr. Charteris of Amisfield, the high street on the south, and the Castlehill and Castle-bank on the west. On this ground there remained the gable and east chimneys of a ruinous tenement which he could have rebuilt since it was his property, but at present he designed only to enclose the ground of it by making a proper entry to his house in order to make it more agreeable to every person resorting to the Castlehill 'and particularly to the Gentlemen and Ladies of the first rank who from the nature of the petitioners business resort to his house.' When he had begun to enclose this piece of waste ground lying between his house and the street he was hindered by the commanding officer of the Castle, who claimed that area as part of the Castlehill and the

property of the Crown. After communication with Lord Mark Ker, Governor of the Castle, Mr. Robert Craigie, late Lord Advocate, and Mr. William Grant, His Majesty's Advocate, it was determined that the petitioner had right to enclose the ground and make a proper entry to his house. Evidence had been produced from the Burgh Register of Sasines that Fullerton's tenement originally was bounded on the west by the waste tenement of the deceased Andrew Moncur, and that the said tenement at the west or uppermost end of the Castlehill had become the property of Robert Davidson and had been allowed to fall to ruin. The Town's assessors also had reported that there was satisfying evidence that there had been a passage entered by a pended gate between the said tenements. Allan Ramsay was given permission to enclose his ground with a stone wall five foot in height, leaving out 25 feet in breadth from south to north and 50 feet in length from east to west under a servitude of never being built upon or enclosed or separated from the public walk on the Castlehill.

Fullerton's tenement, referred to above, was originally Andrew Moncur's east tenement¹ which eventually became the property of John Fullerton and his wife, Margaret Jardine, in 1636. Their son John was elected bailie in 1664. It came into the possession of Colonel Francis Charteris in 1708. By Feu Contract dated April 1757, the Honourable Francis Charteris of Amisfield, as heir of entail to the late Colonel Francis Charteris, feued to John Davidson, W.S.,² for £4 sterling the waste tenement and others lying on the north side of the high street above the Reservoir. In this contract was excepted a yard or area adjoining the north end of the waste tenement jutting out into the upper part of the garden belonging to Allan Ramsay of Kinkell within a little of the bank

¹ See p. 19.

² John Davidson of Stewartfield and Haltree, Crown Agent, and Depute Keeper of the Signet, 1778-1797.

or rock facing his house, the said area being 14 yards in length north from the north gable of the ruin and in breadth $9\frac{3}{4}$ yards, the west boundary of the yard running in a straight line north with the west wall of the ruined house, which area was presently possessed by Allan Ramsay with free ish and entry thereto. On this waste tenement John Davidson built a house consisting of three storeys, a sunk storey and attic storey. In Kay's *Edinburgh Portraits*, Vol. II, p. 243, the biographical sketch of John Davidson, Esq., W.S., continues: 'The late Mr. Hugh Warrender, his first clerk, succeeded to his business at his death, which occurred at Edinburgh on the 29th December 1797. The house built by Mr. Davidson, and for sixty years successively inhabited by him and Mr. Warrender, was the uppermost house on the Castlehill, next to the Castle, on the north side of the street, and is now (1842) possessed by Sir George Warrender, Bart., who inherits it under the settlement of his relative.' The house is shown in the Measured Drawings of Lawnmarket and Castlehill made by Thomas Hamilton, architect,¹ but it was demolished by the Water Company in 1849 to make way for the enlargement of the reservoir.

Davidson, like Ramsay, was anxious to secure the adjoining property and in August 1757, while Ramsay was in Italy, he acquired from the Honourable Francis Charteris that area or yard to which Ramsay had been given free entry. This caused acrimonious disagreement between Ramsay and Davidson, the former accusing the latter of seeking to take advantage of him, particularly as Davidson offered to sell the area, upon servitude, to Ramsay, who had previously held it from Charteris without payment. In a long letter from Ramsay in London, dated 14th January 1758, to Davidson, Ramsay concludes: 'Having thus drawn you on to read a very long and unentertaining Detail of what you should know full as well as I, I will save you the Trouble of reading it

¹ *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, Vol. XII, p. 249.

over again by contracting the Substance of it into the following summary:—

'That there is a piece of ground possessed by me which Mr. Charteris refused to sell you reserving it expressly for my use.

'That you afterwards bought this ground from him in my name.

'That you are no more than an Agent in this purchase, and, consequently, have no right to retain the Subject for yourself, or, which is the same thing, to load it with conditions for your own advantage.

'That I will not grant you any Servitude upon my own Ground, by Virtue of your letter above recited, so that if you are as deeply entrenched in Law as you imagine, the Ground you pretended to purchase for me will become your own, and you will carry it off with the additional glory of having outwitted my Doer and Mr. Charteris, notwithstanding all his Endeavours to keep his Promise, and to do a kindness to his old Friend.

'Wishing you all the Success which such enterprises deserve. I remain as much as I have been for some months past, Sir, Your most humble Servant.'

Davidson in March 1758 also succeeded in acquiring from Archibald Hope a piece of ground extending 40 feet from Allan Ramsay's north boundary, bounded by the hedge of Allan Ramsay's ground on the south, Hope's own ground on the north, and the dykes enclosing the ground on the east and west. On the 4th of April of that year he petitioned the Town Council for a feu of the bell-house at an annual feu duty of £6 sterling, but it was Allan Ramsay of Kinkell, 'limner,' who obtained from the Town Council on 27th September a feu contract of the bell-house or founding-house, described as lying upon the north side of the Castlehill, 'consisting of 57 feet in length from east to west, 40 feet in breadth at the west end and 25 feet at the east end, bounded by the house and yard or garden belonging to Allan Ramsay on the west and north, the enclosed ground belonging to the City, now possessed by William Baird of Newbyth, and Allan Ramsay's entry on the south, and the highway leading from the high

street to the new port and flesh-markets on the east.' The Town Council in 1684 caused the bell-house or founding-house to be built for the use of John Meikle, founder, in casting the Town's bells.¹ Bells for the High School, Greyfriars Church, the fire bell in the high steeple of St. Giles, and musical bells were all cast by Meikle, who was succeeded in his occupation of the bell-house by Robert Maxwell, Daniel Hope, James Bell, Alexander Anderson, and William Armstrong. It was let to James Cunningham, founder, and William Ormiston, copper-smith, in 1738.

Mr. William Johnston, advocate, was tenant of Allan Ramsay's house in 1759,² when he and the latter petitioned the Town Council for the repair of the road leading from the Castlehill by the north side of the town. The Town Council was not prepared to incur any expense but agreed to allow them to make a footpath to the house and to pave the other parts of the road at their own expense 'if they have a mind,' which footpath it was stipulated should be only 5 feet broad.

Disagreements continued between Ramsay and Davidson, and these were submitted to George Drummond, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, and William Alston, W.S., for determining the several processes between them pending in the Court of Session. On 10th April 1759, sentence and decreet arbitral was pronounced. Davidson was decerned to have right to the house built by him and to the piece of ground adjoining the north gable of the house which he was ordered to enclose at his own expense, with entry only on the east side. Ramsay was not to erect any building or plant thicket of trees over that part of his ground on the west side of Davidson's house. The latter was declared to have no right to an entry or passage through Ramsay's piece of ground on the west side of his dwelling-house and Ramsay had no right to a passage for

¹ See *Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1681-1689*, pp. 104-5.

² Allan Ramsay, the poet, who had continued to live in the house on the Castlehill, died in January 1758.

any wheeled carriage in the close on the east side of Davidson's house. In recompense for any encroachment made by Davidson on Ramsay's property in building his house and enclosing the small piece of land to the north of the house, the arbiters ordered Davidson to dispoise to Ramsay that piece of ground possessed by Ramsay and feued to Davidson by Francis Charteris of Amisfield, under servitude that Ramsay would not erect any building or plant any trees to the injury of Davidson's lights, Ramsay relieving Davidson of the feu duty of £1 sterling, or paying him £30 as the price of the feu duty; also that Davidson should dispoise to Ramsay that piece of ground which Davidson had from Archibald Hope, extending 40 feet from Ramsay's north boundary. To these conditions both parties submitted.

William Baird of Newbyth, who had a house on the south side of the Castlehill, was tacksman of the Town's coach-house and stables opposite the bell-house, and had acquired from Davidson in April 1759 the southmost part of a piece of ground below the reservoir for £2 sterling. Davidson dispoised to Ramsay the remainder of the ground, the northmost part, on 16th September 1760 for £7, 7s. sterling. On 18th June 1761, William Johnston, Ramsay's tenant, wrote the following letter to William Baird: 'Lord Elbank acquainted me of your offer to let Mr. Ramsay have the piece of ground belonging to you opposite to the bell-house, Castlehill, for a hogshead of claret as you was in use to get from John Inglis. I informed Mr. Ramsay of this and have his answer last night desiring me to write you that he agrees to your proposal, and desiring you will be so good as to cause make out a conveyance in his favour, when I shall give an order in Mr. Ramsay's name for the hogshead of claret from Mr. Inglis. As Mr. Ramsay proposes to set about his new building immediately he shall be glad that the conveyance be executed with your first conveniency.' The Disposition of the southmost part to Allan Ramsay is dated 2nd July 1761.

Ramsay's new building mentioned above was a project which he had put forward in a petition to the Town Council on 4th February. He desired to build two houses 'in the English fashion fit to accommodate two small families of distinction—a project of certain advantage to the City of Edinburgh, however hazardous it may be to the projector.' Upon examining the ground he had found that the bell-house itself, 25 feet from south to north, was not capable of taking the intended building and he wished to include nine feet more of his original ground northwards which he held in free burgage. Therefore he wished the Town Council to convert the feu duty of the bell-house ground into a purchase, holding free burgage. To this the Council agreed, he paying £156 sterling, being 26 years' purchase of the present yearly feu duty of £6. The Disposition in his favour was signed on 27th July 1763, the description of the bell-house being the same as in the Feu Contract, but the bounds were now given as the houses and garden ground belonging to the said Allan Ramsay on the west and north, the enclosed ground north of the City's water-house and of the coach-house possessed by Mr. John Davidson on the south, and the highway leading from the high street to the new port on the east. Warrant was given to him by the Dean of Guild on 3rd July 1765 to build two houses with a common wall, the whole occupying 60 feet from east to west and 39 feet from south to north, the front coming as far south as the southernmost part of his washing-house now possessed by Mr. Nairn, and the west gable to be placed where the west gable of the bell-house then stood, containing in height three storeys and garrets above ground to the south, and a sunk storey. The neighbouring heritors, Mr. Joseph Williamson, advocate, Mr. John Davidson, W.S., Clerk to the Signet, Peter Hutchison, indweller, and Mr. William Ramsay, treasurer to the City, lodged no objections. It was stipulated that Allan Ramsay was to observe the laws relative to building within the City, particularly the Act of Parliament of

1698, and also to keep the east gable of his new building upon the old foundation of the east gable of the bell-house.

The houses in Ramsay Garden, apparently designed by Robert Adam,¹ were built by 1768, as on 24th August of that year Ramsay asked permission of the Town Council to bring that part of the road which lies between the high street and the houses lately built by him to a proper level at his own expense. In a letter dated 11th October 1769 to the Town Council he stated that having *three* new houses behind the reservoir he wished each to have a pipe of water.

The piece of ground which Archibald Hope had retained to the north of Allan Ramsay's property he disposed on 23rd June 1766 in favour of his sister, Miss Margaret Hope, for £200 sterling. Archibald Hope was then designed 'Collector of Excise at Ormistoun,' and the subjects were described as 'his park or enclosure with the houses and others thereon on the north side of the Castlehill, excepting 40 feet of the highest and southmost part of the said park running in a line from east to west disposed by him to Mr. Allan Ramsay . . . which park is partly enclosed with a stone dyke on either side and the remains of the outmost ditch at the foot and north side.' On 17th June 1773, Margaret Hope disposed this remaining ground to Allan Ramsay of Kinkell for £350 sterling, which now completed his purchase of the property adjudged to Samuel McClellan in 1698 and which originally belonged to Andrew Moncur in 1501.

Allan Ramsay of Kinkell, who had been appointed Principal Painter to His Majesty in 1767, died in 1784, when the property passed to his son, General John Ramsay. In the latter years of his life he made few visits to Scotland, but the

¹ In *The Architecture of Robert and James Adam*, by A. T. Bolton, there is listed in the Topographical Index to the collection of Adam Drawings now in the Sir John Soane Museum, London, Section I, Country, under Edinburgh, a 'Design for a pair of houses' for Allan Ramsay—5 plans 3 elevations. (61 ft. frontage x 40 ft. depth.) The brothers Adam were old friends of Allan Ramsay.

houses built by him still remain. Then the new Town was in creation and from that time the prospect from the houses on the Castlehill has been a changing one over the valley beyond. Lord Provost Drummond's vision of the 'green fields covered with houses, forming a splendid and magnificent city' has come true.

NOTE

This article is based on unpublished material in the City Archives.

WILLIAM'S HUT

By MARGARET TAIT

THERE appears to have been a curious local usage of the word Hut, defined by Chambers as 'a small or mean house, a small temporary dwelling,' in Edinburgh during the second half of the eighteenth century, to indicate the secondary (but by no means small, mean, or temporary) house of a family who normally inhabited a larger and more imposing abode. At least three instances of this use of the word are recorded, and one of the houses survives. The most important of the three was the Lothian Hutt, which was the town house of the Lothian family and adjoined the Abbey Close. It was built in 1750 and demolished in 1825. The Lothian Hutt is marked on Ainslie's map of 1804. The existence of another Hut is proved by an advertisement in the *Courant* of 6th February 1775, which runs—'To let that house known by the name of Bruntsfield Hut with a garden and large room therein, stable, cellar, and other conveniences agreeably situated near the head of Bruntsfield Links as presently possessed by John Baptie, vintner, and also two houses adjoining. Enquire of Mrs. Brown the proprietor at Bruntsfield Links.' The last of the trio is William's Hut, now No. 13 Sylvan Place.¹

A rich fund of local tradition exists about William's Hut none of which I have been able to verify. It is said that it was at one period the home of the Duke of Argyll's factor, and, later on, of a mysterious early anatomist with a reputation akin to that of the celebrated Dr. Knox. In the day of this grisly practitioner of the art of surgery, William's Hut went by the name of Sylvan House and stood in pleasantly wooded

¹ Since writing this article, the author has discovered a fourth Hut. On Kincaid's map of 1784 Ramsay Lodge is marked as Ramsay's Hut.