

City of Edinburgh Council

Edinburgh
Survey of Gardens and Designed Landscapes

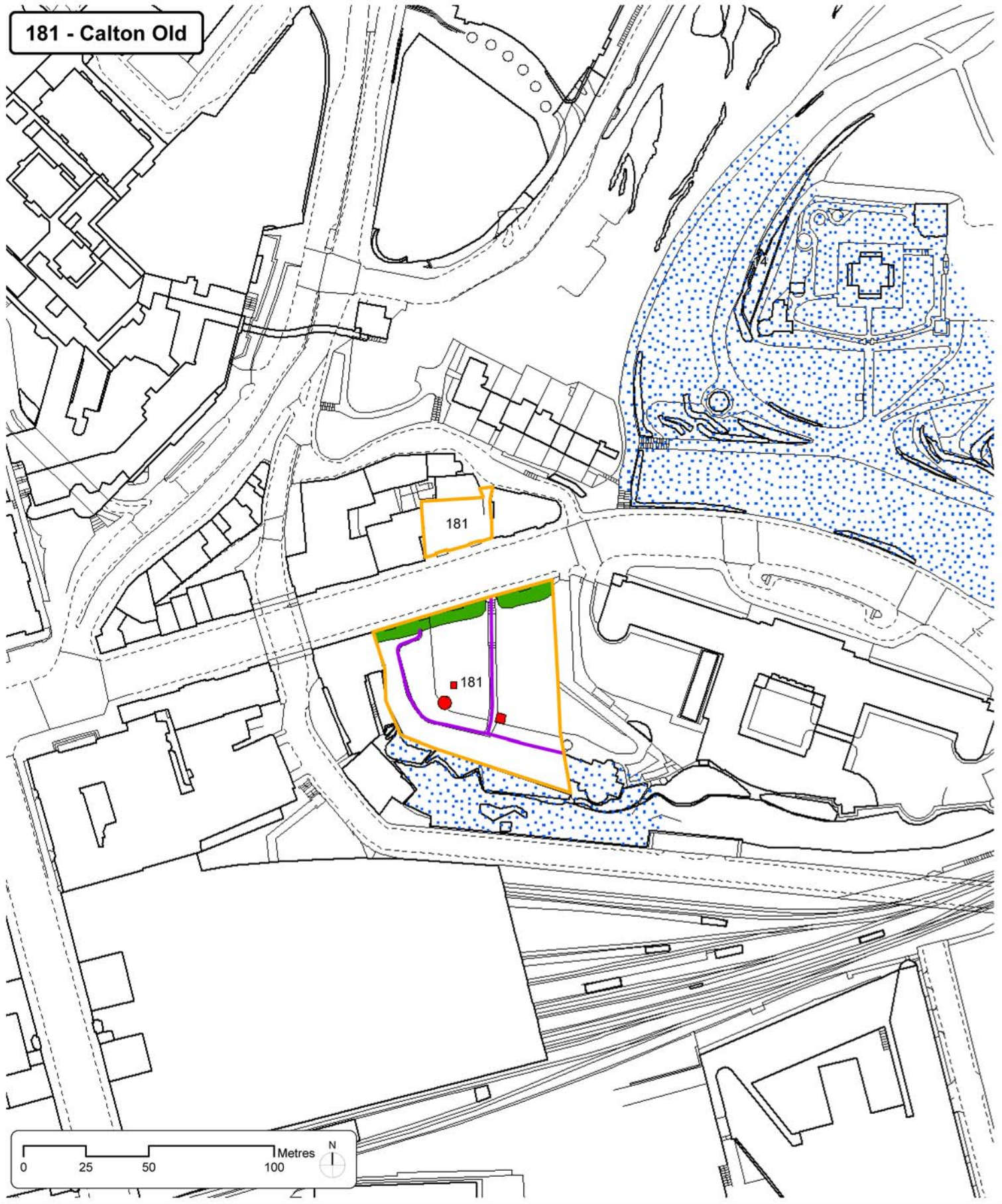
181 Old Calton Burying Ground

Consultants














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This report by Peter McGowan
Survey visit: July 2007

181 - Calton Old



Key

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------|---|--------------------------|
|  | Site boundary |  | Essential setting |
|  | Ruined buildings |  | Site of former house |
|  | Principal buildings |  | Main drive |
|  | Gardens |  | Principal views or vista |
|  | Water |  | Panoramic View |
|  | Woodlands |  | Walled Garden |
|  | Parkland | | |

EDINBURGH
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

**SURVEY OF GARDENS AND
DESIGNED LANDSCAPES**

Peter McGowan
Associates with
Christopher Dingwall

181 Old Calton Burying Ground

Parish Edinburgh

NGR NT 2604 7402 South section
NT 2603 7408 North section

Owner City of Edinburgh Council

Designations

Listing Calton Old Burying Ground and monuments with screen walls to Waterloo Place A

New Town Conservation Area

Edinburgh World Heritage Site

REASONS FOR INCLUSION

Old Calton Burying Ground is of special importance for several reasons: for the outstanding monuments it contains both in terms of their design, their architects and the people commemorated; for its history, particularly in relation to the development of the urban form of the locality; and as part of the picturesque composition of landform and buildings on greater Calton Hill.

LOCATION, SETTING AND EXTENT

Old Calton Burying Ground lies at the east end of Waterloo Place and on both sides of the road, with the largest and most prominent part on the south. It lies on the lower slopes of Calton Hill and forms a significant component of the outstanding group of 18th, 19th and 20th century buildings on the greater area of the hill, where Regent Road now gives a false impression of the hill's height and extent. Views of the burial ground in the setting of the hill area are notable from North Bridge and some other viewpoints, as are views out from the site. Site area (both parts) 0.49ha.

MAIN PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT

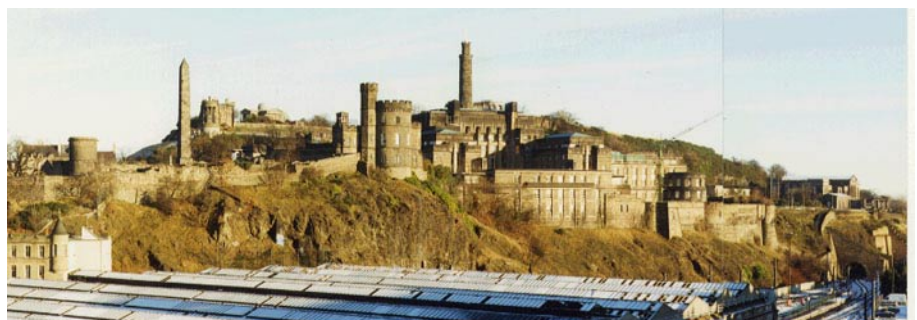
Commenced 1718-19; extended 1760s; divided by construction of Regent Road with screen walls 1816-19; some later addition of monuments.

HISTORY OF LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT

Early representations of Calton Hill show it as a lumpen ridge at the edge of the town, running parallel with Canongate and rising in two main steps to a knobby summit. Use for grazing and quarrying continued for several centuries until the great surge of urban expansion between the 1760s and 1830s. Until then the hill's volcanic and glaciated origins which formed it with shallow soils and steep sides had precluded development and limited its use.

The Old Calton Burying Ground was the first substantial development on the hill, occupying the south-west corner of the lower step of the hillside above the back

*Hume and Martyrs
monuments in Old Calton
Burying Grounds on left in the
context of greater Calton Hill
seen from North Bridge*



of Canongate. The origin of Old Calton burial ground lies in the expansion of a community of artisans and tradesmen.

In 1631 Lord Balmerino granted a deed of gift that laid the foundation for *The Society of the Incorporated Trades of Calton* (Anderson, 574). It also gave the Society the exclusive rights to trade within Calton and the right to tax others that wished to do so. The proximity of the City allowed the community to conduct a thriving trade without the restrictive practices of the various incorporations within. In the 17th century, outwith the City boundaries, Calton was situated in the South Leith Parish and the Calton, or Craigend people as Leith folk called them, went to church in Leith not Edinburgh (Anderson 575). The burial ground in Leith, however, was inconveniently placed for burials.

In 1718 Society approached Lord Balmerino and obtained a grant for a burial ground on McNeills' Craigs which,

... consisting of half an aikre, as it is now enclosed with ane stone dyke, to be made use of for a buriall place for the inhabitants of the said brugh, and others whom they shall allow, together also ane liberty and freedome of ane highway from the north end of the said brugh up the hill to the said buriall place consisting of fifteen foots of measure in breadth. (OEC XIX, 127)

The ground chosen, for which the Society paid £1012 18s. 4d, although high above the Calton and remote from the parish church in Leith, was conveniently close for the community (*ibid.*). From the documents that record the grant of the land for Old Calton the grounds were clearly already enclosed and, it must be presumed, had a sufficient depth of soil for burials. The size and the location of the enclosure suggest that it may have been an existing sheep fold.

From 1724 to 1760s the grounds were leased for sheep shearing and also for grazing to keep the grounds in good condition. However this practice was to cease in 1760 when all beasts were banned from the burial ground (OEC XIX 127-8). By the late 18th century, the building of the North Bridge (1772) and the opening up of the new lands to the north of the Old Town brought a new wealthy class to the area. Although, in the 18th century, Old Calton was still outside the boundaries of the City its location and its successive extensions that offered new undeveloped areas must have made it attractive. The main burial ground within the City boundaries, Greyfriars Churchyard, was already over-crowded and too distant from the New Town. As the New Town began to grow on the lands to the west, Old Calton burial ground also began to be expanded.

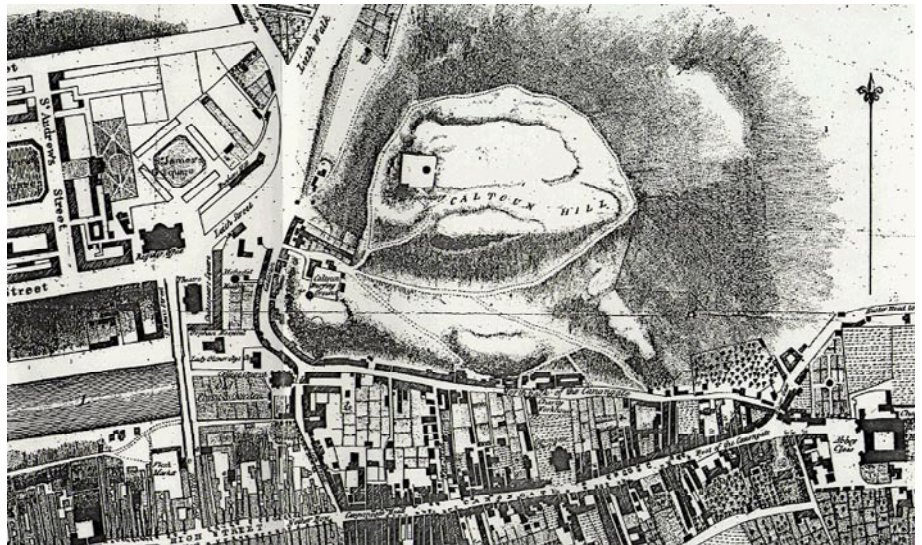
The first major extension to the original boundaries of the burial ground was in 1767 when the Town Council granted by feu charter to the Society,

all and hail that piece of ground on the south side of the present burial yard on the Calton hill and which piece of ground is hereby declared as an addition to the present burial place of Calton ... (McQueen 25)

After levelling it was enclosed with a wall. Land around the burial ground to the south and east was also granted by the Council to the community of Calton for the sole use of bleaching grounds on the condition that it was not to be enclosed or built on (OEC XIX 130).

In the late 18th century the enclosure of the burial ground was extended again. In 1784 the Society, finding that the existing area of Old Calton was becoming too crowded, petitioned the Council for a further area of land to the south (OEC XIX 131). Objections to the petition were made by a John Gregory on the principal that the area of land had been gifted to the inhabitants of Calton for the sole use as a bleaching area. The Council, however, rejected his plea and on 31 August 1786 the extension was granted (*ibid.*). In 1786 The Incorporated Trades of Calton petitioned the Council for permission to build a perimeter wall at the south end of the burial ground. The Council agreed. (McQueen 26)

John Ainslie's map Old and New Town of Edinburgh and Leith with the Proposed Docks 1804 showing the Calton Hill area before the construction of Waterloo Place and Regent Road



Between the mid 1780's and the 1800's two attempts were made by the Society to obtain the feu charter of land to the east of the Burial ground. In 1787 the Society of Incorporated Trades of Calton petitioned the Council to enclose the "rock called Ram-fauld along with the burying ground" (McQueen, 26). The Council, presumably already aware of proposals for a new City Jail and Governor's House on the site, refused. In 1798 the Society petitioned for the area to the east between the burial ground and the Bridewell. Again the Council refused (*ibid.*). In 1790 new regulations covering the payment of lair fees were passed. Payment for a plot was by the square yard and limited to fifteen square yards (OEC XIX 132). Those in the centre of the graveyard were cheaper than those around the walls. However, the latter gave the right to enclose the area whilst those in the centre did not. Strangers could buy a plot although the cost of the plot was at a higher rate than members of the community (*ibid.*). Fees were also set for the payment of a grave digger to watch over the lair following interment.

The last of the major extensions to the burial ground was in 1803 when the Society purchased an area of ground with houses on it to the west of the burial ground (OEC XIX 133). It was ninety foot long and extended from the west dyke of the burial ground down to the road at the back of the houses in Calton (*ibid.*). As the ground to the north was about to be enclosed it was suggested that a new Convening House for the Society be erected (*ibid.*). The proposal appears to have fallen through. As part of the works carried out to the burial ground, James Watson causey-layer received £10 for making a road across the burial ground (OEC XIX 132).

The plan for extending Princes Street and driving a road through Calton burying ground had been suggested by John Patterson, Robert Adam's Clerk of Works as early as 1790 (Edinburgh 442). Until that time the graveyard was approached from the west up the steep winding road of Old Calton. On 3 February 1814 The Society of Incorporated Trades of Calton was informed that there was a plan to make a bridge over Low Calton from Shakespeare Square to which, on promise of compensation in the form of remuneration and land, the Society agreed in principal (OEC XIX 133-5). The problem was the proposed route through Old Calton. Following negotiations an agreement was signed on 7 April 1815 (*ibid.*). As part of the agreement the Society was to receive an equal portion of land for a new burial ground, New Calton, and was to be paid £3,300 with £1,000 in advance for the erection of a new convening room at the north-east end of the burial ground. The Council further agreed to defer the expense of excavation and exterior ornament of the new building (*ibid.*). The Bill for the new approach by London Road and Regent Bridge was passed in 1814 (Edinburgh, 442) and, on the 9th September 1815, the new foundation stone was laid with massive

ceremony (Edinburgh 442). Archibald Elliot was the architect and Robert Stevenson was the engineer for the works (ibid.).

The line of the road was significantly lower than the burying ground and the section cut resulted in large retaining walls and steep flight of steps for the new entry up to the south part. During excavations the soil and remains from Old Calton burial ground was carted away under white palls to the New Calton burial ground to the east. When complete Waterloo Place contained a mixture of public buildings, commercial premises, taverns and dwellings. One of the first buildings to be completed was the Calton Convening Rooms at the east end on the north side. Between Regent's Bridge and the remaining portions of Old Calton burying ground two buildings were erected. Waterloo Hotel on the north side was opened in 1821 and a new Post Office building on the south side was completed in 1822 (Mitchell 35). At the east end of Waterloo Place the new retaining walls of Old Calton burying ground were faced with columns and niches in classical style to match the whole, all to the design of Archibald Elliot.

Whilst Regent Bridge was still under construction, Calton Jail and the Governor's House were designed and built by Archibald Elliot on the land to the east of the burial ground (McKean 100). In 1924 Calton Jail was closed, the prisoners were transferred to Saughton Prison and both Calton Jail and Bridewell were demolished in order to build St. Andrew's House (Mitchell 35).

Although burials still took place in Old Calton after the completion of Waterloo Place there was no further room for expansion of the grounds. The burying ground closed under Section 16 (j) of the Public Health (Scotland) Act 1867, after the appointment of Edinburgh's first Medical Officer of Health, Henry Littlejohn in 1869 (Keir 439). The Incorporated Trades of Calton managed the burying ground until 1888, when this duty was transferred to the Town Council of Edinburgh (McHattie 49).

Inhabitants of the Burying Ground

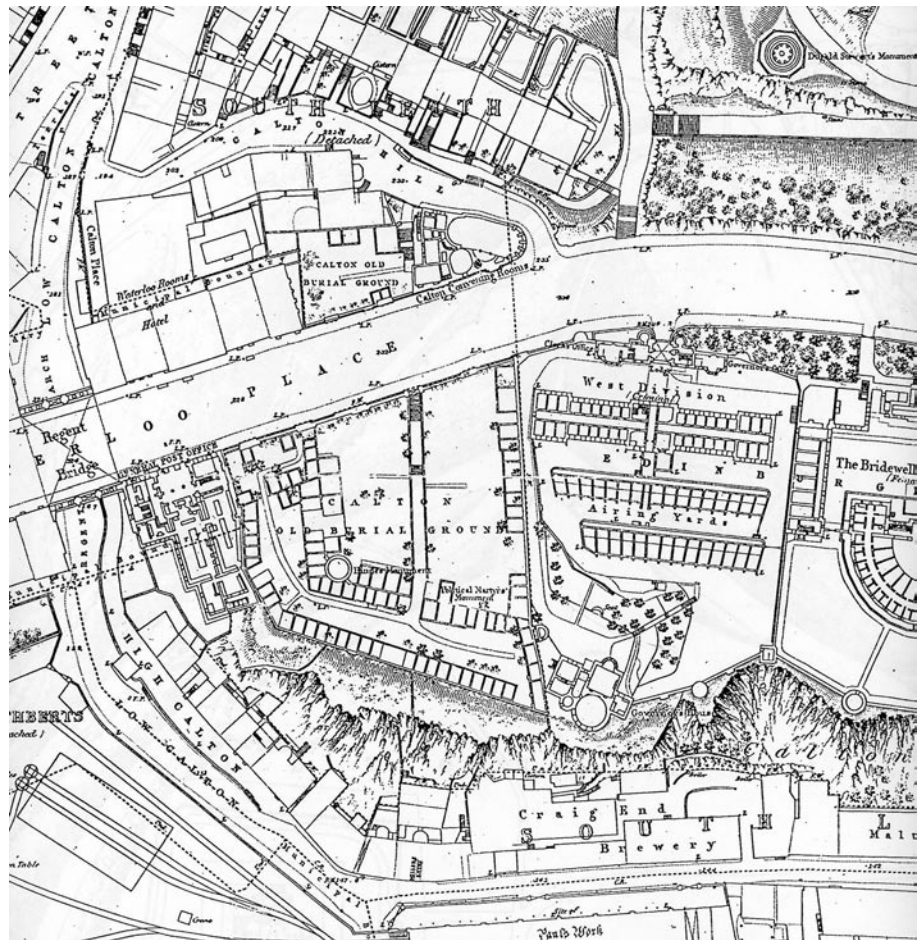
The early inhabitants were from the community of tradesmen and artisans from the Burgh of Calton. Their presence is reflected in the carvings of the symbols of their trades on the more modest wall murals and gravestones in the north portion of the burial ground (OEC XIX, 131). Amongst the oldest are the large number of which belong to the members of the cordiner or shoemaking trade which bear the trade signs of the shoemakers, a peculiarly shaped knife with crown above. However, by the end of its development the grounds were to contain the lairs of many of the most eminent literary, scientific and artistic figures of the Enlightenment.

The first recorded burial within the grounds was that of a Jean Willocks in 1719, however, no visible trace of the grave remains (Mitchell 26).

On 29 February 1776 David Hume, one of Edinburgh's most illustrious citizens, purchased a lair for £4.00 Sterling in the south-west corner of the burial ground (OEC XIX 131). A hostile crowd gathered at his funeral, and the tomb was guarded for eight days thereafter (Turnbull 83). Two years later his heir, David Hume of Ninewells, petitioned for a further portion of ground to erect a monument (ibid.). It is perhaps fitting that Hume's final resting place is overlooked by the walk on Calton Hill he had made his own. The monument caused much comment at the time and may have encouraged new wealthy class of inhabitant. Amongst the artists buried are Charles MacKay (1787-1857) impersonator and comedian & William Woods (1747-1808) actor (Turnbull 91). The close proximity of their lairs in Old Calton has resulted in the area being known as the *Actor's corner*.

At least two inhabitants have a close connection with the development of Calton Hill – the architects Robert Burn (d.1816) and Thomas Hamilton (1784-1858). Robert Burn was responsible for the design of the Nelson Monument. Thomas Hamilton designed the former Royal High School, Burns' Monument and Martyrs' Monument.

Ordnance Survey map of 1852 showing the two parts of the burying ground divided by Waterloo Place and the detailed layout of the lairs and monuments

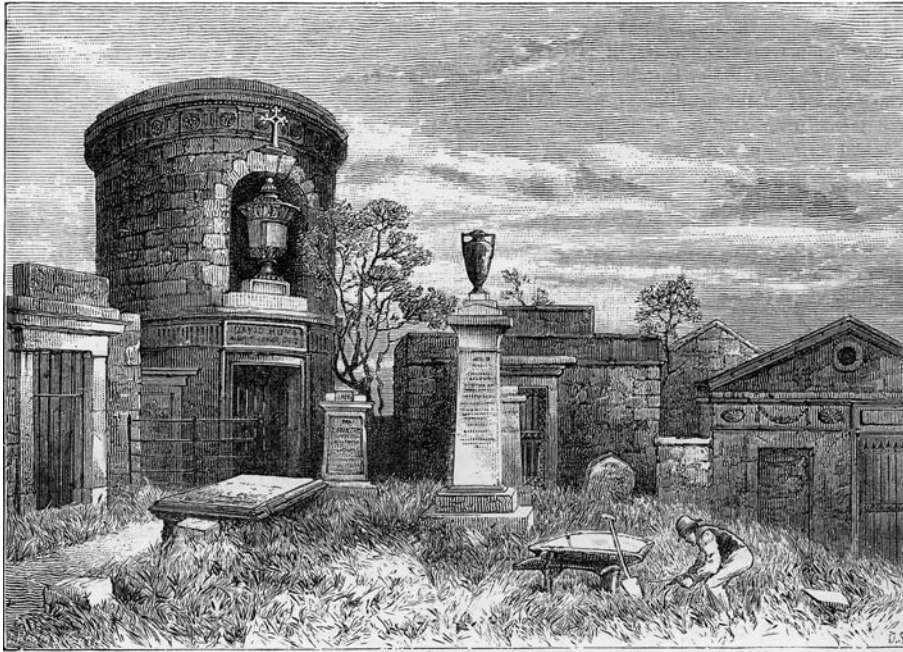


Two eminent Edinburgh publishers are also buried in the grounds. Archibald Constable (1774-1827) and William Blackwood (1776-1834). Archibald Constable published Sir Walter Scott's novels and poems, was proprietor of *The Scot's Magazine* and was also connected with the *Edinburgh Review* (Anderson, 593). William Blackwood was the founder of the Tory *Blackwood's Magazine* and published many works including the *Third Statistical Account of Scotland*, 1840 (Anderson, 597-8).

There are at least five unmarked graves in the grounds. Two belong to the teachers William Cruckshank (1746-1795) and William Nicol (1747-1797) who taught Classics at the Royal High School and were immortalised in the poetry of their friend Robert Burns (Skinner 68). Another belongs to Professor John Playfair (1748-1819) mathematician, author, natural philosopher and member of the Astronomical Society (Anderson 591). His lair is overlooked by the fine neo-classical observatory and monument built for him on Calton Hill by his nephew William Playfair.

Maps and Graphic Evidence

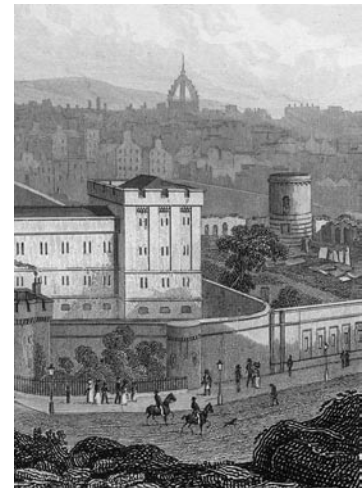
Central Edinburgh benefits from a wealth of maps, panoramic views and topographic prints including the early Hogenburg map of 1582, the James Gordon 'bird's-eye view' of 1647, and the Queen Ann view c.1710, all of which give impressions of Calton Hill. The first map to show the burying ground clearly is William Edgar's of 1742 which shows *Calton Burying Place* as a square walled enclosure lined by trees. Many maps show the progressive development of the New Town commencing with Ainslie's map of 1780, with completed terraces and planned road layout; a circular building lies in the south-west corner (Hume monument) and small buildings lie round the burying ground wall externally. Maps continue to show the original square layout, despite its extension on the west and south in 1767, until Kirkwood 1817 where Regent Bridge and *Great London Road* (Regent Road) are included with the split and extended *Burying*



'The Calton Burying-ground: Hume's Grave' etching from Cassell's Old and New Edinburgh, c1876

Ground layout. Wood 1823 shows the road after completion with the names *Waterloo Place* and *Regent Road*; both maps show also the new burying ground to the east. The large scale 1st edition OS maps of 1852 show Calton Old Burial Ground in detail with vaults along the lower extension areas and some of the perimeter of the upper space, and with the Hume and Political Martyrs' monuments named. There has been no further development of the layout.

On Gordon of Rothiemay's *Bird's-eye view of Edinburgh* of 1647, a large circular walled enclosure is shown on the west crags of Calton Hill. There is no evidence for the purpose of this structure. Despite its prominence, the graveyard does not often feature in graphic representations of Calton Hill, which tend to concentrate on the upper hill, views to or from Princes Street and the Bridewell and new jail. One view of the latter – Thomas Shepherd 1831 – shows part of the main Old Calton ground with, interestingly, many of the gravestones leaning or fallen. More interesting still are Turner's studies for *The Provincial Antiquities and Picturesque Scenery of Scotland* and one watercolour view *Edinburgh from Catlton Hill* c1819 showing the Regent Bridge area in the late stage of construction, before the adjoining buildings were erected, and with the two parts of the graveyard clearly shown. The same view exists in sketch form and in an engraving by George Cook c1820. A later etching from *Cassell's Old and New Edinburgh* (Grant c1876) shows the Hume monument.



Detail from Thomas Shepherd's engraving The New Jail, from Calton Hill, showing part of the southern section of the burying ground



Screen wall of north section of the burying ground and the former Calton Convening Rooms seen from within the south section

*Screen wall and arched
entrance to the south section
of the burying ground,
Waterloo Place*



COMPONENTS OF THE DESIGNED LANDSCAPE

General Description

A wrought-iron gated archway give access to the main burial ground by two steep flights of stone steps on the line of a central north-south path. The view is dominated by the tall obelisk of the Political Martyrs' monument. The main area, rough grassed with free-standing monuments is enclosed by walls lined with wall tablets and lairs. The finest of the enclosures is Robert Adam's neo-classical circular monument to David Hume which stands on high ground in the south-west corner.

Beyond the Martyrs monument, the character of the burial ground changes. To the south and west of the main area a central path connects a narrow strip of land in which wall enclosed lairs line the walls on either side to form a sort of street.

Mature trees are a significant component of the graceyard with eight lime trees and a in a row beside Waterloo Place and four other trees within the grounds.

Architectural Features

Screen Wall and Gates

Screen retaining walls along boundaries of north and south parts of Burying Ground on Waterloo Place

*Original wrought iron railings,
entrance to south section*



Masonry wall built in courses of dressed ashlar sandstone blocks and designed with niches, Ionic columns and cornices to form an ornamental screen to Waterloo Place, retaining the ground of the burying ground; built to the design of Archibald Elliot in conjunction with the Waterloo Place and Regent Bridge elevations; screen design continued into the elevation of Calton Convening Rooms (now Howie's Restaurant) at the corner with Calton Hill (road); design repeated in wall on the opposite sides of the street with a semi-circular arched gateway to the south part of the burying ground. Condition: fair on north, where it has been cleaned; poor and grime encrusted on south.

Walls and railings, Old Calton Burying Ground (North)

Mainly retaining walls of coursed rubble with dressed sandstone copes and lime mortar pointing. Wall on north side is dressed ashlar sandstone blocks, being the rear wall of Parliament Hotel. Condition: generally fair.

Wrought iron railings on east side of steps with 19mm square bars at 100mm centres and arrow-head finials, built on stone base wall; height 1.5m. Condition: fair.

Walls and railings, Old Calton Burying Ground (South)

Retaining walls on east and west sides of path built of coursed rubble with dressed sandstone copes and lime mortar pointing to joints; height varies. Condition: fair.

Railings on retaining wall at entrance are original 19th century wrought iron railing on west side with modern alternative on east side (with original posts) with 19mm square bars at 150mm centres with arrow-head shaped tops; ornate decorated posts; height 870mm. Condition: good/fair, original railings are badly eroded.

Handrail on steps are modern in mild steel tubular sections. Condition: fair.

Internal wall/retaining wall in Old Calton Burying Ground (South) in coursed rubble with dressed sandstone copes and lime mortar pointing to joints; burial 'lairs' on both sides and the John Hume Monument at the south-west corner, and the Martyrs' obelisk adjoining it on the east side of the path; height 3m+ approx. Condition: fair.

Retaining wall on east boundary built in coursed rubble with dressed sandstone copes and lime mortar pointing to joints; burial 'lairs' on west side; height varies 4m+. Condition: fair.

Retaining wall on south boundary built in coursed rubble with dressed sandstone copes and lime mortar pointing to joints; burial 'lairs' on north side; height varies 1-3+m. Condition: fair.

Wall on west boundary built in coursed rubble with dressed sandstone copes and lime mortar pointing to joints; burial 'lairs' and detached headstones on east side; height 2.5m+. Condition: fair.

Monuments

Old Calton has some of the finest examples of 18th and 19th century monuments and memorials including wall murals, wall enclosed lairs, freestanding stones and slabs, that are of local, national and international importance.

Thomas Robertson (d.1720)

The oldest remaining monument is that of Thomas Robertson, cordiner (shoemaker), who died in 1720 (Anderson 576). A wall mural in tablet form with supporting pillars and pediment on the west wall of the north part. The pediment has a relief carving of the shoemakers trade sign, a shaped knife with crown above. Above and below the central tablet are relief carvings of winged souls in flight.

William Flemming (1664-1733)

Immediately next to the old entrance to the north part, within a large rubble walled enclosure, is an important mural to *William Flemming portioner and brewer*. The enclosure, one of the first to be erected in the grounds, is shown on the earliest maps.

John Morton (1674-1728)

In the north-west corner of the south part there is an impressive mural monument erected to John Morton, heelmaker, with ionic supporting columns and pediment on either side of which are relief statues of women.

Thomas Gray (1672-1752)

In the south part, just to the east of the entrance steps, is an 18th century upright stone with elaborate carving, one of the finest examples of its type in Scotland. It was erected by Captain John Gray to his father Thomas Gray, Wright (carpenter) and his mother Elizabeth Wilkie, (d.1747) (Turnbull 89). Both faces of the stone are carved in relief. On the back of the stone is a freemason symbol of a square and compass. On the front of the stone there is a fine relief of a full masted galleon its sails filled with wind riding across high seas with two grotesque heads and symbols of mortality below.



Thomas Gray / Elizabeth Wilkie gravestone

*The David Hume and
American Civil War memorials*



David Hume (1711-1776)

The finest of all the monuments in the burial ground is the one designed by Robert Adam to his great friend David Hume, Philosopher & Historian. An austere cylinder with rough fluted frieze on the lower stage, a bold Doric entablature on the upper and a large urn in a niche above the entrance. Its sources are clearly Roman inspired, both the mausoleum of Theoderic at Ravenna, and the Tomb of Caecilia Metella, on the Via Appia have been cited.

When Stevenson wrote about Hume, *as he lay composed beneath that circular idea*, he was quoting from the witticism at the time,

Within this circular Idea,
Called vulgarly a Tomb.
The Impressions and Ideas rest,
That constituted Hume. (Skinner 68)

The monument, twenty feet in diameter by thirty feet high, was erected in 1778 (Anderson 581). A cross was installed in 1843 and removed later in the same century (Patterson & Rock 176).

John Wilkie (d. 1786)

To the north of the Hume Monument is the sandstone enclosure of John Wilkie, mason, and also Charles and Isaac Slaters Brewers. The frieze to the pedimented front combines modern swags with paterae and an interesting rendering of skulls and bones (Edinburgh 438).

The Spottiswood Enclosure (e. 1800)

A fine 18th century enclosure with Gothic front by Batty Langley erected in 1800.

Francis Allan, Upholsterer, (d. 1815)

A fine wall monument within a walled enclosure topped with a flaming urn in a wall niche.

Robert Burn (d. 1816)

To the west of Hume's Monument in the later west extension is an impressive gothic mausoleum to the architect Robert Burn. In the style of St John's Princes Street and roofed with stone slabs it was, presumably, designed by his son William Burn (McKean 438). His widow and twelve children including his sons William and John are also interred within the enclosure although no monument was erected to them.



*Jail Governor's House,
Political Martyrs monument
and Hume monument on
skyline seen from near
entrance to southern section
of the burying ground*

William Raeburn, Perfumer (d.1812)

Immediately to the east of the Martyrs' Monument is a handsome Greek temple enclosure with a fluted and domed sarcophagus like a perfume bottle, erected 1817 (Edinburgh 438).

Thomas Hamilton (1784-1858).

A bronze plaque, relief portrait of the architect of the former Royal High School, Burn's Monument and the Martyr's Monument on Calton Hill.

Obelisk to the Political Martyrs of 1793-4

On the high point of the burial ground on the east of the path is an giant grey ashlar obelisk which, along with Hume's enclosure, dominates the burial ground. Designed by Thomas Hamilton, it was erected to Thomas Muir and the four other Political Martyrs –Thomas Fyshe Palmer, William Skirving, Maurice Margarot and Joseph Gerrald – who argued for Parliamentary reform. They were charged with sedition and were transported to Botany Bay for fourteen years (Turnbull 85). Of the five that were transported only Margarot returned home to live in Britain (ibid). In his closing speech Thomas Muir professed,

When our ashes are scattered by the winds of heaven, the impartial voice of future times will rejudge your verdict. (ibid)

The foundation stone of the 90 foot high monument was laid in 1844 (Turnbull, 87). Over 400 members of the Complete Suffrage Association dressed in black



*Base of Political Martyrs
monument, completed 1845*

and processed to the hill, passing the High Court in Parliament Square where the mis-trial of Muir by the hated Lord Braxfield was held (IBID). During the foundation ceremony that followed the crowd covered the entire south side of the Hill. The monument was completed in 1845.

Lord Cockburn described it simply as: 'a pillar of disgrace to the delinquent judges' (Skinner 74)

David Allan (1744-1796)

David Allan was an historical painter and Burns' illustrator whose Italian sketches earned him the title of "Scottish Hogarth" (Skinner, 70). A free-standing stone with white marble medallion with relief portrait carving by John Hutcheson (Edinburgh 438). It was erected to his memory by Royal Scottish Academy in 1874 (Anderson 582).

Sir John Steell (1804-1891)

Sir John Steell was an eminent 19th century Scottish sculptor. Amongst his most notable works are the statue of Sir Walter Scott for the Scott Monument and the statue of the Duke of Wellington in front of Register House. His lair to the north end of the west area is a black iron mortsafe. Ironically, there are no carved inscriptions or monuments to his name.

William Blackwood (1776 - 1834)

In the north-west corner of the larger south part is an impressive enclosure erected for William Blackwood, publisher and founder of the Tory Blackwood's Magazine. The ornamental gateway still retains its highly decorative cast iron gate. Within the enclosure are red sandstone wall tablets.

American Civil War Memorial (E. 1893)

In 1893 the American Civil War memorial was erected to the design of George E. Bisset. Known as the *Emancipation Monument* it commemorates five Scottish American Soldiers who took part in the American Civil War (1861-5) (Turnbull 85). It comprises of a red granite base with standing bronze statue of Abraham Lincoln below which a bronze statue of a freed slave lies on battle flags with out-stretched hand. It is the first life-size statue of Lincoln to be erected in Europe (Turnbull 87).

John (1813-1892) and David Paton (d. 1855)

Rare surviving painted cast-iron wall tablet.

Drives and Paths

Old Calton Burying Ground (North) Steps

The north part of the old burying ground is grass surfaced throughout and the steps into it are the only paved element. A stone wall with iron railings and a gate outside Parliament Hotel opens onto a small concrete surfaced court from which rise two flights of 14 stone steps, between stone retaining walls, up to the graveyard level.

Old Calton Burying Ground (South) Paths and Steps

A spine path runs through the middle of the original area of the burying ground which rises in a flight of steps from the semi-circular arched gateway in the monumental screen retaining wall along Waterloo Place. A section of bitmac path with stone channel between retaining walls then rises in another flight of stone steps (new stone) to the graveyard level. The rest of the path is surfaced in red whin chips with the original stone channels and a low retaining wall rising with the ground level; red chipping are also laid along the margins at the back of the retaining wall. Elsewhere in the graveyard white chippings are used with buff gravel in some lairs.

Lime trees above the screen wall of the southern section of the burying ground, Waterloo Place





East part of the southern section of the burying ground against the backdrop of upper Calton Hill and its buildings

In the outer burying ground extension a path of red chippings leads westwards but peters out in the west part of the extension.

Trees and Other Planting

Old Calton Burying Ground north, trees

The only trees here are two limes and the stump of a third in a row along the top of the Waterloo Place retaining wall.

Old Calton Burying Ground south, trees

Eight limes line the top of the retaining wall along Waterloo Place. They are of various sizes but probably all the same age, some suppressing others due to their close spacing. A row of eleven trees are shown in this location on the 1852 and 1877 Ordnance Survey maps together with most of the other trees in other parts of the graveyard noted below. This would suggest that they were planting following completion of the new Regent Bridge/Waterloo Place c.1819.

Other trees within the graveyard include a further two limes and a variegated holly in the western extension of the graveyard beside the wall and another two limes, a sycamore and an ash internally. The size and location of these trees suggest that they dated from the c.1820s.

Views and Vistas

There are fine views St Andrew's House and the Governor's House to the east and Waterloo Place and the upper slopes of Calton Hill to the north. From the high ground at the end of the path are equally fine views of the Castle and the Old Town to the south.

From Waterloo Place nothing except the tops of monuments and the trees that line the walls gives any clue to the graveyard above and beyond. In the northern part the top of a small obelisk and two mature trees can be seen.

Set on very edge of the steep cliffs above Low Calton the walls of the burial ground, the circular drum of David Hume's monument and the tall obelisk of the Martyrs' monument are a part of the overall dramatic composition of the Hill which reinforces the image of an Acropolis, seen most impressively from the North Bridge.

PUBLIC ACCESS

Both parts of the burying ground are open to the public during daylight hours. There are no facilities for visitors and no interpretation, although a sign at the entrance to the south part lists a dozen or so *celebrities* who are interred there.

*Lairs along the south
boundary in the later
extension of the burying
ground and view over the Old
Town*



FUTURE MANAGEMENT POTENTIAL

Both the north and south part of Old Calton are in reasonable condition, although some of the lairs are damaged and overgrown. The paths and stone steps in both areas vary in their condition and accessibility. If public access is to be encouraged further attention to surfaces and condition of paths and steps will be required.

The boundary walls, with the exception of screen wall to Waterloo Place, are in reasonable condition although all require some degree of repair. The screen wall to Waterloo Place, including the north entrance gateway and gates to the south part is in poor condition and remedial action is needed to prevent deterioration.

The majority of the monuments, for their age and exposure, are in reasonable condition. However, several of the freestanding monuments have been damaged and bits of monuments can be found throughout the grounds. The interiors of many of the lair enclosures show signs of neglect and deliberate damage and the stonework of monuments generally varies in the degree of deterioration.

There is a natural sensitivity regarding the issue as to the extent of conservation work that should be undertaken on graveyards monuments. The loss of all, or part, of the railings to the lairs is unfortunate but it may be difficult to argue for their re-instatement. A detailed survey of the monuments should therefore be undertaken to enable decisions to be made on their relative importance and condition and the extent of stabilisation and essential repairs that should be carried out.

There is a real concern regarding the safety of visitors to the burial ground not only from the undesirable activities which are known to occur there but also from the present physical condition of the grounds and monuments.

The stone steps and bitmac path sections are in fair condition, but the use of red chippings creates a cheap and untidy appearance, and can be unstable to walk on when on a slope. Use of buff gravel and white chippings elsewhere creates a patchy appearance.

While many visitors find the south part of the Burying Ground, there are issues about how to encourage people to visit it, how to interpret it sensitively and how to accommodate increased access safely. The north part is both less visited and less interesting. Wheelchair users cannot access either part of the burying ground and there is no easy way to provide access for them.

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Overall Significance

Old Calton Graveyard is of exceptional significance within the context of the history and development of Calton Hill. Not only does it contain the graves of many of the literary, scientific and artistic figures of the Enlightenment, but the use made of the prominent site is spectacular.

It is a burial ground of exceptional quality that spans a unique time in the development of graveyard and monument design, from the humble post Reformation carved stones of the tradesmen to the grandeur of the later 18th and 19th neo-classical and gothic monuments. In the later south-west extension a system of streets of enclosed lairs is precursor of the 19th century graveyard of Highgate in London.

There are fine examples of early 18th and 19th century monuments and memorials, including many elegant fronts, in a mixture of neo-classical and gothic revival. Many of them including the free-standing stone to Thomas Gray, George E. Bisset's American Civil War Memorial, Robert Adam's mausoleum to David Hume, and Thomas Hamilton's Monument to the Political Martyrs are of national significance.

In its severed but preserved form the two parts of the burying ground are highly significant as evidence of the sequence of development in this part of the city and as a component of both the Waterloo Place / Regent Bridge / Regent Road project of the early 19th century and of the wider composition of Calton Hill.

Work of Art

Outstanding

Historical

Outstanding

Horticultural / Arboricultural / Sylvicultural

Little

Architectural

Outstanding

Scenic

Outstanding

Nature Conservation

None

Archaeological

Some

Recreational

High

Sources – Primary

Maps

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John Ainslie Old and New Town of Edinburgh and Leith with the Proposed Docks 1804 NLS

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First edition Ordnance Survey (1852) NLS

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NLS National Library of Scotland www.nls.uk

NMRS National Monuments Record of Scotland

SCRAN Scottish Cultural Resource Access Network www.scran.ac.uk

Old Calton www.headstones.fsnet.co.uk/ocalton.htm Alan Wilson
photographer

Old Calton north www.headstones.fsnet.co.uk/ocaltonnorth.htm Alan Wilson
photographer

RCAHMS Old Calton from above – C40332CN SC 760479

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