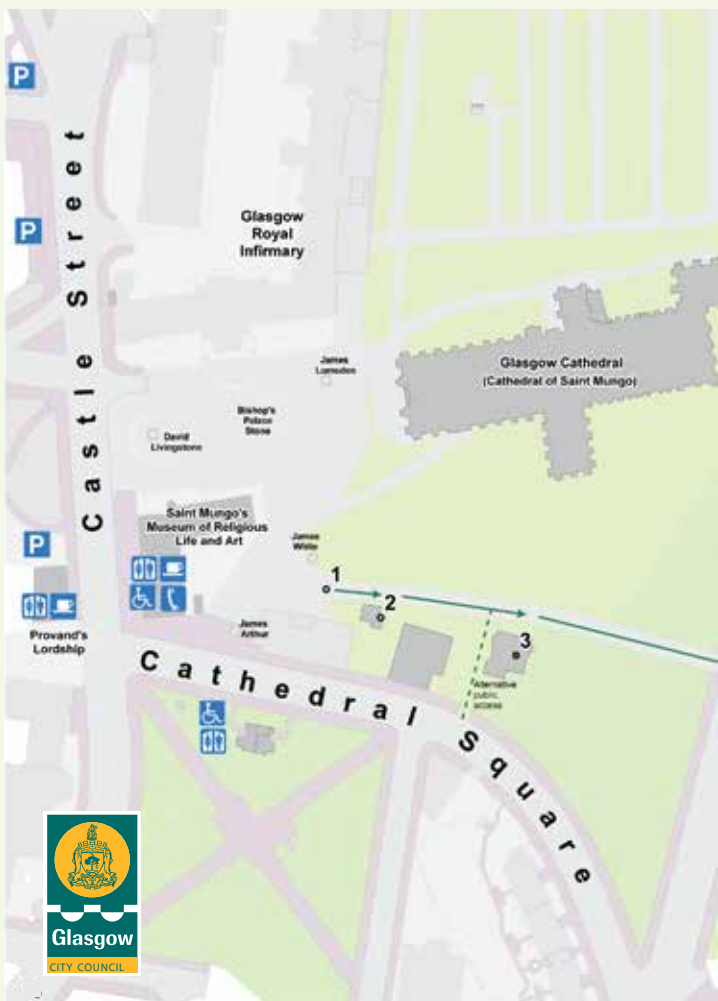




# Glasgow Necropolis Heritage Trail





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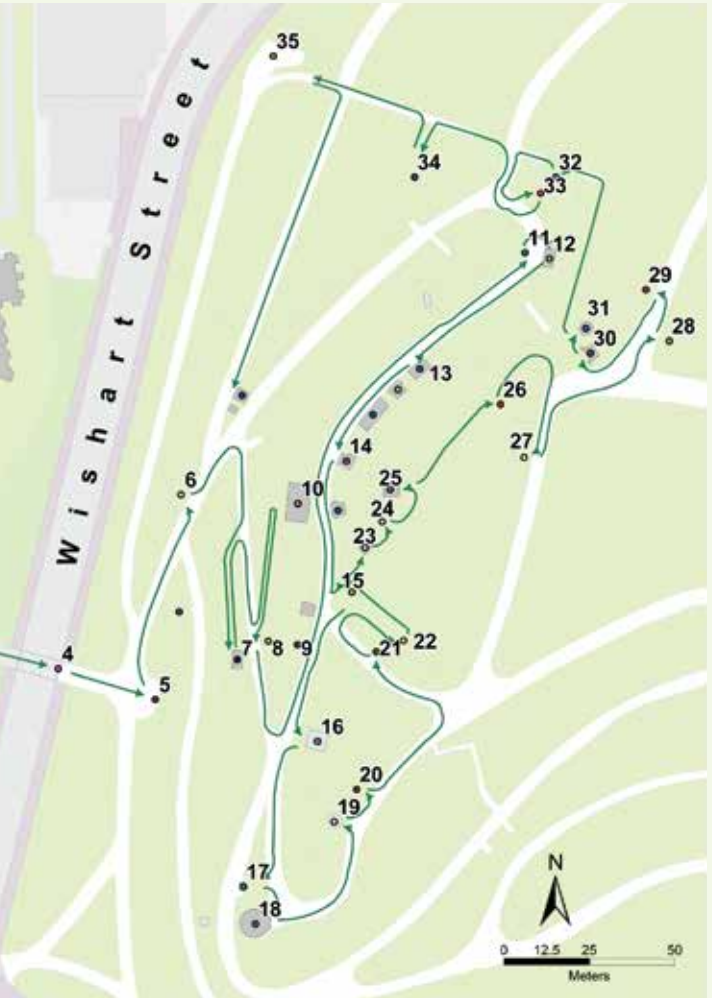
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## The Glasgow Necropolis Heritage Trail

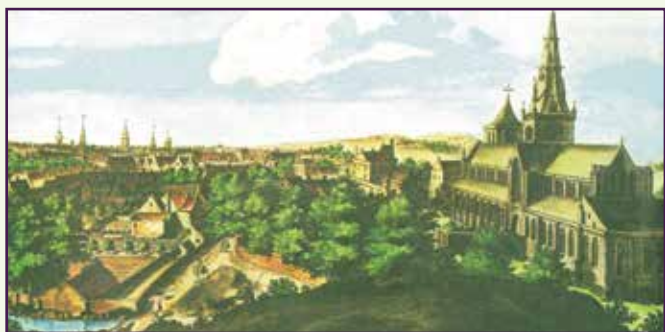
On behalf of Glasgow City Council, welcome to Glasgow Necropolis 'the Great Grey Rock'. Please enjoy your visit. For your own safety please follow the route marked on this leaflet. It will take you approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes to follow the



Heritage Trail from the Museum, across the Bridge of Sighs, through the Necropolis grounds, across the Grey Rock and back again. Please remember at all times that this is a cemetery. The Necropolis is hallowed ground which contains the remains of more than 50,000 people and as such should be treated respectfully.



Any tour of the Necropolis, Glasgow's garden cemetery based on Mount Louis, Pere Lachaise in Paris, should advisedly start and finish at the St Mungo's Museum of Religious Life and Art in the Cathedral precincts - which is the UK's only museum celebrating the world's many religions. St Mungo's museum features a priceless collection of art and religious artefacts and contains an enchanting Zen garden. Daily guided tours of the Necropolis leave from this point, refreshments and toilets are available.



A view of the Cathedral and Upper Town in the 1670's

## Introduction

### 'The Place of the Grey Rock'

There are many interpretations of the origin of the name Glasgow, the most common being 'the dear green place'. However many scholars have argued that Glasgow actually means 'the place of the grey rock' being the Fir Park, now known as Glasgow Necropolis. This site is as old as Glasgow itself and overlooks the Molindinar stream where St Mungo baptised his Christian converts in the 6th century. In earlier times a druidical grove is said to have crowned the brow of the Grey Rock. At a subsequent period, tradition assigns this sylvan vale as the scene where Aymer de Valiance and Menteith met to plot the treacherous betrayal of Sir William Wallace at Robroyston.

The site of the Glasgow Necropolis also played an integral part of the history of the medieval City of Glasgow as can be seen from this view of the Cathedral and Upper Town in the 1670's - taken from Captain



John Abraham Slezer's 'Theatrum Scotia' published in 1693. The view is taken from the Grey Rock looking North West across the City. Glasgow Cathedral and Bishop's Castle are clearly identifiable to the right and in the foreground the Molindinar Burn, now Wishart Street, ripples past the gardens of the prebendal manses that sloped down from the Drygate. The houses of High Street are seen and of the five spires in the background the centre one is that of the Old College.

At that time the Grey Rock was known as the lands of Wester Craigs and alternatively Golf Hill. It was later known as the Fir Park and the Merchant's Graveyard before becoming known as the 'City of the Dead'. Almost 330 years later one can still stand on the grey rock in the exact position the artist chose for this painting, just slightly below the John Knox Monument, to view the cathedral and its precincts in all their gothic grandeur.

The Necropolis has been described as a 'unique representation of Victorian Glasgow, built when Glasgow was the second city of the empire. It reflects the feeling of confidence and wealth and security of that time.' It is a memorial to the merchant patriarchs of the City and contains the remains of almost every eminent Glaswegian of its day. Monuments designed by leading Glaswegian architects including Alexander 'Greek' Thomson, Bryce, Hamilton and Mackintosh adorn it. Their designs are executed by expert masons and sculptors who contributed ornate and sculptural detail of the finest quality. The Necropolis remains one of the most significant cemeteries in Europe, exceptional in its contribution to the townscape, its symbolic relationship to Glasgow Cathedral and to the medieval heart of the City. It is a major attraction to visitors from the UK and overseas. It is also a 'park' valued by Glaswegians for study. On a clear day looking west, one may see the valley of the Clyde bounded by the hills of Cowal, Kyle and Cunninghame.

## **St. Mungo and the Great Grey Rock**

The first Christian community in Glasgow was established on the site which became Glasgow cathedral, consecrated in 1136. Since medieval times the Necropolis has been separated from the Cathedral grounds by the Molindinar Ravine. The Molindinar stream is now culverted beneath Wishart Street. Legend has it that St. Mungo was obliged to bury Fergus, a holy man from Carnock near Stirling. Fergus's dying wish was that his body should be placed on a cart drawn by two untamed bulls and Mungo was to follow the bulls and bury Fergus where they stopped. The next morning St. Mungo harnessed the bulls to a wagon and placed Fergus's body on it. They travelled West for some thirty miles before they arrived at a charming glen, with a great grey rock on one side and a beautiful burn beneath. This is where Fergus was buried and St. Mungo built his cell here. The burn was the Molindinar and the great grey rock was the Fir Park, now the site of the Glasgow Necropolis. St. Mungo's daily ritual was to rise early and rush in all weathers into the Molindinar where he would remain until he had chanted or sung the whole of the one hundred and fifty Psalms of David. When he was finished St Mungo would lay himself on a stone on the hillside to dry - on the hillside now more commonly known as the Necropolis.

This early Christian settlement became so important in the Christian world that St. Columba came to visit St. Mungo. They strolled along the banks of the Molindinar and it is said that they liked one another so much that they exchanged pastoral staves - in token of the esteem they bore for each other.

## **Development of the Fir Park**

Formerly part of the Wester Craigs Estate, the Grey Rock was bought by the Merchants' House in 1650 from Stewart of Mynto for £1,291 and lots of land were feued out at £70.6s.8d a year to quarry stone and rock. The promontory and western approaches to the estate were



considered too rocky to use profitably, so it was laid out as a plantation. The Western side of the park, with its stunning views of the cathedral was planted out with fir trees and quickly became known as the Fir Park. By 1804 due to industrial pollution in Glasgow the Scots Firs started to die off, and over the next fifty years were replaced with elm and willow. A surrounding wall was built, a keeper appointed, and an arboretum and garden constructed. 1824 saw the Merchants' House buying out its feuars and three further properties near to the Cathedral. In 1825, with much pomp and ceremony, the foundation stone of the John Knox Monument was laid.

## Why the Necropolis was Built

The early 1800's saw Glasgow grow as a major industrialised city, with it came a new class of merchants and entrepreneurs who had made vast fortunes in tobacco, spices, coffee and cotton. By 1831 Glasgow's population had trebled from 70,000 to more than 200,000. Flooded by immigrants, most notably Irish and Highlanders, the existing urban structure was inadequate and could not cope with such an influx. The working classes suffered considerable conditions of deprivation, exacerbated by inadequate housing, dire poverty, poor sanitation and contaminated water supplies. This sudden dramatic increase in Glasgow's population directly affected cemeteries since the poverty and squalor resulted in fierce epidemics of cholera and typhus. In the 1830's over 5,000 people were dying per year and were being buried in unhygienic urban churchyards. Previously burials in the 1800's outside of a churchyard had been reserved for the unbaptised and lunatics. Buchan, in his guide to the Cathedral and Necropolis in 1843, puts this change of heart rather more forcefully, "A practice (burial within a churchyard) more revolting to human nature and more destructive to the health of the living could not possibly exist." Growing concerns with hygiene and sanitation led to the opinion that this policy of burial in urban churchyards had now to be avoided.

## The Heritage Trail

### 1 The Entrance Gate

Designed by David and James Hamilton 1838



The gates were installed in 1838 to provide access to the "Bridge of Sighs", which carried the carriageway from the square across the Molendinar Ravine to the Necropolis. They were designed by James Hamilton, whose father David designed the bridge, and were cast at Thomas Edington & Sons' Phoenix Foundry in Queen Street. These ornate gates were made in cast iron at a cost of £150. The massive piers were derived by Hamilton from Stark's Asylum in Parliamentary Road. In the centre of the gates is the Merchants' House symbol, 'the clipper on top of the world'. Underneath this is the engraved latin phrase 'Toties redeunt es eodem' - 'So often returning to the same place' which is the Merchants' House motto. On closer inspection you will notice one gate has a hinged window. In days gone by the gates would be locked and only suitably attired visitors allowed entry to walk about and permitted to sign the visitor's book. In July 1878 the visitor's book shows that 13,733 people visited the Necropolis, consisting of 12,400 citizens and 1,333 other visitors.

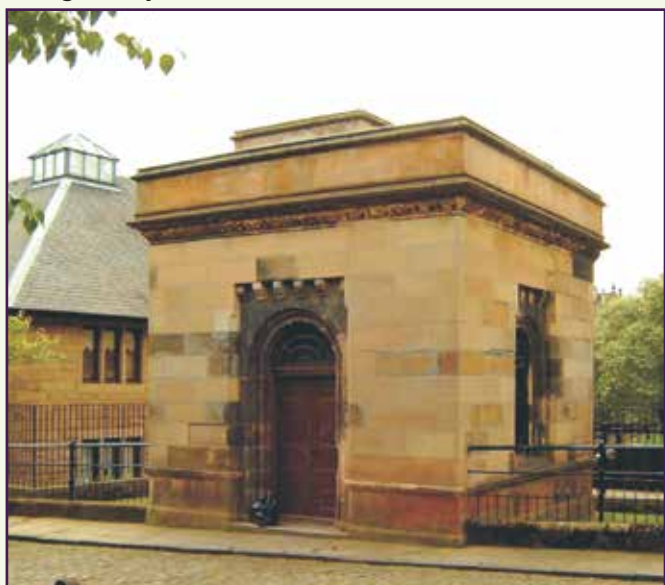




*Among the rose gardens on your left stand three recent memorials in the Kirk Lane approaches to the Bridge of Sighs, namely the SANDS monument for still birth and neo natal deaths, the Korean War Monument and a splendid monument for Glasgow recipients of the Victoria Cross. These poignant memorials regularly attract visitors and mourners. Their setting beneath the ancient cathedral walls is both appropriate and pleasing.*

## **2 The Cemetery Lodge**

Designed by David and James Hamilton 1839-40



Costing £413.10s 4d and constructed from the remains of the Old Barony Church, this castellated Romanesque ashlar construction was the former office of the Superintendent. This lodge was re-sited here from its original position further along on the left, immediately before the Bridge of Sighs. One can look for the plates where the original gates were sited.

## **3 The Superintendent's House** 1848

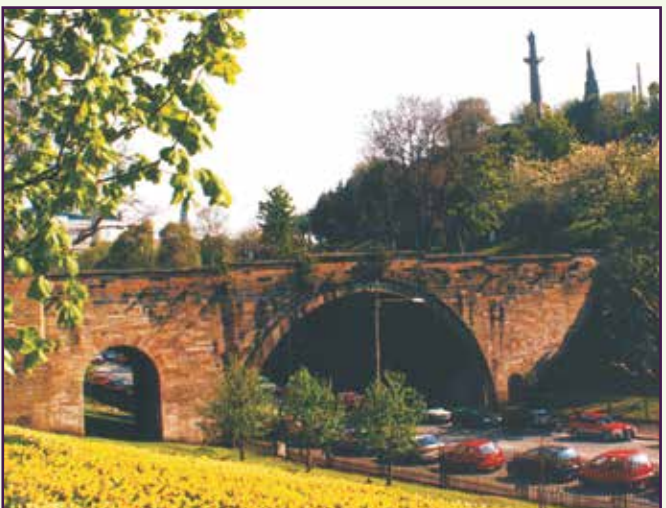
This house, built in 1848 on elevated ground for £400, contains the present office for the cemetery. On the walk from the gates to the bridge one can catch glimpses of the Cathedral and its graveyard which



was described by Sir Walter Scott in his 1817 masterpiece *Rob Roy ...*" the broad flat monumental stones are placed so close to each other, that the precincts appear to be flagged with them, and, though roofed only by the heavens resembles the floor of one of our old English churches". Scott also commented in the same book... 'On the opposite side of the ravine rises a steep bank, covered with fir trees closely planted, whose dusky shade extends itself over the cemetery with an appropriate and gloomy effect.'

## 4 The Bridge of Sighs

Designed by D and J Hamilton 1833-34





Described as 'the separation between time and eternity' proposed by John Strang and built by contractor John Lochore as a single 60 foot semi-circular arch using coursed rubble with an ashlar parapet at a cost of £1,240. Notice the three arches, the two external arches being walkways while the mighty Molendinar coursed below the middle span over an artificial waterfall. Over the archway is the following inscription;

### **THE ADJOINING BRIDGE**

Was erected by

### **THE MERCHANTS' HOUSE OF GLASGOW**

To afford a proper entrance to their new cemetery combining convenient access to the grounds with suitable decoration to the venerable cathedral and surrounding scenery to unite the tombs of many generations who have gone before with the resting places destined for generations yet unborn, where the ashes of all shall repose until the resurrection of the just, when that which is born a natural body shall be raised a spiritual body, when this corruptible must put on incorruption, when this mortal must put on immortality, when death is swallowed up in victory.

A.D. MDCCCXXXIII

“Blessed is the man who trusteth in God  
and whose hope the Lord is.”

The land for building the bridge in 1833 was bought for 6 shillings a square yard - around thirty pence per square yard in decimal currency. The foundation stone was laid on 18 October 1834, on the park side of the bridge, with much pomp and ceremony. James Ewing, the Lord Provost, led the procession and children from the local charity schools sang psalms and said prayers. A choir from the Cathedral gave the musical accompaniment. In the cavity of the foundation stone was placed a hermetically sealed phial containing

current coins, almanacs, newspapers of the day, the draft contract, a specification of the bridge, a list of the directors and members of the Merchants' House and copies of the inscriptions. It was intended that the view from the bridge "would form a scene so magnificent and as interesting as would scarcely be equalled by anything of the kind in the UK".

## 5 The Entrance Facade

Designed by John Bryce 1836



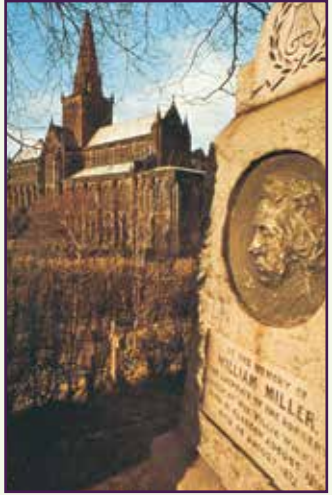
Built by John Park, this façade was intended as a magnificent gateway to a subterranean crypt housing tiers of vaults which would ensure safety from 'body snatchers' and 'grave robbers'. Unfortunately the passing of the 1832 Anatomy Act allowing cadavers to be released to medical science, the constant flooding of the vaults and the growing opinion that people did not wish to be 'entombed in darkness' all combined to cause a distinct lack of interest in the façade - which doomed the subterranean crypt as not financially viable.

## 6 William Miller Monument 1872

Born in Glasgow, the Scottish poet Miller 1810-1872 lived most of his life at No.4 Ark Lane in Dennistoun. A



carpenter to trade, Miller was an accomplished poet and songwriter. His works were published in various magazines and also as a collection entitled 'Whistle-binkie: Stories for the Fireside' (1842). Unfortunately the beloved Miller died penniless and was buried in his family plot in Tollcross Cemetery at the



North wall near the main entrance. Friends and admirers raised this memorial stone by public subscription. It is said that the poem 'Wee Willie Winkie', now widely recognised as a "Savage political satire", was written about his son Stephen.

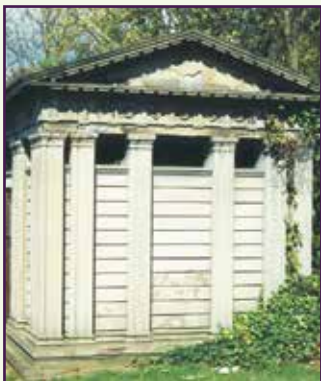
'Wee Willie Winkie runs through the toon,  
upstairs and doonstairs in his night goon,  
Knocking on the window and crying through the  
lock,-  
are all the weans in their bed?  
for its past ten o'clock.

## 7 Davidson of Ruchill Mausoleum

Designed by John Thomas Rothead 1851

James Davidson was involved in the lucrative muslin trade and was a partner of James and John Meikleham. Their warehouse stood on the east side of Glassford Street. After their death Davidson became a successful merchant in his own right and bought the lands of Ruchill, Garrioch and Balgray. He owned Ruchill House but also kept a residence at Wemyss Bay. Davidson lies in the vault below this tomb. The monument resembles a Greek temple, built from Craiglands Quarry stone measuring 22 ft by 22 ft with a roof supported on an ante-pilastrade with screens and bronze doors (now

lying inside). The eaves are decorated by foliated antefixae. Many years after his death, the Council bought 53 acres of his estate from his son, William James Davidson, for the construction of Ruchill Park and Hospital (1893).



## 8 Peter Lawrence Monument

Designed & sculpted by John Mossman 1840



A sculptor of some note himself, examples of Lawrence's own work can still be seen in the Necropolis. This was one of J.Mossman's first works, a sculpture of a winged seraph/youth, perched on top holding an extinguished torch as a symbol of death - now sadly missing.

## 9 Mathew Montgomerie Monument

Designed by Charles Wilson 1842

The writer Montgomerie erected this Gothic monument in memory of his wife Margaret at a cost of £400. Based on Henry VII's chapel at Westminster, the elaborate stonework was badly damaged by a storm on 6th and 7th February 1856. The two figures, of Hope and Resignation were sculpted





by J.Mossman, the main monument by Hamilton and Miller.

## 10 Aitken of Dalmoak Mausoleum

Designed by James Hamilton II 1875

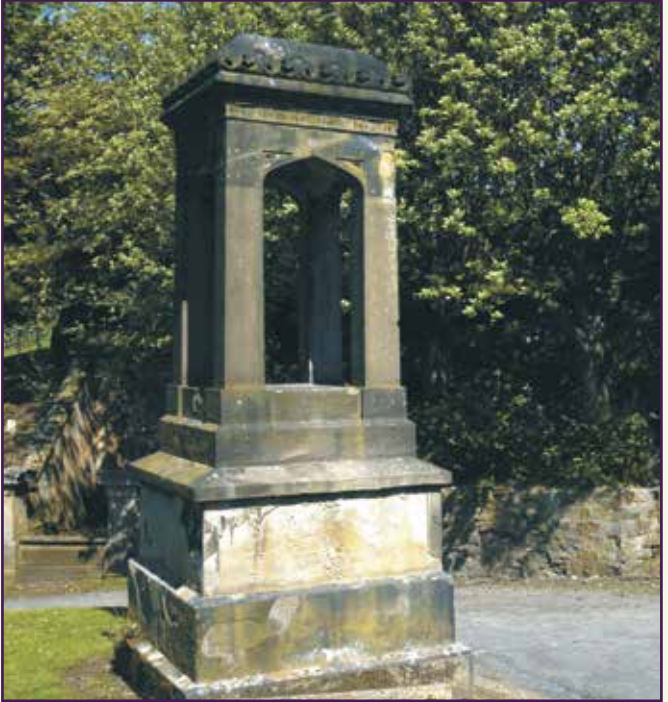


Probably the largest of the mausolea on the Grey Rock, the Aitken monument comprises four compartments, built for the four branches of the family. It is designed in a Greek renaissance style, with 4 cast iron gates and a domed roof supported on 4 pink granite shafts. In a push for social acceptance the Aitken dynasty built the magnificent Dalmoak Castle in 1869, a castellated Gothic mansion house in their estate near Dumbarton. The huge stained glass window at Dalmoak is thought to be the biggest in domestic use in Scotland.

## 11 William Motherwell Monument

Designed by James Fillans 1851

The Scottish poet, antiquary and journalist William Motherwell (1797-1835) is chiefly remembered for "Jeanie Morrison", "My heid so like to rend, Willie", and "Wearies could well". The son of a Glasgow ironmonger, Motherwell was appointed sheriff-clerk depute at Paisley in 1819. He published a volume of local ballads under the title of 'The Harp of Renfrewshire'. He became editor of the Paisley Advertiser in 1828, and of the Glasgow Courier in 1830. Aged just 38, Motherwell died an untimely death in 1835, due to a fit of apoplexy. At the time of his death Motherwell was actively lobbying on behalf of a national monument to Sir



William Wallace, ironically intended to be sited in the Fir Park. This 20 ft high Gothic temple with a Tudor canopy originally housed a bust of Motherwell executed in Parian marble, sadly now stolen. Halbert the Grim is shown on one side surrounded by two snakes and two friends, on the left are scenes showing Jeanie Morrison, Motherwell's early sweetheart. The bas-reliefs contain images from Motherwell's poetry which often concerned warring and heroic times of Scandinavian adventure. This monument to the beloved poet was erected by friends sixteen years after his death. Before then a friend came occasionally to mark the spot with a card inscribed with the following quotation from his poetry.

"When I beneath the cold red earth am sleeping  
    life's fever o'er  
Will there for me be any bright eye weeping  
    that I'm no more?  
Will there be any heart still memory keeping  
    of heretofore."





## 12 Robert Black Mausoleum 1837



The merchant Robert Black (1792-1879) was one of the owners of Black and Wingate Cotton Mills, Sandyford Street, Kelvinhaugh, Glasgow. Black lived in an opulent mansion at Glenarbuck House in Old Kilpatrick, near Glasgow. This Greek Doric temple, the first mausoleum in the Necropolis, was erected for his daughter Catherine who died aged 12. Altogether 5 of his daughters died before they were 21. Mr Black himself though lived to 86 and died on the 28th November, 1879.

## 13 Buchanans of Bellfield

Designed by John Stephen circa 1860



This Greek astylar mausoleum with draped urns was built for three sisters - the 'Misses Buchanan of Bellfield'. J and G Mossman sculpted the draped urns. Elizabeth, Jane and Margaret were the daughters of

George Buchanan of Woodlands in Glasgow. The sisters lived at Bellfield near Kilmarnock. Elizabeth died in April 1875 and Jane and Margaret had passed on before her. The 27 square yards of Necropolis ground for this mausoleum cost £85. The sisters will bequeathed £10,000 to the Merchants' House for the perpetual upkeep of their tomb. Most of their considerable estate was left to a series of worthy charities and 'the whole residue of the estate, after providing for these purposes, is to be paid, one half to the Glasgow Royal Infirmary and the other half to the Glasgow Asylum for the Blind.'

## 14 The Egyptian Vaults

Designed by David & James Hamilton 1837

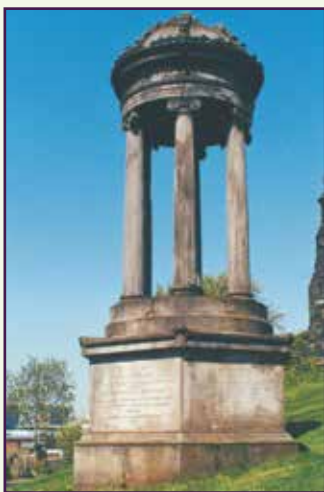


These vaults were built as a temporary resting place for corpses whilst the tombs and mausoleums were being erected and graves were being prepared. The cast-iron gates, made by T. Edington & Sons' Phoenix Foundry in Queen Street, consist of four pairs of torches, interestingly inverted but not extinguished. A winged hourglass above the vaults represents the rapid flight of time. Blair describes the view from the gate. "The massive stone lids of the temporary tombs, with iron rings attached are visible within, extending to the further extremity of the cavern, from which they retire right and left, into the excavated chambers or aisles on either side."



## 15 Reverend John Dick Monument

Designed by Robert Black 1838



Reverend Dr John Dick was minister of Greyfriars Secessionist church, Shuttle St, Glasgow and was appointed professor of theology to the Associate Synod in 1820. Born in Aberdeen on 10th October 1764 he was the son of Reverend John Dick DD who was also a Secession Church minister.

The Reverend Dick was appointed assistant minister to Rev Alexander Pirie in 1801 at the Old Lights (Lights) Greyfriars church and became sole minister on the death of Reverend Pirie in 1810. In 1815 he received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University of Princetown, New Jersey, USA. In 1820 Reverend Dick was appointed Professor of Theology to the Associate Synod, a position held till 1825. He died on January 21st 1833 and in 1834 his theological lectures were published in four volumes.

The monument consists of a solid hexagonal base topped by a circular plinth which supports six fluted and castellated columns. These in turn support a circular canopy and ornate dome. Based on the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates in Athens it forms an ionic rotunda. The central urn and finial are missing. Reverend Dick died aged 69 of inflammation of the brain caused by an inner ear infection. His remains lie in the Cathedral graveyard. The inscription on the frieze at the top may be translated:

“Oh! tell me not the good man dies  
embalmed in sacred sleep he lies.”

## 16 William McGavin

Designed by John Bryce 1834

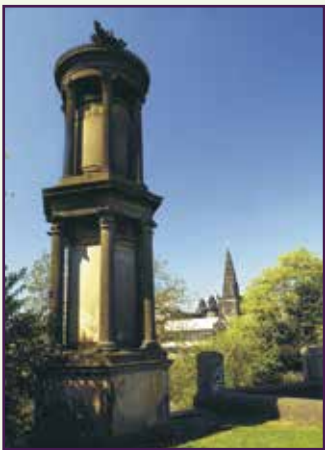
Born in Ayrshire and originally a weaver to trade McGavin tried his hand at a few other positions, teacher, merchant and bank manager. He is particularly famous for his publication "The Protestant" which began as a series of letters in The Glasgow Chronicle in May 1818. In an almost fanatical religious manner it attacked the errors of popery. McGavin was buried in the now



demolished Wellington Street Chapel; his remains were re-interred in the Necropolis. This 35 ft high monument was sculpted by Robert Forrest (who also sculpted the John Knox statue).

## 17 Buchanan of Dowanhill Monument

Designed by James Brown 1844



Commisioned by John and Thomas Buchanan of Dowanhill, merchants in Glasgow, on the death of their father James Buchanan (1756-1844). The site consists of three plots of ten square yards of Necropolis ground thirty square yards purchased at a total cost of £64. The monument is

based on two monuments from ancient Athens, the lower half being the Tower of Winds and the upper based on the Monument of Lysicrates. The carving is by James Shanks.

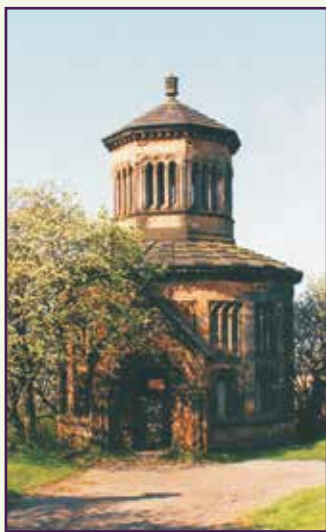


The top half of the monument was damaged when blown down in 1856. Its replacement had a solid centre to add stability. The lower support columns are simplified Corinthian order without volutes and the roof is a replica of the original fish scale tiling surmounted by a row of antefixae. The top is capped by scrolls intended to support a tripod.

## **18 Major Archibald Douglas Monteath Mausoleum**

Designed by David Cousin 1842

Monteath served in the East India Company. Allegedly, Monteath made his fortune when an elephant carrying precious gems belonging to a Maharajah was captured and 'relieved' of its load by him. When he died £1,000 was left to build his monument. There was a shortfall, however the Merchants' House gifted the extra



land needed and this spectacular mausoleum was built. Based on the Knights Templar Church of the Holy Sepulchre, experts dispute whether it is modelled on the Jerusalem Church or possibly their Cambridge Church. This 30 ft diameter Neo-Norman rotunda has grotesque faces around the doorway and each niched window has a different design. In 1850 Monteath's brother, James Douglas Monteath of Rosehall and Stonebyres was also interred here.

## **19 Dunn of Duntocher Monument**

Designed by John Thomas Rothead 1848

William Dunn was born in Kirkintilloch in 1770, trained as a cotton spinner in Glasgow and then spent four years learning iron-turning and machine making. One



of the most successful Glaswegian entrepreneur capitalists Dunn became an extensive landowner, most notably the estates of Duntocher, Milton, Kilbowie, Balquharan, Duntiglennan and Auchintoshan. Farmland at that time, this landbank is now worth countless millions. In 1880 he bought the Duntocher Mill

and acquired Faifley Mill, the Dalnotter Iron Works and built Hardgate Mill. Owner of a successful machine-making works on High John Street, Dunn installed his own machinery in the five mills he owned. Dunn eventually employed nearly 2,000 people in cotton manufacture, agriculture and mining. He lived luxuriously in his handsome mansion in St. Vincent Place and also kept a country house at Dalmuir. It is recorded that Dunn had an excessive liking for law pleas, and consequently he was constantly in the Court of Session with his neighbours, particularly Lord Blantyre and Hamilton of Cochno. On his death in 1849 Dunn's brother Alex inherited his fortune and had this mausoleum built. The monument is executed in a severe classical style with rectangular Doric pilasters in Irish Granite.

## 20 Reverend William Brash Monument

possibly designed by John Bryce 1851

The Reverend William Brash was minister of East Campbell Street United Presbyterian Church, just off Gallowgate at Glasgow Cross. He died in November 1851, aged 58, of apoplexy. His monument is a tall elaborate Elizabethan structure, projecting into four wings of a St Andrews Cross. This supports a truncated square pillar, terminating in a cinerary urn. Other members of his family are buried in an adjoining plot, most notably his son Walter Brash.



## 21 John Henry Alexander Monument

Designed by James Hamilton 1851



An actor, owner and manager of the Theatre Royal in Dunlop Street - uniquely split into two sections so that comedy and tragedy could be played at the same time. One night in 1849, 65 people were killed in a crush caused by someone falsely shouting 'fire', Mr Alexander is said to have roared himself hoarse

trying to prevent the disaster and never recovered, as he died shortly after. Sculpted by Alexander Handyside Ritchie, a Saltire topped with a circular temple. Robert Forrest was originally commissioned as sculptor but it was transferred to Hamilton after his own untimely death. The front section is an elaborate proscenium stage, with footlights, and the figures of tragedy and

comedy complete with laurel wreath all representing Alexander's final curtain call.

## 22 Reverend Dr Robert Muter Monument

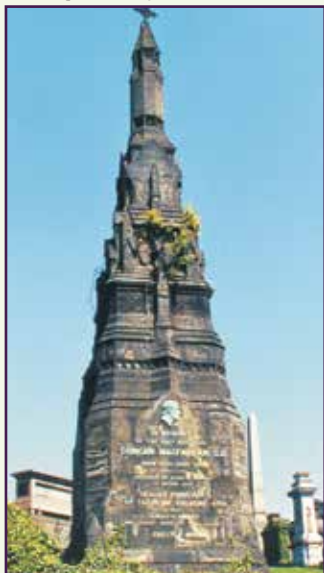
Designed by John Stephen 1844

Reverend Muter was a popular preacher of Duke Street United Associate Congregation. His monument consists of four fluted Doric columns supporting a square entablature. A small sarcophagus is located within the columns and supported on a massive base. It was designed by John Stephen (1807-1850) of architects Scott, Stephen & Gale.



## 23 The Very Reverend Duncan Macfarlan's Monument

Designed by Jonathan Anderson Bell 1863



Born in Auchengray in September 1771, The Very Reverend Macfarlan succeeded his father as Minister of Drymen Church in 1792. He became Principal of Glasgow University in 1823 and was made Minister of Glasgow Cathedral in 1824, posts which he held for over thirty years till his death in 1857. Reverend Macfarlan became Dean





of Chapel Royal, 1820-1824 and was twice chosen to be Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland (in 1819 and 1843). Reverend Macfarlan also attended the laying of the Bridge of Sighs foundation stone in 1833. He died in Glasgow on 25 November 1857. This majestic neo-gothic tower was erected in his honour in 1863. Designed by Jonathan Anderson Bell, the bronze profile was by William Brodie.

## 24 James Ewing of Strathleven Monument

Designed by John Baird I 1857

Born 7th Dec 1775 when the population of Glasgow was 40,000 James Ewing was the 5th child of Walter Ewing Maclae, 3rd of Cathkin and Margaret Fisher, daughter of Rev James Fisher and granddaughter of Rev Ebenezer Erskine. Her father and grandfather were two of the four founder members of the Secession Church, the first break up in the Church of Scotland in 1733. Walter was an extremely well known accountant and arbiter dealing with the many disasters that befell Glasgow tobacco merchants' businesses, their supporting Banks and other businesses, as a result of the American war of independence.



James Ewing received excellent business training in his father's office before leaving to set up his own company as a West Indian Merchant supplying his eldest brother's sugar plantations in Jamaica and selling the sugar and rum returning to the Clyde. On the death of his father both businesses were merged into James Ewing & Co. He bought Glasgow House in 1815. This magnificent mansion was later compulsorily purchased and demolished to build the existing Queen St. Railway station. It was in Glasgow House in 1828 that the idea for the Necropolis was discussed and those present agreed to make a proposal to the Merchants House.

In 1822 Ewing built Castle House (now Council offices) in Dunoon and was one of the first people to start the Glasgow passion for going 'doon the watter'. In 1835 Ewing retired and bought the house and estate of Levenside near Dumbarton which he renamed Strathleven. He married for the first and only time, Jane Tucker Crawford, at the age of 61 and chose a wife 30 years his junior! By the time he died in 1853, the population of Glasgow was over 360,000. On his death in 1853 Ewing left a fortune of £280,000 - a sum equivalent to more than £22 million at today's prices. Of this fortune £70,000 was bequeathed to charitable institutions (now equivalent to more than £5 million pounds) and £30,000 to 'decaying Glasgow merchants, their widows and the education of their sons'. The large polished pink Peterhead granite sarcophagus was sculpted by J.Mossman and originally bronze bass relief panels with Ewing's portrait adorned the side. Unfortunately they were stolen. There is a memorial window to James Ewing in Glasgow Cathedral and a marble bust in the Merchants House.

## **25 John Knox Monument**

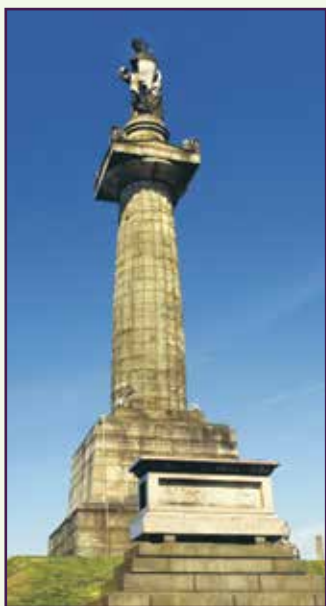
Designed by Thomas Hamilton 1825

Born in Gifford near Haddington in East Lothian in 1505, John Knox took holy orders whilst attending St Andrews University. He later became a disciple of George Wishart, thereby rejecting the Roman Catholic



Church. Knox had to flee Scotland because of religious persecution and arrived in Geneva where he studied and became a convert to the teachings and doctrine of Calvin. John Knox returned to preach at St Andrews and played a significant part in the Reformation and its aftermath. Rightly acknowledged as one of the most significant figures in Scottish history, Knox died peacefully in Edinburgh on 24th November 1572 and his remains interred in St Giles Kirkyard. This imposing 70-foot monument - comprising a 58 ft high Doric column, surmounted with a 12 ft statue of Knox in his Geneva gown, clutching a bible in his right hand - was erected by James Carmichael in 1825. The Geneva gown is still proudly worn by Presbyterian ministers today.

This stunning monument predates the Necropolis Cemetery and was originally intended as the centrepiece of the Fir Park. The haunting image of John Knox overlooking the cathedral has deep religious and political connotations and the monument has become an iconic image of Glasgow. Among many inscriptions on the base is the memorable eulogy by the Earl of Morton:



“When laid in the ground,  
the regent said, `There lieth he,  
Who never feared the face of man,  
who was often threatened with dab and dagger,  
yet hath ended his days in peace and honor.”

Thomas Hamilton (1785-1858) was the architect and Robert Forrest the sculptor of John Knox's statue.

## 26 Charles Tennant of St. Rollox Monument

Designed by Patrick Park 1838



Born in Ochiltree, Ayrshire 1768 and trained as a weaver, Tennant went on to become a bleacher in Darnley. Bleaching at that time involved exposing the cloth to rain, wind and sun. In 1797 Tennant - with no formal chemical training - discovered that mixing chlorine and lime produced a controllable bleaching agent. Tennant established his St Rollox Chemical Works in 1799 which became the largest chemical plant in Europe. The factory chimney at a height of 455 ft. was a famous landmark in Glasgow, known as 'Tennant's Stack'. Many of his workers suffered due to continued exposure to toxic chemicals and were colloquially known as 'Tennant's White Mice'. Charles Tennant died suddenly at his home in Abercrombie Place, Glasgow in 1838 aged 71. Contemporary newspaper articles of the time criticised this Carrara marble sculptured by Patrick Park (1811-1855) claiming that the slumped figure made Tennant look rather 'like a casualty of the product that made his family fortune'.



## 27 Robert Stewart of Murdostoun Monument

Designed by James Brown 1866

Lord Provost of Glasgow from 1851-1854, Robert Stewart is fondly remembered for introducing the water supply from Loch Katrine to Glasgow. This Roman Doric structure shows an Elizabethan upper section with four arches surmounted with a cinerary urn. A splendid fountain erected to his memory stands in Kelvingrove Park. Arguably the centrepiece of the park and the jewel in the Kelvingrove crown, the magnificent Stewart



Fountain commemorates the breathtaking feat of Victorian engineering which provided fresh drinking water for the residents of the City of Glasgow and eradicated the twin threat of cholera and typhus. At that time clean and fresh drinking water was a priority for public health in Glasgow. Robert Stewart had been Lord Provost when the scheme was first proposed in 1854 and had fought very strongly against powerful commercial interests to bring the scheme into being. The Kelvingrove fountain was erected in 1872 and is based on themes from Sir Walter Scott's 'Lady of the Lake' and the main figurine represents the fair Ellen Douglas.

## 28 Charles Clark Mackirdy

Designed by James Thomson of Baird & Thomson 1891  
Charles Clark Mackirdy (1811-1891) was the owner of a large cotton spinning company. His parents had been

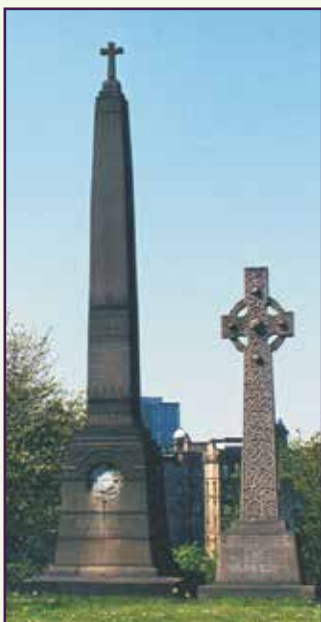


merchants with extensive estates in the West Indies. Mackirdy lived at 5 Blythswood Square Glasgow till his death at 80 years of age. He was buried on Christmas Eve in 1891. This is another monument based on the popular design of Lysicrates with a Corinthian rotunda boasting unusually fine granite detail. Note that the door is in cast iron. The sculptor of this finely detailed choragic Corinthian rotunda was David Buchanan.

## 29 Reverend George Marshall Middleton Monument

Designed by Alexander 'Greek' Thomson & sculpted by J & G Mossman 1867

The reverend George Marshall Middleton, first minister of St Vincent Street United Presbyterian Church died in 1866. The following year the congregation subscribed for this monument and also for a monument for his predecessor Reverend Beattie. The obelisk was an ancient Egyptian form which Thomson regarded as an 'imperishable thought, a symbol of truth and justice.'





### 30 John Houldsworth of Cranston Hill Mausoleum

Designed by John Thomas 1845



This Graeco-Egyptian style monument is in marble with two statues at the entrance. On the left stands Hope with an anchor, on the right stands Charity carrying a child and inside Faith clasping a bible with an angel on either side. The sculptor John Thomas later went on to work on the Houses of Parliament. John Houldsworth 1807-1859 was the last Lord Provost of Anderston before it was incorporated into Glasgow, a Senior Baillie

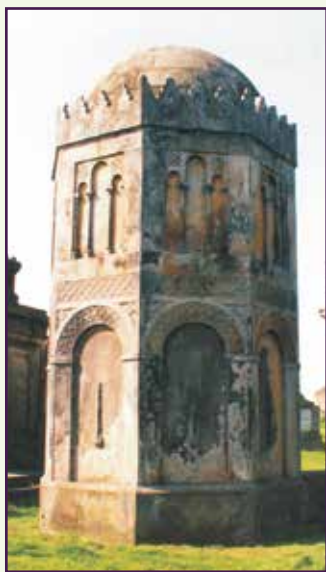
of Glasgow and founder of the Anderston Foundry and Machine Works. The son of a Nottingham cotton-spinner who moved to Cranston Hill and worked in Kelvinbridge, Houldsworth was educated in Glasgow, Geneva and Heidelberg. Houldsworth's leisure time was devoted to art and to sailing. He cruised the Firth of Clyde and sailed to the Western Isles. He was also an accomplished musician and had a piano on his yacht. He married Eliza Muir in 1836.

### 31 William Rae Wilson Mausoleum

Designed by Jonathan Anderson Bell 1849

Doctor William Rae Wilson L.L.D., sometime of Kelvinbanke, was born in Paisley 7th June 1772. Born William Rae, he adopted the name Wilson from his uncle, John Wilson, when he inherited money from him.

Wilson practised as a solicitor. His first wife died eighteen months after they were married. He then went

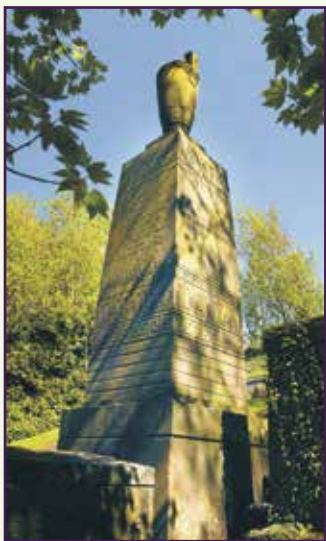


travelling in the Middle East, subsequently writing 'Travels in the holy land' and other books. Eventually he married 'An English lady of good family' from London. When Wilson died, his wife had this domed octagonal Moorish kiosk built, in the style of Sepulchre monuments from his beloved Palestine. No wood, iron or lead has been used in its

construction, all joints are expertly concealed. The family arms of Rae and Wilson are depicted inside the mausoleum in white marble .

## 32 Reverend Alexander Ogilvie Beattie Monument

Designed by Alexander 'Greek' Thomson & sculpted by J & G Mossman 1867



A supporter of Greek Thomson, the Reverend Alexander Ogilvie Beattie was the first minister for Gordon Street United Presbyterian Church. He died in 1858, but if he had lived Reverend Beattie would have undoubtedly become the first minister of St Vincent Street UP Church, which he had commissioned to Alexander 'Greek'

Thomson and was under construction at his untimely death. This monument consists of an obelisk and urn and a tomb chest with on a base of polygonal masonry.



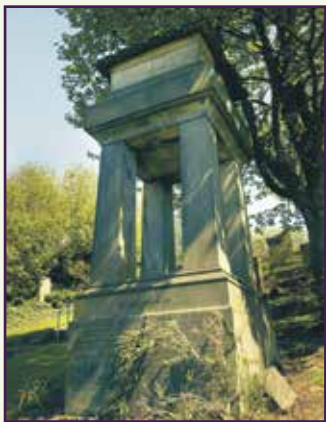


It is considered to be Thomson's most impressive and innovative cemetery monument, notable in that it lies on a slope and rises from a projecting plinth of cyclopean masonry. Recognised as the paradigm of Thomson's meta architecture, this piece also uses the same Grecian motifs that Thomson used in paint in many of his interiors.

### 33 Hugh Cogan Monument

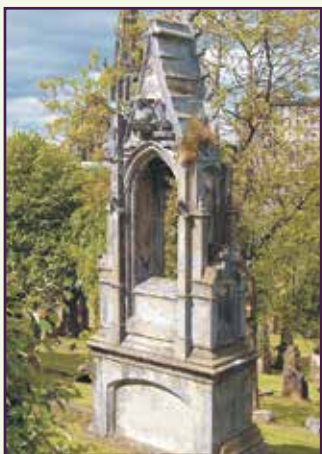
Designed by John Thomas Rothead 1855

Dean of Guild at the Merchants' House 1842 - 1843 Cogan is remembered for founding the first Glasgow Building Society and as an elder of the Free Church. He died on 28 August 1855 at the age of 63. A rather gloomy monument, almost Egyptian in proportion.



### 34 Lockhart Monument

Designed by J Wallace 1842



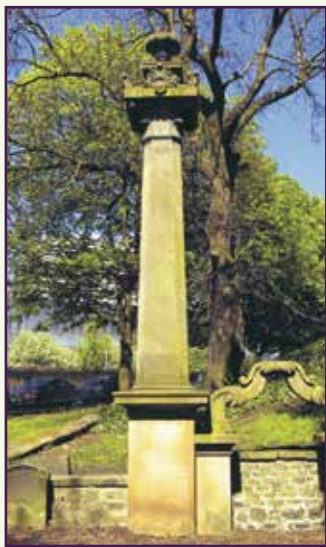
Robert and Thomas Lockhart were wealthy clothiers in Glasgow. This is another Gothic fantasy monument complete with obligatory cherubs, finials and scrolls. This piece was sculpted by J. Mossman and designed by Mrs Robert Lockhart's brother, the London based architect J. Wallace.

### 35 Facade to the Jewish Enclosure

Designed by John Bryce 1836

Built in 1836 and designed by J. Bryce based on

Absalom's Pillar in the King's Dale, Jerusalem, the symbols at the top of the pillar read 'Mi Kamoka Baalim Jehovah' - 'Who among the mighty is like unto you Jehovah?' The pillar also features extracts from the 'Hebrew Melodies' by Lord Byron. The ground was purchased from the Merchants' House for 100 guineas (£105) financed by general subscription in the synagogue. Joseph Levi - a 62 year old jeweller who had died of dysentery - was the first burial on September 12th 1832. Due to the Jewish custom of burying bodies one per grave the available space was quickly used up. The wash house, for cleaning bodies, was removed and this space gradually used too. By 1851 there was no more room for burials in this section.



*The tour of the Glasgow Necropolis is now complete and as indicated one should now follow the map back across the Bridge of Sighs to finish at the St Mungo's Museum of Religious Life and Art in the Cathedral precincts where refreshments and toilets are available.*

‘My heid is like to rend, Willie,  
 My heart is like to break -  
 I’m wearing aff my feet, Willie,  
 I’m dying for your sake!  
 Oh lay your cheek to mine, Willie,  
 Your hand on my breast-bane -  
 Oh say you’ll think of me, Willie,  
 When I am deid  
 an’ gane.’

William Motherwell ‘My Heid So Like To Rend, Willie’



## The Necropolis Design

The role of John Strang, Chamberlain in the Merchants' House, in the design and creation of both the Necropolis Cemetery and the Bridge of Sighs cannot be understated. In 1831 Strang wrote 'Necropolis Glasguensis' as a historical account of burial rites world wide.

Strang also advocated a bridge over the Molindinar, at the foot of Kirk Lane as an approach to the cemetery. It was intended that the Molindinar be considered as the river Styx which everyone must cross - the separation between time and eternity. When built this Bridge quickly, and not inappropriately, became known by Glaswegians as the 'Bridge of Sighs'.



The Merchant Park Cemetery circa 1835

The first interment was that of the Jewish jeweller Joseph Levi, who died of dysentery in September 1832. On 12th March 1833 authority was finally given by the Merchant House to dispose of burial places in the Necropolis and the cemetery was formally opened as a burial ground from April of that year.

The genius of the prolific Glasgow architects David Hamilton (1768-1843) and his son James Hamilton (1818-1861) is evident in the stunning approaches to the Necropolis. The Hamiltons were responsible for the Entrance Gates, the Cemetery Lodge, the Superintendent's House, the Egyptian Vaults, and most

notably the Bridge of Sighs. Their other commissions throughout Scotland are too numerous to list here, but include the Nelson Monument on Glasgow Green, Camphill House, Castle Toward, Hamilton Palace, Lennox Castle, Dunlop House, the Royal Exchange (GOMA) and Mosesfield House in Springburn Park.

## The Victorian Necropolis

The Necropolis was the first planned cemetery in Glasgow, and marked a new era in hygiene and sanitation. In common with other major Victorian cemeteries, it was designed as a botanic and sculpture garden to improve the morals and tastes of Glaswegians and act as a historical record of past greatness. In 1857 George Blair asked "Who is not made better and wiser by occasional intercourse with the tomb" and he hoped that visitors would be inspired with "a laudable ambition to imitate and emulate" those interred within. This "Dreamlike vision of Attic splendour on the hill by the Cathedral" has had many eminent admirers since its beginnings in 1832. In August 1849, during his visit to the Cathedral with Queen Victoria, Prince Albert "expressed himself delighted" at the sight of the Necropolis. More recently the painter LS Lowry considered it his favourite place in Glasgow. From the top of the Grey Rock, 225 feet above the Clyde, there is a magnificent view of the city and surrounding hills.

The Glasgow Necropolis was one of the few cemeteries at that time to keep records of the dead, including profession, ages, sex and cause of death. They reveal an appalling record of infant mortality with measles being a prime killer of the under twenty-fives. Also recorded are the prices paid which varied considerably; for example, "when body in hearse drawn by four horses or carried shoulder high" the cost was one guinea, but single graves, without right of property, for young children cost only 2/6d. The city of the dead was always intended to be non-denominational. It was intended that "Catholics could sleep in a spot



associated with the name of the Holy Virgin .... Jews could slumber in a cave, like that of Machpelah in the field of Ephron .... Lutherans could lie among nature .... Quakers could lie in sequestered nooks and strict Presbyterians could obtain graves around the column which proclaims the pure and unswerving principles of John Knox.”

On 9th February 1833 the first Christian interment, that of Elizabeth Miles was made - ironically the step mother of George Myles the cemetery superintendent. The first lair sold was that of Laurence Hill in 1835 who had been present at the 1828 meeting that had agreed the original proposal and design for the Necropolis. Of the 50,000 interments only about 3,500 have tombs. The majority lie in communal graves. All names, dates, sex, cause of death and professions were recorded and are available in the Mitchell Library. As indicated, the Necropolis is inter-denominational, apart from the Jewish Section since Jewish law requires that Gentiles could not be buried alongside them.



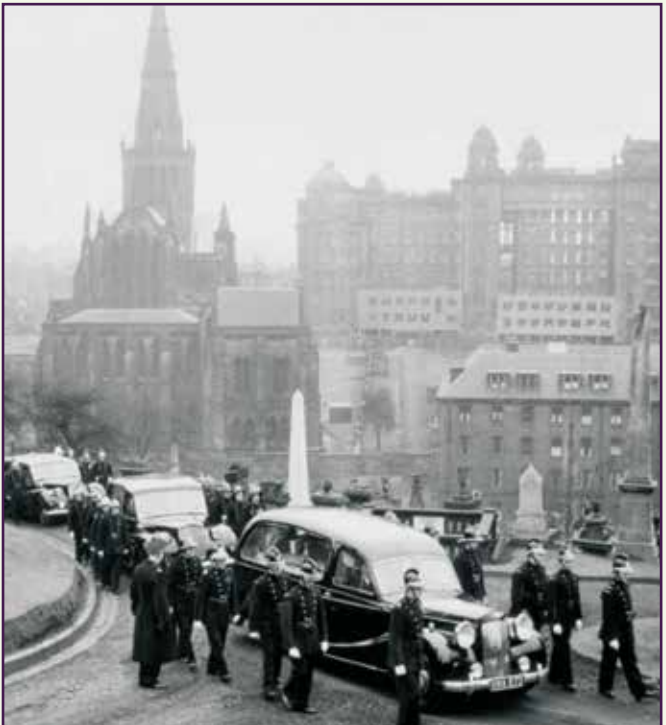
The Necropolis circa 1850

Due to obvious sensitivities tombs and monuments in the vicinity of John Knox had to be vetted by Thomas Hamilton and rights to land in the new cemetery could be forfeit if purchasers “failed to dress and ornament their ground and erect their monuments within the stipulated period”. The works involved in the creation of the Necropolis were very extensive, on the brow of the rock many tombs had to be blasted out with dynamite.

A night watchman was on duty and severe fines imposed on visitors who dared to step over fences or railings. In 1860 the East and South extensions were added, in 1877 and 1893 further lands were acquired in the North and South East effectively doubling the size of the Necropolis to 37 acres.

## Glasgow's Fire Service and Salvage Corps.

The Necropolis also contains a poignant memorial in commemoration of Glasgow's Fire Service and Salvage Corps. Those officers who died in service at Cheapside Street in 1960 and at Kilbirnie Street in 1972 are buried on the Grey Rock and are remembered by their colleagues each year in a deeply moving ceremony which is attended by surviving family members, close friends from the community, representatives of the emergency services, elected members and other dignitaries.



The 1960 funeral cortege from Glasgow Cathedral of the officers killed in an explosion at a bonded warehouse on Cheapside Street and Warroch Street



## **Charles Rennie Mackintosh** 1868-1928

The name of Charles Rennie Mackintosh has become synonymous with Glasgow. More than just an architect, he was also an outstanding international artist and designer. Born one of eleven children in Glasgow, Mackintosh lived for seventeen years at no. 2 Fir Park Terrace in Dennistoun. This tenement still stands, immediately adjacent to the Necropolis, marked with a plaque from the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society. There can be little doubt about the impression that the Necropolis would have made on an emerging architect.



An 1893 water colour by CRM of the Thornton monument in the Cathedral graveyard

Mackintosh's designs gained in popularity in the decades following his death. His House for an Art Lover was finally built in Glasgow's Bellahouston Park in 1996, and the University of Glasgow rebuilt the terraced house which Mackintosh had remodelled for himself and Margaret McDonald, complete with their original furniture. The Glasgow School of Art building, now renamed 'The Mackintosh Building', is regularly cited by architectural critics as among the very finest buildings in the UK. The Necropolis cemetery features several of his creations and his own headstone is a feature of any trip to the Grey Rock.

## Land and Environmental Services

Glasgow City Council, 231 George Street, Glasgow, G1 1RX.

phone 0141 287 2000

[www.glasgow.gov.uk/parks](http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/parks)



### Acknowledgements

The information contained in this leaflet was provided from various sources, in particular

**James J Berry** BA Hons. His 1985 dissertation 'The Glasgow Necropolis Heritage Trail and Historical Account' was the chief source for this leaflet

Other reference sources include;

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### The Friends of the Glasgow Necropolis

in particular **Nigel Willis** and  
**Ruth Johnston**  
[www.glasgownecropolis.org](http://www.glasgownecropolis.org)

### Dennis McCue

Senior Information Officer,  
Land and Environmental Services,  
Parks and Open Spaces

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