

THE BOOK
OF THE
OLD EDINBURGH
CLUB

The Journal for
Edinburgh History



Graeme Cruickshank, 'Rambling Round the Walls: One Hundred Years On',
Book of the Old Edinburgh Club, New Series 8 (2010), pp. 111–119

~~~~~

This article is extracted from **The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club**, **The Journal for  
Edinburgh History** ISSN 2634-2618

Content © The Old Edinburgh Club and contributors. All rights reserved.

For information about The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club (BOEC), including contents of  
previous issues and indexes, see <https://oldedinburghclub.org.uk/boec>.

**This article is made available for your personal research and private study only.**

For any further uses of BOEC material, please contact the Editor, The Book of the Old  
Edinburgh Club, at [editor@oldedinburghclub.org.uk](mailto:editor@oldedinburghclub.org.uk). The Club has a Take-Down Policy  
covering potential rights infringements. Please see [http://oldedinburghclub.org.uk/oec-  
take-down-policy](http://oldedinburghclub.org.uk/oec-take-down-policy).



Digitised by the Centre for Research  
Collections, Edinburgh University  
Library from the copy in the Library  
Collection



# RAMBLING ROUND THE WALLS

## ONE HUNDRED YEARS ON

GRAEME CRUICKSHANK

THE EDINBURGH ROOM in the Central Public Library contains an item which sheds much light on the early days of the Old Edinburgh Club (OEC). Although it is called the Club's Minute Book No. 1, it does not include minutes of early Council meetings, but does contain various items of printed ephemera relating to the Club's formation and early activities.<sup>1</sup> Amongst these is an invitation to join in a walk round the line of the old town walls of Edinburgh, to be held on 18 July 1908 (fig. 1). This would appear to be the first official outing by the newly formed OEC following its inauguration on 29 January that year. An idea immediately occurred – to re-create that walk as part of the Club's programme of centenary events.

The original invitation was issued on 8 July by the Club Secretary, Lewis MacRitchie, from his business address at 40 Princes Street. Curiously the outing was referred to not as a walk, nor a tour, nor even an excursion, but as a 'ramble' – a term which, a century later, carries connotations of a party kitted out with hiking boots and knapsacks, and the

prospect of a day's trekking in the hills. (By the following year an OEC excursion was referred to as a 'walk of investigation'.) Also, it was not actually an Old Edinburgh Club event at all: the infant organisation was hitching a ride on the back of the Edinburgh Photographic Society, whose annual ramble was organised by their Survey Section. The Council of that Society had been kind enough to invite the members of the OEC to join in the walk.

The notion of replicating the outing appealed, and it was duly organised, led by Council member Graeme Cruickshank, whose suggestion it was. For practical reasons, numbers attending such events have to be limited. Twenty-five seemed a sensible target, but within a matter of days 60 members had signed up, and it was decided to hold the event twice, on successive days. Depending on one's viewpoint, both events could be regarded as centenary walks, the first being held on 18 July (a Friday evening) which was exactly one hundred years later by date, while the second, held on a Saturday afternoon at 2.00 pm, was exactly one hundred years later by day and time. In the end 37 people came on the first walk and 33 on the second. It must be wondered what it was like in 1908, when the ramble was held just the once yet had to cater for the membership of two societies, the number attending being the same as the combined total for 2008!

No detailed account of the 1908 ramble is known. A paragraph was devoted to the event in the *Scotsman* on the Monday following, 20 July. A single sentence giving the basic facts is followed by an abbreviated list of streets visited: one would have hoped for more, considering that the tour leader, John Geddie, was Assistant Editor of the *Scotsman* at the time. Two events had attracted the attention of the *Scotsman* on that day. One concerned the Olympic Games, which were in progress at the White City in London. The big news story was the complaint made by the Americans against the British tug-of-war team for

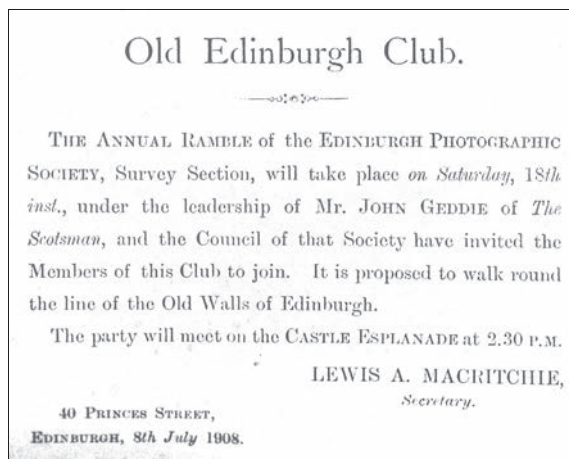


Fig. 1. Printed notice inviting members of the Old Edinburgh Club to participate in the Club's first outing, dated 8 July 1908. (Reproduced by kind permission of Edinburgh City Libraries.)

wearing 'heavy boots', a clearly underhand tactic, which was contrary, as the article put it, to the British sense of fair play. The major event on the home front was the Scottish National Exhibition at Saughton Park. The *Scotsman* reported 'a great influx of visitors on Saturday, and the grounds presented an animated scene throughout the day ... The Yankee Cake Walk – which is the latest installation among the amusements – provided a continual source of fun and laughter'. Despite these goings-on, one might have expected a somewhat more thorough report on Saturday's ramble. A slightly longer account of the walk was included in the report of Club activities given to the first annual general meeting.<sup>2</sup> At least we now knew that the tour had progressed in a counter-clockwise direction.

It is worth noting that the OEC organised another walk round the walls between those of 1908 and 2008. On 14 June 1930 a group was guided round 'the remains of the fortified walls on the south side of the Burgh' by the noted architect, Frank Mears; quite a detailed account of this was published in the next *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*.<sup>3</sup>

The participants in the 1908 ramble had assembled on the Castle Esplanade, where John Geddie 'made some remarks on the Edinburgh Wall and its extensions'. Alas, this starting point was out of bounds in 2008. With the seating for the Edinburgh Military Tattoo already in place, it had become the practice to stage a number of major concerts of popular music in the weeks prior to the main event. Two were scheduled for the same days as the planned walks, meaning that access was denied to non ticket-holders, not just to the Esplanade but also to the Lawnmarket. An alternative meeting place was secured thanks to the Club President, Dr Iain Brown – the Board Room of the National Library of Scotland, in which institution he is Principal Curator of Manuscripts. As a precursor to the 2008 tour, the leader paid tribute to his predecessor of a century before, and provided a brief account of Geddie's life and career.

John Geddie, a native of Garmouth on the Moray coast, was initially heading for a career in the law, but upon coming to Edinburgh opted instead for journalism. In 1870, at the age of 22, he joined the *Scotsman* sub-editing staff, moving on to become a leader-writer with the newly created *Evening Dispatch* in 1886, before returning to the *Scotsman*

as leader-writer and Assistant Editor three years later. He held that position for fully forty years, from his appointment in 1889 to his official retiral in 1929. Many a trenchant editorial issued from his pen – but always anonymously. John Geddie was a highly clubbable man. Two in which he was particularly active were the Trotters Club, devoted to the sport of skittles, in which he was Club Bard; and the Rymours Club, dedicated to the collection, preservation, study and publication of old Scots ballads and ballad music, in which he was a regular speaker and contributor to its publications. He was a founder member of the OEC, being a Council member from its inception; he wrote seven articles dealing with the 'Sculptured Stones of Old Edinburgh' for the *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, four appearing in the first four issues. Geddie was the author of numerous books and articles on a number of historical and topographical subjects, his favourite being Edinburgh. His *Romantic Edinburgh* of 1900, of which there were several printings, was a perennial favourite. His feelings for the city were summed up in *Edinburgh* (1922): 'Beauty, bestowed by nature and enhanced by art, is the unchallenged endowment of Edinburgh'.<sup>4</sup>

As noted previously, the outing of 18 July 1908, the first in the history of the OEC, was not really the Club's at all; they were the guests of the Survey Section of the Edinburgh Photographic Society (EPS). One person in a good position to act in a linking role was James Oliver, a member of the inaugural OEC Council, and also Secretary of the EPS. A likely scenario is that the EPS first planned their walk round the walls, then the idea occurred to their Secretary that this would be of interest to the fledgling OEC. Be that as it may, the OEC surely owes a debt of gratitude to the EPS for allowing it to join in such an appropriate outing at a time when it was still finding its feet. Because of that, it was considered only fitting that a member of the EPS be invited to join the 2008 OEC centenary walk on 18 July, and this offer was accepted by Peter Stubbs, a leading member of the Society with a keen interest in history.

Mr Stubbs explained that the EPS was founded in 1861 and in the course of its first forty years it had spawned a number of special interest groups. By the start of the twentieth century these included the Elementary Section, the Lantern Section, the Ladies'

## RAMBLING ROUND THE WALLS

Practical Section, the Cycling Camera Corps, and the Survey Section. This latter Section had been founded in 1899, though it was only to last for a decade or so. It had two principal objectives:

1. To make a comprehensive collection of original paintings, engravings, prints, photographs, lantern slides, and illustrations of every description of Edinburgh, Leith, and district, of the past.
2. To secure permanent photographs (such as by carbon or platinotype process), drawings, &c. of streets, buildings, [and] monuments of Edinburgh, Leith, and district, as they now exist, and of all public and open spaces in and around the city, and to obtain representations of the civic and social life and customs of the city.

The Survey Section thus adopted a much wider remit than establishing a comprehensive record by photography alone. They appear to have worked assiduously at their task, so much so that they were able to hold an exhibition early in 1905, comprising some 50 paintings, 107 prints, and 359 photographs. Two sets of the latter were produced, and it is believed that one of these sets is now held by the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, while the other has been incorporated into the Edinburgh Room's photographic collections at the Central Public Library. As Mr Stubbs explained, the EPS organised many photographic outings, utilising a range of methods of transport, including train, steamer, canal barge, wagonette, motor charabanc, cycle, and on foot.<sup>5</sup> The latter method was adopted for following

the line of the city walls in 1908, as indeed it was a century later. It is not known to what extent photography was employed during the original ramble, but one hundred years later it was much in evidence, even though the subject matter seemed to be more often the participants in the event itself rather than the relics of bygone days – always assuming that a distinction could be drawn between the two (fig. 2)!

Before embarking on the centenary walks of 2008, the leader gave a brief talk on the subject of the town walls. Two fundamental points should be borne in mind. First, Edinburgh was never circumvallate (i.e. surrounded by fortifications) as most walled medieval cities were, because it was protected on the west by the Castle on its rock, and on the north by the man-made Nor' Loch. Walls were therefore mainly built on the south and east sides of town. Second, while military defence was the primary reason for town walls, there were others. The major secondary reason was to act as a deterrent against smuggling, thereby providing a customs barrier which raised considerable revenue for the civic authorities. Walls could also act as a way of enforcing a curfew, as a barrier against the spread of plague, as a means of excluding outland beggars, and so on. It was also pointed out that the story of the fortification of Edinburgh was by no means straightforward, as indicated in a useful



Fig. 2. The first OEC tour of 2008 reaches the top of the Vennel steps; at the front are Club President Dr Iain Brown (wearing the Presidential badge of office) and tour leader Graeme Cruickshank (carrying his loudhailer). (*Photograph by Colin Warwick.*)

booklet on the subject of 1988, by our Honorary Vice-President, Lord Cullen.<sup>6</sup> The fortifying of the city is likely to have been as old as the city itself, and there are suggestions of early medieval walls, probably replacing earlier palisades. However, we know of three major defensive walls.

The *King's Wall* (15th century). The *murus regius* (more properly translated as the 'Royal Wall') may have resulted from an edict of King James II in 1450 ordering that the town be fortified against 'the evil and skaith [danger] of our enemies of England'. Other dates, and reasons for the name, have been suggested. The longest stretch of this wall ran along the southern slope below the High Street, but did not enclose the Grassmarket or Cowgate. The narrowing of the High Street at John Knox House may reflect the original position of the Netherbow Port (gate). The best surviving section is down Tweeddale Close.

The *Flodden Wall* (16th century). Although perhaps started earlier, the necessity for this wall arose from the fear of imminent English invasion following the disastrous Battle of Flodden in 1513. Even so, its progress was somewhat fitful, some sections being new while others were patch-ups of existing stretches of walling, and it was still ongoing into the 1560s. In addition to the original old town, it encompassed the Grassmarket and the head of the Cowgate in the south-west, and four religious foundations in the south-east. It contained a number of major Ports (gateways), their locations being recognisable today. The best surviving sections are at the top of the Vennel steps, in Greyfriars Kirkyard, and along lower Drummond Street and the lower Pleasance.

The *Telfer Wall* (17th century). This was effectively an extension of the Flodden Wall to the south-west built after 1618, its name referring to Johnne Taillefer, deacon of the masons from 1616, who was responsible for at least part of the work. It was the only Edinburgh town wall built to standard dimensions. The best surviving section is along the Vennel facing Heriot Place.

Inevitably, there came a time when the town walls were regarded as redundant and they were taken down, though it was a very piecemeal process which, thankfully, was never completed. The tour guide issued a hand-out, one side carrying the basic information given above, and the other providing some views of the Flodden Wall and its Ports.<sup>7</sup>

With that, the groups departed, following in the footsteps of their 1908 predecessors as far as could be ascertained and was nowadays practical. That last word had a particular relevance, for not only did events already mentioned prevent the planned gathering on the Esplanade but building operations for a new hotel at the head of Victoria Street, directly opposite the National Library of Scotland, meant that the first stretch involved a loop up George IV Bridge to the Lawnmarket and back down the other side, then down into the Grassmarket, without pause. Prior to setting out, the guide had warned against the dangers of navigating busy roads in large groups, and the advisability of using pedestrian crossings. Borrowing from the Highway Code, 'Wait for the green man' was the order of the day, and to emphasise the point the guide was clad in an emerald green suit (which quickly became the subject of ribald humour). There follows a list of the 22 places where the rambles stopped to look at and hear about points of special interest.

*Stop 1. Midway along the Grassmarket, on the north side, to view a section of the King's Wall (probably), located on the middle leg, the east-west section, of Castle Wynd South. Very little of its northern face is to be seen, the area adjacent being terraced to form a wildlife reserve (restricted access).*

*Stop 2. At the western end of the Grassmarket, on the north side, to look at the line of the Flodden Wall coming south from the Castle (with fragments incorporated in the wall on the east side of the modern Granny's Green steps) and extending across the Grassmarket, delineated by differentially-toned paving and metal studs. At the time, this whole area was undergoing extensive upgrading which made this part of the tour a little awkward. Informative signage was later added, including an extensive quotation from Sir Walter Scott's *Marmion*.<sup>8</sup> During the works a small section of the foundations of the Flodden Wall was uncovered, which allowed the marking of the exact line and width of the wall.<sup>9</sup> The inscription is dated 'Flodden Wall: c. 1513-1870', though it is not easy to account for the latter date, as old maps indicate that the remainder of the wall here was removed in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century.<sup>10</sup>*

*Stop 3. At the east end of the street called West Port, adjacent to the site of the former West Port gateway. Newly placed markers in the street here indicate the line of the wall, though not the position of*

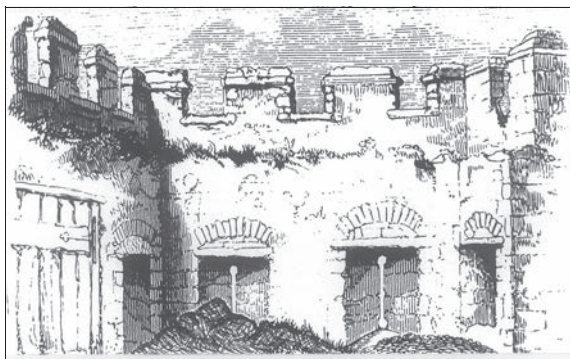


Fig. 3. Sketch of the interior of the Flodden Tower by John Syme, 1 May 1829, published in Patrick Neill, *Notes Relative to the Fortified Walls of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh 1829). (From Sir Daniel Wilson, *Memorials of Edinburgh in the Olden Time*, Edinburgh 1891, vol. 1, p. 152.)

the Port itself. On a number of occasions, this was the point of entry for royalty. The guide described a spectacular ceremony that took place at the West Port in 1590 for the entry of Anne of Denmark, the new bride of King James VI.<sup>11</sup>

*Stop 4. At the top of the Vennel steps*, to examine the Flodden Wall tower, both outside and in. One of the most dramatic of the surviving town fortifications, this has long attracted the interest of antiquarians (fig. 3). It is crenellated all round, i.e. provided with battlements, the alternating high and low sections of parapet giving cover to the defenders. They were also aided by the loopholes (narrow vertical slits) being constructed with embrasures – angled internal openings which gave the defenders a wide field of fire, yet allowed the attackers only very small targets. Even in its incomplete state, the tower still exhibits four gun-loops (one blocked) with the possibility of more having existed prior to the insertion of a window in 1878 and the construction of the school building in 1933. The tour party were given access to the little courtyard thanks to the good offices of George Heriot's Trust.

*Stop 5. Immediately round the corner*, to examine the junction of the Flodden Wall and the Telfer Wall, the latter being crenellated for some considerable distance.

*Stop 6. Halfway along Heriot Place*, to study a stretch of the Telfer Wall which exhibits a change in the colour, shape, and style of construction of the masonry.

*Stop 7. At the south end of Heriot Place*, to look back at this impressive stretch of the Telfer Wall from what was its southern limit.

*Stop 8. In the grounds of George Heriot's School.* The 1908 ramble actually visited the School, conducted by Dr David Lowe, the principal, who also sat on the Council of the Old Edinburgh Club. In 2008 the excursion through the School grounds allowed Greyfriars Churchyard to be entered from the west, a considerable short-cut. This was not practical on the second outing because of a wedding in the School chapel, and so the longer route to Greyfriars was taken, along the remainder of Lauriston Place and up Forrest Road. This had the advantage of permitting a close-up look at the section of the Telfer Wall linking these two streets, rather than the somewhat distant view from the location of Stop 10.

*Stop 9. In Greyfriars Churchyard*, to walk through an aperture in the Flodden Wall, which allowed it to be viewed up close from both sides, and its thickness to be gauged.

*Stop 10. Also in Greyfriars Churchyard*, for a distant view of a section of the Telfer Wall at the far end of the Covenanters' Prison.

*Stop 11. Still in Greyfriars Churchyard*, to view a gap in the later masonry on the line of the Flodden Wall.

*Stop 12. At the north end of Forrest Road, west side, and then on to the adjacent traffic island*, to view the plugged gap from the other side, and then the strip of setts on the pavement, which also extends across the traffic island, marking the line of the Flodden Wall. There was no plaque explaining the street markings but both groups reacted enthusiastically to the suggestion that there should be, and on 31 December

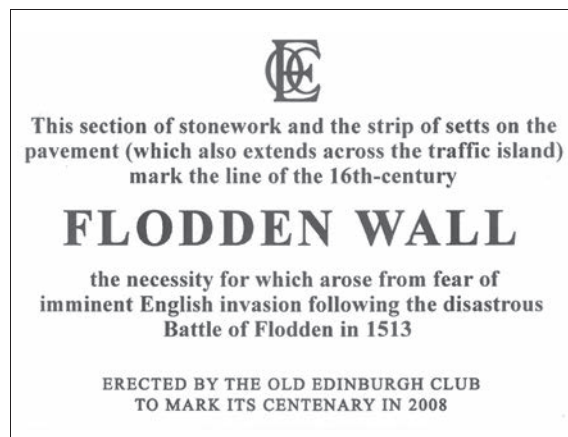


Fig. 4. Final foundry proof for the template used for the bronze plaque on the line of the Flodden Wall in Forrest Road. (Charles Laing & Sons Ltd, Beaverbank Foundry, Edinburgh.)

2008 the Old Edinburgh Club erected a new plaque here as a finale to its centenary celebrations (fig. 4).

*Stop 13. Within the National Museum of Scotland, to examine a section of the Flodden Wall in 'PAMS Link' (so-called from the department of Public Affairs and Museum Services). This surviving section is in a non-public part of the Museum, and our visit was made possible by the good offices of Dr David Caldwell, keeper of the Scotland and Europe department, who gave a short address. It is a little*

sad to think that the 1908 participants saw considerably more of the wall at this point. Indeed, at that time it ran pretty well continuously from Bristo Port to Potterrow Port.<sup>12</sup> Dr Allen Simpson, a member of the Old Edinburgh Club's Council and a former curator at the Museum, informed the group of what had transpired to so drastically reduce the wall to its present fragmentary state. In this, he was greatly aided by the recent researches by his former colleague Geoff Swinney.



Fig. 5. Fragment of the Flodden Wall inside the Royal Scottish Museum, *Scotsman*, 9 September 1929. (Reproduced by kind permission of Scotsman Publications Ltd.)

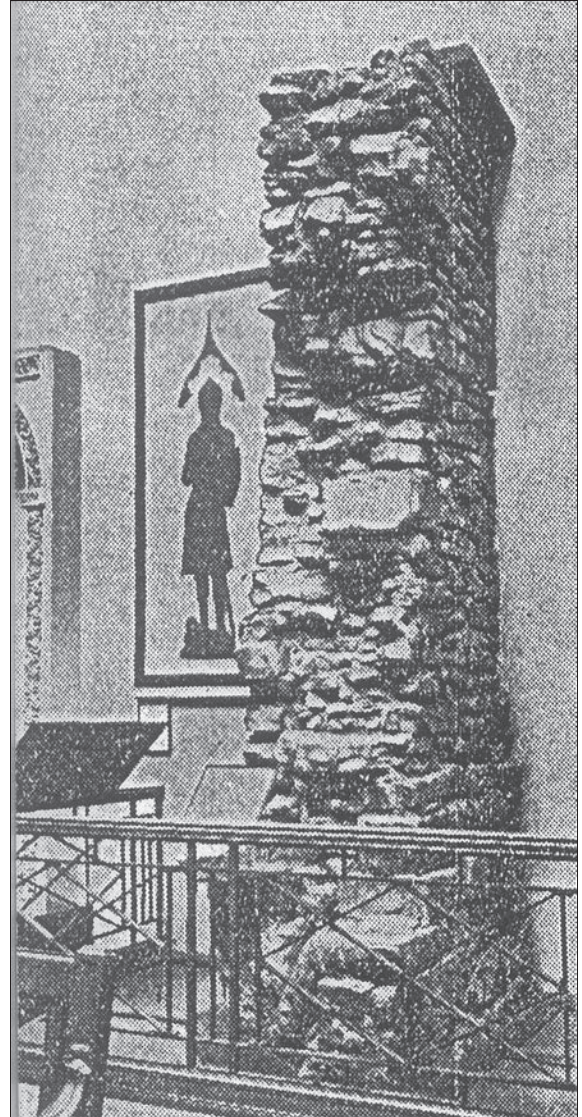


Fig. 6. Another fragment of the Flodden Wall inside the Royal Scottish Museum, *Evening News*, 8 February 1935. (*Scotsman Publications Ltd.*)

## RAMBLING ROUND THE WALLS

The then Royal Scottish Museum had expanded to fill the whole space between Chambers Street and the wall, and in 1910 the decision was taken to extend to the south, demolishing the wall in the process and removing the lane that ran alongside it. These plans were met with strong opposition, including that of the Old Edinburgh Club, but to little avail. This regrettable action had followed the loss in 1902 of a section of the wall in the Pleasance, which resulted in legal action, and the removal not long afterwards of another section along Drummond Street. The Museum's government architect felt obliged to 'compromise' and retain two very short portions of the wall to full height at the sides of the main exhibition hall where it extended through the wall (figs 5 and 6). Access to them was later restricted when they were boxed in. They were finally demolished when mezzanine floors were inserted in 1966-67, contrary to the publicly expressed wishes of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. However, Crown buildings were then exempt from the need to obtain planning permission, and so the demolition proceeded unchecked. The foundations, however, remained in the cellar below.

Even these meagre remains were all but lost, but they were known to Dr Simpson, for this cellar is where the reserve collections of his department were stored.

There are currently a number of locations within the National Museum where surviving fragments of the Flodden Wall are to be found:

1. A large section in PAMS Link south of Gallery 18;
2. Two smaller sections in store room 14 under the temporary exhibitions gallery;
3. Some moderately large sections below Gallery 9, in cellar 10, in the small room beyond, and in the corridor beyond that.

None of the above are in public areas of the Museum. Happily, the most impressive section still extant, the first in the list, is quite easy to reach, though special permission was required. The rest are difficult to reach, and the two small sections in store room 14 are currently boxed in. It is very much to be hoped that there will be no further losses of these relics while they remain within, and under the protection of, the National Museum of Scotland.

*Stop 14. At the west end of the lane called Bristo Port, at the site of the former Bristo Port gateway. This Port had three different names at different times. These were: Greyfriars Port, from the nearby friary of the Franciscan order of Grey Friars, founded here in 1447, and dissolved in 1559; Society Port, from the Fellowship and Society of Ale and Beer Brewers of Edinburgh, set up in 1598 by royal charter to supply 'good and sufficient ale' to the town as a monopoly – it lasted only a couple of decades, being wound up in 1619, though the name Society continued to be applied to the area into the twentieth century; and Bristo Port (a corruption of Birstow), the name coming from the Anglian *byrh stow* meaning a 'herding place' (first recorded 1502), being at the end of the loaning which approached the Old Town from the south.*



Fig. 7. James Skene, water-colour reconstruction of the Telfer Wall at the corner of Teviot Place and Bristo Place, captioned 'Teviot Row, Correction House, Bethlem, Town Wall, Bristow Port', ?c. 1817: Edinburgh Room (pYDA 1882, Acc. No. 13418). (With permission of [www.capitalcollections.org.uk](http://www.capitalcollections.org.uk), Central Library, Edinburgh.)



The guide described the ceremonies at another royal entry to the town, of King James IV and Princess Margaret of England in 1503, allegedly at Bristo Port (though this is doubtful as the wall and gateway would not be built till c. 1515).<sup>13</sup>

*Stop 15. At the south-west end of Lothian Street, to view the incorrect masonry inscription on the tenement across the road at the junction of Teviot Place and Bristo Place, '1513: Site of Town Wall'. This was not on the line of the Flodden Wall, however, but of the later Telfer Wall (fig. 7).*

*Stop 16. At the north end of Potterrow, adjacent to the modern 'Potterrow Port' underpass. The name (spelt incorrectly as Potterow on the northern side) is now applied to the 1960s underpass; the actual Port was considerably further north.*

*Stop 17. One-third of the way down West College Street, west side, on the line of the Flodden Wall, as defined by the conjunction of the Royal Scottish Museum of the 1860s and its extension half a century later: the site of the original Potterrow Port.*

*Stop 18. Near the foot (east end) of Drummond Street, north side, to examine an impressive stretch of the Flodden Wall, which shows a change in the style of masonry.*

*Stop 19. At the junction of Drummond Street and the Pleasance, north side, to examine the remains of a bastion in the Flodden Wall. Edgar's Plan of Edinburgh, 1742, shows the circular tower here; it was erased in the 1765 re-issue. The semi-circular internal arch remains, though now blocked off.*

*Stop 20. Near the foot (north end) of the Pleasance, to examine another stretch of the Flodden Wall, which shows several changes in the style of masonry. A plaque records the conservation and landscaping of the Pleasance section of the wall jointly by the City and the University in 1988. Slum clearance schemes in the 1960s swept away a huddle of old shops and houses that had previously masked the remains of the wall.*

*Stop 21. Off the foot (east end) of the High Street, down Tweeddale Close, to examine a probable stretch of the King's Wall.*

*Stop 22. At the Netherbow, at the very foot (east end) of the High Street, on the site of the former Netherbow Port, to see the markers in the street and fragments of the actual Port set into an adjacent*

building. The outline of the Netherbow Port, demolished as an obstruction to the street in 1764, is marked by a series of brass-bound setts in the roadway, installed in 1933.<sup>14</sup> They are now in poor condition and should be repaired. There is also a carved stone further up the street, above doorway to No. 9 in the 1870s tenement on the north side, with a representation of the Netherbow Port.

The ramble round the walls terminated at John Knox House, to round off the event. This was appropriate in a number of ways: it is very close to the previous stop, there being nothing to visit on the line of the walls after that point; it was where the steering group met to plan the inception of the Old Edinburgh Club in 1907-08 and could therefore be regarded as the society's spiritual home; and in recent years it has been joined to a new building to create the Scottish Story Telling Centre. It was here that the participants on both tours gathered to rest (despite hurrying along, the walks lasted in excess of two hours) and enjoy a social occasion. As this was a special centenary event, wine and canapés had been laid on. The guide told one last story, about the Netherbow Port and the thwarted ploy of the false millers in 1571.<sup>15</sup>

The ramble round the walls came to a conclusion with a centenary address from the President. As the social gathering wound down, the participants had an opportunity to peruse maps relating to the day's events, which were displayed in the meeting room, copies of the 25-inch Ordnance Survey map of central Edinburgh (surveyed 1893-94, revised 1906, and published 1908), showing the area as it was at the time of the inaugural walk. Surprisingly, the 1908 Ordnance Survey map contained very little information about the walls and ports, limited to: 'West Port (site of)' at the west end of the Grassmarket; 'Town Wall' along the stretch of Telfer Wall south of the Flodden Tower; and a mysterious 'Town Wall A.D. 1450' north of the Castle Rock!<sup>16</sup>

Three times in one hundred years the Old Edinburgh Club has indulged in a walk/ramble/excursion around the old town walls, keeping up the numbers with remarkable consistency – some 70 on each occasion. Time will tell when Ramble No. 4 will take place.

## RAMBLING ROUND THE WALLS

### NOTES AND REFERENCES

- 1 The contents of this volume are listed more fully in the article ‘A Centenary Re-Creation of an Old Edinburgh Club Council Ritual’ elsewhere in this volume.
- 2 ‘Report of the First Annual Meeting of the Old Edinburgh Club’, *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club (BOEC)*, Original Series vol. 1 (dated 1908, published 1909), Appendix, p. 4.
- 3 ‘Excursions: The Flodden Wall’, *BOEC*, 18 (1932), App. pp. 30–32.
- 4 A much fuller biographical account of John Geddie is in the course of preparation.
- 5 Information given in various volumes of the *Transactions of the Edinburgh Photographic Society*.
- 6 Lord Cullen, *The Walls of Edinburgh: A Short Guide* (Cockburn Association, Edinburgh 1988). See also W. Moir Bryce, ‘The Flodden Wall of Edinburgh’, *BOEC*, OS 2 (1909), pp. 61–79, with a useful map and contemporary photographs; and Aaron Allen, ‘Defending the Burgh: Continuity and Change in Early Modern Edinburgh’s Defence Infrastructure’, *BOEC*, New Series 6 (2005), pp. 1–9.
- 7 These were: A stretch of the wall including Potterrow Port, by James Gordon, 1647; Potterrow Port (reconstructed internal view) adapted from a drawing by James Skene (c. 1817); the last Netherbow Port, Canongate side, by William Hole (1886); Flodden Tower (interior) at the top of the Vennel, adapted from a sketch by John Syme (1829, see fig. 3); a stretch of the Wall along Thief Raw (Drummond Street), reconstruction by Thomas Ross (1910).
- 8 The poem deals with the prelude to the Battle of Flodden. Much more appropriate would have been a reference to its aftermath, as rendered in *Edinburgh after Flodden* by William Aytoun, a poetic work both more pertinent and more poignant.
- 9 *Evening News*, 7 July 2008.
- 10 A date for construction of this section of the wall was cited as 1547 in *Evening News*, 2 April 2008. It had disappeared by the time of Kirkwood’s plan of 1817. The date 1870 may refer to the removal of a remnant which was incorporated into a later building.
- 11 From George Marjoribanks, ‘The Annals of Scotland’, a manuscript gathered with others and edited by J. T. Gibson Craig under the general title *Papers Relative to the Marriage of King James the Sixth of Scotland with Princess Anna [sic] of Denmark*, published by the Bannatyne Club (Edinburgh 1828), pp. 39–40.
- 12 See photograph of this section of the wall in Bryce, ‘Flodden Wall’ (note 6), p. 70.
- 13 William Maitland, *The History of Edinburgh from its Foundation to the Present Time* (Edinburgh 1753), p. 140. See Bryce, ‘Flodden Wall’, p. 70, for the location at Bristo Port. Michael Lynch has identified the original source as ‘The Fyancelles [i.e. Betrothal] of Margaret, eldest daughter of King Henry VIIIth [of England] to King James [IVth] of Scotland’, by John Younge, Somerset Herald, published in John Leland, *De Rebus Britannicis Collectanea* (2nd edn, London 1770), pp. 258–300, at pp. 289–290. However, Yonge does not actually specify the Port through which they entered the town!
- 14 Hugo Arnot, *The History of Edinburgh*, 2nd edn (Edinburgh 1788), p. 238. For the brass markers see *Scotsman*, 30 May 1933; this followed the precedent of marking the outline of the old Tolbooth beside St Giles in 1928, at the instigation of Thomas Yule of the OEC.
- 15 Anon., ‘A Diurnal of Remarkable Occurrents in Scotland’, pp. 193, 239–240. This untitled manuscript consists of a collection of jottings covering the period 1513–75, written contemporaneously from 1557, apparently by some minor official associated with the Court. It was published by the Bannatyne Club in 1833.
- 16 The maps were marked up to show: the route of the 1908 ramble; the route of the 2008 walk; and a fuller picture of the defences of Edinburgh, including the locations of plaques relating to the walls and their texts. All have been deposited in the Edinburgh Room, Edinburgh Central Library: Map 1 – Plan DA 1828.908, Acc. No. C0032937938; Map 2 – Plan DA 1828.2008, Acc. No. C003293761X; and Map 3 – Plan DA 1876, Acc. No. C0032937326.