



BLUE PLAQUES

in

**St Michael's Churchyard
Dumfries**

LIST OF CONTEMPORARIES

SURNAME	FIRST NAME(S)	PLAQUE NUMBER
McMURDO (BLAIR)	Mrs John (Jane)	39
BLACKLOCK	Dr. Archibald	32
BLACKLOCK	John	33
BURNSIDE	Rev. WM.	1
BUSHBY	John	6
CLARK	William	41
CLARK	Samuel jun.	37
CRICHTON	Dr James	20
CROSBIE	Of Holm	43
DOUGLAS	Alexander	45
MILLER (EVERY)	Mrs Every (Frances)	27
GOLDIE	Thomas	2
GRACIE	James	7
GRAY	George	14
HAMILTON	Captain John	31
HARLEY	Dr John	4
HAUGH	George	26
HYSLOP / MAXWELL	William and Jean	5
INGLIS	Rev. William	11
JACKSON	Robert	9
LEWARS	John	10
LEWARS	Jessie	18
MAUSOLEUM		(16)
MAXWELL's	VET'RAN CHIEF	38

LIST OF CONTEMPORARIES *(continued)*

SURNAME	FIRST NAME(S)	PLAQUE NUMBER
MITCHELL	John	15
MUNDELL	Robert	21
McCLURE	James	17
McCULLOCH	Mrs David (Janet)	44
McDIARMID	John	24
McLAUHLAN	Mary	36
McMURDO	Colonel A.	22
McNEIL	James	35
NEWALL	David	40
PEROCHON	Mrs Agnes	8
PEYSTER	Col. de	25
RANKINE	Adam	19
RICHARDSON	Gabriel	23
RIDDEL	Robert Cutlar & Wauchope	3
SHORTT	Francis	12
SMITH	William	28
STAIG	David and Jessie	13
THOMSON	William - of Woodhouse	42
WALLACE	William	29
WHITE	Thomas	34
WILLIAMSON	David	30

BRIEF HISTORY OF ST MICHAELS CHURCH

On the South side of Dumfries there stands the oldest Church in town – now known as St Michaels and South Parish Church. It would appear that a Christian Church has stood on this site for close on 1,300 years, and even before that, that around 400a.d. there is evidence of a sanctuary having been built there by St. Ninian, as a stopping-place for pilgrims going to Whithorn on the extreme South West coast of Scotland, where Ninian had set up a Priory and place of pilgrimage.

The present Church is the third to be built on this site and the graveyard is believed to be over 900 years old, with tombstones erected on top of old graves. We do know definitely that the cemetery was receiving inhabitants in the days of Malcolm Canmore, an eleventh century King of Scotland.



The Church and many of the magnificent gravestones in the adjoining cemetery are built of local red sandstone which, unfortunately, is not very durable and time has resulted in extensive wear to the building exterior and also to many of the stones. The elements, too, over the years, have contributed to damage and deterioration.

Previous to the Reformation, a movement took place in the 16th century for the reform of medieval religious abuses, the Church was built in the form of a cross and had no galleries. After the Reformation, and when much larger Church accommodation was required, St Michael's was enlarged by a simple process of making it square, and galleries erected.

In 1735, extensive repairs were undertaken by the Town Council, but in 1743 the condition of the Church began to cause anxiety, and after almost endless discussions in Presbytery and Town Council, it was agreed that the Church be rebuilt, the estimates of all the tradesmen concerned coming to the sum of four hundred and two pounds, three shillings and elevenpence halfpenny. On payment of eighty pounds towards the new building, the Seven Trades of Dumfries were permitted to build galleries or "lofts" for the accommodation of their members and the sign of each trade was hung on the wall of its respective gallery.

During the Building of the Church, Prince Charlie, the Young Pretender to the British throne, passed through Dumfries being pursued by the army of the Duke of Cumberland. Dumfries was unfriendly to Charlie and the army demanded lead, money and shoes and as the lead for St. Michaels's roof was ready to hand this was given along with a levy of £2,000 and 1,000 shoes. Not receiving all as demanded the army took hostages until some of the money and shoes were handed over.

The re-built Church had no room where the Minister could prepare for a service and he had to walk in his robes from the Manse across St Michaels Street. There was no heating and to add to uncomfortable conditions the two side doors situated on each side let in draughts.

Most of this was corrected in 1869 when modern pews were introduced along with accommodation for the minister and a heating system. This was followed by, in 1881, by a complete renovation and gas fittings installed all at a cost of £1,023 – 18s 11 1/2 d.

In 1929, with the Union of the Church of Scotland and the United Free Church of Scotland, responsibility for its upkeep came to rest on the congregation. They soon faced costs of having to carry out renovations due to death watch beetle in the roof and replacing the plaster on the ceiling, this they did in 1933 and also managed to enlarge and electrify the fine old Willis organ. The Church was relit with a new and unique lighting system and redecorated the whole in a manner befitting such a fine building. In spending £2,500 the work carried out made the Church worthy of its long and honourable past.

In conclusion it is fair to say that St Michael's is world famous because it was the Church that the National Bard of Scotland attended while he was in Dumfries and likewise St Michael's graveyard because Robert Burns was buried there, and within its bounds stands the Mausoleum erected in his memory.

*“All ask the cottage of his birth,
Gaze on the scenes he loved and sung,
And gather feelings not of earth
His fields and stream among,
They linger by the Doon's low trees,
And pastoral Nith, and wooded Ayr,
And round thy sepulchres, Dumfries-
The Poet's tomb is there.”*

MARKER STONE SHOWING THE POSITIONS OF THE VARIOUS BURIAL PLACES THAT THE CONTEMPORARIES OF ROBERT BURNS ARE SITUATED

This sandstone pedestal and marker plaque was erected by Mathew McKerrow in 1930. The plaque shows the position, by number, the graves of friends of Robert Burns. This can be reached up on the right of the Church as seen when facing the front door, and an illustration of the plaque is produced on the inside back cover.

THE BLUE MARKER PLAQUES

In 1996, as a special commemorative project, the Burns Howff Club of Dumfries had blue marker plaques mounted on a concrete bases and these were positioned on each grave.

INFORMATION ON EACH CONTEMPORARY

Mathew's choice of the contemporaries follows and attempts to give some detail of the place each held in the life of the Poet.

1. REV. WM. BURNSIDE.

The minister of St. Michael's when Robert Burns and Jean were members. Burns wrote of Mr Burnside:- *"Mr Burnside is a man whom I shall ever gratefully remember, and his wife - Gude forgie me! . . . simplicity, elegance, good sense, sweetness of disposition: in short - but if I say one more word about her, I shall be directly in love with her."* Dr Burnside wrote an excellent history of Dumfries, a resume of which appeared in Sinclair's 'Statistical Account of Scotland.' The manuscript copy of this work is in the possession of the Dumfries and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society

2. THOMAS GOLDIE

Goldie was President of the Loyal Natives Club, a club which had a short existence, Burns snuffing it out by his audacious impromptu:-

*"Ye true Loyal Natives, attend to my song,
In uproar and riot rejoice the night long:
From envy and hatred your corps is exempt,
But where is your shield from the darts of contempt?"*

The Goldies lived in Irish Street - a street parallel to the High Street in Dumfries.

3. ROBERT CUTLAR AND WAUCHOPE RIDDELL

Buried in the ancestral grave of the Fergussons and Riddells. Alexander Fergusson and Robert Riddell were, of course, contenders for the Whistle - an award for drinking one's companions under the table. Burns himself was an observer, though not a contestant, while staying at Ellisland. The contest was held at Friars' Carse, a large house near the Hermitage and the home of Robert Riddell.

4. DR JOHN HARLEY

A distinguished surgeon, Dr Harley was a prominent member of the No. 2 Company of the Royal Dumfries Volunteers, the company of which Robert Burns was a member. Associated with him were John Syme, James Gracie, John Lewars, etc. Dr Harley lived in Castle Street, a street which adjoins Greyfriars' Church, or, as it was known in Burns' day, the New Church.

5. WM. HYSLOP AND JEAN MAXWELL

In Robert Burns' day joint owners of what is now the Globe Inn. When this was the Globe Hotel, Burns described it as his 'favourite howff.'

6. JOHN BUSHBY

This obelisk built by John Bushby in memory of his father, peculiarly only bearing his father's name and that of another son, Thomas. For some years John Bushby, jun. was an intimate friend of Robert Burns and then they became estranged. John Bushby, jun.'s tomb is unknown. Burns, in an ill-tempered mood, wrote the well-known epitaph:-

*"Here lies John Bushby - honest man,
Cheat him, Devil - if you can!"*

7. JAMES GRACIE

Gracie was a well-known banker and a Captain in the Royal Dumfries Volunteers. For upwards of twenty years he occupied the magisterial bench in Dumfries. He was an intimate friend of the Poet, and while the latter was attempting to find a remedy for his illness at the Brow Well, a few miles outside Dumfries, Gracie wrote enquiring after his health, offering the use of his carriage to bring him home. It is also believed that he tendered some pecuniary aid as well. Burns' reply to the letter is dated from the "Brow, Wednesday morn, July 13th," only eight days before his death. In McDowall's "Burns in Dumfriesshire," there appears the following epigram:-

*"Gracie, thou art a man of worth,
o be thou Dean for ever!
May he be damn'd to Hell henceforth
Who faults thy weight or measure."*

8. MRS AGNES PEROCHON

Right in the corner of the North and East walls is the grave where Robert Burns was originally buried in 1796, prior to the removal of his body, in 1815, to the Mausoleum. Mrs Perochon had shown great kindness to Jean Armour and, out of gratitude, Jean gave her the spot where Robert was first buried. Mrs Perochon was the wife of one Joseph Perochon, a French Royalist who fled his country during the Revolution.

Shared with :-

46 - BARDS ORIGINAL GRAVE - position shown on pedestal location plan (inside back cover)

As already mentioned, this was the original resting-place of ROBERT BURNS. Burns was born on 25th January, 1759, in a clay cottage which his father had built in Alloway, Ayrshire. Robert, at six, attended the local school at Alloway Mill and his father engaged a private tutor, 18 year-old John Murdoch. At seven, however, the Burns family moved to a farm at Mount Oliphant and at nine years of age, Robert was working alongside his father.

Robert during his early years read widely and tried to master French and Latin. At fifteen he had his first love affair with Nelly Kilpatrick, who was helping at the harvest.

Two years later, in 1777, the family moved to another farm at Lochlie. Tarbolton was near at hand and there Burns started his famous Bachelors' Club. In 1784, however, after the death of his father, Robert and family moved to Mossgiel, an Ayrshire farm near Mauchline.

Although he had short love affairs with many girls, it was Jean Armour, a girl from Mauchline, who captured his heart. Jean's father, for some reason or another, did not realise Burns' worth and did not approve of any intended marriage, eventually sending Jean off to Paisley.

All this time Robert Burns had been writing poetry and in 1786 had the Kilmarnock edition of his works published. Later in that same year he was being treated as a celebrity by Edinburgh's society, which resulted in the Edinburgh edition of his works being published the following year.

In 1788, Robert Burns moved to Ellisland, a farm on the outskirts of Dumfries, and Jean Armour joined him there. He had taken a six-week course in gauging under the Excise Officer at Tarbolton, and successfully applied, while in Dumfriesshire, for a job with the Customs and Excise, Dumfries division.

He was still writing poetry profusely, and while at Ellisland, wrote his famous 'Tam o' Shanter' in, as it is said, one day.

After three years at Ellisland, Burns moved to Dumfries to an Excise post, settling first of all in Bank Street, 'the Stinkin' Vennel', in a house which is now named 'the Songhouse of Scotland', as, while there, he wrote many of his most famous songs.

Not long afterwards he moved to a house in the Mill Vennel, barely 100 yards from St. Michael's Church. This street has now been re-named Burns Street. There, in 1796, Robert Burns died, and after his funeral, which was attended by many thousands, he was interred in the grave now occupied by Mrs Perochon, who has just been mentioned.

9. ROBERT JACKSON

Jackson was the publisher of the second broadsheet newspaper in 1777. He did not have great contact with Robert Burns whose fame at that time was only budding, not having reached its full flower. Jackson also published a weekly serial prior to 1777.

10. JOHN LEWARS

Lewars was a Supervisor of Excise, as was his son John, who was a colleague and friend of Robert Burns in the Excise. Robert Burns received much useful information regarding his Excise duties from the son and maintained a friendship with him until his death. John Lewars, jun., lived in Ryedale Cottage, which was latterly the site of a knitting factory. He died in 1826. John, jun., was the brother of Jessie, who tended Burns on his deathbed.

11. REV. WILLIAM INGLIS

Mr Inglis was minister of Loreburn St. Church. When asked why he, on occasion, attended the 'Meeting House,' Burns replied, "*I go to hear Mr Inglis because he preaches what he believes, and practises what he preaches.*" Mr Inglis, who attended Burns on his last illness, died in 1826, in the 62nd of his ministry. Greatly loved by his congregation, this stone was erected by them as a testimony of the esteem in which he was held. Mr Inglis' eldest son became a chemist in Dumfries, and, when a lad took medicine to the dying Poet, which had been prescribed by Burns' good friend and physician, Dr Maxwell.

12. FRANCIS SHORTT

Francis Shortt was Town Clerk during the time Burns was in Dumfries. During that period there were many changes both nationally and provincially. In his latter days, it is recorded, Shortt was a 'walking encyclopedia' of local events. He lived in Castle Street, Dumfries, and was Secretary of the Loyal Natives Club.

13. DAVID AND JESSIE STAIG

David Staig was a banker and Collector of Customs in addition to being Provost of Dumfries. First chosen as Provost in 1783, he was re-elected seven times. A man of great influence in the Town he was instrumental in organising the building of Dumfries Academy and establishing a Mail Coach communication between Edinburgh, Dumfries and Portpatrick in 1808. He promoted the building of the New Quay and Buccleuch Street Bridge, as well as many other significant improvements. His daughter, Jessie, whose beauty, virtue and accomplishments are placed on permanent record in the poetry of Burns, became the wife of Major William Miller of Dalswinton, but she unfortunately died at the early age of 26. Robert Burns said of her:-

*"Fresh is the rose in the gay, dewy morning,
And sweet is the lily at evening close;
But in the presence of lovely young Jessie,
Unseen is the lily, unheeded the rose."*

14. GEORGE GRAY

Gray was a colleague of Burns in the Excise. 'The whole tenor of his life was unblemished, his conduct discreet, sincere and manly; his heart grateful and affectionate; a sincere Christian and an excellent husband, an anxious father and a faithful friend.'

15. JOHN MITCHELL

John Mitchell was Burns' superior officer in the Excise, both while at Ellisland and in Dumfries. He was an ancestor of James Weir Mitchell, the American novelist. Burns often consulted Mitchell about his poems, and after Mitchell's death a collection of poems in Robert Burns' handwriting was found among his possessions. Unfortunately Mitchell's family lost these manuscripts. Robert Chambers, a Burns' biographer, says that *"it may be added that Burns had a critical friend in Collector Mitchell, who, having been well-educated with a design to the Church, possessed a mind not ill-qualified to judge of literary compositions."* Burns himself wrote of Mitchell: -

*"Friend of the Poet, tried and leal
Wha wanting thee might beg or steal;
Alake, alake, the meikle Deil
Wi' a' his witches
Are at it, skelpin jig and reel
In my poor pouches!"*

16. THE MAUSOLEUM

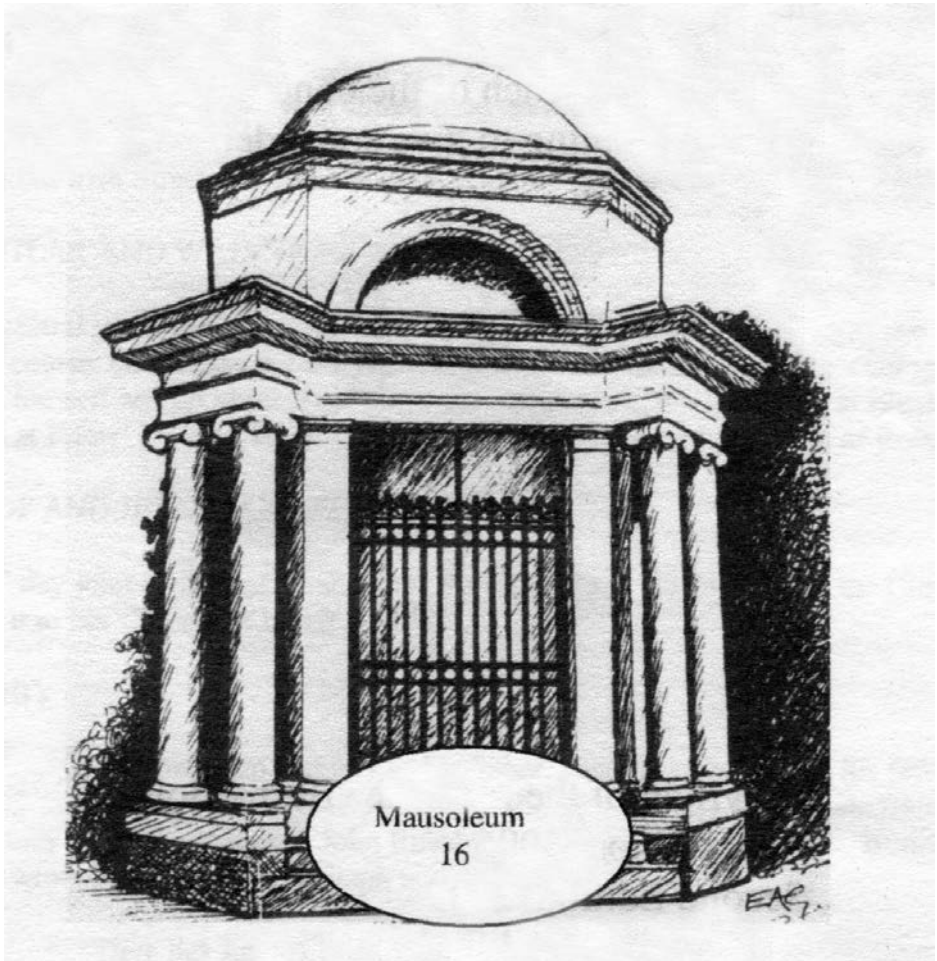
Around midnight on 19th September, 1815, the mortal remains of Robert Burns were transferred from their original resting-place to the Mausoleum by James Grierson, John Milligan and James Thomson, together with James Bogle, the Maxwell's' gardener, assisted by some of his cronies. Burns' coffin was in an advanced state of decay compared with the coffins of his children. The macabre scene is described by William McDowall in his "History of Dumfries" as follows: - 'at first glance, Burns' dead body appeared to be very well preserved, suggesting one who had just sunk into the slumber of death, the lordly forehead of the dreamless sleeper still rising arched and high, the dome of thought covered with hair still dark as a raven's wing, and the teeth still retaining their original whiteness and regularity.

The scene was so imposing that most of the workmen stood bare and uncovered, and at the same time felt their frames thrilling with some indefinable emotion as they gazed on the ashes of him whose fame is as wide as the world itself. But the effect was momentary; for when they proceeded to insert a shell or case below the coffin, the head separated from the trunk and the whole body, with the exception of the bones, crumbled into dust.'

The inscription on the stone inside the Mausoleum is baldly prosaic, yet eloquently simple: -

*In memory of
Robert Burns,
who died the 21st July, 1796,
in the 37th year of his age.*

Prominent among those thinking along the lines of a monument were John Syme and William Grierson. (John Syme (Stamp Shop Johnnie) is buried in Troqueer Cemetery across the River Nith.). Sir Henry Duncan, minister of Ruthwell Church and founder of the Savings Bank, and Grierson were, in fact, joint secretaries of the Mausoleum Committee, with Sir Walter Scott assisting in the fund-raising for



the memorial. About fifty designs were submitted and the plans of Thomas Hunt of London eventually approved. The foundation stone was laid, with full Masonic honours, on June the 5th, 1815. The mural sculpture of an Italian, Peter Turnerelli was chosen for the interior - this gentleman not long after receiving the Freedom of Dumfries.

In 1834 the vault of the Mausoleum was again opened to receive the mortal remains of Jean Armour. Mrs Burns was buried on 1st April of that year and her coffin was carried shoulder-high from the Midsteeple in the centre of Dumfries, with the great crowds striving to touch the coffin, which was a mark of respect in Scotland those days. While the vault was open, a number of gentlemen, who had received prior authority, descended into the vault and obtained a cast of the Poet's skull with a view to examining it and attempting to deduce the power of the brain. Now with his wife and family, the Poet sleeps peacefully.

*“For him the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:
No children run to lisp their sire’s return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.”
(Gray)*

17. JAMES McCLURE

Buried within the precincts of the Mausoleum because he was a very good friend of the Poet’s, and, after Burns’ death, James McClure was active and successful in his endeavours to promote the interests of the family. Robert Burns said of him, ‘he is a man who, by his punctuality, his integrity, his benevolence and the uniform uprightness of his character, conferred respectability on the humble situation of letter-carrier.’

After quitting the precincts of the Poet’s tomb, we may say with Campbell:-

*“Farewell, high chief of Scottish song!
That could’st alternatively impart
Wisdom and rapture in thy page,
And brand each vice with satire strong;
Whose lines are mottos of the heart,
Whose truths electrify the sage.
Farewell, and ne’er envy dare
To wring one baleful poison drop
From the crush’d laurels of thy bust;
But while the lark sings sweet in air,
Still may the grateful pilgrim stop
To bless the spot that holds thy dust.”*

18. JESSIE LEWARS

Jessie was the daughter of the Supervisor of Excise and the sister of John Lewars, a colleague of Robert Burns in the Excise Service. As is well known, Burns was rarely able to leave his room from April, 1796, until his death in July of that year, and during that period Jessie rendered invaluable assistance to Jean Armour. She is remembered through two lyrics from Burns’ pen, ‘Here’s a Health to Ane I lo’e dear’ and ‘o wert thou in the Cauld Blast.’ Jessie, who married James Thomson, a well-known writer in Dumfries, died on the 26th of May, 1855.

19. ADAM RANKINE

Rankine was described as an active, bustling, enterprising and warm-hearted gentleman who was Governor of the local Savings Bank. He also formed a Volunteer Artillery Corps, of which he was made chief officer.

20. Dr JAMES CRICHTON

Elizabeth Crichton was the eldest daughter of Sir Robert Grierson of Lag. In life, she was the antithesis of her infamous ancestor – Grierson of Lag, persecutor of the Covenanters. As trustee and executor of her husband’s estate, she gave to

Dumfries the Crichton Royal Institution or Crichton Royal Hospital which was known worldwide for the treatment and care of the mentally ill, the Crichton, with its magnificent buildings and tranquil grounds. Situated within the southern environs of the Burgh, the Complex is now occupied by Commercial Enterprises and University Campus for Glasgow University, the University of the West of Scotland, Dumfries and Galloway College and the Open University.

21. ROBERT MUNDELL

Robert Mundell, a tobacconist, was well-known for his friendship with Burns, as was his sister's husband, Gabriel Richardson, who was a brewer in the Town. Mundell also had a brother who was a doctor.

22. COLONEL A. McMURDO

Mr McMurdo was a son of Mr John McMurdo, Chamberlain to the Duke of Queensberry at Drumlanrig Castle. Robert Burns, while at Ellisland, became friendly with Mr McMurdo, sen., and wrote at least three songs about his daughter, Miss Philadelphia McMurdo. The best known, possibly, being one beginning:

*“Adown winding Nith I did wander,
To mark the sweet flowers of the Spring;
Adown winding Nith I did wander,
Of Phillis to muse and to sing.”*

23. GABRIEL RICHARDSON

Gabriel Richardson was a brewer in Dumfries and also a leading Councillor, who, at a later date, became Provost. Richardson had a house in Nith Place, which is quite near Burns Street, and the Poet was a welcome and familiar guest at Gabriel's house at any time.

24. JOHN McDIARMID

Editor of the 'Dumfries and Galloway Courier' and recording the daily ongoings of the community, both social and political, McDiarmid was regarded as 'guide, philosopher and friend, to a complete generation of citizens'. He left a mark upon the minds of the population which was not effaced when his pen of power fell from his fingers which had used it for so long as a sceptre.

25. COL. de PEYSTER

Col. Arent de Peyster trained the Dumfries Volunteers, of which, of course, Robert Burns was a member. He survived Burns by some twenty-six years, dying at the ripe old age of 96. A verse of his own is inscribed on his tombstone:-

*“Raise no vain structure o'er my grave
One simple stone is all I crave;
To say beneath a sinner lies,
Who died in hopes again to rise,
Through Christ alone, to be forgiven,
And fitted for the joys of Heaven.”*

26. GEORGE HAUGH

Haugh was a 'douce, honest, blacksmith' who was treated by Burns on a 'familiar footing as a neighbour.' He lived above Burns in the house in Bank Street.

27. Mrs EVERY MILLER (Frances Every)

Frances Every was the second wife of Major William Miller, whose father was the celebrated Patrick Miller of Dalswinton, and who set Robert Burns up at Ellisland Farm. Major Miller's first wife was the 'lovely Jessie Staig of Robert Burns' verse. Jessie, as has been said, expired at the ripe age of 26.

28. WILLIAM SMITH

A prosperous trade in Robert Burns' day was that of a barber and such was William Smith. He dealt in hair-powders, pigtails, wigs and perfumery. As a youth he frequently saw Burns and gave his own recollection of the Poet, describing his eyes as "piercing, lustrous, like orbs of fire.'

29. WILLIAM WALLACE

A devoted friend and admirer of Burns, he was a writer in Dumfries. After the Poet's death he was zealous in his efforts for the welfare of the family.

30. DAVID WILLIAMSON

A draper in the Town, David Williamson supplied the Bard with his uniform as a Volunteer. His wife was the niece of the celebrated Paul Jones, who is credited with founding the American Navy.

31. CAPTAIN JOHN HAMILTON

Capt. Hamilton was Robert's landlord while he lived in his first house in Dumfries, in the Wee or Stinkin' Vennel (Bank Street). As a friend and admirer of the Poet, he occasionally invited Burns to dinner.

32. DR ARCHIBALD BLACKLOCK

Dr Blacklock played a leading part in obtaining a cast of Robert Burns' cranium for phrenological purposes. One of the few casts now in existence may be seen at the Robert Burns Centre in Dumfries. Dr Blacklock, as a surgeon and with naval connections, was of invaluable assistance during the cholera outbreak in the Burgh in 1832.

33. JOHN BLACKLOCK

Though from a poor background, John Blacklock was well-educated and was eventually ordained as Parish Minister at Kirkcudbright. He was blinded at the age of three, being a smallpox victim, and before the age of nineteen lost both parents through a tragic accident. He was a good friend and great admirer of Robert Burns as well as being an excellent poet in his own right, publishing a small volume of Miscellaneous Pieces, which was highly acclaimed. The stone appears to have been erected in memory of his father, John Blacklock, and the inscription reads: -

*“Here drop, Benevolence, thy cordial tear!
 A friend of human kind reposes here;
 A mind content himself and God to know;
 A heart with ev’ry virtue form’d to glow;
 A soul superior to each mean disguise;
 Truth’s sacred voice and Pity’s melting eyes.
 Beneath each pressure uniformly great;
 In life untainted, unsurprised by fate;
 His God beheld his suffering worth sincere,
 And bade it shine in Heaven, its genuine sphere!”*

34. THOMAS WHITE

This stone was erected by friends and pupils of Thomas White, who was a highly regarded mathematician and taught at Dumfries Academy for forty years. A man who was held in great esteem by all who knew him, he taught the sons of Robert Burns and also John Richardson, later Sir John Richardson the great explorer.

35. JAMES McNEIL

Without being a cronie of Robert Burns, Mr McNeil’s sister, who acted as his housekeeper, used to remark that ‘she aye kend ticht weel when her brother had been spending his nichts wi’ the Poet.’

36. MARY McLAUHLAN

Mary, the wife of Andrew Nicholson, a shoemaker, when young was in the service of James McClure, a letter-carrier mentioned earlier. She was, in later years, the devoted attendant of Robert Burns on his death-bed, and also gave valuable assistance to Cromek when that indefatigable collector was preparing his ‘Reliques of Burns.’ In 1813, Jean Armour took Mary into her own household, and, finding her sensible and trustworthy, treated her more as a companion than as a dependant. On Mary’s marriage to Andrew Nicholson, Jean gave them six chairs - one of which can be seen in Burns’ House today.

37. SAMUEL CLARK, jun.

Samuel Clark was conjunct Commisary Clerk and Clerk of the Peace for the County of Dumfries. His remains lie behind the rear of the Church. He was a friend of Robert Burns to whom the Poet wrote on one occasion following a night when he, Burns, had expressed a political opinion to the annoyance of a certain Captain Dods.

38. MAXWELL’S VET’RAN CHIEF

Burns’ famous lines to Maxwell were written on the latter’s 71st birthday:-

*“But for thy friends – and they are mony,
 Baith honest men and lassies bonnie –
 May couthie fortune kind and cannie,
 In social glee,
 Wi’ mornings blythe and e’nings funny
 Bless them and thee.”*

MARTYRS MEMORIAL

Among all the memorials with which St. Michael's Churchyard is crowded, there is one modern monument which is a reminder of 'the killing times,' i.e. when the Covenanters, who were Scots who adhered to a Solemn League and Covenant with Cromwell, and found that when Charles II succeeded to the throne, the re-establishing of Episcopacy and the barring of Covenants were high on his agenda. This resulted in ordering the resignation of Ministers, or, in many cases, their banishment and death. The monument, an obelisk, is situated in the area behind the Church, and seems to tell us, like Tennyson's river, 'men may come and men may go, but I live on for ever.' Yet this massive pyramid, too, will perish, while the Protestant principles, when freed from what is of the earth earthy, will outlive 'the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds.' The North side of the monument tells that it was erected by voluntary contributions from admirers. The West side names three martyrs who 'suffered unto death for their adherence to the principles of the Reformation.' There are three stones marking the graves of three martyrs and the first we see is that of William Welsh, a Pentland martyr 'where he lyes for adhering to the word of God, and appearing for Christ's Kingly Government in His House, and the Covenanted work of Reformation, against Perjury and Prelacie.' and then:-

*"Stay passenger, here interred dothly
A witness 'gainst poor Scotland's perjury,
Whose head once fix'd upon the bridge-port stood,
Proclaiming vengeance for his guiltless blood."*

The other martyrs commemorated are William Grierson and James Kirko or Kirka, the latter's grave being close to the original grave of Robert Burns, in the North-East corner of the graveyard. The persecution of the Covenanters was particularly rife in the South-West of Scotland, although it was a National tragedy.

CHOLERA MASS GRAVE

In 1832 there was a cholera epidemic in Dumfries, resulting in the deaths of many hundreds of persons from the Town. Over four hundred of the victims are buried in a common grave on the West Wall, i.e. the wall backing on to St. Michael's Street. The patients of the Crichton escaped the epidemic, drawing their water from an Artesian Well - as drinking-water was the cause of the scourge; this fact was, at the time, a complete mystery.

39. Mrs JOHN McMURDO (JANE BLAIR)

Jane was the wife of John McMurdo and the daughter of Provost Blair. While at Ellisland, Robert Burns wrote to Jane in appreciation of kindness shown on a previous visit. To Jane's daughter, Jean, Burns wrote:-

*"There was a lass and she was fair,
At Kirk and market to be seen;
When a' the fairest maids were there
The fairest maid was bonnie Jean."*

40. DAVID NEWALL

David Newall was a friend of Robert Burns. There is not much on his headstone, unlike many of the other memorials in the Churchyard, in fact it is singularly unique in its simplicity.

41. WILLIAM CLARK

Very little is known of William Clark, but he was Provost of Dumfries from 1786 to 1788 - the period just prior to Robert Burns' arrival in the area.

42. WILLIAM THOMSON OF WOODHOUSE

Thomson was a gentleman of high moral worth and culture, who became Provost of the Burgh in 1824. It was to Thomson that Burns consigned his present of "De Holme on the British Constitution." Again he was a friend of Robert Burns.

43. CROSBIE OF HOLM

The headstone commemorating Crosbie of Holm is quite near the entrance gate. Robert Burns often used to direct his course to their house when it was occupied by Mr Walter Riddell and his accomplished wife, Maria Woodley. Burns was, for a long a long time, on intimate terms with Maria

44. Mrs DAVID McCULLOCH (JANET McCULLOCH)

Janet was the wife of David McCulloch, whom Burns trusted to accompany him when he made a tour of Galloway. The 'Laird of Ardwall,' as David was known, administered a practical rebuke to those who, in Robert Burns' darkest days, were for ignoring him in the High Street of Dumfries, He did this by greeting the Bard with the utmost cordiality and accompanying him to his house.

45. ALEXANDER DOUGLAS

Alexander Douglas was a merchant and also a friend and contemporary of Robert Burns. His father was a wig-maker in Dumfries.

ERRATUM

Plaque 37 for Clarke read Clark

Plaque 42 for Thompson read Thomson



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Matthew McKerrow

Past President of Burns Federation;
 Past President of Burns Howff Club Dumfries
 Provision of stone pedestal and position marker Plaque

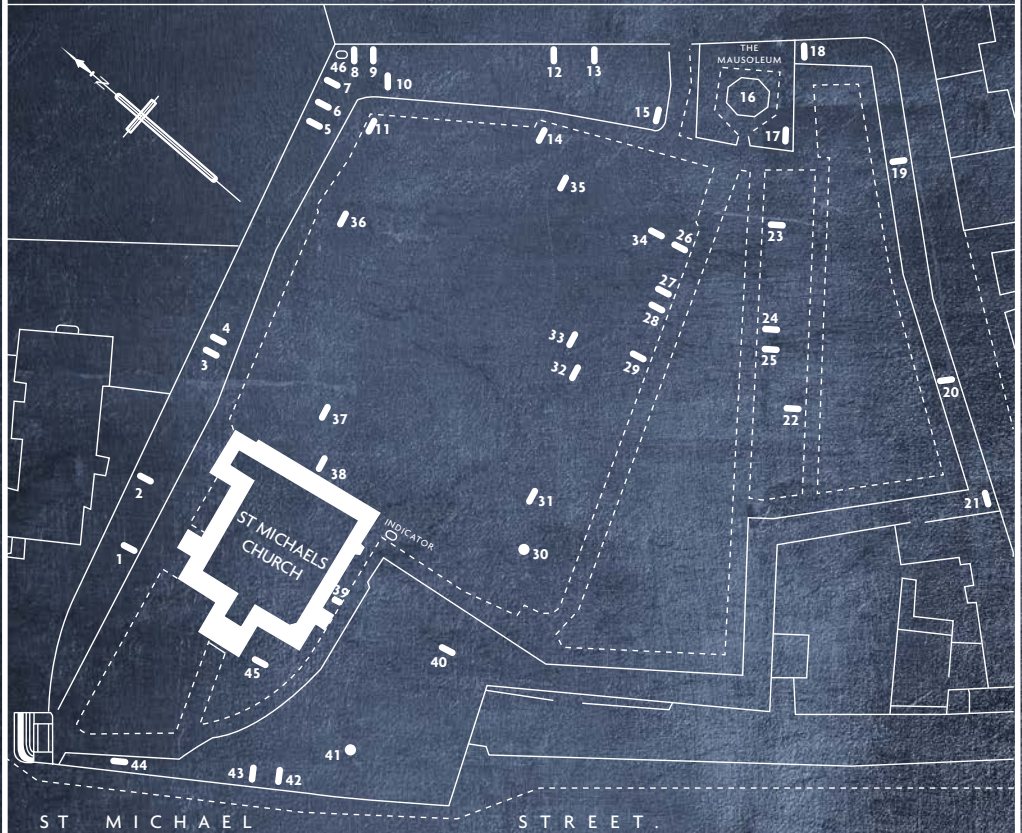
William Sutherland

Past President of Burns Howff Club Dumfries
 Original compilation of the Brochure prepared for the Bi-Centenary
 Commemoration of the death of Robert Burns

Burns Howff Club Dumfries

(Federated Number 112)
 Construction and Installation of Blue Plaques
 Ongoing maintenance and refurbishment
 Annual inspection and cleaning

PLAN SHOWING THE POSITION OF THE GRAVES OF THE FRIENDS OF ROBERT BURNS



— KEY TO THE GRAVES ON THE ABOVE PLAN —

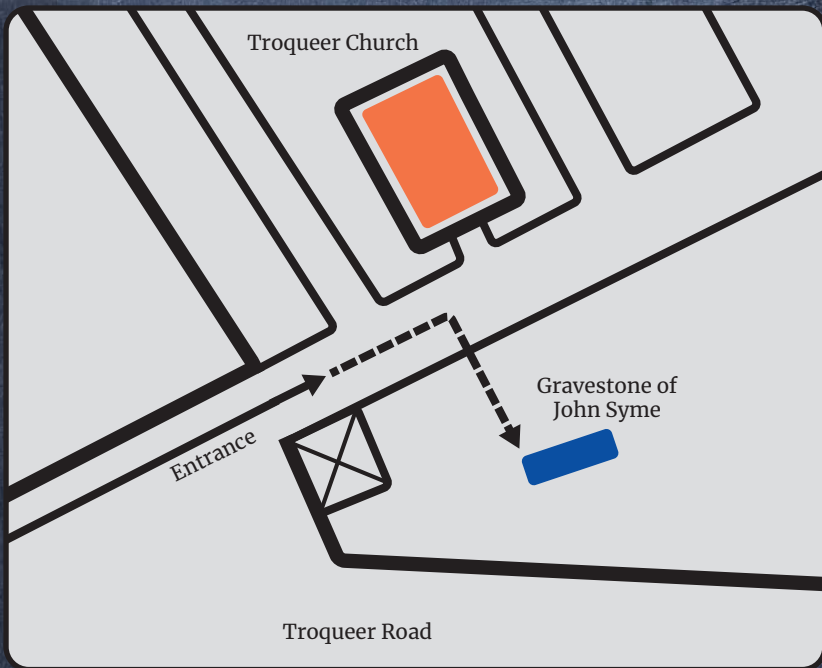
- | | | | |
|--|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 THE REV. WILLIAM BURNSIDE. D.D. | 14 GEORGE GRAY | 28 WILLIAM SMITH | 42 WILLIAM THOMSON |
| AND M ^{RS} BURNSIDE | 15 JOHN MITCHELL | 29 WILLIAM WALLACE | 43 CROSBIE OF HOLM |
| 2 THOMAS GOLDIE | 16 THE MAUSOLEUM | 30 DAVID WILLIAMSON | 44 MRS DAVID M ^C ULLOCH |
| 3 THE CUTLERS & WAUCHOPE RIDDEL | 17 JAMIE MCCALL | 31 CAPT. JOHN HAMILTON | 45 ALEXANDER DOUGLAS |
| 4 DR JOHN HARLEY | 18 JESSIE LEWARS | 32 DR ARCHIBALD BLACKLOCK | 46 THE ORIGINAL GRAVE |
| 5 WILLIAM HYSLOP & JEAN MAXWELL | 19 ADAM RANKINE | 33 JOHN BLACKLOCK | OF ROBERT BURNS |
| 6 JOHN BUSHBY | 20 DR JAMES CRICHTON | 34 THOMAS WHITE | |
| 7 JAMES GRACIE | 21 ROBERT MUNDELL | 35 JAMES M ^C NIEL | |
| 8 M ^{RS} AGNES ELEANOR PEROCHON | 22 COL. ARCHIBALD M ^C MURDO | 36 MARY M ^C LAUCHLAN | |
| 9 ROBERT JACKSON | 23 GABRIEL RICHARDSON | 37 SAMUEL CLARKE JUN | |
| 10 JOHN LEWARS | 24 JOHN M ^D IARMID | 38 MAXWELL VETERAN CHIEF | |
| 11 REV WILLIAM INGLIS | 25 COL. DE PEYSTER | 39 MRS JOHN M ^C MURDO | |
| 12 FRANCIS SHORTT | 26 GEORGE HAUGH | 40 DAVID NEWALL | |
| 13 DAVID STAIG & JESSIE STAIG | 27 MRS EVERY MILLER | 41 WILLIAM CLARK | |

**BLUE PLAQUE
INSTALLED IN TROQUEER CHURCHYARD, DUMFRIES**

JOHN SYME

Lawyer/Writer was one of Robert Burns' closest friends during his time in Dumfries. He accompanied him on his short tours of Galloway. His offices were directly below Burns' first home in Dumfries in the wee or stinking vennel, now Bank Street.

“O had the malt thy strength of mind,
Or hops the flavour of thy wit,
Twere drink for first of human kind,
A gift that e'en for Syme were fit”



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Burns Howff Club Dumfries

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