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THE BOOK OF THE  
OLD EDINBURGH  
CLUB

TWENTY-NINTH VOLUME



EDINBURGH

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FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE CLUB

1956



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## CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE MINUTES OF THE MERCHANT MAIDEN HOSPITAL. By Rev. EDWIN S. TOWILL	1
<i>With Illustrations.</i>	
THE TRON CHURCH. By Miss MARGUERITE WOOD	93
<i>With Illustration.</i>	
NOTES ON REBUILDING IN EDINBURGH IN THE LAST QUARTER OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. By Miss HELEN ARMET	111
<i>With Illustrations.</i>	
EXTRACTS FROM AN EDINBURGH JOURNAL, 1823-1833 : PART I (1823-1828). By D. G. MOIR	143
<i>With Illustrations.</i>	
MISCELLANY—	
24. THE SOCIETY OF BOWLERS. By Miss HELEN ARMET	185
25. SENTENCE BY THE BAILIES, 24TH AUGUST 1738. By Miss HELEN ARMET	187
26. THE LOYAL EDINBURGH SPEARMEN. By Major H. P. E. PEREIRA	188
INDEX . . . . .	190
APPENDIX—	
FORTY-FIFTH, FORTY-SIXTH AND FORTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORTS, LIST OF MEMBERS, ETC.	

## ILLUSTRATIONS

### THE MERCHANT MAIDEN HOSPITAL.

	FACING PAGE
The First Hospital in the Cowgate . . . . .	16
<i>Block kindly lent by the Merchant Company.</i>	
The Second Hospital in Bristo . . . . .	16
<i>Block kindly lent by the Merchant Company.</i>	
The Third Hospital in Lauriston . . . . .	17
Samplers by Merchant Maidens . . . . .	24
<i>By courtesy of the Mary Erskine School.</i>	
Merchant Maidens, Winter and Summer, 1841 . . . . .	25
<i>By courtesy of the Mary Erskine School.</i>	

### THE TRON CHURCH :

The Church in 1647 . . . . .	104
------------------------------	-----

### NOTES ON RE-BUILDING . . . 17TH CENTURY :

Todrig's Wynd . . . . .	112
Edinburgh from the North Loch . . . . .	113

### EDINBURGH JOURNAL, 1823-1833 :

Plan of the University of Edinburgh <i>and</i> View of the South side before completion . . . . .	152
View of the Great Fire of 1824 . . . . .	153
Port Hopetoun . . . . .	160

*Unless otherwise stated, the illustrations are from material in the Edinburgh Room, kindly lent for the purpose by Edinburgh Public Libraries.*

THE MINUTES OF THE MERCHANT MAIDEN  
HOSPITAL

By

Rev. EDWIN S. TOWILL, B.D., B.Ed., F.S.A.Scot.

**F**OUNDED in 1694 by the Company of Merchants of Edinburgh as the result of a generous mortification from Mary Erskine, the Merchant Maiden Hospital is the oldest of the famous Merchant Company schools, and one of the earliest foundations for female education in our country. Until 1870 it remained a 'hospital,' that is, a charitable institution providing for its foundationers both education and maintenance and undertaking full responsibility for the girls under its care. In that year, in common with most such hospitals, it underwent considerable change as a result of new statutory provisions which allowed alterations in the terms of such trusts, and became a moderately priced fee-paying school, with a core of foundationers still receiving free education and a maintenance grant.

The Merchant Maiden Hospital is one of the more important of a large group of such hospital schools which were founded in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and even into the last century, and which are often designated in England as 'charity schools.' Many of them, however, catered for quite a different type of foundationer from the later English charity schools, and unlike them never provided education for the illiterate masses. The minutes reveal that at one period girls were not allowed to take advantage of their foundation unless they were able to read. These foundations were designed to assist the less fortunate members of the burgess class, and entry to them was regarded as a privilege rather than a stigma.

After the Reformation, Scotland found herself impoverished both in educational provision and in charitable benefaction.

In the general seizure of church monies little regard had been paid to preserving those bequests which provided for education or relief. Knox and the Reformers fought to retain sufficient funds to put into operation the comprehensive educational provisions outlined in the Book of Discipline, but they received little support from the secular authorities. As a result the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were periods of difficulty and impoverishment in education; the old mediaeval school system had gone, and, great as was their concern, the Reformers had not the resources to establish a new system to take its place. This want was felt most acutely in the larger burghs, and in these places the gap was partially filled by a remarkable series of generous bequests, among the first of which were those of Mary Erskine. It is significant that the benefactors were themselves of the wealthy and increasingly important burgh class and that their foundations were designed for the relief of burgh children.

Of Mary Erskine herself, little is known; she was of noble birth, proud of her kinship with the Earl of Mar and of her connection with the Erskine family. She must have been one of many daughters of the old aristocracy who married into the ranks of the rising burgh citizens and so formed a bridge between the two classes. It is possible, even probable, that she was that Mary who, born in 1639, was the eldest child of Sir Charles Erskine of Alva by his first wife, Mary, daughter of Sir Thomas Hope of Craighall. If such were the case, her paternal grandfather was John, seventh<sup>1</sup> Earl of Mar, and her paternal grandmother, Marie Stewart, daughter of the Duke of Lennox.

According to the custom of the time, she continued to be known by her maiden name although she was twice married. There is an entry of marriage in the General Registry Office showing that on 19th July 1661, Robert Kennedie, writer,

<sup>1</sup> Lord High Treasurer of Scotland: second earl by the creation of 1565, or seventh by a previous creation.

married Marie Arskin, and there is another reference to the same marriage as taking place on 21st July of the same year. Although it is not known where Kennedie lived, there is a reference to his furniture and to his giving and taking bonds, and in the public records for 1672 there is his Testament Dative, in which reference is made to 'Marie Ereskine, his relict spouse.'

After three years of widowhood Mary Erskine was married to James Hair, merchant, by Thomas Wilkie, minister of North Leith. This marriage was entered at the General Registry Office with the date 23rd September 1675, and the spelling is on this occasion Areskine. This James Hair, a druggist in the High Street of Edinburgh, remains another shadowy figure in Mary Erskine's story. In the list of Edinburgh apprentices he appears in 1671 as 'James Hair, son to James Hair in Glentochar, prentice to Archibald Oliphant, apothecary.' In the Register of Burgesses and Guild Brethren of 1676 he is recorded as burghess and guild merchant, prentice to the same Archibald Oliphant. It is not known when he died, but the succession to his estate is recorded in the Register House in 1688.

Widowed for the second time, probably in her forties, Mary Erskine turned her thoughts to charitable objects, particularly to the provision of a hospital for girls on the lines of that which George Heriot had left for boys. The first concern was to provide a home, clothing and maintenance, and the educational provisions followed. Soon after its foundation, however, the educational advantages of such an establishment at a time when other provisions for girls were practically non-existent, led to many applications where education rather than charity was obviously the deciding factor.

The Merchant Maiden Hospital was not the only enterprise of Mary Erskine in this direction; it is sometimes forgotten that she founded two girls' schools, both bearing her name, both existing side by side in rivalry for nearly two hundred

years, and to-day both continuing, although in changed forms. The second of these, both in point of time and in wealth and numbers, is the Trades Maiden Hospital, or, more correctly, 'The Maiden Hospital, Founded by the Craftsmen of Edinburgh and Mary Erskine'<sup>1</sup>; the first, and that with which we are here concerned, is 'The Maiden Hospital, Founded by the Company of Merchants of the City of Edinburgh and Mary Erskine.'

The Edinburgh of Mary Erskine's day was dominated by the merchants on one hand and the trades or craftsmen, descendants of the mediaeval guilds, on the other. Of the histories of these bodies, and the keen rivalry between them, full accounts have been written elsewhere. The craftsmen were already banded together in the Incorporated Trades, and in 1681 the cloth merchants formed themselves for protection and mutual assistance into the Edinburgh Company of Merchants. An important function of similar bodies at the time was the management and dispensing of charitable funds, a duty which the company has worthily performed until the present day. When Mary Erskine contemplated the mortification of part of her considerable fortune for the foundation of a girls' hospital, it was natural that she should turn to the newly formed company, especially as James Hair had himself been a merchant, even if in a different line from those who formed the original members.

It must have been both something of a surprise to the company, and a token of confidence in its integrity when, on 14th June 1694, just thirteen years after its foundation, the Master intimated that

'Mary Erskine, relict of James Hair, druggist, had mortified 10,000 merks for the maintenance of burges children of the female sex, and that the money was actually left to the town of Edinburgh for that effect.'

<sup>1</sup> See 'The Minutes of the Trades Maiden Hospital', *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club* vol. XXVIII.

The Company accepted the offer, and as it considered that a sum of 20,000 pounds Scots would be needed to erect and maintain such a hospital, it launched a 'fund for the lasses,' which had an immediate response from merchants and others both in the town and beyond. There are some indications that the school was actually open in 1695, but it was not until 1696 that a committee was appointed to find accommodation for the hospital. Probably Mary Erskine had envisaged some worthy building after the style of Heriot's Hospital, but the maidens had to wait until 1818 before they acquired anything approaching these commodious quarters, for the funds were never such as to leave a large margin for building. Upon the committee reporting that the girls could be housed in the Company's own halls, the following resolution was approved—

'to lend to the said female children at the term of Whitsunday next (1697) for seven years until their stock increased, the Gallarie above the companies Hall or meeting place with one of the sellars below, which has a kitching chimney in it for the use of the said female children.'

Mary Erskine continued to take a lively interest in the foundation and evidently considered the premises unsatisfactory, for in 1706, after the seven years' lease had expired and the Company had made no move towards a new building, she herself purchased for 12,000 merks a 'great lodging and yard in Bristo,' and presented it to the Company for the hospital.

In the meantime, inspired by the example of their rivals, the Incorporated Trades had started a fund for a similar hospital for the daughters of their own indigent members. Mary Erskine interested herself in this fund also, and mortified such a generous sum that the Conventry included her name as co-foundress and gave to herself and her family certain rights of presentation. Thus the Merchant Hospital has about seven years' precedence over its rival, although the Trades Hospital had its own building, in Horse Wynd, about two years before the Merchant Maidens moved into Bristo.

Mary Erskine lived long enough to see the last Scottish Parliament ratify the constitutions of both her hospitals; a month later, on 19th April 1707, she made her will, confirming her previous gifts, and at some unknown date during the same autumn she died. Her Testament Dative was confirmed on 22nd November, but the date of her death is not given. On 12th September of the same year her kinsman James Erskine, Lord Grange, wrote a letter which clearly implied that she was 'still alive,'<sup>1</sup> so the date of her death may be fixed as between 12th September and 22nd November 1707.<sup>2</sup>

*The Statutes and Constitution*

It is not our purpose to give in full the constitution of the hospital, which was printed and circulated in 1731 in a small booklet which makes an appeal to the charitable reader for further legacies—

'As there is no duty more frequently commanded and commended in the Holy Scriptures than Charity and Bounty and Liberal Giving toward the Poor, so no Charity is more pleasing to God, and profitable to mankind, than the Erecting and Providing Hospitals for the maintenance of the Aged and Young, who can do nothing for themselves, being most Diffusive, Extensive and Lasting, and so most Honourable to the Giver.'<sup>3</sup>

The original statutes were framed on 20th November 1697, and were enlarged on 23rd February 1702. An Act<sup>4</sup> of the

<sup>1</sup> The full text of this interesting letter is printed in Appendix I.

<sup>2</sup> The great table cover which hangs in the present Mary Erskine School is claimed to be her work. The border bears the date 1710, her name, that of the Merchant Maiden Hospital and various texts; red roses form the centre.

I am indebted to W. Cyril Wallis, Esq., of the Royal Scottish Museum for the following note on the cover:

'This is a hand-knotted pile carpet of so-called Turkey work carried out by passing double strands of wool through a coarse canvas ground, knotting them in the fashion of Turkish carpets (with the Ghiordes knot) and clipping the wool to form a thick, close pile. The design of the border is of seventeenth-century type and it is unlikely therefore that the carpet is later than the date assigned to it.'

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix II.

<sup>4</sup> A.P.S. Vol. IX, p. 487.

last Scots Parliament, 25th March 1707, ratified the statutes and gave powers to make alterations in the future. The parallel courses which the two Mary Erskine schools were taking is shown by the fact that another Act of the same Parliament deals similarly with the statutes of the Trades Hospital. Slight alterations were made on 9th February of the following year and approved by the Town Council on 19th March; after a further slight amendment on 10th February 1783, the statutes remained in force until in 1869 the Company obtained powers to transform the hospital into a fee-paying day school.

With the foundation of the Merchant Maiden Hospital the Company began a policy which they followed in connection with their subsequent bequests from George Watson, James Gillespie and Daniel Stewart; instead of administering the trusts directly themselves, they set up a Board of Governors for each institution, and each managed its own funds and properties, with a limited amount of borrowing and lending between the various funds. At one point the governors of Watson's and of the Maiden Hospital were at litigation in the Court of Session, although in an amicable way, over the disposal of bequests.

The Maiden Hospital was governed by a body consisting of the Master of the Company, thirteen members chosen by the Company, five by the Town Council, three by the City Ministers, to which were added two of the name of Erskine and a Treasurer chosen from the Company. They met usually in the Hospital, but occasionally in the Merchant Hall, and, until a declaration was later substituted, they took an oath of fidelity on appointment; they elected a Preses and held statutory meetings for the submission of accounts and the election of foundationers; they annually appointed panels of visitors to supervise the running of the school, and as time passed it became the practice to appoint committees to undertake the various aspects of the work.

Of these committees, one of the most important was the 'Landed Estates,' for the governors became important landowners of widely scattered estates. In addition to extensive holdings in the Border country, they owned the land on which is built the modern town of Peterhead. The minutes of this committee give, over two centuries, a detailed account of the growth of Peterhead; indeed, in some of the minute books, more than half the space is given to details of the management of these estates. In 1739 the tenants of Peterhead presented a petition to the governors asking for the restoration of their cannon in order to defend their town if necessary, and in 1746 the tacksman sent a letter deploring the fact that the tenants had under compulsion paid their previous year's cess 'to those concerned in the Rebellion,' and asking consideration of the hardship of having to pay it over again. The governors, however, refused to allow any rebate, although they did so occasionally when times proved hard in the North. The building of the harbour and the railway and the foundation of the Peterhead school are all dealt with at length in the minutes, and this intimate connection between the Company and the burgh remains until to-day.

If, as was natural, it was the business men from among the Merchant Company representatives who interested themselves most in the care of the estates, the representatives of the ministers were most active on the Education Committee, which engaged itself with staffing and with the education provided in the Hospital.

Citizens who were to become prominent in the life of the city, as Provosts or in other ways, figure from time to time in the minutes; if the Merchant Hospital lacked any figure as sinister as Deacon Brodie, who is reputed to have graced the board of the rival hospital, it had as governor for many years Sir J. Y. Simpson, who was elected as one of the Company's representatives.

The statutes make clear the original intention of the

bequest, to provide maintenance and education for the daughters and granddaughters of deceased or indigent burgesses, merchants of the city. The presentations, which were in part laid down in the original statutes and in part added to by purchase either by individuals or public bodies, were of two kinds. In the case of the normal presentation the presentee had to fulfil the conditions of membership of the burgess class; in the case of open presentations, any girl could be presented provided that she was a deserving object of charity. These rights of presentation were regarded highly, and were willed or bought and sold. Girls were admitted between the ages of seven and eleven, and left, with a bounty, at the age of seventeen or eighteen.

Among the miscellaneous papers preserved by the Company are several interesting examples of early presentations, couched formally as a petition or crave; some of these are printed for circulation among the governors, others, like the following example, are handwritten; the spelling and punctuation are as in the original—

PETITION OF ELIZABETH MERCER, 1723.

'Unto the Honourable the Preses and other Governours of the Maiden Hospital founded by the Compeny of Merchants and Mary Erskine.

The Petition of Wm Mercer, merchant burges and gild brother. That albeit I once had a fair prospect of busyness in Edin'. whereby I might have maintained my Family and Educate my Six Children, yet by bad Debtors and other Losses I was sometime ago nessessitat to give over all trade that way and to give up all that I had to my Lawful Credetors after which I betook myself to honest but mean employment about the Excise, To wit a Gadger by which though I have thirty pounds yearly Sallary yet being thereby obliged to keep a horse for travelling through my District the aforesaid Sallary can do little more than maintain my said horse myself and defray the Charges of Travelling, much less can it go any length to maintain my wife and six children, it being known that a Single man cannot live well in that station. That being informed your honours has several

and frequent vacancies in the Merchants maiden hospital, I presume to petition you in behalf of my Daughter called Elizabeth Mercer, who is of Competent age, having been born the 30th of May 1715 conform to Testificat herewith produced, and who is fully intituled to your charity not only by my own burgess ticket but also by that of John Scott her Grandfather who and his predecessors have for many Generations been of the order and calling of Merchants burgesses and gild brothers of Edin. as could be Instructed by many old burgess tickets and by documents if needfull.

May it therefor pleas your Honours to Elect and Choise Elizabeth Mercer as a proper object and full Intituled to Supply the first vacancy in the said Hospital.

And your Petitioner shall always pray.<sup>1</sup>

From 1733 complete minutes are available and a large number of extracts from them is presented in the following pages ; it has not been our purpose to extract those minutes dealing with changes in presentations or the management of stock and property, but rather those which serve to furnish some picture of the changing life of the school through the years. The first minute, which set the general form to be followed through the years, is as follows—

‘ At the Merchant Maiden Hospital,  
Bristo. The 29th October, 1733.

Sederunt of the Governors of the said Hospital—

Baillie John Cochran, Presses (here follows sederunt, including four bailies, two ministers and William Tod, Treasurer.)

After prayers were said and the last minute read. The Clerk, having laid before the Meeting a Minute of Sederunt of the Master and Assistants and Treasurer of the Merchant Company . . . wherein they nominate and present Bethia Baak, daughter to Duncan Baak, merchant and member of the above company . . . upon one of the funds in their presentation now vacant’.

After the Treasurer had laid before the meeting his annual accounts, which were approved, other financial business was

<sup>1</sup> For another, and more pathetic, petition, see Appendix III.

transacted, the old governors were dismissed and the new Master of the Company took his seat as Preses, then—

‘ The Governors, taking to consideration that for a number of years there had been no regular method observed to the Cloathing of the Girls, which of late had occasioned a good deal of confusion, as well as loss to the Hospital, nor any rule yet established for distribution of profits of the girls’ work, for preventing whereof and for establishing a Rule for the said Distribution and Cloathing of the Girls in time coming, they appoint a Committee of their number. . . . to take the said matters into consideration, and to report their opinion in writing to the Governors.’

Another Committee was then appointed to investigate the diet and report on the cheapest method of serving the hospital with bread, auditors were named, visitors were appointed, and finally the Governors, Mistresses, Girls and Servants were exhorted by the Rev. Wm. Brown ‘ as usual.’

#### *The Hospital Buildings*

As has been indicated, the first home of the Merchant Maidens was the Company’s Hall in Cowgate, where they were granted the use of the ‘gallarie’ and the ‘sellar with the kitching chimney.’ This house, one of the most interesting of old Edinburgh mansions, was demolished in 1829. It stood in the Cowgate, hard by Society, and had a back entrance from Candlemaker Row. The site is now beneath the southern piers of George IV Bridge where the cul-de-sac Merchant Street commemorates its connection with the Company. Chambers’ *Traditions* and Grant’s *Old Edinburgh* both give descriptions of this ‘court of old buildings’ with its great second-floor room with panelled walls and ornamented stucco ceiling and its grounds which later became famous as a bowling green. The house belonged to Macgill of Rankeillor, from whom it was rented by its most famous tenant, Thomas Hamilton of Priestfield, Lord President of the Court of Session, and later

first Earl of Haddington, whom James VI nicknamed 'Tam o' the Cowgate. When the king revisited Scotland he and his court dined with Hamilton in the building. Later it became the first Hall of the Merchant Company and in 1730 it was let as the Excise Office, finally suffering demolition in the improvements which led to the erection of Chambers Street and George IV Bridge.

We have seen how, in 1706, Mary Erskine purchased the 'great lodging and yard' in Bristo, which from that date housed the hospital for some 120 years. This building has also been completely swept away and the topography of the district so altered that it is difficult to visualise how it appeared in Mary Erskine's day. The hospital stood just behind the buildings which now compose the corner of Lothian Street and Bristo Street. At that time the former street did not exist, east to west passage being provided by Thieves' Row, a narrow lane which ran along the outside of the old city wall, represented now by the cul-de-sac of Bristo Port. Bristo Street itself was a lane, having on the west side the city wall, which turned sharply south at Bristo Port and westward again at what is now the Teviot Place—Bristo Street corner; on the east side of Bristo Street, immediately outside the wall, was a famous coaching inn, The George, and a number of buildings of which Mary Erskine bought the largest for the hospital. It faced Bristo Street and had at the back a considerable garden reaching to the city wall, and indeed, marching with the Trades Maiden property in Argyle Square.

At first the whole property was not needed for the girls, and tenants continued to dwell within the same 'land,' entering by separate doors but coming into the hospital to draw their water. The outside stairs of these houses remained until 1764, when the following minute occurs—

'As five stairs of the Hospital's houses are to be taken down for widening the street now repairing . . . to ask the Lord Provost either to leave them or pay for new ones.'

—in the end it was decided to ask the 'good town' to pay one-half the cost.

As the years passed, the character of the district, which had at first been a salubrious suburb outside the walled city, changed for the worse. In particular, there were some tumbledown workshops and factories beyond the garden, and a high tenement known as Sprott's Land immediately to the south. Even at first the high city wall<sup>1</sup> across the narrow street must have cast its shadow over the front of the building. Over the wall the upper stories of Darien House and other mansions could be seen, but later these gave place to the city Bedlam and the Charity Workhouse.

Even when Mary Erskine acquired it the building was old, and not really suitable for the purpose. In 1734 the minutes record that the accommodation was 'much scrimped' and the governors resolved to take in Mr. Scott's house, which formed part of the 'land'; the tenant was unwilling to move, but offered them two rooms above their hall. At the same time they turned the cellar next to the kitchen into a dining-room for the girls, the first of a long series of alterations by which they endeavoured to adapt the house more conveniently to its purpose. In 1735 it is recorded that—

'The girls' beds and partitions of the house were infested with bugs to that degree that the girls could get no rest, which straitened them exceedingly . . . resolved that these beds and partitions be taken down and a number of tent beds bought.'

At this time the governors asked an architect to report on alterations to the house; it was decided to confine the sleeping quarters to the first and second floors, to make a new dining-room and writing-room and to carry out certain other improvements. Although their financial position would not permit of any but the most necessary alterations, they decided

<sup>1</sup> Telfer's Wall, not the Flodden Wall. See *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, Vol. II.

that these improvements were needed in the interests of health.

As the girls were not allowed outside the premises, the garden provided their only opportunity for getting fresh air, and the governors took some pains to make it as pleasant as possible. In 1743 they made alterations to it, removing trees, laying out gravel paths and providing seats with little roofs. From time to time apprentices and local lads found themselves attracted to the maidens' garden and proved a source of worry to the matron and the governors. The attraction must have been further increased when an open air bath was installed. In 1780 a report is read from Dr. Hamilton, one of the governors, and Mr. Andrew Wood, the hospital surgeon, 'representing that they had examined the bath in the garden and found that it is necessary to adopt some measures which may serve to make it watertight, and further, that there was a necessity for providing a covered shelter for the use of the girls in which they may dress and undress before and after using the bath, and as they considered the use of bathing as equally conducive to cleanliness and health they thought it their duty to lay the above before the governors.'

After the turn of the half century the character of Bristo began to alter rapidly. In 1743 the Charity Workhouse, a gaunt dismal building, had been erected about a hundred yards across the city wall, while stately Darien House and the mansion adjoining were now both utilised for the housing of lunatics. On the other hand, the value of the land was increasing, for the city was spreading southwards outside the old walls to George Square, Chapel Street and Nicolson Street. In 1765 the governors considered

'selling the laigh houses in Bristo Street and area and part of the garden owing to such subjects getting very high prices at this time.'

Nothing came of the project, but again in 1772—

'The governors, taking into consideration the state of the Hospital funds, and that in appearance they will increase so in a few years as

to admit a much greater number of girls than at present, recommended to the Preses and Auditors to consider the State of the Hospital house and to take the advice of Tradesmen as to the repairing and enlarging it, or what price the Hospital's property next to Bristo Street may sell for, and likewise, what may be the expence of building a new Hospital house in the garden if that should be thought proper.'

This is the first mention of a possibility which they kept before them for many years, that of feuing the most valuable part of their property on the main street line and rebuilding for themselves over part of the large garden, where ultimately the Relief Chapel was erected. Nothing came of the suggestion and they continued to make alterations to the old building.

'The Treasurer and visitors represented that the girls were too much crowded in their Bedding upon account of their number being increased,' and after a plan for additional beds had been approved

'they were also too crowded in the schoolroom and that this room might be rendered much more convenient by moving the Petition (*sic*) further into the Trance.'

In spite of this shortage of accommodation for the children, there were still parts of the building let to tenants as late as 1776, when they resolved to take in the house of Mr. Johnston in the same tenement.

In the same year Dr. Steedman gave in a full report on the girls' health, which included several matters dealing with the house. The sick-room, which looked into the street, was neither quiet nor well ventilated, and he suggested a room over the matron's parlour, with two sunny windows to the garden. There is no mention at this date of any water being laid on above ground level, and one of the recommended rules as a result of the report is that no person, neighbour or tenant be allowed to come in to carry out water from the cistern. A bell is to be fitted to the door to stop the practice of neighbours walking in and out as they pleased. A new dining-room was built, and three years later a new schoolroom was made from

rooms previously occupied by a tenant. In 1780 the old building was harled; next year the meeting-hall within the hospital was repainted and the names of donors painted on the walls; in 1782 the governors' hall was painted white and in 1785 they appointed 'a female porter whose sole duty be to attend the outer door.'

During the same year (1785) we read for the first time of the proposed changes which were to give the Bristo area the pattern which we know to-day. A special meeting is held to consider

'a plan that is at present in agitation for opening a new road of communication from the intended South Bridge to join the great West Turnpike Roads and which new road it seems to be intended to carry through the ground belonging to the hospital lying behind the Hospital house occupied at present as a place of recreation and exercise for the girls.'

This street, which was never built, was a more northerly variant of Lothian Street. The governors, while 'desirous of helping any scheme which may tend to the ornament and convenience of the city,' cannot support this proposal, but suggest accommodating the town with as much ground as necessary 'to widen the present road by the Townwall if it shall be determined to carry the road in that direction'—that is, they suggest improving the narrow lane which ran immediately outside the wall. This, however, would have entailed the main east-west road taking a sharp right-angled bend at the Bristo Port, a suggestion which could hardly find favour with the town-planners even of that day. For a time it looked as if the governors might get their way. The Lord Provost himself attended their next meeting and agreed to lend his support to their suggestion. Although powers to widen this old road were included in the Act which the Council obtained, nothing was done for eight years, when, in 1793, the governors learned of a printed memorial addressed to them, but never submitted, in which the Improvement Trustees suggested that



MERCHANT HALL, COWGATE—FIRST HOME OF  
THE MERCHANT MAIDEN HOSPITAL

*From the engraving by Bruce in Chambers, 'Minor  
Antiquities of Edinburgh,' 1833*



SECOND HOME OF THE MERCHANT MAIDEN  
HOSPITAL IN BRISTO

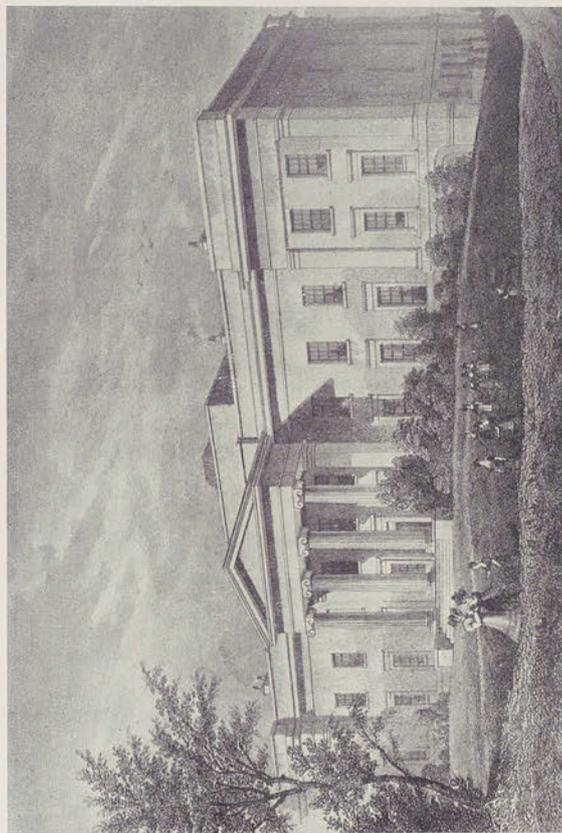
*From Storer, 'Views in Edinburgh,' 1820*

as the road for which plans had been granted was circuitous, a new east-west road, south instead of north of the hospital, might be authorised. This would involve pulling down Sprott's land and close and the old wright's shop which stood near the hospital garden and which had already been several times on fire, and would pass by the side of the building itself. In return the Trustees offered to close the old lane by the wall and give the ground to the hospital.

In the end the governors persuaded the Trustees to construct the new road slightly further south and to grant them the ground which lay between it and the hospital. Thus the presence of the old house, now long since swept away, determined the two reverse angles in the College Street-Lothian Street-Teviot Place road. It was not an ideal arrangement for either party, for the Trustees built a road which was off the straight, while the hospital was left too near the intersection of two increasingly busy thoroughfares. Indeed, when the revised plans showed that the road would approach at one point to within five feet of the house, the governors agreed that they must either reconsider erecting a new hospital on their present site but further from the roadway or else seek a site elsewhere—

'The Governors, after considering the probable advantages at which the property presently occupied by the Hospital may be feued and the necessity they would soon be under of building a new House, as well on account of the decayed and incommodious state of the present one as of the inconveniency of its being so near to the intended new road, did appoint a committee to consider whether a more eligible situation could be got for a new house.'

Within the next four years the new street had been built, and the Lighting Commissioners installed lights in Bristo Street. The governors strongly resisted the charges which were laid on them for this lighting, for under the original Act of the Scots Parliament they had been granted freedom from all ordinary charges which were laid upon the citizens; this



Photo

MERCHANT MAIDEN HOSPITAL, LAURISTON

From the drawing by Shephard engraved by Henshall, 1820

National Museum

they interpreted as granting exemption for all time from all rates and other dues which in these years were multiplying rapidly with the increase in public services. At the same time they were perturbed at the lack of lighting, as the district was becoming rowdy at nights and they were on an exposed corner site.

'They consider that by the opening of Lothian Street, the Hospital's property is a good deal exposed on that quarter and that it might be proper and expedient to have some lights put up there during the winter season which would afford a protection to the Hospital's property, and resolve . . . to erect a lamp either upon the south or the west.'

In the last years of the eighteenth century they continued to make some alterations in the classrooms to render them of a more convenient size, and even at one point considered buying more land in Lothian Street, but in the first year of the new century they passed an important resolution

'that if a convenient spot could be found for the new hospital it would be more advisable to leave the present situation, as the ground has from the great increase of new buildings about it become in some degree less eligible for such an institution, while by these buildings it had upon the other hand become much more valuable as a property.'

They remitted to a committee the task of looking out for such a new site and of making plans of the present grounds with a view to seeing what they might bring for building. In 1802 they reported

'that the increasing insufficiency of the Hospital House which requires a constant and expensive repair and becomes everyday more unfit for the family not only as to accommodation but even in some degree as to safety [makes it necessary] to form a determined resolution upon the subject, and remit to the standing committee to consider, 1. The present state of the fabric, 2. Whether it would be expedient to sell or feu the ground, and if so whether it would be practicable to obtain another situation, and 3. What the probable expense of a new hospital would be.'

In July the Committee reported

'1. That the state of the present fabric is such as to render it absolutely necessary to have a new hospital. 2. That it would be highly inexpedient to sell or feu out the ground about the present house, because after the fullest enquiry no other situation can be discovered nearly so central and convenient. At the same time the committee are of the opinion that the new Hospital may be so placed as to allow the Governors to feu at some future period a strip along Bristo Street and returning a certain distance into Lothian Street, if such a measure should appear not to be detrimental to the new house. 3. That the expense of a new house cannot be accurately estimated but would not be below £5000.

As a result of this report the governors resolved to build a new hospital facing Lothian Street. This did not mean, however, that steps to implement the resolution then began; there was a considerable body of opinion in favour of waiting and obtaining some more eligible situation, and the decision seems to have been regarded as a test of opinion round which discussion might freely revolve for some years.

In the meantime the governors received an intimation which in the end influenced them in their decisions regarding the new hospital. In 1802 died George Grindlay, respected member of their Company and a governor of both Watson's and the Maiden Hospital. In the following year it was announced that he had bequeathed his fortune to be divided equally between the two hospitals, but only in the event of his son George dying without issue before reaching his majority. Apparently the lad was not strong, for the governors regarded themselves as being, if not actually in possession of the money, at least with great expectations. When he did die, in the year 1810, they found that the estate would realise at least £10,000, including half the lands of Orchardfield. At the time the latter was not looked upon as a very valuable part of the estate, but soon it became the site of Lothian Road and the adjoining commercial and residential properties.

In April 1804 ignoring their previous resolution, the governors resolved to advertise for suitable ground for a new hospital. Although at first these enquiries proved fruitless, they determined to continue their search, and in the meantime carried on negotiations with a Mr. Ritchie, slater, for the sale of their Lothian Street ground. As a result of further advertisements they began to consider the purchase of ground in Lauriston, belonging to Mr. Adam Keir, whose name is now remembered in the street adjacent to the Vennel. There remained, however, the difficulty of price, for they were unwilling, and indeed unable, to pay more than £1800, while Mr. Keir would not let it go at that figure. After negotiations had dragged on through the autumn, they decided once again to investigate the building of a new hospital on their present ground, placing shops at the front. On 27th May 1805 they ratified this decision and offered a prize of twenty-five guineas for the best plan for the new hospital. Several entries were submitted, from which they chose that of Mr. Harvey, architect in Edinburgh, but they decided to postpone for some time the actual commencement of the work. In the meantime both the hospital and the adjacent buildings were suffering from neglect and from the prolonged indecision; in 1808 a minute tells of

'the ruinous state of the houses in Bristo belonging to the Hospital'

—and two years later a committee reports

'that as the ruinous state of disrepair into which the present hospital is rapidly falling and the possible dangers that may arise therefrom, agree that the building of a new house was not now a matter of choice but had become absolutely necessary and that they should proceed to take the necessary measures without delay.'

Their funds for this purpose were now in the region of £1700, together with the expectations of the sales of some land in Peterhead, but this was all too small for extensive rebuilding. It seems strange that a body of men so careful in the administration of their funds should not have attempted

to provide for this in one of two ways—by keeping the number of presentations down and so conserving some of their monies against property depreciation, or else by again launching a 'fund for the lasses' through which they might have appealed to the liberality of the merchants and citizens.

On 28th May 1810 they reaffirmed their minute of 1805 to proceed with work at their own site and they employed Robert Reid, architect, to put into execution Mr. Harvey's prize plan. However, this plan was not the first architect's dream which has appeared better on paper than when translated into stone and lime. Mr. Reid reported that the plan 'contained certain unsurmountable difficulties' by which we may conjecture that he doubted whether such a hospital would have remained standing upright. Mr. Reid then himself prepared plans, which the committee revised and finally approved.

These plans were for a hospital facing Lothian Street, with a strip left vacant along Bristo Street which could be used for feuing for a line of narrow buildings. On the first floor were to be schoolrooms, eating- and play-rooms; connected by a covered passage were kitchens, washhouses, etc.; in the central part of the second floor was the dining-parlour for mistresses connecting with the kitchen by a separate stair; in the wings of this floor were sleeping-apartments for the girls with a servant's room adjoining each ward; there were also separate sleeping-quarters for 'the grown up girls' and sick quarters above. The main fault of the plan was its restricted playground space.

In January 1811 the governors were notified that by the death of the lad George Grindlay the whole of the residuary funds (£25,559, less £9950 for annuities, plus rents of about £445 annually with feus on Lothian Road) would be divided equally between George Watson's Hospital and their own funds. In May they received tenders for the new building, the lowest of which (£11,850) exceeded their estimate by over £2000. As a result they decided again to delay building

and to ask Mr. Reid for plans for a 'double' rather than a 'single' type of house, as they believed it might be cheaper. The architect then furnished them with a report in which he strongly recommended the type he had already planned. We may suspect that by this time Mr. Reid's patience was somewhat exhausted, but the governors persisted and requested plans 'striking off every ornament which is unnecessary and adopting the most economical mode of finishing each part both exterior and interior to reduce expense.'

This was done, but again they desired him to draw up an entirely new plan 'on the lines of the old one, but cheaper.' In January 1812 he laid before them three sets of plans—(a) one prepared by himself but on the lines of the double house suggested by the governors; (b) two different sets of plans given in by tradesmen. In the end none of these many plans was to be translated into stone, for at the same meeting—

'The Preses, reminding them that they had the joint rights of Orchardfield, off Lothian Road, said that it appeared to afford a desirable situation upon which the Hospital might be put down . . . before proceeding further the governors should take the opportunity of exploring fully the nature and situation of this ground, so a committee should be asked to visit the ground and go into it in all its bearings.'

Three months later the governors met to consider a memorandum from Mr. Anderson, the Preses, and a report from their committee. The former is in favour of Orchardfield, both for health reasons and because the feus there are likely to take little from their revenues while the ground at Bristo is now very valuable. The Committee's report weighs carefully the two suggestions; the advantages of Bristo are that it is nearer the town for the governors attending meetings and for the girls going to market and to Church; it is also more convenient for ladies bringing work to be done by the children. Among disadvantages are, nearness to the street, the limited extent of its site and the fact that additional buildings will soon be erected very near it. Orchardfield has the advantage

of a secluded situation and a greater extent of ground for recreation and for growing vegetables; in addition, there would be no interruption in the life of the hospital as the new one could be erected while the old was still in occupation. On the whole the committee inclined to the Orchardfield site. A point of interest is the weight put upon distance from 'The Cross' and the fact that even in the second decade of the nineteenth century Lothian Road was considered far from the focal point of the town's life—

'Taking South Bridge to one [hospital] and the Mound to the other, the distance from the Cross is not more than five minutes further. That to Gillespie's Hospital is greater, and to Watson's not much less. Employers of girls' work come chiefly from the New Town, and would find it easier, and anyway as the total work only realises £50 this is not important. As to Church, the girls could go to the new Church now building in Charlotte Square.'

The governors resolved to build on Orchardfield, and went as far as to interview the Lord Provost and magistrates with a view to securing sittings in St. George's when it was built. They found difficulties, however, in securing a portion of their own land as they had only a half interest in it, and a year later no progress had been made. They continued to repair the old house, remaking floors, walls and ceilings, taking down some of the more dilapidated buildings adjoining and adding ground to the garden. Three years later there was still no signs of progress and the Education Committee again 'recommended the earnest attention of the governors to the erection of a new hospital.' The Treasurer also reported—

'The whole building, particularly timber, is far advanced in decay and will in a few years be uninhabitable.'

It was now forty-three years since the idea of a new hospital had first been proposed and twenty years since they had resolved to build, but nothing had been done. Rather naturally the governors were now a little uncertain of what

actually had been decided over this period of years, so they called yet another committee to review the steps already taken by previous governors. From the deep bag of plans and projects which this committee unearthed appeared several by the long-suffering Mr. Reid, but the plan which most attracted their interest was by Mr. Crichton, one of their own number who was also an architect. In this economy was the keynote. After reviewing English establishments of a similar type he had prepared a plan estimated to cost only £7000. In place of Mr. Reid's eight bedrooms for the girls it had three large wards or dormitories holding forty beds with two to a bed; the chapel and play-room had disappeared and the school and sick-rooms were reduced in size. The front had 'a neatness sufficiently attractive for a building of a charitable character.' As a sop to any aesthetic objections it was noted that a handsome colonnade could be added at a future period. It is obvious that Mr. Crichton had taken as his model the English charity school of the poorest type, and we may be glad that his plan never materialised.

To complicate matters, the situation at Orchardfield had now somewhat changed. No longer was it a secluded locality, for the canal basin was proposed there, with a branch railway from it to Leith. The governors also realised that to build there meant extensive outlay in drainage and long walls, facilities which were already to hand in Lothian Street. On the other hand, Lothian Street was already up for sale, and before long 'from there to the University may be covered with lodging-houses, not a desirable neighbourhood for a female hospital.' Indeed, they were now between the devil (in the shape, may we say, of divinity students) and the deep sea, or at least the Union Canal.

The only resolution of the dilemma was by finding a site different from either, and so they resolved to explore the possibilities of a park in Lauriston belonging to the heirs of a Mr. Brown. With their usual thoroughness they made a



Photo

From the originals in the Mary Erskine School. By Jane B. Holdway, 1844, and Helen G. Holdway. The initials are those of classmates, the names of the Governess and Mistresses



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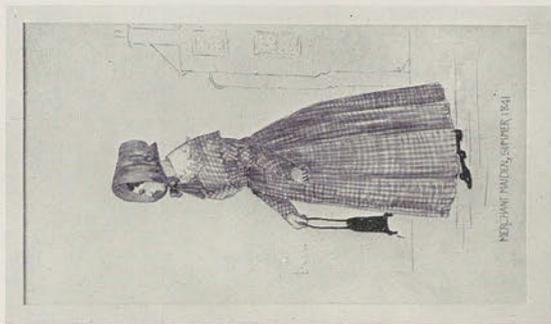
SAMPLERS BY MERCHANT MAIDENS

preliminary survey, sending Doctors Hamilton and Wood to make a report. This report provides an excellent picture of the Meadows district as it appeared in 1815—

'We repaired to the park and traversed it in every direction. We remarked a few good dwelling houses upon the east side, and upon the west the ground is open all the way to the house of Drumdryan and to the road leading to Wrightshouses tollbar, and will likely remain open in all time coming. We went into the Meadows at the south side of the park which we found to be greatly improved; in place of the impure soil from the buildings in George Square and Buccleugh Place now conveyed in a sunk drain which tends to the east and opens about St. Leonard's Hill, pure and surface water rises in the open drains of the Meadows to the westward and contributes greatly to the amenity of the place. We have not disregarded the Distillery at Lochrin; we are aware that volumes of smoke from fires of pitcoal issue from it and that this smoke may be occasionally carried over the ground in question . . . but we do not apprehend that it will prove injurious to health.' [The present hospital] 'is much changed from what it has been; placed in our recollection in the outskirts of the town, it resembled a country house with a fine exposure and good ventilation, that in the lapse of years, houses after houses have been built in the immediate neighbourhood and that there is a prospect and probably not a distant one of it being completely shut up on the south, the only opening it yet possesses. That it has, of course, been placed as it were, in the centre of a town, deprived of pure ventilation, likely soon to be secluded from the cheerful rays of the sun and overlooked from adjoining houses.'

This very practical but almost lyrical report is followed in the minutes by one, severely matter-of-fact in character, from Messrs. Dickson and Thin, builders. As a result, the governors called on their committee again to review the advantages of two sites—this time Lothian Street and Lauriston. There was still some feeling in favour of the old Bristo corner, but the committee advised that if they were to rebuild there it would entail buying the Old George Inn, and constructing a sewer—which suggests that previous drainage had been by cess-pool.

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Photo

## MERCHANT MAIDENS, 1841

From water-colours in the Mary Erskine School

Strangely, they rate among its advantages 'the elevated situation and airiness and the long and certain experience of its salubrity by the uninterrupted health enjoyed by the children,' and indeed there were far more outbreaks and epidemics after they had moved to Lauriston than there had been in the old house.

In the end they decided for Lauriston and offered for the ground. Mr. Brown's trustees, however, would not accept a figure less than £2600, and so reluctantly the governors decided to seek a new situation. Again they turned to Orchardfield, but found that as the division of the land between the beneficiaries was likely to drag on for some time there was little hope of building there on their own land. In February 1816 Mr. Brown's widow offered them the 'park' for £2400, which they accepted.

They asked five architects to prepare plans for a building, without ornament, costing not more than £7000. One of the five was Mr. Reid, who declined, probably considering that they already had too many of his plans stored away in their files; a second did not answer the request, so in the end they had three plans before them, for each of which they paid twenty-five guineas. The selected plan, which was to become such a prominent feature of the Meadows district for over a century, was by William Burn, who designed Edinburgh Academy, St. John's Episcopal Chapel and the Melville Column and who restored St. Giles. It cost just £1500 over the figure which they had laid down. Before finally beginning the work, the governors, with their usual caution, obtained the advice of Dr. Andrew Duncan, professor of Medical Jurisprudence, 'who had paid much attention to the internal arrangements of hospitals,' and finally, on 22nd June, they foregathered on Brown's ground, 'preambulated the same' and drove in the stakes to mark the building lines.<sup>1</sup> On 2nd

<sup>1</sup> Before building commenced the line was moved some yards north of the original site as marked out by the governors.

August they again met

'on the new ground at Lauriston, when the Foundation Stone of the New Hospital was laid by Mr. William Ramsay, Preses, in their presence and the ceremony concluded with a suitable and impressive prayer by Dr. Johnston.'

At the same time they enquired fully into their financial position and found that, while the cost of running the hospital was now £1845 annually, they were saving some £1000 on their revenue. For the new building they borrowed £2500 from the Orphan Hospital, £2000 from James Gillespie's Trust and £1000 from the Master and Assistants of the Company.

The new hospital, which took two years to build, stood to the east of Chalmers Street, on the ground now occupied by the Nurses' Home at the foot of Archibald Place. After the Merchant Maidens vacated it in 1870, it became the first George Watson's School,<sup>1</sup> and as such many citizens remember it. When it was built, neither Chalmers Street nor Archibald Place had been feued, and the entrance was by the narrow Lauriston Lane, of which to-day only a truncated portion remains beside the Infirmary mortuary. The Maidens were never given an entrance into the Meadows, and the Hospital during their occupation was enclosed by a ten-foot high wall. On 21st October 1818—

'The Committee having met this morning, at the family entering into the new Hospital, the governess, mistresses, teachers and children attended in the Principal School-Room and after being congratulated on the occasion and the excellent appearance they made, Dr. Johnston made them an interesting address and concluded the whole by an impressive prayer.'

The building, in the chaste Georgian style which so well suited our city, suffered both externally and internally from the severe economies which the governors had imposed on their architect. It had three classrooms, the westmost of which was

<sup>1</sup> In 1870 George Watson's Hospital became a school under the Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act of that year.

used also as a chapel, and three dormitories, in two of which a mistress slept with the girls. The many refinements which Mr. Reid had suggested were absent, and the constant need for repair and alteration suggested that quality of material had also to some extent been sacrificed.

In the meantime the governors held a public roup of the furniture at Bristo Street and proceeded to feu the land. For some time there had been enquiries from the Portsburgh Congregation of the Relief Church and in the end the governors offered them land behind the Lothian Street frontage, with entry from Bristo Street by a short street of two-storey houses; this was later amended as entering from Lothian Street, and is to be seen to-day in the Ministry of Works (store) building and the cul-de-sac named Brighton Street.<sup>1</sup> In 1819, when the old hospital had stood derelict for six months, the governors conceived the idea that the land might feu better if the high city wall facing it were removed. There is no sentiment or affection for the historic remains shown in their minutes—

'Sir William Forbes stated that he had waited on the Lord Provost and suggested that taking down of the City Wall along Bristo Street as a public improvement and which might afford not only a more enlarged access from Lothian Street to Teviot Place but by throwing the ground open belonging to the Charity Workhouse might enable the managers of the institution to feu out that ground to advantage. That he had been received by His Lordship with great politeness and the matter having afterwards been brought under consideration of the managers of the Workhouse, communications have passed between them and the magistrates on the subject which were likely to terminate in an arrangement which would be satisfactory to all parties and by which this Hospital's property would be considerably benefited, in so far as the front of their ground to Bristo Street would become more valuable by

<sup>1</sup> The relief trustees proved in the end unable to face the interest on a bond of £2000 which they had secured towards its erection, and the feu-duty of £90 annually. The bondholders took possession of the building and in 1846 it was purchased by the E.U. congregation, which had been meeting in Roxburgh Place Chapel; see *Brighton Street Church, history and jubilee*, Fairgrieve, Edinburgh 1894.

a removal of the City Wall and of the building occupied as a Bedlam, which was comprehended under the proposed arrangement, and Sir William submitted that until the proposed arrangement was completed it would be inexpedient to dispose of any of the areas fronting Bristo Street or of the corner area fronting it and Lothian Street.'

At the end of the same year the Bristo property was exposed to public roup, but as there were no bidders it was disposed of privately. Soon after the new hospital was built, Mrs. Archibald feued the ground to its north for a new street, now Archibald Place, and the hospital was granted a right of entry from that street. In 1826 the open drain in the Meadows in front of the building was closed in. In 1827, just eleven years after its erection, the roof was reported to be off the level. As Mr. Burn, the architect, gave them no satisfaction, perhaps feeling that he had given as good a bargain as possible for the money, they called in the Deacons of Mary's Chapel, who pronounced that while unsightly, it was safe enough.

Heating the huge stone building was always a problem, and it was suspected that the girls' health, which was not as good as it had been in Bristo, was connected with the cold and damp. At first they introduced a system of hot-air from the kitchen led under the floors, like the old Roman hypocaust; in 1839 they opened the original fireplaces, which had been blocked up, and refitted the windows to prevent draughts, dismissing as impractical the new patent hot-water tubes which were recommended to them.

Nor was the original plumbing adequate; before the full water supply for the town came into being both quantity and pressure of water were poor. Times were changing, and in 1859 they stated that

'neither did the sanitary system form so important an element in public institutions as it now does . . . and the Hospital is now greatly inferior in this respect to nearly all the other institutions of a similar kind in town.'

There were only two small baths on the ground floor, sufficient to provide only one bath each a fortnight, 'and even then the rota commences at three or four o'clock.'

'There was no proper arrangement for lavatories in the original plan. For a single dormitory of fourteen girls there is a small apparatus with four basins in a closet entering from the stairway, where is also a water-closet for teachers; the upper floor with 82 girls has only one lavatory with 21 basins.'

Of water-closets there were originally only two, latterly four, one of which was next the larder. At the same time (1858) they complained that there was a disagreeable smell on the ground floor which they suspected came from the drains. Gas had been introduced into the house in 1830.

As early as 1835 the governors had before them suggestions for major repairs and alterations, and by 1858 they decided that the matter was pressing and that £3500 would have to be expended—a larger sum than it would have cost to accept Mr. Reid's more suitable plan forty years earlier. The floor and ceiling of the Council Room were raised, a new dining-room for the girls built below it and the former eating-quarters turned into kitchens. The dormitory on the main floor was turned into a classroom and one of the existing rooms divided, giving five classrooms in place of three. All sleeping-quarters were concentrated on the second floor, sick-rooms placed in the attics and more adequate lavatory and washing facilities provided. In order to pay for these improvements they realised some stock and sold part of their Roxburghshire estate.

While the governors of the Victorian years were as short of money as had been their Georgian predecessors, they felt the prevailing urge for embellishment, not always in the best taste. In place of the simple sashes, plate glass windows were fitted in the Council Chamber, and plans obtained for stained-glass windows bearing the arms of the Company, the City and

the Earl of Mar.<sup>1</sup> Two ornate lamps similar to those at the Physicians' Hall in Queen Street were erected on the outer stairway, and chairs bearing the Company's crest were purchased.

In 1859 the governors found that their old worries about undesirable neighbours were cropping up again in their new quarters. They protested when they heard that a house next to their entrance in Lauriston Lane had been let for a 'Home for Fallen Women.' They were unable to prevent this, but for two years they held up a proposal to turn number seven in the same street into a Hospital for Sick Children. While they had certain fears about the danger of infection, their main concern was about the type of child and visitor who would be brought near their property. When it was reported that 'the lane is full of squalid paupers on certain days,' they took steps to make a new entrance. Rejecting the suggestion of an entrance from the Meadows, they resolved to make one at the foot of Archibald Place, but as this was not done until 1869 the Maidens had the use of it for only one year before they themselves left the district.

In 1870 came the transformation of the hospital into a fee-paying school and the building became the 'Edinburgh Institution for Young Ladies' or 'The Collegiate School for Girls,' in which the foundationers found themselves joined at their lessons by a large number of fee-paying day girls. The dormitories were needed as classrooms, and houses were taken in Saxe-Coburg Place, and later in Royal Crescent, for the boarders. In 1871 it was resolved to sell the building to George Watson's, now also transformed into a day school, as

<sup>1</sup> In 1878 the governors had to decide between rival claimants to the Mar presentations in the persons of the Earl of Mar and Kellie and the Earl of Mar; in 1874 the House of Lords had granted the title to the former. In the miscellaneous papers of the Company relating to the M.M. Hospital there is a very full account of the rival claims. The rights of presentation for the future were given to Lord Kellie, although Lord Mar had in 1866 been made a life governor and his presentations recognised.

'they had found it desirable to remove the Educational Institution to the New Town.' For this purpose they made extensive alterations to the Hopetoun Rooms at the west end of Queen Street, which they still occupy.

*Life in the Hospital*

Reference to daily life of the hospital is scanty, particularly in the early minutes. These matters were left to the Governess, supervised by the rota of monthly visitors, and only if a question of finance or discipline entered in was anything recorded in the minutes.

A term frequently used in the early days was 'the family,' and this is not an inaccurate description of the relationship which existed between the governess or matron with her two assistant mistresses, and the forty girls under their care. The staff were homely and practical rather than highly educated. There were few precedents to serve as guides in feminine education, and the training was designed to produce capable housewives rather than, as later, governesses and teachers. School work was at first restricted to the 'three R's' and the methods of teaching were slow and cumbersome; there was much practical work—sewing and spinning took a great deal of time; the older girls helped in the kitchen and went to the market with the mistresses. Most girls had parents or friends in the town, to whom weekly visits were allowed. Apart from these excursions into the old town it was a confined life; at first even walks together were confined to the weekly church parade to Greyfriars, and the back garden provided the only form of outdoor recreation. In this miniature universe the generations of maidens passed their girlhood years, supping their porridge from wooden basins with pewter spoons and drinking their half-mutchkin of ale, while successive governesses grew old in quiet and faithful service to youth in days when modern methods were unknown and the word psychology still unheard.

Like other such hospitals, the Merchant Maidens had their uniform, which the governors, as befitted merchants, supervised as to quality and quantity. One of the first minutes gives a full list of the garments, most of which were made by the mistresses or the girls themselves; it includes such unusual items as 'night mutches of linnen and day mutches or duds with musline borders.' At first the 'gown of Orkney stuff' was to be dyed 'blue or green or any other colour'; later the colour was standardised as green, until in 1782 they decided—

'the girls to be supplied with white freeze cloaks in place of the old green ones.'

But white cannot have been a practical colour and five years later they resolved on cotton drugget 'of a different colour to the Trades Maidens.' There is an early petition from two of the girls—

'Janet Mitchell and Mary Johnstone craving each a new pair of stays for the reasons therein mentioned . . . they deferred consideration to a more frequent meeting.'

For as the matter involved expenditure, and perhaps even a matter of principle, it was not considered trivial; in the end, after debate, the petition was refused. Later in the same year, when the colder weather had set in, three more girls petitioned for new night-gowns—

'they were called in and it appearing that their gowns were quite worn out the meeting allowed new gowns.'

Even then, clothing was a costly matter and the Governess often found difficulty in persuading the Board to make adequate allowance for growing girls. In 1740 she complained that the napkins, or scarves

'are so yellowed and worn that they cannot go to Kirk with them, and they are also cold. As they are not allowed pattens the winter shoes

get worn out and they are detained from Kirk in the hazard of catching cold while they could be repaired for sixpence each.'

And three years later—

'that as the children are allowed only four shifts every two years they not only grow from them but are constantly complaining and in ragges before the time of their getting new ones . . . that there is a very great scarcity of bed linen occasioned partly by the great sickness and partly by the small supply that has been made these several years bygone.'

In 1791 the Governess informed the governors that the girls were going to church in different coloured bonnets and hats given them by friends, so they were granted black silk bonnets, and later beaver hats, the cost being defrayed by the work done by the girls; she continues that

'as they have Cloaks to go to Church in winter, they have nothing for summer round their necks but a single handkerchief, and their appearance would be improved by a worked shawl or plaid at five shillings each, and as this would be used only on Sundays it would do a number of years.'

*The Diet and Health of the Girls*

In 1733 the governors appointed a committee to enquire if the diet was satisfactory, and a complete diet sheet is given. For breakfast there was 'pottage and milk' and for supper 'pottage and ale' or bread and ale. On Sunday there was one egg to dinner and a flesh supper; Monday and Friday, boiled meat and broth; Tuesday and Thursday, roast meat; Wednesday, two eggs; and Saturday, bread and butter. From time to time alterations were made in the diet, and on occasions there were complaints that it was insufficient. After their entry into the new hospital in Lauriston they asked their surgeon to investigate and in 1823 he reported that he had compared the diet with that of other hospitals and found it equal to any; in particular—

'That in comparing the diet of the Merchant Maiden Hospital with

that of the Trade Maiden Hospital, the inmates of which most nearly resemble one another, the diet of [the former] is superior, because meat is served out two days in the week more than in the Trades Maiden Hospital, for on the two soup days the meat is dispersed in the soup or broth and served out along with that to the girls, whereas in the Trades Maiden Hospital the meat is taken out and consumed by the mistresses and servants. That the quality is of the highest, principal pieces of meat only are received and well prepared.'

No statistics of illnesses are given, but in the minutes there are all too frequent notes of diseases and epidemics. In 1734, on the governors enquiring why the surgeon's account was up, it was reported that the children had had the itch during the summer. In these early days scurvy was common in the house, and in 1737 two girls suffering from it were sent to Corstorphine 'for the water.' When it persisted among the children, the Board blamed too much pottage in the diet, and substituted more bread and ale or bread and milk. We note the almost complete absence of green vegetables from the diet, which to-day would be linked with the outbreaks of this disease.'

Gradually there was a realisation that the standard of hygiene of the House was related to the question of health, and in 1776 Dr. Steedman, the hospital surgeon, read a paper to the governors on the health of the girls and made suggestions which were the basis of a series of improvements; his report gives some indication of the living conditions of the time—

'1. The sickroom is exposed to the noise of the street; it has windows on one side only and the ventilation is insufficient. When infectious or putrid diseases are present the air is offensive. [He suggests a room overlooking the garden with a convenient closet.]

2. Through bad habits the feather beds were rotted and should be replaced by flax and wool mattresses.

3. Owing to the shortage, the sick girls have no change of bedding and when sick girls have to be removed back to the dormitories before they have recovered, the others have been forced to sleep three to a bed. More spare bedding is needed.

4. Bed curtains might be dispensed with, as in the Infirmary—this might meet with a bad reception as their use is so universal, but there was a period when this piece of delicacy was unknown in the country nor was it productive of bad consequences; perhaps in their place an extra night cap might be provided.

6. There should be a frame for the open-air airing of blankets.

7. The wooden bed frames harbour vermin and, as in the Infirmary, iron bed frames with canvas bottoms should be substituted.'

In 1779, when Dr. Steedman was succeeded by Mr. Andrew Wood as surgeon, a remarkable family connection with the hospital was begun, for in 1812 his son, Dr. William Wood, was conjoined with him and eventually succeeded him, and in 1843 the grandson, Dr. Andrew Wood, likewise became colleague to his father, the three generations holding the position for over a century in both the Merchant and the Trades Maiden Hospitals.

During the eighteenth century there is little mention in the minutes of the recurring epidemics which affected the family in later times, but this may be due to the fact that they were accepted as normal happenings. In 1798 Rebecca Rae, one of the girls, became insane, but although 'she was in a most melancholy state' they resolved to keep her in the house as Dr. Wood hoped for a recovery. In 1814 St. Vitus' Dance, 'a nervous infection or indisposition, though not dangerous' affected several of the girls, who were during the epidemic boarded out in lodgings a little distance from the house with a proper nurse.

In 1824, after removal into the new building, it is recorded that an 'epidemic, prevalent in town, affected the girls; two died, but of diseases unconnected.' Following the epidemic there was much scrofula; some were sent home until better, while others were removed to the 'Bathing Quarters.' The Governess was desired

'to enquire for a proper lodging house at or near Seafeld for them to continue their education there.'

In 1827 Mary Murray, one of the girls, lost her hand and had to leave the hospital; it was decided that she be

'provided with an artificial hand with fork, hook and spring . . . the governors to see the work properly executed.'

In 1830 another girl had her leg amputated and was allowed a cork leg. In the same year there was another serious outbreak of scrofula. In 1832 there was an outbreak of 'spasmodic cholera' in the town and as a precaution everyone in the hospital was confined to the grounds; at the same time a donation was sent to the Peterhead Cholera Fund. The quarantine was imposed on 27th January, and as the outbreak in the town flared up again in the summer and autumn the girls remained confined until 10th December, a period of nearly a year.

In the years following, scarlet fever and scrofula were again prevalent, and in 1838 there is the first mention of a death from consumption, a disease which was to take a very heavy toll in the next twenty years. The next year two girls died of the disease, and a third of water on the brain. From 1823 to 1838 there had been 19 deaths out of an average roll of 90 girls. The governors record their 'painful feelings and anxiety,' but decide that, as for five years during this period there were no deaths, there could be nothing in the building itself to cause alarm. They recommend, however, certain alterations to make the house warmer and encourage the mistresses

'to ensure that active playfulness which in youth is at once the concomitant and cause of good health.'

And they decide also to encourage the early draining of the Meadows as 'likely materially to increase the salubrity of the hospital.'

In the next two years there were three more deaths from

consumption, bringing the total to eight in twelve years, and in addition the surgeon pointed out

'that small pox had been very prevalent in the Hospital of late, 34 of the girls having been attacked with the disease, all of whom, however, were now convalescent with the exception of Mary Johnstone who, it was feared, would lose the entire use of her eyesight. All the children attacked had been previously vaccinated. One girl removed from the Hospital some time before for ill health had since died of disease of the lungs.'

Because of this report it was decided to postpone the admission of new children. Mary Johnstone unfortunately did lose her sight and was sent to her mother with a special grant to enable her to learn a trade.

There can be little doubt that the damp and badly ventilated house, the inefficient drains and the marshy condition of the Meadows had been responsible for much of this ill health. When these were all improved, in the middle years of the century, the mention of disease becomes much rarer and in the later years of the hospital occurs hardly at all.

#### *The Hospital Staff*

During the whole period of the Hospital's existence staffing continued on the lines laid down in the original constitution. Supreme authority was vested in the Governess, or Matron, who was assisted by two mistresses, with a visiting male teacher for writing, English and arithmetic. When the number of the family grew, a third mistress was added and the number of visiting teachers, usually men, grew with the addition of extra subjects as the curriculum became wider. The Governess supervised the servants and acted as housekeeper as well as matron, but although she had authority over the mistresses, she did not herself teach. Much of the mistresses' time was devoted to teaching sewing and housewifery, but they assisted with school subjects. The system broke down in both the maiden hospitals, after nearly two centuries, owing to the

increasingly complex pattern of education; the same woman could no longer manage the household arrangements and effectively supervise what amounted to a primary and secondary school, and in both cases a headmaster was appointed. Then came the Educational Endowments (Scotland) Act, which changed the whole nature of the school.

In appendix VIII the names of such masters and mistresses as are mentioned in the minutes are recorded, but fuller mention must be made of the governesses. From the first minute in 1734 to the great change in 1870, the Hospital had eight governesses. In this period the establishment changed from a simple house of charity for poor girls, providing shelter and the '3 R's' to an educational academy for young ladies, many of whom were in training as governesses or teachers. It is quite obvious from the minutes that the type and character of the governess changed also, with the passing of the years, from the homely and simple eighteenth-century woman to the highly educated Victorian governess.

The early minutes mention a Mrs. Wenson as governess; in 1765 there is the first mention of the choosing of a new governess. The salary at that time was £12 annually, and the leet of four is interesting as it provides an insight into the type of applicant—

- '1. Janet Balderstone, age 52, housekeeper and governess to private families.
2. Elizabeth Haliburton, 51, has been my lady's own woman and housekeeper.
3. Margaret Montgomery, 49. Doctrix to Miss Wylie all the time she kept a school, presently keeps a school as mistress.
4. Margaret Anderson, 49, housekeeper in the best families and had charge of the inferior servants and children.'

From this leet Margaret Montgomery was chosen; nine years later she died, still in the service of the house. Her successor was Mrs. Hog or Hogg, a widow, who served from

1774 to 1793. During these nineteen years both staff and pupils proved more than usually unruly. The disturbances among the girls, referred to in the minute as 'riots,' are dealt with under the later section on Discipline, but her difficulties with the mistresses must have proved equally worrying.

In 1779 Miss Duncan, the mistress in charge of the 'white seam,' had been reprimanded for her work by the governors and doubtless bore a grudge against the rest of the staff. Within two years the disharmony came to the ears of the Board, and on investigating they

'found that Miss Duncan and Miss Syme did quarrel before the girls in a manner very unbecoming and improper and ought to be reprimanded therefore. Miss Duncan is also remiss in her duties, leaving her classroom and destroying the character of Mrs. Hogg. Her complaints of excessive drinking and neglecting the girls by Mrs. Hogg are not accepted.'

As a result Miss Duncan was dismissed. Four years later the third mistress, Miss Jack, refused to move 'her school' to suit the new arrangements when the house was altered, and she also suffered dismissal. The next year, 1786, Miss Syme, who had previously been associated with Miss Duncan, was brought before the governors and

'found guilty of disharmony with the Governess and Miss Mountford and rudeness to the Governors and ordered to be dismissed at Whitsunday or immediately if she does not conduct herself with propriety.'

During Mrs. Hogg's term of office the salary of the Governess was raised to £20 and that of the three mistresses to £12, as the result of a petition which stated—

'Education is more extensive and liberal than formerly, particularly in millinery, mantua making, washing and dressing caps etc., nett work, lace and fine sewing. That the mode of living and dressing is now very different and much more expensive than they were 50 years ago.'

In 1793 Mrs. Hogg died, and one of the mistresses, Mrs.

Grizel Mountford<sup>1</sup>, was elected Governess, a position which she held for 20 years. She inherited many of the difficulties which had faced Mrs. Hogg; the house was falling into disrepair and the attention of the governors was mainly directed to finding a site for a new building; the district had become rowdy, bringing problems of discipline, and the girls themselves were straining at restrictions, affected by the ideas of liberty preached outside. It is no coincidence that these were the years of the French Revolution; in the great world beyond the walls the Bastille had fallen; in the little world inside, Miss Mountford and the governors set up their own chamber for solitary confinement in their attempt to preserve the old order. Miss Mountford, a simple devout Christian of the old eighteenth-century ways, attending the dissenting chapel in Argyle Square when not at service with the girls at Greyfriars, left the imprint of her personality upon the hospital longer than most governesses, and is perhaps most typical of them all. Commencing her service with the Hospital about 1783, she was for ten years one of the mistresses and then for twenty years ruled the establishment as Governess or Matron. Although in her time many of the old ways were passing, the curriculum was widening and the privileges of the burgess class for which the Hospital had been founded were falling, she retained much of the simplicity of the early matrons. She had no new ideas about freedom or self-expression, but if her discipline and her punishments appear severe and even savage, it was because she set the same austere standard in her personal life. She is free from the artificiality of her Victorian successors and treats her charges as healthy girls growing to womanhood rather than as young ladies aspiring to become governesses. At Bristo, she fits as naturally into her little room with its narrow window as she would have been out of place behind the stained glass of Lauriston. She

<sup>1</sup> Referred to in the minutes as either Mrs. or Miss. It would appear that she was a widow and that the latter was a courtesy title.

died just five years before the family's connection with the old building ended.

During her term of office the list of governors included such well-known figures as Sir William Fettes, Sir Henry Moncrieff, minister of St. Cuthbert's, and Mr. George Grindlay, and most of the preliminary negotiations for moving from Bristo were completed. At the beginning the European wars made the food position difficult and a special meeting was held with the authorities of the other hospitals, at which it was agreed to cut down the consumption of bread and to use only the wheaten loaf recommended by the Privy Council and known as Portland Bread. Five years later the price of oatmeal caused them to substitute wheatmeal entirely in the diet.

In 1805 there was a complaint that the imperfect singing of the girls was causing 'interruption' in the psalmody at Greyfriars Church, and the governors invited

'Mr. McDonald, precentor in Greyfriars, and teacher of music to another hospital, to be assistant teacher of music in the hospital, with no salary during the life of Mr. Aitken the present teacher.'

—and they also suggested—

'That the managers of Watson's Hospital and the Trades Maidens be persuaded to permit an exchange to be made of the Seats occupied by the Boys of Watson's Hospital with those of the girls of the Trades Hospital, so as the Boys of Watson's and the girls of this Hospital might sit in Old Greyfriar's Church and the Boys of Heriot's and Girls of the Trades Maidens in New Greyfriar's Church.'

The minutes of the Trades Maiden Hospital tell more fully the story of the intense rivalry which existed between the two maiden hospitals in church, of which this minute was an attempted solution. At one point the rivalry grew so acute that when one hospital sang, the other girls stopped, and remarks were passed about their faces and figures.

In 1809 there was a complaint of harsh treatment of the

girls by two of the mistresses; on the advice of Miss Mountford one was retained, but the other, Miss McColl, was dismissed. Some months later Miss McColl wrote to the governors with serious charges against Miss Mountford. The minutes give no indication of what these charges were, but the governors considered them sufficiently serious to merit a full investigation. On 15th January 1810 they met and intimated that as Miss McColl had not written to substantiate her allegations there was no case to answer; while this motion was being made, however, they were interrupted and a sealed packet was handed in with Miss McColl's substantiation of her statements. Although, after a further investigation, they supported their Governess and rejected the complaint, some of them obviously felt that the time had come for Miss Mountford to retire. Many irregularities of conduct on the part of the older girls suggested that her control over the family was not as firm as once it had been. In 1813 they met to consider whether the Rules and Regulations were sufficient; they decided that they were, but added—

'In the management of so large a family of young girls an unyielding firmness in the enforcement of general rules, and a constant exertion of the powers, both of the mind and body in the head of the family are absolutely necessary, and that these qualifications cannot be expected to be exercised with the same effect in a very advanced period of life.'

It is significant that in the same minute they mention the need for widening the curriculum as now many of the girls desire to become governesses. In September Mrs. Mountford sent in her resignation after thirty years of service.

In 1814 Mrs. Isabella Campbell was chosen as Governess, a position she held for less than four years. Two years later it is recorded that she nursed the girls so carefully during an outbreak of fever, which affected 37 of the children, that on their recovery they presented her with a small gift and a letter,

thanking her for her 'tender care.'<sup>1</sup> It is the more surprising, therefore, that during the same year she was called upon to face serious charges brought by one of the mistresses, and supported by several of the governors led by a Mr. Anderson. To minor charges of keeping a dog which had bitten several of the girls, staying up late, going out at night and taking meals apart from the rest of the staff, he added that of unjust and excessive punishment of a girl, Isabella Foggo, who had recently left. For three months this girl had been confined to her room without candle or heat, except when taken to the sewing-class, where she was segregated from the other girls.

Mrs. Campbell gave in a report which indicated that Foggo had carried on correspondence with a boy called Denholm, whose mother had appealed to her to try to stop the affair. The girl denied writing an improper letter, but had slipped away from the others when going to church to join the boy; that after trying all other means she had confined her, but only under the care of Miss Saunders, one of the mistresses. A majority of the governors agreed that, while she had acted without their consent, it was in the girl's best interests, but a minority strongly opposed this motion and desired the dismissal of the Governess. When a compromise motion was passed, several 'took instruments' to protest, either because it was not strong enough in its criticism of the Governess or because of the rebuke it contained. In the meantime, discipline slipped badly; one mistress left and the disharmony among the staff was so great that the governors appointed a master until the family was put in order. At the beginning of 1817 all the former mistresses either left or were dismissed and a completely new staff was engaged; in October of the same year Mrs. Campbell herself resigned.

<sup>1</sup> This is the only instance of a gift from the girls to a Governess, but in 1831 some of the older girls presented the Treasurer, James Burgess, with a ring and a letter of appreciation. The governors doubted if this were permissible under the Statutes; it was accepted but the donors were warned 'not to do so under any pretext whatever in future.'

During the remaining months of the year the governors themselves made attempts to restore discipline, prosecuting several young men who had broken into the house or garden and expelling some of the older girls. In February 1818 the new Governess, Miss Geddes was introduced, and in October of the same year she led the family into the new hospital in Lauriston.

To Miss Geddes fell the difficult task of fitting the family into its new quarters. While the building was a great improvement upon the ancient house in Bristo, it suffered, as has been indicated, from economy both in fittings and arrangement of rooms and from the sanitary standards, which still remained primitive. The Governess had to contend with an increasing amount of illness and even death among the children, while the problems of indiscipline continued. The habit of complaining to the governors about the Governess had been established, and within three years this weapon was used against Miss Geddes. A letter signed by 'Veritas' brought charges of 'carelessness, cruelty and of having cruelly beaten one of the girls who had come from, or had to go to, the sick-room.' The real situation appeared to be that the girl had poured boiling water into a pail where another girl was washing her feet 'whereby she was much scalded,' and the Governess had given her a slap on the back of the neck. In support of the Governess one parent wrote to the governors—

'I beg you'll state to the Directors my sincere and heartfelt gratitude and admiration of the excellent Education, both with respect to morals and other acquisitions which she has received at their precious institution, and to assure them that no time shall erase the impressions which I have conceived of the manner in which it is regulated.'

In 1825 a letter signed by a parent and an uncle of two of the girls brought further complaints against Miss Geddes, for

'refusing permission to the Girls to leave the House on those days when this is allowed by the rules, in inflicting severe punishment on

the elder girls in particular cases, and in general harshness of behaviour towards them.'

An investigation lasting several months ensued, when it was revealed that the Governess had been annoyed by several young men communicating with the girls while coming to and from church; two of the younger girls, both aged 15, had tricked the seniors by forging a letter as if it came from the young men, which act had disturbed and annoyed the family. When this was discovered and acknowledged, Miss Geddes had inflicted 'a personal punishment in presence of the other children.' The governors interrogated the girls concerned, Isabella Gardner and Jemima Dalrymple, interviewed the complainers and other parents, the governess and doctor, held four meetings and set up a sub-sub committee; after some months the matter ended with a report—

'Although some of the complaints are not altogether without foundation, yet it appears to the Committee that a higher colouring has been given and a different construction put on the matter . . . than the real circumstances of the case seem to justify . . . it has appeared that punishments of the kind alluded to have been inflicted in the House, and on the last occasion with an appearance of severity which the Committee must and do disapprove of, although they conceive it to be just to the Governess to mention that it does not appear to . . . have been resorted to more than three times during the period of eight years, and . . . on the last occasion for a deep moral offence which, had it been brought before the governors would have merited expulsion. The Committee disapproved of the mode of punishment alluded to in any and in every case not only because it does not meet with sufficient discrimination the different degrees of offences for which it may be inflicted, but because it is quite improper and unsuitable in a female institution like that of the Hospital.'

In fairness to Miss Geddes we must note that in 1825 there must have been many such institutions which employed the birch, and that she was seeking some substitution for the governors' penalty of long periods of solitary confinement, sometimes with the cutting out of the hair at the beginning

and expulsion at the end. The two ministers on the Board dissociated themselves from the report, perhaps because the Church inclined towards established customs, or perhaps because they sympathised with the matron's difficult task. In the years following the problem of discipline became no easier, and in 1832 Miss Geddes laid before the Board a letter which she had intercepted passing between one of the former pupils and a girl in the Hospital. It was not revealed what the contents of the letter were, but the governors ordered their Education Committee to consider the whole internal management of the House, particularly that part coming under the control of the Governess. After some months' investigation the committee reported—

'There is at present, and has existed, for some time past, a certain degree of relaxation of discipline among the Girls of the Establishment, more particularly when out of doors and in the grounds of the Hospital. This, however, does not seem to extend itself to the Schools as there, both those under the management of the female mistresses and those under Mr. Johnstone, the Girls are reported to be obedient and submissive to their Teachers. When out of school, the case seems otherwise, the Girls showing a carelessness and inattention to what is said to them, a restlessness under control, and when on the grounds a spirit of mischievousness which leads them to destroy both fruits and flowers, and for which they have not been or will not suffer themselves to be checked.'

This the governors put down partly to the long period of quarantine during the cholera epidemic, but partly to the irritability of the Governess

'who did not enjoy the respect and affection of the children in a degree which is to be desired on the part of an individual filling the responsible situation which she holds.'

As a result of this adverse report it was decided to admonish Miss Geddes and to direct her to visit the schools more frequently; a minority in favour of dismissal raised the question again at the next meeting, when it was agreed to pension her and to advertise for a successor, 'who must be

fully qualified to superintend the education as well as the domestic economy of the hospital.' Miss Geddes had been Governess for fourteen years, and she continued to draw her pension until her death in 1859.

During Miss Geddes' term of office the Board made an interesting presentation to Sir William Fettes for his services to the Hospital—

'It was proposed that he should be requested to accept of the Iron Chest which had been discovered when the Family removed from the old House in Lothian Street as a mark of the sense which the Governors entertain of the value of his services, trusting that the antiquity of the chest and its curiosity as a piece of ancient workmanship may induce him to accept of it.'

Miss Jess Leechman began her twenty-five years of office as Governess in 1832. When appointing her the governors let it be known that they might expect her to teach, probably not so much from the possibility of this arising, for the complete management of an institution of 96 girls entailed full-time supervision, as from their desire to have a Governess who was capable of teaching and so of effectively controlling the larger number of visiting teachers. During her term the curriculum was broadened to provide for the increasing number of girls who left to become governesses in private families or teachers in schools. A large number, however, still left to go into dressmaking or millinery, and during her day the system of 'out-boarding' grew up, whereby such girls were allowed to leave the Hospital at fourteen and begin their apprenticeship; although they lived at home they remained in the care of the governors and drew benefits from the funds until they reached the normal leaving age of seventeen.

Disciplinary problems disappeared during Miss Leechman's day, and there is only one letter of criticism recorded against her. This is not due entirely to the changing times, and the greater submissiveness of the Victorian maiden, but mainly to the introduction of this boarding-out system whereby the

number of older girls in the Hospital was greatly reduced and those who remained were interested in the broader studies which they would need for their vocation. Even the ancient name of the institution, with its associations of charity, was avoided by the staff, and in 1840 the Board records—

'The governors, having been informed that some of the Teachers and others connected with the Hospital were in the practice, when alluding to the Institution, of styling it "The Merchant Maiden Seminary" instead of "The Hospital," the meeting were of opinion that it would be proper and expedient to record in the minutes . . . that the above change received no sanction from them and that they did not recognise any other title, but that conferred on it by the statutes.'

During her predecessor's term, in 1830, the governors decided to combine the office of chaplain with that of English, writing and arithmetic master, and appointed the Rev. William Johnstone to the post. Mr. Johnstone's influence upon the education of the Hospital was noteworthy. He introduced a modification of the monitorial system of teaching which had been popularised by Bell and Lancaster. In 1835 his salary was raised to £135 per annum and he was engaged for full-time duties. Although the change is not recorded officially in the minutes, it appears that he was known as the Headmaster and given charge of the educational side of the institution. He resigned in 1859 after almost thirty years' connection with the school, and died in 1869.

In Miss Leechman's day the Hospital was modernised and new manners and customs replaced the old. The girls' half-mutchkin of ale had long given place to other beverages, and the practice of their drinking a dish of tea with their Governess was encouraged by the governors.<sup>1</sup> In 1845 they suggested

<sup>1</sup> In 1774 Mrs. Hogg had petitioned the governors that 'the use of tea is now become so common that it would be even Indecent not to have it in the Hospital upon some occasions and what tea has been used has been at her expense'; she had entertained the mistresses with tea for breakfast five days in the week and given it to sick girls and friends who visit them. The governors granted a sum for tea as 'a proper Diet or Refreshment for the girls when indisposed.'

that they might further economise on the quantity of malt liquor consumed by the servants—although 'this was given on washing and cleaning days only it might encourage habits injurious to them in later life.' Extra tea and coffee was to be allowed in place of ale.

In 1843 the Disruption had its repercussions within the institution. On 29th May the governors discussed a letter from several of their own number and others petitioning that the girls should follow Mr. Sym from Old Greyfriars and 'sit under him in the Free Presbyterian Church.' The Rev. Dr. Clason and the Rev. David Runciman, representing the City Ministers on the Board, withdrew before the discussion. A motion that they be not sent to Old Greyfriars was carried, whereupon the minority who adhered to the Establishment took instruments and threatened legal proceedings if the motion were put into effect. It was agreed to take Counsel's opinion on the powers which the governors possessed of withdrawing the girls.

On 3rd July a special meeting was called to consider the opinion of Counsel. At the beginning a question arose—had Dr. Clason and Mr. Sym, two of the governors, a right to sit, as they had demitted their charges in the parish church and so could no longer be said to represent the city ministers? Dr. Clason affirmed his continued interest in the welfare of the Hospital and said he had only attended because he was summoned; he resigned and withdrew. Mr. Sym said he had no instruction from the body appointing him that his connection had ceased and he intended to continue, but he withdrew from the discussion, safeguarding his own interests. The governors recorded their loss of Dr. Clason from the Board.

Counsel's Opinion was that in the statutes 'established religion' did not mean only the parish church but any other holding the same faith and doctrine and observing the same forms of worship. This had been tacitly recognised in the case of Miss Mountford, who had been accepted as Governess

although she belonged to a dissenting body, and so the Governess would not be affected unless she refused to accompany the girls to the established church. Both statutes and custom, however, bound the governors to send the children to the parish church.

A motion was carried 'regretting that the opinion does not afford a correct view of the powers of the governors but that considering the threat of legal proceedings it was inexpedient to enforce (their rights) at present.' In a lengthy protest against Counsel's Opinion they reserved the right to remove the girls later if they desired. To a letter from the Presbytery Clerk intimating the names of new minister representatives to the Board, they replied that they were unaware that any vacancies existed.

No further move was made to remove the girls from the parish church, and within a year Dr. Lee of Greyfriars was lecturing to the pupils on modern history. In 1845 it was reported that as Greyfriars had been burned down the girls had attended St. John's, and they debated whether St. John's or West St. Giles would be more convenient, in the end deciding for the latter.

In 1853 there was hung on the great staircase of the Hospital a portrait of Mr. Roderick Gray, factor of their estates at Peterhead, commissioned by them from Sir John Gordon. Mr. Gray, who had factored the estates for forty years, had risen to be provost of the burgh. The painting was considered one of the best of Gordon's works and permission was given on two occasions for it to be temporarily removed and sent to Paris and to Manchester for exhibitions.<sup>1</sup>

When Miss Leechman resigned in 1857, Miss Katharine C. Bathgate, matron of the Edinburgh Female Blind Asylum, was appointed. Miss Bathgate was the last matron of the old hospital, and when in 1870 it was turned into a day-school she continued as matron of the boarding-houses where the

<sup>1</sup> The portrait now hangs in the Merchant Hall.

foundationers were accommodated. During her time the establishment, which had been 90 to 96 in the first half of the century, began to drop, to 80 and then to 75. Changes were coming and the whole hospital system was being severely criticised. The year after her appointment it is mentioned that 47 out of the last 61 girls leaving had gone as governesses; the demand was for secondary education more specialised than could be provided even by their wider curriculum.

During Miss Bathgate's years the minutes devote space to more pleasant domestic topics—annual excursions to places as far distant as St. Andrews, the Falls of Clyde, North Berwick, Hopetoun and Jedburgh; photographs taken of the girls about to leave; donations to the Matron and governesses to visit the International Exhibition; holidays in the summer and at Christmas and New Year.

Then, in 1868, came Mr. Simon Laurie, eminent educationist of his day, with a horror of all hospitals and their system, to inspect and peer into every nook and cranny. The ordeal for the Governess must have been severe, but even he has to praise her in his report—

'The girls are evidently quite happy, that is to say, with that negative kind of happiness which seems to be characteristic of hospital existence.'

#### *Discipline*

Before passing to the subject of the curriculum it is necessary to return to the old days at Bristo to consider such cases of discipline as have not already been noted in connection with the Governesses. During the years in the old Hospital the number of girls increased from 40 to over 80 and the task of keeping such a large family happy under the restrained manners of the time cannot have been easy. Most of our insight into the life of the maidens is obtained through their misdemeanours, because, then, as now, sin has greater 'news

value' than virtue and the breaking of rules is recorded at length while the keeping thereof is not reported.

Day-to-day discipline was in the hands of the Governess, but graver breaches of rules were brought to the notice of the Board. The lesser punishment was a public rebuke, while in more serious cases the girl would be 'extruded from the house' and lose her foundation benefits. Towards the end of the eighteenth century the latter punishment was replaced by, or accompanied by, long periods of solitary confinement in rooms specially constructed for the purpose, with bread and water diet, and on occasions, the cutting out of the hair. In 1825 the governors forbade in matters of discipline the use of corporal punishment, which had been administered on occasions publicly by the matron.

The first recorded minute relating to discipline is in 1757 when—

'The Governess complained of diverse misdemeanours of Jean Meggat who was called in and rebuked by the Rev. George Hay in presence of the Governors.'

In 1761 a more serious domestic fracas arose, as a result of which the staff and girls were called before the governors and new regulations were read to them.<sup>1</sup> Four years later further additions to the regulations were made—

'The roll shall be called before going about family worship in the evening, and if any of the girls be wilfully or unnecessarily absent they shall be duly chastised.'

And if any girl stays out overnight the Preses is to be notified before she is readmitted.

In dealing with the staff we have noted the wave of delinquency which began about this time and lasted until well into the next century. This was due to the large numbers of older girls of sixteen and seventeen who found the restriction

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix IV.

irksome and longed to start their apprenticeship as dress-makers or milliners, and the task of the governors in checking it was made more difficult by outside influences both on the part of parents and of students and apprentice lads who paid undue attention to the inmates, with unsettling results.

In 1766 Isobel Vere Jackson

'having been reprov'd for certain misdemeanours did thereupon desert the House and has been several nights absent.'

After reading a letter from her mother, the governors resolved to extrude her from the House and deprive her of her emoluments.

In 1774 a riot occurred in which several girls were involved—

'Last night being Sunday, about 7 o'clock the Family had been disturbed by some young men who got into the Garden and broke several Glasses in the Windows of the Hospital while the Family were at public worship. The Governors called in the Governess to inquire about the affair and being acquainted by her that she had got the names of the most guilty persons, ordered that they be forthwith pursued in name of the Governors before the Sheriff of the County to answer for this misdemeanour.'

There is no record of the success of the prosecution, but the governors continued to tighten up the discipline and enforce additional rules.<sup>1</sup>

In 1785 Ann Ross was publicly rebuked and expelled, having

'been guilty to several offences and had not attended School for these five weeks nor done any work notwithstanding repeated admonitions by Visitors and Governess and Mistresses.'

<sup>1</sup> In 1775 a girl called Mary Scott was extruded for theft, after having been for two years 'chastised, reprov'd and threatened.' At the same time the governors stopped the practice of going out to evening service as some had used the opportunity to slip away in the darkness—'under no pretence whatever' was any girl to be allowed out after dark.

She led several others into trouble, for it was reported that—

'The Governors had the declaration before the Magistrates of Finlay Wilson and Rutherford, surgeon apprentices, and Weir and Borthwick, painters, whose company the girls had frequented and some of whom had been detected in the Hospital under night. By this it appears that Ann Ross, lately expelled the house, Ann Ramadge, Bell Burt, Jean Lauriston, Ann Livingston and Fanny Burnet had not only kept company with these young men at unreasonable hours, but had gone with them to a house of very ill fame in the town. The Committee called Ann Ramadge and Bell Burt who are the oldest and seem to be the most aggravated offenders, and admonished and reprimanded them in the strongest terms, but without being able to make any deep impression on them. They next sent for Jean Lauriston and Fanny Burnet and talked to them at great length of the great impropriety of their late behaviour and of the immanent danger which they run by frequenting such company, when they appeared to be much afflicted with a sense of their fault and promised amendment. Ann Livingston was so deeply distressed that she could not appear and there is reason to hope that these last three will never offend again.'

As a result the two older girls were extruded from the House, a servant who had connived at the disturbance was dismissed and the others were warned. The Procurator Fiscal was left to deal with the young men concerned, and a month later there was a letter from Alexander Weir,

'father of one of the young men concerned in the late riots . . . setting forth that his son had now been above four weeks confined in prison, and as he wished to send him to America he was willing to give Bond to the governors that he would not remain longer in the Country than until he could find a Vessel to carry him thence, and also for his good behaviour till then, and therefore praying that the Governors would consent to his being liberated from prison.'

To this course the governors agreed on condition of his paying a fine and costs. Even these stern measures did not prevent a similar occurrence two years later, when one Sunday evening three girls climbed the garden wall to meet some

young painter apprentices. In addition to prosecuting the lads, the governors appointed a portress to spend her full time guarding the door—and, we may presume, keeping an eye on the garden wall. The girls concerned refused to give any information to the governors and showed no signs of repentance; reluctant to resort again to the extreme penalty of expulsion, the governors introduced the system of solitary confinement which was to be increasingly used during the remaining years in Bristo—

‘Decided to put Ann McLardie, Peggie Douglas and Christian Rankin into confinement for the space of six weeks, and to be fed during that period on bread and water.’

The period was to be shortened if there were signs of repentance, but if there was no contrition expulsion was to follow—

‘The Committee set apart a proper place for that purpose, and gave orders for fitting it up in three separate apartments. And when it is ready (resolved) to meet to carry it into effect in presence of all the girls.’

The offence was committed in April 1787, but it was not until two months later, on 13th June that the punishment was carried into effect. On 14th July when they had been confined for a month, the girls wrote to the Treasurer—

‘Honoured Sir,

We are very sorry that we have disoblged you and put you and the Governors to so much trouble about us. We own we have been greatly in the fault, but we hope through the strength of God to do better in time to come. We are very sensible it is for our own good that we have been so confined, but not so much as we deserved. We are sensible of the care that has been taken of us and we return our most humble thanks to the Governors and Ministers for their good advices, and we will be very much obliged to you for our liberty if you please to grant us. . . .’

The most genuine clause in this rather pathetic epistle is undoubtedly the last one; many of the others sound as if they had been inspired by some kindly adult—one of the ministers or mistresses. The psychologist to-day would be very unsure of the professed repentance, but the governors were so satisfied with the results of their new mode of punishment that they resolved to keep the rooms ready, and gave the Governess full power, with the approval of the Treasurer, to confine any girl for a period of one week.

In the following January the peace of the House was again broken by an ‘outrage’ in which some of the girls previously punished were again concerned—

‘On the night of the last day of the year, three young men, namely Moses Lothian, apprentice to Mr. Deuchar, seal-engraver, James Williamson, apprentice to Mr. King, painter and glazier, and Alex. Borthwick, apprentice to Mr. Figgins, solicitor at law, broke into the Hospital by getting into the Garden and thence into the House by one of the back windows and afterwards the door of one of the principal wards had been forced open. . . . That this outrage had been committed with the knowledge of some of the girls . . . that they had taken declarations from some of the girls, and these were now laid before the Committee. The Treasurer further informed them that two of the young men had absconded, but Alex. Borthwick still remains in town, and he had been examined and the particulars of that examination were laid before the committee . . . they considered with the fullest attention the affair in which the most serious interests of the House are materially concerned. They were unanimously resolved that it was absolutely necessary to make severe examples of those girls who had taken a prominent part in it.’

This time they resolved to expel and deprive of benefits, Christian Rankin, ‘who had been deeply concerned in a former delinquency, and Katharine Alexander, Ann McLardie and Margaret Douglas were to be put into solitary confinement, fed on bread and water and have their hair cut out, after which punishment they were to be dismissed the house earlier than the date on which they would have been due to leave. A fifth

girl was to be confined for a shorter period and fed on bread and water. When word was received that Ann McLardie's father, who had emigrated, was willing to receive her home immediately, the governors resolved to pay her passage and dismiss her at once. In her place, Katharine Alexander was placed in the punishment room, where she remained, week about with the girl Rankin, for six weeks. On hearing that the young men who had occasioned all the trouble had been fined only one guinea, the governors wrote to protest at the light sentence.

By their severe handling of this case the governors secured peace for ten years, until, in May 1796, arose that which is known in the minutes as 'The Case of Campbell Grant,' which deserves the pen of a novelist rather than the brief extract in our Appendix to do it justice.<sup>1</sup>

We have already noted the rivalry which existed between the two foundations sponsored by Mary Erskine. This was aggravated by the fact that they both attended the same place of worship and that their two gardens were separated only by the old city wall. In 1806 three of the Merchant Maidens made a physical attack upon the Trades Maidens, in 'circumstances of an aggravated kind,' the details of which are not given—

'In justice to the other girls of the House, and to the family of the Trades Maidens, the girls were severely censured in public and . . . carried to their place of confinement.'

New Year's Day was always a time of anxiety to the authorities, and in 1813 a disturbance arose on that night—

'Four girls, along with three girls from another hospital, had dined with some young men in a Tavern in Bank Street, where they remained until six o'clock in the evening, and where they were left by the girls of the other hospital. That on leaving the house, they accompanied the young men in a Coach to another Tavern in Brunts-

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix V.

field Links where they remained until nine o'clock, and then returned to the Hospital. That on being questioned on their coming home where they had been and how employed, they gave evasive and false answers, and that a few nights after this happened Isa Foggo and Joan Douglas had gone out of the House without leaves and under disguise and had remained out for a little time.'

While the governors considered that no criminal act had been committed they decided on solitary confinement and sparse diet under doctor's orders for four weeks, and arranged for the rooms, which had fallen into disuse, to be prepared that it might be carried out without injury. It was also decided to abolish the New Year's holidays, the girls to be given tea on the last day of the year and a dinner on New Year's Day.

At the same time they attempted to trace the causes of the disturbances which had been all too frequent during the past half-century. They discontinued the practice of allowing the girls to go outside for lessons from teachers who were not on the staff, and they encouraged the older girls to take increased responsibility, giving them a small sum for assisting in teaching the younger. It is also obvious that they had lost confidence in Mrs. Mountford, who was now advanced in years, and they welcomed her resignation, which followed the recent disturbance. An increasing number of the governors felt that the Bristo district was now so altered that the best solution was to make a clean break, and from this time they agitated to obtain a new building in a different district at an early date.

Five years later the family moved into the new Hospital. The disciplinary difficulties which beset them there have been detailed in our account of the governesses. The final solution to a long period of discontent among the older girls was found not in more rigorous discipline, but in the introduction of 'boarding out,' a system which will be explained more fully in the next section.

*Development in Education*

It is significant that the first minute dealing with the education of the girls concerns practical training, where for many years the main interest lay—

'Upon a motion by the Governess that the girls should be educate for some months before their going out of the Hospital at the Paistry School, the governors deferred consideration.'

In the same year, 1734, they decided

'to apply to the Trustees for encouraging Linnen Manufactory in Scotland, that one of the French spinning mistresses be allowed to come, without expense, into the Hospital to teach girls the art of spinning.'

And next year

'they resolve to try both French and Scotch ways of spinning, to repair the old wheels and to get six French wheels.'

In 1744 they received a petition from the Trustees mentioned above, that they allow a teacher to instruct the girls in:

'spinning yarn fit for Cambrick after the french method, so that they be taught a business by which they can never be in want of bread.'

At this time, and for the remainder of the century, the girls did a large amount of work which was bought by the ladies of the town. Unlike English Charity Schools, however, the governors did not profit by these sales but divided the proceeds amongst the girls on their outgoing from the Hospital. In 1761 mistresses were rebuked following complaints of the poor quality of this work, and in framing new regulations the governors laid down that it was to be 'neatly and sufficiently done before it be carried Home.' For many years the chaplain's salary was also defrayed from the proceeds of the sales. In considering possible sites for the new hospital at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the governors took into account the effect on their customers in bringing and collecting

the work; they felt that as most of the ladies now lived in the New Town it would be even more convenient for them to call at Lauriston than at Bristo, and in addition, the sum realised from the sales was now so small as to render it unimportant.

As so many of the girls left the hospital to become dress-makers, mantua makers or milliners, sewing remained an important part of the training during the two centuries of its existence. There are references to the mistress in charge of the 'white-seam' and to special classes in dressmaking and mantua-making.

The early minutes are almost devoid of any reference to academic education even of an elementary kind. In 1737, when they chose a new mistress, the governors decided to test her in reading an English book, and to get a report from one of the ministers as to her ability to teach the Christian religion. The appointment of a new mistress in 1745 was postponed owing to the occupation of the town by the Pretender's troops, and in the following year they recorded

'that by the late Calamity of the Country no election had hitherto ensued . . . they gave opportunity for renewing applications.'

In 1766, for the only recorded time in the Hospital's history, one of the senior girls was appointed schoolmistress. Ten years later the monthly visitors record that they are not satisfied with the progress in English, and consider whether it would be proper to have a special master or mistress to teach the first principles of reading. This is the first of several adverse reports on progress in reading. In 1777 they had a motion before them to engage a man to devote his full time to teaching reading, writing, arithmetic and church music and to act as chaplain. This was not put into effect and the one visiting English master sufficed for some years.

At this time Mr. Laurie, the visiting teacher, showed the governors a manuscript containing 'several useful instructions

and religious and moral advices for the girls,' and they ordered 500 copies to be printed for their use. Later, Mr. Laurie published a music book, and they ordered copies for the use of the girls, but after inspection ordered the last two songs to be removed.

In 1781 the governess and mistresses presented the petition for increase in salary which has been referred to above, and from which it is clear that they still regarded their work as mainly teaching sewing in its various branches. Three years later, as a result of more adverse reports on the education of the girls, the governors called for a full report from their Committee on Education. This report admits that the present state of education in the hospital is 'very defective,' and suggests

1. That a new teacher attend, whose sole employment in the House shall be to teach English according to the present improved methods received in the established English schools of Edinburgh. That no candidate should be considered who is not either married or at least 40 years old.

2. That this English master should attend and teach six hours in summer and five in winter every lawful day except Saturday.

3. That the girls (about 80 in number) be divided equally into four classes.

4. That the hours, as well in sewing as in work, be—Summer—7-9 a.m.; 10-12; 2-4.30 p.m.; 5-7. Winter—9-12 noon; 2-4.30; 5-7 p.m. That each of the four classes should attend the English master for one period each day.

5. On Saturdays the English master shall attend each class for one hour solely for explaining religion.

6. The Writing master, who is also to teach arithmetic and singing, shall attend three hours—the two senior classes to attend him, viz, the third for writing, the fourth for writing and arithmetic.'

They decided to draw up new regulations for masters and scholars, to have a book for reports, and to give small premiums annually for the best work. Dr. Hamilton proposed that instead of engaging a master one of the three mistresses

should be engaged solely in teaching English; this was, however, considered inadequate and Mr. James Mowat was elected the first English Master. As a result of this one of the mistresses refused to move her 'school' to suit the new arrangements, and had to be dismissed. Later in the year the visitors reported themselves highly pleased with the progress of the English and Writing Masters.

Although the education was still restricted to the '3 R's' and, by later standards, very elementary, these reforms of 1784 placed it on a sound basis. The Education Committee which had brought them into being was allowed to lapse, and not revived again until 1797, when it became a permanent committee of the governors until the last days of the Hospital. One of its first tasks in 1795 was to accept the offer of the Writing Master to teach some geography, and to buy a terrestrial globe, an atlas and a few copies of school-books on the subject. On inspecting the work in the various subjects, the committee reported that it was well satisfied. Mr. Mowat, however, was in declining health and was pensioned off. In 1802, as the Writing Master was considered inefficient, one master was engaged for both writing and English.

In 1805 the governors decided to award annually 'as excitements to emulation' four medals, to be worn at the examinations and school functions. These were for the best reader and reciter of English, the best writer and accomptant, the best sewer and the best in general good behaviour. The four were to be chosen partly by popular vote. These were increased to seven medals, and a year later to ten.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century some of the girls were leaving to become governesses, and as the education provided within the Hospital was inadequate, the custom arose of parents paying for their daughters to receive lessons in French, music and other subjects outwith the building. In 1813 the governors forbade the practice because of disciplinary difficulties, but decided to investigate the possibility of widen-

ing the curriculum to provide for those becoming governesses. As a result of this investigation instrumental music and French were provided at the parents' expense, except in cases of hardship when they were given without charge; at the same time

'older girls showing proficiency shall be employed to instruct and bring forward the beginners, and such Teaching Girls shall get a small sum from the Work Fund.'

Dancing lessons had been added some time previously, and soon the charge for the French lessons was discontinued and it became a regular subject of the curriculum. The governors inspected the work periodically at a function which combined the properties of an examination, prize-giving and display—

'The Family being called in, the children gave specimens of their progress in the different branches of their education which were highly satisfactory, after which the usual premiums were distributed and the family exhorted in terms of the statutes.'

For several years after moving into the new Hospital there were no changes in the girls' education, except that there seems to have been increasing emphasis on academic attainment and a neglect of sewing and housewifery which had once been the main subjects. In 1830 and again in 1833 the governors sense a certain danger in this trend; in the former year they record that as some girls still leave to become dressmakers and nursery governesses they should be taught the washing and getting up of fine linen; in the latter year they desire the girls to be thoroughly instructed in sewing before leaving 'in the event of their afterwards becoming Tradeswomen.' As a result of this uneasiness the Education Committee was instructed to report fully on sewing, and also on instrumental music.

In 1834 the Committee reported. As regards music, the pianos were too old and had lost tune, and the matter was put right by purchasing two new ones. As to sewing, the younger

girls were getting three hours daily; forty girls in the white seam department were receiving four hours daily; thirty seniors were getting five hours daily and were making up the work taken into the Hospital, also—

'All the children's clothes, with the exception of the cotton stockings and the plaiting of their bonnets are made and repaired in the House . . . so those girls who go to the mantua making trade must leave with a considerable knowledge of it.'

The annual proceeds of the work sold is now about £31, 10s., which is much less than formerly, but—

'The same quantity of work is not now offered by the Public to the Hospital, due to the peculiar situation of the country and to the increased number of respectable females in reduced circumstances who are now compelled to seek their livelihood by their own industry and who engross a considerable proportion of the employment formerly given to the Hospital.'

In addition, they had had to refuse work during the cholera epidemic. The children too were busy making the extra articles of clothing which formerly they did not have—two full sets of nightdresses (formerly they wore their day-shifts at nights) and one set of slip-bodices had been made.

In 1833 the Rev. Mr. Johnstone, who in addition to being chaplain taught English grammar, writing, geography, history and arithmetic, was appointed full-time teacher, and from that date the mistresses confined their teaching to sewing and domestic branches. Although the Governess still had nominal supervision of the education, Mr. Johnstone gradually became regarded as headmaster of the school.

By 1844 it had become obvious that on the one hand the girls who intended to become governesses found the curriculum too restricted when compared with other schools, while on the other hand those going out to a trade such as dressmaking found the standard too high and the last years at school irksome. The governors called for a full report from their

Education Committee, and as this document is of interest in providing a detailed picture of education in the hospital a century ago, it is given as Appendix VI.

This report mentions for the first time the possibility of 'boarding out' those girls for whom the last two or three years were of the least use. The governors followed this up, and two years later, in 1846, received another report. Contrary to that of 1844, this report indicates that most of the girls still go out to become dressmakers. It estimates the cost of maintaining and clothing a girl in the Hospital at £15-£16 per annum; without additional expense to the governors a girl becoming apprentice to a milliner might leave at 14 and might be allowed during her three years' apprenticeship £16 per annum with £10 for her outfit.

As a result of this report it was decided to introduce the 'boarding out' system, with certain safeguards. A girl, on completing her fourteenth year, might become articled to a dressmaker or milliner or similar trade if the governors approved the case; regular reports on her conduct and progress would be called for and she would still be considered as belonging to the institution; she would receive an allowance of £15 per annum for three years, or until she became 18, when she would receive her benefits as if she had newly left the Hospital. Time spent on sewing was to be slightly cut down, the younger girls getting three hours with one hour for play in place of four hours sewing; the older girls were to get less repairing and mending and concentrate on finer work; for the making and mending of clothes outside assistance was to be secured.

Now that some of the girls were out-boarded, the governors were able to raise the educational standard of the seniors to suit the embryo governesses. In 1851 there is mention of classes in Natural History and Physical Science, and in the same year the Education Committee reports—

'It is of the utmost importance to all aiming at the profession of

governess, which is the case with nearly four-tenths of the girls, to have as great an acquaintance as possible with the modern European languages, particularly French, German and Italian, so as to secure at their first outset such a status as may enable them the more easily to procure proper situations, and may tend materially to smooth their path in after life.'

They decided to offer French and German in the curriculum leaving Italian to be added later. In 1852 they began to print the courses of study each year after the fashion of the ladies' fee-paying seminaries. In 1855 there was a motion, which does not seem to have been put into effect, to have the school inspected by Dr. Cumming, H.M. Inspector, as was the case with Watson's. Instead the Education Committee made a very full report on the state of education in the Hospital.<sup>1</sup>

The report, which reviewed the whole curriculum, and suggested that an inspector was not required if the Committee visited more often, was accepted and was followed by a motion by Dr. Nisbet

'that as the girls are denied the instruction of a mother in the domestic arts and in nursing sick members of a family, the Matron should take the elder girls round when she inspects household operations, explaining the practice of housekeeping and the manner in which cooking is required of a mistress to be performed, and seeing that the girls are able to prepare the drinks and little delicacies any sick members of a family require, and should generally do for them in regard to Household matters of every kind that which a mother in the middle classes considers it a duty to do for her own children.'

In 1858 it was reported that of the last 61 girls leaving, 47 had become governesses. It was agreed to have more music teaching, and one of the senior girls was to remain, assisting with different duties and eating with the schoolmistresses. In 1859 Mr. Johnstone resigned owing to ill-health, and a slight alteration was made in the teaching arrangements. In place of a chaplain, the matron herself was to undertake family

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix VII.

worship and the remainder of Mr. Johnstone's duties was to be divided between two male visiting teachers. This arrangement did not work very well and in a year they

'considered appointing a person of higher attainments as Senior English Teacher, as most girls go as governesses and need the highest standard of female education.'

The person appointed, they add, should be a married man. In May 1861 Mr. David Pryde was appointed, and when in November he received the offer of Senior English Teacher in Watson's Hospital, the governors made arrangements in their classes to allow him to hold both positions. Two years later we hear that he applied for a lectureship in the new School of Arts, and that he was teacher of English in another ladies' institution; he was also the author of a volume entitled *English Literature*. The governors allowed him to introduce *Macbeth*, divested of all objectionable passages, into the senior class.<sup>1</sup>

In 1864 the girls began to take the Middle Class University Examination, the title of which presumably referred to academic attainment and not to social status. Among the applicants at this time were teachers from the Ladies' Institution in Park Place and the Ministers' Daughters' College—the Hospital was on a level with the best seminaries for young ladies.

In the following year, 1868, the governors invited Mr. Simon S. Laurie to report on the system of education in the Hospital. The subsequent events, leading up to the closure of the Hospital within two years, are dealt with in the following concluding section.

*The Laurie Report and the Last Days at Lauriston*

'The Preses stated that the Governors of other Hospitals under the charge of the Merchant Company had recently resolved to request

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Pryde remained to become the first Headmaster of the school when it was reorganised as a day college.

Mr. Simon S. Laurie, secretary of the Education Committee, to visit these hospitals and report on the system of education conducted in each of them, on hearing which statement the Governors unanimously resolved that Mr. Laurie should be requested to visit the Merchant Maiden Hospital and report whether any suggestions occurred to him in reference to the present course of study in the Hospital.'

This minute, dated 20th April 1868, marks the beginning of the end of the old Hospital. Down the years the Merchant Company had left the Governors a completely free hand in managing the Hospital, and the most important decisions had been taken without reference to the parent body. The only recorded instance in the minutes of interference by the Company was in 1817, when the general meeting requested that a copy of the governors' minute of censure on Mrs. Campbell, the Governess, be furnished to them, and this was refused. Now, however, the Company itself is evidently concerned about the continuance of the hospital system and the Governors of the Merchant Maidens tend to fall in with a common policy for all the Company's hospitals. The final decisions to change the system are made not by the Governors but by the Company and by joint meetings of all the hospitals. Without any record in the minutes and without any formal delegation, or diminution of their powers, the Governors accepted the final decisions which ended the old system. This makes the last two years of the minutes unsatisfactory as a record, and the end comes as something of an anti-climax, when they concern themselves only with the handful of foundationer boarders sent out to Saxe-Coburg Place under the aging Miss Bathgate.

The second half of the nineteenth century was a time of complete reorganisation of the Scottish educational system. Political and religious considerations caused the arguments on administration to take on a bitter tone, while in the schools themselves content and method were both revolutionised. Much of the controversy was irrelevant to the hospital schools,

but criticism did not pass them by. They were expensive to maintain and could provide for a very limited number of children. In three Merchant Company Hospitals, with a total annual income of over £12,000, it was estimated that the actual sum spent on education was just over £2000. The old distinction of burgh citizen had gone and made many of the original terms of the presentations meaningless. The wider curriculum necessary for the senior classes made it increasingly difficult for the institutions to remain efficient when judged by the new standards. The hospitals themselves had changed and they were more like boarding schools for the middle-class than, as the donors had envisaged, places of charity for sons and daughters of the needy.

In addition, there was a growing distrust of institutional life, of which the Victorians seemed to see only the worst side. They were conscious that the hospital children were deprived of the very full home life which was a feature of their age (cf. Dr. Nisbet's motion of 1856). They did not realise that, at least south of the Border, wealthy parents were paying dearly to obtain the advantages which institutional life had to offer. In their zeal for education they were perhaps too ready to forget that the original bequests had regarded education as secondary to maintenance, and that the monies had been left for relief rather than for schooling.

Although as yet they had no intention of abandoning the hospital system altogether, the governors were influenced by the many criticisms which were gathering weight, and to which no satisfactory reply seemed to be forthcoming. No educationist seemed to be found to put in a good word for the old system, and the governors were practical men, swayed by the prevailing ideas of their times.

In April 1868 they commissioned Mr. Laurie<sup>1</sup> to report;

<sup>1</sup> Born in Edinburgh in 1829, Simon Somerville Laurie has been described by Alexander Morgan as 'the most outstanding educationist in Scotland during the latter half of the nineteenth century.' For many years he was secretary to

without waiting for his reply they discussed, in May, the possibility of adopting the system introduced twenty years earlier in Watson's, of admitting fee-paying day-pupils along with the foundationers. They admit that

'for some years attention in the city has been drawn to the large sum spent on hospital education.'

which they estimate at £50,000 annually. After discussion they resolved to admit day-girls

'providing it in no way interferes with the establishment of resident girls or affects the rights of patrons.'

The incomers were not to be under 12 years of age and were to possess the same qualifications as required by Statute XI of their regulations. They would remain until 17, paying ten guineas per annum, which would include the cost of dinner and music.

The admittance of fee-paying girls was not entirely novel to the Merchant Maiden Hospital; in 1702 a meeting of contributors had passed a resolution that

'female children may be educated if they pay 200 merks of donation and the charges of maintenance and clothes.'

Such children were to form part of the family, but were to be privileged by sitting and dining with the Governess. While there is no note in the minutes of any girl being admitted under this rule, it is probable that in the early days many parents only obtained a presentation by reimbursing the patrons. In addition, there was an entry fee of 20 pounds

the Church of Scotland Committee on Education which controlled all the parish schools; later he was also the first holder of the Bell Chair of Education in Edinburgh University. He was an outspoken critic of the old hospital system, and as secretary of the Endowed Schools (Scotland) Commission played a leading part in the reformation which turned the hospitals into day-schools. He it was who advised the Merchant Company to obtain the private Act of Parliament in 1869 which turned the hospitals into day-schools.

Scots. In 1770 there was a memorial presented to the governors

'that the present practice of the girls paying 20 pounds Scots on admission be dispensed with, the same bearing hard upon such of them as are the greatest objects of charity.'

Six years later there was a motion to raise the fees of presentations as

'the prices of the necessaries of life had become almost double what they were when these funds were fixed in 1718.'

Next year it was revealed that two girls elected six months previously had not yet been received into the Hospital because the indigency of their friends was so great that they could not advance the necessary twenty pounds. In this case the fee was dispensed with and it was agreed to abolish it altogether for all Merchant Company and limited presentations—that is, girls who were nearest to the original terms of the bequest, daughters of granddaughters of burgesses, would in future be admitted without entrance fee, while others, being objects of charity outwith the limited class, would continue to pay.

Since these resolutions a century had passed. The school was now offering an excellent education for which there was considerable demand. Any fee they might charge would be considerably below those of the numerous 'academies' which offered for girls the only alternative. Approving the motion, the governors called a meeting of Donors and Contributors to secure powers to put it into effect. In September 1868 the governors met to elect 'day-boarders,' of which they had resolved to take in twenty-five.

Unfortunately, the demand was not as great as they had expected. In July of the following year, the Treasurer, Mr. Robert Walker, handed in a report on the situation, with suggestions for the future. Of 21 applicants as 'day-boarders,' 20 had been admitted, of whom four withdrew half-way through the session. There were two resident fee-payers, and

one foundationer had become a fee-paying day-scholar. Mr. Walker states—

'As a rule, the day pupils are not equal to the resident girls. The latter in general prepare their lessons better and take a higher position in class.'

He calculated that if the present rate of fees was continued £50 would be added to the expenditure, but the benefits would be worth it, and when the school became better known the fee might be raised. He suggested an establishment of 30 day-pupils. For the residents the entry age should be 10 to 14, so that the institution would compare with English boarding schools. This scheme would cut costs, as the girls would be less time in the hospital, and would offset the increased cost of education. He recommended an entrance examination which would give preference to merit. He mentioned that since Mr. Johnstone had left there was less of the atmosphere of a 'normal' school, less monitorial teaching as the masters, attending only part of the time, did not know the girls so well. He suggested that it would be an advantage if those going out as teachers were sent, on completing their time in Hospital, to the normal school for a session.

This report by the Treasurer was received in July 1869, but by this time two matters of considerable importance were before the governors, which were to lead to changes even more fundamental. One was the Educational Endowments (Scotland) Bill. The inspirer of this measure was none other than Mr. Simon Laurie who had reported on their Hospital. It proposed granting powers to governing bodies to alter the management of their institutions, but also envisaged government direction to compel governors to make alterations. At a special meeting in May 1869 the governors gave general approval to the Bill and sent a deputation to London to recommend certain changes to the Lord Advocate.

The other matter of importance was the reception of the Laurie report, which was laid before the governors on 20th

July 1868, just three months after the Preses had recommended them to ask Mr. Laurie to inspect the school.

The Laurie report to the governors of the Merchant Maiden Hospital begins by surveying the whole field of female education—

‘The truth is that the intellect of women is a very difficult growth and that it is interwoven with her imagination, her affection and her moral emotions much more intimately than in man.’

What the world wants is not two men, a big one in trousers and a little one in petticoats, but a man and a woman.’

He protests against giving girls the same type of education as boys, and suggests more practical household subjects and music. Then he continues with a review of life in the hospital—

‘The 75 girls are well-clothed, well housed and in all respects well cared for. . . . The girls are evidently quite happy, that is to say, with that negative kind of happiness which seems to be characteristic of hospital existence. . . . The girls seem to me to be over-governessed, and over superintended. I should think it impossible for them even to move without the consciousness of some eye being upon them.’

Turning to their education, he analyses the figures of the past ten years; 23 girls have left for home duties, 10 for dressmaking, 81 for teaching, 22 to marriage, 6 have died. Therefore, he reasonably concludes, the education should be directed mainly to teaching.

In the practical subjects, he is satisfied with the sewing, except that every girl should be able to cut out. He notes that they are not allowed to do laundry work lest they come into contact with the laundry-maids, and comments that what is good enough for girls in a higher sphere is good enough for those in the Hospital. He suggests a course in cookery for the last year. For all subjects he suggests dividing the girls into four classes, each with two sections.

The English department comes in for severe criticism, particularly in the advanced section. Reading from Dickens and from newspapers he considers good, the grasp of Shake-

spearean grammar poor, and ‘of literary appreciation there was not a glimmer. . . . I suspect,’ he adds rather illogically, ‘we must attribute (the defects in English) to the influences of hospital life.’

His criticism of this department ends with the complaint that

‘the highest class is utterly unfit for any reading more advanced than Goldsmith or Scott.’

On the whole, there must be few English departments of secondary schools to-day which would reach the standard he expected, and his complaint of their lack of grasp of Shakespearean grammar contrasts strangely with his previous emphasis on the uselessness of many of the subjects then taught to girls.

Their arithmetic he dismisses with the comment that ‘some might be fitted to become bookkeepers.’ History and geography, art and singing are good. The piano classes are well organised and well taught. French is good in the junior classes, but the seniors are backward. Of only one class does he speak highly—

‘The most intellectual class in the school is unquestionably the German. . . . Mr. Weisse possesses the art of educating through instruction in the highest perfection.’

This, of course, was the most exclusive class in the hospital, only the best girls being allowed to take it. In summing up he suggests—

‘The analytic powers of the female mind would be much strengthened by a deeper and stricter grammatical training.’

While of girls’ education in general he states—

‘It is so much a thing of unconnected facts, dead words and superficial accomplishments, and fails to reach and vitalise the intelligent soul.’

He speaks of the ‘moral evil influences of Hospital life,

and the depressing weight of the system from which there seems no escape.'

He gives no revolutionary suggestions for improvement, suggesting pocket money for the older girls, dolls and more playtime for the younger and allowing each girl to select her own clothes.

The report, which is signed from his home at Brunstane, Portobello, is a clever if not unbiased document. Nowhere does he suggest the end of the hospital as an institution, but the implications are clear, and coming with all the authority and experience of the foremost educationist of his day, was bound to carry great weight.

On 4th August 1869 the Education Committee presented to the governors their recommendations as a result of the Laurie report. Their only suggestions were for greater diversity in dress and an intake of up to 30 day-girls; to these, however, was appended a much longer list of suggestions by their Convener, Mr. Dickson. The Convener noted that one of the teachers, Mr. Taylor, was much hurt by the adverse criticism and the slight on his teaching; he had shown his results to experts and they had been approved. Mr. Schneider blamed domestic reasons for any deficiencies in his teaching. It was suggested that they be both called in and improvements in their classes discussed. The Convener's other recommendations were

'1. That uniform be discontinued and the girls allowed to choose a pattern from similar fabrics.

2. That the matron and governesses dine and breakfast with the girls. That they should not be always present in the classes and accordingly that one mistress might be dispensed with.

3. That 30 outdoor pupils (aged 10 to 15 on admission) should be taken.

4. That resident pupils be admitted from 10 to 14 years.

5. That the resident girls above 11 be allowed to go home alone if their parents are in town.

6. That the elder girls be allowed training in teaching.
7. That there should be more outdoor recreation (such as croquet) for the older girls.
8. That time for revising be limited.
9. That time for arithmetic be increased.
10. That time for map drawing be given to the older classes.'

This scheme, if adopted, might have given a new lease of life to the old Hospital while retaining much of its original character. In the meantime, however, the Master of the Company, Thomas J. Boyd, had been preparing a fuller and more revolutionary scheme to cover the four Hospitals. While the Merchant Company had turned to Simon Laurie for a full report on the system working within their Hospitals, they themselves, under the guidance of their Master, designed the new pattern which was to supplant the old. In July 1869 Mr. Laurie had, indeed, made suggestions in a supplementary report to the governors<sup>1</sup> and claimed—

'If these suggestions are carried out it might become a model Primary and Secondary School for Girls and accomplish much for female education in Scotland without damage to the interests of the legitimate beneficiaries.'

On 28th February 1870, Mr. Boyd presented his report to a joint meeting of the governors of the four Hospitals. His suggestions were

'1. To erect or lease one or more establishments for the use of children belonging to Watson's, the Merchant Maidens and Stewart's hospitals, if necessary in different localities from the Hospital buildings, so that these buildings may be converted into Institutions for education only, or Day Schools.

2. To allow selected children to reside in their family with approved

<sup>1</sup> Laurie's suggestions in his supplementary report of July 1869 included separate primary and secondary courses, with examinations, and any girls failing to reach the standard to be removed, whether day-girl or foundationer: that the name 'Collegiate School for Girls' be adopted, and that a new entrance be substituted, as Lauriston Lane 'is full of squalid paupers on certain days.'

persons, paying a sum of money for maintenance in place of maintaining them in the hospitals.

3. The claims of children to be placed on the foundation to remain as at present, but the Governors to have power to refuse to admit any if it would be prejudicial to the interests of the others, and to remove any whose continued connection would have a bad effect.

4. To admit as day scholars any deemed suitable, but the privileged classes to have a preference if answering to the description in the Statute respecting poverty.

Note: The admission to day schools on payment of fees is in accord with Mr Forster's English Endowed Schools Act, and works well in the Merchant Maiden Hospital, while the admission of boys to Watson's Day School gratuitously has not realised the anticipations which were formed, few boys having been sent to it; in Gillespie's education was formerly given free, but when fees were charged attendance increased.

5. To carry education in Stewart's to a more advanced stage than that of Gillespie's School, and that of Watson's Hospital further on than Stewart's. The education in Stewart's and Watson's to have a Commercial and a Classical side. Power to be obtained for giving technical Education in both Hospitals.

6. Power to select privileged boys and girls of merit whose circumstances require it and to place them on foundation, also to transfer boys from Watson's to Stewart's foundations and vice versa.

7. To provide apprentice fees, university bursaries etc to boys of promise at Watson's and Stewart's and allowances to Merchant Maiden girls for educational advancement.

8. To endow a class in the University for teaching the Theory and Practice of Commerce, Finance and Mercantile Law.

9. To have qualified inspectors.

10. To sell Gillespie's Hospital and erect another less expensive in a different locality, and to use the surplus revenues in outdoor pensions, or to do away with a Hospital House altogether and apply the funds to the distribution of pensions.

11. To extend the usefulness of James Gillespie's free school either by enlarging the present building or selling it and erecting another.

12. To establish an Industrial School in the city for neglected boys and girls.'

The meeting agreed generally with these suggestions, and appointed a committee to confer with the governors of other Hospitals near Edinburgh, to take advice and prepare separate schemes for each Hospital. The final scheme which was adopted was generally the same as Mr. Boyd's proposals except that the Industrial School never came to pass, and a new girls' day school, George Watson's Ladies' College, was set up in George Square.

From this point the minutes of the governors lose the thread of the new developments, which were put into operation with remarkable rapidity. On 8th April 1870 the Education Committee minute records that—

'The Committee considered the present state of teaching in the Hospital and looking to the important changes proposed to be introduced under the Endowed Institutions (Scotland) Act and to Mr. Simon S. Laurie's report, they unanimously agreed to dispense with Mr. Taylor's services as teacher and to report what changes they consider necessary.'

Without any formal change recorded the hospital is now mentioned as the 'Edinburgh Educational Institution,' and there is an enigmatic entry where the governors agreed to increase the salary of 'Miss Kay, the Lady Superintendent of the Institution' from 100 to 150 guineas. Miss Bathgate is only mentioned as in charge of the boarding-houses which were taken in Saxe-Coburg Place. At the governors' meeting on 30th May the heading 'Merchant Maiden Hospital' is crossed out, and from that date the meetings were headed from the Company Offices in Hanover Street. On 28th November the governors appointed a standing committee to 'carry out the remaining purposes of the provisional order relating to the changes.' In July 1871—

'It was resolved to sell the Hospital to Watson's as it was found desirable to remove the Educational Institution to the new town.'

At the same time it was resolved to move the boarding-houses from Saxe-Coburg Place to Royal Crescent, and there was a complaint from householders in the Hopetoun Rooms that the alterations to the building in making the new school had resulted in a loss of profit from lodgers. In October 1870 Mr. Pryde, the Headmaster, is mentioned; in November 1872 a complaint by a parent against his actions is not received, and from this time quarterly reports from the Headmaster and from the boarding-house matron, Miss Bathgate, are received. As the number of resident foundationers was decreasing it was agreed that one Governess with Miss Bathgate would suffice. When the last of the girls who had been received into the old Hospital left, the history of the Merchant Maidens as a Hospital may be said to have ended. In its place was the 'Edinburgh Educational Institution for Young Ladies,' housed in the Hopetoun Rooms at the west end of Queen Street, which was to fulfil its promise and become one of the foremost girls' schools of the country.

At the same time Mary Erskine's other institution, the Trades Maiden Hospital, had dealt with the new challenge in quite a different way. The governors opposed the alterations which would be imposed in them by the new Act, and in the end retained their Hospital; in view of the increasing difficulties in educating the girls, however, they gave up the educational side and sent the girls out to the new Watson's College for their schooling. Thus arose the strange position of one Hospital giving up its boarders while retaining its school, and the other giving up its school but retaining its boarders, and in that form they both continue to-day.

The Minutes of the Merchant Maiden Hospital, contained in twenty-two volumes, are in the possession of the Merchant Company of Edinburgh, to whom the author makes grateful acknowledgement for permission to consult the volumes and to publish extracts; it is perhaps unnecessary to state that he alone is responsible for any comments or expressions of opinion on matters of policy. He records his indebtedness to the Secretary of the Company,

Harvey M. Jamieson, Esq., B.L., W.S., for much helpful advice and patient interest during the several years when the material was being collected, and for making available blocks for illustration: and to the Headmistress, Miss Muriel Jennings, M.A., for her co-operation and for help in selecting and permission to use certain illustrations. His thanks are due also to the Company's Officer, John Thomson, for making easy the consultation of the volumes.

Of the 22 volumes of minutes, only the first 13 are necessary for a study of the old Hospital up to the point of its transformation into a day school in 1870. The volume numbered One begins in 1733 and there is no indication as to whether previous books were lost (as was the case with Trades' Maiden records up to 1739) or whether they were then for the first time kept separately from the records of the Company.

There are a few miscellaneous papers of considerable interest, also in possession of the Company, and relevant material from these has been included in these pages. The matrons' books and visitors' records, which would have thrown much valuable light on the day-to-day life of the Hospital have unfortunately not been preserved; nor do there appear to be any articles of historic interest left except the great 'tapestry.'

## APPENDIX I

*Letter of James Erskine, Lord Grange, dated 10th September 1707, in Miscellaneous Papers of the Merchant Company.*

'I give you this trouble at the desire of severals of your own Number and some of the Reverend Ministers of this City. The late Mr. Orr having left many poor Children behind him altogether unprovided, will, (I assure myself) engage your Charity to take in to your Hospital, Isobel Orr his Eldest Daughter, and when you have finally ended the Bargain with Mrs. Hair, so that there will be some persons who shall have right to present Girls to your Hospital by vertue of Mrs Hair's Mortification to it. I assure I shall use my utmost endeavours with these Persons to continue this Girl Isobel Orr in the Hospital on Mrs Hair's account. I hope I may prevail with them, and in the mean time if you please to anticipate a little and take the child as soon as you can, the hazard to the Hospital can not be great; and it will be a great favour to,

GENTLEMEN,

Your Most Obedient Servant,  
JAMES ERSKINE.

To The Governors,  
Of the Maiden Hospital  
Founded by the Merchant  
Company of Edr. &c.'

## APPENDIX II

*Preface to 'Rules and Constitutions for Governing and Managing the Maiden Hospital Founded by the Company of Merchants and Mary Erskine in Anno 1695'.*

*A small printed booklet dated 1731 among Miscellaneous Papers of the Company.*

CHARITABLE READER,

As there is no Duty more frequently commanded and commended in the holy Scriptures than Charity and Bounty, and Liberal Giving

to the Poor; So no Charity is more Pleasing to God, and Profitable to mankind than the Erecting and Providing Hospitals for the maintenance of the Aged and Young, who can do nothing for themselves, being most Diffusive, Extensive and Lasting and so most Honourable to the Giver.

This Honourable City of Edinburgh had Divers Hospitals for Aged Men and Women and the famous Hospital founded by George Heriot for Boys, which are for the relief of Many. But there was found wanting one for the Relief of Girls; for the supply of which there was a Design set on Foot a few years ago, by some Persons of a truly Publick Spirit, especially of the Merchant Company of this City, who themselves liberally contributed, and solicited for contributions from others, to so pious and charitable a Work being much encouraged therein by the Worthy and Charitable Mary Erskine, relict of James Hair, druggist, who not only purchased convenient Lodgings, with large and pleasant Gardens, and other accomodations every Way fit for that Design, to the value of 12000 merks but also a little before her Death, added a considerable to her former bounty.

(The preface goes on to encourage giving and legacies and is signed 'Your Soul's Well-Wisher').

## APPENDIX III

*Early Petition to the Governors, from Miscellaneous Papers of the Company; undated.*

Unto the Rt Hon. the Lords and Others, Managers of the Merchants Maiden Hospital.

The Petition of Margaret Laing, Relict of the Deceased Archibald Row, Merchant in Edinburgh.

HUMBLETH SHEWETH—

That when your poor Petitioner did in May last present a petition to your Lordships and Honours, holding forth her Miserable and poor condition, her husband being Dead; and that she being left with two poor Fatherless Orphans had no mean of Subsistance for them,

Therefore craving your Lordships and Honours would be pleased to Receive Marjory Row one of the two Poor Children abovementioned

into the said Hospital, as the said Petition bears. Upon which Ye were pleased to cause Book her; but as yet she is not received in. And Your Poor Petitioner having already sold all her Cloaths, for the saids Children their Maintenance, and having now no Means of Subsistence for the said Marjory,

May it therefore please yr Lordships and Honours now to receive the said Marjory into the said Maiden Hospital,

And yr Petitioner shall ever pray.

#### APPENDIX IV

##### *Resolutions of the Governors anent Discipline, 1761.*

'The Preses acquainted the Governors that the Governess and Mistresses of the Hospital had made mutual complaints of one another and of the Girles and that he and the auditors had made some inquiry into the affair . . . and that it appears to them that there had not been that unanimity and Freindship that ought to subsist among the Mistresses nor that regard that is due by them to the Governess, and the Girles had failed in that respect and obedience which is due . . . and that they had been so careless of their work that it was represented by several good judges as frequently insufficient and had occasioned many complaints from the Employers; whereupon the Governors came to the following resolutions—

1. That the Governess has the supreme authority and is to be obeyed by all within the House, as well mistresses as girles and servants.
2. That the Mistresses are to have the more immediate inspection of the girles, both as to their behaviour and learning, and therefore are to be respected and obeyed by them. That the Mistresses are to take particular care that all the Work given into the House be neatly and sufficiently done, and before it be carried home, are to show it to the Governess for her approbation.
3. That as the profite of the Girles' work is divided among them at their going out, therefore the Governess shall keep a Book for recording their Dilligence and Behaviour that due regard may be had in distributing the profites to the application and discreet behaviour of each girl while in the House.

4. That the Governess and Mistresses be regular in attending family worship in the Hospital and along with the Girles and servants attend publick worship and take particular inspection of their behaviour in Church.

5. That the Governess and Mistresses be enjoined to live in freindship with one another and concurr in promoting the interest of the Hospital and shewing a good example to the Girles. That if at any time the Girles are disobedient or continue in any bad practice after having been reprovod for it, they are to acquaint the Governors that such Girl may be turned out of the Hospital.'

#### APPENDIX V

##### *'The Case of Campbell Grant'—1796.*

'On Sunday se'night the governors discovered that Campbell Grant, one of the girls, had left the family on their way to Church and afterward absented herself from the House. On enquiring the cause of this, she at first declined to give any reasons for it. But afterwards some suspicions arose which made it necessary to make a more particular investigation into her conduct, and the company she associated with upon the Monday afternoons when she and the other girles are permitted to visit their Parents and friends. This was followed by a confession of her being several times of late in a low House in company with a person whose name she says is Church, and alone with him, and there is good reason to think that a sister of her own who resides in Town and who is of bad character has been the means of introducing her to this company, or at least has countenanced the meetings. She declared that while in company on the street with her sister, a person of the name of Church, as she believed, made up to her, and pretending to have some acquaintance with her Father, offered some civilities to her sister and her and prevailed on them to go with him and drink Tea in a house which she described; that in company with her sister she, upon another evening, met and drank Tea with the same person, and at both times got money from him. That upon another occasion, Church again made up to her when she was alone, and persuaded her to accompany him to the same house, and she having gone with him accordingly, he had on that occasion used some very improper practices with her, and again gave her money. That on

another day on the street she had fallen in with him, but shunned him and had not upon any after occasion gone with him to any house.'

The girl was immediately put into solitary confinement, and would have been expelled, but that 'she is a real orphan and her sister a bad character,' so she was continued in confinement until 'a situation however menial, be found for her at a distance from Edinburgh.' The affair had a happy ending, for a year later there is a letter from her employer at Stanley Mills notifying them—'That she was to be married to a very industrious, creditable Tradesman, and he (the employer) had been much satisfied with the girl's conduct and behaviour.'

—whereupon the governors resolved to pay her a sum from the profits of the girls' work towards the furnishing of her home.

#### APPENDIX VI

*Report by the Education Committee to the Governors, 1844.*

'... while the Committee feel that they have it in their power to report very favourably of the Education of the Hospital, as at present conducted, yet it has appeared to a majority of them, that a change in some of the departments might be very beneficially introduced. To enable the Governors to judge of this, however, it may be necessary to bring under their notice the system pursued under the present arrangements.

The system embraces English in all its branches, including History, and Geography, with Writing and Arithmetic, French, Drawing, Music and Dancing, with Knitting and Sewing, that very necessary element in the education and training of a young Female.

The English Department is under the exclusive charge of Mr Johnstone, who also teaches Writing and Arithmetic, and who is employed in the Hospital from 8 to 9 hours daily, excepting on Saturday when he leaves the Hospital at 11. Mr. Johnstone's salary is £180, and his department, in the opinion of the Committee, is most efficiently conducted. If the Committee were to suggest any alteration, it would perhaps be some little change in the class hours during the day and the giving to the younger Girls, through the medium of Monitors but under Mr. Johnstone's eye, an additional hour at their English lessons, which at present occupy them during two hours only daily. This additional hour may be taken from the time occupied in Knitting and

Sewing at present  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hours, and which appears to your Committee to be too long.

The teaching of French is at present entrusted to Mr. Surene, who has a class of 25 girls for an hour on three days of each week, the class being divided into four sections. In this Department your Committee are unanimously of opinion, that some improvement is required, the opportunity at present afforded the Girls of acquiring a knowledge of the French Language being much too limited. The Committee would recommend, therefore, that the attendance of the French Teacher should be extended to six instead of three, hours weekly, and that he should give two hours of teaching on each alternate day, while the Scholars to be taught by him should include every Girl who has completed her 13th year. . . . Under this arrangement the amount of instruction in French will be nearly doubled, and the Teacher will have a better opportunity of properly classifying his Pupils, while it will ensure to Girls of fair talent such an amount of instruction as ought to perfect them in this Branch of Education.

The Drawing is taught by Mr. D. F. Surene . . . who attends two days weekly for two hours each day and he has generally about 19 or 20 pupils under his charge. Your Committee do not propose any alteration in this Branch, which, in their opinion is extremely well taught.

The Music, excepting the Vocal department of it, is taught by Miss Dewar, the Music and Musical Instruments being provided by the Hospital, but the Hospital does not contribute anything towards the Teacher's allowance. That is paid for by the Relations and Friends of the Girls who choose to avail themselves of this Teacher's attendance at the rate of 21/- for each sixteen lessons. In this Branch it has appeared to a majority of your Committee that a change might be introduced. . . .

Vocal Music is taught by Mr Ebsworth who attends for one hour on two days of each week, and Dancing has been taught by Mr Dunn for some years past during the three Winter months, the attendance being two days during each week and two hours each day. The allowances made these Masters are paid exclusively by the Hospital.

The different Teachers above alluded to, embrace the whole of those who come into the Hospital and give their attendance for limited periods of the day. Besides them there are resident a Mistress, or Governess as she is styled in the Statutes, at present Miss Leechman, and three Female Teachers—the Salary of the former is Fifty Guineas

and each of the latter has Thirty Guineas while all of them have board and washing in the Hospital. The employment of the three Female Teachers and the duties incumbent on them have engaged much of the attention of your Committee and have caused some difference of opinion.

Their combined duty at present is to instruct the Girls in Knitting and Sewing and, with the assistance of the more advanced pupils, to make and keep in repair all the Girls' clothes, while one of the three alternately is present with the Girls for one hour in the evening superintending the preparation of their lessons for the following day. The time allotted for teaching Sewing etc. is six hours daily with one quarter of an hour in Scripture reading in the morning, besides which, one of the three attends the Girls at their meals and in their walks and exercise within the Hospital Grounds.

The Establishment is divided into three Sections of about 32 Girls each. The first section . . . is composed of the younger Girls who are taught Knitting and Sewing, and all, or nearly all, are employed during 4½ hours daily. The Second Section is composed of Girls from about 11 to 14 years of age. . . . It is while they are in this division that the Girls are taught White-Seam, make the under-garments etc worn in the House, and do any Sewing Work which may be sent into the Hospital. The time occupied in this way averages about 4 hours daily. The third or Senior Section is composed of Girls of 14 and upwards . . . and by them the Upper dresses are made. Miss Leechman takes a general superintendence of the whole Establishment, but does not herself teach any Branch, while by the Rules of the Institution she is required frequently to visit the School Rooms and observe the care and diligence of the Mistresses and Masters, and the behaviour, application and progress of the Girls.'

(After making three recommendations—that the music teaching be extended, that the Governess visit the 'schools' more often, and that a female Mistress be present during the lessons taken by visiting Masters—the report continues—)

' . . . Another suggestion which has also occurred to some Members . . . is whether a wider range might not be afforded to the Girls in making choice of their future occupation on leaving the House. At present the great majority turn their attention to the Situation of Governesses, and the facility with which many of them obtain places affords evidence perhaps of the present effective state of the system of

education pursued. It must be obvious, however, that among so many Girls . . . it is nearly impossible that all can be fitted to take the place of an Instructress of youth . . . and yet there is some reason to fear that any situation short of this is frequently looked upon as a degradation, or at all events, beneath the notice of the Girls. . . . It has been thought therefore, that the business of a Milliner or a Shop-keeper's Assistant would better suit the tastes and acquirements of some of the Girls, while it would be to them, in many respects, a very desirable and useful line of life. In that case liberty might be given to them to leave the Institution at an earlier age than they do at present, say at 15, and then to enter upon an apprenticeship with some . . . parties . . . who would become bound to instruct them in business and would look after their moral welfare.'

#### APPENDIX VII

*Report by the Education Committee to the Governors, 1855.*

1. French Class (Mons. Schneider) The Committee not only heard the business of the junior and senior divisions conducted in the usual manner by the Teacher, but subjected the pupils to a minute and searching examination on their power of reciting passages at sight and expressing themselves with facility in the language. The result was creditable to all concerned . . . but care should be taken by the governors that no class book should be introduced by the teacher without an express sanction to do so having been obtained from the Education Committee, a course which had not been followed in regard to a Phrase-book at present in use.

2. Departments of English, reciting, composition, Instruction in Scripture Truth, Geography, History, writing and arithmetic . . . these must always form the staple classes of the Institution . . . Mr. Johnstone, their excellent teacher, has brought them to great proficiency in ability to appreciate the sense and merits of what they read, and in the power of expressing themselves in composition with fluency, accuracy and spirit. But the Committee would recommend that in addition to a considerable portion of time being occupied by the elder girls in the composing of themes, all of whom who can write should be frequently exercised in writing on the slate to dictation.

3. With the specimens of penmanship submitted and the proof of proficiency in arithmetical operations, the Committee were satisfied. Especially were they gratified by the acquaintance exhibited with the Holy Scriptures and Catechism, and with the doctrines and facts embraced in them. The governors are not only taught by the highest authority that 'the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of the holy, understanding,' but are charged by the terms of their trust to see that education is based on and imbued with the spirit and knowledge of religion. While they feel that it is only by divine power that the knowledge thus given can be elevated to a rule of life, the committee rejoiced to find that it was full and accurate, received with interest and given with earnestness and affection, in preparing those of the girls who wished to join the Communion of the Church. In that important step in their life, Dr. Nisbet, the present minister, had reported that they were usually well informed when they presented themselves for examination, and that, while on the evenings of every Lord's Day they are instructed diligently by the various teachers and examined on the Sermons they have heard at Church, he has for many years devoted to these objects a portion of the afternoons of that Day and it is believed, with advantage.

4. German, under Mr. Noa, was good, but the time needed extending.

5. The course on Physical Science, introduced some years ago by Mr. Anderson, continues to be attended with interest, and from their comparative seclusion from the world of nature, is one which is much required by them. This course, extending from February to April, should be extended to July, with excursions.

## APPENDIX VIII

The following list of Governesses, mistresses and Teachers is not complete, but contains such names as are mentioned in the Minutes.

## GOVERNESSES OR MATRONS

— Mrs. Wenson		
1765 Miss Margaret Montgomery	died 1774	
1774 Mrs. Hog or Hogg	died 1793	
1793 Mrs. (Miss) Grizel Mountford	retired 1813	

1813 Mrs. Isabella Campbell	retired 1817
1818 Miss Geddes	retired 1832, died 1859
1832 Miss Jess Leechman	retired 1857
1857 Miss Katharine C. Bathgate	

## MISTRESSES

— Miss Syme	dismissed 1786
— Miss Jack	dismissed 1785
— Mrs. Gairden	
— Miss Cockburn	retired
— Miss Stobie	left 1817
1805 Miss McColl	dismissed 1809
1809 Miss Eliz. Richmond	
— Miss Rankine	dismissed 1817
— Miss Saunders	dismissed 1817
1817 Miss Jessie Zeigler	
1817 Miss Hogarth	
1819 Miss Jane Deans	resigned 1822
1822 Miss Ramsay (1817 ?)	
1822 Miss Duncan	
1836 Miss Snodgrass	died 1843
1836 Miss Moreham	resigned 1836
1836 Miss Mollison	resigned 1844
1839 Miss Lyon	Appointed Matron, John Watson's 1849
c. 1844 Miss Walker	
1844 Miss Sarah Weddell	
1849 Miss Ann Taylor	Married 1851
1851 Miss Mary Smith	

## TEACHERS

1775 Mr. Walker	Chaplain	died 1779
1780 Mr. Miller	Chaplain	
1784 Mr. Mowat	English	retired 1799
1795 Mr. Aitken	Assist. singing	
1801 Mr. Porteous	Chaplain	
1807 Mr. McDonald	Singing	
— Mr. Stanhope Wilson	Singing	retired 1814

92 MINUTES OF MERCHANT MAIDEN HOSPITAL

1814	Madame Rossignoli	Dancing	retired 1831
—	Mr. Lyon	French	retired 1829
1818	Mrs. Philips	Assist. music	resigned 1838
1830	Rev. Wm. Johnstone	English etc. and Chaplain.	retired 1859 died 1869
1830	Mons. Gabriel Surene	French	retired 1851
—	Mr. Forbes	Drawing	died 1839
1839	Mr. Surene	Drawing	died 1861
1839	Mr. Dunn	Dancing	resigned 1844
1844	Mr. and Mrs. Lowe	Dancing	
1851	Mr. Anderson	Senior Class	
1851	Chs. Schneider	French	
1851	Leopold Noa	German	Removed to London 1856
1858	Wm. Anderson	Assist. English, etc.	
1858	Miss Agnes Watson	Assist. music	
1859	David Pryde, M.A., LL.D.	English	First Headmaster of the day school
—	Mr. Taylor		resigned 1870

THE TRON CHURCH

ABOVE the entrance to the Tron Church is the inscription *ÆDEM HANC CHRISTO ET ECCLESIE SACRARUNT CIVES EDINBURGEN. ANNO DOM MDCXLI.* Who was responsible for the wording and why that particular date was chosen remains so far a mystery. The date cannot refer to the completion of the building, for, as will be shown later in this narrative, the building was not ready for roofing till 1643. The only possibility is that in 1641 the north front of the church was finished.

If it were not for the history of the construction the inscription might be taken at its face value, as the commemoration of a pious impulse on the part of the Edinburgh inhabitants. As it stands, the dedication is nothing if not ironic, implying a voluntary effort made to the Glory of God, while in reality the building began as an attempt to avoid the penalty due by many for breaking the law of the land. It was financed partly by a so-called voluntary contribution, made under the alternative of an assessment if the contribution were not commensurate with the wealth of the offerer, partly by a few pious testators and completed only with money in some cases diverted from other purposes. There was nothing spontaneous about it and it ended with the Town Council's attempt to finish it as cheaply as possible.

So the story of the building of the church must be taken in conjunction with the contemporary history of Edinburgh, which gives the reason for its erection and the difficulties, financial and structural, encountered. It began in a time of comparative peace, continued through the wars of the Covenant, the English invasion and occupation, and was not finished until late in the reign of Charles II. The plan was mooted first at a difficult time for the capital. Charles I had required from the Town the building of the Parliament House,

which had been begun in 1632. The Town's reception to him when he came north for his coronation had cost thousands of pounds Scots, while he had invited them to raise the stipends of their ministers. In addition to this the King's creation of a Bishopric of Edinburgh involved the provision of a Cathedral Church. For this purpose he had demanded that St. Giles should be restored as a single church, by which alteration two places of worship would be lost to the Town. The King had left no doubt as to what he exacted by instancing the two walls to be demolished, the east wall separating the Great or Mid Church from the former choir, known as either the Little, East or High Church, and the west wall dividing the Mid Church from the Tolbooth Church. The Town Council endeavoured to compromise. They gave orders for the removal of the east wall and informed the King that the west one was necessary.

It was no use. Charles' next letter ordered the demolition of any walls which separated the aisles and vestry from the rest of the building, of the adjacent song school and the shops built against the outer wall and, once again, of the west partition wall. The Council were in a quandary. By 3rd June 1634 the congregation of the High Church were homeless and obliged to worship in the High Tolbooth, of which the galleries were being taken down. The Council still hesitated. They wrote again to the King that they would arrange for removing the shops, for mending the holes in the fabric made by these shops, but begged that his Majesty would delay the building of the church for the dispossessed south-east parish because of the other burdens on the Town. They added that they expected the King would find some way for the building.

This Charles did, but not as the Council meant. The merchants of the capital for long had infringed the penal statutes forbidding the export of money to pay for their overseas trade. They now learned on 25th July 1635 that these statutes would be enforced against the guilty if two

churches were not built and St. Giles restored. The threat was enough. It is obvious that the offence must have been pretty general to give cause for alarm, so the Council, as was usual in moments of anxiety, called in the neighbours to consult. On 1st August it was agreed that all persons liable for prosecution under the statutes should offer contributions towards the schemes. Those who were innocent might offer also, and, as was usual, the Council intimated that, if voluntary contributions were not adequate, they would be forced to impose a tax.

Neither the King's threat nor the Council's warning had any immediate effect. Three weeks later the latter noted that contributors were not coming forward and ordered the magistrates to deal with the refractory. On 17th October they, with the neighbours, agreed to the levying of a tax from which voluntary contributors would be exempt. A manuscript among the City Papers shows that, at last, the necessity was realised. It is a list of the neighbours of the south-east parish who 'offered' for the building of the churches and repair of St. Giles' sums of money payable half at Whitsunday 1636 and half at the same term in 1637. On the list are a hundred and sixty-two names. Naturally the list gives no hint of discrimination between those who had bad consciences and those who had not, but some definitely belong to the latter class. The seventy-one craftsmen in the south-east quarter who had not the right to foreign trade were perforce guiltless. It is noticeable that on the whole their contributions were not very large, and these vary even within a craft. It must remain doubtful whether the £66, 13s. 4d. offered by Michael Gibson, tailor, as contrasted with the £10 of Alexander Mann of the same trade, was due to prosperity or pious interest, or why Alexander Clogy, shoemaker, offered only £16, 13s. 4d., while Alexander Cleghorn, his fellow-craftsman, gave £33, 6s. 8d. Candlemakers were poor, the highest contributions offered were of £10 and £4, which incidentally were never paid.

William White, embroiderer, only offered £8, while Daniel Hay, fiddler, could offer £10 and two painters offered respectively £40 and £6, 13s. 4d. Dame Katherine Weir, widow of Sir James Murray of Kilbaberton, offered £133, 6s. 8d.

Another class who may have been free of suspicion were the women, of whom there were thirteen who mostly call themselves widows. It is true that Edinburgh women were among the most zealous upholders of the Church, yet it is surprising to find their offers reaching the total of £1204, 10s. Scots. The McMaths were a wealthy merchant family; still, £333, 6s. 8d. was a large sum for Janet McMath, widow, to give. Isobel Allan offered £200, Margaret Richardson and Isobel Young £100 each, Katherine Richardson £66, 13s. 4d. and Susanna Luikop the lowest sum, being £10.

The south-east quarter had its share of the more important and wealthy merchants, a fact which, without attributing any motive of self-preservation, accounts for the larger contributions. Sir Alexander Clerk, a former and future Provost, offered £333, 6s. 8d. Stephen Boyd, member of Council and future bailie, the same. James Loch, of the family of Drylaw, sometime Town Treasurer, offered £500. Laurence Henderson, who was to have his troubles as treasurer to the building of the church at the Tron, offered £266, 13s. 4d., while David McCall headed the list with £1000. Later, his legacies were to include a further sum for the church. Mr. Joseph Johnston of Sciennes, cousin of Sir Archibald, offered £333, 6s. 8d. While these were the greatest sums and while the merchants' contributions varied considerably, it must be remembered that there were other calls on the purses of the inhabitants and that of these the merchants paid the larger share. Not only did they contribute towards the Parliament House, but they had to pay large sums for the King's tax, for the expenses of the royal visit in 1633 and even more for the commutation of the proposed tax on annual rents. In addition to these and during the period that the church was being built there were

two other purposes to which the neighbours had to contribute. For both of these the lists are imperfect, but they show what large sums could be and were available. For a loan to the Estates a hundred and forty-three persons contributed £170,373, 9s.; for the use of the Scots army in Ireland in 1643 ninety-five contributed £38,400. It shows how considerable were the reserves of wealth in the capital that there was any money left for the King's church-building schemes. Still, in the case of the voluntary loan for the churches it must be said that more was promised than performed. The promises, however, served their purpose. The King was satisfied and by his charter of 19th January 1636 remitted the penal statutes as to the export of money. Some merchants must have breathed more freely.

It may have been because of these other demands or equally because of the Council's usual difficulty in collecting taxes due to inadequate machinery that the contribution for the churches fell short of the total promised. The list of offers, containing a hundred and sixty-two names—surely not all the taxable inhabitants of the quarter—shows a promised sum of £12,529, 12s. 6d. Scots payable over two years. There is no list showing who paid for the first term, but one of sixty-one persons who by 1640 had not paid the first instalment due at Whitsunday 1637. Among these were thirty craftsmen and five women, including Dame Katherine Weir. The rest were merchants save one, Robert Logan, entered as 'gentleman.' Another of seventeen persons, including four women, shows those who had paid their second instalment. It appears that no more ever was collected of the £12,529, 12s. 6d. than £7712, which appears in the accounts of the collector for the quarter. His discharge was £7362, for which he accounted as follows: £3504 in three separate payments to David McCall, treasurer to the Tron Church till his death before 1639, the first payment made on 2nd November 1636; £2565, 6s. 8d. to John Binnie for the repair of St. Giles given in nine separate

payments. These two sums, with the amount overdue and apparently written off as a bad debt, equal the discharge.

The next stage in the proceedings was the purchase of the land. The price had been referred to the Lords of Session, who awarded 10,000 merks between the heritors, the widow and heirs of William Melrose and John Bannatyne, writer, while Dr. William Scott was to have £1000 for his backhouse. Only in January 1638 did the doctor receive payment with borrowed money, and in March the heritors were paid. On 9th December of that year the Council ordered their treasurer to buy for the work of the churches two hundred and forty oak planks recently imported.

An interval of four years follows in which there is no mention made of the progress on building. Presumably it began in 1636 when the first payment was made to the treasurer of the work. It is true that the times were troubled, the years between 1636 and 1642 when allusion to the church reappears saw the agitation over the Service Book, the inception of the National Covenant, the first taking up of arms ending with the Pacification of Berwick, the 'Incident' and the King's last visit to Scotland. Within that time the Town Council only mention the alterations in St. Giles once, and once, on 19th December 1638, allude to the communion cups, which are still in use. These had been given by George Foulis, goldsmith, for the use of the south-east quarter and had been in the care of the late minister of the parish. He, having been deposed by the Glasgow Assembly of that year, gave back the cups to Foulis, who handed them to the Council to be used in the new church. It was at the close of the year 1641 that an act records the rearrangement of the Town parishes. The bounds of the south-east parish were defined as follows: 'from the Netherbow Port to Peebles Wynd on the south side of the High Street; from the Cowgate Port on the north side of the street to Peebles Wynd; the south side of the Cowgate to Rapperlaw's Close, excluding the College.'

The congregation were housed temporarily in the Mid Church of St. Giles and their minister was Mr. William Colville, or Colvin, who later removed with them to the new building.

Yet, in spite of the Council's preoccupation with other matters, it is odd that no contract is noted either with John Milne, master mason, or John Scott, master wright. The payments, noted above, to David McCall show that some activity was in progress, presumably on the fabric of the church, while the purchase of timber can hardly have been made without approval of the master wright. On 7th December 1642 it is possible to infer that the greater part of the church had been built. On that day it was agreed between the Council and Milne that building should be finished 'on task' of the steeple and the south side. The act stated that Milne should complete the whole stone work like the rest of the building and to the satisfaction of the Dean of Gild, the Council providing stone, lime and scaffolding and Milne being responsible for the workmen and workmanship. For this he was to receive £400 sterling in instalments, £100 in hand, £200 as the work progressed and the rest at the completion of the body of the church at Lammas next and the 'yle' by Michaelmas.

Milne's estimate of the work involved is given in great detail and would be more enlightening had he been as good a penman as a builder and had there existed a ground plan of the church before the extensive alterations when Hunter Square was built. He begins by describing the materials for the steeple, but as his spelling is wholly his own and all his architectural terms not identifiable only a few items can be paraphrased here.

Item the steeple must rise for the present at least twenty feet above the level of the walls with all the ornaments that belong thereto such as are determined already by the president [?architect] of the work: First it will take of ashlar 400 pieces at least at 20s. the piece . . . £400 0 0

Item the two corner pillars are to be furnished with a goodly capital of the Corinthian order, the piece hewing and carving will stand 36 lib. the piece	£72 0 0
The architrave that must lie upon them and meet the wall plates to the number of 40 feet long at 30s. the foot	£60 0 0
The plain frieze that must lie above it is of length 50 feet at 10s. the foot	£25 0 0
Item the cornice that must lie above it is of length three score feet being two stones in thickness at 36s. the foot is	£108 0 0
Item the turnpike will take of newells 30 piece of stone at 6s. the piece	£54 0 0
Item a little door to serve at all occasions for the roof in the inside of the steeple being 5 foot high and 3 foot wide the rybats and scunchions, sills and lintels to the number of 26 at 26s. the piece is	£33 16 0
Item to raise the four buttresses to a reasonable height in the manner and fashion of a pedestal and finish them with fair and high pyramids as the work requires and likewise the heads of the corner pillars of the steeple to be finished above the cornice in the aforesaid manner evening on with one another will cost for hewing a hundred merks overhead	£400 0 0

These and other lesser items brought the cost of the steeple to £2060, 16s. Scots.

The next part of Milne's estimate, which deals with the finishing of the south side of the church, shows how much had to be done. It shows also something of the pattern of the building. Milne describes the great south window in the 'aisle' as opposed to the south windows in the 'body of the church' and the great arch between these two, while his mention of east windows shows that the church cannot have been enclosed wholly by buildings on the east side, even if it was on the west. It must also have been well lighted. There

were two windows in the aisle, one south and one east, as well as two south windows and one east one in the body of the church. For this work he asked £3612 Scots, the Council providing stone, lime and scaffolding. Some of the items help to make the picture of the church possible :

Item the great south window in the aisle is of wideness 18 foot and of height to the beginning of the arch 12 foot and the height of the arch above that is 9 foot : the arch will take of great ogee voussoirs three foot long at least and 16 inches thick and 2 foot broad with the mouldings thereof proportionate . . . 36 of them at £4 the piece	£144 0 0
Item for the great inner arch of the same window of stones for the arch 48 pieces their length is 3½ feet, their thickness 14 inches and breadth 2 feet at 40s. the piece	£96 0 0
Item the said window will take of mid mullions five, every mullion of two stones six foot long and their competent breadth, hewn on all sides with their mouldings, the hewing of every one of these stones £8	£80 0 0
Item of stones for the net work of the said window 34 piece of stones some three some four some five feet long some 15 inches thick some two some three feet broad all well wrought round about in compass work [ <i>i.e.</i> circular] conform to the moulding of the mullions the price overhead of these stones £6	£204 0 0
Item of table stones with a moulding to keep the rain from the window 15 piece at 3 feet long, 14 inches thick, 2 feet broad well shaped conform to the arch the piece of these stones will be £3	£45 0 0
Item to the east window in the aisle two mullions of a competent breadth and thickness well moulded conform to the rybats on all sides at £8 the piece of stone	£32 0 0

Item for the net work of the same window 15 piece of stone some three some four some 5 feet long 15 inches thick some two foot, some three foot broad the same to be wrought all round about in compass work with the moulding of the mullions at £6 the piece . . . . .	£90 0 0
Item of ashlar corner stones for the two great mid mullions in two south windows in the body of the church which must support the whole roof at that part 80 piece of stone 3½ foot long a foot thick and 18 inches broad, price of the piece 30s. . . . .	£120 0 0
Item of stones to finish the great pillars that must bear the great arch that must be made on the south side of the church between the aisle and the kirk 12 of them 3 foot long, 2 foot broad, 1 foot thick at £3, 6s. 8d. the piece. . . . .	£40 0 0
Item to the foresaid great pillars two capitals in the Doric order well and handsomely made which do consist every one thereof in four stones . . . . .	£45 0 0
Item for the great arch that does consist of three courses of voussoirs every course takes three-score pieces of stone, the length of every stone 3½ foot, 2 foot broad one foot thick at 48s. overhead . . . . .	£432 0 0
Item of cartouches [pad stones] eight, four within the church itself on the south side thereof and four in the aisle to bear the feet of the main roof consisting of two stones every one of them 3½ foot long 18 inches broad one foot thick at £4 apiece . . . . .	£64 0 0
Item of arched ashlars that must lie above those cartouches that receive the back of the main couples of all the arch will take 160 piece of stone 3 foot long, one thick 15 inches broad at 20s. apiece . . . . .	£160 0 0
Item the finishing of the two corner buttresses on the corner of the body of the church and the other on the corner of the aisle to raise them	

with a handsome way to preserve them from weather every one of them forty pounds the doing of them according as is aforesaid . . . . .	£80 0 0
Item for laying of all the south work of the Kirk with the aisle and furnishing of barrow men and totally finishing the same in laying . . . . .	£600 0 0
The whole south side is . . . . .	£3612 0 0

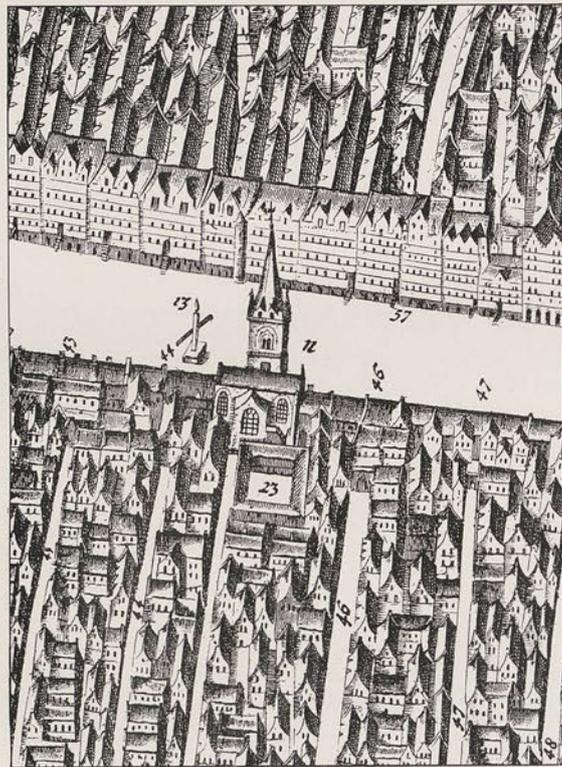
Before the contract with Milne for completing the stone work the Council already had considered the question of the wright work. On 1st April 1642 it was reported that John Scott, master wright, had examined the wood of the Tolbooth gallery, which had been taken down, and had found a hundred and twenty serviceable oak 'trees.' The removal of this gallery had been ordered on 21st January of that year in preparation for the demolition of the west wall of the Great Church in St. Giles, as required by the King. The Council valued the beams at £3 apiece and settled that Laurence Henderson should have them for the church. Apparently the treasurer for the projected church in the Castlehill had claimed them, for Henderson was ordered to give the price to him. Apart from this there is no account of the interior woodwork, not even of the construction of the roof, which resembles that of the contemporary Parliament House.

If the account of the fitting-up of the interior is practically non-existent, that is not the case with the outer covering of the roof. For ten years the Council Minutes refer at intervals to the matter, though wherein the difficulties lay it is impossible to determine. A long Act dated 25th January 1643 narrates the negotiations for importing lead from England for the roof as well as for Heriot's Hospital and the College Library. It may well be that the imminence of war put restrictions on export, but at that precise moment it was to the advantage of the English Parliament to conciliate the Scots. So Sir John Smith, later Provost, produced in Council a warrant

from the English Exchequer, directed to the officers of Customs at the port of London or elsewhere in England, authorising himself and Henry Rollock to export up to five hundred 'fother' of lead. The Council agreed that they only required a hundred 'fother' at this time, but that Sir John must insist on retaining the warrant for future use. No immediate action was taken to utilise the warrant till on 25th August the Council learned that the building was ready for the wooden roof and lead covering, indeed that there was need for haste as winter was coming on. There was, however, no money in hand. The Town treasurer was authorised to borrow 6000 merks and Henderson to send for the lead. The Council anticipated difficulty, probably correctly, for the royalist cause in England had been successful at least temporarily, and instructed the bailies to write to 'Mr. Johnston,' better known as Sir Archibald, of Warriston, and Mr. Alexander Henderson, their minister, then in London for the negotiation of the Solemn League and Covenant, for their help.

Why the Council allowed so long a time to elapse between the last act and the next, on 20th December of that year, is not easily explained, for it was not until that month that preparations for war began. Nearly a year after ordering the lead to finish the roof the Council agreed that the steeple should be made thirty feet higher than in the original plan, with five windows and two doors. Milne was to receive 2000 merks for this and also to have the wages of a master of work.

Nearly a year later, in October 1644, the Council changed their minds about the roof, agreeing that it should be covered with copper. They sent to Hamburg and Amsterdam to enquire where that metal might be procured most cheaply and, with unusual haste, on 8th November ordered Sir William Gray to write to James Reid, merchant in Amsterdam, to buy sheet copper of the thickness given in a pattern and to the amount of 1000 stone. The Council offered no ready money,



THE TRON CHURCH

*Detail from Gordon of Rothiemay, 'Bird's-eye view of Edinburgh,' 1647*

but assurances that payment would be made. In December, noting that part of the wooden roof had been finished, they ordered the rest of the work to be hastened.

The long interval between that act of Council and the next, of 19th August 1647, is amply explained by troubles which left no one with leisure or heart for church-building. The plague in the Town and Leith reduced all activities to a minimum, while the victories of the Marquess of Montrose, particularly that of Kilsyth, kept the city authorities as well as the Government in terror of invasion. At that meeting the Council reviewed the position; the steeple was not finished, the roof was covered only with planks and as usual there was no money. They discussed another voluntary contribution from the south-east quarter, but there is no evidence that this was imposed. Indeed the suggestion was unlikely to find favour in that quarter; it was no doing of the inhabitants that they had lost their former church; why, they might have asked, should they pay for a new one? A committee appointed to deal with the matter did nothing, and on 14th July the Council, apparently desperate, decided to divert the yield of the merk per tun, granted for the ministers' stipends, to the purpose of finishing the church.

The work might be urgent, but matters of greater urgency intervened. The attempt to rescue Charles I, known as the 'Engagement,' roused conflicting views in the country. Edinburgh's endeavour to compromise succeeded with neither party and the failure of the expedition, with the defeat of the Duke of Hamilton's army at Preston, the Whiggamore Raid and the fear of civil war, combined with Cromwell's advent in support of the Church party, were all disturbing enough to occupy the Council's attention even had not the Commission of Assembly exacted formal repentance for the crime of contributing money to that unlawful Engagement. To make matters worse, they had been compelled to raise a regiment for use against the Engagers as

well as to execute the Act of Classes against all malignants in civil and military employment. So it is even surprising that on 29th December 1648 the Council appointed a committee comprising the Provost, bailies, dean of gild and four others to arrange with some merchant to bring home copper. No ready money was available, so each member of the committee was asked to give his private bond for the purchase money, to be repaid from the merk per tun. Only a few days later, on 3rd January 1649, that committee arranged with James Telfer, merchant, that he should bring home eleven thousand pounds of Hungarian sheet copper and copper nails. The sheet copper was to be of the thickness used for the roofs of Hamburg churches. Telfer also was charged to bring back a man to do the work, while, unlike the unfortunate Amsterdam merchant of 1644, he was assured of payment of 15s. 6d. for every pound, £1000 in hand, £3000 one month after the delivery of the copper and any balance within the ensuing eight months.

The plan of bringing back a workman was abandoned and on 28th March 1649 Thomas Haliday, brazier, was sent with Telfer to Hamburg to study the method of roofing. By 29th August the copper had arrived and the Council ordered John Scott, their master wright, to put up scaffolding on the church that the roofing might be done. A month later an entry leaves some doubt as to whether the work had been begun. An act of 28th September promised Haliday 500 merks and, should he be a loser, a hundred merks more. From another entry of 28th November it appears that the Provost, bailies and dean of gild had shifted the onus of paying for the copper on to four merchants, presumably the other members of the committee appointed in 1648. These, having advanced the necessary money, received the Council's bond for two sums, £6874, 1s. for the copper and, inexplicably in view of the act of 28th September, £1125, 19s. as the cost of roofing—a neat total of £8000 Scots. It seems that, after all, the work was

not completed since on 19th December the order for scaffolding was renewed. In addition, John Scott received orders to build a gallery in the church between the great door and the pillars with front and sides of oak, to build a porch underneath with two doors and two other side doors and to floor the steeple, all this to be complete before 10th March 1650 and for the sum of 800 merks. The act noted that the floor of the second loft was not to be included in the price quoted.

Trouble again overwhelmed the Town and put a stop to many things, including the church at the Tron. The defence of the city by Leslie against Cromwell, his occupation of it after the disaster of Dunbar and the harm done by the army of occupation, all engaged the Council's attention to the exclusion of less urgent matters. It was not until 23rd June 1652 that they considered the unfinished church. As might have been expected, the fabric had deteriorated. That day the Council ordered John Foster, who may have been the wright of that name, to bring down the old oak timber from the abandoned Castlehill church to mend the roof of the church at the Tron, whether for the outer or the inner work is not stated. An act of 15th December shows that the price of the copper had not yet been paid. As usual, there was no ready money and the Council allocated the yield from the arms silver, the pew rents of the south and south-east parishes and the merk per tun to George Suittie, James Rocheid, Laurence Henderson and James Ellis. The money, 11,000 merks, was just a little less than the sum of £8000 Scots quoted in 1649—a most unusual occurrence in Town accounts.

From an act of 29th June 1653 it appears that the copper had sufficed only for a part of the roof, so a committee was charged to investigate the position. What their report was can perhaps be guessed since another committee was appointed to meet 'anent the copper of the Kirk at the Trone and the losse thereof.' After a delay of months the Council on 17th May 1654 learned that the whole roof had been covered with

copper except 68 ells of the south aisle. In the opinion of the architect, here mentioned for the first time, but not named, four stone of lead to the square ell was required. James Ellis and Laurence Henderson were ordered to finish the work as best they could.

It was neither finished nor satisfactory. On 19th December 1655 William Thomson, Town Clerk, was sent to the English Council of State to beg them 'for a few Sabbath days to repair to the Mid kirk in respect they cannot be served in the Trone kirk for defect of the cover theirof.' What happened after this is not explained. Perhaps the roof was patched temporarily. In any case only on 16th January 1656 a green cloth was provided for the seat of the Protector's Council in the Tron Church and nothing more was said or done until June 1659. On the 10th of that month the Dean of Gild, David Wilkie, reported that he and others had inspected the church roof in consequence of which they recommended that the copper of the upper part of the roof should be sold and lead to take its place be bought at Hull. John Reid had offered to buy it at the cheapest possible rate and to sell it to the Council 'at a merke the testan,' that is without making a profit.

It may have been the excitement due to General Monck's departure for England with the hopes thus aroused of a change of government, although the Council pursued their wonted course in other matters; it may equally have been the procrastination so evident in the building. Still it is curious that, after having decided upon a covering of lead, the Council appointed a committee to ascertain whether the roof was suitable six months after their decision. They might have delayed longer, so far as any progress was concerned. It was not until 21st August 1663 that the matter was considered again. Then another committee, with the Treasurer, James Davidson, was ordered to consider 'theiking of the rooffe with skailie and the flatt rooffe with leid and of the

sail of the copper to the best advantage . . . with all conveniencie in the most frugall way they can.' And that is the last entry about the much-discussed roof. One must regret the decision to abandon the copper.

Apart from the actual fabric, there were various embellishments. On 26th December 1649, John Scott was ordered to put rails round the building. Unfortunately the position of these is not explained. No illustrations show them in front, so it is possible that they may have been at the back or south side, equally possible that the order took no effect. The matter of a clock for the steeple was much delayed. On 9th April 1658 the Council learned that the great clock formerly in the weighhouse, destroyed by the English in 1650, could be bought for £5 sterling. The Dean of Gild was ordered to buy it and presumably did so at once, but it was twenty years before the clock, as an 'ornament to the Town,' was placed in the steeple. On 16th August 1671 the Council decided to heighten the steeple by building a 'head' to it like the one on the Abbey Church. This head was destroyed in the fire of 1824. An agreement of 24th January 1673 with Bailie George Drummond, later Lord Provost, provided a bell at a cost of 1490 merks 8s., which the Treasurer was to receive and cause to be hung. There is no indication as to the provenance of the bell, whether from abroad or from the founding house in the Castlehill. On 25th April of that year a committee was appointed to arrange with a clockmaker called Burbage for a cheap clock and an iron frame for a peal of bells. Neither of these ideas took effect and on 28th August 1678 the Council remembered that they had bought the weighhouse clock, which had been lying in the Low Parliament House since 1658, and ordered the Dean of Gild to put it up in the steeple with an 'horologe' made for it. Another finishing touch had been paid for on 23rd July 1675, when Alexander Anderson, coppersmith, received £96, 10s. Scots for a weathercock and globe on the steeple.

The cost of the church has been estimated by Maitland at £75,000 Scots and by Arnot at about £6000 sterling, the former estimate including the price paid for the land, which is not stated in the latter. How either arrived at their estimates is not stated. The Council records omit much, indeed most of the cost. As has been noted, only a part of the cost of the mason work has been preserved and none for the wright work, none for the cost of the various experiments on the roof, none for additions to the steeple, the clock and the weather cock. Neither is much information to be gained from the record of legacies and borrowing for the work. The legacies totalled 11,500 merks, excluding the sum left by David McCall for a week-day preacher. Lady Yester donated 1000 merks towards the building. The sums borrowed amounted to 21,500 merks, if indeed, as seems unlikely, all these are entered. The price of the ground was £7666, 13s. 4d. Scots. On 11th December 1644 Laurence Henderson rendered his accounts with a charge of £9800, 13s. 4d. Scots and a discharge of £9823, 7s. 9d. These were approved and his next accounts were produced only in 1647, showing £6965, 8s. of charge and £7598, 16s. 9d. discharge. In which of these discharges, if in either, was included the payment to Milne of £400 sterling cannot be said—more probably in neither. In other words the whole evidence is inconclusive. It is a pity. It would have been pleasant to know the cost of the hammer-beam roof, what was paid for the copper and how much was dropped on the sale, how much the lead cost and whether the purchaser really made no profit. But most Town records are not complete, indeed why should they have been since the Town Council were answerable only to themselves? The money was spent, the church was built and succeeding generations forgot how the necessity arose—and why not? The tablet over the door gave an explanation.

MARGUERITE WOOD.

#### NOTES ON REBUILDING IN EDINBURGH IN THE LAST QUARTER OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

CONSIDERABLE rebuilding of tenements of 'lands' or houses was accomplished in Edinburgh in the last quarter of the seventeenth century which swept away the Town's mediaeval aspect and introduced uniformity in design much as is in evidence to-day in the Old Town. The timber-fronted and thatched houses with their wooden balconies and stairs encroaching upon the High Street or hiding behind stone tenements in closes and wynds almost completely disappeared. This transition period was coeval with the introduction of a water supply to the Town in 1675, the building of a meal market in the Cowgate, an Exchange for the merchants' use in Parliament Close and a flesh-market and slaughter-houses at the North Loch side. Street cleaning was more strictly enforced and the public lighting of streets and closes was undertaken by the Town Council. By the last gift of James VII and II to the Town the magistrates were given authority to compel the heritors of houses to make pavements before their tenements. They also were given freedom to extend the bounds of the Town as they thought expedient, but more than fifty years were to pass before this power was sought.

The Town Council, through the Dean of Gild and his Council, granted permission to build, and watched that none encroached on the amenities of the burgh, but they had no control over design in private building. Thatched roofs on houses, barns or sheds, the cause of frequent fires, still remained in the Town despite Acts of Parliament to hasten their despatch. There was one, dated 4th August 1621, to the effect that Edinburgh, 'being the heid burgh of this realme,' no one there in time coming was to be allowed to build any house except he roof it with 'sklaith skailye lead

tyld or thak stane,' and should the roof of a thatch house become ruinous the owner was obliged to re-roof it in the foresaid manner.<sup>1</sup> Another Act, 60 years later, on 16th September 1681, obliged all heritors of thatched houses to replace the thatch with lead, slates or tiles within a year. The magistrates were given power in 1644 to call upon the proprietors of ruinous houses which had stood waste and empty for seven years to rebuild them within a year, failing which they themselves could value and sell the houses or take them down and rebuild as the property of the burgh.<sup>2</sup> The Town Council on 11th January 1650 took advantage of this Act to warn all who had ruinous property on the High Street to appear before the Council, but no further action was taken, possibly because of the troubles of the period.<sup>3</sup>

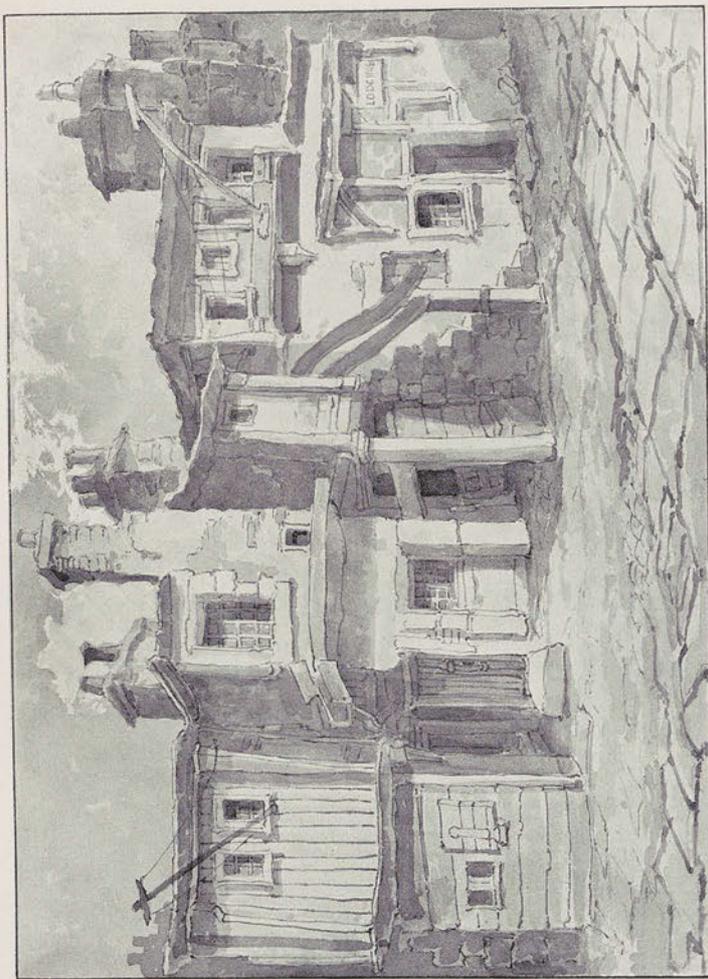
The population had grown considerably during the century, causing many open spaces to be built upon in a haphazard manner, and as in the case of the thatch roofs, the timber-fronted houses constituted a danger to all property in the case of fire. A serious outbreak on 14th April 1674 in a shop in a tenement at the head of Todrig's Wynd, which destroyed several other tenements, caused the Town Council to take firm action. They appointed a committee to consult Sir George Lockhart, Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh and Mr. John Lauder, their assessors, in the drafting of an Act for building houses solely of stone.<sup>4</sup> This was followed by a meeting of the Town Council, the extraordinary deacons, sixteen former merchant councillors and thirty-one craftsmen, when it was enacted that all ruinous or burnt tenements or new buildings were to be built or rebuilt of stone, likewise the front stairs, whether in the Town, Leith, Canongate, or the

<sup>1</sup> See Town Council Minutes, *Extracts 1604-1626*, App. xxxvi, p. 425.

<sup>2</sup> See *A.P.S.*, Vol. VI (1), p. 227, also *A.P.S.*, Vol. VII, p. 457, for a similar Act of 17th July 1663 which reduced the period to three years.

<sup>3</sup> See *Extracts 1642-1655*, p. 227.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 1665-1680, p. 176.



TODRIG'S WYND

From pencil and wash drawing by Channing, circa 1850



EDINBURGH FROM THE NORTH LOCH  
 From pencil and wash drawing by Steser, circa 1690

suburbs. The Council recommended to all other heritors of timber-fronted tenements to rebuild in this fashion, and for their encouragement declared that any so doing would be free from taxation for seventeen years after the rebuilding.<sup>1</sup> To ensure enforcement of their Act the Town Council obtained its ratification on 7th May by the Privy Council,<sup>2</sup> and on 4th November a survey of the waste houses in the Town was called for in order to charge the proprietors to rebuild or to have their property appropriated by the Town.<sup>3</sup> Considerable rebuilding followed.

A dispute between the heritors who suffered loss in the fire at Todrig's Wynd caused the whole Council and deacons of crafts to visit the ground on 16th November 1674 and hear all complaints on the spot, and as a result they recommended that the tenements fronting the High Street should be built of equal height, in a straight line, with windows at the same level, and supported on pillars and arches. No entry was to be made on the front street to deform the front of the building. When completed the cost of the pillars and arches along with the rental of the dwelling-houses and shops in the respective tenements would be considered by the Town Council, who would then apportion the cost between all the heritors. No heritor was to be allowed to erect a shop between the arches, which were to be kept open in all time coming. The entry in the Town Council Minutes concluded 'And the Council declares that this present act shall be ane rowell as to the lyke building as is mentioned therein in all tyme coming.'<sup>4</sup>

This pleasing design of building was not new in the Town, but this was the first attempt by the Council to secure its adoption for the frontage to the High Street. Fortunately Gladstone's land, built in 1619, in the Lawnmarket, has been restored and is a fine example of the architecture of this period.

<sup>1</sup> *Extracts 1665-1680*, pp. 177-8.

<sup>2</sup> See *P.C.R.*, Vol. IV, pp. 180-4, and copy of printed Act appended.

<sup>3</sup> See *Extracts 1655-1680*, p. 197.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 202.

Although not included in their printed Act of 1674 the Town Council sought to enforce the scheme, but no doubt their successors found it difficult, if not impossible, to insist upon it. Two merchants, John McMorlan and Thomas Gavine, were reported on 10th February 1675 to have introduced wainscot windows and casements into their tenement at the head of Dickson's Close fronting to the High Street. This was contrary to the printed Act, and, although it meant demolishing the whole tenement, the merchants were prevailed upon to rebuild it in stone and ashlar and erect pillars upon the front street.<sup>1</sup> A tenement in Leith with its frontage to the Shore was ordered to be built in pillars and arches, and for the sake of uniformity the Town Council were prepared to demolish part of the gallery of the adjoining Custom House.<sup>2</sup>

Further to encourage rebuilding in stone, carts bringing in stone to the Town for this purpose were declared on 19th March 1680 to be free from duty.<sup>3</sup>

The Town Council also attempted to regulate the number of storeys of tenements on the High Street. Some of the newer tenements on the south side were so high that they kept the sun from those on the north side of the street. It was decided on 5th December 1684 that future building should be restricted to 'ane competent number of stories,' and a committee was appointed to prepare a draft of an Act accordingly.<sup>4</sup> It was not until 30th August 1698, however, that in an 'Act Regulating the manner of Building within the Town of Edinburgh' which was passed by Parliament it was enjoined that no houses were to be built higher than five storeys above the calsay.<sup>5</sup>

Another serious outbreak of fire at the end of 1675 burned and damaged much property on the east side of Parliament Close, and so many heritors were involved that the valuation of their lands delayed rebuilding. The Privy Council decreed

<sup>1</sup> See *Extracts 1665-1680*, p. 215.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 319.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 394.

<sup>4</sup> See *Extracts 1681-1689*, pp. 106, 129.    <sup>5</sup> See *A.P.S.*, Vol. X, pp. 150-1.

on 6th September 1676 that neighbouring houses in St. Ninian's Close and in the Kirkheugh not burnt or ruinous also were to be taken down for uniform building, and permission was given to value not only the burnt lands but those between them and the close called the back of the Fishmarket Close and in the Kirkheugh.<sup>1</sup> Incidentally, the Privy Council took the opportunity to make the Town Council improve the approach to Parliament House.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Alexander Paterson of Caverhill, a merchant burgher, one of the heritors of the burnt tenements, built a new tenement which was bounded on the west by Parliament Close and part of the great tenement of Thomas Robertson<sup>3</sup> fronting towards the church. By 1684 Paterson's tenement was ready for occupation. Facing east and west, it was entered by a scale stair off Parliament Close having a large back court to the east which was to remain open in all time coming and to be shared by other heritors, as also access to the ground on the south of the tenement. On 22nd October 1684 he disposed in favour of Sir Alexander Seton of Pitmedden, Bart., Senator of the College of Justice (until removed by James VII), and George Seton, his son, the second storey described as 'the third storey above the level of Parliament Close counting the shops of his newly-built tenement of land at the back of the Fishmarket to the east of the ground now built upon called Lady St. Monance Close, which storey measures 100 ft. from north to south, and 48 ft. in breadth, and lies under the storey sold to Mr. John Frank, W.S., and Hugh Stevenson, writer, and above the first storey occupied by the Earl of Southesk and Robert Paterson, writer.'<sup>4</sup> This flat Sir Alexander Seton sold in 1696 for 20,000 merks to the

<sup>1</sup> See *P.C.R.*, Vol. V, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> See *Extracts 1665-1680*, pp. 261, 266.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Robertson, brewer turned merchant, was the builder of the Meal Market on the north side of the Cowgate, and of the Exchange in Parliament Close. See *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, Vol. XXIX, pp. 126-51.

<sup>4</sup> City Archives, Moses, Bundle 80, No. 3516.

Directors of the Bank of Scotland and the Bank moved into it from Milne's Square. The north half of the fourth storey, which was then occupied by Jean Pringle, widow of Mr. Hugh Scott, minister of Galashiels, Alexander Paterson sold to Hugh Dalrymple, later Sir Hugh Dalrymple of North Berwick, advocate, one of the Commissaries of Edinburgh and President of the Court of Session in 1698, and Marion Hamilton, his wife, for 6600 merks, the south half having been sold to George Home of Whitfield.<sup>1</sup> Two chambers, one immediately above the other, at the head of the stair, were sold to Sir Patrick Home of Lumsden, advocate, for 900 merks.<sup>2</sup> Equal with the great front gate or entry was a dwelling-house of two chambers and a kitchen which was sold to Agnes Burns, widow of Thomas Yorston, late deacon of the goldsmiths, along with an upper shop or booth, a lower shop or workhouse immediately below, and a cellar below that, the upper shop (entering off Parliament Close) having access to the dwelling-house by a door in the middle wall of the tenement, and the lower shop and cellar by a timber stair from the upper shop.<sup>3</sup> The lower shop to the south, and a similar dwelling-house, which was occupied by Alexander Reid, yr., goldsmith burgess, was sold to William Sheils, merchant burgess, and Sarah Adam, his wife, for 6250 merks. The workhouse attached lay immediately below the northmost upper front shop occupied by Mr. George Leslie, stationer.<sup>4</sup> Another upper front shop he sold to Jean Campbell, widow of William Law of Lauriston, goldsmith burgess.<sup>5</sup>

Paterson's land, popular for its proximity to the Parliament

<sup>1</sup> City Archives, Moses, Bundle 83, No. 3653.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 90, No. 3916. Sir Patrick Home of Lumsden was knighted in 1682, M.P. for Berwick 1702-7, Solicitor to the King 1697.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 81, No. 3535.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 82, No. 3590.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 124, No. 4940. William Law purchased Lauriston Estate on 14th June 1683 and died that same year.

House, was completely destroyed by a disastrous fire on 3rd February 1700, along with several others.

Several heritors owned property in the tenement which stood to the north of Paterson's land rebuilt after the fire of 1675 by Robert Milne of Balfarg, the King's Master Mason, and Andrew Paterson, wright. This tenement, which was built over pillars and arches, was commonly called Blair's land after Hugh Blair, vintner, who owned part of the property. On 7th May 1687 Robert Milne and Andrew Paterson sold to Mr. John Vaus, late keeper of the Tolbooth,<sup>1</sup> the south half of the fifth storey (the north half belonging to the heirs of the deceased Henry Adamson), also two upper front shops and two lower shops, with a back room off each and a vault running off the lower rooms beneath the piazzas, the two upper shops having their entry within the pillars looking to St. Giles' Church.<sup>2</sup> Vaus must have had earlier occupation as he and two others petitioned the Town Council and were granted permission on 11th May 1683 to build the vault provided they made its top level with the rest of the calsay and that they laid 'three ells of plane stone toward the casay upon the high street north-ward from the said airches and pillars the wholl lenth of ther respective interests from the northwest cunzie of the said tenement eastward to Pitcarlies land.'<sup>3</sup> Mr. John Montgomery, W.S., another heritor of property in this tenement, on 18th May 1699 disposed to James Steven, Usher to His Majesty's Exchequer, for 8000 merks, the north half of the uppermost storey, being the sixth storey, which lay contiguous to the south half belonging to John Nicolson of Trabroun, late Dean of Gild, with a front upper shop having its entry from the street and looking to the Cross.<sup>4</sup> Hugh Blair's eldest son and heir,

<sup>1</sup> He was dismissed along with Arthur Udney on 19th November 1686 for allowing a prisoner to escape. See *Town Council Records*.

<sup>2</sup> Moses, Bundle 84, No. 3661.

<sup>3</sup> See *Extracts 1681-1689*, p. 70.

<sup>4</sup> Moses, Bundle 112, No. 4587.

Henry, on 17th May 1701 disposed in favour of Mr. George Rome, writer, Jean Lyle, his wife, and Jean Rome, their daughter, for 12,800 merks, a dwelling-house or first storey above the piazza with the stonework 'as it stands unfinished,' which house was burnt or damaged in the recent fire (of 1700).<sup>1</sup>

Pitcairlie's land already mentioned, to the east of Blair's land, belonged to Mr. John Bayne of Pitcairlie, W.S., and had been rebuilt by him in stone with pillars and arches on property partly his own and partly acquired from James Clelland, surgeon. He died in 1681 and ten years later Roderick Bayne, writer, sold to John McFarlane, W.S., a writing-chamber formerly occupied by Mr. John Bayne on the first storey, the rest of the storey then being occupied by Sir Hugh Paterson of Bannockburn, W.S.<sup>2</sup>; also the second storey, containing eight fire rooms, *viz.* four chambers, two closets, a dining-room and a kitchen, to John, Archbishop of Glasgow, and Alexander Paterson, his second son.<sup>3</sup>

On the opposite side of the High Street, a little below the Mercat Cross, Frederick Hamilton, merchant, Mr. David Main, writer, and Mr. Robert Richardson, W.S., heirs of a demolished timber tenement, were ordered by the Town Council on 11th March 1687 to rebuild in stone with pillars and arches. When the Dean of Gild and his Council visited the site on 16th March they reported that the three pillars and two arches necessary for the foundation of the tenement would obstruct the light of a shop and its entry. If four pillars and three arches were erected the pillars could only be 14 in. thick and the arches 4 ft. wide and would not conform

<sup>1</sup> Moses, Bundle 121, No. 4826.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 96, No. 4099. Sir Hugh Paterson of Bannockburn, W.S., was Keeper of the Signet, 28th September 1682.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 93, No. 3997. John Paterson was Bishop of Edinburgh during the reigns of Charles II and James VII when the latter appointed him Archbishop of Glasgow in 1687.

to the rest of the pillars and arches on the High Street; therefore one large arch was adopted as an alternative.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Robert Richardson, W.S., with consent of Margaret Law, his wife, the following year disposed in favour of Alexander Hamilton, merchant and late bailie, the third storey above the close and shops, containing a front chamber looking to the High Street and a back chamber looking to the north with a little dark mid room between them, all fire rooms, with another little room on the east of the transe, and entering from the new stone turnpike. The new stone tenement was described as being formerly a timber land to the front street, of two storeys, acquired by Mr. Robert Richardson from John Lauder of Fountainhall, merchant burgess.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Robert Richardson also acquired property on the south side of the High Street, a little above the Netherbow, the east part of which at one time belonged to Alexander Acheson of Gosford.<sup>3</sup> He rebuilt two tenements, of five storeys, described as easter and wester, above pillars and arches bounded between Purves Close on the east and Charteris Close on the west, and disposed of them as follows: the first storey of the easter tenement, containing a 'laigh' house, vault and shop, to Patrick Chalmers, wright, and Lilius Bell, his wife, on 8th August 1684<sup>4</sup>; the second, containing a lodging and cellar then occupied by Mr. Alexander Swinton of Mersington, a Senator of the College of Justice, to John Wilkie, merchant, and Agnes Scott, his wife, on 9th April 1692<sup>5</sup>; the third and fourth storeys to Mr. Thomas Chalmers, eldest son of the deceased James Chalmers, advocate, on 17th February 1683.<sup>6</sup> The third storey spread across the west tenement and contained

<sup>1</sup> See *Extracts 1681-1689*, pp. 200, 201.

<sup>2</sup> Moses, Bundle 85, No. 3715. He was father of Lord Fountainhall.

<sup>3</sup> See Town Council Minutes of 20th January 1579-80, wherein Acheson complained of the extent laid upon him.

<sup>4</sup> Moses, Bundle 80, No. 3503.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 93, No. 3977.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 78, No. 3442.

twelve rooms, with pantries and other conveniences, the west half of which, containing seven fire rooms, was two years later sold to Mr. Thomas Gordon, W.S., and Janet Fletcher, his wife.<sup>1</sup> The fourth storey contained five fire rooms, etc. The fifth storey, which was let to the widow of Colin Lauder, merchant, he disposed on 5th and 6th January 1693, with consent of Anna Gladstone, daughter of the late Albert Gladstone, to David Cathcart of Glenduisk and his wife, Lilius Campbell.<sup>2</sup> The first storey of the wester tenement he must have sold to John Marjoribanks, merchant and one-time bailie, as the latter on 20th March 1693 sold it to Andrew Merton, merchant and Town Treasurer in 1688.<sup>3</sup> There is no information of the sale of the second storey and Mr. Robert Richardson may have occupied this himself. The third, as stated above, was sold to Mr. Thomas Chalmers; the fourth which contained seven fire rooms and was then presently let to Henry Sinclair, writer<sup>4</sup> to James Oswald, merchant, on 6th September 1682; the fifth, with the same number of rooms, to John Marjoribanks on 23rd November 1682, the occupying tenant then being the Laird of Spott.<sup>5</sup>

After the fire of 1674 in Todrig's Wynd, James Murdoch, tailor burghess, rebuilt his burnt and waste tenement which at one time belonged to John Spottiswood, son and heir of the deceased Francis Spottiswood,<sup>6</sup> described as beneath the tenement of land of the deceased Archibald Todrig.<sup>7</sup> The third storey, containing a hall or dining-room with a little chamber off the end, a front chamber looking to the street and study within the same, and kitchen and back room, James Murdoch, with consent of his wife, Euphame Dougall,

<sup>1</sup> Moses, Bundle 84, No. 3686.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 94, No. 4038.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 95, No. 4079.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 78, No. 3410.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 96, No. 4116.

<sup>6</sup> Francis Spottiswood is mentioned in the Town Council Minutes on 21st July 1521, and John Spottiswood as 'of the Council' on 24th January 1555-56.

<sup>7</sup> Archibald Todrig is first mentioned in 1480-81 in the Town Council Minutes, and as a bailie on 2nd May 1483. His lands are noted in early Protocol Books.

disposed to James Penicuik, writer, son of Alexander Penicuik of Newhall, and Margaret Deans, his wife, on 21st November 1685.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. James Elphinstone, W.S., later Sir James Elphinstone of Logie, who was joint Keeper of the Signet from 1691 to 1696, built a tenement near the foot of Gray's Close, the third storey of which he sold to Robert Stewart, merchant, on 9th February 1687. It had five storeys, the lowest being occupied by David Boog, goldsmith, the second by himself, the third by the said Robert Stewart and the old Lady Craigmillar,<sup>2</sup> which tenement was bounded between his own close on the south side, the yard of Sir James Foulis of Colinton<sup>3</sup> and his son on the north, the transe of the wynd called Gray's Close on the west, and his own lower yard on the east.<sup>4</sup> The fifth storey he sold to William Smeaton, merchant burghess, in 1685,<sup>5</sup> and the latter disposed of it three years later to Mr. James Dallas, yr., of St. Martins, and Elizabeth Riddell, his wife.<sup>6</sup> The fourth storey, occupied respectively by George Sinclair, merchant and late bailie, and Mrs. Stevenson, a widow, was sold by Elizabeth McPherson, only daughter of the late Daniel McPherson, writer, on 12th October 1693 to Major George Wishart and Anna Barclay, his wife.<sup>7</sup>

Alexander Borthwick, vintner burghess, purchased and acquired right to several tenements on the north side of the High Street, directly opposite and a little below the Salt Tron, two of which were assigned to him and his wife, Katherine Beaton, on 15th June 1681 by Mr. William Clerk, advocate. Some of the property formerly belonged to William Ruthven of Gardyne, heir of Patrick Ruthven of Gardyne, and to Patrick Carkettill, minister at Humbie, thereafter to John

<sup>1</sup> Moses, Bundle 82, No. 3597.

<sup>2</sup> Widow of Sir John Gilmour of Craigmillar.

<sup>3</sup> Senator of the College of Justice in 1661, Lord Justice Clerk, 22nd February 1684.

<sup>4</sup> Moses, Bundle 93, No. 3967.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 84, No. 3690.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 84, No. 3691.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 96, No. 4111.

Carkettill, his son and heir, while another half tenement was purchased from Patrick Murray of Keillor.<sup>1</sup> Borthwick kept a tavern there, and in a petition to the Dean of Gild dated 27th March 1687 for a front vault it was stated 'the petitioner hath lately built ane greit tenement of land upon the fore street which of late wes in timber and is now erected in ane beautifull stone tenement with aisler work as to the front or forepart thereof which is ane great ornament to the city.'<sup>2</sup> On 16th February 1689 he, with consent of his wife (now Rachael Tait), sold to William Borthwick of Pilmuir,<sup>3</sup> surgeon-apothecary, and his wife, Euphame Young, for 6600 merks, the dwelling-house on the third storey containing seven fire rooms, *viz.* a dining-room, four bed-chambers, one dark closet and a kitchen, 'entering within the new court by the baluster steps within the tenement of land . . . bounded between the King's High Street on the south, the lands sometime pertaining to John Sandilands and now purchased and rebuilt by John Hamilton, wright . . . and a laigh house and close pertaining to me (Alexander Borthwick) on the west, the land lately rebuilt by Robert Mill mason<sup>4</sup> and now pertaining to Archibald Sinclair, advocate, and George McKenzie, one of the Clerks of Exchequer, George Drummond of Blair, and others on the north, and the large court and land built and disposed by the said Robert Mill to Sir Richard Colt, advocate, Laurence Oliphant, W.S., and others on the east.'<sup>5</sup> Bonds were taken out by Alexander Borthwick with security on annual rents on this property, and on 10th January 1695 a contract was made between Elizabeth Borthwick, only

<sup>1</sup> Moses, Bundle 76, No. 3354. Patrick Ruthven of Gardyne or Gairne acquired his property in 1656. See Moses, Bundle 37, No. 1539.

<sup>2</sup> Dean of Gild Records, 1687-1695.

<sup>3</sup> He was a Council deacon in 1677, surgeon to the Militia in 1679, commissioner to the General Convention of Burghs in 1682 and 1683, and commissioner to Parliament in 1683.

<sup>4</sup> Part of Milne's Square. See *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, Vol. XIV, p. 45.

<sup>5</sup> Moses, Bundle 86, No. 3749.

daughter and heir of the deceased Alexander, and her curators, and Edward Marjoribanks, merchant, whereby she disposed to the latter for 35,188 merks the first storey, consisting of vaults and cellars, and the second storey entering off the High Street, presently occupied by herself; the third, occupied by Anna Barclay, widow of — Bell, late chamberlain to the Countess of Rothes; the fourth, by Christian Richardson; the seventh, by William Montgomery of Macbiehill; and the eighth, being the top or roof storey, by John Chancellor, merchant and late bailie. Edward Marjoribanks, a merchant councillor in 1685 and Town Treasurer in 1686, undertook to pay Borthwick's creditors.<sup>1</sup>

John Hamilton, wright, whose new building lay to the west of Alexander Borthwick's, acquired his property in 1688 from Andrew Wauchope of Niddrie Marischal, — Wauchope of Edmiston and others, tutors of Robert Sandilands, only son of Mr. John Sandilands.<sup>2</sup> His new building was referred to a Committee by the Town Council on 30th May 1688 to consider the number of pillars required and the height of the arches, and on 18th January 1689 he was given liberty to dig a vault the whole length of his tenement of polished ashlar.<sup>3</sup> The two lower storeys he sold on 29th April 1690 to James Cockburn, goldsmith, and Magdalen Scott, his wife<sup>4</sup>; the second storey to Richard Mills, clock-maker, and Catherine Gordon, his wife<sup>5</sup>; the third storey he let to Mr. James McMath, apothecary<sup>6</sup>; and the fourth to Margaret Dalgleish, widow of the late Lewis Craig of Riccarton.<sup>7</sup> Mr. James Carnegie, writer, and Janet Forrest,

<sup>1</sup> Moses, Bundle 98, No. 4200.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 107, No. 4470.

<sup>3</sup> See *Extracts 1681-1689*, pp. 234, 261.

<sup>4</sup> Moses, Bundle 91, No. 3934. James Cockburn was elected a Council deacon and commissioner to the Burghs in 1688, and when the Mint was reopened in 1687 he was appointed depute to Sir Wm. Sharp, Master of the Mint.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 113, No. 4609.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 107, No. 4454.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 107, No. 4454.

his wife, bought the fifth storey,<sup>1</sup> and Robert Milne, writer, the sixth or uppermost storey.<sup>2</sup> James Cockburn later sold his property to Robert Bruce, goldsmith<sup>3</sup>; and Mr. James Carnegie disposed of his fifth storey to Mr. James McMath and Helen Carmichael, his wife.<sup>4</sup>

Milne's Square, opposite the Tron Church, which was destroyed when the present North Bridge was built, was begun in 1684.<sup>5</sup> The builder, Robert Mylne or Milne of Balfarg, Fife, at the age of 35 succeeded his uncle, John Milne, as Principal Master Mason to the King on 28th February 1668. His work at Holyroodhouse, other palaces, and houses of the nobility, and the bridges, etc., which he built, have been put on record by the Rev. Robert Scott Mylne in *The Master Masons to the Crown of Scotland*. In addition to executing work for the Town Milne found time to carry on private building of houses. By contract dated 2nd and 4th July 1684 he was given a tack of Heriot's Hospital quarry on the west side of the road from Holyrood Abbey to Leith.

Milne's Court, at the head of the Lawnmarket, was begun in 1690, and, as in the building of Milne's Square, he had as partner Andrew Paterson of Inch or Kirkton, deacon of the wrights, who was appointed Town's wright on 22nd January 1690. During the building of the Court they built a new tenement of stone ashlar opposite the West Bow with entry by a passage and scale stair. The east first storey of four fire rooms and two cellars was sold to Robert Cairns, wright, for 3222 merks<sup>6</sup>; the second, of seven fire rooms and two closets, to Alexander Baird, merchant and bailie, for 5500 merks<sup>7</sup>; the third, also of seven fire rooms, to James McLurg, merchant, late bailie and Dean of Gild, and his wife, Marian Aikman<sup>8</sup>;

<sup>1</sup> Moses, Bundle 121, No. 4846.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., Bundle 123, No. 4903.

<sup>5</sup> See *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, Vol. XIV, pp. 45-8.

<sup>6</sup> Moses, Bundle 121, No. 4840.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., Bundle 95, No. 4049.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Bundle 107, No. 4454.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., Bundle 133, No. 5225.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., Bundle 94, No. 4015.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., Bundle 94, No. 4042.

the fourth to Mr. John Stewart of Ascog, advocate, and his children by Margaret Cleland, his present wife, for 4750 merks, the west storey being sold to John Hunter, merchant.<sup>1</sup> The west first storey, containing six fire rooms, three to the front street and three to the court, was sold to David Lindsay, merchant and late bailie, and Alexander Lindsay, his son<sup>2</sup>; the third to the then Dean of Gild Michael Allan and Christian Stewart, his wife, for 5000 merks. It had a dining-room and two bed-chambers to the High Street, a dark room, a bed-chamber and a kitchen to the court and two closets, one to the court and one to the front street.<sup>3</sup> Michael Allan was a prosperous merchant, as in the Poll Tax Returns he was stated to be worth 10,000 merks in 1694 and between 30,000 and 40,000 merks in 1698.

The Keepers of the Signet and Commissioners of the Writers having decided to buy a convenient house 'where the signet office and warrands thereof might be kept, and the writers may meet on all occasions,' on 14th August 1695 considered acquiring this in the 'building by Robert Milne of Alexander Crombie's land,' and on 11th November it was reported that the transaction was completed for the price of 5500 merks.<sup>4</sup> On 17th January 1698 the following was recorded in their minutes: 'Ten guineas to be given by the treasurer as a compliment for the earnest of the house and the name of the Court, which they are to put up above the principal gate in gilded letters befor payment be made, and to call the same the Wryters' Court.'<sup>5</sup>

Writers' Court on the north side of the High Street was built by Robert Milne in partnership with Patrick Steill, vintner burghess, sometimes called merchant, who kept the Cross Keys Tavern, a popular meeting-place in Durie's or

<sup>1</sup> Moses, Bundle 96, No. 4089.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., Bundle 94, No. 4015.

<sup>4</sup> See *The History of the Society of Writers to the Signet*, p. 341.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 349.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Bundle 94, No. 4017.

Steill's Close, which was destroyed by fire in 1708. In 1680 Steill acquired and added to a great lodging repaired by Sir Alexander Gibson of Durie, Kt.,<sup>1</sup> described as a little below the Cross on the south side of the High Street in Durie's Close, having Borthwick's Wynd on the west. Patrick Steill was a captain of the Train Bands in 1681, and in 1691 he sued the Town Council for payment of his accounts for 'treats' supplied on their orders between 1686 and 1688. He and Robert Milne acquired the property over which Writers' Court was built partly from Thomas Young of Rosebank, merchant and late bailie, on the east side of Malcolm's or Mary King's Close,<sup>2</sup> and partly from Robert Watson, merchant, formerly belonging to Alexander Abercrombie, vintner, and Robert Scott, writer,<sup>3</sup> on the east side of Bruce's Close,<sup>4</sup> opposite the foot of the Luckenbooths.<sup>5</sup> In 1695 George Baillie of Jarviswood petitioned Parliament against the proposed altering and raising of the land which formerly belonged to Alexander Abercrombie as it threatened to darken his tenement at the head of Craig's (or Bruce's) Close. This tenement had been built by Mr. Thomas Craig, advocate,<sup>6</sup> more than a hundred years earlier on special warrant from King James VI in 1582, and because of this Baillie claimed special privileges. Despite defence of their plans Parliament enacted in favour of the petitioner and forbade any building by Patrick Steill and Robert Milne which would prejudice Jarviswood's tenement or lights.<sup>7</sup> They erected a large new

<sup>1</sup> President of the Court of Session in 1642 and 1643. His name was included in a list of owners of property in Edinburgh in 1635. See *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, Vol. XIII, p. 103 and n.

<sup>2</sup> Moses, Bundle 102, No. 4327.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Robert Scott, writer, was made burgess on 22nd February 1615.

<sup>4</sup> See 'Notes on the Names of the Closes and Wynds of Old Edinburgh,' *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, Vol. XII, p. 27.

<sup>5</sup> Moses, Bundle 102, No. 4326.

<sup>6</sup> Sir Thomas Craig of Riccarton, advocate, 1st February 1563-64.

<sup>7</sup> *A.P.S.*, Vol. IX, p. 475.

building with a court within the same, consisting of several dwelling-houses, vaults, cellars and garrets, and repaired and enlarged Abercrombie's property below the court. A close entered to the new court and there was also an entry from Warriston's Close. An old tenement of land above the court they sold to Mr. John Montgomery, W.S., it then (1696) being occupied by Mr. James Dalrymple<sup>1</sup> and Mr. Robert Alexander, two of the Principal Clerks of Session.<sup>2</sup> A first half storey below the court in their new building on the west side of Warriston's Close, containing five fire rooms, and the first half storey above the court, of six rooms with cellars and garrets, were sold to William Scoullar, merchant, and Anna Keith, his wife, for 8900 merks<sup>3</sup>; a second half storey to George Alison, merchant, and Anna Lowrie, his wife.<sup>4</sup> It is very confusing, as another first half storey on the west side, containing five fire rooms, with an entry from Warriston's Close, and another by the scale stair, was sold to William Machrie, fencing master, and Isobel Blair, his wife, for 2600 merks.<sup>5</sup> The third storey on the west side of the stair, containing six fire rooms, a large outer room and a pantry, with a cellar and garret, was sold to David Patton, painter,<sup>6</sup> and the fourth, with similar accommodation, to Mr. Charles Oliphant, doctor of medicine, for 4500 merks.<sup>7</sup> Another third wester half storey, above the cellars, next Warriston's Close entering by three or four steps from the court to the north of the house sold to Mr. John Montgomery, W.S., containing twelve fire rooms, two of which projected on the close, later was sold to Henry Lochhead, vintner, and Janet Stenhouse, his wife, for 8300 merks.<sup>8</sup>

The first half storey to the east, of five fire rooms, bounded

<sup>1</sup> Mr., later Sir James Dalrymple, was second son of James, Viscount Stair.

<sup>2</sup> Moses, Bundle 103, No. 4338.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 103, No. 4349.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 103, No. 4346.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 103, No. 4366.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 104, No. 4382.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 110, No. 4541.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 104, No. 4388.

by Mary King's Close and having an entry by it and another down the scale stair, and lying immediately under a half storey sold to John Anderson, coppersmith,<sup>1</sup> was bought for 3200 merks by Robert Hutton, baker,<sup>2</sup> while a second half storey of six fire rooms with two cellars above the court was bought by John Edington, writer, for 4750 merks. The storey was described as immediately above the half storey sold to Robert Cunningham, one of the Under Clerks of Session, 'in the new tenement called Writers' Court.'<sup>3</sup>

Mr. James Smith of Whitehill, mason burgess, and a son-in-law of Robert Milne, was responsible for a number of new buildings in addition to the Canongate Church begun by him in 1689. He rebuilt burnt lands at the head of the Canongate and also acquired the right to a tenement of land from Robert Burnet, W.S., and a waste land to the west of the same in Niddry's Wynd, and erected a large tenement of stonework, the front of which faced Niddry's Wynd. A dwelling-house on the fourth storey above the shops containing seven fire rooms with six windows fronting on the Wynd 'bounded between the scale stairs on the north, the "gunn stain" close<sup>4</sup> on the south, the transe of the wynd on the east, and the leather and corn market, the land of William Dundas, advocate, and the back court of the new building on the west,' was sold on 22nd April 1691 to James Somerville, elder, of Drum, for 4500 merks.<sup>5</sup>

A tenement of hewn stonework was built by Mr. James Smith on the north side of the High Street, opposite the head of Blackfriars Wynd, having Barrenger's Close on the east and Paisley's Close on the west. Captain William Seaton

<sup>1</sup> He entered burgess on 1st November 1689 by right of his deceased father, Alexander Anderson, coppersmith, who built Anderson's land in the West Bow, and gildbrother on 11th April 1694 by right of wife, Margaret, daughter to Robert Milne of Balfarg.

<sup>2</sup> Moses, Bundle 104, No. 4374.

<sup>4</sup> Gunstone's or Gunn's Close.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 113, No. 4602.

<sup>5</sup> Moses, Bundle 90, No. 3919.

became the owner of the second storey; Sir William Scott of Harden<sup>1</sup> and Dame Jean Nisbet, his wife, of the third; and Lady Strowan and Dr. James Nisbet of two half storeys on the fourth.<sup>2</sup>

Old ruinous tenements at the head of Blackfriars Wynd, two of which belonged to William Elphinstone of Calderhall, were demolished and rebuilt in stone by Patrick Steill and Patrick Carfrae, mason. On 12th May 1697 they were granted warrant from the Dean of Gild to rebuild, the front to be built in ashlar and to come in a straight line with the stone land at Todrig's Wyndhead on the east and the stone land called McMorlan's land on the west<sup>3</sup>. The tenement was of six storeys from the ground and garrets above with a large stone scale stair off Blackfriars Wynd dividing the back and front houses. On the south part James Fulton, mason, bought a lower dwelling-house for 1800 merks.<sup>4</sup> Another storey of six fire rooms was bought by Charles Hay, baker, and Isobel Hutchison, his wife, for 2600 merks and 'two guineas in gold'<sup>5</sup>; the fourth by James Affleck, baker, and Margaret Johnston, his wife, for 2800 merks<sup>6</sup>; the fifth, by James Carmichael, elder, of Barnblae, and Mr. Robert Carmichael, doctor of medicine, his son<sup>7</sup>; the top storey next the garrets by Andrew Houston and Isobel Elphinstone, his wife, for 1800 merks.<sup>8</sup> The storeys to the north, above the shops and to the street, were bought as follows: the first of five fire rooms and one without a fire, by Robert Ross, writer, and Janet Dalrymple, his wife<sup>9</sup>; the second, which also must have included the south half as it contained eleven fire rooms,

<sup>1</sup> He and his son Sir Wm. Scott of Harden, yr., both spent some time in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh. See *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, Vol. VIII, p. 140, Vol. IX, p. 117-18, and Vol. XI, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Moses, Bundle 115, No. 4686.

<sup>3</sup> Dean of Gild Records, 1695-1699, p. 281.

<sup>4</sup> Moses, Bundle 115, No. 4656.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 115, No. 4658.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 122, No. 4863.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 115, No. 4685.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 114, No. 4640.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 123, No. 4900.

by William Menzies, merchant and late bailie<sup>1</sup>; the third, for 7500 merks, by James Marjoribanks, merchant. A wester front booth or shop, cellars and vault, entering immediately off the High Street, then occupied by William Adam, apothecary, and having the front shop belonging to John Kello, embroiderer, on the east, was sold to William Hutton, merchant, for 5600 merks.<sup>2</sup>

William Milne, mason, eldest son of the King's master mason, and Duncan Buchanan, wright, demolished a ruinous tenement lying within the pend of Todrig's Wynd, on the east side and bounded between the lands of the deceased George Todrick on the north and the lands of the deceased John Spottiswood on the south.<sup>3</sup> They built a new stone tenement of five storeys, one of which they sold to James Dunbar, merchant, for 1550 merks,<sup>4</sup> and another to Alexander Dunbar, brewer, for 3050 merks.<sup>5</sup> Milne gave up his half share of the first storey to Buchanan on 14th June 1694 as the latter wished to have this for himself.<sup>6</sup>

Following on the building of his tenement opposite the Salt Tron on the north side of the High Street, John Hamilton, wright, built on the south side in Burnet's Close and between it and Conn's Close, on properties acquired by him between 1691 and 1696 from Lieutenant John Lothian, eldest son of the late Colonel James Lothian,<sup>7</sup> from Sir Thomas Kennedy of

<sup>1</sup> Moses, Bundle 114, No. 4641. The Poll Tax Returns for 1694 show him worth 10,000 merks, with a wife, 7 children, 1 man servant, 2 women servants, a nurse and boy and three boarders, one a young gentleman, Thomas Kincaid, with a man servant.

<sup>2</sup> Moses, Bundle 115, No. 4683.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 11 n. George Todrig was possibly a descendant of Archibald Todrig. He was a bailie in 1592, 1596 and 1600. A George Todrig, merchant, built a tenement on the east side of the wynd. See 'Notes on the Names of the Closes and Wynds of Old Edinburgh,' *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, Vol. XII, p. 82.

<sup>4</sup> Moses, Bundle 98, No. 4181.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 98, No. 4193.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 88, No. 3849.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 90, No. 3913. Colonel James Lothian, son of Thomas Lothian, merchant, was made burghess and gild brother, gratis, on 2nd September 1653.

Kirkhill, Lord Provost in 1685 and 1686,<sup>1</sup> and from James Mill of Hatton and James Govan, tailor burghess of the Canon-gate.<sup>2</sup> Two back stairs of timber were also disposed by Mr. Michael Lumsden, advocate, and George Chalmers, writer.<sup>3</sup> Hamilton built two large stone tenements with a broad scale stair in the middle, each having six storeys and a roof-house, above cellars. The first storey on the south side, containing a dining-room 18 ft. long, two bedrooms, one facing east and one west, each 13 ft. long, with a closet in each of them, another chamber with a closet on the west, a little dark pantry with another chamber on the east, a kitchen and a lobby 16 ft. long and 6 ft. broad, and a back stair 20 ft. long and 6 ft. broad, all rooms having fires, he sold to Robert Hunter, merchant, and Euphame Muir, his wife, on 14th May 1698.<sup>4</sup> In the disposition this storey is said to be in the lands acquired from Sir Thomas Kennedy, James Milne and James Govan, adjoining the tenement of the Bishop of Dunkeld. The latter was in the adjacent Bell's Wynd and is mentioned in early charters, likewise in the Town Council Minutes of 7th June 1588. The fourth storey was bought by John Edington, writer, for 4000 merks, containing six fire rooms, with closets off<sup>5</sup>; the fifth by Mr. John Duncan, merchant<sup>6</sup>; and the sixth, of similar size, by Mr. John Fairholm, advocate, for 4100 merks.<sup>7</sup> On the north side of the scale stair the second storey, containing five fire rooms, a waiting-

<sup>1</sup> Moses, Bundle 108, No. 4490. This was a tenement of land called Crosshouses which at one time belonged to Alexander Hay of Kennet, Clerk Register in 1578, and later to Sir Alexander Hay of Whitburgh.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 108, No. 4489. This land lay within the tenement of the deceased William Vernour on the west side of Burnet's Close. William Vernour's lands are mentioned in John Foular's Protocols dated 1514-1528 and Vernour's Close in Alexander King's Protocols of 19th April 1549. A William Vernour and his son William were admitted gildbrothers on 7th October 1463.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 108, No. 4478.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 134, No. 5275.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 113, No. 4598.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 123, No. 4898.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 110, No. 4536. Mr. John Fairholm of Baberton was Treasurer of the Faculty from 1696 to 1702.

room and a large closet, was bought by Gideon Elliot of North Sintoun, surgeon apothecary and deacon of the surgeons, and Mary Cunningham, his wife. It was described as immediately above that occupied by Mr. James Borthwick, writer, and immediately below that occupied by Alexander Leslie, servant to Lord Carmichael.<sup>1</sup> A similar dwelling-house on the fourth storey was bought on 22nd December 1699 by William Alves, writer, and Anna Hamilton, his wife, and John Alves, their eldest son.<sup>2</sup> Mr. John Cameron, minister at Kincardine, and Janet Barclay, his wife, bought the fifth storey, which was then occupied by Daniel Simpson, W.S.<sup>3</sup>

Alexander Govanlock, who in 1695 had the working of a quarry in Bruntfield Links<sup>4</sup>, and was deacon of the masons in 1697, built in Forrester's Wynd on the south side of the High Street, and on the north side opposite 'or over against' the Wynd between 1690 and 1700. On 23rd August 1693 a contract was entered into between him and Alexander Chancellor, eldest son and heir of the late William Chancellor, merchant, whereby Chancellor disposed his four houses, waste ground and old walls on the west side of Forrester's Wynd as they lay between the lands of Lord Saline<sup>5</sup> on the north, the lands of himself (Govanlock), James Arbuckle and others on the west, and of Robert Watson on the south. In return he obliged himself to dispose to Alexander Chancellor a new house and cellar.<sup>6</sup> Demolishing these houses he built a great stone building with a scale stair. The lowest house on the south side he sold to Alexander Henderson, bookseller,

<sup>1</sup> Moses, Bundle 120, No. 4821.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 121, No. 4843. William Alves entered Writer to the Signet on 28th June 1700, was Under Keeper of the Signet 9th November 1709, Joint Deputy Keeper 1710-11, Commissary of Dumfries, M.P. for Sanquhar 1702-7.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 115, No. 4651.

<sup>4</sup> *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, Vol. X, p. 240.

<sup>5</sup> Sir Andrew Birnie of Saline, Senator of the College of Justice from 1679 until the Revolution.

<sup>6</sup> Moses, Bundle 104, No. 4387.

and Elizabeth Christie, his wife.<sup>1</sup> The first storey, with an entry to itself at the foot of the stair, on the west side of the passage, was bought for 3000 merks by John Hislop, wright, and Agnes Pringle, his wife<sup>2</sup>; the second and third storeys, each of five fire rooms and other conveniences, by John Anderson, writer, and Katherine Cunningham, his wife<sup>3</sup>; the fourth, next to the garrets, also of five rooms, by Mungo Campbell of Burnbank and Jean Shaw, his wife, for 3000 merks.<sup>4</sup>

The other tenement built by Govanlock on the north side of the street was erected on property acquired from Mr. James Young which had formerly belonged to his father, Andrew Young, W.S., and from Andrew Kerr, merchant. A dwelling-house of four fire rooms immediately above the shops he sold on 27th September 1698 to John Scott, writer, and Katherine Douglas, his wife, for 5500 merks, including a cellar on the east side of Ireland's or Bailie Brown's Close.<sup>5</sup> They also a year later bought for 300 merks a wester-south front garret with a little pantry or office house.<sup>6</sup> An easter first half storey was sold for 6000 merks to Mr. Robert Henderson, Keeper of the College Library, and Katherine Law, his wife<sup>7</sup>; the second storey on the west side, containing four fire rooms, for 4800 merks to Walter Jamieson, glazier, and Jean Scott, his wife<sup>8</sup>; while that on the east, with six fire rooms, with the easter fifth storey of the same accommodation, and two upper merchant booths and a lower merchant booth and a cellar, were sold to John Russell, yr., merchant.<sup>9</sup> The fourth easter half storey of six fire rooms was sold to

<sup>1</sup> Moses, Bundle 134, No. 5276. In the Poll Tax Return of 1694 Alexander Henderson is stated to be worth between 500 and 5000 merks.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 103, No. 4368.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 103, No. 4359.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 120, No. 4819.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 120, No. 4826.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 120, No. 4825.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 115, No. 4681. Mr. Robert Henderson succeeded his father, Mr. William Henderson, as College Librarian on 21st November 1684.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 124, No. 4955.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 110, No. 4538.

John Law, writer, for 5500 merks,<sup>1</sup> and the fifth wester half to Robert Fisher, baker, and Isobel Gray, his wife.<sup>2</sup>

Thomas Fisher, merchant, treasurer to the Kirk Sessions for the year 1685-86 and treasurer to George Heriot's Hospital in 1688, owned property on both the north and south side of the High Street. His land on the south side of the Lawnmarket has now been restored and is the home of the Scottish Central Library. This he built on the site of property acquired from several heritors. By disposition of 6th May 1698 he purchased from Margaret Mitchell, eldest daughter of the deceased John Mitchell, burgess, a low dwelling-house 'in the mid tenement of the great tenement of land of the deceased James Cant, son of the deceased Thomas Cant of St. Giles Grange,'<sup>3</sup> which lay between the tenement of the deceased Alexander Elphinston,<sup>4</sup> then of the deceased George McMorran<sup>5</sup> on the west, the tenement of the deceased John Carmichael<sup>6</sup> upon the east, the King's High Street on the north and the lands of the deceased Thomas Somerville, maltman, on the south; also a

<sup>1</sup> Moses, Bundle 115, No. 4681.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 115, No. 4680.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Cant of St. Giles Grange is mentioned in the Town Council Minutes of 11th May 1558 as 'a gentleman heritor within the burgh.' On 16th April 1617 James Cant of St. Giles Grange was given permission to calsey the loan on the east of his land. Another tenement of land belonging to Thomas Cant lay at the foot of the close.

<sup>4</sup> He is mentioned in the Town Council Minutes on 23rd October 1520 and in John Foular's Protocol Book of 1514-1528.

<sup>5</sup> George McMorran, merchant, youngest son of the deceased John McMorran, entered burgess and gildbrother on 23rd August 1648, and George McMorran, son of the former, let his 'great lodging' in Sir John Smith's Close (or McMorran's Close) to Sir George Mackenzie, advocate, on 29th March 1667. See Moses, Bundle 57, No. 2564. (Sir John Smith of Grothill was Lord Provost from 1643 to 1646.)

<sup>6</sup> A tenement of land described as sometime belonging to the late William Carmichael, son of the late James Carmichael of Athernie, having the tenement of land of the late Thomas Cant of St. Giles Grange on the west, which was resigned on 1st August 1639, was that formerly belonging to John Carmichael. See Moses, Bundle 20, No. 836.

front dwelling-house pertaining of old to Quentin Low,<sup>1</sup> a dwelling-house immediately above the same occupied at one time by the deceased James Hamilton, merchant,<sup>2</sup> and an upper dwelling-house at one time occupied by David Bryson, macer.<sup>3</sup> On 13th May 1698 Christian Ord, daughter of the late Laurence Ord,<sup>4</sup> merchant, and wife of William Graham, jeweller burgess of the Canongate, with consent of Christian Barnes, widow of George Young, dyer, disposed to Thomas Fisher a dwelling-house in the tenement of land sometime of the late James Cant, on the south end, and a front dwelling-house.<sup>5</sup> Following this on 3rd June 1698 he acquired from Andrew Duncan, glazier, a front dwelling-house being the first storey above the shops of which the latter had obtained possession from Sir George Nicolson of Kemnay, Senator of the College of Justice, with consent of Dame Margaret Haliburton,<sup>6</sup> and the same day from John Corsbie, merchant, a dwelling-house in the middle tenement of the late James Cant.<sup>7</sup> On the 14th June William Neilson, merchant, parted with two upper dwelling-houses in the same tenement, which houses at one time belonged to James Kininmonth, chamber-

<sup>1</sup> The daughter of the deceased Quentin Low, or Love, on 29th May 1624 ratified a renunciation made by her mother Elizabeth Acheson of an annual rent from a dwelling-house within the front tenement of James Hamilton in the tenement formerly of Thomas Cant of St. Giles Grange. See Moses, Bundle 3, No. 94.

<sup>2</sup> Entered burgess by right of his wife Janet Gillespie on 6th November 1593.

<sup>3</sup> Moses, Bundle 116, No. 4711.

<sup>4</sup> He married the daughter of George Young and entered burgess and gildbrother by right of her on 18th August 1680 when he is described as 'an indweller in Canongate.' He was the owner in 1673 of two hackney coaches and owned a tenement and kept an inn in what is now known as White Horse Close on the north side of the Canongate.

<sup>5</sup> Moses, Bundle 107, No. 4464. Christian Barnes and her sister received from their brother Alexander Barnes by Procuratory of Resignation dated 21st November 1663 two dwelling-houses in the tenement of land sometime of the late Thomas Cant of St. Giles Grange. See Moses, Bundle 61, No. 2721.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 107, No. 4465.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 107, No. 4463.

lain of Fife, then to Mr. William Burnet of Barns.<sup>1</sup> Another low dwelling-house Fisher acquired from Robert Thomson, merchant,<sup>2</sup> and the next year, on 8th April 1699, a similar house from William Mitchell, stabler.<sup>3</sup> On 5th May, by a disposition in his favour by William Henderson of Meggatland, indweller in Edinburgh, he obtained the easternmost of Henderson's two tenements of land with shops and cellars which formerly belonged to James Nicoll, thereafter to Mr. Thomas Aitkenhead, one of the Commissaries of Edinburgh.<sup>4</sup> On the same day he sold two of the shops in this tenement which entered off the High Street to Mr. William Archibald, writer.<sup>5</sup>

On 15th February 1699 Fisher applied to the Dean of Gild and received a warrant to slope or take down the east side wall of the back land and to slope the chimneys of the south gable; also to sink the cellars four feet and take down the turnpike and middle gable and found them further north. John Muir of Park and Adam Muir of Blackhall, adjoining heritors, were ordered to carry up a sufficient stone front for their shops from the foundation of the cellars. Permission was also given to take down the scale stair leading to his and Henderson of Meggatland's front tenement and to found the same 18 inches further west so that he could have sufficient room for founding the front of the tenement which he was going to build in stonework.

Information is not available as to all the owners or occupiers of Fisher's tenement on its erection, but on 10th July 1713 Mr. John Montgomery of Wrae, W.S., disposed to his creditors the first storey and shops there,<sup>6</sup> followed on 1st and 3rd August by the second storey above the shops, immediately

<sup>1</sup> Moses, Bundle 116, No. 4710. James Kininmonth owned property in the Town in 1635. See *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, Vol. XIII, pp. 127, 129, 145.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 107, No. 4473.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 112, No. 4578.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 145, No. 5646.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 113, No. 4575.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Bundle 112, No. 4576.

below the lodging belonging to and occupied by Sir James Dick of Prestonfield.<sup>1</sup>

Building was carried out in other parts of the Town, but the foregoing will suffice to show the disappearance of the old timber dwellings, the planning of more spacious tenements, the introduction of courts to allow more light and air, and straight stairs to replace the turnpikes. The wealthier citizens at least invested their money in property, and builders and materials were at hand for this purpose. The Town Council was too handicapped by lack of money to consider extending its boundaries. Depression in trade followed the Union of Parliaments, and it was not until the latter half of the eighteenth century that the builders again came into their own in the erection of the New Town to the north.

HELEN ARMET.

#### APPENDIX

EDINBURGH first May One thousand six hundred and seventy four years.

The Which Day, the Lord Provost, Baillies, Council, and Deacons of Crafts, being convened in Council, together with many of the old Magistrates, and Deacons, who were all warned personally to the effect and for the special affair aftermentioned, and calling upon the Lord for a blessing to their endeavours, taking to their consideration. THAT FORASMUCHAS the Good Town of Edinburgh being the chief and capital city of the kingdom, and the place and seat where his Majesty's Parliaments and the Secret Council, and the supreme courts and ordinary jurisdictions criminal and civil, do sit and are holden; and, upon that occasion, the Estates of Parliament, Nobility and Gentry, and other subjects, from all corners of the kingdom, must and do frequently repair and do stay there for doing their affairs, and strangers

<sup>1</sup> Moses, Bundle 145, No. 5648. Sir James Dick of Prestonfield was Lord Provost from 1678 to 1681.

from other kingdoms, upon occasion of trade at Leith, do come and repair to the said Town: LIKEAS, not only the public records and registers of the whole kingdom are kept, but the rights, securities and writs of his Majesty's subjects, of whatsoever quality, within the kingdom, concerning their lands and other estates and interests of greatest importance, are brought, left and kept in the said Town, in the Chambers, or in the hands of their advocates, clerks and writers, for pursuit and defence of processes, and upon other occasions: AND ALBEIT, upon the considerations foresaid, not only the citizens and inhabitants, but his Majesty and the whole kingdom are concerned, that the said Town be secured and preserved, as much as can be done by human providence, from hazard, and in special from the danger and destructions of fire and burnings; and, in order thereto, his Majesty's predecessors and Estates of Parliament from time to time did make several good and excellent laws and acts of parliament, and nevertheless the City is still obnoxious and subject to the hazard of burning; and the reason is obvious, and inherent in the very constitution and way of building of a great part of the same, and the front and fore-part of the most part of the houses especially in the fore-street, being built altogether with timber, and the vennals and closes being so narrow, and the houses so thick and joined together, and there being many families lodged in the several storeys of the respective tenements, so that when any house or storey of the same, and especially upon the high street, doth by negligence or otherwise take fire, the whole tenement is in a short time destroyed; and the dry timber being ready feul to the fire, it doth quickly increase, and is carried to and doth seize upon the neighbour adjoining tenements; as did appear diverse times, when the Town, within these few years, was visited and afflicted with great burnings, in diverse corners of the same, and most evidently in the late burning upon the 14th April last; at which time a fire having been in a low shop of a tenement in the fore-street, in the night-time, did in a very short time become so dreadful and furious, that it did quickly destroy, not only the said tenement, but seven other tenements, to the great loss and prejudice, not only of the heritors but the inhabitants within the same, being surprised in the night so suddenly and unexpectedly, that with great difficulty and hazard they were saved, and did escape with their wives and children, with the great and total loss of their goods and plenishing, and did threaten destruction to the whole Town by the great violence

and progress it had, if GOD in his mercy and goodness had not set bounds to the same, and a tenement entirely built with stone and lime had not made interruption. THEREFORE the said Lord Provost, Baillies, Council, and Deacons of Craft ordinary and extraordinary, together with the old Magistrates and the old Deacons of the said burgh, by these presents, STATUTE AND ORDAIN, That when any house or tenement are or shall be, at any time hereafter, ruinous or burnt, whether the same belong entirely to one heritor or more or diverse heritors, or when any house or tenement shall be built from the ground where there was no tenement formerly, within this burgh, Leith, Canongate, or suburbs, viz: West Port, Potterrow or Pleasance, the same shall be built in such a way as shall be most fit and suitable to the honour of the kingdom, and for the ornament and security of the City, and of the inhabitants thereof, and all others concerned. THAT IS TO SAY, That the front and fore-parts, and other parts of the same, shall be built altogether with stone and lime, and no part thereof, nor any fore-stairs of the same, shall be built with timber: And it is desired and expected, That the heritors of such houses as are built with timber may and will think it their interest and security, that when any think it convenient, and they shall have occasion to repair the same, that they be built with stone and lime, AND FURTHER, it is ORDAINED AND DECLARED, That hereafter the vennals and closes within the said burgh shall not, in any time coming, be obstructed or straitned with the putting out or building of any fore-stairs where was none before the date of thir presents, seeing the said vennals are narrow, and are the King's common ways and passages for the use of the lieges, and are not to be encroached upon by any fore-stair or structure promoted or brought out beyond the buildings upon either side; and where there hath been any fore-stairs formerly built, it is ORDAINED, for the preventing the hazard of fire, That where there is any occasion or necessity of repairing the same, the said fore-stairs shall be built and repaired with stone and lime, at least with plaister and tile, in the same manner and with the same extent as they had formerly, and no further: And in case any person or persons shall presume to contravene, or work or build contrary to the premisses, it is DECLARED, That the wrights and craftsmen that shall work or build otherwise than is above ordained shall be severely punished and censured, and what shall be wrought and built otherwise shall be demolished and taken down upon the charges of the contravener.

AND FURTHER STATUTE AND ORDAIN, That no craftsman of this burgh, in any time coming, shall repair or build any houses or tenements of land within the bounds foresaid, without first they acquaint the Dean of Guild and his Council with the design of the said reparation or building, to the end that a visit may be made upon the ground of the said lands, that the heritors and others concerned may receive a warrant from the Dean of Guild and his Council to repair or rebuild conform to the tenor of this principal act in all points; certifying every mason, wright, or any other, that does in the contrary, that they shall be liable in the penalty of one hundred pound Scots money *toties quoties* they contravene thir presents, by and attour the punishment of their persons, at the discretion of the Magistrates. And the said Lord Provost, Baillies, Council, and Deacons of Crafts, ordinary and extraordinary, together with the old Magistrates and Council, by their representing the body and community of the said burgh, and for their particular interests, heritors within the said bounds, in sign and token of their consent and hearty acquiescence to this present act, have subscribed thir presents; consenting to the registration hereof in the books of Council and Session, Town court or Council Books of Edinburgh, to remain therein *ad futuram rei memoriam*: And constitutes

our procurators. Subscribed by us day and place and year of GOD above mentioned. *Sic subscribitur*, James Currie, Provost, William Johnston, Baillie [and other bailies, Councillors, etc.].

FOLLOWS a Consent subscribed by the Heritors.

We under subscribing heritors and others, concerned in the houses and tenements of lands within the City of Edinburgh and liberties thereof, taking to consideration, That the Council of the said burgh, with consent of the old Magistrates, and several neighbours of the same, hath upon just and convincing motives, and pregnant reasons, importing the public well, safety and security of Edinburgh and liberties thereof, STATUTE and ORDAINED, That no houses nor tenements of lands, which are or shall happen in any time coming to be ruinous or burnt in the roof or uppermost storey thereof, or wheresoever a considerable part is or hereafter shall happen to be burnt or ruinous, the same shall not be rebuilt but with stone and lime, as the said act within written, of the date the first May instant, subscribed by the said Council, old

Magistrates, Councillors and Deacons, containing several other useful clauses and articles at length, bears; which act being read in our presence, and considered by us, We do hereby cheerfully and heartily approve of the same, in all the heads, articles, and points thereof, and INTERPONES our consent thereto, WITH THIS ADDITION, That whosoever the major part of the heritors of the houses, tenements of land within the bounds foresaid, which are already built with timber in the front and fore-part thereof, shall think it convenient to build it with stone and lime, in that case the rest of the heritors concerned in the saids houses and tenements shall be obliged to pay their proportion of the said building with stone and lime so to be made, and that according to their respective interests in the said tenements and houses: And in case the less or minor part of the heritors shall not condescend to pay their proportions of the said building with stone and lime as said is, then it shall be in the power of the major part of the heritors to petition the Council of Edinburgh to cause appretiate the value of the saids houses and tenements at the sight of fifteen sworn men to be appointed by them, that the same shall be paid to the less or minor part of the heritors, and their parts of the saids houses and tenements shall in all time thereafter belong properly and irredeemably to the said major part of the heritors; or that it shall be in the option of the said major part of the heritors, who repair or rebuild as said is, to uplift the rents belonging to the lesser part of the heritors, ay and while they be reimbursed of their proportionable part of the expence of the said building, according as the same shall be taxed and modified by the Dean of Guild and his Council, or by the Council of Edinburgh, AND DECLARES, That the major part of the heritors are not to be reckoned according to the number of the persons heritors, but according to their rents and interests in the said houses and tenements: And further CONSENTS, That in all debates and differences that shall hereafter fall out betwixt heritor and heritor, or betwixt heritor and neighbour, in the matter of building allenary, that the same shall be decided by the Dean of Guild and his Council, or by the Council of Edinburgh, and oblige ourselves to stand to their determination thereanent, without advocation or suspension. AND ALSO DECLARES That we consent, that the foresaid act, together with thir presents, be ratified by the act of the Secret Council. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have subscribed thir presents with our hands, Edinburgh the fourth day of May One thousand six hundred and seventy four years;

and therefore humbly supplicating that his Majesty's Privy Council might approve of the supplicants procedure in passing the said act, and interponing their authority thereto.

THE LORDS of His Majesty's Privy Council having heard and considered the said petition and act of the Town-Council above-mentioned DO APPROVE AND ACCEPT of the saids Magistrates of Edinburgh their care and diligence in passing the said act, wherein they have given evidence of their special care and zeal for the safety and security of the said burgh of Edinburgh, for which they return the said Magistrates their hearty thanks, and hereby interpone their authority to the said act, and ratify and approve the same in the haill heads, articles and clauses thereof, AND ORDAIN the said act to be put in execution, conform to the tenor of the samen, and to be observed and obeyed by all persons concerned. Extracted by me, Al. Gibson *Cls. Sti. Concilii*. Extracted forth of the records of the Town Council of Edinburgh by me

GEORGE HOME.

## EXTRACTS FROM AN EDINBURGH JOURNAL

1823-1833

(PART I, TO 1828)

The writer of this anonymous diary was an Edinburgh citizen, but he gives no clue to his name or occupation except that he carried on a trade which would be affected by the extension of oil-gas lighting; and that he lived in the South side. The diary shows the interest he took in all events at home and abroad; the extracts given here refer to local events at a time of great development within the city, and to the schemes which resulted in the Improvement Act of 1827, authorising the construction of new roads from the old town to the South (George IV Bridge), and to the West (Johnston Terrace). Certain comments have been added at a later stage by the author of the diary. The diary is in the Old Edinburgh Room of Edinburgh Public Library and many thanks are due to Edinburgh Public Libraries Committee for permission to consult and print it.

1823 March 1st. The feuing of Lord Murray's grounds<sup>1</sup> which commenced last year, is likely to lead to the formation of a third grand division of our new town.<sup>2</sup> The addition of from 7 to 800 new dwelling houses to Edinburgh every year for some years past one would think must thro' time overstock the market and lower the rents, but this state of matters has not yet taken place.

March 12. It has been for some time a matter in agitation to erect and establish a second High School for the benefit of the extended Royalty and a situation is talked of on the north extremity of the new town. Two charges no doubt can be brought against the present school.<sup>3</sup> It is rather crowded and

<sup>1</sup> For Earl of Moray's estate, see article by J. Clark Wilson, *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, Vol. XXV, p. 75, and Grant's *Old and New Edinburgh*, Vol. II, pp. 200-1. Moray names were given to Darnaway Street, Randolph Crescent, Forres Street, etc.

<sup>2</sup> The first great division or extension embraced Princes Street to Queen Street; the second, Heriot Row to Fettes Row.

<sup>3</sup> In High School Yards, now part of the University block. This school was built in 1777 on the site of an older school built in 1578. Sir Walter Scott entered this school in 1779.

1823

the distance is too great from that part of the city where the greatest number of our genteel families reside. On the other hand it would not be easy to maintain two respectable schools of this description. Yet tho' I believe most people are of opinion that one school in a central situation would be the preferable plan such a situation is hardly to be obtained—particularly if play ground is to be included in the arrangement. Princes Street and the Mound have been mentioned as suitable for the purpose. It would be easy to fix a central point in Princes Street, but this street is too much used as a thoroughfare to be eligible in other respects. On this subject however it appears our Town Council must speedily come to some decision. Since writing the above I understand two situations have been proposed, the one in the bottom of the North Loch and the other on the east side of the Calton Hill, the former would indeed be central with a witness and the latter completely excentral to almost every part of the town.

May 20. A sensible letter from old Dr. Duncan insisting on the propriety of two distinct schools being maintained in Edinburgh appears in this day's paper. As the new school must necessarily be in some remote part of the new town, I think the population on our side of the north loch will still be able to preserve the old institution respectable. A spirit of emulation too may be generated which may prove beneficial to all parties.

October 10. For some years past the number of new houses added to our city made me apprehend that as there could not be less than 800 annually valued from £15 to £150 and above of rent, the market would have been overstocked with this kind of manufacture, but as yet this does not appear to be the case. They are almost uniformly occupied as soon as finished, while the old houses if they lose one kind of tenants are not long of finding others. The public buildings at present going on, consist of two Chapels of Ease for the parish of St.

Cuthbert one in the Northern<sup>1</sup> and the other in the Southern<sup>2</sup> extremity of the town, both of which are pretty well advanced. The south side of the College<sup>3</sup> and the north side of the Register Office<sup>4</sup> are also in the way of being speedily completed. A building for the Society of Arts at the Mound after great labour & expense in laying the foundation on piles is now beginning to rise slowly.<sup>5</sup> On the same piece of ground as that on which the north chapel of Ease is built, a handsome Structure for the Education of the deaf and dumb makes its appearance and the Edinburgh Academy closely adjoining is now three or four feet above the level of the ground tho' in my opinion its Situation is too far out of the way even for the patrician part of Edinburgh. As to private houses on the south side of the town which are intended chiefly for the middle classes we have in the Pleasance-Parkside building at the upper end & three or four lands towards the other extremity. Next the Pleasance the east side of Drummond Street is nearly completed by the building of some very high lands. North Richmond Street is completed. The south side of St. Patrick's square is nearly brought to a height & in that neighbourhood additions have been made to W. Clerk Street, Rankeillor Street & particularly the houses & villas of Newington. At Lauriston a new street—Archibald Place—has suddenly been struck out leading directly south to the back of the new Merchant Maiden Hospital<sup>6</sup> & houses on both sides of it are pretty well advanced. In the neighbourhood of the Canal a few lands are building on the line of Fountainbridge & in the Lothian Road opposite to the basin,<sup>7</sup> but operations in that

<sup>1</sup> St. Bernard's Church.    <sup>2</sup> Buccleuch Church.    <sup>3</sup> The University.

<sup>4</sup> See *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, Vol. XVII, pp. 147 ff.

<sup>5</sup> The Royal Institution, begun 1823, completed 1836, now the home of the Royal Scottish Academy.

<sup>6</sup> Erected in 1816-19; demolished in 1933 to make room for Infirmary extension.

<sup>7</sup> The canal basin, called Port Hopetoun, existed from 1822 to 1922, and the site is now partly occupied by Lothian House.

1823

quarter this season are not near so extensive as those of last year. In the new town there are considerable ranges of buildings both in the north east & north west extremities. We have to notice in the former division the completion of Drummond Place & material addition to Scotland Street, London Street south side, Mansfield Place (completed) & Bellevue Crescent. Claremont Place is begun but [it] is rather unaccountable that Claremont Crescent from its beautiful situation is not sooner filled up. The most remarkable increase as to buildings of expensive architecture are those on Lord Murray's ground. About the end of last year the beginnings of the vast operation in that quarter only were perceptible, now a great part of three or four sides of the Octagon<sup>1</sup> are visible. A line of houses nine or ten in number extending from the western extremity of Queen Street eastward nearly as far as the servitude will allow have suddenly sprung up on the north side, to the great annoyance of the old proprietors opposite. At right angles to this extremity of Queen Street also another street is fairly begun stretching northwards & forming part of the east boundary of Lord Murray's property. It is curious to notice that the last plan<sup>2</sup> of Edinburgh published very lately contains all the new streets between the Calton Hill & Leith which may require half a century to complete, while Lord Murray's ground is left blank tho' from contracts entered into with builders it is said a great part of this important division will be finished within two years. In the direct western extremity of the New Town we have Coates Crescent completed this year & several new houses built in Walker Street. There are also additions in India Street, India Place, Gloucester Place. In what may be called the Leith Walk & Calton Hill division building is not going on so quickly this year as might be expected from the favour-

<sup>1</sup> Moray Place is an octagon.

<sup>2</sup> Plan by Thomas Brown, 1820, revised to 1823 by John Wood.

able situation of the ground. The amount for the season is about four houses in Windsor Street, four or five lands in Leopold Place & corner of Baxter's Place and two only in Elm Row, the most eligible of all. The Royal Terrace notwithstanding its elevated & commanding position is feuing out but slowly & as yet only three of its houses are inhabited.

Oct. 11. Our Theatre which was only open for a few days at this time closed this evening. The principal attraction was a Miss Paton, whose real merits as a singer as well as her being a native of the place, tho' she never before appeared in this theatre, were the means of drawing crowded houses. She had also a sister who has shown respectable talents for comedy. The father of these girls who attends them & takes complete charge of their money concerns, was some years ago the first writing master in Edinburgh. His professional abilities were undoubted but some eccentricities in his conduct it is said were the means of his losing his school. His residence for some time I suppose has been in London where his daughters' talents have been known & appreciated.

October 27. The plan of a new approach to Edinburgh from the south of which the middle walk of the Meadows is to form a material portion appears in this day's papers. It is the project perhaps rather visionary of an anonymous individual, & yet I would not be surprised at it exciting such interest as may lead to a further discussion of its merits, particularly as he connects this line with a proposed bridge<sup>1</sup> over the Cowgate at the Lawnmarket, an improvement which was really talked of some years ago. A most important recommendation of this line is the comparatively small expense at which it might be executed. The Meadow Walk is already formed & the expense of the bridge might in a great measure be defrayed by feuing out new buildings on the line.

November 27th. A line of road leading eastward from Drummond Street thro' the Kings Park was planned out long

<sup>1</sup> George IV Bridge.

1823

ago & an act of Parliament obtained for it in 1803. Hitherto however the carrying into effect this road act has been quite neglected. Last year the south district addressed the Trustees on the subject, just now their memory is again refreshed by repeated letters & paragraphs in the Edinburgh papers to which I myself have contributed<sup>1</sup> but I fear we must look forward to disappointments & delays.

Nov. 29. Oil gas Companies are establishing both at Edinburgh & Leith. The former is likely to rival the Coal Gas concern which is at present getting so extensive. At a meeting of the Edinburgh Oil Gas Company the other day Sir Walter Scott was loud in its praise & thought it highly probable that in the course of two years every private house in this City would be lighted with it.<sup>2</sup> In that case some trades will suffer, ours among the rest.

*Union Canal.* Trade on this canal is increasing so fast that the basin is not sufficient to contain the vessels that come to it, so that the canal Company are purchasing ground for an additional basin in the neighbourhood. The imports besides coal & goods consists also of all kinds of building materials, stone, slates, wood & lime; the exports however are necessarily fewer comprising only merchant goods and dung.

Dec. 10. Among other lines of approach to our city lately projected I observe one is described to form a direct communication between the upper end of Portsburg[h]<sup>3</sup> at Main Point & the extremity of the High Street at the Castle Hill. An arch would be requisite to carry it to the south west part of the Castle bank; it would then proceed it is said by a gradual ascent<sup>4</sup> along the south declivity of this hill till it

<sup>1</sup> This may refer to a letter in the *Scotsman* of 26th November 1823, signed 'A Citizen.'

<sup>2</sup> Sir Walter Scott was Chairman of the Edinburgh Oil Gas Light Company, incorporated 1824. He used gas at Abbotsford—Lockhart's *Life*, chap. 58.

<sup>3</sup> Portsburg district, comprising West Port, etc., was not part of the city proper until 1856.

<sup>4</sup> Now Johnston Terrace.

united with that part of the High Street which is named the Castle Hill. This plan seems tolerably eligible, but the one leading east from Drummond Street having now a legislative sanction obtained twenty years ago ought to have the preference of all others as to priority of time. Some strenuous exertions are making about this line just now but prospect of success is but doubtful.

Dec. 29. It appears to be in serious agitation just now to purchase Duddingston Loch from the proprietor for the purpose of obtaining an additional supply of water for the city. The plan is to drain the loch & by mechanical means to raise the spring to such a level as may supply a part of the southern division of Edinburgh. (This plan however was never attempted to be put in execution, as the town was shortly after amply supplied by the Crawley Spring.)

1824 Feb. 7. The public in this city have got an additional accommodation by all the penny post offices throughout the New town & suburbs being rendered free receiving houses for country letters.<sup>1</sup>

Feb. 9. *Edinburgh improvements.* As novelties on this head we have stances for houses advertised to be feued in April on the south and east of the Calton Hill & on the London Road immediately to the north of the Hill; also villa stances on the Murrayfield Grounds to the north-west of Coltbridge. A new road is projected to lead from Leith Walk immediately below Gayfield Place in as straight a line as possible to Newhaven. An additional basin for the Union Canal is fairly begun to be excavated a little to the north west of the present inner basin. Another crescent is also to be built opposite Coates Crescent converting it into a circus, namely Atholl Crescent. Some people are projecting a new bank similar to the Commercial to be named the Edinburgh Bank.

March 13. *Castle Hill Road.* This approach to the loftiest

<sup>1</sup> A Penny Post was started in Edinburgh by Peter Williamson in 1774.

1824

part of our city I noticed in Decr. It is now more confidently talked of, as the prospects & plan are printed and circulated and one important point is held out that the value of the ground will be sufficient to clear the expense an important consideration at this time when the finances of our City have been so embarrassed by the improvements of late years. It would appear to me rather a hazardous speculation to lay out money upon, at the same time it is an improvement highly desirable.

June. The rage for building seems rather on the increase and notwithstanding the excessive number of ticketed houses before Whitsunday, at present there are very few to be seen unoccupied either in the new or old parts of the town. On the South Side at present the most considerable ranges of new houses are in the Pleasance-Parkside buildings; [and] St. Patrick's Square, which is about to be completed by the addition of the south & west sides. Opening from Lauriston to the south we have Archibald Place which was not heard of till within these few months and now the stances about 16 in number are mostly all built upon, & some of the houses tenanted. The Lothian Road is extending southwards so as to approach the Meadow Walk & foundations of houses in that quarter are digging. Immediately to the east of the Canal a lofty range is building and a handsome corner house on the West Kirk<sup>1</sup> glebe, close to the churchyard. To the west of the additional basin forming for the canal a lofty crescent is fairly begun, Gardner's Crescent. In the north-west quarter, on Heriot's Hospital ground, Athol Crescent is springing up all at once making a counterpart to Coates Crescent or rather converting it into a circle. Melville Street & other streets adjoining are also on the increase. In Lord Murray's ground besides the large polygon there are buildings going on in Ainslie Place, St. Colme Street, Forres & Darnaway

<sup>1</sup> St. Cuthbert's Church.

Street. In the north the greatest number of new houses are in Cumberland Street and Scotland Street, London Street also is just completed. The progress of building in the Leith Walk department is slower than might be expected. Windsor Street has got most addition, Elm Row is creeping on, also Hillside Crescent, Brunswick Street is just begun.

As to public buildings the north half of the Register Office is nearly finished. The vacancy on the south side of the College is about to be filled up which will complete the whole edifice excepting the spire in front. The public building to the north of the Mound is like to prove a tedious work and at present has the appearance of an Egyptian ruin. Bellevue, or St Mary's Church is now so far advanced as to give promise of being a most elegant structure and the new approach to it from Claremont Crescent a judicious improvement of that part of the Newhaven Road. The new Academy is to be occupied on the 1 Oct. Government having allowed £4000 a year for six years towards the improvement of Holyrood House, sheds and workshops for the masons and carpenters are rearing up. From the proceedings at a general meeting held here on the 18th one would think the building of the National Monument on the Calton Hill is to commence sometime this season.

June 24. *Fire at the Cross & entry to Parliament Close.* This has proved the most extensive & destructive fire in Edinburgh within my remembrance. A favourable opportunity now occurs for widening the entrance to the Parliament Close, if our good town folks are able to buy up the ruins.

June 25. It is in agitation at present to transfer the property of the Leith Wet Docks from the Town of Edinburgh to a private company to be named the Dock Company. The first wet dock of Leith opened in 1806 proved a good concern for the town as the trade of the port increased very much after that time but the formation of a second dock turned the scale the other way, as to pay the interest of the debt incurred

152 EXTRACTS FROM AN EDINBURGH JOURNAL

1824

the whole revenue is insufficient and in this head the Town sustains a loss of £2-3000 a year at present. It is proposed by the town to make the new company an allowance for a certain number of years, and afterwards the Company to take the chance of a probable increase of revenue. One would think this to be not a very promising speculation for the shareholders but it is said the measure is likely to be carried into effect. The magistrates in getting rid of the Docks it is understood however are to do what they can for the extension of the pier of Leith which is an improvement much wanted.

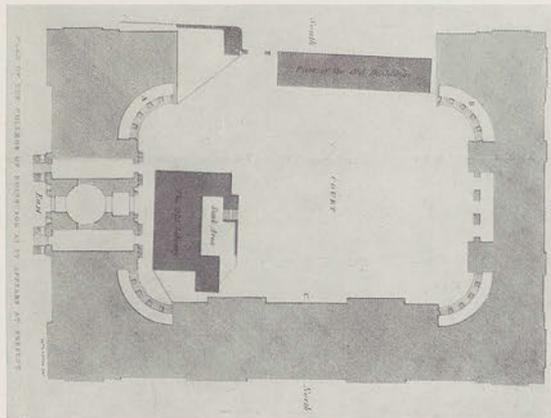
July 21. A public meeting held here this day have begun a subscription for a monument to James Watt the great improver of the steam engine. It is proposed that it should be a public edifice so as to accommodate the School of Arts.<sup>1</sup>

July 26. *Water of Leith.* The very great number of mills on this river & their importance in supplying this city with the most necessary articles of consumpt, has just now suggested a plan for securing a regular supply of water in the summer months, the want of which hitherto particularly in dry seasons has been very much felt. It is proposed to form one reservoir or perhaps more towards the source of the river and in this manner the overplus of winter will make up for the deficiency of summer. The expense of course must be borne by those whose property will be improved by such a measure and I suppose at the top of the list should appear the Edinr. Corporation of Bakers.

July 27. It being understood that the magistrates have it still in view to move the High School from its present situation to St. Andrew's Square probably to the present Excise Office if not converted into a mansion house<sup>2</sup>, a meeting

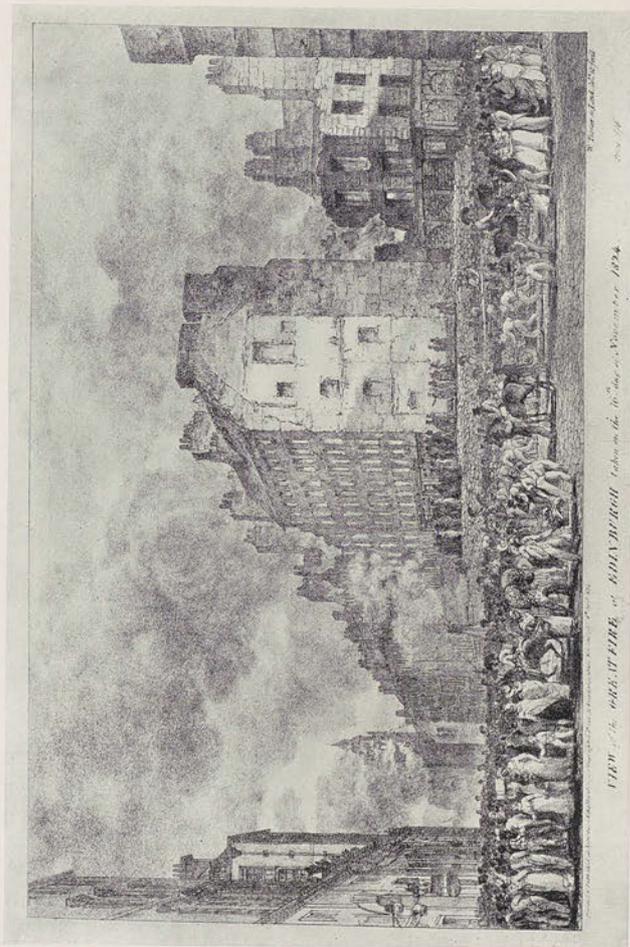
<sup>1</sup> The money collected was insufficient for a new building, and the Watt Institution remained in Adam Square (on the site of the E. end of Chambers Street), until a new building (now the Heriot-Watt College) was opened in 1873.

<sup>2</sup> See under 11th March 1825.



PLAN OF UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH AND VIEW OF SOUTH SIDE BEFORE COMPLETION IN 1825

From engravings by Lizars



VIEW OF THE GREAT FIRE OF EDINBURGH Taken on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of December, 1824.

THE GREAT FIRE OF 1824

From lithograph by W. Turner

#### EXTRACTS FROM AN EDINBURGH JOURNAL 153

of the inhabitants of the south districts was held this day with the view of entering into resolutions against the removal. I was present but the meeting was neither numerous nor upon the whole very respectable. Long enough speeches however were made on both sides of the question, two leading members of the Town Council, Messrs. Waugh & Allan, being present who defended the magistrates' plan with feasible enough arguments. On the one side it was urged that the High School being considered as an appendage to the College might still under able teachers retain its respectability as a seminary of education, having the undivided support of the Old Town, Canongate & South districts, the latter rapidly increasing in extent and population while on the other hand if moved to the new town might lose the patronage of the South and gain very little of the North, having to contend with another establishment which had a great part of the population on that side pledged to its support. On the other hand it was urged that at present both the smallest & least respectable part of the school belonged to the south division and thus in the event of its moving north, from its terms being considerably lower than the new school, it might still retain a great part of the families who were not subscribers to the Academy, while its eminence & character would draw a large preponderance of pupils from the old town and its dependencies. The majority of the meeting were in favour of the school remaining where it is, but all things considered their determination will throw little weight into the scale. For my own part tho' long attached to the idea of the High School remaining the School of Old Edinburgh, I begin now to waver in my opinion, it is indeed a subject on which much may be said plausibly on both sides. The state of the school next winter when the new Academy will have fairly entered the lists with it will serve as a tolerable criterion to judge of its future destiny.

Aug. 7. A new jail is immediately to be built in Leith and

1824

the old one erected in Queen Mary's time to be taken down.<sup>1</sup> The new road leading from the foot of Leith Walk to the upper bridge over the water of Leith, so as to make a direct communication with North Leith without going through the narrow dirty streets of South Leith, commenced some time ago but of late has remained at a stand and at present has a very awkward appearance.

Sept. 11. Our Excise Office is now advertised to be sold by auction on the 13th October the upset price being £28,000. It is still supposed that the City may have a bargain of this costly edifice if they please as they have claims on Government for ground yielded by them for different public buildings, which may reduce the purchase of the Excise Office considerably.

Sept. 20. A railway on which wheel carriages are to be moved by steam seems a serious agitation as an improved mode of communication between Manchester & Liverpool. Our paper of this day notices a similar railway to be projected for connecting Edinburgh with Dalkeith & Musselburgh & that £36,000 raised by subscription on shares will answer the purpose.

Oct. 7. In the Edinr. newspaper of this day we have the first notice of an intended application to Parliament for an Act to carry into effect the late projected improvements. Four distinct objects are to be comprised in this Act. (1st) The West Road by the Castle Hill; (2nd) a new Bridge & communication southward from the Lawnmarket opposite Bank Street (3rd) The alterations and improvements of St. Giles Church and (4th) what I have only heard of for the first time an intended street and communication leading from the north of Adam Square to Merchant Street.<sup>2</sup> The latter

<sup>1</sup> In Tolbooth Wynd.

<sup>2</sup> Merchant Street, off Candlemaker Row, was formed at the expense of the Merchant Company and ran south of and parallel to the Cowgate. The foundations of the present Augustine-Bristo Congregational Church rest on the street.

seems for the purpose of making an area to the north of the College by clearing away Adam Square and other old buildings so as to allow this stately edifice to be a little better seen on the north as it is so much hid on the other three sides. The Lawnmarket & Castle Hill improvements it seems will lead to the pulling down a great part of the south side of these two streets, and if these are to be removed there is still better reason for demolishing the north side houses of the Castle Hill which are truly frightful and probably have stood already more than 300 years. A direct approach from the Grassmarket to the Lawnmarket is also connected with these other alterations so as to supersede the West Bow.

Nov. 15 to 17. *Great Fire of Edinburgh.* This fire for the extent of its ravages seems to have but one parallel in the annals of our city that of Feb. 1700 which happened very nearly in the same situation in both cases destroying the very highest houses in Edinburgh. I often think it is a pity an Act of Parliament were not passed limiting the height of houses to three or at the most four stories. It is worthy of remark that the most calamitous fires in this City have commenced in the upper parts of high lands, for those which attack shops or the lower parts of houses are almost always got under without spreading upwards. No engines however can reach to the top of our lofty old town houses; indeed when a house is completely kindled at the top from its being so much in contact with the air, a deluge of water would be necessary to arrest the progress of the flames.<sup>1</sup>

Dec. 6. Two of our Edinburgh newspapers just now have furnished their readers with engraved plans of the intended improvements of our City particularly as connected with the approaches from the south and west. Those agreeing with

<sup>1</sup> For a description of the Great Fire, see the *Scotsman* of 17th and 20th November 1824. Fire broke out on the 15th and continued until the 17th November, destroying most of the property between Parliament Square and the Tron Church, in parts right back to the Cowgate.

1824

the latest reports of the architects or surveyors differ essentially from the first plan. It was at first intended that the bridge over the Cowgate should be exactly opposite Bank Street. It is now suggested that the line of the Mound should strike directly into the Lawnmarket near where the Weighhouse stood & from this point the Castle Hill road should diverge in a south west, and the south approach in a south east, direction, thus proceeding for a short distance behind the front houses on the south side of the Lawnmarket and then turning directly south by a bridge across the Cowgate, keeping in a line with the west side of Brown's Square<sup>1</sup> which must be taken down, it at length reaches Bristo Port where one branch leads directly to the Meadow Walk. The plan of the west road is merely the same as formerly noticed only it is proposed to raise the middle of the Lothian Road to a level with Princes Street. The next part of the plan is to level the High Street all the way from the Exchange<sup>2</sup> to the esplanade of the Castle, in the upper part this will amount to twenty feet below the present level so that it will be necessary to ascend to the Esplanade by a flight of steps, the carriage road to the Castle winding round the north and south sides of the Esplanade.<sup>3</sup> One important advantage to be gained by the levelling of the street is to render the approach both from the Mound and from the south and west easier. The houses on the north as well as the south side of the Castle Hill to be completely demolished and the street in that direction made straight and much wider with crescents looking both to the Castle and Princes Street. The estimate of the whole expense of these improvements including £13,000 for the alteration on St. Giles Church amount to £50,000 beyond what will be gained

<sup>1</sup> On the site of the Dental Hospital in Chambers Street.

<sup>2</sup> The Royal Exchange for merchants was built in 1753-61; it became the City Chambers in 1811.

<sup>3</sup> In the Lawnmarket this resulted in steps being required from the new street level to the pavement.

by the feuing of stances for houses on the different new lines. Since the late fire another very neat improvement has been projected, namely, to extend the Parliament Square eastward to the line of the Old Assembly Close, clearing away all the ruinous buildings and a few others which are in the way thus presenting a noble & spacious area in the centre of our City which will show our venerable St. Giles to great advantage. This latter article I suppose has not yet been the subject of survey or estimate but it is evident the great extent of the late fire will render it practicable at far less expense than it could otherwise have been done. It may be long enough before these plans are carried fully into execution and they may be now modelled in various ways in the meantime. It is amusing to note from time to time the different views that are taken of these subjects.

Dec. 9. *Edinr. Musical Festival.* The nett gain to the public charities from the Festival of this season amounts to little more than £500 being about one-third of the profits of the first Festival in 1815 and less than a half of the second in 1819. From this progressive diminution it is supposed there will be little encouragement to try another.<sup>1</sup>

1825 Jan. 22. Some months ago I noticed the progress made towards transferring the property of the Leith Wet Docks from the city of Edinburgh to a private company. This measure is now like to meet with serious opposition and that on feasible enough grounds. One meeting was held at Leith some days ago attended by the resident magistrates and a large proportion of the respectable inhabitants for the sake of publishing their sentiments on this subject, and yester-

<sup>1</sup> The First Edinburgh Musical Festival was held from 30th October to 4th November 1815, partly in the Parliament House and partly in Corri's Rooms (on the site of the present Theatre Royal); the second from 19th to 23rd October 1819 in Parliament House and the Theatre Royal (on the site of the G.P.O.), and the third from 25th to 30th October 1824.

1825

day a meeting was held in Edinburgh of people holding similar views as to this plan of our Magistracy. . . .

Feb. 23. The fire last night at the head of Blackfriars Wynd is the fourth very serious one in the space of eight months. Printed regulations have been lately issued as to the arrangements proper in cases of fire and the duty of public functionaries & all those immediately connected with the fire department. The instructions are both ample & minute enough but yet I think there is too much formality and etiquette in different respects. More stress should be laid on the prompt attendance of the engines as this is the most important point of all & yet was certainly neglected last night as the firemen with their apparatus were at least half an hour later than they ought to have been and in the circumstances of the case was an unpassable loss of time.

Feb. 25. Yesterday at a meeting of the Council and Magistrates agreed to the erection of a new church in St. Vincent Street near the Royal Circus.<sup>1</sup> The application for seats in St. Mary's Church being more numerous than could be supplied, of course suggest the expediency of another place of public worship in this district of increasing wealth & population.

March 3rd. An advertisement in our papers this day announces that a plan of streets, including a crescent, for the space occupied by the old Botanic Gardens and ground to the north and west is ready so that it may be feued without delay.<sup>2</sup> It is intended also to extend London Street in this direction so that the inhabitants of the north extremity of the new town may have a short & direct communication with the middle of Leith Walk. It is rather a curious circumstance that the field next Leith Walk & adjoining to Gayfield Square

<sup>1</sup> St. Stephen's Church.

<sup>2</sup> The Old Botanic Gardens were situated between Leith Walk and Hope Crescent.

has been ticketed to feu ever since I remember & though to all appearance a most eligible situation not the least progress has yet been made towards building in this quarter.

March 11. Yesterday our Excise Office<sup>1</sup> was sold to the Royal Bank for about £35,000 which is thought a very high price.

March 24. The explosion which happened last night in Shandwick Place is the first of the kind attended with fatal consequences which has occurred since the introduction of gas light into this City. Its co-incidence with the commencement of the Oil Gas Company's operations may be of prejudice to that company as they looked for their support in a good measure from the use of it in private houses in the New Town. Otherwise it would have sooner been forgotten.

March 31. Within these few days there have been meetings of the inhabitants & of public bodies connected with the City & suburbs for the purpose of expressing the opinion as to the bill at present before Parliament for assessing the City & liberties to defray the expense of the intended improvements. Those connected with the interior of the City were of course most favourable to the bill. The Canongate and south districts were at first rather disposed to acquiesce in the measure provided some concession were made to themselves such as the east line of communication from Drummond Street to the London Road so long talked of, another line connecting the Canongate with this line & the Calton Road also public drains both for the South & Canongate. A party in the New Town however consisting mostly of lawyers have boldly declared against the assessment altogether and have got large bills posted up in the most public places with the words 'Compulsory Assessment' in large letters at the top inviting everybody to sign a petition to Parliament against the intended legislative enactment. The idea of allotting £15,000 of the money to be raised for the purpose of embellishing old St. Giles seems to be scouted by all parties both

<sup>1</sup> In St. Andrew Square.

1825

South & North, as it is insisted the Magistrates ought to do this out of the proper Church Fund, the seat rents of the Town Church amounting at present to between £4 and £5000.

March 31. *Edinburgh New College*. Besides the open ground the College has gained to the west and what the Commissioners expect to acquire on the north from Adam Square by the Improvement Act, they are in the train of bargaining both for Mr. Aikman's Church & the Trades Maiden Hospital which when taken down will leave an open space for garden ground or the like all the way to Argyle Square.<sup>1</sup>

April 8. Both the South district and Canongate have declared more directly against the assessment for the improvements at their second meetings. It will not be easy now to carry through the bill this session. In a paper of this day a Joint Stock Company is advertised to be formed for the purpose of effecting the improvements without having recourse to assessments. They propose a capital of £300,000 or perhaps £500,000, but to give up the proposed approach by the Castle bank as too expensive, contenting themselves with a line<sup>2</sup> from the east end of the Grassmarket to connect with the north end of the new South Bridge. They hardly look for the value of the feus in the new lines doing more than clearing their expense but they expect their profits to arise chiefly from being builders themselves. I hardly think this scheme will take, at least it is not very probable they will get people to embark such an amount of real capital upon an undertaking of the kind.

April 9. *Cuddy Park*. This piece of ground on Leith Walk adjoining to Gayfield Square is at length beginning to be cut up with the view of building. It is rather remarkable so eligible a situation ticketed for feuing about 30 years ago should have remained so long a vacant space.

<sup>1</sup> The Royal Scottish Museum is on the site of Argyle Square.

<sup>2</sup> Now Victoria Street.



INNER CANAL BASIN, PORT HOPEFOULN  
From photograph in the Edinburgh Room of an oil painting, circa 1830

EXTRACTS FROM AN EDINBURGH JOURNAL 161

April 17. *Fire in Milne's Court.* The fire which took place here early this morning had at first as alarming an appearance as any of our great fires, breaking out in the upper part of a lofty old tenement. The Tripod, a late invention for raising the pipes of the fire engines to play with effect at the height of four or five stories, was found very useful on this occasion and confined the damage to the upper two stories & garret. This old house happened to be in the very line of the intended approach from the Mound to the upper part of the Lawnmarket so that its demolition must take place soon at any rate if this improvement is effected.

April 30. In one of our newspapers this day a long advertisement appears recommending a new infirmary to be built somewhere on the north side of the town, part of it to be employed as a medical hotel for those who may be able to pay for services of this kind, so that what may be gained by one department of the institution may go to assist the other or charity class of patients.

May 2nd. A great alteration is announced as to the arrangement of mail coaches between London and Edinburgh. Instead of one we are to have two coaches, one setting off from Edinburgh in the evening about 9 & the other at 8 in the morning, but both to arrive in the evening, one is to go by Dunbar and Berwick & the other by Kelso. The present coach is to arrive at six in the evening instead of nine and the letters are to be delivered that evening. It is to be hoped also the newspapers will be ready sooner. The alteration commences between the 6th & 8th of May.

*Calton Hill.* The south east side of this hill being part of Heriots Hospital grounds looking towards the Canongate & Holyrood House is cutting up just now with the view of building immediately. This line of houses will form a pleasant terrace on the sunny side of the hill. (It was named the Regents Terrace.)

May 9. The London Mail arrived last night a little after

1825

5 o'clock for the first time. Some years ago particularly from the years 1812 to 1815 an arrival so early in the evening would have been an important arrangement to the loungers & quidnuncs when almost every post was pregnant with momentous intelligence; at present there is comparatively speaking much indifference as to the contents of newspapers.

May 23. The Bill authorising the transfer of the property of the Leith Wet Dock to a joint stock company has after a good deal of discussion been thrown out in the House of Commons to the great joy of the Leith people.

June 10. It seems now to be arranged by our Town Council that the High School is to be removed to the Calton Hill. The situation fixed upon is to the east of the Miller's Knowe & to the north of the London Road. This spot is certainly objectionable in different respects, but upon the whole it was almost impossible to procure a more eligible place.

June 25. It is now understood that Government are to lend money at 3 per cent to enable the City of Edinburgh to pay off the debts in the Leith Wet Docks allowing them to levy other 2 p. cent which is to act as a sinking fund to reduce the capital of the debt. There is a condition annex'd however of the City's building the eastern wall of the Dock intended for ships of war entering from Newhaven. £28,000 also is to be laid out in the improvement in Leith Harbour.

June 30. The number of houses building in Edinburgh this season probably exceeds that of any former year. The great increase however is in the west in Coates division & north west Lord Moray's ground for in other quarters the number is much the same as before. In the south east division the most extensive building is Parkside Street nearly complete now but the houses are but of ordinary description. St. Patrick Square is just completed. In the villa ground immediately to the west of the Meadow Cage<sup>1</sup> three sides of a

<sup>1</sup> A glass pavilion at the south end of Meadow Walk.

square are forming. Between the south end of the Lothian Road & the Meadows a great deal of feuing & building is going on the houses being rather for the lower classes. West from the Canal basin Gardner's Crescent is half built. Atholl Crescent seems now complete though only begun last summer. In the Coates division besides additions to other streets there are 25 houses building in Melville Street alone which promises soon to be one of the finest in Edinburgh. In Lord Moray's grounds such rapid progress is making that in the course of another year this division is likely to be nearly filled up. Moray Place is all built except a few stances in the south west corner, and as Randolph Crescent is fairly begun almost every street or place marked on the plan of the property is more or less advanced. To the north of the New Town the new additions are but moderate comprising a few in Cumberland Street, Fettes Row, & Brandon Street. The Royal Crescent facing Canonmills Loch is just beginning. Claremont Street however has 13 new houses but Claremont Crescent goes on but slowly & as yet is only half built. The buildings in the Leith Walk divisions are going on regularly but not with increased speed. Elm Row and Leopold Place will be complete this season. Windsor Street wants but little. Hillside Crescent has just 4 & Brunswick Street 6 houses. Brunton Place just beginning. The Royal Terrace which for a long time past consisted of 7 houses not the half inhabited, from the digging going on, is about to receive some additions. On the south east side of the Calton Hill there will soon be a long range of houses if we may judge by the extent of the foundations digging. In the cess park adjoining Gayfield Square there are already 7 or 8 houses building & foundations digging completely behind the old Botanic Gardens. As to public buildings the south side of the College quadrangle will be finished this season, so that only the spire in front will be wanting to finish the whole. The public building in the Mound is getting on faster this year, whatever opinion may be formed of its general appearance,

1825

its aspect with regard to Hanover Street is certainly objectionable as it is a kind of blocking up of what is intended as a principal line of communication between the old & new towns. The spire of St. Mary's & Bellevue Church is nearly finished. The improvement of Holyrood House is going on but is not likely to be attended with any wonderful effect.

July 4. *John Watson's Hospital.* The foundation of this hospital was laid this day at the Dean. It is meant for the maintenance & education of destitute children. The money left by Mr. Watson it is said in 1781 only amounted to £4700 & now had accumulated to £120,000 being three times the sum that would have been produced by Compound Interest at 5 per cent. Such extraordinary increase is only to be accounted for by some lucky speculation in the funds.

July 6. *High School.* The estimate for this building £20,000 is in my opinion too much. It is expected the present school & grounds will sell for £7-£8000 and the rest of the money is to be raised by subscription. (It actually cost about £33,000.)

July 25. The North Loch to the east of the Mound is filling up very fast this summer owing to the very great quantity of earth brought from the foundations of the many new buildings going on at present.

July 28. Tho' the foundation of the intended High School was laid this day with great formality, it seems extremely doubtful when the building will commence. It will not be easy to raise £12-£13000 by subscription for this purpose, indeed if we may judge from the new Infirmary, contributions for public institutions are not getting on at present with much spirit. The Infirmary list contains abundance of names but the amount as yet is but a fraction of what will be required. The foundation of the High School is almost the only public measure the present Provost has carried through.

August 11. *Canonmills Meadow.* This meadow both to the east and west of Pitt Street is at present advertised for feuing.

The situation I should think is very similar to the North Loch and would look much better if laid out in pleasure grounds than in building stances.

Sept. 5. A new road is at present forming so as to connect the southern part of Edinburgh with Portobello & Musselburgh. It is to commence at Preston Street, & proceeding I suppose nearly in the line of the present footpath which approaches so close to the basaltic rocks on the south side of Arthur's Seat, passes thro' Duddingston & to the east of Duddingston Mill & crosses the Figgate Burn by a bridge at present building. This line will no doubt supersede the road once intended to run in a straight direction eastward from Drummond Street so as to join the Musselburgh road at the Watering Stone.

Sept. 10. The Dean lands to a great extent are feuing just now so that it is not unlikely we may soon have another new town in that quarter. They talk of making a communication between that side of the water of Leith and Lord Moray's ground by means of a very lofty bridge (called afterwards the Dean Bridge).

Sept. 17. There is a talk just now of removing the Tron Church from its present situation & building a larger one for the same parish probably somewhere near the Netherbow for that purpose removing some of the old crazy tenements thereabouts. It is said the proprietor of Hunter Square & part of the South Bridge would contribute a considerable sum to have the space where the Church stands at present made clear.

Oct. 3. From a public notice on the church doors or otherwise I observe the very same train of improvements are to be brought forward next session of Parliament, namely the west & south approaches, the embellishment of St. Giles Church, the clearing away of buildings from the north & west of the College, and perhaps also the removing of the Tron Church.

Oct. 10. This day commenced building a double land at the head of the old Assembly Close being the first rebuilding

1825

of houses consumed in the great fires of Novr. 1824. It is not expected anything will be done in the Parliament Close till next summer at soonest most of it being in the hands of Government and some legislative enactments being requisite for building the Courts & other public edifices projected in that quarter.

Oct. 12. It has been observed for some time that the extension of the finest part of Edinr. has been uniformly to the west & north. What buildings are going on in other directions proceeding more languidly and the inhabitants though respectable enough by no means the tip top gentry of the west. Some people account for this on philosophical principles as it is said to take place in other large towns besides Edinburgh. They allege that westerly being the most prevalent winds, the west may be considered as the windward side, if our dwelling lie to this side therefore we are less liable to be involved in smoke & of course more likely to enjoy a purer atmosphere. It is curious also to compare the inhabitants of old Edinburgh at present with those by whom it was occupied about the middle of last century. Before 1750 Edinburgh was mostly included within the walls excepting its suburbs to the south & west which were generally made up of mean looking houses. The higher classes, including a much greater number of noble families than are to be found now in our finest new streets, were distributed thro' the High Street, Canongate and the closes leading from these & the Cowgate. At present within the same bounds we hardly find a respectable family even of the middle class, the best part of the old town inhabitants holding a kind of intermediate rank between the middle & lower classes, such as tailors, shoemakers & other tradesmen who may have a few men working under them, but even of these there are not enough, as some of the best old houses have to be sub-divided so as to admit of the lowest kind of tenants. We have still some first rate shops in the old town but these

are gradually moving off to the northwards. Even in the new town a second migration has distinctly taken place the great folks who originally occupied the eastern parts having moved westwards leaving Princes Street, St. Andrew Square etc. to be occupied by public offices, hotels, shops, lodging houses and the like.

Nov. 3. The grounds of Mr. Fletcher of Saltoun in the south back of the Canongate<sup>1</sup> extending from St. John's Hill nearly to Holyrood House & comprising about 12 acres were advertised to be feud for the first time in this day's paper. It is expected on this occasion a serious attempt will be made to carry into execution the long talked of road leading from Drummond Street thro' the St. John's hill grounds, but it is now clearly ascertained the public will do nothing for this road except keeping it up after it is made. The St. John's Hill proprietors and Mr. Fletcher's doers must take the whole burden if it is to be done.

Nov. 17. Of the money raised by voluntary contribution for the sufferers by the great fires which took place here exactly twelve months ago amounting to over £11,000 a surplus still remains of about £5000 after satisfying all claims & charges. There have been meetings to consider how to dispose of this sum. Some have proposed a small part to be allotted to the sufferers at Miramichi<sup>2</sup> but a general opinion seems to be in favour of establishing a house of refuge for petty offenders to enable them to recover their characters, Nothing is yet exactly determined as to this matter.

Nov. 22. One Edinburgh builder Hill has failed just now and it is supposed there are others rather embarrassed. Building this season has certainly been carried too far & a considerable rise in wages and materials will make a serious drawback in profits & eventually check its progress.

<sup>1</sup> South back of the Canongate is now named Holyrood Road.

<sup>2</sup> A fire in New Brunswick, when 160 lives were lost and 6000 square miles of forest burned.

1825

Dec. 3. The subscription for the new High School has fairly commenced, our magistrates & Council taking the lead. At least £10,000 will be required besides the proceeds of the old school & if they trust to what is to be got by hanging up subscription papers in banking houses & the like, I fear it will be long before the building is commenced. In my opinion the best way would be for two or three respectable people to carry about subscription papers from house to house, many people would give small sums this way that would not contribute otherwise.

Dec. 31. The remains of the entrance to the Parliament Close destroyed by fire in June 1824 are now beginning to be taken down and both stones & rubbish removing so that it is likely we shall soon have plenty of open space in this part of the town. These ruins had a most unsightly appearance and it was not creditable to our public authorities to let them remain so long in this condition.

1826 17th Jan. Now that the half burnt buildings at the entrance to the Parliament Close are taken down & the stones and rubbish cleared away I suppose it occurs to every person that this part of the old town would be much improved by the east side when rebuilt being thrown much further back. Indeed it is said Government have purchased all this property including the old double land which at present stands solitary between the ruins of two different fires, and that it is intended the new range of buildings which are mostly intended for public offices shall have a much more open & splendid appearance. If the embellishing & new modelling of St. Giles Church be managed with taste, and the High Street in this quarter properly levelled, the old town may yet be revived in some measure from its late depressed condition. Building in this quarter it seems is put off till summer after next at soonest.

Jan. 17. A great portion of our newspapers lately has been occupied by tedious discussion between the old & new water companies. The latter are about to apply to Parliament for liberty to bring an additional supply of water from springs at Listonshiels to the westward. The former on the other hand maintain that the quantity at present is quite sufficient for the consumpt of the city and it is plain they deprecate the idea of an over-supply, as however advantageous to the public might have the effect of reducing prices too much.<sup>1</sup>

Feb. 16. The Princes Street proprietors as well as some others of our new town Dons having had a meeting lately, published in the paper resolutions expressing of their disapprobation of the filling up of the North Loch to the east of the Mound as having the effect of injuring the romantic appearance of the old town as seen from this quarter. They are also jealous of the Town Council having still the intention of building somewhere to the south of Princes Street.<sup>2</sup> The Provost in answer to a letter addressed to him by them is not very explicit on this head. The Princes Street folks allege that the North Loch has been filled up to the height of 24 feet with earth & rubbish, the Provost says but 16. However if reduced to a level just now & covered with a coat of grass & intersected with neat paths I think its appearance will not suffer by its present elevation.

Feb. 16. The improvement bill it seems is put off to another session of Parliament & by that time it is likely it may be much altered from its present shape.

Feb. 23. The opening of the rooms in the large building on the Mound adapted for the use of the Royal Institution for the encouragement of the fine arts in Scotland which took place on the 13 gave more than usual interest to our exhibition of paintings this year. The paintings upon the whole however,

<sup>1</sup> See *Edinburgh and District Water Supply*, by James Colston.

<sup>2</sup> By the Act of 1816 building on the south side of Princes Street was prohibited, except for St. John's Church.

1826

with the exception of Allan's historical piece of John Knox reproving Queen Mary, cannot be said to possess merit superior to former exhibitions. . . .

March 21. On occasion of the trial of several juvenile delinquents lately before the Court of Justiciary it was observed by the Judges that our Bridewell<sup>1</sup> so far from being a place proper for correcting or reforming offenders was rather calculated for training them to expertness in crime. The openness of the working cells being conducive to a free intercourse between the inmates of course those younger & less experienced have an ample opportunity of being completely trained & instructed by adepts arrived at maturity in all nefarious practices. The Court it appears have drawn up a minute recommending a new Bridewell upon different principles, the present one if possible to be converted to a debtor's jail. It is said the Glasgow Bridewell offers a grand model for buildings of this kind.

April 1. *New Edinburgh Paper*. The Northern Reporter intended to be a weekly newspaper made its first appearance. The first number however is not a very favourable specimen being ill-written & most confusedly arranged. (This paper was soon given up.)

April 8. The new market situated between the Royal Circus & Stockbridge was opened this day. The building & arrangement is in a very handsome style perhaps too much so to make an adequate return to the proprietors. The situation likewise is not at all central but they talk of another for the eastern part of the new town. (This market never succeeded well.)

May 25. In travelling this day from Edinburgh to Dunkeld the principle novelties I observed were a new line on the Queensferry road between the 2nd & 4th milestone by which

<sup>1</sup> On the Calton Hill, the site now occupied by St. Andrew's House.

the village of Muttonhole<sup>1</sup> is left out of the direct route & this part of the road shortened. Upon this new line there is a wall building the expense of which will be considerable.

June 3. Harmony seems to be restored between the citizens of Edinburgh & Leith as to the Docks. Lord Melville & the present Provost are interesting themselves as to this. Government are advancing money to pay off the present dock bond and are to set a going a dock or harbour for ships of war to the westward. The extension of the pier will certainly be a main point in the improvements of Leith.

June 16. The ground dimensions of the walls of the National Monument are now fairly cut out on the Calton Hill and I observed workmen employed this day digging the foundations tho' but a very few hands are yet employed.

June 20. Digging the foundations of the new High School has fairly commenced on the Calton Hill. Between it & the National Monument there is bustle enough on the hill.

June 30. From the state of the times it may easily be supposed the Edinburgh new buildings are falling off this year. The sum total 174 does not differ so much from that of last year 232 as might be expected, but this we have to take into account that hardly more than 40 have commenced this year. Reckoning six divisions for the sake of reference namely 1. South East. 2. South West. 3. West. 4. North West. 5. North. 6. North East there is a diminution in every one but the North East—Calton Hill. [In] the Southwest in neighbourhood of the Canal the decrease is most remarkable, namely from 31 to 7. In the West or Coates division no new street is begun and the additions are but few. In the North West in Lord Moray's ground there are not many new foundations, Moray Place wants just 5 stances of being completed all on the south side. A great part of it is now inhabited; among the occupiers are the Solicitor General,—Dr. Hope—Mr. Hunter of Thurston, Mrs. Oswald of Dunnikier, etc. The

<sup>1</sup> Now called Davidson's Mains.

1826

north side of Ainslie Place is wholly roof'd in but only one or two houses are inhabited. Forres Street will be completed this season & St. Colme Street wants just two stances on the west. There are only 3 houses in Glenfinlas Street & 4 buildings in Randolph Crescent. Darnaway Street wants the south side. The North Division affords no addition of consequence. Appearances in the North East Division are more interesting. In the old cess park north from Gayfield Square the first foundation was only digging in April last year. At present there are in Annandale Street and Haddington Place 18 high lands nearly finished besides 2 self contained houses in Hope Crescent. On the other side of Leith Walk little progress has been made since last year. Of Montgomery Street there are just two lands built since June last one adjoining to Elm Row & the other to Windsor Street. The Royal Terrace after standing long at 7 houses is now increased to 12. The areas of Carlton Place are marked out but no houses are begun. The Regent Terrace where 12 months ago there were only foundations digging now presents us with 17 houses nearly complete besides 6 lately begun. As to rebuilding the houses at the head of the Old Assembly Close were begun in October, but the building was suspended a long time owing to some dispute, they recommenced lately but the progress they have made is not great. The eastmost part is not half built & the westmost is hardly above the level of the ground. There are not many public buildings going on just now. John Watson's Hospital to the west of Edinburgh begun in July last is well advanced. There are two places of worship building one in Brighton Street and the other in Gardner's Crescent near the Canal.

July 8. *Salisbury Crags.* There is some prospect now of a stop being put to the quarrying of those rocks which has been so long an eyesore to the people of Edinburgh. Lord Haddington has been prosecuting the Trustees for carrying off stones

for the roads while they have been recriminating on his Lordship for destroying property with which he is not feudally invested. It seems to be understood by both parties now that very little more is to be taken from these rocks. The south side however is pretty well defaced already.<sup>1</sup>

July 8. A bridge (the Dean Bridge) is about to be built over the Water of Leith nearly at the point where the present tollhouse is, a little to the westward of Lord Moray's ground which besides the accomodation it will afford, must from its great height afford a fine object to the view.

Aug. 31. The newspapers announce that the railway so long talked of between Dalkeith & Edinburgh has at length commenced.

Sept. 4. Mr. Greenhill the new Lessee of the Newhaven & Burntisland Ferries has given out that a great reduction in the passage money is to take place at this time namely the Cabin fare from 2/- to 1/- and the Steerage from 1/6 to 6d. This is rendering a great benefit to the public and it is to be hoped the Lessee will be no loser himself by such a liberal measure.

Sept. 27. The foundation of the National Monument at which labourers have been employed excavating for the last three months is now surrounding with a strong paling and the building is to go on immediately, a part to the value of £13,000 being contracted for. Many people think the erecting of a part only of this vast structure will be foolish as it is seriously doubted whether funds will ever be raised to complete it on the scale as planned out.<sup>2</sup> Tho' the foundation of the new High School is not nearly cleared yet the building of the west wing has commenced. This side of the hill indeed at present is quite disfigured having the appearance of an enormous quarry.

<sup>1</sup> See *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, Vol. XVIII, p. 181 'Story of Quarrying at Salisbury Crags,' by W. Forbes Gray.

<sup>2</sup> The money subscribed (£16,192) did not suffice to complete the project and work stopped in 1829.

1826

Oct. 25. The North Leith steam coach has been lately seen perambulating the Queensferry road, but as yet there is not much appearance of it being turned to account.

Oct. 26. The improvements of this city as to which public notice is given of their being brought forward in the ensuing session of Parliament seem to be the very same as those announced twelve months ago. But tho' the bill is meant to be comprehensive it is now given out that they are to commence on a more contracted scale than was at one time intended. Three only of the projected improvements are to be attempted in the first instance, namely 1st The West approach by the south Castle bank but to run behind the line of houses forming the south side of the Castlehill Street & to join the High Street at the upper end of the West Bow. 2nd The removing entirely of the ugly old range of buildings on the north side of the Castlehill School and in rebuilding to throw that side of the street further back so as a distinct view of the Castle may be had in the lower part of the High Street. 3rd The levelling of the High Street adjoining to St. Giles Church, the Advocates Library and the County buildings, it being understood that Government are to advance £10,000 for the repair of the Church itself. To effect these objects it is calculated only £25,000 will be required, to be levied in 5 years at the rate of £5000 per annum, the assessment for this purpose being only 1 per cent on rents, thus for a house of £25 rent the landlord pays 3/- & the tenant 2/-. This is certainly moderate enough but still there will be a variety of conflicting opinions to reconcile before such a measure can be entered into. It is rather strange too that by this arrangement the south approach which most people think the most important is put off to a future period which may be considered as indefinite.

Nov. 26. The Oil Gas Company have given notice that they intend to apply to Parliament for leave to substitute coals for oil in their works, as they find the latter too expensive.

This alteration I should think will not be palatable to some [of] our New town Dons.

Dec. 2. This day the Portable Gas Company have announced in the newspaper the commencement of their business & the terms on which they are to deal. The price of their gas is to be a 1d. per cubic foot but at least 100 feet must be taken and paid per advance, a rent being put on the cylinders which are furnished by the Company.<sup>1</sup>

Dec. 19. On the subject of our improvements as was to be expected we have had a great variety of opinions. There have been separate meetings of almost every ward of police besides larger divisions such as the Canongate and South Districts and latterly we have had two aggregate meetings of representatives from all the public bodies the latest of which were held yesterday in the High Church Aisle. Upon the whole people are more favourable to the improvements going on than they were a year or two ago, and one reason is the necessity of giving employment to work people. . . .

Dec. 30. The new High School on the Calton Hill the building of which commenced in September is now getting on tho' not very rapidly. The first storey of the two wings is nearly complete, but the hewn work of the middle part is hardly commenced. The King has just now bestowed a donation of £500 on it, but a great deal more will require to be subscribed before it can be finished. In this state of matters it appears doubtful whether it may be got ready in the course of the ensuing season.

1827 March 8. The Advocates & Writers to the Signet have by a great majority concurred in the Bill before Parliament to carry into effect the intended improvements of our City. On the other hand a considerable opposition to this Bill is set on

<sup>1</sup> A portable gas lamp, and compressed gas cylinders, invented by David Gordon, Edinburgh, are described in *Edinburgh Philosophical Journal*, 1819, p. 373.

1827

foot in which Sir Alexander Maitland Gibson, Mr. Drysdale W.S., and other New Town Dons are taking the lead. They are both advertising & circulating hand bills to induce the inhabitants at large to subscribe a petition to Parliament against it, on the ground that what are called improvements are merely building speculations in which the whole city is to be taxed for the benefit of one or two districts, and that when once begun there is no saying how far these plans may be carried. To the arguments of the opposition the promoters of the measure have replied at great length in an advertisement which occupies a whole column in the papers. . . .

March 23. A footpath is at present forming on the Calton Hill by the unemployed labourers so as to connect Leopold Place and the adjoining part of Leith Walk with the north side of the hill by a gradual slanting ascent. This was much wanted as the approach hitherto from that quarter was so very steep as to render that side of the hill almost inaccessible.

March 31. The first storey of the High School on the Calton Hill is nearly finished, but besides another storey the whole colonnade in front is still wanting. The finishing, fitting up, & also the levelling of the playground will be very expensive. Little more than £6000 is yet subscribed and even the sale of the old premises besides other items it is likely will not raise the general fund above £10,000. On the other hand the estimate was £18,000 and it is now clearly ascertained that the whole expense will considerably exceed £20,000, so that a loan of £10,000 at least will be required to completely finish the whole in time for next session. Thus a permanent burden on the establishment will be incurred of nearly £500 per annum to defray which it will be necessary to levy an extra additional annual payment of about 20/- from each scholar. The building itself is certainly too expensive, the colonnade particularly is but a showy piece of superfluity.

May 14. In the case of the Leith Municipal Bill by means of which the good people of that place are striving hard to gain for themselves a free constitution, or at least as much self government as can be obtained from the Legislature, our Provost has rather got into a scrape. It appears he had submitted the City of Edinburgh's interest to the judgment of the Solicitor General of Scotland & Mr. Abercrombie, afterwards, however, thinking their opinion too favourable to the Leith interest he has alleged either that these two gentlemen had taken too much upon themselves or that his own authority was not sufficient to invest them with such power. He seems now in a fair way to be blamed by all parties.<sup>1</sup>

May 31. It appears that the space of a thousand feet of the extended pier at Leith is contracted for, a certain part of which to be completed by September next.

June 4. Our Oil Gas Company have failed in their application to Parliament for liberty to change their material from oil to coal. The inhabitants of the north side of the new town are very well pleased at this prohibition as coal gas works would have proved an intolerable nuisance where there are so many fine buildings.

June 14. The Bill for our improvements has now passed both houses of Parliament.

June 26. There are rejoicings at Leith this day for the success of their Municipal Bill. They have now in a great measure gained the choice of their Magistrates, also a Sheriff Court and other advantages.

June 27. A premium of £30 is advertised for the best design of a new steeple to the Tron Church. Of course, the intention of removing that building is quite given up.

June 30. The new buildings in our city this summer hardly amount to a third of last year's, or a fourth of the year before.

<sup>1</sup> Leith became a separate municipality in 1833; it was amalgamated with Edinburgh in 1920.

1827

The public buildings going on at present are, 1st the High School on the Calton Hill, the main body of which is nearly completed, but it still wants the roof and the colonnade in front, so that another summer must lapse before it can be occupied. 2nd The National Monument, which is proceeding but heavily a part of the west end only is a few feet elevated above the ground but there is no appearance of pillars as yet, though the hewing of them is begun. 3rd St. Stephen's Church, the building of which is little more than commenced. 4th Melville's Monument, which is about to be completed by placing the colossal statue on its summit.

Aug. 15. This day the anniversary of His Majesty's Visit to Scotland was marked by the commencement of our long talked of improvements, in laying the foundation of the new South and West bridges.<sup>1</sup> Tho' the weather proved remarkably unfavourable, it having rained from morning to night, yet the number of people in the procession, and the crowd of spectators who waited patiently in the streets in the most uncomfortable plight, was incredibly great.

Aug. 18. It is announced in the papers that the Portable Gas Company is about to be dissolved from which circumstance we may infer that this article has not answered the purpose so well as was at one time expected.

Oct. 29. *Tron Steeple.* The tower of the old steeple rising about 50 feet above the roof of the church was begun to be taken down on the 24th September, but the process of demolition was very slow, each stone having to be lowered separately by a windlass. The old part being at length removed, the building of the new steeple commenced this day. It is just about three years since the upper part of the spire composed of wood covered with lead, was consumed by fire, which at the

<sup>1</sup> George IV Bridge and King's Bridge (over King's Stables Road). The proceedings are reported fully in the *Scotsman* of 18th August 1827.

same time completely destroyed everything in the inside of the tower and hardly the smallest fragment was to be seen of the large bell. The fire however had the effect of rather strengthening the cement of the stone work of the tower so that it was found very difficult to loosen the old stones. The new steeple from a design of Mr. Dickson looks well upon paper & will be lofty enough, the only fault is that it will be too good for the church, but then it will help to set off the old town viewed at a distance.

1828 Jan'y 12. *Leith Pier.* From the proceedings of a public meeting at Leith this week, it appears that people there are displeas'd at the Edinr. Town Council being so dilatory in setting about the extension of the East pier, on the pretence that it is necessary to make arrangements for the West pier at the same time.

Feb'y 2. *Leith Pier.* At a meeting of the Leith Dock Commissioners yesterday, it was carried by a majority of votes that the lengthening of the Eastern pier should be commenced immediately. On this occasion the Edinr. & Leith Commissioners took opposite sides the former wishing a delay till the consent of government was promised for carrying on the West pier at the same time, without which it was alleged the East pier would be of little service to the harbour. The Edinr. Town Council afterwards resenting this decision of the Commissioners came to a resolution not to advance any money for this undertaking. The East pier however was fairly commenced this month by Mr. Matheson the Contractor, tho' it was very soon stopped by an interdict from the Court of Session applied for by the Town Council. The Leith people indignant at this act of hostility seem determined to resist, so thus both parties are about to involve themselves in a Law Suit which will help to eat up the funds.

March 3. *Dean Bridge.* Contractors are advertised for

1828

building a lofty Bridge over the Water of Leith at the Dean. It is to consist of five arches each of Sixty feet span.

March 21. *Leith Pier.* The Leith folks are again crowing over our Edinburgh dignitaries having got the interdict on the pier building taken off.

April 5. *Dalkeith Railway.* The Railway between this City & Dalkeith is now making some progress & approaching to the South of Duddingston Loch. Contractors are advertised for forming the Tunnel between the Wells of Weary & the depot at St. Leonards, which will rather prove a tough job.

April 14th. *Court of Justiciary.* The Lord Advocate is carrying thro' parliament just now a bill containing different improvements in the administering of Criminal Justice in Scotland, among other things there are to be three circuits in the year at Glasgow instead of two as at present. In case of criminals pleading guilty, conviction is to follow without the verdict of a Jury, which hitherto has been a waste of both time and money.

New Edinburgh Gas Company. A new Gas Company is at present in contemplation. In this Concern Mr. Forrest Alexander seems to be taking a lead and it is supposed he has in view his own grounds in the Pleasance as a situation for the works, which will of course prove a great nuisance to the neighbourhood, even St. John's Hill will be far too near. This affair in the mean time gives occasion to an advertising paper war. A very long advertisement of the intended new Company being followed by a kind of counter manifestos both of the Old Edinburgh and also of the Leith Company wishing to shew the impropriety of two companies in Edinburgh. (The Company did not go on.)

April 28. *Edinburgh House Property.* A great fall is taking place just now in the rents both of houses & shops particularly

high priced ones. There are instances of expensive shops falling to one half of the former rent & it is not uncommon to hear of a deduction of nearly a fourth from house rents. The number of both houses & shops likely to be unoccupied after Whitsunday is unusually great. So that there is very little encouragement for new buildings.

June 21. *Edinr. Improvements.* About 100 men are now employed on the South Side of the Castle Rock excavating for the Bridge & forming a terrace for the West approach.<sup>1</sup> At the foot of Liberton's Wynd, houses are taking down to make room for the new South Bridge.<sup>2</sup>

June 30. *Edinr. Buildings.* Building in Edinr. was hardly ever in my remembrance so slack as at present, any unfinished houses at this time having begun more than twelve months ago.

As to Public Building the Calton Hill takes the lead. The new High School is now pretty far advanced & partly roof'd in but the failure of the contractor has put everything at a stand and before new arrangements can be made for the work going on as much time will be lost as to prevent the School being ready in October.

The twelve pillars of the National Monument are mounting slowly upwards and are now got more than halfway to their height. Twelve pillars without any other building will really make a singular kind of monument.

The appearance of the Observatory is improved by pulling down the ugly dead wall with which it was surrounded & supplying its place with a handsome low parapet mounted with iron rails.

The Tron Church steeple is pretty far forward, having nearly got to the upper rail and balcony.

The grounds round Heriots Hospital are all new modelling. They talk of having a raised terrace quite round the Hospital and a handsome approach from the South.

<sup>1</sup> Johnston Terrace.<sup>2</sup> George IV Bridge.

1828

July 7. *Leith Pier*. The contention between Edinr. & Leith as to the Pier & Docks is still going on. The Edin. party having lately employed Mr. Telfurd engineer to make a report on the subject and he disapproving of the extension of the East Pier, they have endeavoured to steal a march on the Leith [party] by getting the Treasury to bring in a bill for suspending the Dock & Pier operations till next Session of Parliament. This proved a vain attempt however as the Leith party by their representations have got the Bill dropt.

July 10. *Dalkeith Railway and Leith*. There is a talk of extending a branch of the Dalkeith railway from Niddry to Leith, proceeding by the West Side of Portobello.

Oct. 6. *Tron Church*. The Tron Church Steeple was finished this day by putting up the Vane. The height is 165 feet the vane 5 feet in length the cross 3 feet 10 & the gilt ball 6 feet 6 inches in circumference.

*Leith*. The Edinr. Magistrates at election time are a little more favourable to their Leith vassals. They are to allow of 300 feet of pier to go on, they have also postponed the Additional shore dues till Decr. and allowed the Leith people to please themselves as to their new Magistrates.

Decr. 5. *Tron Church*. This evening for the first time one of the transparent dial plates of the Tron Church Steeple was lighted up, but the effect was not very striking.

*Steam Vessels*. About this time the Steam vessels sailing between Leith & London gave up for the Season, every Season however they are encroaching farther upon the winter.

Dec. 23. *Burke's trial*. The conviction of William Burke an Irishman for the murder of an old woman in the West Port excites an extraordinary sensation at present as this murder turns out to be but one of a long series committed by him and his accomplices for the purpose of selling their bodies for

dissection. The persons treated in this manner were in general strangers of a destitute appearance who were inveigled by those ruffians to their place of abode under the pretence of shewing them kindness. They were then plied with liquor and when thus disabled from resistance they were smothered in an artful systematic manner so as to have as little the appearance of violence as possible. Tho' there was a good deal of circumstantial evidence in this case it was thought Burke's conviction could not have been effected without the testimony of Hare his associate another Irishman whose character is still worse than that of Burke. Hare is retain'd in Custody & every body seems anxious that he should not escape the punishment due to such a horrid course of Crime. Beside, many others who suffered, it is now ascertain'd there was one person among this number well known to almost every person in Edinburgh, a harmless madman named Daft Jamie who was always on the streets. As both his mother and sisters are in the place it is supposed the circumstances of his murder may lead to the conviction of Hare. This however appeared very doubtful, as these villains seem to have been abundantly cautious in their proceedings.<sup>1</sup>

Both the cause and manner of these murders disclose a new & horrid species of Crime and is a subject of discussion not only here but all over Britain and probably in foreign countries. The Surgeons appear to incur a good deal of odium on this occasion particularly Knox the lecturer on Anatomy to whom it is known Burke's gang sold the whole of their subjects. No doubt they use the plea of ignorance in their defence tho' this is hardly creditable to their professional skill. Closely connected with this matter is the question continually agitated how far the legislature ought to interfere in sanctioning the procuring of dead bodies for the Medical Schools. It is often alleged that one easy & practicable method would be to give up unclaimed bodies from public Hospitals. This

<sup>1</sup> See *Trials of Burke and Hare*, ed. William Roughead.

1828

however is in fact, giving up the poor for the benefit of the rich. If dissection is absolutely necessary all classes should contribute alike. Our Rulers would do well in my opinion not to attempt to legislate on the subject at all, except perhaps to authorise the importation of this article from foreign countries.

D. G. MOIR.

[To be continued.]

## MISCELLANY

## 24. THE SOCIETY OF BOWLERS.

In 1768 the Governors of Heriot's Hospital granted the petition of the Gentlemen Bowlers in Edinburgh for a lease of twenty-one years of the bowling green behind Heriot's Hospital and the inner garden to the east of it, commonly called 'the Wilderness,' which they were prepared to level and to lay down as two greens. John Wood, merchant in Edinburgh, undertook the work, and on 9th November 1768 he applied to the Town Council for permission to cut turfs from the loans on the west side of Leith Walk, and, when these were exhausted, if necessary, to take them from the Links of Leith, remote from the golfing ground.

In July of the next year the bowlers approached the Town Council for a Seal of Cause and on 15th November 1769 by Charter or Seal of Cause the Provost, magistrates and Council erected into 'a Corporation or Body Corporate,' the persons aftermentioned, viz. Messrs. Joseph Williamson, Thomas Mabane, Thomas Cleland, Robert Selkrig, William Robertson, John Carmichael, James Craig, William Tod, senior, Charles Howieson, Robert Hunter, Matthew Listoun, Alexander Brown, John Thomson, James Gibson, Edward Inglis, Hugh Gray, Andrew McCara, John Moncrieff, Ebenezer Macfait, William Hume, Robert Clark, Robert Boyd, John McPherson, William Nair, John Brown, Thomas Thomson, George Stewart, Robert Hall, William Scott, George Boyd, Duncan McQueen, Maitland Bannantyne, John Cumming, Robert Wright, James Ewart, Andrew Skinner, Alexr. Webster, William Lothian, James Baird and John Hepburn with a perpetual succession by the name and title of the 'Edinburgh Society of Bowlers.' They were given power to meet annually on the first Friday of April at John Wood's house in Heriot's Gardens or elsewhere, to elect a preses, a committee of four, and six other assistants to advise from time to time, as also a clerk to minute their procedure, and to make rules and regulations for the preservation of the greens and the exercise of bowling. Any new rules were to be presented to the magistrates for their approval, the Society's proceedings 'being always consistent

with the Laws of the land, customs of this City, and the trust reposed in the said Incorporation.'

*FOLLOWS THE Regulations relative to the Exercise of Bowling*

- (1) The Block is to lye wherever its thrown provided there be two Byasses and four or five feet from the water Table or Bank.
- (2) A right handed Bowler must keep his right foot on the trig when he plays, and a left handed Bowler his left foot.
- (3) If any Bowler play his Bowl immediately after his Neighbour the other Party may take up the Bowl while running and throw it into the Bank, but if they allow it to settle it is a counting Bowl.
- (4) If any of the Bowlers accidentally stop a Bowl when running it must be played over again.
- (5) If any of the Bowlers accidentally turn over his adversary's Bowl when settled it is left to the Person who played the Bowl to replace it.
- (6) If any Bowler accidentally turns over his own Bowl or any of his Partners Bowls, his adversary is to replace it.
- (7) If any Bowler touch or stop a running Bowl and if it is the opinion of the Company that he did it on purpose, if it be his adversarys Bowl it shall be lay'd touching the Block, if his own or on his own side it shall be thrown into the Bank.
- (8) The Bowl that cary's the Block into the Bank is a Counting Bowl, and all Bowls that are drove into the Bank along with the Block are allowed to play in the Bank untill they settle, and if they touch the Block are Counting Bowls till touch'd or bank't, if they do not touch the Block they must be taken up and laid aside.
- (9) When the Block is in the Bank all Bowls are allowed to play in the Bank till they settle and if they touch the block are counting Bowls, and if a Bowl touch the bowl in the Bank and afterwards the Block, the Bowl it touched is banked and the other counts, but if the Bowl that was in the Bank shall touch the Block again, it shall count.

- (10) A Bowl that lyes in the Bank touching the Block cannot be bank't with the first Bowl that touches it, that is to say it must be first separated from the Block and then touched.
- (11) All disputes anent a Bowl touching the Block are to be decided by the Bystanders.
- (12) If any Bowler be measuring a cast and put back his adversary's Bowl he loses the cast.
- (13) If a Bowler accidentally alter the Block his adversary must replace it.
- (14) If the Block is Riden or Rested, and is accidentally touched or stop't by a Bowler he loses once that end, but if it is the opinion of the Bystanders that he stopt it on purpose, he loses the game.
- (15) The Trig must be laid within four feet of the place where the Block lay the last end.
- (16) No Beter Wagerer or bystander can give ground or advice in the Game, if a Beter he forfeits his bets.
- (17) If a Bowl be stopt or put out of its course by a stander, before touching any of the Bowls it must be played over again, But if it has touched any of the Bowls it must lye there as a Rub of the Green.

HELEN ARMET.

25. SENTENCE BY THE BAILLIES, 24TH AUGUST 1738.

A fish-seller, accused of committing a 'riot' against a servant of the Professor of Hebrew at the University, Mr. William Dawson, appeared before the bailies who, having considered the complaint, appointed her 'instantly' to be committed to the tolbooth of this City there to remain till Wednesday the sixth day of September next, upon which day betuixt the hours of eleven and twelve forenoon they ordain the keepers of the said Tolbooth to deliver her over to the City officers to be by them carried to the Mercat Cross of Edinburgh and there they appoint her to stand upon the usual place for the space of one hour, with her head uncovered and two dozen of herrings hinging about her neck and a labell on her breast write in Capitall Letters denoting her crime and thereafter they ordain their saids officers to remand her to prison there to remain untill she make payment to the pursuer of

the sum of ten shillings sterling which they hereby find her lyable in payment to the pursuer in name of damnages and expenses. And untill she find caution to keep the peace of this City in all time coming under the penalty of Ten pound sterling.'

HELEN ARMET.

26. THE LOYAL EDINBURGH SPEARMEN.

I am indebted to Miss Cullen of Ayr for allowing me to examine a commission in this Corps which is in her family papers.

The commission, to Andrew Gairdner, is dated 10th July 1804, although he was actually gazetted 17th November 1803, the same date as all the other captains. The Lieutenants and Majors were not gazetted until 17th January 1804. He was bidden by Lord Provost Neil Macvicar, who granted the Commission as Lieutenant of the City of Edinburgh and 'Admiral of the Frith of Forth,' to 'exercise as well the officers as soldiers of his company,' and to use his best endeavours 'to keep them in good order and discipline.' He is not to take rank in the Army unless the Corps is 'called out into actual Service.'

Andrew Gairdner, who became a Merchant and Burgess of Edinburgh on 2nd March 1796, was the son and partner of Ebenezer Gairdner, linen manufacturer in the city.

Very little has survived, to my knowledge, of this Corps. There is a silver medal in the National Museum of Antiquities which represents, on the reverse, a Spearman in uniform, with hat and feathers, cutaway coat and breeches and, in the right hand, a spear. The obverse is engraved 'Loyal Edinburgh Spearmen,' and the reverse, 'Reward of Merit.' The medal is oval, 2½ in. by 1½ in., with a suspension loop.

Kay, in his 'Edinburgh Portraits' (No. CLXXX) shows the Earl of Moira addressing the Edinburgh Spearmen, but from the viewpoint of the Spearmen, so that they are not shown. No. CLIX shows Mr. John Bennet, Surgeon, who was Colonel of the Spearmen, but not in uniform. This gentleman had been surgeon to the Sutherland Fencibles from 1779 to 1783 when they were disbanded. He was appointed Surgeon to the Garrison of Edinburgh Castle in 1791, and when the Edinburgh Spearmen were embodied he was appointed Lieut. Colonel Commandant. Kay's memoir further describes the occasion of the presentation of colours to the Spearmen, in Heriot's Hospital Green, by Mrs. Bennet, and the gift of a silver cup to Colonel Bennet by the

Corps, which was then inspected by the Earl of Moira at Duddingston House. Colonel Bennet was a keen sportsman, and he was found dead on 10th October 1805, in a field near Kinghorn, Fife, with his gun beside him. He was succeeded by Lieut. Colonel Inglis.

The 'Volunteer Chart' published in 1806 by James Willson gives the strength of the Spearmen as 486, and shows that they were divided into Riflemen, Infantry and Artillery. The Riflemen and Infantry wore scarlet coats with blue breeches, with gold lace on the officers' uniforms, and the Artillery wore blue coats and breeches with gold lace for the officers. In a return of Volunteers made to the House of Commons in 1806, the Inspecting Officer reported they were 'fit for the service they were destined for, of preserving the peace of the City.'

The title 'Spearmen' did not reflect their armament. They were at first supernumerary to the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the Edinburgh Volunteers. There was also a supernumerary company of Riflemen who seem to have merged with the Spearmen by the time of the 1806 'Volunteer Chart.' There were ten companies of the Spearmen in 1803, but only seven in 1806.

Perth had a supernumerary company of 'Pikemen' in 1803 but they failed to turn up for drills and were disbanded in 1804. Aberdeen had two companies of 'Gilcomston Pikemen' in 1803 who really were armed with pikes and the old pike drill was re-issued by the Government for their use. Another company of Pikemen was raised in Aberdeen in 1804, but these were armed with muskets in 1807. Both units transferred to the Local Militia in 1808.

H. P. E. PEREIRA.  
*Scottish United Services Museum.*

INDEX

Abbey Church: *see* Holyrood Abbey Church.  
 Abercrombie, Alexander, vintner, 126, 127.  
 —, Mr.: *see* Dunfermline, James Abercromby, Lord.  
 Aberdeen, Gilcomston Pikemen of, 189.  
 Acheson, Alexander, of Gosford, 119 and n.  
 — Elizabeth, wife of Quentin Low, 135n.  
 Act of Classes, 106.  
 Adam, Sarah, wife of William Sheils, merchant burghess, 116.  
 — William, apothecary, 130.  
 — Square, 152n, 160; proposal in 1824 for new road from Merchant Street to north of, 154 and n.; proposed demolition of, 155, 165.  
 Adamson, Henry, 117.  
 Advocates' Library, 174.  
 Aitken, James, baker, 129 and n.  
 Aikman, Reverend John, Independent Church in North College Street of, 160.  
 — Marion, wife of James McLurg, merchant and baillie, 124 and n.  
 Ainslie Place, building in 1820s in, 150, 172.  
 Aitken, Alexander, teacher of music in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 42, 91.  
 Aitkenhead, Thomas, Commissary of Edinburgh, 136 and n.  
 Albemarle, George Monck, 1st Duke of, 108.  
 Alexander, Forrest, 180.  
 — Katharine, 57, 58.  
 — Robert, principal Clerk of Session, 127 and n.  
 Alison, George, merchant, 127 and n.  
 Allan, Isobel, 96.  
 — Michael, merchant and Dean of Guild, 125 and n.  
 — William, baillie, 153.  
 — Sir William, painter, 170.  
 Alves, John, 132 and n.  
 — William, writer, father of above, 132 and n.  
 America, 55.  
 Amsterdam, 104, 106.  
 Anderson, Alexander, coppersmith, 128n; weathercock and globe for Tron Church steeple made by, 109.

Anderson, John, coppersmith, son of above, 128 and n.  
 — John, writer, 133 and n.  
 — Margaret, housekeeper, 39.  
 — Robert, teacher in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 90, 92.  
 — Samuel, governor of Merchant Maiden Hospital, 22, 24.  
 — William, teacher in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 92.  
 Annandale Street, building in 1826 in, 172.  
 Approach Road, South: *see* George IV Bridge.  
 — Road, West: *see* Johnston Terrace.  
 Arbuckle, James, 132.  
 Archibald, William, writer, 136 and n.  
 — Mrs., *see* merchant, 29.  
 — Place, 27; feuing of, 29; entrance made in 1869 to Merchant Maiden Hospital at foot of, 31; building in 1820s in, 145, 150.  
 Arskine: *see* Erskine, Mary.  
 Argyle Square, 160 and n.; Trades Maiden Hospital in, 12; meeting-house of Scottish Baptists in, 41.  
 Arms silver, 107.  
 Arnot, Hugo, estimate of cost of Tron Church by, 110.  
 Arskin: *see* Erskine, Mary.  
 Arthur's Seat, 165.  
 Atholl Crescent, building in 1820s in, 149, 150, 163.  
 Augustine-Bristo Congregational Church, 154n.  
 Ayr, 188.

Baak, Bethia, presentation to Merchant Maiden Hospital of, 10.  
 — Duncan, merchant, father of above, 10.  
 Back of the Fishmarket Close, 115 and n.  
 Baillie Brown's Close, 133.  
 Baillie, George, of Jerviswood, 126.  
 Baird, Alexander, merchant and baillie, 124 and n.  
 — James, 185.  
 Bakers' Incorporation, 152.  
 Balderstone, Janet, housekeeper and governess, 39.  
 Bank of Scotland, 116.

INDEX

Bank Street, 154, 156; tavern in, 58.  
 Bannatyne, Maitland, 185.  
 Bannatyne, John, land for Tron Church purchased from, 98.  
 Barclay, Anna, wife of Major George Wishart, 121.  
 — Anna, widow of — Bell, chamberlain to Countess of Rothes, 123.  
 — Janet, wife of John Cameron, minister at Kincairdine, 132.  
 Barnes, Alexander, 135n.  
 — Christian, sister of above, 135 and n.  
 Barrenger's Close, 128.  
 Basin: *see* Port Hopetoun.  
 Bastille, fall of, 41.  
 Bathgate, Katharine C., governess (1857-1870) of Merchant Maiden Hospital, 51-52, 69, 79, 80, 91.  
 Baxter's Place, building in 1823 in, 147.  
 Bayne, John, of Pitcarlie, W.S., 117, 118.  
 — Roderick, writer, 118.  
 Beaton, Katharine, wife of Alexander Borthwick, vintner burghess, 121.  
 Bedlam, 13, 14, 29.  
 Bell, —, chamberlain to Countess of Rothes, 123.  
 — Reverend Andrew, monitorial system of teaching of, 49.  
 — Lilius, wife of Patrick Chalmers, wright, 119 and n.  
 Bell's Wynd, 131.  
 Bellevue Church: *see* St. Mary's Parish Church, Bellevue.  
 — Crescent, building in 1823 in, 146.  
 Bennet, John, surgeon, 188-9.  
 — Mrs., wife of above, 188.  
 Berwick, 161.  
 — Pacification of, 98.  
 Binnie, John, 97.  
 Birnie, Sir Andrew, of Saline: *see* Saline, Lord.  
 Bishops' Wars, 98.  
 Blackfriars Wynd, 128, 129; fire of 1825 in, 158.  
 Blair, Henry, 118.  
 — Hugh, vintner, 117-18 and nn.  
 — Isobel, wife of William Machrie, fencing master, 127 and n.  
 — Sir James Hunter, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, 16.  
 Boog, David, goldsmith, 121.  
 Book of Discipline, 2.  
 Borthwick, —, painter, 55.  
 — Alexander, apprentice, 57.  
 — Alexander, vintner burghess, 121-3.  
 — Elizabeth, daughter of above, 122-3.  
 — James, writer, 132.  
 — William, of Pilmuir, surgeon-apothecary, 122 and n.  
 Borthwick's Wynd, 126.

Botanic Gardens, Old, building in 1825 on site of, 158 and n., 163.  
 Bowlers: *see* Edinburgh Society of Bowlers.  
 Boyd, George, 185.  
 — Robert, 185.  
 — Stephen, baillie, 96.  
 — Thomas J., Master of Merchant Company, report in 1870 on Merchant Company hospitals by, 77-9.  
 Brandon Street, building in 1825 in, 163.  
 Bridewell, criticism in 1826 of, 170 and n.  
 — Glasgow, 170.  
 Brighton Street, Relief Church in, 28 and n., 172.  
 Bristo, 41, 42, 45, 52, 56, 59, 61; purchase in 1706 by Mary Erskine for Merchant Maiden Hospital of house in, 5; location of Merchant Maiden Hospital in, 12; use for 120 years by Merchant Maiden Hospital of house in, 12-29; public roup of furniture of Merchant Maiden Hospital in house in, 28; attempts in 1819 by governors of Merchant Maiden Hospital to dispose of house in, 28-9.  
 — Port, 12, 16, 156.  
 — Street, 12, 15, 19, 21, 28, 29; proposal in 1765 for sale by governors of Merchant Maiden Hospital of laigh houses in, 14; installation in late eighteenth century of public lighting in, 17-18; proposal in 1819 for removal of Telfer's City Wall along, 28.  
 Brodie, William, deacon of wrights, 8.  
 Brown, Alexander, 185.  
 — David, interest of governors of Merchant Maiden Hospital in park in Lauriston of, 24, 26.  
 — John, 185.  
 — Thomas, plan of Edinburgh in 1820 by, 146 and n.  
 — Reverend William, minister of Old Greyfriars' Church and governor of Merchant Maiden Hospital, 11.  
 — Square, proposal in 1824 for demolition of, 156 and n.  
 Bruce, Robert, goldsmith, 124 and n.  
 Bruce's Close, 126 and n.  
 Brunswick Street, building in 1820s in, 151, 163.  
 Brunton Place, building in 1825 in, 163.  
 Bruntsfield Links, tavern in, 58-9; quarry in, 132 and n.  
 Bryson, David, macer, 135 and n.  
 Buccleuch Church, building in 1823 of, 145 and n.  
 — Place, 25.  
 Buchanan, Duncan, wright, 130.  
 Burbage, —, clockmaker, 109.

- Burgess, James, treasurer in 1831 of Merchant Maiden Hospital, 44n.  
 Burghs, Royal, General Convention of, 122n.  
 Burke, William, conviction for murder of, 182, 183 and n.  
 Burn, William, architect of building of Merchant Maiden Hospital in Lauriston, 26, 29.  
 Burnet, Fanny, 55.  
 — Robert, W.S., 128.  
 — William, of Barns, 136.  
 Burnet's Close, 130, 131n.  
 Burns, Agnes, widow of Thomas Yorston, deacon of goldsmiths, 116.  
 Burntisland, reduction in 1826 of fares of ferries between Newhaven and, 173.  
 Burt, Bell, 55.
- Cairns, Robert, wright, 124 and n.  
 Caltou Hill, 146, 170n; building in 1820s on, 144, 149, 151, 161, 162, 163, 171, 173, 176, 178, 181.  
 — Road, 159.  
 Cameron, John, minister at Kincardine, 132.  
 Campbell, Isabella, governess (1813-1817) of Merchant Maiden Hospital, 43-4 and n., 69, 91.  
 — Jean, widow of William Law of Lauriston, goldsmith burgess, 116.  
 — Lilius, wife of David Cathcart of Glenduisk, 120 and n.  
 — Mungo, of Burnbank, 133 and n.  
 Canal: *see* Union Canal.  
 — Basin: *see* Port Hopetoun.  
 Candlemaker Row, 11, 154n.  
 Canongate, 128, 131, 135n., 139, 153, 159, 161, 166, 175; enactment by Town Council in 1674 for building in stone in, 112-13 and nn.  
 — Church, building of, 128.  
 Canonmills Loch, 163.  
 — Meadow, advertisement in 1825 for feuing of, 164-5.  
 Cant, James, 134 and n., 135 and n.  
 — Thomas, of St. Giles' Grange, father of above, 134 and nn., 135nn.  
 Carfrae, Patrick, mason, 129 and n.  
 Carkettill, John, 121-2.  
 — Patrick, minister at Humble, father of above, 121.  
 Carlton Place, building in 1826 in, 172.  
 Carmichael, Helen, wife of James McMath, apothecary, 124 and n.  
 — James, of Athernie, 134n.  
 — James, elder, of Barnblae, 129 and n.  
 — John, 134 and n.  
 — John, 185.  
 — Robert, doctor of medicine, son of
- James Carmichael, elder, of Barnblae, 129 and n.  
 Carmichael, William, son of James Carmichael of Athernie, 134n.  
 — Lord, 132.  
 Carnegie, James, writer, 123-4 and n.  
 Castle of Edinburgh, 156, 174, 181, 188.  
 Castlehill, 148-9, 154-5, 156, 174; bell foundry in, 109.  
 — Church, projected building in 1642 of, 103; abandonment of, 107.  
 — Road: *see* Johnston Terrace.  
 — School, proposal in 1826 to demolish buildings north of, 174.  
 — Street: *see* Castlehill.
- Cathcart, David, of Glenduisk, 120 and n.  
 Chalmers, George, writer, 131 and n.  
 — James, advocate, 119.  
 — Patrick, wright, 119 and n.  
 — Thomas, eldest son of James Chalmers, advocate, 119 and n., 120.  
 — Street, 27.  
 Chambers Street, 152n; building of, 12; Dental Hospital in, 156n.  
 Chancellor, Alexander, eldest son of William Chancellor, merchant, 132.  
 — John, merchant and baillie, 123.  
 — William, merchant, 132.  
 Chapel Street, 14.  
 Chapels of Ease: *see* Buccleuch Church; St. Bernard's Church.  
 Charity Schools, in England, 1, 24, 60.  
 — Workhouse, 13, 28; erection in 1743 of, 14.  
 Charles I, 103; his relations with Edinburgh regarding building of Parliament House, 93-4, 96; requires Edinburgh to restore and establish St. Giles Church as Cathedral, 94-7; Coronation in Scotland of, 94; tax on merchants for expenses of visit to Edinburgh in 1633 of, 96; enforcement in 1635 of penal statutes relating to export of money by, 94-5; remission in 1636 of penal statutes relating to export of money by, 97; last visit to Scotland of, 98; attempt in 1648 to rescue, 105.  
 — II, 93, 118n.  
 — Edward Stuart, Prince, occupation in 1745 of Edinburgh by troops of, 61.  
 Charlotte Square, 23.  
 Charteris Close, 119.  
 Cholera, outbreak in 1832 in Edinburgh and Peterhead of, 37, 47, 65.  
 Christie, Elizabeth, wife of Alexander Henderson, bookseller, 133 and n.  
 Church, —, 85.  
 — of Scotland, Education Committee of, 70n.

- Church of Scotland, General Assembly of, meeting in Glasgow in 1638 of, 98.  
 — General Assembly of, Commission of, 105.  
 City Chambers, 156n.  
 — Wall: *see* Telfer's Wall.  
 Claremont Crescent, 151; building in 1820s in, 146, 163.  
 — Place, building in 1823 in, 146.  
 — Street, building in 1825 in, 163.  
 Clark, Robert, 185.  
 Clason, Reverend Dr. Patrick, minister of Buccleuch Church, 50.  
 — Thomas, 185.  
 Cleghorn, Alexander, shoemaker, 95.  
 Cleland, Margaret, wife of John Stewart of Ascog, advocate, 125.  
 Clelland, James, surgeon, 118.  
 Clerk, Sir Alexander, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, 96.  
 — William, advocate, 121.  
 Clock, in steeple of seventeenth-century Tron Church, 109.  
 Clogy, Alexander, shoemaker, 95.  
 Clyde, river, falls of, 52.  
 Coates, building in 1820s in area of, 162, 163, 171.  
 — Crescent, 149, 150; completion in 1823 of, 146.  
 Cochran, John, baillie, 10.  
 Cockburn, James, goldsmith, 123 and n., 124.  
 — Miss, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.  
 College: *see* University of Edinburgh.  
 — Street, 17.  
 Collegiate School for Girls, 31; *see also* Merchant Maiden Hospital.  
 Colt, Sir Richard, advocate, 122.  
 Coltbridge, feuing in 1824 of villa stances to north-west of, 149.  
 Colville, Reverend William, minister of south-eastern parish of Edinburgh, 99.  
 Colvin, Reverend William: *see* Colville, Reverend William.  
 Commercial Banking Company of Scotland, 149.  
 Companies, Town, 126.  
 Conn's Close, 130.  
 Consumption, prevalence in mid-nineteenth century in Edinburgh of, 37-8.  
 Corri's Rooms, meeting in 1815 of first Edinburgh musical festival in, 157n.  
 Corsbie, John, merchant, 135.  
 Corstorphine, 35.  
 Court of Justiciary, 170; proposed alterations in 1828 to, 180.  
 — of Session, 179, 180; litigation of Watson's and Merchant Maiden Hospitals in, 7; price of land for Tron Church fixed by, 98.  
 Cowgate, 98, 154n., 155n., 166; building of meal market in, 111, 115n.; proposal in 1820s for building of bridge over, 147, 156.  
 — Port, 98.  
 Craig, James, 185.  
 — Lewis, of Riccarton, 123 and n.  
 — Sir Thomas, of Riccarton, advocate, 126 and n.  
 Craig's Close, 126.  
 Craigmillar, Lady, widow of Sir John Gilmour of Craigmillar, 121 and n.  
 Crawley Spring, supply of water to Edinburgh from, 149.  
 Creech, William, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, 23.  
 Crichton, Richard, architect, plan for new building for Merchant Maiden Hospital submitted by, 24.  
 Crombie, Alexander, 125 and n.  
 Cromwell, Oliver, 105, 107.  
 Cross Keys Tavern, 125.  
 Crosshouses, 131n.  
 Cuddy Park, building in 1820s in, 158, 160, 163, 172.  
 Cullen, Miss, 185.  
 Cumberland Street, building in 1820s in, 151, 163.  
 Cumming, Dr. James, H.M. Inspector of Schools, 67.  
 — John, 185.  
 Cunningham, Katharine, wife of John Anderson, writer, 133 and n.  
 — Mary, wife of Gideon Elliott of North Sintoun, 132.  
 — Robert, Under Clerk of Session, 128 and n.  
 Currie, James, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, 140.  
 Custom House, Leith, 114 and n.
- Daft Jamie: *see* Wilson, James.  
 Dalgleish, Margaret, widow of Lewis Craig of Riccarton, 123 and n.  
 Dalkeith, building in 1820s of railway between Edinburgh and, 154, 173, 180; proposal in 1828 for extension of railway between Edinburgh and, 182.  
 Dallas, James, younger, of St. Martins, 121.  
 Dalrymple, Sir Hugh, of North Berwick, advocate, President of Court of Session, 116.  
 — Sir James, principal Clerk of Session, second son of James Dalrymple, 1st Viscount Stair, 127 and n.  
 — Janet, wife of Robert Ross, writer, 129 and n.

Dalrymple, Jemima, 46.  
 Darien House, 13; use as lunatic asylum of, 14.  
 Darnaway Street, 143n.; building in 1820s in, 150-1, 172.  
 Davidson, James, treasurer of Edinburgh, 108.  
 Davidson's Mains: *see* Muttonhole.  
 Dawson, William, 187.  
 Dean, lands of, foundation laid in 1825 of John Watson's Hospital in, 164; feuing in 1825 of, 165.  
 — Bridge, plans in 1820s for building of, 165, 173, 179-80.  
 Deans, Jane, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.  
 — Margaret, wife of Alexander Penicuik of Newhall, 121.  
 Denholm, —, 44.  
 Dental Hospital, Chambers Street, 156n.  
 Deuchar, David, seal engraver, 57.  
 Dewar, Miss, teacher of music in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 87.  
 Dick, Sir James, of Prestonfield, Lord Provost of Edinburgh (1678-1681), 137 and n.  
 Dickens, Charles, 74.  
 Dickson, R., architect, designer of new Tron Church steeple erected in 1820s, 179.  
 — Mr., Convener of Education Committee of Merchant Maiden Hospital, 76.  
 — and Thin, Messrs., builders, report in 1815 of suitability of Lauriston site for Merchant Maiden Hospital by, 25.  
 Dickson's Close, 114 and n.  
 Dougall, Euphame, wife of James Murdoch, tailor burghess, 120.  
 Douglas, Joan, 59.  
 — Katherine, wife of John Scott, writer, 133 and n.  
 — Margaret, 56, 57.  
 Drumdryan House, 25.  
 Drummond, Sir George, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, provision in 1673 of bell for Tron Church by, 109.  
 — George, of Blair, 122.  
 — Place, completion in 1823 of, 146.  
 — Street, building in 1823 in, 145; proposals in early nineteenth century for a road through King's Park eastwards from, 147, 148 and n., 149, 159, 165, 167.  
 Drylaw, 96.  
 Drysdale, William, W.S., 176.  
 Duddingston, 165.  
 — House, 189.  
 — Loch, 180; proposed purchase in 1823 for reservoir of, 149.  
 — Mill, 165.  
 Dumfries, Commissary of, 132n.

Dunbar, 161.  
 — battle of, 107.  
 — Alexander, brewer, 130 and n.  
 — James, merchant, 130 and n.  
 Duncan, Andrew, glazier, 135.  
 — Dr. Andrew, professor of Medical Jurisprudence, 26, 144.  
 — John, merchant, 131 and n.  
 — Miss, mistress in 1779 in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 40.  
 — Miss, mistress in 1822 in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.  
 Dundas, William, advocate, 128.  
 Dunfermline, James Abercromby, Lord, 177.  
 Dunkeld, 170.  
 — bishop of: *see* Rollock, Peter.  
 Dunn, James, teacher of dancing in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 87, 92.  
 Durie's Close, 125-6.

East Church: *see* St. Giles, Little, East or High Church of.  
 Ebsworth, Joseph, teacher of vocal music in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 87.  
 Edinburgh, 30, 62, 146 and n., 148 and n.; contributions to tax of 1635 by craftsmen of, 95-6; reorganisation in 1641 of parishes of, 98, 99; pew rents of south and east parishes of, 107; plague in 1640s in, 105; notes on rebuilding in late seventeenth century in, 111-42; danger of thatched roofs and timber-fronted houses in late seventeenth century in, 111-12 and n.; building in late seventeenth century of pavements in, 111; public lighting in late seventeenth century in streets of, 111; introduction in 1675 of water supply to, 111; measures taken for building of stone houses in late seventeenth century in, 112-13 and n., 137-42; fires in late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in, 112, 114-15, 116-17, 118, 120, 126, 138-9; representation on governing body of Merchant Maiden Hospital of ministers of, 7, 50-1; extracts from journal (1823-1833) by citizen of, 143-84; building in 1820s in, 143 and n., 144-6, 149, 150-1, 153-4, 158, 160-1, 162-8, 169-70, 171-2, 173, 174, 175-9, 180-1, 182; schemes in 1820s for improvements in, 143, 147, 154-7, 159-60, 165, 169, 174, 175-6, 177, 181; proposal in 1823 to use Duddingston Loch as reservoir for southern part of, 149; operation of Penny Post in, 149 and n.; fires in 1820s in, 151, 155 and n., 157, 158, 161, 167; building in 1820s of railway between Dalkeith and,

Edinburgh (*continued*)—  
 154, 173, 180; musical festivals of early nineteenth century in, 157 and n.; use of gas lighting in new town of, 159; proposal in 1825 for erection of new infirmary on north side of, 161; alterations in 1825 in times of mail coaches between London and, 161-2; building in 1825 of road between Portobello, Musselburgh and southern part of, 165; extension in 1820s to north and west of, 166; comparison of distribution of population in early eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in, 166-7; controversy in 1826 about additional water supply for, 169 and n.; municipal bill of 1827 concerning separation of Leith and, 177 and n.  
 — bailies of, sentence in 1738 by, 187-8.  
 — bishop of: *see* Paterson, John.  
 — bishopric of, Charles I's creation of, 94.  
 — Town Council of, 144; relations regarding establishment of cathedral church with Charles I of, 93-7; financial arrangements of 1635-1638 for building of two additional churches and for restoration of St. Giles by, 95-8; authorisation of purchase of oak planks for Tron Church by, 98; arrangements for fitting up interior of Tron Church made by, 103; arrangements for roofing Tron Church made by, 103-5, 106-9; review in 1647 of delay in building of Tron Church by, 105; regiment raised against the Engagers by, 105-6; execution of Act of Classes against malignants by, 106; effects of battle of Dunbar in 1650 on interest in Tron Church of, 107; work in Tron Church in early 1650 authorised by, 107; authorisation for railings round Tron Church by, 109; measures taken for provision of clock for Tron Church by, 109; decision in 1671 to raise height of Tron Church steeple taken by, 109; measures in late seventeenth century with regard to building in Edinburgh taken by, 111-15; representation on Board of Governors of Merchant Maiden Hospital of, 7; approval in 1708 of statutes of Merchant Maiden Hospital by, 7; request for sittings for girls in St. George's Parish Church made in 1812 by governors of Merchant Maiden Hospital to, 23; proposal in 1820s for removal of High School from old town of Edinburgh by, 152-3, 162; subscription to new High School on Calton Hill by, 168; controversy regarding transfer to private

ownership of docks at Leith owned by, 151-2, 157-8, 162; improvements in 1820s to piers and docks at Leith made by, 152, 162, 171, 177, 179, 180, 182; agreement in 1825 to building of St. Stephen's Church given by, 158 and n.; proposals in 1825 for payment of restoration of St. Giles made by, 159-60; fears in 1826 of possibility of building on south side of Princes Street by, 169 and n.; request in 1768 by John Wood to, 185.  
 Edinburgh Academy, 26; building in 1823 of, 146; opening of, 151; possible rivalry between new High School and, 153.  
 — Bank, proposal in 1824 for foundation of, 149.  
 — Coal Gas Company, rivalry in 1823 of Edinburgh Oil Gas Light Company and, 148.  
 — Deaf and Dumb Institution, Henderson Row, building in 1823 of, 145.  
 — Educational Institution, 32, 79: *see also* Merchant Maiden Hospital.  
 — Educational Institution for Young Ladies, 80: *see also* Merchant Maiden Hospital.  
 — Institution for Young Ladies, 31: *see also* Merchant Maiden Hospital.  
 — Joint Stock Water Company, 169.  
 — Ladies' Institution for Education, Park Place, 68.  
 — Oil Gas Light Company, establishment in 1823 of, 148 and n.; rivalry in 1823 of Edinburgh Coal Gas Company and, 148; effect of explosion in Shandwick Place in 1825 on, 159; proposal in 1826 to change from oil to coal in works of, 174-5, 177.  
 — Society of Bowlers, formation in 1769 of, 185; regulations of, 186-7.  
 — Volunteers, 189.  
 Edington, John, writer, 128, 131 and n.  
 Elliott, Gideon, of North Sinton, surgeon-apothecary, 132.  
 Ellis, James, 107, 108.  
 Elm Row, 172; building in 1820s in, 147, 151, 163.  
 Elphinstone, Alexander, 134 and n.  
 Elphinstone, Isobel, wife of Andrew Houston, 129 and n.  
 — Sir James, of Logie, W.S., joint Keeper of Signet, 121.  
 — William, of Calderhall, 129.  
 Endowed Schools (Scotland) Commission, 70n.  
 Engagement, The, 105.  
 Engagers, The, 105.

- England, negotiations for importation of lead by Edinburgh Town Council from, 103-4.
- Erskine : *see* Erskine, Mary.
- Erskine, family of, Mary Erskine's connection with, 2; representation on governing body of Merchant Maiden Hospital of, 7.
- Sir Charles, of Alva, 2.
- Mary, daughter of above, 58, 80, 82, 83; family of, 2; date of birth of, 2; marriages of, 2-3; death and will of, 6 and n.; bequest to Merchant Company of Edinburgh for foundation of Merchant Maiden Hospital by, 1-4; purchase in 1706 of a house in Bristol for Merchant Maiden Hospital by, 5, 12; bequest to Incorporated Trades of Edinburgh for foundation of Trades Maiden Hospital by, 4, 5.
- Lady Mary, first wife of Sir Charles Erskine of Alva, and mother of above, 2.
- Estates of Parliament, contribution of citizens of Edinburgh towards loan to, 97.
- Ewart, James, 185.
- Exchange, building in Parliament Close of, 111, 115n.
- Excise Office, Cowgate, lease of Merchant Hall, Cowgate, in 1730 to, 12.
- Office, St. Andrew Square, proposal in 1824 for removal of High School to, 152 and n.; sale of, 154, 159 and n.
- Fairholm, John, of Baberton, treasurer of Faculty of Advocates, 131 and n.
- Fettes, Sir William, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, governor of Merchant Maiden Hospital, 42, 48.
- Row, 143n; building in 1825 in, 163.
- Figgate Burn, 165.
- Figgins, Mr., solicitor, 57.
- Finlay, —, surgeon apprentice, 55.
- Fish-seller, sentence in 1738 on, 187-8.
- Fisher, Robert, baker, 134 and n.
- Thomas, merchant, treasurer of George Heriot's Hospital, 134-7.
- Flesh Market, building beside North Loch of, 111.
- Fletcher, Andrew, of Saltoun, feuing in 1825 of land in South Back of Canon-gate of, 167.
- Reverend David, minister of south-east parish of Edinburgh, 98.
- Janet, wife of Thomas Gordon, W.S., 120 and n.
- Flodden Wall, 13n.
- Foggo, Isabella, 44, 59.
- Forbes, A., teacher in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 92.
- Sir William, 28-9.
- Forres Street, 143n.; building in 1820s in, 150, 172.
- Forrest, Janet, wife of James Carnegie, writer, 123-4 and n.
- Forrester's Wynd, 132.
- Forster, William Edward, M.P., English Endowed Schools Act of, 78.
- Foster, John, 107.
- Foular, John, protocol books of, 131n., 134n.
- Foulis, George, goldsmith, communion cups presented to south-east parish church of Edinburgh by, 98.
- Sir James, of Colinton, Lord Justice Clerk, 121 and n.
- Fountainbridge, building in 1823 in, 145.
- Fountainhall, Lord, son of John Lauder of Fountainhall, 112, 119n.
- Frank, John, W.S., 115.
- Free Church of Scotland, 50.
- Fulton, James, mason, 129 and n.
- Gairden, Mrs., teacher in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.
- Gairdner, Andrew, merchant and burgess, commissioned in 1804 in Loyal Edinburgh Spearsmen, 188.
- Ebenezer, linen manufacturer, father of above, 188.
- Galashiels, 116.
- Gardner, Isabella, 46.
- Gardner's Crescent, building in 1820s in, 150, 163; building in 1826 of United Associate Synod Chapel in, 172.
- Gavine, Thomas, merchant, 114 and n.
- Gayfield Place, 149.
- Square, building in 1820s in cess park adjoining, 158, 160, 163, 172.
- Geddes, Miss, governess (1818-1832) of Merchant Maiden Hospital, 45-8, 91.
- General Post Office, 157n.
- Register Office, building in 1823 of north side of, 145 and n., 151.
- Gentlemen Bowlers of Edinburgh, 185.
- George IV, donation to new High School of, 175; anniversary in 1827 of visit to Scotland of, 178.
- IV Bridge, 11; plans in 1820s for building of, 12, 143, 147 and n., 154-6, 160 and n., 165, 178 and n., 181 and n.
- Inn, Bristo Street, 12, 25.
- Square, 14, 25, 79.
- Watson's Ladies' College : *see* Watson's (George) Ladies' College.
- Gibson, Alexander, 142.
- Sir Alexander, of Durie, President of Court of Session, 126 and n.
- Sir Alexander Maitland, 176.
- James, 185.
- Michael, tailor, 95.

- Gilemston Pikemen, 189.
- Gillespie, James, bequest to Merchant Company of Edinburgh of, 7; money lent in 1816 to Merchant Maiden Hospital by trust of, 27.
- Janet, wife of James Hamilton, merchant, 135n.
- Gillespie's Hospital, 23; report in 1870 of Thomas J. Boyd on, 77-8.
- School, 78.
- Gilmour, Sir John, of Craigmillar, 121n.
- Gladstone, Albert, 120.
- Anna, daughter of above, 120.
- Gladstone's Land, 113.
- Glasgow, Bridewell of, 170; alterations in 1828 to Court of Justiciary circuits at, 180.
- archbishop of : *see* Paterson, John.
- Glenfinlas Street, building in 1826 in, 172.
- Glentochar, 3.
- Gloucester Place, building in 1823 in, 146.
- Goldsmith, Oliver, 75.
- Gordon, Catherine, wife of Richard Mills, clockmaker, 123.
- David, invention of portable gas lamp by, 175n.
- Sir John Watson, R.A., portrait of Roderick Gray by, 51.
- Thomas, W.S., 120 and n.
- Govan, James, tailor burgess, 131 and n.
- Govanlock, Alexander, 132 and n.
- Graham, William, jeweller burgess, 135.
- Grange, James Erskine, Lord, letter of 1707 to governors of Merchant Maiden Hospital of, 6 and n., 82.
- Grant, Campbell, 58 and n., 85-6.
- Grassmarket, proposal in 1824 for building of road to connect Lawnmarket and, 155; proposal in 1825 for building of Victoria Street from George IV Bridge to, 160.
- Gray, Hugh, 185.
- Isobel, wife of Robert Fisher, baker, 134 and n.
- Roderick, factor of Merchant Maiden Hospital estates at Peterhead, 51.
- Sir William, 104.
- Gray's Close, 121.
- Great Church : *see* St. Giles, Great or Mid Church of.
- Junction Street, building in 1824 of, 154.
- Greenhill, Mr., lessee in 1826 of Newhaven and Burntisland ferries, 173.
- Greyfriars Church, 32, 33-4, 41, 42.
- Grindlay, George, elder, 42; bequest to Merchant Maiden and Watson's Hospitals of, 19, 21.
- George, younger, son of above, 19, 21.
- Gunn Stain Close : *see* Gunstone's Close.
- Gunn's Close : *see* Gunstone's Close.
- Gunstone's Close, 128 and n.
- Haddington, Charles Hamilton, 8th Earl of; and Salisbury Crags, 172-3 and n.
- Thomas Hamilton, 1st Earl of, possession of Merchant Hall, Cowgate, by, 11-12.
- Place, building in 1826 in, 172.
- Hair, James, elder, 3.
- James, younger, druggist, son of above and second husband of Mary Erskine, 3, 4, 83.
- Mrs. : *see* Erskine, Mary.
- Haliburton, Elizabeth, housekeeper, 39.
- Dame Margaret, 135 and n.
- Haliday, Thomas, brazier, connection with copper roofing of Tron Church of, 106.
- Hall, Robert, 185.
- Hamburg, 104, 106.
- Hamilton, Alexander, merchant and baillie, 119.
- Anna, wife of William Alves, writer, 132 and n.
- Frederick, merchant, 118.
- James, merchant, 135 and n.
- Dr. James, governor of Merchant Maiden Hospital, 62; report in 1780 on Merchant Maiden Hospital in Bristo by, 14; report in 1815 on suitability of site in Lauriston for new Merchant Maiden Hospital by, 25.
- James Hamilton, 1st Duke of, 105.
- John, wright, 122, 123, 130-1.
- Marion, wife of Sir Hugh Dalrymple of North Berwick, 116.
- Hanover Street, 79, 164.
- Hare, William, 183 and n.
- Harvey, Mr., architect, plan for new building for Merchant Maiden Hospital submitted by, 20, 21.
- Hay, Alexander, of Kennet, Clerk Register 131n.
- Sir Alexander, of Whitburgh, 131 n.
- Charles, baker, 129 and n.
- Daniel, fiddler, 96.
- Reverend George, 53.
- Henderson, Alexander, bookseller, 132-3 and n.
- Alexander, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, 164.
- Reverend Alexander, 104.
- Laurence, treasurer of Tron Church, 96, 103, 104, 107, 108, 110.
- Robert, College librarian, 133 and n.
- William, College librarian, father of above, 133n.
- William, of Meggatland, 136.

- Hepburn, John, 185.  
 Heriot, George, hospital founded by, 3.  
 — Row, 143n.  
 Heriot-Watt College, 152n.  
 Heriot's Green, colours presented to Loyal Edinburgh Sparmen in, 188.  
 — Hospital, 5, 82; lead imported from England in 1643 for roof of, 103; quarry of, 124; treasurer in 1688 of, 134; attendance at Greyfriars Church of boys of, 42; building of Atholl Crescent on ground owned by, 150; proposal in 1825 for building of Regent Terrace on ground owned by, 161; alterations in 1828 to grounds of, 181; lease in 1768 of ground to Gentlemen Bowlers of Edinburgh by, 185.  
 High Church: *see* St. Giles, Little, East or High Church of.  
 — School, building in 1820s of new, 143 and n., 144, 152 and n., 153, 162, 164, 168, 171, 173, 175, 176, 178, 181.  
 — School Yards, 143 n.  
 — Street, 3, 98, 112, 114 and n., 118, 122, 123, 125, 126, 128, 130, 132, 136, 148-9, 156, 166, 168, 174; disappearance in late seventeenth century of thatched and timber-fronted houses in, 111; recommendation in 1674 of Town Council for rebuilding in, 113 and n.; attempt of Town Council in late seventeenth century for regulation of height of tenements in, 114 and n.; property of Robert Richardson, W.S., in, 119 and n., 120; property of Alexander Borthwick, vintner burgess, in, 121-2; property of Thomas Fisher, merchant, in, 134.  
 — Tolbooth: *see* Tolbooth Church.  
 Hill, David, builder, 167.  
 Hillside Crescent, building in 1820s in, 151, 163.  
 Hislop, John, wright, 133 and n.  
 Hog: *see* Hogg, Mrs.  
 Hogarth, Miss, teacher in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.  
 Hogg, Mrs., governess (1774-1793) of Merchant Maiden Hospital, 39-40, 41, 49n, 90.  
 Holyrood Abbey, 124.  
 — Abbey Church, 109.  
 — Road, 167n.  
 Holyroodhouse, 161, 167; work of Robert Milne of Balfarg at, 124; improvements in 1820s to, 151, 164.  
 Home, George, 142.  
 — George, of Whitfield, 116 and n.  
 — Sir Patrick, of Lumsden, advocate, 116 and n.  
 Hope, John, Solicitor General, 171, 177.  
 Hope, Sir Thomas, of Craighall, maternal grandfather of Mary Erskine, 2.  
 — Crescent, 158n.; building in 1826 in, 172.  
 Hopetoun, 52.  
 — Rooms, Queen Street, accommodation in 1871 of Merchant Maiden Hospital in, 32, 80.  
 Horse Wynd, Trades Maiden Hospital in, 5.  
 Hospital Schools, of seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, 1.  
 Houston, Andrew, 129 and n.  
 Howieson, Charles, 185.  
 Hull, 108.  
 Humbie, minister at, 121.  
 Hume, William, 185.  
 Hunter, James, of Thurston, 171.  
 — John, merchant, 125 and n.  
 — Robert, 185.  
 — Robert, merchant, 131 and n.  
 — Square, 99, 165.  
 Hutchison, Isobel, wife of Charles Hay, baker, 129 and n.  
 Hutton, Robert, baker, 128 and n.  
 — William, merchant, 130 and n.  
 Improvements: *see* Edinburgh.  
 Incident, The, 98.  
 Incorporated Trades of Edinburgh, 4, 5.  
 Independent Church, North College Street, Reverend John Aikman, minister in, 160.  
 India Place, building in 1823 in, 146.  
 — Street, building in 1823 in, 146.  
 Industrial School, proposal in 1870 for foundation of, 79.  
 Inglis, Edward, 185.  
 — Lieutenant-Colonel, 189.  
 Ireland, 97.  
 Ireland's Close, 133.  
 Jack, Miss, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 40, 91.  
 Jackson, Isobel Vere, 54.  
 Jacobite Rebellion of 1745, 8, 61.  
 James VI, 126; visit to Tam o' the Cowgate's house of, 12.  
 — VII, 111, 115, 118n.  
 Jamieson, Walter, glazier, 133 and n.  
 Jedburgh, 52.  
 Johnston, Sir Archibald, of Warriston, 96, 104.  
 — Charles, schoolmaster, 15.  
 — Reverend John, minister of Roxburgh Place Relief Chapel, 27.  
 — Joseph, of Sciennes, 96.  
 — Margaret, wife of James Affleck, baker, 129 and n.  
 — Mary, 33, 38.  
 — William, bailie, 140.

- Johnston, Reverend William, teacher (1830-1859) in Merchant Maiden Hospital and Chaplain, 47, 49, 65, 67, 68, 73, 86, 89, 92.  
 — Terrace, plans in 1820s for building of, 143, 148 and n., 149, 150, 155-6, 165, 174, 181 and n.  
 Joint Stock Company, proposed formation in 1825 for effecting Improvements in Edinburgh of, 160.  
 Kay, John, his *Edinburgh Portraits*, 188.  
 — Miss, lady superintendent of Edinburgh Educational Institution, 79.  
 Keir, Adam, negotiations in 1804 for the purchase by Merchant Maiden Hospital of land in Lauriston of, 20.  
 — Street, 20.  
 Keith, Anna, wife of William Scoullar, merchant, 127 and n.  
 Kello, John, embroiderer, 130.  
 Kelso, 161.  
 Kennedy, Robert, writer, first husband of Mary Erskine, 3.  
 Kennedy, Sir Thomas, of Kirkhill, Lord Provost of Edinburgh in 1685-1686, 130-131 and n.  
 Kerr, Andrew, merchant, 133.  
 Killyth, battle of, 105.  
 Kincaid, Thomas, 130n.  
 Kincoardine, minister at, 132.  
 King, Alexander, protocol books of, 131n.  
 — Mr., painter and glazier, 57.  
 King's Bridge, building in 1820s. of, 178 and n., 181.  
 — Park, 147-8.  
 — Stables Road, 178n.  
 Kinghorn, 189.  
 Kininmonth, James, chamberlain of Fife, 135-6 and n.  
 Kirk Sessions, Thomas Fisher, treasurer (1685-1686) to, 134.  
 Kirkheugh, 115 and n.  
 Knox, John, 170; educational aims of, 2.  
 — Dr. Robert, lecturer in Anatomy, connection with Burke and Hare of, 183-4.  
 Ladies' Institution: *see* Edinburgh Ladies' Institution, Park Place.  
 Lady St. Monance Close, 115.  
 Laing, Margaret, widow of Archibald Row, merchant, 83.  
 Lancaster, Joseph, monitorial system of teaching of, 49.  
 Lauder, Colin, merchant, 120.  
 — John: *see* Fountainhall, Lord.  
 — John, of Fountainhall, merchant burgess, 119 and n.  
 Laurie, Robert, visiting master at Merchant Maiden Hospital, 61-2.  
 Laurie, Simon S., report in 1868 on Merchant Maiden Hospital by, 52, 68-80.  
 Lauriston, 34, 41, 45, 61; negotiations by Merchant Maiden Hospital for purchase of ground belonging to Adam Keir in, 20; negotiations by Merchant Maiden Hospital for purchase of ground belonging to David Brown in, 24-6; report in 1815 by Dr. Hamilton and Mr. Wood of suitability for new Merchant Maiden Hospital of site in, 25; building of new Merchant Maiden Hospital in, 26-7; building in 1820s in area of, 145, 150.  
 — estate of, 116 n.  
 — Jean, 55.  
 — Lane, 27, 31, 77n.  
 Law, John, writer, 134 and n.  
 — Katherine, wife of Robert Henderson, College librarian, 133 and n.  
 — Margaret, wife of Robert Richardson, W.S., 119.  
 — William, of Lauriston, goldsmith burgess, 116 and n.  
 Lawnmarket, 113, 124, 134, 161; plans in 1820s. for bridging Cowgate at, 147, 154-5, 156 and n.; proposal in 1824 for building of road to connect Grassmarket and, 155.  
 Leo, Reverend Dr. Robert, minister of Greyfriars Church, 51.  
 Leechman, Jess, governess (1832-1857) of Merchant Maiden Hospital, 48-51, 87, 88, 91.  
 Leith, 114, 124, 138, 139, 146; plague in early seventeenth century in, 105; measures taken for building of stone houses in late seventeenth century in, 112-13 and n.; proposed branch railway from canal basin to, 24; building in 1824 of new jail at, 153-4; controversy regarding transfer to private ownership of docks at, 151-2, 157-8, 162; improvements in 1820s to piers and docks at, 152, 162, 171, 177, 179, 180, 182; municipal bill of 1827 concerning separation of Edinburgh and, 177 and n.; proposal in 1828 for extension of Edinburgh-Dalkeith railway from Niddry to, 182; *see also* North Leith, South Leith, Links, 185.  
 — Oil Gas Light Company, establishment in 1823 of, 148; suggested rivalry in 1828 between new Edinburgh Gas Company and, 180.  
 — Walk, 158, 158n., 160, 176, 185; proposal in 1824 for new road between Newhaven and, 149; condition in 1824 of new road to upper bridge over Water of Leith from foot of, 154; building in 1820s in area of, 146-7, 151, 163, 172.

- Lennox, Esmé Stewart, 1st Duke of, paternal great-grandfather of Mary Erskine, 2.  
 Leopold Place, 176; building in 1820s in, 147, 163.  
 Leslie: see Leven, Alexander Leslie, 1st Earl of.  
 — Alexander, servant to Lord Carmichael, 132 and n.  
 — George, stationer, 116.  
 Leven, Alexander Leslie, 1st Earl of, 107.  
 Libberton's Wynd, demolitions in 1828, for building of George IV Bridge in, 181.  
 Lindsay, Alexander, 125 and n.  
 — David, merchant and baillie, father of above, 125 and n.  
 Listonshields, proposal in 1826 for additional supply of water to Edinburgh from, 169.  
 Listoun, Matthew, 185.  
 Little Church: see St. Giles, Little, East or High Church of.  
 Liverpool, proposal in 1824 for railway between Manchester and, 154.  
 Livingston, Ann, 55.  
 Loch, James, of Drylaw, treasurer of Edinburgh, 96.  
 Lochhead, Henry, vintner, 127 and n.  
 Lochrin, distillery at, 25.  
 Lockhart, Sir George, 112.  
 Logan, Robert, 97.  
 London, 104, 147; alterations in 1825 in times of mail coaches between Edinburgh and, 161-2.  
 — Road, 162; feuing in 1824 of stances in, 149; proposal in 1825 for road from Drummond Street to, 159.  
 — Street, building in 1820s in, 146, 151; proposal in 1825 for extension of, 158.  
 Lord Provosts: see Blair, Sir James Hunter; Clerk, Sir Alexander; Creech, William; Currie, James; Dick, Sir James, of Prestonfield; Drummond, Sir George; Fettes, Sir William; Henderson, Alexander; Kennedy, Sir Thomas, of Kirkhill; Mackenzie, Kincaid; Macvicar, Neil; Smith, Sir John, of Grothill; Trotter, William, of Ballindean.  
 Lothian, Colonel James, burgess and gildbrother, son of Thomas Lothian, merchant, 130 and n.  
 — Lieutenant John, eldest son of above, 130.  
 — Moses, apprentice, 57.  
 — Thomas, merchant, 130 n.  
 — William, 185.  
 — House, 145n.  
 — Road, 19, 21, 22, 23, 156; building in 1820s in, 145, 150, 163.  
 Lothian Street, 12, 24, 29, 48; building of, 16-18; negotiations of Merchant Maiden Hospital with Mr. Ritchie, slater, for sale of their ground in, 20; plans for new Merchant Maiden Hospital facing, 21, 25; offer to Relief Church of land belonging to Merchant Maiden Hospital behind, 28.  
 Low, Quentin, 135 and n.  
 Lowe, Joseph, teacher in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 92.  
 — Mrs., wife of above, teacher in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 92.  
 Lowrie, Anna, wife of George Alison, merchant, 127 and n.  
 Loyal Edinburgh Spearmen, 188-9.  
 Luckenbooths, 126; Charles I orders demolition of, 94.  
 Luikop, Susanna, 96.  
 Lumsden, Michael, advocate, 131 and n.  
 Lyle, Jean, wife of George Rome, writer, 118 and n.  
 Lyon, Robert, teacher in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 92.  
 — Miss, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.  
 Mabane, Thomas, 185.  
 McCall, David, treasurer of Tron Church, 96, 97, 98, 99; money left for weekday preacher for Tron Church by, 110.  
 McCara, Andrew, 185.  
 McColl, Miss, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 43, 91.  
 McDonald, Gilbert, precentor of Greyfriars Church, 42.  
 — Mr., teacher of singing in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.  
 Macfait, Ebenezer, 185.  
 McFarlane, John, W.S., 118.  
 Macgill, Hew, of Rankeillor, owner of Merchant Hall, Cowgate, 11.  
 Machrie, William, fencing master, 127 and n.  
 Mackenzie, Sir George, of Rosehaugh, 112, 134n.  
 — Kincaid, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, 28.  
 McKenzie, George, Clerk of Exchequer, 122.  
 McLardie, Ann, 56, 57, 58.  
 McLurg, James, merchant and bailie, 124 and n.  
 McMath, James, apothecary, 123 and n., 124 and n.  
 — Janet, 96.  
 McMorlan, John, merchant, 114 and n., 129.

- McMorran, George, elder, merchant, youngest son of John McMorran, 134 and n.  
 — George, younger, son of above, 134n.  
 — John, 134n.  
 McMorran's Close, 134n.  
 McPherson, Daniel, writer, 121.  
 — Elizabeth, daughter of above, 121.  
 — John, 185.  
 McQueen, Duncan, 185.  
 Macvicar, Neil, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, 188.  
 Magistrates: see Edinburgh, Town Council of.  
 Main, David, writer, 118.  
 — Point, 148.  
 Maitland, William, estimate of cost of Tron Church by, 110.  
 Malcolm's Close, 126 and n.  
 Manchester, 51; proposal in 1824 for railway between Liverpool and, 154.  
 Mann, Alexander, tailor, 95.  
 Mansfield Place, completion in 1823 of, 146.  
 Mar, John Erskine, 7th Earl of, paternal grandfather of Mary Erskine, 2 and n.  
 — John Francis Miller Erskine, 31st Earl of, 30-1.  
 — John Francis Erskine Goodeve- Erskine, 32nd Earl of, 31n.  
 — Marie Stewart, 7th Countess of, paternal grandmother of Mary Erskine 2.  
 — and Kellie, Walter Henry Coningsby Erskine, 11th and 13th Earl of, 31n.  
 Marjoribanks, Edward, merchant councillor and Town Treasurer, 123 and n.  
 — James, merchant, 130.  
 — John, merchant and baillie, 120 and n.  
 Mary Queen of Scots, 154, 170.  
 — Erskine School, table cover in, 6n.  
 — King's Close, 126 and n., 128.  
 Mary's Chapel, deacons of, 29.  
 Matheson, Mr., contractor in 1828 of East Leith pier, 179.  
 Meadow Cage, 162 and n.  
 — Walk, Middle, 147, 156, 162n.  
 — Walk, North, extension in 1824 of Lothian Road to, 150.  
 Meadows, 25, 26, 27, 29, 31, 37, 38; building in 1825 between Lothian Road and, 163.  
 Meadows House, 7 Lauriston Lane, hospital for sick children, 31.  
 Meal Market, Cowgate, building of, 111, 115n.  
 Medal of Loyal Edinburgh Spearmen, 188  
 Meggat, Jean, 53.  
 Melrose, William, land for Tron Church purchased from widow and heirs of, 98.  
 Melville, Henry Dundas, 1st Viscount, building in 1827 of monument to, 26, 178.  
 — Robert Dundas, 2nd Viscount, 171.  
 — Street, building in 1820s in, 150, 163.  
 Menzies, William, merchant and baillie, 130 and n.  
 Mercat Cross, 23, 117, 118, 126, 187; fire of 1824 at, 151.  
 Mercer, Elizabeth, petition in 1723 to Merchant Maiden Hospital on behalf of, 9-10.  
 — William, father of above, 9-10.  
 Merchant Company of Edinburgh, 31n, 72, 82, 83, 154n.; formation of, 4; Hall in Cowgate of, 11-12; arms of, 30; foundation of Merchant Maiden Hospital by, 1, 4-5; policy regarding administration of hospitals of, 7, 69; money lent in 1816 to Merchant Maiden Hospital by, 27; powers to transform Merchant Maiden Hospital into fee-paying school obtained in 1869 by, 7, 70n.  
 — Hall, Cowgate, 7, 51n.; history of, 11-12; lease in 1697 for seven years to Merchant Maiden Hospital of, 5.  
 — Maiden Hospital, minutes of, 1-92; foundation of, 1; purpose of foundation of, 1-2, 3, 9; date of opening of, 5; statutes and constitution of, 6-11, 82-3; functions and powers of board of governors of, 7-8; Landed Estates Committee of governors of, 8; ownership of lands in Borders by, 8, 30; ownership of land on which Peterhead is built by, 8; Education Committee of governors of, 8; report in 1832 on internal management of Hospital by Education Committee of, 47; effect of Disruption of 1843 on Board of governors of, 50; presentations to, 9-10, 83-4; rights in 1878 of rival claimants to Mar presentations to, 31n.; bequest of George Grindlay, elder, to, 19, 21; buildings occupied by, 11-32; accommodation from 1706-1818 in Bristo of, 15, 12-25; public roup of furniture of property in Bristo of, 28; offer of land behind Lothian Street to Porteburgh congregation of Relief Church by, 28; sale in 1819 of property in Bristo of, 29; proposals in late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries for the erection of a new building for, 15, 17, 18-27; negotiations in 1804 for the purchase of property in Lothian Street belonging to John Ritchie, slater, by, 20; negotiations in 1804 for the purchase of pro-

Merchant Maiden Hospital (*continued*)—  
 perty in Lauriston belonging to Adam Keir by, 20; proposal for erection in Orchardfield of new building for, 22-4; negotiations in 1815-1816 for the purchase of property in Lauriston belonging to the heirs of David Brown by, 24-7; report in 1815 by Dr. Hamilton and Mr. Wood on suitability of site in Lauriston for, 25; decision in 1816 for removal to Lauriston of, 26; submission of architects' plans for new building in Lauriston of, 26; foundation stone laid in 1816 of building in Lauriston of, 27; financial arrangements for payment of building in Lauriston of, 27; site of building in Lauriston of, 27, 145 and n.; description of building in Lauriston of, 27-8; internal arrangement of building in Lauriston of, 29-30; condition in 1827 of building in Lauriston of, 29; repairs and alterations in 1858 to building in Lauriston of, 30; entry from Archibald Place to building in Lauriston of, 29, 31; removal in 1870 from building in Lauriston of, 27; sale in 1871 to George Watson's School of building in Lauriston of, 31; occupation in 1871 of Hopetoun Rooms by, 32, 80; purchase of houses for boarders in Saxe-Coburg Place and Royal Crescent in 1870 by, 31, 79, 80; daily life in, 32-4; uniform of girls of, 33-4; attendance at Greyfriars Church of girls of, 32, 33-4, 41, 42; attendance in 1845 at St. John's Established Church of girls of, 51; attendance after 1845 at West St. Giles Church of girls of, 51; effect of Disruption of 1843 on Church attendance of girls of, 50-1; diet and health of girls of, 34-8; surgeons to, 36; report in 1776 of Dr. Steedman on health of girls of, 35-6; surgeon's report in 1823 on diet of girls of, 34-5; staff of, 38-52, 90-92; discipline in, 52-59; regulations of 1761 concerning discipline in, 53 and n., 84-5; development in education in, 60-8; report in 1784 of Education Committee to governors on education in, 62; report in 1834 by Education Committee to governors on sewing and instrumental music in, 64-65; report in 1844 of Education Committee to governors on education in 65-6, 86-9; introduction of boarding-out system in, 66; report in 1855 of Education Committee to governors on education in, 67, 89-90; report in 1868 of Simon S. Laurie on education in, 52, 68-80; report in 1869 of Robert

Walker, treasurer to the hospital, on education in, 72-3; report in 1869 of Education Committee to governors on education in, 76-7; report in 1870 of Thomas J. Boyd, Master of Merchant company, to governors on education in, 77-9; change in 1870 of status of, 1, 31-2. *See also* Collegiate School for Girls, Edinburgh Educational Institution, Edinburgh Educational Institution for Young Ladies, Edinburgh Institution for Young Ladies, Merchant Maiden Seminary.  
 — Maiden Seminary, 49; *see also* Merchant Maiden Hospital.  
 — Street, 11; proposal in 1824 for new road from north of Adam Square to, 154 and n.  
 Merk of the tun, diversion to building of Tron Church of yield from, 105, 107.  
 Merton, Andrew, merchant and Town Treasurer, 120 and n.  
 Mid Church: *see* St. Giles, Great or Mid Church of.  
 Midlothian County Buildings, 174.  
 Mill, James, of Hatton, 131 and n.  
 — Robert, mason: *see* Milne, Robert, of Balfarg.  
 Miller, James, Chaplain to Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.  
 Miller's Knowe, 162.  
 Mills, Richard, clockmaker, 123 and n.  
 Milne, James, 131.  
 — John, King's master mason, 104, 110, 124; estimate and contract in 1642 for steeple and south side of Tron Church between Edinburgh Town Council and, 99-103.  
 — Margaret, daughter of Robert Milne of Balfarg and wife of John Anderson, coppersmith, 128n.  
 — Robert, writer, 124 and n.  
 — Robert, of Balfarg, King's master mason, 117, 122, 124, 125, 126, 128 and n.  
 — William, mason, eldest son of above, 130.  
 Milne's Court, 124-5 and nn.; fire of 1825 in, 161.  
 — Square, 116, 122n., 124 and n.  
 Ministers' Daughters' College, 68.  
 Mint, The, 123n.  
 Miramichi, 167 and n.  
 Mitchell, Janet, 33.  
 — John, burgess, 134.  
 — Margaret, eldest daughter of above, 134.  
 — William, stabler, 136 and n.  
 Moira, Francis Rawdon Hastings, 2nd Earl of, 188, 189.

Mollison, Miss, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.  
 Monck, General: *see* Albemarle, George Monck, 1st Duke of.  
 Moncrieff, Reverend Sir Henry, minister of St. Cuthbert's Church and governor of Merchant Maiden Hospital, 42.  
 — James, Lord Advocate, 73.  
 — John, 185.  
 Montgomery, John, W.S., 117, 127.  
 — John, of Wrae, W.S., 136 and n.  
 — Margaret, governess (1765-1774) of Merchant Maiden Hospital, 39, 90.  
 — William, of Macbiehill, 123.  
 — Street, building in 1826 in, 172.  
 Montrose, James Graham, 1st Marquess of, 105.  
 Moray, Francis Stewart, 10th Earl of, 165, 173; feuing in 1822 and 1823 of estate of, 143 and n.; building in 1820s on estate of, 146, 150, 162-3, 171.  
 — Place, building in 1820s in, 146 and n., 163, 171.  
 Moreham, Miss, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.  
 Morgan, Alexander, 70n.  
 Mound, 23, 144, 151, 156, 161, 163, 164, 169.  
 Mountford, Grizel, governess (1793-1813) of Merchant Maiden Hospital, 40, 41-3, 50-1, 59, 90.  
 Mowat, James, teacher in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 63, 91.  
 Muir, Adam, of Blackhall, 136.  
 — Euphame, wife of Robert Hunter, merchant, 131 and n.  
 — John, of Park, 136.  
 Murdoch, James, tailor burgess, 120.  
 Murray, Sir James, of Kilbaberton, 96.  
 — Mary, 37.  
 — Patrick, of Keillor, 122 and n.  
 — Lord: *see* Moray, Francis Stewart, 10th Earl of.  
 Murrayfield, feuing in 1824 of villa stances in, 149.  
 Museum, National, of Antiquities of Scotland, medal of Loyal Edinburgh Spear-men in, 188.  
 Musical Festivals in Edinburgh in 1815, 1819 and 1824, 157 and n.  
 Musselburgh, proposal in 1824 for railway between Edinburgh, Dalkeith and, 154; building in 1825 of road between southern part of Edinburgh, Portobello and, 165.  
 Muttonhole, 171 and n.  
 Mylne, Robert, of Balfarg: *see* Milne, Robert, of Balfarg.  
 Nair, William, 185.

National Covenant, 93, 98.  
 — Monument, Calton Hill, building in 1820s of, 151, 171, 173 and n., 178.  
 Neilson, William, merchant, 135.  
 Netherbow, 119, 165.  
 — Port, 98.  
 New Brunswick, 167 n.  
 — College: *see* University of Edinburgh.  
 — Town Market, Stockbridge, opening in 1826 of, 170.  
 Newhaven, 162; proposal in 1824 for new road between Leith Walk and, 149; reduction in 1826 of fares of ferries between Burntisland and, 173.  
 — Road, improvement in 1824 of, 151.  
 Newington, building in 1823 in, 145.  
 Nicoll, James, 136.  
 Nicolson, Sir George, of Kemnay, Senator of the College of Justice, 135 and n.  
 — John, of Traboun, Dean of Gild, 117.  
 — Street, 14.  
 Niddry, proposal in 1828 for extension of Edinburgh-Dalkeith railway from Leith to, 182.  
 Niddry's Wynd, 128.  
 Nisbet, Dr. James, 129 and n.  
 — Dame Jean, wife of Sir William Scott, elder, of Harden,  
 — Reverend Dr. Robert, minister of West St. Giles, 67, 70, 90.  
 Noa, Leopold, teacher in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 90, 92.  
 North Berwick, 52.  
 — Bridge, 124.  
 — Leith, 154, 174; minister in 1675 of, 3.  
 — Loch, 144, 165; building of Flesh Market and slaughter-houses by side of, 111; filling up of, 164, 169.  
 — Richmond Street, completion in 1823 of, 145.  
 Northern Reporter, first issue in 1826 of, 170.  
 Observatory, Calton Hill, 181.  
 Octagon: *see* Moray Place.  
 Old Assembly Close, 157; building in 1820s in, 165-6, 172.  
 Oliphant, Archibald, apothecary, 3.  
 — Charles, doctor of medicine, 127 and n.  
 — Laurence, W.S., 122.  
 Orchardfield, bequest by George Grindlay, elder, to Merchant Maiden Hospital and George Watson's Hospital of lands of, 19, 22, 26; proposal for erection of new building for Merchant Maiden Hospital in, 22-4.

- Ord, Christian, wife of William Graham, jeweller burghess, 135.  
— Laurence, merchant, father of above, 135 and n.  
Orphan Hospital, money lent in 1816 to Merchant Maiden Hospital by, 27.  
Orr, Isobel, petition to governors of Merchant Maiden Hospital on behalf of, 82.  
— Mr., father of above, 82.  
Oswald, James, merchant, 120.
- Paisley's Close, 128.  
Paris, 51.  
Parkside, building in 1820s in area of, 145, 150.  
— Street, building in 1825 in, 162.  
Parliament Close, 115, 116; building of Exchange in, 111, 115n.; fire of 1875 in, 114-15; fire of 1824 in, 151, 168.  
— House, 103, 109, 116-17; relations between Charles I and Edinburgh concerning building of, 93-4, 96; tax on merchants for building in 1632 of, 96; improvement in late seventeenth century of approach to, 115 and n.; meetings in 1815 and 1819 of first and second Edinburgh musical festivals in, 157n.  
— Square, 155n.; proposal in 1824 for eastern extension of, 157.  
Paterson, Alexander, second son of John Paterson, Archbishop of Glasgow, 118.  
— Alexander, of Caverhill, merchant burghess, 115-17.  
— Andrew, wright, 117.  
— Andrew, of Inch or Kirkcoun, deacon of wrights, 124.  
— Sir Hugh, of Bannockburn, W.S., Keeper of the Signet, 118 and n.  
— John, Bishop of Edinburgh and later Archbishop of Glasgow, 118 and n.  
— Robert, writer, 115 and n.  
Paton, Miss, actress in 1823 in Edinburgh, 147.  
— Miss, singer, sister of above, 147.  
— Mr., writing master, 147.  
Patton, David, painter, 127 and n.  
Peebles Wynd, 98.  
Penicuik, Alexander, of Newhall, 121.  
— James, writer, son of above, 121 and n.  
Penny Post, operation in Edinburgh of, 149 and n.  
Perth, pikemen of, 189.  
Peterhead, ownership by Merchant Maiden Hospital of land on which is built the town of, 8; growth of, 8; relations between Merchant Maiden Hospital and, 8; expectations of sales by Merchant Maiden Hospital of land in, 20; cholera fund of 1832 in, 37; factor of estates of Merchant Maiden Hospital at, 51.
- Philips, Agnes, teacher in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 92.  
Physicians' Hall, Queen Street, 31.  
Pitcairrie: see Bayne, John, of Pitcairrie.  
Pitcairrie: see Bayne, John, of Pitcairrie.  
Pitt Street, 164.  
Pleasance, 139, 180; building in 1820s in, 145, 150.  
Poll Tax Returns for 1694, 130n., 133n.  
Port Hopetoun, 163; proposal for building in Orchardfield of, 24; proposed branch railway from Leith to, 24; building in 1823 in Lothian Road opposite, 145 and n.; insufficiency in 1823 of, 148.  
Portable Gas Company, formation in 1826 of, 175 and n.; dissolution in 1827 of, 178.  
Porteous, James, chaplain to Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.  
Portland Bread, 42.  
Portobello, 76, 182; building in 1825 of road between southern part of Edinburgh, Musselburgh and, 165.  
Portsburgh, 148 and n.  
Porterrow, 139.  
Preston, battle of, 105.  
— Street, 165.  
Princes Street, 143n., 144, 156, 167; disapproval of filling up of North Loch and of proposed building to south of, 169, and n.  
Pringle, Agnes, wife of John Hislop, wright, 133 and n.  
— Jean, widow of Hugh Scott, minister of Galashiels, 116.  
Protocol Books, 120n., 131n., 134n.  
Pryde, David, teacher at Merchant Maiden Hospital, 68 and n., 80, 92.  
Purves Close, 119.
- Queen Street, 32, 80, 143n.; building in 1823 in, 146.  
Queensferry Road, 174; alterations observed in 1826 to, 170-1.
- Rae, Rebecca, 36.  
— Sir William, Lord Advocate, 180.  
Ramadge, Ann, 55.  
Ramsay, William, foundation stone of Merchant Maiden Hospital in Lauristone laid in 1816 by, 27.  
— Miss, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.  
Randolph Crescent, 143n.; building in 1820s in, 163, 172.  
Rankellor Street, building in 1823 in, 145.  
Rankin, Christian, 56, 57, 58.  
Rankine, Miss, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.

- Rappelerlaw's Close, 98.  
Reformation, 1.  
Regent Terrace, building in 1820s in, 161, 172.  
Reid, Alexander, younger, goldsmith burghess, 116.  
— James, merchant in Amsterdam, 104.  
— John, 108.  
— Robert, architect, plans for new building in Lauristone of Merchant Maiden Hospital submitted by 21, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30.  
Relief Chapel, Roxburgh Place, 28n.  
— Church, Brighton Street, building in 1826 of, 15, 28 and n., 172.  
Richardson, Christian, 123.  
— Katherine, 96.  
— Margaret, 96.  
— Robert, W.S., 118, 119, 120.  
Richmond, Elizabeth, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.  
Riddell, Elizabeth, wife of James Dallas, younger, of St. Martins, 121.  
Ritchie, John, slater, negotiations in 1804 for the purchase by Merchant Maiden Hospital of land in Lothian Street of, 20.  
Road Trustees, 148, 172-3.  
Robertson, Thomas, merchant, 115 and n.  
— William, 185.  
Rocheid, James, 107.  
Rollock, Henry, 104.  
— Peter, Bishop of Dunkeld, 131.  
Rome, George, writer, 118 and n.  
— Jean, daughter of above, 118 and n.  
Ross, Ann, 54, 55.  
— Robert, writer, 129 and n.  
Rossignoli, Madame, teacher of dancing in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 92.  
Roths, Margaret Leslie, Countess of, 123.  
Row, Archibald, merchant, 83.  
— Marjory, daughter of above, petition to governors of Merchant Maiden Hospital on behalf of, 83-4.  
Roxburgh Place, Relief Chapel in, 28n.  
Roxburghshire, estates of Merchant Maiden Hospital in, 30.  
Royal Bank of Scotland, purchase of  
— Excise Office by, 159 and n.  
— Blind Asylum, Nicolson Street, 51.  
— Circus, 158; opening in 1826 of new market between Stockbridge and, 170.  
— Crescent, building in 1825 in, 163; purchase by Merchant Maiden Hospital in 1870 of houses for boarders in, 31, 80.  
— Exchange, 156 and n.  
— Infirmary, 36; nurses' home of, 27; mortuary of, 27; contributions in 1825 for new, 164; extension in 1933 of, 145n.
- Royal Institution: see Royal Scottish Academy.  
— Scottish Academy, building in 1820s of, 145 and n., 151, 163-4, 169-70.  
— Scottish Museum, 160n.  
— Terrace, building in 1820s in, 147, 163, 172.  
Runciman, Reverend David, minister of Newington Church, 50.  
Russell, John, younger, merchant, 133 and n.  
Rutherford, —, surgeon apprentice, 55.  
Ruthven, Patrick, of Gardyne, 121.  
— William, of Gardyne, son of above, 121.
- St. Andrew Square, 159n., 167; proposal in 1824 to move High School to, 152-3.  
— Andrew's House, 170n.  
— Andrews, 52.  
— Bernard's Church, building in 1823 of, 145 and n.  
— Colme Street, building in 1820s of, 150, 172.  
— Cuthbert's Church, 150 and n.; minister of, 42.  
— Cuthbert's Parish, building in 1823 of two Chapels of Ease for, 144-5 and n.  
— George's Parish Church, building in 1812 in Charlotte Square of, 23.  
— Giles Church, 117, 174; details of restoration ordered by Charles I of, 94; effects on Edinburgh of Charles I's proposal for repair and establishment as cathedral of, 94-7; money paid by citizens of Edinburgh for repair in Charles I's reign of, 95-7; demolition ordered by Charles I of song school of, 94; proposed reconstruction in 1820s of, 154, 156-7, 159-60, 165, 168; restoration by William Burn in 1829 of, 26.  
— Giles, Great or Mid Church of, demolition ordered by Charles I of east and west walls of, 94; preparations for demolition of west wall of, 103; use in 1641 as temporary meeting-place by south-east parish of Edinburgh of, 99; Cromwellian Council of State asked to remove to, 108.  
— Giles, Little, East or High Church of, demolition ordered by Charles I of wall separating Great or Mid Church from, 94.  
— Giles, West Church of, attendance of Girls of Merchant Maiden Hospital after 1845 at, 51.  
— John's Episcopal Church, 169n.; building by William Burn of, 26.  
— John's Established Church, Victoria Street, attendance in 1845 of girls of Merchant Maiden Hospital at, 51.

- St. John's Hill, 167, 180.  
 — Leonard's, 180.  
 — Leonard's Hill, 25.  
 — Mary's Parish Church, Bellevue, building in 1820s of, 151, 164; application for seats in, 158.  
 — Ninian's Close, 115.  
 — Patrick Square, building in 1820s in, 145, 150, 162.  
 — Stephen's Church, building in 1820s of, 158 and n., 178.  
 — Vincent Street, 158.  
 — Vintus' Dance, presence in 1814 in Merchant Maiden Hospital of, 36.  
 Saline, Lord, Senator of the College of Justice, 132 and n.  
 Salisbury Crags, quarrying in 1826 of, 172-173 and n.  
 Salt Tron, 121, 130.  
 Sandilands, John, 122, 123.  
 — Robert, son of above, 123.  
 Sanquhar, Member of Parliament from 1702-1707 for, 132n.  
 Saunders, Miss, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 44, 91.  
 Saxe-Coburg Place, purchase by Merchant Maiden Hospital in 1870 of houses for boarders in, 31, 69, 79, 80.  
 Scarlet Fever, prevalence in mid-nineteenth century in Edinburgh of, 37.  
 Schneider, Charles, teacher in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 76, 89, 92.  
 School of Arts, 152 and n.  
 Scotland, condition after Reformation of education in, 1-2; anniversary in 1827 of George IV's visit to, 178; bill of 1828 improving administration of criminal justice in, 180.  
 — Street, building in 1820s in, 146, 151.  
 Scots Army, contribution of citizens of Edinburgh for use in Ireland in 1643 of, 97.  
*Scotman*, 155n., 178n.  
 Scott, Agnes, wife of John Wilkie, merchant, 119 and n.  
 — Hugh, minister of Galashiels, 116.  
 — Jean, wife of Walter Jamieson, glazier, 133 and n.  
 — John, master wright, 99, 106; report in 1642 on wood of Tolbooth gallery by, 103; instructed to build gallery, porch and floor in Tron Church, 107; instructed to put rails round Tron Church, 109.  
 — John, merchant burgess and gild brother, 10.  
 — John, writer, 133 and n.  
 — Magdalen, wife of James Cockburn, goldsmith, 123.  
 — Mary, 54.

- Scott, Robert, writer, 126 and n.  
 — Sir Walter, 75; entry to High School as pupil in 1779 of, 143n.; Chairman of Edinburgh Oil Gas Light Company, 148 and n.  
 — William, 185.  
 — Dr. William, land for Tron Church purchased from, 98.  
 — Sir William, elder, of Harden, 129 and n.  
 — Sir William, younger, of Harden, son of above, 129n.  
 — Mr., 13  
 Scottish Central Library, building in Lawnmarket of, 134.  
 Scoullar, William, merchant, 127 and n.  
 Scrofula, prevalence in nineteenth century in Edinburgh of, 36, 37.  
 Scurvy, prevalence in early eighteenth century in Merchant Maiden Hospital of, 35.  
 Seafield, 36.  
 Seaton, Captain William, 128-9.  
 Selkirk, Robert, 185.  
 Service-Book, Scottish, 1637, 98.  
 Seton, Sir Alexander, of Pitmedden, Senator of College of Justice, 115.  
 — George, son of above, 115.  
 Shakespeare, William, 74-5.  
 Shandwick Place, gas explosion in 1825 in, 159.  
 Sharp, Sir William, master of the Mint, 123n.  
 Shaw, Jean, wife of Mungo Campbell of Burnbank, 133 and n.  
 Sheils, William, merchant burgess, 116.  
 Signet, Keepers of, purchase of Writers' Court by, 125 and n.  
 Simpson, Daniel, W.S., 132 and n.  
 — Sir James Y., governor of Merchant Maiden Hospital, 8.  
 — Memorial Maternity Pavilion, 27.  
 Sinclair, Archibald, advocate, 122.  
 — George, merchant and baillie, 121.  
 — Henry, writer, 120 and n.  
 Sir John Smith's Close, 134n.  
 Skinner, Andrew, 185.  
 Smallpox, prevalence in mid-nineteenth century in Merchant Maiden Hospital of, 38.  
 Smeaton, William, merchant burgess, 121.  
 Smith, James, of Whitehill, mason burgess, son-in-law of Robert Milne of Balfarg, 128.  
 — Sir John, of Grothill, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, 103-4, 134n.  
 — Mary, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.  
 Snodgrass, Miss, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.

- Society, 11.  
 — of Arts, 145 and n.  
 — of Bowlers: see Edinburgh Society of Bowlers.  
 Solemn League and Covenant, negotiation in London of, 104.  
 Somerville, James, elder, of Drum, 128 and n.  
 — Thomas, maltman, 134.  
 South Back of Canongate, feuing in 1825 of, 167 and n.  
 — Bridge, 16, 23, 165.  
 — Leith, 154.  
 Southesk, Robert Carnegie, 3rd Earl of, 115 and n.  
 Spott, Archibald Murray, Laird of, 120 and n.  
 Spottiswood, Francis, 120 and n.  
 — John, son of above, 120 and n., 130n.  
 Sprott's Land, 13, 17.  
 Stair, James Dalrymple, 1st Viscount, 127n.  
 Stanley Mills, 86.  
 Steedman, Dr. John, surgeon to Merchant Maiden Hospital, report in 1776 on health of girls of Hospital by, 15, 35-6; succeeded in 1779 by Andrew Wood, 36.  
 Steill, Patrick, vintner burgess, 125, 126, 129 and n.  
 Steill's Close, 126.  
 Stenhouse, Janet, wife of Henry Lochhead, vintner, 127 and n.  
 Steven, James, Usher to His Majesty's Exchequer, 117.  
 Stevenson, Hugh, writer, 115.  
 — Mrs., 121.  
 Stewart, Christian, wife of Michael Allan, Dean of Gild, 125 and n.  
 — Daniel, bequest to Merchant Company of Edinburgh of, 7.  
 — George, 185.  
 — John, of Ascog, advocate, 125.  
 — Lady Marie: see Mar, Marie Stewart, 7th Countess of.  
 — Robert, merchant, 121.  
 Stewart's Hospital, report in 1870 of Thomas J. Boyd on, 77-8.  
 — School, 78.  
 Stobie, Miss, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.  
 Stockbridge, opening in 1826 of new market between Royal Circus and, 170.  
 Strowan, Lady, 129 and n.  
 Suttie, George, 107.  
 Surene, D. F., teacher in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 87, 92.  
 — Gabriel, teacher in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 87, 92.  
 Sutherland Fencibles, 188.

- Swinton, Alexander, of Mersington, Senator of the College of Justice, 119.  
 Sym, Reverend John, minister of Greyfriars Church, 50.  
 Syme, Miss, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 40, 91.  
 Tait, Rachel, wife of Alexander Borthwick, vintner burgess, 122.  
 Tam o' the Cowgate: see Haddington, Thomas Hamilton, 1st Earl of.  
 Taylor, Ann, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.  
 — John, teacher in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 76, 79, 92.  
 Telfer, James, merchant, 106.  
 Telfer's Wall, 12, 13 and n., 14, 16; proposal in 1819 for removal of part of, 28-9.  
 Telford, Thomas, report on Leith Pier by, 182.  
 Terviot Place, 12, 17, 28.  
 Theatre Royal, Shakespeare Square, 147; meeting in 1819 of second Edinburgh musical festival in, 167n.  
 Thieves' Row, 12.  
 Thomson, John, 185.  
 — Robert, merchant, 136 and n.  
 — Thomas, 185.  
 — William, Town Clerk of Edinburgh, 108.  
 Tod, William, treasurer of Merchant Maiden Hospital, 10.  
 — William, senior, 185.  
 Todrick: see Todrig, George.  
 Todrig, Archibald, baillie, 120 and n., 130n.  
 — George, merchant and baillie, 130 and n.  
 Todrig's Wynd, 129, 130; fire in 1674 in, 112, 113, 120.  
 Tolbooth, 117, 129n.; fish-seller committed in 1738 to, 187.  
 — Church, congregation of St. Giles High Church compelled to worship in 1634 in, 94; demolition ordered by Charles I of wall dividing St. Giles from, 94; gallery taken down in 1642 of, 103.  
 — Wynd, Leith, 154n.  
 Town Council: see Edinburgh, Town Council of.  
 — Wall: see Telfer's Wall.  
 Trades Maiden Hospital, 160; foundation by Mary Erskine of, 4 and n., 5; statutes of, 7; building in Horse Wynd of, 4; building in Argyle Square of, 12; uniform of girls of, 33; diet in 1823 of girls of, 34-5; surgeons to, 36; attendance at Greyfriars Church of girls of, 42; status in 1870 of, 80.  
 Train Bands: see Companies, Town.

- Tron Church, 124, 155n.; building of, 93-110; inscription over entrance to, 93; reasons for building of, 93-4; financial arrangements of, 1635-1638 for building of, 95-8; purchase of land for, 98; presumed date of beginning of work on, 98; treasurer ordered in 1638 to buy oak planks for, 98; state of building in 1642 of, 99; estimate and contract in 1642 between John Milne and Edinburgh Town Council for building steeple and south side of, 99-103; John Milne's estimated cost of steeple of, 100; plan as deduced from John Milne's estimate of, 100-1; interior wooden fittings of, 103, 107; arrangements for roofing with copper or lead of, 103-9; height to be raised of steeple of, 104; reasons for delay of 1644-1647 in building of, 105-7; deterioration of fabric as result of delay of 1650-1652 in building of, 107; Cromwellian Council of State asked to remove to St. Giles from, 108; provision of railings round, 109; provision of clock and bells for, 109; decision of 1671 to build head on steeple of, 109; provision in 1675 of weathercock and globe for steeple of, 109; donation of communion cups now in possession of, 98; difficulty of estimating cost of, 110; legacies to and borrowing for, 110; proposal in 1825 for demolition of, 165, 177; destruction in 1820s of steeple head of, 109, 178; building in 1820s of new steeple of, 177, 178-9, 181, 182.
- Trotter, William, of Ballindean, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, 169, 171, 177 and n.
- Udney, Arthur, 117n.
- Union Canal, 24; building in 1820s in neighbourhood of, 145, 150, 171, 172; increase in 1823 of trade on, 148; building in 1820s of basin additional to Port Hopetoun for, 148, 149, 150.
- United Associate Synod Chapel, building in 1826 in Gardner's Crescent of, 172.
- University of Edinburgh, 24, 98, 153; lead imported from England for roof of library of, 103; librarians in late seventeenth century of, 133 and n.; building in 1820s of south side of, 145 and n., 151, 163; negotiations in 1825 for more land by, 160; proposal in 1820s for demolition of buildings north and west of, 155, 165; Bell Chair of Education in, 70n.
- Vaus, John, keeper of Tolbooth, 117 and n.
- Vennel, 20.
- Vernour, William, elder, gildbrother, 131n.  
— William, younger, gildbrother, 131n.
- Vernour's Close, 131n.
- Victoria Street, proposal in 1825 for building of, 160 and n.
- Walker, Robert, treasurer of Merchant Maiden Hospital, 72-3.  
— Miss, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.  
— Mr., Chaplain to Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.  
— Street, building in 1823 in, 146.
- Warriston's Close, 127.
- Water of Leith, 154; proposal in 1824 to supply mills from, 152; building in 1820s of Dean Bridge over, 165, 173, 179-80.
- Watering Stone, 165.
- Watson, Agnes, teacher in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 92.  
— George, bequest to Merchant Company of Edinburgh of, 7.  
— John, foundation of hospital by, 164.  
— Robert, merchant, 126, 132.
- Watson's College: see Watson's (George) Ladies' College.  
— (George) Hospital, 7, 23, 68, 71; bequest of George Grindlay to, 19, 21; attendance at Greyfriars Church of boys of, 42; report in 1870 of Thomas J. Boyd on, 77-8; change in 1870 in status of, 27n.; sale in 1871 of Merchant Maiden Hospital building in Lauriston to, 31.  
— (George) Ladies' College, 80; foundation of, 79.  
— (George) School, 27 and n., 78, 79.  
— (John) Hospital, building in 1820s of, 164, 172.
- Watt, James, proposal in 1824 to erect memorial to, 152 and n.  
— Institution, 152n.
- Wauchope, —, of Edmiston, 123.  
— Andrew, of Niddrie Marischal, 123.
- Waugh, John, Dean of Gild, 153.
- Webster, Alexander, 185.
- Weddell, Sarah, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.
- Weighhouse, 156; clock bought for Tron Church from, 109.
- Weir, —, painter, 55.  
— Alexander, father of above, 55.  
— Dame Katherine, widow of Sir James Murray of Kilbabernton, 96, 97.
- Weisse, Heinrich, teacher in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 75.
- Wells of Weary, 180.
- Wemyss Place, 146.

- Wenson, Mrs., governess (before 1765) of Merchant Maiden Hospital, 39, 90.
- West Bow, 124, 128n., 174; proposal in 1824 to supersede, 155.  
— Clerk Street, building in 1823 in, 145.  
— Kirk: see St. Cuthbert's Church.  
— Port, 139, 182-3 and n.  
— Road: see Johnston Terrace.  
— St. Giles Church: see St. Giles, West Church of.
- Whiggamore Raid, 105.
- White, William, embroiderer, 96.  
— Horse Close, Canongate, 135n.
- Wilderness, The, 185.
- Wilkie David, Dean of Gild, 108.  
— John, merchant, 119 and n.  
— Reverend Thomas, minister of North Leith, 3.
- Williamson, James, apprentice, 57.  
— Joseph, 185.  
— Peter, establishment of Penny Post in Edinburgh by, 149n.
- Wilson, James, 189.
- Wilson, —, surgeon apprentice, 55.  
— James, murder of, 183.  
— Stanhope, teacher in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.
- Windsor Street, 172; building in 1820s in, 147, 151, 163.
- Wishart, Major George, 121.
- Wood, Andrew, surgeon, 14, 36; report in 1815 on suitability of site in Lauriston for new Merchant Maiden Hospital by, 25.
- Wood, Dr. Andrew, surgeon, grandson of above, 36.  
— John, revision in 1825 of Thomas Brown's 1820 plan of Edinburgh by, 146 and n.  
— John, merchant, 185.  
— Dr. William, surgeon, son of Andrew Wood, surgeon, 36.
- Wright, Robert, 185.
- Wrightshouses, 25.
- Writers to Signet, Society of, purchase of Writers' Court by, 125 and n.; attitude to Improvements Bill of 1826 of, 175.  
— Court, 125, 126, 128.
- Wylie, Miss, 39.
- Yester, Dame Margaret Ker, Lady, donation to building of Tron Church by, 110.
- Yorston, Thomas, deacon of goldsmiths, 116.
- Young, Andrew, W.S., 133.  
— Euphame, wife of William Borthwick of Pilmuir, surgeon-apothecary, 122.  
— George, father-in-law of Laurence Ord, merchant, 135n.  
— George, dyer, 135.  
— Isobel, 96.  
— James, son of Andrew Young, W.S., 133.  
— Thomas, of Rosebank, merchant and baillie, 126 and n.
- Zeigler, Jessie, mistress in Merchant Maiden Hospital, 91.

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APPENDIX

FORTY-FIFTH, FORTY-SIXTH AND FORTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORTS, ETC.

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THE FORTY-FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CLUB was held in the OLD COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY CHAMBERS, on the afternoon of *Tuesday, 31st March 1953.*

THE RIGHT HON. SIR JAMES MILLER, LORD PROVOST, presided.

In submitting its Forty-Fifth Annual Report, the Council has with deep regret to record the loss which the Club has sustained during the past year through the death of some of its prominent members and office-bearers. Sir Frank C. Mears, LL.D., and Mr. James H. Jamieson were both original members of the Club, the former being in recent years one of its Vice-Presidents. Both made useful contributions to its volumes. Mr. David Robertson, LL.B., S.S.C., also a Vice-President, and former Town Clerk of Edinburgh, joined the Club in 1909; and besides furnishing material for the volumes, he gave generously of his help on many occasions, out of his store of knowledge of the city and its environs. Mr. C. Maitland Smith, C.A., gave his services for some years as honorary auditor. Last but not least, within recent weeks the President of the Club, Sir Francis J. Grant, K.C.V.O., LL.D., has been taken from our midst at the advanced age of 89. His distinguished career as Clerk of the Lyon Court, and thereafter as Lyon King of Arms, is matter of common knowledge, as well as his services to Scottish record scholarship. Joining the Club in 1930, he was immediately elected a member of Council, and two years later Vice-President. From 1943 he has been President, and in this capacity, notwithstanding his weight of years, seldom missed a meeting. The Society may indeed remember with gratitude the services of these men who, throughout a busy public career, found time to further the interests of the Club and keep alive the traditions of the past.

In the summer of 1952 the Excursions were to (1) the old church and churchyard of the Canongate where the Minister, the Rev. R. Selby Wright, M.A., outlined the history of each and told of the impending changes in the adjacent Reid's Court, the site of the old manse; (2) Inch House, Liberton, built in 1617 and extended in later

centuries. Occupied, *inter alios*, by the families of Winram and Gordon Gilmour, it is now the property of the Corporation of Edinburgh.

The architectural features of the various parts were described by Mr. J. R. McKay, F.R.I.B.A. A short narrative was given of the careers of some of the more notable occupants in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

On the evening of June 19, the Club visited Hawthornden, the home of the seventeenth-century poet William Drummond, now of his descendant, Sir James W. Drummond. Dr. H. W. Meikle gave an entertaining account of the poet and his visitors—including Ben Jonson—and pointed out the landmarks associated with the poet.

During the present winter three lectures have been given: the first, a lantern lecture, by Mr. Ian Finlay of the Royal Scottish Museum on the Silver Work of Old Edinburgh. Among the items illustrated were the Crown, Sceptre and Sword of State of Scotland, the seventeenth-century maces of the Court of Session and different types of mazers.

The second lecture took the form of a Film of Edinburgh—silent and sound—with comments by Mr. James Hossack, M.A., F.E.I.S., Director of Extra-Mural Studies, Edinburgh University. In the sound film 'Singing Street'—school children were seen and heard singing several old well-nigh forgotten children's songs, some of them adapted to modern taste.

The third lecture, 'The Story of Trinity House Leith,' was given by Dr. John Mason who made use of the epidiascope for illustrating interesting relics of the historic maritime establishment.

The Editor has nothing to report, except to express gratification at the somewhat belated appearance of Volume XXVIII with its miscellaneous fare to suit varied tastes. There is no rush of contributors to fill the ranks of those who have so well served the Club in former days. Many appeals have been made; surely it cannot be that the sources of material regarding Old Edinburgh have been exhausted. The active interest of members is again invited. The volume just issued is available to all those who have paid two years' subscriptions since the issue of its predecessor.

In view of the losses sustained among office-bearers, certain changes have become necessary, and the Council recommends that Dr. James S. Richardson, one of the Vice-Presidents, shall become President; and that Mr. Donald M. Mathieson, Dr. H. W. Meikle, C.B.E., and Mr. Robert E. Douglas, O.B.E., D.L., be invited to



THE FORTY-SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CLUB was held in the OLD COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY CHAMBERS, on the afternoon of *Monday, 22nd February 1954.*

THE RIGHT HON. SIR JAMES MILLER, LL.D., LORD PROVOST, presided.

During the summer of 1953 three Outings of the Club were arranged. By kind permission of the Very Rev. C. L. Warr, K.C.V.O., LL.D., a visit was paid to the High Kirk of St. Giles on 25th May when Mr. A. Esme Gordon, A.R.I.B.A., outlined the history of the Church and explained its various architectural features. Thereafter Dr. J. S. Richardson, President of the Club, before proposing a vote of thanks to the lecturer, described the position of the High Altar in St. Giles and outlined the functional change in the kirk following upon the Reformation.

In June a visit was paid to Parliament House and its precincts under the leadership of Dr. C. A. Malcolm. After describing the changing appearance of the site to the south of St. Giles, Dr. Malcolm conducted the members of the Club through Parliament House, the Law Courts and the Signet Library, delineating interesting features in each and recalling events of interest associated with each place.

The Autumn meeting took the form of an excursion to Borthwick Castle through the courtesy of Mr. Theo Lang who welcomed the party. Dr. J. S. Richardson, in his inimitable manner, outlined the history of the Castle and its main architectural features. After being shown over the Castle the members visited the adjoining Borthwick Church under the guidance of the minister, the Rev. Andrew Clark Orr, M.A.

In November a joint meeting of the Old Edinburgh Club, the Ecclesiological Society and the Saltire Society was held in the Tron Kirk when Dr. H. W. Meikle, C.B.E., spoke on the history of the Kirk, while Mr. George Hay, A.R.I.B.A., described its architecture. There followed a discussion on the future of the building.

The second lecture of the winter series was held in the Library of

the University of Edinburgh on the afternoon of Saturday, 9th January 1954, when Dr. J. C. Corson, Deputy Librarian, described the origin and growth of the Library from the Little Bequest in 1580 until the present day. Many of Playfair's Plans and other interesting exhibits were on view. Thereafter the members were entertained to tea in the Upper Library.

The series will be completed by a visit to the Scottish National Portrait Gallery with Mr. R. E. Hutchison as guide on Tuesday, 23rd February, at 7.30 p.m., and to Huntly House on Wednesday, 17th March, at 7.15 p.m., when Mr. George A. Young, F.M.A., will conduct the party.

Preparations are being made for the issue of Volume XXIX of the Book of the Club in the early part of 1955. Its contents meantime are problematical, but some of the subjects that may be dealt with are the Edinburgh 'Lands,' extracts from Canongate Kirk-Session Records, the Tron Kirk, Merchiston Tower, excerpts from an Edinburgh Diary (early 19th Century), and notes on the 'Great Eucharist' in St. Giles Kirk.

Contributors on these or other subjects are requested to send their MS. to the editor as soon as possible, and not later than 30th June this year.

The late Mr. H. Brougham Paterson, a valued member of the Club, bequeathed to the Old Edinburgh Club a legacy of £250 free of Legacy Duty.

Ten members died during 1953-54; twelve resigned, and fifteen new members have been added to the Roll which now stands at 349. Of this total 309 are individual members and 40 libraries.

The Account of Income and Expenditure, duly audited, is appended.

Old Edinburgh Club

ABSTRACT OF ACCOUNTS OF THE HONORARY TREASURER

as at 31st December 1953

RECEIPTS		PAYMENTS	
Balance in Bank 31/12/52 . . . . .	£444 5 6	Balance of cost of Volume No. 28 . . . . .	£526 1 6
Subscriptions received:—		Printing, Postages, Stationery and Expenses of Meetings . . . . .	80 7 6
280 Members at £1, 1/- . . . . .	£294 0 0	Balance in Bank:—	
39 Libraries at £1, 1/- . . . . .	40 19 0	Current Account . . . . .	179 1 6
Sale of Volumes . . . . .	334 19 0	Savings Account . . . . .	250 6 0
Legacy from late Mr. H. Brougham Paterson . . . . .	6 6 0		
Bank Interest . . . . .	250 0 0		
	0 6 0		
	£1,035 16 6		£1,035 16 6

W. CROWN HODGE, Hon. Treasurer.

EDINBURGH, 3rd February 1954.—I have examined the Intrusions of the Honorary Treasurer of the Old Edinburgh Club for the year ended 31st December 1953, of which the foregoing is an Abstract, and have found them to be correctly stated and sufficiently vouched and instructed. The sums shown as Subscriptions received included arrears collected and payments in advance.

C. W. DAVIDSON SMITH, C.A., Hon. Auditor.

THE FORTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CLUB was held in the OLD COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY CHAMBERS, on the afternoon of *Thursday, 31st March 1955.*

THE RIGHT HON. JOHN G. BANKS, C.B.E., LORD PROVOST, presided.

Two outings of the Club were held during the summer of 1954. Under the guidance of Mr. A. Steele, A.R.I.B.A., the City Architect, members of the Club visited the Royal Mile. At the Castle Esplanade Mr. Steele outlined the problems to be faced in the preservation and restoration of buildings of historic and architectural interest in the Old Town, and thereafter the party visited various sites in the Royal Mile. Mr. Robert Hurd, B.A., F.R.I.A.S., described his work in connection with the scheme of façades on the north side of the Canongate extending to the Tolbooth which includes the Bible and Cordiners' Lands. Thereafter Mr. Steele conducted the members over the restored and renovated Canongate Tolbooth. Dr. J. S. Richardson, in thanking Mr. Hurd and the City Architect, expressed the gratitude of the Club for the work that was being done to revitalise the Royal Mile and at the same time maintain something of its characteristic features.

The second excursion was held on the afternoon of Saturday, 26th June 1954, when a pilgrimage was made to three places in East Lothian indirectly associated with the Capital of Scotland. The first was Tynninghame House, the ancestral home of the Earls of Haddington, the first Earl being familiarly known as 'Tam o' the Cowgate'. The next place visited was the pre-Reformation Kirk at Whitekirk associated with Abbot Crawford of Holyrood. Stormy weather prevented a visit to the ruin at Auldham, the home of Sir Adam Otterburn but at Whitekirk Dr. Marguerite Wood, the City Archivist, described the part played in the history of his time by this eminent Scot who was Common Clerk of Edinburgh from 1512 to 1525, seven times Provost of the City, a Judge of the Court of Session, King's Advocate, and diplomat.

During the winter three meetings were held. On Wednesday, 15th December 1954, Dr. J. N. W. Hunter gave a lecture on John Wood, an

early Edinburgh Educationist, indicating the progressive outlook of the man in educational matters and suggesting that perhaps John Wood had received less than his due in this field.

The second lecture was given by Mr. R. E. Hutchison, Keeper of the National Portrait Gallery, on the evening of Monday, 28th February 1955, on Eighteenth-Century Costume. The lecture was illustrated by lantern slides and by an exhibition of period costume.

The third lecture in the series was given by Mr. W. H. Marwick, M.A., on Thursday, 17th March 1955, his subject being 'Edinburgh Shops in the Nineteenth Century.' Mr. Marwick sketched the development of retail trade in the city with reference to some of the leading shops, instancing their characteristic features.

During the year plaques were erected in Old Assembly Close and New Assembly Close on the recommendation of the Old Edinburgh Club. The Club appreciates greatly the erection of such plaques on places of historic interest in the Royal Mile, and welcomes the opportunity of co-operation in such matters.

During the year the Club suffered the loss through death of several valued members. In August the death occurred of Dr. Marguerite Wood, City Archivist and Honorary Vice-President of the Club. Over a long period of years Dr. Wood rendered many important services to the Club, alike by carefully documented articles to the Book of the Club, by lectures delivered at winter meetings and summer excursions and by her wise guidance at meetings of Council. The diminishing number of surviving original members of the Club was still further reduced by the death of William J. Hay of John Knox's House who was made an Honorary Member for long and distinguished service to the Club.

The Council accepted with regret the resignation of Mr. H. M. Paton, M.A., Honorary Editor of the *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club* and it wishes to place on record its appreciation of the valuable services rendered by him as Editor during the past fifteen years. Mr. Paton possessed a profound knowledge of the history of Edinburgh, and of sources of yet untapped material, and his own literary gifts and meticulous care in editorship ensured publications of outstanding value. Although demitting this Office his counsel will still be available to the Club. It is announced with pleasure that Mr. R. J. F. Carnon, M.A., and Mr. Stuart Maxwell, M.A., were appointed Joint Honorary Editors in his place.

The issue of Volume XXIX of the Book of the Old Edinburgh Club is expected later in the year. Its contents will include articles on The Tron Church, Notes on Rebuilding in Edinburgh in the last quarter of the 17th Century, Excerpts from an Edinburgh Diary, 1823-33, and The Minutes of the Merchant Maiden Hospital.

Seven members died during 1954-55; six resigned and twenty-nine new members have been added to the Roll, which now stands at 365.

The Account of Income and Expenditure, duly audited, is appended.

Old Edinburgh Club

ABSTRACT OF ACCOUNTS OF THE HONORARY TREASURER

as at 31st December 1954

RECEIPTS		PAYMENTS	
Balance in Bank 31/12/53	£429 7 6	Printing, Postages, Stationery and Expenses of Meetings	£73 17 9
Subscriptions received:—		Balance in Bank:—	
299 Members at £1, 1/-	£313 19 0	Current Account	£461 2 9
40 Libraries at £1, 1/-	42 0 0	Savings Account	254 1 2
Bank Interest	355 19 0		
	3 15 2		
	<u>£789 1 8</u>		<u>£789 1 8</u>

W. CROWN HODGE, *Hon. Treasurer.*

EDINBURGH, 8th January 1955.—I have examined the Intrusions of the Honorary Treasurer of the Old Edinburgh Club for the year ended 31st December 1954, of which the foregoing is an Abstract, and have found them to be correctly stated and sufficiently vouched and instructed. The sums shown as Subscriptions received include arrears collected and payments in advance.

CHARLES H. BURROWS, C.A., *Hon. Auditor.*

Old Edinburgh Club

1955-1956

*Honorary Patrons*

THE LORD PROVOST, MAGISTRATES AND COUNCIL  
OF THE CITY OF EDINBURGH.

*Honorary President*

The Right Honourable THE EARL OF ROSEBERY, K.T., D.S.O., M.C.

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JAMES S. RICHARDSON, LL.D.

*Vice-Presidents*

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HENRY W. MEIKLE, C.B.E., D.Litt., LL.D.  
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*Honorary Secretary*

JAMES HOSSACK, M.A., B.Com.

*Honorary Treasurer*

W. CROWN HODGE

*Joint Honorary Editors*

R. J. F. CARNON, M.A.  
STUART MAXWELL, M.A.

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A. ESMÉ GORDON, A.R.I.B.A.  
J. EDWIN LAMB.  
THOMAS McCRAE, F.R.I.A.S.  
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CHARLES MILNE, Q.C.  
THEODORE STEWART, M.A., F.S.A.Scot.  
J. AINSLIE THIN.  
The Rev. RONALD W. V. SELBY WRIGHT, M.A.

## Old Edinburgh Club

### LIST OF MEMBERS

*Surviving Original Members marked \**

#### HONORARY MEMBER

\* JOHN KIPPEN, M.A.

ALBERT, Mrs., M.A., 46 Fountainhall Road.  
Alison, Arthur J., Q.C., LL.D., 46 Heriot Row.  
Allan, Mrs. Alicia, 6 Castlelaw Road, Colinton.  
Allan, Mrs. C. A., 40 Park Road, Trinity.  
Allan, Eric, M.A., 10 Russell Place, Trinity.  
Anderson, Alexander H., M.A., Leny House, Muthill, Perthshire.  
Anderson, Ian, 93 Easter Drylaw Drive.  
Annand, J. K., 1 Silverknowe Loan.  
Archer, John M., 24 Stanley Road, Leith.  
Armet, Miss Helen, 32 Forbes Road.  
Arnott, Mrs. George, 6 Campbell Avenue.  
Atkinson, John J., 12 Viewforth Square.

BALFOUR, Miss MARIE, Edinburgh Public Library, and 20 Dick Place.

Balfour-Melville, Evan W. M., D.Litt., 2 South Learmonth Gardens.  
Barke, Jas., Woodburn Cottage, Daljarrock, by Girvan.  
Barnson, Sydney, 90 Inverleith Place.  
\*Barrie, John A., 11 Lady Road.  
Bartholomew, John, M.C., M.A., 12 Duncan Street.  
Batt, Mrs. C., 400 Ferry Road.  
Baxter, G., O.B.E., M.Inst.C.E., 16 Ravelston Gardens.  
Bell, T. Wilson, 11 Elliot Place, Firhill.  
Benham, Mrs., 2 Morningside Place.  
Bird, George, 40 Saughton Road, Edinburgh.  
Blair Hugh, A., C.A., New Club, Princes Street.  
Bonar, John J., W.S., 15 Hill Street.

Boyes, Dr. John, 41 Clayton Road, Jesmond, Newcastle.  
Brown, Mrs. Jean H., 71 Newark Drive, Greenock.  
Brown, Miss Mary F., 26 Stafford Street.  
Bucher, Mrs. S. Beatrice, 17 Mayfield Gardens.  
Budge, James, 28 Barony Terrace, Corstorphine.  
Burness, William, 15 Queen's Avenue, Blackhall.  
Burnside, Rev. John W., M.A., 19 Carriagehill Drive, Paisley.  
Burrows, C. H., B.Com., C.A., 67 York Place.  
Butchart, R., M.A., F.L.A., 84 Gilmore Place.

CAMERON, WAVERLEY, B., 4 Grosvenor Street.  
Campbell, Mrs. A. D., 136 Braid Road.  
Campbell, Buchanan, W.S., Moidart, Currie.  
Carnon, Ronald J. F., M.A., 13 Warrender Park Crescent. (*Joint Editor of Publications.*)  
Carruthers, Dr. G. J. R., 4A Melville Street.  
Catford, Edwin F., 59 Learmonth Grove.  
Cavaye, J. S., 40 Durham Terrace, Portobello.  
Cochrane, A., 6 Bruntsfield Gardens.  
Cochrane, James Dean, 47 Hanover Street.  
Cochrane, J. Douglas, 5 Abercrombie Place.  
Collier, T. L., 4 Pearce Road.  
Considine, W. C. D., The Holt, Frith Hill, Godalming, Surrey.  
Cooke, G. S. P., Finlang, Killin, Perthshire.  
Cormack, Donald S., 10 Piersfield Place.  
Cousland, Chas. J., 26 Kinnear Road.  
Cowan, A. Wallace, 1 St. Margaret's Road.  
Crerar, Miss Annie, c/o Miss Calder, 14 Steel's Place.  
Crichton, Mrs. Lilian M., M.A., 30 Blasket Place.  
Croall, Robert, 16 Bangholm Avenue.  
Crombie, Miss E., 11 Cluny Terrace.  
Cruickshank, A., 2 Craigleith Crescent.  
Cunningham, A., 15 Murrayfield Gardens.

DARLING, Sir WILLIAM Y., C.B.E., M.C., LL.D., M.P., Juniper Bank, Walkerburn, Peebleshire. (*Honorary Vice-President.*)  
Dey, William G., 20 Dovecot Road, Corstorphine.  
Dickie, Miss K. M., J.P., 37 Lauriston Place.  
Dickinson, Professor W. Croft, M.C., D.Litt., University, South Bridge.

## LIST OF MEMBERS

- Dickson, G. Anderson, Lasswade Road.  
 Dickson, John A., 3 Brandon Terrace.  
 Dickson Walter, 5A Elcho Terrace, Portobello.  
 \*Dobson, Mrs., 145 Warrender Park Road.  
 Donaldson, Gordon, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt., 24 Hermitage Place,  
 East, Leith.  
 Douglas, D. M., 21 St. Ninians Road, Corstorphine.  
 Douglas, Robert E., O.B.E., D.L., 89 George Street. (*Vice-  
 President.*)  
 Doull, A. Clark, 10 Alexandria Drive, Alloa.  
 Dow, Joseph, A., M.A., 18 Duddingston Crescent.  
 Drummond, James, 8 Viewforth Gardens.
- EAVES-WALTON, Mrs. P. M., M.A., 4 Coates Place.  
 Eggeling, H. F., M.A., 95 Comiston Drive.  
 Elliot, Dr. William A., 55 Liberton Gardens.  
 Erskine, Sir John M., C.B.E., D.L., F.R.S.E., Commercial Bank  
 of Scotland, George Street.
- FAIRLEY, Miss J. H., 69 Inverleith Row.  
 Fairley, Miss Jane Graham, 10 Blackford Road.  
 Fairlie, James M., 35 Chester Street.  
 Farr, J. H., 32 Inverleith Gardens.  
 Finlayson, Wm. W., 45 Castle Street.  
 Forbes, Mrs. S. A. C., 6 Howden Hall Road, Liberton.  
 Forgie, A. G., M.M., A.R.I.B.A., 66 Relugas Road.  
 Forrester, Mrs. M. K., 5 Observatory Road.  
 Forsyth, Miss J., Merchiston Castle School.  
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## CONSTITUTION

- I. The name of the Club shall be the 'Old Edinburgh Club.'
- II. The objects of the Club shall be the collection and authentication of oral and written statements or documentary evidence relating to Edinburgh; the gathering of existing traditions, legends, and historical data; and the selecting and printing of material desirable for future reference.
- III. The membership of the Club shall be limited to four hundred. Applications for membership must be sent to the Secretary in writing, countersigned by a proposer and a seconder who are Members of the Club. The admission of Members shall be in the hands of the Council, who shall have full discretionary power in filling up vacancies in the membership as these occur.
- IV. The annual subscription shall be £1, 1s. payable in advance on 1st January. Any Member whose subscription is not paid within four months from that date may be struck off the Roll by the Council.
- V. The affairs of the Club shall be managed by a Council, consisting of the President, three Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, Editor of Publications, and twelve Members. The Office-bearers shall be elected annually. Four of the Members of Council shall retire annually in rotation, and shall not be eligible for re-election for one year. The Council shall have power to fill up any vacancy in their number arising during the year, to make bye-laws, and to appoint Sub-Committees for special purposes. Representatives to such Committees may be appointed from the general body of Members. At meetings of the Club nine shall be a quorum, and at meetings of the Council seven.
- VI. The Secretary shall keep proper minutes of the business and transactions, conduct official correspondence, have custody of, and be responsible for, all books, manuscripts, and other property placed in his charge, and shall submit an Annual Report of the proceedings of the Club.
- VII. The Treasurer shall keep the Accounts of the Club, receive all moneys, collect subscriptions, pay accounts after these have been passed by the Council, and shall present annually a duly audited statement relative thereto.

VIII. The Annual Meeting of the Club shall be held in January, at which the reports by the Secretary and the Treasurer shall be read and considered, the Council and the Auditor for the ensuing year elected, and any other competent business transacted.

IX. The Council shall hold stated meetings in April and October, and shall arrange for such meetings throughout the year as they think expedient, and shall regulate all matters relative to the transactions and publications of the Club. Papers accepted by the Council for publication shall become the property of the Club.

X. Members shall receive one copy of each of the works published by or on behalf of the Club as issued, but these shall not be supplied to any Member whose subscription is in arrear. Contributors shall receive twenty copies of their communications. The Council shall have discretionary powers to provide additional copies for review, presentation, and supply to approved public bodies or societies.

XI. In the event of the membership falling to twelve or under, the Council shall consider the advisability of winding up the Club, and shall take a vote thereon of each Member whose subscription is not in arrear. Should the vote, which shall be in writing, determine that the Club be dissolved, the Council shall discharge debts due by the Club, and shall then deposit in trust, with some recognised public institution or corporate body, any residue of funds or other properties, including literary, artistic, and other material collected by the Club, for preservation, in order that the same may be available to students of local history in all time coming.

XII. No alteration of this Constitution shall be made except at the Annual Meeting of the Club. Notice of any proposed alteration must be given in writing to the Secretary, who shall intimate the same by circular to each Member not less than seven days prior to the meeting. No alteration shall be made unless supported by two-thirds of the Members present at the meeting.

## CONTENTS OF PREVIOUS VOLUMES

### VOLUME I

- PROVISIONAL LIST OF OLD HOUSES REMAINING IN HIGH STREET AND CANONGATE OF EDINBURGH. By BRUCE J. HOME. *With a map.*
- THE EMBALMING OF MONTROSE. By JOHN CAMERON ROBBIE.
- THE PANTHEON: AN OLD EDINBURGH DEBATING SOCIETY. By JOHN A. FAIRLEY.
- SCULPTURED STONES OF OLD EDINBURGH: THE DEAN GROUP. By JOHN GEDDIE. *With illustrations.*
- THE BUILDINGS AT THE EAST END OF PRINCES STREET AND CORNER OF THE NORTH BRIDGE: A CHAPTER IN THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE NEW TOWN OF EDINBURGH. By WILLIAM COWAN.

### VOLUME II

- EDINBURGH AT THE TIME OF THE OCCUPATION OF PRINCE CHARLES. By WALTER BIGGAR BLAIKIE. *With illustrations.*
- THE FLODDEN WALL OF EDINBURGH. By W. MOIR BRYCE. *With illustrations and a plan.*
- THE COVENANTERS' PRISON IN THE INNER GREYFRIARS YARD, EDINBURGH. By W. MOIR BRYCE. *With illustrations.*
- THE CANNON-BALL HOUSE. By BRUCE J. HOME. *With illustrations.*
- THE SCULPTURED STONES OF EDINBURGH: II. THE WEST-END AND DALRY GROUPS. By JOHN GEDDIE. *With illustrations.*
- AN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY SURVIVAL: THE WAGERING CLUB, 1775. By JAS. B. SUTHERLAND.
- AT THE BACK OF ST. JAMES'S SQUARE. By JAMES STEUART. *With illustrations.*
- EDINBURGH STREET TRADERS AND THEIR CRIES. By JAMES H. JAMIESON. *With illustrations.*
- OLD CELLARS AND RELICS DISCOVERED DURING THE EXCAVATIONS FOR THE NEW CHAPEL AT ST. GILES' CATHEDRAL. By FRANCIS CAIRD INGLIS. *With illustrations.*
- STATUES OF JUSTICE AND MERCY, FROM THE OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE. By THOMAS ROSS, LL.D. *With illustrations.*

### VOLUME III

- THE ARMORIAL BEARINGS OF THE CITY OF EDINBURGH. By SIR JAMES BALFOUR PAUL, LL.D., Lyon King of Arms. *With illustrations.*
- THE BLACK FRIARS OF EDINBURGH. By W. MOIR BRYCE. *With illustrations and a map.*
- AN ACCOUNT OF THE FRIDAY CLUB, WRITTEN BY LORD COCKBURN, TOGETHER WITH NOTES ON CERTAIN OTHER SOCIAL CLUBS IN EDINBURGH. By HARRY A. COCKBURN.
- THE SCULPTURED STONES OF EDINBURGH: III. MISCELLANEOUS. By JOHN GEDDIE. *With illustrations.*
- THE HISTORY OF PARLIAMENT SQUARE: BEING AN HISTORICAL NOTICE OF THE SOUTHERN PRECINCTS OF THE CHURCH OF ST. GILES, EDINBURGH. By RALPH RICHARDSON. *With an illustration.*
- LADY STAIR'S HOUSE. By THOMAS B. WHITSON. *With illustrations.*

VOLUME IV

- GEORGE DRUMMOND: AN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY LORD PROVOST. By WILLIAM BAIRD. *With a portrait.*
- THE SCULPTURED STONES OF EDINBURGH: IV. WRYCHTIS-HOUSIS. By JOHN GEDDIE. *With illustrations.*
- THE OLD TOLBOOTH: WITH EXTRACTS FROM THE ORIGINAL RECORDS (First Article). By JOHN A. FAIRLEY. *With illustrations.*
- AN OLD EDINBURGH MONUMENT NOW IN PERTHSHIRE. By THOMAS ROSS, LL.D. *With illustrations.*
- THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDLY CONTRIBUTORS OF RESTALRIG. By Rev. W. BURNETT. *With an illustration.*
- RECENT EXCAVATIONS AND RESEARCHES AT HOLYROOD. By W. T. OLDRIEVE. *With plans.*

VOLUME V

- SAINT MARGARET OF SCOTLAND AND HER CHAPEL IN THE CASTLE OF EDINBURGH. By W. MOIR BRYCE. *With illustrations.*
- THE SITE OF THE BLACK FRIARS' MONASTERY FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE PRESENT DAY. By WILLIAM COWAN. *With illustrations.*
- THE OLD TOLBOOTH: EXTRACTS FROM THE ORIGINAL RECORDS. By JOHN A. FAIRLEY.
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- LETTERS FROM JOHN BONAR TO WILLIAM CREECH CONCERNING THE FORMATION OF THE SPECULATIVE SOCIETY. By Rev. HENRY PATON.

VOLUME VI

- DAVID'S TOWER AT EDINBURGH CASTLE. By W. T. OLDRIEVE. *With illustrations.*
- THE INCORPORATED TRADE OF THE SKINNERS OF EDINBURGH, WITH EXTRACTS FROM THEIR MINUTES, 1549-1603. By WILLIAM ANGUS.
- THE OLD TOLBOOTH: EXTRACTS FROM THE ORIGINAL RECORDS. By JOHN A. FAIRLEY.

VOLUME VII

- THE HOLYROOD ORDINALE: A SCOTTISH VERSION OF A DIRECTORY OF ENGLISH AUGUSTINIAN CANONS, WITH MANUAL AND OTHER LITURGICAL FORMS. By FRANCIS C. EELES. *With illustrations.*

VOLUME VIII

- THE MAGDALEN CHAPEL, COWGATE, EDINBURGH. By THOMAS ROSS and G. BALDWIN BROWN. *With illustrations.*
- THE VISITATION OF THE COLLEGE OF EDINBURGH IN 1690. By R. K. HANNAY.
- THE OLD TOLBOOTH: EXTRACTS FROM THE ORIGINAL RECORDS. By JOHN A. FAIRLEY.
- JOHN WESLEY IN EDINBURGH. By W. FORBES GRAY. *With illustration.*
- THE ANCIENT REGALIA OF SCOTLAND. By W. MOIR BRYCE.

VOLUME IX

- INCIDENTS AND DOCUMENTS, A.D. 1513-1523. By R. K. HANNAY.
- SHIPPING AND THE STAPLE, A.D. 1515-1531. By R. K. HANNAY.
- EDINBURGH ENGRAVERS. By JOHN C. GUY. *With illustrations.*
- THE OLD TOLBOOTH: EXTRACTS FROM THE ORIGINAL RECORDS. By JOHN A. FAIRLEY.
- THE SEDAN CHAIR IN EDINBURGH. By JAMES H. JAMIESON. *With illustrations.*

VOLUME X

- THE BURGH MUIR OF EDINBURGH. By W. MOIR BRYCE.

VOLUME XI

- MAP OF EDINBURGH IN THE MID-EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. By HENRY F. KERR. *With map.*
- THE OLD TOLBOOTH: EXTRACTS FROM THE ORIGINAL RECORDS. By JOHN A. FAIRLEY.
- SHELLEY IN EDINBURGH. By WALTER EDWIN PECK (M.A., Columbia). *With illustrations.*
- ON THE ANTECEDENTS OF THE COLLEGE OF JUSTICE. By R. K. HANNAY.
- THE TAILORS' HALL, COWGATE. By THOMAS ROSS, G. BALDWIN BROWN, and W. FORBES GRAY. *With illustrations.*

VOLUME XII

- NOTES ON THE NAMES OF THE CLOSES AND WYNDS OF OLD EDINBURGH. By CHARLES B. BOOG WATSON.
- THE OLD TOLBOOTH: EXTRACTS FROM THE ORIGINAL RECORDS. By JOHN A. FAIRLEY.
- THE MAPS OF EDINBURGH, 1544-1851. By WILLIAM COWAN.
- MEASURED DRAWINGS OF LAWNMARKET and CASTLEHILL MADE BY THOMAS HAMILTON, ARCHITECT. By F. C. MEARS. *With plates.*

VOLUME XIII

- THE BUILDING OF THE PARLIAMENT HOUSE. By R. K. HANNAY and G. P. H. WATSON. *With illustrations.*
- BEARFORD'S PARKS. By WILLIAM COWAN.
- LIST OF OWNERS OF PROPERTY IN EDINBURGH, 1635. By CHARLES B. BOOG WATSON.

VOLUME XIV

- A NOTE ON HUNTLY HOUSE. By WILLIAM COWAN.  
 THE OLD TOLBOOTH OF EDINBURGH. By HENRY F. KERR. *With illustrations.*  
 THE CANONGATE CRAFTS: AN AGREEMENT OF 1610. By ANNIE I. CAMERON.  
 MYLNE SQUARE. By the late IRVINE A. STIRLING.  
 THE SCULPTURED STONES OF THE 'ROYAL MILE.' By JOHN GEDDIE. *With illustrations.*  
 THE GARDENS OF THE CASTLE. By C. A. MALCOLM.  
 SOME INNS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. By JAMES H. JAMIESON. *With illustrations.*  
 REMINISCENCES OF A TOWN CLERK. Edited, with Introduction and Notes, by W. FORBES GRAY.

VOLUME XV

- THE DOMESTIC AFFAIRS OF THE BURGH, 1554-1589. By MARGUERITE WOOD.  
 THE SANCTUARY OF HOLYROOD. By HUGH HANNAH. *With plan.*  
 SCULPTURED STONES OF THE 'ROYAL MILE': II. By JOHN GEDDIE. *With illustrations.*  
 THE OLD INFIRMARY AND EARLIER HOSPITALS. By ROBERT THIN. *With illustrations.*  
 THE BURLAW COURT OF LEITH. By DAVID ROBERTSON.  
 THE MELVILLE MONUMENT. By W. FORBES GRAY.

VOLUME XVI

EXTRACTS FROM BANNATYNE CLUB PUBLICATIONS:

INTRODUCTION. By W. FORBES GRAY.

TEXT:—

- A DIURNAL OF OCCURRENTS, 1513-1575.  
 JOURNAL OF THE SIEGE OF THE CASTLE OF EDINBURGH, 1573.  
 HISTORIE AND LIFE OF KING JAMES THE SEXT, 1566-1596.  
 DIARY OF JOHN NICOLL, 1650-1667.  
 HISTORICAL NOTICES OF SCOTISH AFFAIRS, 1661-1688. By SIR JOHN LAUDER of Fountainhall, Bart.  
 SIEGE OF THE CASTLE OF EDINBURGH, 1689.

VOLUME XVII

- SIR DANIEL WILSON: THE MAN AND HIS WORK. By HUGH HANNAH. *With portrait.*  
 'COCKPEN HOUSE,' CASTLERHILL. By H. A. COCKBURN.  
 SCULPTURED STONES OF THE 'ROYAL MILE': III. By JOHN GEDDIE. *With illustrations.*  
 ST. PAUL'S WORK. By MARGUERITE WOOD.  
 GABRIEL'S AND OTHER OLD ROADS. *With map* compiled by HENRY F. KERR.  
 CHARLES II. STATUE, PARLIAMENT SQUARE. By E. J. MACRAE.  
 THE INCORPORATION OF CANDLEMAKERS OF EDINBURGH, 1517-1884. By W. FORBES GRAY. *With illustrations.*  
 THE GENERAL REGISTER HOUSE. By HENRY M. PATON. *With plan.*

VOLUME XVIII

- EARLY GOLF AT BRUNTSFIELD AND LEITH. By C. E. S. CHAMBERS. *With illustrations.*  
 STATE CEREMONIALS IN EDINBURGH IN THE OLDEN TIME. By FRANCIS J. GRANT, C.V.O., LL.D., Lyon King of Arms.  
 THE BARONY OF CALTON: PART I. By HENRY M. PATON.  
 GEORGE IV. BRIDGE AND THE WEST APPROACH. By DAVID ROBERTSON. *With two maps.*  
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 THE QUARRYING OF SALISBURY CRAGS. By W. FORBES GRAY.

VOLUME XIX

- THE HAMMERMEN OF THE CANONGATE: PART I. By MARGUERITE WOOD.  
 SOCIAL ASSEMBLIES OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. By JAMES H. JAMIESON. *With illustrations.*  
 THE BARONY OF CALTON: PART II. By HENRY M. PATON. *With illustration.*  
 BONNINGTON: ITS LANDS AND MANSIONS. By JOHN RUSSELL. *With illustrations.*  
 THE MUSICAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH AND ST. CECILIA'S HALL. By W. FORBES GRAY. *With illustrations.*

VOLUME XX

- THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL OF THE CANONGATE. By H. M. ANDERSON. *With plan.*  
 DALRY HOUSE: ITS LANDS AND OWNERS. By JOHN SMITH. *With illustrations.*  
 THE MAGISTRATES AND MASTERS OF LEITH. By DAVID ROBERTSON.  
 THE HAMMERMEN OF THE CANONGATE: PART II. By MARGUERITE WOOD.  
 AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY RIDING SCHOOL. By W. FORBES GRAY. *With illustrations.*

VOLUME XXI

- GENERAL INDEX, VOLUMES I-XX. Compiled by W. FORBES GRAY.

## VOLUME XXII

- THE ROYAL EXCHANGE AND OTHER CITY IMPROVEMENTS. By W. FORBES GRAY.  
 A NOTE ON THE HOPETOUN MONUMENT. By W. M. PARKER. *With illustration.*  
 THE EDINBURGH CHARITY WORKHOUSE, 1740-1845. By ARTHUR BIRNIE. *With illustration.*  
 EASTER AND WESTER CROFTS OF BRISTO. By JOHN SMITH. *With illustrations.*  
 THE INCORPORATION OF THE TAILORS OF THE CANONGATE. By W. H. MARWICK.  
 MEDICAL QUACKS IN EDINBURGH IN THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES.  
 By ROBERT THIN.  
 THE BUILDER OF PILRIG HOUSE. By JOHN RUSSELL. *With illustration.*  
 THE NEW TOWN OF EDINBURGH—I. By F. C. MEARS and JOHN RUSSELL. *With illustrations.*  
 THE STORY OF CRAIGENTINNY. By JAMES SMITH.  
 PETER WILLIAMSON'S BROADSIDE. By WILLIAM J. HAY. *With illustrations.*

## VOLUME XXIII

- THE NEW TOWN OF EDINBURGH: PART II. By F. C. MEARS and JOHN RUSSELL.  
*With maps.*  
 GLEANINGS FROM SCOTTISH EXCHEQUER REPORTS. By W. FORBES GRAY.  
 THE STORY OF PIERSHILL. By JAMES SMITH. *With illustration.*  
 THE NEIGHBOURHOOD BOOK. By MARGUERITE WOOD.  
 NOTES ON AN OLD LAWSUIT ABOUT DUNDEE MILLS. By HENRY M. PATON.  
*With sketch-plan.*  
 ST. LEONARDS LANDS AND HOSPITAL. By the late JOHN SMITH and HENRY M. PATON.  
 LORD KAMES AND THE NORTH BRIDGE. By THOMAS McCRAE. *With plans.*

## VOLUME XXIV

- DIARY OF GEORGE SANDY, APPRENTICE W.S., 1788. By CHARLES A. MALCOLM.  
*With illustrations.*  
 HISTORIC MORNINGSIDE: LANDS, MANSIONS AND CELEBRITIES. By WILLIAM MAIR.  
*With map and illustrations.*  
 THE BORE STONE. By HENRY M. PATON.  
 'ALL THE STAELEIE BUILDINGS OF . . . THOMAS ROBERTSON'—A BUILDING  
 SPECULATOR OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. By MARGUERITE WOOD.  
 THE LANDS OF NEWINGTON AND THEIR OWNERS. By W. FORBES GRAY. *With  
 map, plans and illustrations.*  
 LANDS OF ST. LEONARDS: SOUTHERN SECTION. By HENRY M. PATON. *With  
 illustrations.*  
 CARDINAL BEATON'S PALACE: BLACKFRIAR'S WYND. By HENRY F. KERR. *With  
 illustration.*  
 MISCELLANY. *With illustration.*

## VOLUME XXV

- THE WEAVERS OF PICARDY. By JOHN MASON. *With plan and sketch.*  
 NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF PILTON. By W. FORBES GRAY.  
 EARLY PAPER MAKING NEAR EDINBURGH. By ROBERT WATERSTON. *With  
 illustrations.*  
 LANDS AND HOUSES OF DRUMSHEUGH. By JOHN CLARK WILSON. *With plan and  
 illustration.*  
 EDINBURGH POLL TAX RETURNS. By MARGUERITE WOOD.  
 SKENE DRAWINGS OF OLD EDINBURGH. By ROBERT BUTCHART. *With illustra-  
 tions.*  
 OLD DOVECOTES IN AND AROUND EDINBURGH. By A. NIVEN ROBERTSON. *With  
 illustrations.*  
 MISCELLANY. *With illustration.*

## VOLUME XXVI

- GEORGE SQUARE: ANNALS OF AN EDINBURGH LOCALITY, 1766-1926, FROM  
 AUTHENTIC RECORDS. By MARGARET TAIT and W. FORBES GRAY. *With  
 illustrations.*

## VOLUME XXVII

- EDINBURGH IN LORD PROVOST DRUMMOND'S TIME. By W. FORBES GRAY. *With  
 Illustrations.*  
 THE HERMITAGE OF BRAID. By C. A. MALCOLM.  
 FURTHER NOTES ON EARLY PAPER MAKING NEAR EDINBURGH. By ROBERT  
 WATERSTON. *With Illustrations.*  
 EDINBURGH HOUSE NUMBERS. By FRANK GENT.  
 THE EDINBURGH SCHOOL OF DESIGN. By JOHN MASON. *With Illustration.*  
 OLD SUNDIALS IN AND NEAR EDINBURGH. By A. NIVEN ROBERTSON. *With  
 Illustrations.*  
 AN EDINBURGH DIARY. By HENRY W. MEIKLE. *With Illustrations.*  
 SOME NOTES ON THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE DEAN ORPHAN HOSPITAL. By JOHN  
 RICHARDSON. *With Illustrations.*  
 MISCELLANY.

## VOLUME XXVIII

- THE MINUTES OF THE TRADES MAIDEN HOSPITAL. By Rev. EDWIN S. TOWILL.  
*With Illustrations.*  
 JAMES RONALDSON, BAKER, TYPEFOUNDER, PHILANTHROPIST, AND HIS CONNEXIONS  
 IN AND AROUND EDINBURGH. By Miss M. TAIT. *With Illustration.*  
 AN ADDITION TO LAING'S CHARTULARY OF ST. GILES. By Miss MARGUERITE WOOD.  
 ST. JOHN STREET: AN EARLY CIVIC IMPROVEMENT. By the late W. FORBES GRAY.

CONVOYS TO THE TRADE ON THE EAST COAST OF SCOTLAND. By Miss HELEN ARMET.  
ICE HOUSES OF THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES. By A. NIVEN  
ROBERTSON. *With Illustrations.*

THE NOTEBOOK OF SIR WILLIAM FETTES, BART. By Miss MARGUERITE WOOD.  
*With Illustration.*

CHARLES II LEAD EQUESTRIAN STATUE, PARLIAMENT SQUARE, EDINBURGH. By  
A. G. FORGIE. *With Illustrations.*

WILLIAM FORBES GRAY: AN APPRECIATION. By the EDITOR. *With Illustration.*  
MISCELLANY.

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